| Research Article / Araştırma Makalesi|

Problematic Internet Use and Marital Adjustment in Married Individuals

Evli Bireylerde Problemli İnternet Kullanımı ve Evlilik Uyumu[1]

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Abstract

Purpose: The main purpose of this research is to analyze the problematic Internet use and marital adjustment in married individuals. For this purpose, 198 (55.8%) female and 157 (44.2%) male volunteers participated in the study.

Design/Methodology/Approach: Research data was obtained by using Personal Information Form, Problematic Internet Use Scale and Marital Adjustment Scale. Data were analyzed by non-parametric methods Mann-Whitney U and Kruskal-Wallis H tests, in addition, Chi-square independence test was used to evaluate demographic variables.

Findings: As a result of the analysis, positive between marital adjustment and problematic Internet use and education level; a negative relationship was found with the marriage duration. The total scores and subscales of marriage adjustment and problematic Internet use scales have statistically significant relationships with each other.

Highlights: Based on this study, couples' high problem-solving skills, satisfaction with the time spent together, and sense of trust increase marital adjustment and significantly reduce problematic internet use. It can be said that couples' inability to have fun with each other in marriage, lack of common interests and not being able to spare time for each other, causes incompatibility in marriage, as well as the development of problematic internet use behavior in couples, especially for the purpose of providing social benefits.

Öz

Çalışmanın amacı: Bu araştırma ile evli bireylerde problemli internet kullanımı ve evlilik uyumunun incelenmesi amaçlanmaktadır. Çalışmaya 198'i (%55.8) kadın, 157'si (%44.2) erkek toplam 355 evli birey katılmıştır.

Materyal ve Yöntem: Veriler Kişisel Bilgi Formu, Problemli İnternet Kullanımı Ölçeği ve Evlilik Uyum Ölçeği ile toplanmıştır. Veri analizleri nonparametrik yöntemlerden Mann-Whitney U ve Kruskall-Wallis H testi ile gerçekleştirilmiş, demografik değişkenlerin ilişki değerlendirmelerinde ise Ki-kare bağımsızlık testi kullanılmıştır.

Bulgular: Yapılan analizler sonucu evlilik uyumu ve problemli internet kullanımı ile eğitim düzeyi arasında pozitif; evlilik süresi ile ise negatif yönde anlamlı ilişki bulunmuştur. Evlilik uyumu ile problemli internet kullanımı arasında ise anlamlı ve ters yönde bir ilişki bulunduğu söylenebilir.

Önemli Vurgular: Bu çalışmadan hareketle çiftlerin problem çözme becerilerinin yüksek olması, birlikte geçirilen zamandan duyulan memnuniyet ve güven duygusu evlilik uyumunu artırmakla birlikte problemli internet kullanımını da anlamlı ölçüde azaltmaktadır. Evlilikte çiftlerin birbiriyle eğlenceli vakit geçirememesi, ortak ilgi alanlarının bulunmaması ve birbirlerine zaman ayıramaması, evlilikte uyumsuzluk yaşanmasının yanı sıra çiftlerde özellikle sosyal fayda sağlama amacıyla problemli internet kullanımı davranışının gelişmesine yol açtığı söylenebilir.

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INTRODUCTION

In today's world, rapid developments in technology, easy access to the internet and mass usage leading to an increase in the use of platforms that the virtual world offers to individuals such as social media, games, entertainment, gambling etc. platforms offered by the Internet appeal to individuals of all ages and characteristics and make it attractive to use. The use of the internet, which covers an essential part of the lives of individuals today, brings with various problems, and this situation is reflected in the family life, social life and business life of individuals.

Mass communication has become more accessible, more democratic, and interactive with internet technology. With increasing participation, the bond grows stronger. The fact that this technology can be used by everyone appeals to all ages and interests and being economical increases the use and power of the internet (Çakır, 2007). While making more manageable many daily tasks of individuals, the internet, which can be used in a wide variety of areas such as having fun, getting information, and creating leisure activities, has become an influence on individuals and the society formed by individuals in many ways (Özer, 2013; Büyükfiliz, 2016).

The internet, which started to be used in Turkey in 1993 (Parlak, 2005), showed a rapid increase in the 2000s, and its use has increased rapidly every year with the personal computers in a home. (Gönül, 2016). Nearly all the population in Turkey uses the internet regularly every day, and this rate is increasing (TUIK, 2018). With the increase in the time spent on the internet, the use of the internet, which varies according to the individual, has led to the questioning of the impact of the new communication areas offered by it on people. While some individuals limit their Internet use in line with their needs, it has been observed that some individuals cannot do so and experience problems in their business and social lives due to excessive use (Gönül, 2002). The inability to control Internet use brings out the concept of problematic Internet use (Berber-Çelik & Odacı, 2011). Caplan (2002) uses the terms "pathological Internet use," "problematic Internet use," and "Internet addiction" to define the Internet use that can cause problems in the psychosocial, academic or work-related areas of an individual's life.

When looking at the underlying causes of Internet addiction, it is seen that there is a virtual environment that provides escape from emotional difficulties (stress, depression, anxiety, etc.), problematic situations or personal difficulties (professional burnout, academic problems, sudden unemployment, marriage, etc.) (Young, 2004). In addition, access to pornographic materials has become much easier with the internet, and the subject of reaching sexuality and providing satisfaction, which is one of the basic impulses, has made the use of the internet attractive (Ögel, 2012). An individual who spends a long time on the internet may lie about it in order not to receive a reaction from his/her family, and may start to spend less time with his/her wife/husband and children because she/he spends most of his/her time on the Internet (Young, 2001). Virtual relationships established over the internet can also be given as an example of incorrect use of the internet, which negatively affects family life. There may be threats to the family such as false relationships, addiction, loss of success and productivity due to virtual relationships, as well as threats to family integrity such as lack of communication, alienation from the family and loneliness, creating an imaginary world and identity and starting to live there, and breaking up the family (Karaca, 2007). Legal experts state that problematic Internet use behavior has impacted an alarming number of divorce cases, child custody battles, and criminal cases initiated by Internet addiction (Young, 2001). In this context, it can be said that problematic Internet use can be seen in individuals who have not achieved marital adjustment and that the marital adjustment of individuals with problematic Internet use may be adversely affected over time.

Marriage is the joining of two people to be happy and accept an ordinary life. In order to achieve this, it is necessary to talk about a harmonious marriage (Çakır, 2008). Spanier (1972) defined harmonious marriages as marriages in which couples are relatively free from conflict, have a consensus on important issues concerning the spouses, have similar entertainment and interests, and approach each other with love. A marriage between men and women aims to satisfy biological, social, psychological needs and motives (Güven, 2017). However, individuals who have not achieved harmony in marriage may choose to meet their biological, psychological and social needs, which need to be satisfied in their relationships and communication, through various platforms in the virtual environment due to the problems experienced between spouses. On the contrary, it can also be said that individuals with problematic Internet use may not be able to spare enough time for their spouses in marriage and cannot fulfill their marital responsibilities, so their marital adjustment may suffer.

The opportunities offered by social media, such as dissatisfaction in real-life relationships, unconditional acceptance offered in the virtual environment, or inclusion of individuals in a social environment they want by hiding their identities, can be counted among the reasons that increase Internet use. In this context, Mavnacıoğlu (2009, p.64) listed the basic features of social media under the following headings:

It is a chain of Internet applications where sharing and discussion are essential without the limitation of time and place.

Individuals publish their content very quickly on the internet and mobile media.

Individuals follow other users' content and comments.

An individual is both a follower and is followee in social media applications.

It is based on sincere conversation logic, not communication with established rules.

When the contents are examined in detail, it is seen that they are informal and can turn into a gossip chain among users over time.

With these features, the Internet environment and social media offer individuals a virtual social environment where they can freely present their ideas and reach them without the limitation of time and place.

Social media applications have recently offered the opportunity for individuals to be in new and different social environments, offering ways of self-expression in areas such as advertising, propaganda, and re-existence in the social environment and these areas have led to the emergence of unlimited research topics for social sciences (Ek≈üi and Vúmmet, 2013).

When we look at the literature on the subject, it is striking that the studies on problematic Internet use are primarily focused on high school and university students (Ceyhan, 2008; Wang et al., 2011; Kormas et al., 2011; Derbyshire et al., 2012; Truzoli et al., 2019; Sela et al., 2020; Wartberg and Lindenberg, 2020; Dib et al., 2021; Kokka et al., 2021), while the number of studies on problematic Internet use on couples is low (Alonzo, 2005; Candemir-Karaburç and Tunç, 2020; Isanejad and Bagheri, 2018; Diba, 2017; Kumcağız, Şahin and Köksal, 2017). The current research results show that due to the increase in the time spent on the internet, there are negative relationships between problematic Internet use and marital adjustment, such as an increase in couple burnout (Candemir-Karaburç & Tunç, 2020), feeling of loneliness in marriage and online infidelity reducing the quality of marriage (Isanejad & Bagheri, 2018), the test scores of the partner's browsing behavior for sex content on the internet and the decrease in sexual intimacy in women at the same rate (Alonzo, 2005). Therefore, research on various variables and samples related to marital adjustment and problematic internet use will guide the development and implementation of studies on understanding the causes of Internet use affecting marital adjustment.

It is thought that the results of the researches to be conducted in the development of protective and preventive strategies against negative situations such as increasing divorce rates, relationship and communication problems in the family, conflicts between spouses and poor problem-solving approaches, evaluating marital adjustment in the context of problematic Internet use variables will guide research and development for mental health professionals. The current study aims to examine the relationship between problematic Internet use and marital adjustment within the framework of various sociodemographic variables.

METHOD/MATERIALS

Research Model

The research is a quantitative research and is in the relational screening model. Relational screening model is a research model that aims to determine the existence and/or degree of change between two or more variables (Karasar, 2016).

Study Group

The study group of the research consists of volunteer participants who are married and at least primary school graduates living in Samsun. A total of 355 married individuals, 198 (55.8%) women and 157 (44.2%) men, were included in the study group. Married individuals participating in the research were selected by random sampling. The age range of the participants is 18-55, the average age is 34.63.

Data Collection Tools

The study used data collection tools as the Problematic Internet Use Scale for problematic Internet use levels, Marriage Adjustment Scale for marital adjustment levels, and Personal Information Form for some sociodemographic characteristics.

Problematic Internet Use Scale (PIUS): It was developed by Ceyhan, Ceyhan and Gürcan (2007) to measure university students' problematic Internet use levels. The scale consists of 33 items answered with a five-point scale ranging from "completely appropriate" to "not at all appropriate." The scores obtained from the scale vary between 33 and 165, and the high scores indicate that individuals' Internet use becomes unhealthy, affects their lives negatively, and may lead to pathology such as internet addiction (Ceyhan, Ceyhan and Gürcan, 2007). The exploratory factor analysis results of the scale for university students revealed that the scale consisted of three sub-factors. These three factors are named as "negative consequences of the internet," "social benefit/social comfort," and "overuse." These three factors together explained 48.96% of the total variance. In addition, within the scope of discriminant validity of PIUS, those who spend more time on the internet have more problematic internet use (Ceyhan, Ceyhan and Gürcan, 2007). Within the scope of the reliability studies of PIUS, the Cronbach Alpha internal consistency coefficient (α) of the scale was found to be .94. Item total score reliability coefficients were found to vary between .31 and .70 (p<.001). The correlation of test repetition scores of the scale obtained at four-week intervals was .81 (p<.001); the correlation between the two parts of the scale was found to be .83 (Ceyhan, Ceyhan and Gürcan, 2007).

Marriage Adjustment Scale (MAS): The reliability and validity study of the Turkish adaptation of the Marriage Adjustment Scale developed by Locke and Wallace (1959) was conducted by Tutarel-Kışlak (1999). The Marriage Adjustment Scale is a 15-item scale that measures marriage quality. The internal consistency (Cronbach Alpha) coefficient of the scale was .84. Since the scores in the first half and the second half of the test were different, half-test reliability was measured according to odd and even-numbered items and was calculated as r=.84. In order to measure the reliability with the test-retest technique, the test was applied to the individuals at 15-day intervals, and the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation coefficient was found to be .57

and significant at the .01 level (Tutarel-Kışlak, 1999). The lowest score obtained from the scale is 1, and the highest score is 60. The scores go from incompatibility to compatibility, and the cut-off point, which distinguishes compatible and discordant married individuals, was determined as 43.5 points (Tutarel-Kışlak, 1999). The scoring system of the scale is given in the table:

Table 1. Scoring system of MAS (Hunt, 1987; as cited in Tutarel-Kışlak, 1999)

Item	Scoring
1	0,1,2,3,4,5,6
2-9	5,4,3,2,1,0
10	0,1,2
11	3,2,1,0
12	Disagreement: 0 Outside activities: 1 Staying at home: 2
13	0,1,2,3
14	2,1,0
15	0,1,2,2
Total	60

Personal Information Form: It is the form prepared by the researcher to obtain data on the independent variables of the research, including demographic characteristics such as age, gender, education level, socioeconomic level.

Process

Data collection tools were applied face-to-face and electronically, taking into account the accessibility of the participants. The filled-in scales were checked before the analysis, and incomplete or incorrectly filled scales were eliminated. The raw data obtained with the data collection tools used in the research were analyzed using the SPSS-24 (Statistical Packet for the Social Science-24) program.

The regular distribution evaluation of all scales and sub-dimension scores of the study was made with the Shapiro Wilk test, and it was determined that all variables were not normally distributed ($p>0.05$). The necessary statistical analyzes were concluded with non-parametric statistical methods.

FINDINGS

The results were evaluated with the Mann-Whitney U test in paired group comparisons and the Kruskall-Wallis H test in more than two group comparisons. In addition, the relationship evaluations of demographic variables were obtained by using the Chi-square independence test, and the results were evaluated by tabulating.

Table 2. Descriptive data of the study group

		F	%
Gender	Female	198	55,8
	Male	157	44,2
	Total	355	100,0
Age	18-25	27	7,6
	26-35	149	42,0
	36-45	99	27,9
	46-55	80	22,5
	Total	355	100
SEL	Low	16	4,5
	Middle	305	85,9
	High	34	9,6
	Total	355	100
Level of education	Primary School	27	7,6
	Middle School	16	4,5
	High School	35	9,9
	Undergraduated	219	61,7
	Graduated	58	16,3
	Total	355	100
Children	Yes	287	80,8
	No	68	19,2
	Total	355	100

When Table 2 is examined, it is seen that 157 (44.2%) of the married individuals in the study group were male and 198 (55.8%) were female. In addition, 27 (7.6%) between the ages of 18-25, 149 (42.0%) between the ages of 26 and 35, 99 (27.9%)

between the ages of 36-45, 80 (22.5%) between the ages of 46-55 are participants. Considering the socioeconomic levels of the individuals in the study group, 16 (4.5%) have low socioeconomic status, 305 (85.9%) and 34 (9.6%) high socioeconomic levels. Of the participants, 27 completed primary school (7.6%), 16 completed secondary school (4.5), 35 completed high school (9.9%), 219 are graduates (61.7%), and 58 are postgraduates (16,3). While 287 (80.8%) of the participants have children, 68 (19.2%) have no children.

Table 3. Descriptive data on Marriage Adjustment Scale and the Problematic Internet Use Scale

	N	Min	Max	$\bar{X}$	Ss
Agreement	355	4,00	46,00	34,6394	6,53842
Relationship style	355	2,00	12,00	8,8423	2,21268
MAS total	355	8,00	58,00	43,4817	8,06167
Internet conclusion	355	17,00	85,00	25,6366	12,10198
Social benefit	355	10,00	49,00	15,5803	7,07396
Overuse	355	6,00	29,00	15,7634	5,09628
PIUS total	355	33,00	152,00	56,9803	21,42368

Table 3 presents data on the Marriage Adjustment Scale and the Problematic Internet Use Scale and the sub-dimensions of these scales. According to the table, the marital adjustment scores of all participants vary between 8.00 and 58.00 points, and the problematic internet usage scores vary between 33.00 and 152.00 points. Considering the average scores, the participants generally have moderate marital adjustment. In addition, although there are individuals with problematic internet use, it is seen that the participants can use the internet in a healthy way in general.

Table 4. Findings on the relationship between the sub-dimension of Agreement and sociodemographic variables

	Agreement	N	$\bar{X}$	Sd	P	Significant Difference	P
Gender	Female	198	34,6717	6,40656	0,948		
	Male	157	34,5987	6,72144			
Age	18-25	27	38,0000	5,33494		18-25;36-45	0,004*
	26-35	149	35,6577	5,88490		26-35;36-45	0,022*
	36-45	99	33,2727	6,96613		46-55;18-25	0,006*
	46-55	80	33,3000	6,86654	0,001*	46-55;36-45	0,040*
	Total	355	34,6394	6,53842			
SEL	Low	16	31,5000	6,28225			
	Middle	305	34,6590	6,67343	0,030*	High-Low	0,027*
	High	34	35,9412	4,88623			
	Total	355	34,6394	6,53842			
Education level	Primary School (I)	27	33,3704	6,86770			
	Middle School (II)	16	34,6875	6,23665			
	High School (III)	35	34,0857	6,20897	0,672		
	Undergraduated (IV)	219	34,8858	6,54699			
	Graduated (V)	58	34,6207	6,75597			
	Total	355	34,6394	6,53842			
Children	Yes	287	34,3449	6,51916	0,035*		
	No	68	35,8824	6,52099			

*p<.05

According to the table above, it is observed that there was a statistically significant difference between the agreement and age, socioeconomic level and childbearing (p<0.05). 18-25 age group differs from 36-45 and 46-55 age groups; the 36-45 age group differs significantly from the 26-35 and 46-55 age groups (p<0.05). Accordingly, the agreement sub-dimension scores of the 18-25 age group are significantly higher than the 36-45 and 46-55 age groups. Considering the relationship between agreement and socioeconomic level, the agreement scores of individuals with high socioeconomic status are significantly higher than those with low socioeconomic status. The agreement scores of the couples who have children were found to be higher than the couples who did not have children.

Table 5. Findings on the relationship between the Relationship Style sub-dimension and sociodemographic variables

	Relationship Style	N	$\bar{X}$	Sd	P	Significant Difference	P
Gender	Female	198	8,6364	2,47405	0,377		
	Male	157	9,1019	1,80521			
Age	18-25	27	9,6667	1,98068			
	26-35	149	9,1007	2,03929		18-25;36-45	0,016*
	36-45	99	8,2525	2,47989	0,005*	26-35;36-45	0,015*
	46-55	80	8,8125	2,10541			
	Total	355	8,8423	2,21268			
SEL	Low	16	8,1250	2,06155			
	Middle	305	8,8459	2,22261	0,151		
	High	34	9,1471	2,17607			
	Total	355	8,8423	2,21268			
Education level	Primary School (I)	27	8,0370	2,71012			
	Middle School (II)	16	8,8125	2,25740			
	High School (III)	35	8,4857	2,46590	0,532		
	Undergraduated (IV)	219	9,0000	2,06544			
	Graduated(V)	58	8,8448	2,30028			
	Total	355	8,8423	2,21268			
Children	Yes	287	8,6899	2,21833	0,003*		
	No	68	9,4853	2,08400			

*p<.05

According to the table, it is seen that there is a statistically significant difference in the 'relationship style' sub-dimension according to age and having children (p<0.05). Accordingly, the relationship style sub-dimension scores in the 18-25 age group are significantly higher than the 36-45 age group. Similarly, the average score of the 26-45 age group in this sub-dimension is significantly higher than the average score of the 36-45 age group. In addition, the relationship style scores of the couples who have children were found to be higher than the couples who did not have children.

Table 6. Findings regarding the relationship between total marital adjustment scores and sociodemographic variables

	MA(Total)	N	$\bar{X}$	Sd	P	Significant Difference	P
Gender	Female	198	43,3081	8,24812	0,695		
	Male	157	43,7006	7,84094			
Age	18-25	27	47,6667	7,00000			
	26-35	149	44,7584	7,28071		18-25;36-45	0,002*
	36-45	99	41,5253	8,71117	0,004*	26-35;36-45	0,010*
	46-55	80	42,1125	8,11779		46-55;18-25	0,009*
	Total	355	43,4817	8,06167			
SEL	Low	16	39,6250	7,77925			
	Middle	305	43,5049	8,18460	0,042*	High-Low	0,037*
	High	34	45,0882	6,53368			
	Total	355	43,4817	8,06167			
Education level	Primary School (I)	27	41,4074	8,55866			
	Middle School (II)	16	43,5000	7,81452			
	High School (III)	35	42,5714	7,68989	0,436		
	Undergraduated (IV)	219	43,8858	8,05490			
	Graduated (V)	58	43,4655	8,21897			
	Total	355	43,4817	8,06167			
Children	Yes	287	43,0348	8,03351	0,013*		
	No	68	45,3676	7,96429			

*p<.05

When Table 5 is examined, there is a statistically significant difference between total marital adjustment scores and age, socioeconomic level and having children (*p<0.05). The 18-25 age group differs from all other groups in a statistically significant way (p<0.05). Accordingly, the total score of the marital adjustment scale is highest in the 18-25 age group and lowest in the 36-45 age group. Accordingly, the marital adjustment of the 26-35 age group is significantly higher than that of the 36-45 age group, and the marital adjustment of the 18-25 age group is significantly higher than the 36-45 and 46-55 age groups. It was determined that there was a statistically significant difference between the groups with high and low socioeconomic status in the total score of marital adjustment (*p<0.05). The total marital adjustment score of individuals with high socioeconomic status

is significantly higher than those with low socioeconomic status. According to the table, having children creates a statistically significant difference in marital adjustment scores (*p<0.05). Marital adjustment of couples with children is significantly higher than couples without children.

Table 7. Findings regarding the relationship between Negative Consequences of the Internet sub-dimension and sociodemographic variables

	Neg. Consequences	N	$\bar{X}$	Sd	P	Significant Difference	P
Gender	Female	198	24,4596	10,53907	0,249		
	Male	157	27,1210	13,71521			
Age	18-25	27	29,5185	16,94419	0,196		
	26-35	149	26,0805	11,32595			
	36-45	99	24,0505	10,71655			
	46-55	80	25,4625	13,05000			
	Total	355	25,6366	12,10198			
SEL	Low	16	30,3125	16,28790	0,373		
	Middle	305	25,6328	12,21987			
	High	34	23,4706	7,71160			
	Total	355	25,6366	12,10198			
Education level	Primary School (I)	27	20,0741	4,93750	0,019	I-IV	0,007*
	Middle School (II)	16	24,7500	7,88670			
	High School (III)	35	28,1714	16,31038			
	Undergraduated (IV)	219	25,5571	12,08950			
	Graduated (V)	58	27,2414	11,95652			
	Total	355	25,6366	12,10198			
Children	Yes	287	24,5749	11,36522	0,001*		
	No	68	30,1176	14,04420			

*p<.05

In the sub-dimension of negative consequences of the Internet, those with primary and higher education levels differ from each other in a statistically significant way (*p=0.007<0.05). Graduates have higher scores from the negative consequences of the Internet than primary school graduates. It is seen that the scores of those who have children in this sub-dimension are higher than the scores of those who do not have children. There is no significant difference in terms of other sociodemographic variables of the negative consequences of the Internet sub-dimension.

Table 8. Findings regarding the relationship between Social Benefit sub-dimension and sociodemographic variables

	Social Benefit	N	$\bar{X}$	Sd	P	Significant Difference	P
Gender	Female	198	14,9141	6,12706	0,290		
	Male	157	16,4204	8,05440			
Age	18-25	27	17,0000	8,10033	0,729		
	26-35	149	15,3893	6,66040			
	36-45	99	15,3737	6,94378			
	46-55	80	15,7125	7,67405			
	Total	355	15,5803	7,07396			
SEL	Low	16	18,2500	6,90411	0,005*	High-Middle	0,02*
	Middle	305	15,7967	7,30028		High-Low	0,09*
	High	34	12,3824	3,12385			
	Total	355	15,5803	7,07396			
Education level	Primary School (I)	27	20,0741	4,93750	0,106		
	Middle School (II)	16	24,7500	7,88670			
	High School (III)	35	28,1714	16,31038			
	Undergraduated (IV)	219	25,5571	12,08950			
	Graduated (V)	58	27,2414	11,95652			
	Total	355	25,6366	12,10198			
Children	Yes	287	24,5749	11,36522	0,050		
	No	68	30,1176	14,04420			

*p<.05

It is determined that there was a statistically significant difference between the social benefit sub-dimension and socioeconomic levels (*p<0.05). Individuals with low and middle socioeconomic status have significantly higher problematic Internet use within the scope of social benefit sub-dimension. The mean scores of individuals with high socioeconomic status in

the sub-dimension of 'social benefit' are lower than the mean scores of individuals with lower and middle socioeconomic status. In other words, individuals with low and middle socioeconomic status have significantly higher problematic Internet use within the scope of social benefit sub-dimension.

Table 9. Findings regarding the relationship between Overuse sub-dimension and sociodemographic variables

	Overuse	N	$\bar{x}$	Sd	P	Significant Difference	P
Gender	Female	198	15,6616	5,47923	0,696		
	Male	157	15,8917	4,58199			
Age	18-25	27	17,5926	5,58335			
	26-35	149	16,3490	5,21941			
	36-45	99	15,1717	5,16472	0,071		
	46-55	80	14,7875	4,33617			
	Total	355	15,7634	5,09628			
SEL	Low	16	15,6875	6,48813			
	Middle	305	15,9016	4,93412	0,158		
	High	34	14,5588	5,79023			
	Total	355	15,7634	5,09628			
Education level	Primary School (I)	27	12,1111	4,90944			
	Middle School (II)	16	17,1250	5,56028			
	High School (III)	35	15,5429	4,21721	0,009	I-IV	0,012*
	Undergraduated (IV)	219	15,9909	5,16249		I-V	0,006*
	Graduated (V)	58	16,3621	4,71168			
	Total	355	15,7634	5,09628			
Children	Yes	287	15,4146	4,99008	0,008*		
	No	68	17,2353	5,31154			

*p<.05

In the overuse sub-dimension, those whose education level is primary school-university (*p=0.012<0.05) and primary school-graduate (*p=0.006<0.05) differ from each other in a statistically significant way. Problematic Internet use scores of undergraduates and graduates are found to be significantly higher than primary school graduates. The excessive use scores of individuals who have children are found to be significantly higher than the scores of individuals who do not have children.

Table 10. Findings related to relationship between Problematic Internet Use Scale Total Scores and sociodemographic variables

	PIUS (Total)	N	$\bar{x}$	Sd	P	Significant Difference	P
Gender	Female	198	55,0354	19,22360	0,193		
	Male	157	59,4331	23,74849			
Age	18-25	27	64,1111	26,42163			
	26-35	149	57,8188	20,19669			
	36-45	99	54,5960	20,27964	0,202		
	46-55	80	55,9625	22,92776			
	Total	355	56,9803	21,42368			
SEL	Low	16	64,2500	25,23358			
	Middle	305	57,3311	21,74475	0,125		
	High	34	50,4118	14,39090			
	Total	355	56,9803	21,42368			
Education level	Primary School (I)	27	46,0741	13,47055			
	Middle School (II)	16	58,8750	15,76018		I-II	0,039*
	High School (III)	35	61,4286	26,73760		I-III	0,031*
	Undergraduated (IV)	219	56,7032	21,45592	0,004	I-IV	0,032*
	Graduated (V)	58	59,8966	20,89967		I-V	0,003*
	Total	355	56,9803	21,42368			
Children	Yes	287	55,2578	20,44393	0,001*		
	No	68	64,2500	23,97036			

*p<.05

When Table 9 is examined, it is understood that there is a significant difference in the problematic Internet use scale according to education level. This difference is according to education levels; primary school-secondary school (*p=0.039<0.05), primary school-high school (*p=0.031<0.05), primary school university (*p=0.032<0.05) and primary school-graduate (*p= 0.003<0.05). Considering the scores of the problematic internet use scale, high school has the highest score and primary school has the lowest score according to education level. Regarding having a child, the problematic internet use scores of individuals

are significantly higher in individuals who do not have children than in individuals who have children. Problematic internet use total scores do not differ significantly in terms of gender, age and socioeconomic level.

Table 11. Findings related to relationship between Problematic Internet Use Scale Total Scores and sociodemographic variables

Dimensions		Agreement	Relationship Style	MAS(t)
Consequences of Internet	X^2	-0,053	-0,094	-0,069
	p	0,320	0,077	0,197
Social Benefit	X^2	-0,124	-0,161	-0,145
	p	0,019*	0,002*	0,006*
Overuse	X^2	-0,043	0,001	-0,034
	p	0,422	0,982	0,519
PIUS (t)	X^2	-0,081	-0,106	-0,095
	p	0,127	0,046*	0,074

*$p<.05$

According to Table 11, the total scores and sub-dimensions of the scales of marital adjustment and problematic internet use contain statistically significant relationships with each other ($p<0.05$, $p<0.01$). While individuals' use of the internet for social benefit increases, their marital adjustment decreases significantly. Concordantly, while the harmony of individuals in the sub-dimensions of agreement and relationship style increases, their use of the Internet for social benefit decreases. In addition, while the harmony of couples in the relationship style sub-dimension increases, their problematic Internet use decreases in a statistically significant way.

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study, it is aimed to examine the problematic Internet use and marital adjustment of married individuals within the framework of various sociodemographic variables, and the results are discussed below.

In the research, problematic Internet use, excessive use, social benefit, negative consequences of the internetinternet were evaluated together with sub-dimensions, and marital adjustment was evaluated together with the sub-dimensions of agreement and relationship style.

According to the findings obtained from the research, no significant relationship was found between marital adjustment and problematic Internet use and the gender variable. However, men generally have higher adjustment scores than women. Although there are studies that have found that the gender variable affects marital adjustment and that men have higher adjustment scores than women (Kastro, 1998; Kumcagiz & Güner, 2017; Tüfekçi Hoşgör, 2013), there are also studies stating that gender does not affect it (Çelik and Tümkaya, 2012; Fışıloğlu and Lorenzetti, 1994; Şendil and Korkut, 2008; Tutarel-Kışlak and Çabukça, 2006). In general, it is seen that men ignore the problems experienced in marriage or prefer to remain in the background in expressing them. On the other hand, since women prefer psychological relaxation by explaining the problems experienced and are more sensitive in communication-related issues, in terms of gender, it can be thought that men's adjustment scores are reflected in the results as a higher adjustment score. In many studies examining the relationship between problematic Internet use and gender, there are findings that the problematic internet use of men is higher than that of women (Günüç, 2009; Berber-Çelik and Odacı, 2011; Tarı-Cömert and Ögel, 2012; Doğan, 2013; Özer, 2013; Ançel et al., 2015; Babacan-Gümüş et al., 2015; Büyükfiliz, 2016; Aydın, 2017; Kabaklı-Çimen, 2018; Candemir-Karaburç and Tunç, 2020). In Kitazawa et al.'s (2018) study with university students, problematic Internet use in women was significantly higher than in men. However, in parallel with the current research, there are also studies stating that there is no significant relationship between problematic Internet use and gender (Balcı and Gülnar, 2009; Ceyhan, 2010; Çetin-Gündüz, Ekşioğlu and Tarhan, 2017; Mutlu, 2018). It can be said that today with the increase in the education rate of the female population and awareness, the use of technology is increasing, and they are actively using many platforms. Accordingly, it can be said that problematic Internet use has become problematic for both men and women over time and that the problematic Internet use scores do not make a significant difference in terms of gender variables.

This study found significant relationships between marital adjustment and age, socioeconomic level, duration of the marriage, and whether or not to have children. It can be said that as age increases, marital adjustment decreases. Kumcagiz and Güner (2017) also found in their research that married couples between the ages of 18-35 have the highest adjustment score. While Yalçın (2014) states that the adjustment of women aged 41 and over is higher than that of the 21-30 age group, there are also studies showing that age does not affect marital adjustment (Tutarel-Kışlak and Çabukça, 2006; Kastro, 1998; Tutarel-Kışlak and Göztepe, 2012; Tüfekçi-Hoşgör, 2013). Considering the results of the current research, it can be said that the decrease in

marital adjustment with age can be attributed to some socioeconomic problems that come with marriage over time, financial difficulties, the problems experienced with the families of the couples, the responsibility of the children and so on. It can be said that there is a significant negative relationship between the socioeconomic level of the participants and marital adjustment. From this point of view, it can be said that individuals' struggle for life, stress and anxiety about income affect the harmony between spouses negatively. Similar results have been obtained in many studies (Kumcağız and Güner, 2017; Şendil and Korkut, 2008).

According to the research findings, marital adjustment decreases as the duration of marriage increases in married individuals between 0-20 years. When the duration of marriage exceeds 20 years, marital adjustment scores increase. In the first years of marriage, individuals need time to get to know each other and adapt, the responsibilities increase with having children, and there may be disagreements about child-rearing and similar issues. It can be said that as the number of time couples spends together, conflicts decrease and they become more harmonious. Although those with a marriage duration of 6-10 years achieved marital adjustment, none of the other levels achieved the marital adjustment score. In general, it can be said that couples who have been married for 6-10 years are the most compatible.

Similarly, Kublay and Oktan (2015) state in their study examining marital adjustment in terms of value preferences and subjective happiness that as the duration of marriage increases, the adjustment scores increase, while married couples between 6-15 years have the highest adjustment. On the other hand, Kumcağız and Güner (2017) found in their study that the adjustment scores of individuals who were married between 0-5 years were higher than the other groups. While it is stated that as the duration of marriage increases, there is a decrease in the behavior of showing love to each other (Şendil & Korkut, 2008), it is also among some research findings that there is no relationship between couples' adjustment and the duration of marriage (Tutarel Kışlak and Çabukça, 2006).

The marital adjustment of the couples who do not have children was higher than the couples who have children. Although studies are supporting this result (Kumcağız and Güner, 2017; Tutarel-Kışlak and Çabukça, 2006), there are studies in the literature that the marital adjustment of individuals who do not have children is significantly higher than individuals who have only one child (Tüfekçi-Hoşgör, 2013), and that whether having children is effective or not (Fışıloğlu and Lorenzetti, 1994). Considering the results of the current research, a critical situation such as raising a child can cause differences of opinion among the spouses, uneven sharing of responsibilities, the concentration of parental responsibility on one spouse or decrease in time spent by spouses due to time mostly spent for the child, problems experienced with the involvement of families in child-rearing processes can be said to be effective in obtaining the findings that having children reduces adjustment in married individuals.

A significant negative relationship was found between the social benefit sub-dimension of problematic internet use and socioeconomic level. Social benefit score decreases statistically significantly as income level increases. While the highest social benefit score is seen in low-income people, the lowest is seen in those with high income. Individuals with high socioeconomic status use the InternetInternet less than individuals with low and middle socioeconomic status to benefit society and meet their social needs. When we look at the literature, there is a finding that there is no relationship between internet use and socioeconomic level (Doğan, 2013; Mutlu, 2018), and there is also a finding that individuals with higher socioeconomic status have higher problematic Internet use (Büyükfiliz, 2016). Günç (2009) states that as the level of income increases, addiction also increases.

When the Problematic Internet Use and its sub-dimensions are examined according to education levels, there are statistically significant differences in the total scores of the problematic Internet use scale, the negative consequences of the InternetInternet and the excessive use sub-dimension according to education levels. Considering individuals' education levels, the highest score in the negative consequences of the Internet sub-dimension is high school graduates, the lowest scores are primary school graduates, the highest score in the excessive use sub-dimension is secondary, and the lowest scores are primary school graduates. The highest group of problematic internet use is graduates, and the lowest is primary school graduates. In general, it can be said that primary school graduates have healthier internet use than all other groups, and the graduates are the group with the highest rate of problematic internet use. However, these results do not support other studies in the literature. In the study examining social phobia and Internet addictions of married couples, Diba (2017) found that as the level of education increased, problematic Internet use decreased.

When the relationship between the duration of the marriage and problematic Internet use is examined, it can be said that there is a negative relationship. As the duration of marriage increases, problematic Internet use and excessive internet use decrease significantly. It can be thought that the decrease in Internet usage of individuals with age may also be effective in this situation. Problematic Internet use of individuals who do not have children is significantly higher than individuals who do not have children, with the dimensions of social benefit, negative consequences of the internetinternet, and excessive use. The

decrease can explain this situation when individuals who have children allocate to internet use due to some of their responsibilities regarding their children.

Considering the relationship between marital adjustment and problematic Internet use, it was concluded that there is a statistically significant and inverse relationship between problematic Internet use for social benefit and marital adjustment. As individuals' marital harmony increases, the rate of using the InternetInternet for social benefit decreases. Considering that harmonious couples spend time with each other in a fun way, have common interests and spend quality time with each other, it can be stated that they do not feel a social deficiency in parallel with the results of the research and the rate of using the InternetInternet for this purpose is low.

There is a statistically significant and inverse relationship between problematic Internet use and the relationship style sub-dimension of marital adjustment. The relationship style sub-dimension includes couples' problem-solving skills, time together, marital satisfaction and trust. It can be interpreted that couples who have achieved harmony on these issues use the InternetInternet more healthily. In contrast, those who cannot achieve harmony can choose to satisfy themselves through the InternetInternet due to problems such as not being able to spend quality time with their spouses, insecurity and poor problem-solving skills.

As a result, it is seen that the effect of problematic Internet use on marital adjustment in married individuals is significant. Individuals' use of the InternetInternet for social benefit, excessive use by not providing controlled use, and personal adverse effects due to this use affect their marital adjustment negatively in many ways.

Considering the researches, it is seen that the studies on problematic Internet use are primarily focused on high school and university/college students. Considering the research results, it was found that problematic Internet use has a significant effect on marital adjustment. Therefore, it is thought that this study, which examines the relationship between problematic Internet use and marital adjustment, will contribute to the literature. Accordingly, the research topic can be expanded within different variables on problematic Internet use in married individuals.

In line with the findings obtained as a result of the research, the strong relationship between the social benefit sub-dimension of problematic Internet use and marital adjustment was significant. In addition, as other sociodemographic variables were found to be related to marital adjustment and problematic internet use, significant relationships were observed in individuals of various ages, educational levels, socioeconomic levels, and couples with and without children. It is thought that researching by considering different variables related to the subject, understanding and revealing the relationship between marital adjustment and problematic internet use of individuals in a more comprehensive way, will contribute to the development of intervention programs in line with the findings.

While the scores of marital adjustment and sub-dimensions increase, the scores of the social benefit sub-dimension of problematic Internet use decrease. Studies show that the risk of addiction is higher in individuals who use the internetinternet for social purposes, and it is seen that the rate of Internet use for social purposes decreases in individuals with marital harmony. Therefore, studies to develop various preventive interventions to increase couples' cohesion will contribute to the literature and guide mental health professionals to develop strategies.

In this context, couple training and workshops can be organized for married couples on subjects such as achieving social satisfaction, spending quality time, spending time with each other, having a shared sense of fun and humor. In addition, it is thought that the use of the internet for social benefit can be prevented since group work on practical problem solving, conflict resolution and effective communication skills will improve individuals' social skills.

The reasons that push individuals to use the problematic InternetInternet are again a different research topic. The researchers' work on this subject will be a guide in terms of determining the situation for solving the problem. In line with the findings, individuals in the risk group regarding problematic Internet use can be identified, and preventive intervention programs can be developed and implemented.

Again in this context, it is essential to carry out small group work on preventing problematic internet use from a young age and to strengthen individuals psychologically. It is thought that individuals who have developed practical problem-solving skills will resort to problematic behaviors less about the relational difficulties they encounter. In addition, the practices to be organized to develop practical communication skills will also strengthen individuals and contribute to the prevention of possible interpersonal conflicts in the future as a preventive work by minimizing relational problems.

From the point of view of the children of individuals with problematic Internet use, it should not be overlooked that problematic internet use behavior can develop through solid social learning and that these children may also be problematic Internet users. Although group guidance studies such as Internet addiction and technology addiction are carried out in school

guidance services, it is thought that it would be beneficial to provide individual or group psychological counseling services for children with a family history of problematic internet use.

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We hereby declare that the study has not unethical issues and that research and publication ethics have been observed carefully.

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F.K.K. performed the analysis, writing and topic determination of the article. Y.B. verified the article's analysis and translated it into English.

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