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## **Examination of the Relationship between Life Satisfaction Level and Internet Addiction of the Students in Guidance and Psychological Counseling Department<sup>1</sup>**

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### **Abstract**

This study aims to examine the relationship between life satisfaction and Internet addiction of the students in guidance and psychological counseling departments. This descriptive research was carried out general screening model. The participants included 316 students (152 female, 164 male) at different class levels in psychological counseling and guidance departments. In the data collection process, Internet Addiction Scale and Satisfaction with Life Scale were utilized. The differences based on the variables were evaluated by using students t- test, ANOVA, LSD and Pearson Correlation Analysis. The study has determined that students' Internet addiction level is low and life satisfaction level is high. Upon evaluation of Internet addiction point as per gender, it has been found that points of men are higher than points of women and life satisfaction points of women are higher compared to men. While no significant difference has been determined between students' Internet addiction points as per class level, there is a significant difference between their life satisfaction points. Finally, a significant negative relation has been determined between students' Internet addiction levels and life satisfaction levels.

**Keywords:** Guidance and Psychological Counseling, Internet Addiction, Life Satisfaction, Gender

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## **Rehberlik ve Psikolojik Danışmanlık Öğrencilerinin İnternet Bağımlılığı ile Yaşam Doyumu Düzeyleri Arasındaki İlişinin İncelenmesi**

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### **Öz**

Bu çalışmada, rehberlik ve psikolojik danışmanlık öğrencilerinin internet bağımlılığı ile yaşam doyumu düzeyleri arasındaki ilişkinin incelenmesi amaçlanmıştır. Araştırma genel tarama modelinde yapılmış betimsel bir araştırmadır. Araştırmanın çalışma grubu rehberlik ve psikolojik danışmanlık anabilim dalının farklı sınıf düzeylerinde öğrenim gören 152'si kadın, 164'ü erkek olmak üzere toplam 316 öğrenciden oluşmaktadır. Araştırmada veri toplama aracı olarak, İnternet Bağımlılığı Ölçeği ve Yaşam Doyumu Ölçeği kullanılmıştır. Verilerin analizinde t-testi, ANOVA, Scheffe testi ve korelasyon tekniği kullanılmıştır. Çalışmada, öğrencilerin internet bağımlılık düzeyi düşük ve yaşam doyum düzeyinin ise yüksek olduğu saptanmıştır. Çalışmada, öğrencilerin internet bağımlılık düzeyi düşük ve yaşam doyum düzeyinin ise yüksek olduğu saptanmıştır. Cinsiyete göre internet bağımlılık puanı değerlendirildiğinde, erkeklerin kadınlara göre puanlarının daha yüksek olduğu, yaşam doyum puanları ise kadınların erkeklere göre daha yüksek olduğu bulunmuştur. Sınıf düzeyine göre öğrencilerin internet bağımlılık puanları arasında anlamlı fark saptanmazken, yaşam doyum puanları arasında anlamlı fark bulunmuştur. Son olarak, öğrencilerin internet bağımlılık düzeyleri ile yaşam doyum düzeyleri arasında ise negatif yönde anlamlı bir ilişki saptanmıştır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Rehberlik ve psikolojik danışmanlık, internet bağımlılığı, yaşam doyumu, cinsiyet



## **Introduction**

Technology appeared as a product of human being's efforts to understand himself and the nature and continues to develop at an unprecedented pace. Today, we have a communication infrastructure not possessed by the humanity in the past. Cell phones, satellite televisions, personal computers and Internet environment compatible with all these provide us with huge opportunities. It is estimated that developments in technology and Internet will continue at high momentum in future.

It may be told that a series of developments which appeared in 40's are significant in terms of history of Internet. The first study enabling communication between computers which revealed the Internet was carried out by George Stibitz with IBM Model 1 in year 1940. And even an article in which the idea of web on computer was firstly mentioned was published by Vanneur Bush in year 1945 (Winston, 1998). On the other hand, concrete steps taken in relation with development of Internet base as late as on 60's and the period from establishment of the system called ARPANET on these dates to 90's provides very important forecasts today in understanding relationship between communication, technology and society (Castells, 2001). Internet bases on the computer network (ARPANET) established in year 1969 by United States of America Advanced Research Projects Agency (ARPA). Electronic mail was adapted to ARPANET in year 1972. The expression World Wide Web (www) was suggested for the first time in year 1991 by Tim Barnes Lee (Çakır et al., 2011). Appearance of WWW resulted in proliferation of internet. First experiments in Turkey was initiated in year 1990 by METU and TUBITAK and first internet connection was established in year 1992 (Şahin, Aydın and Balay, 2016; Taş ve Kestellioğlu, 2011). According to data of TUIK (2015), Internet usage rate in Turkey has attained 55,9% as of year 2015. The rate for men is 65,8% while it is 46,1% for women. Frequency of computer and Internet usage is the highest at the age group 16-24 which is 77,0% and the rate for men is 85,1% while it is 68,9% for women.

Proliferation of Internet has brought many issues with it. Internet addiction may be specified among those negative effects. Some individuals limit their Internet usage needs by time and the others don't apply such limitation and it is observed that they encounter problems in their business and social life due to excessive usage (Şahin, 2014). Internet addiction appears as physical, environmental and psychological problems. While excessive usage of muscle strength, bad posture, long time spent in front of computer without break may be counted as the physical dimension, noise, room temperature, humidity, illumination and properties of devices available in the environment are among the environmental factors. Sense of excessive work load, stress, negative work environment relations may be emphasized as the psychological risk factors (İnandı and Akyol, 2001).

Generally considering the addiction, although the first concepts coming to mind are alcohol, gambling and drug, there is an increase especially in addiction to technological devices among addiction types in 21st century (Doruk, 2007). The concept "Internet addiction" being one of those technological devices which became widespread today and whose unconscious usage results in dangerous consequences with that proliferation has become a field which should be paid attention to.

The Internet addiction concept was firstly used in year 1995 by Goldberg and then, by Young. Recently, Internet addiction started to be described with various names such as "net addiction", "Internet dependency", "Internet addiction disorder", "pathological Internet



usage”, “problematical internet usage” and “cyber disorder” (Young, 1996; Greenfield, 1999; Eichenberg and Ott, 1999; Bayraktar, 2002; Shapira et al., 2003; Bölükbaş, 2003; Işık, 2007; Tutgun, 2009; Şahin and Korkmaz, 2011; Jiang, 2014). Internet addiction was described by Goldberg (1995) as pathological compulsive disorder by using alcohol addiction diagnosis criteria; as impulse control disorder by Young (1996) by using pathological gambling criteria; as sub-dimension of behavioral addiction as a different type of technology addiction by Griffiths (1998). Young (1998) who described Internet addiction for the first time and set forth the first diagnosis criteria indicated that the closest disorder to Internet addiction which doesn't involve any substance abuse is the “pathological gambling” specified under the title of impulse control disorders in DSM IV (Hahn and Jerusalem, 2001; Arısoy, 2009). Notwithstanding that Internet addiction hasn't had any standard definition yet, Şahin and Korkmaz (2011) described Internet addiction as a concept which means that an individual uses Internet excessively and encounters various problems in individual, social and occupational terms.

In studies implemented at abroad, it is seen that connection of Internet addiction with psychological problems such as insomnia and depression (Cheung and Wong, 2011), psychological symptoms (Yen et al., 2008), social skills (Caplan, 2005), attention deficit (Yoo et al., 2004), loneliness (Morahan- Martin and Schumacher, 2003) . Studies implemented in Turkey generally aim to describe Internet usage by handling it with various concepts such as tendency to violence (Babacan Gümüş et al., 2015), depression (Şahin, 2014), self-sufficiency (Çetinkaya, 2013), shiness (Ayas, 2012), anger (Ata et al., 2011), psychiatric symptoms (Kelleci and İnal, 2010), self-respect (Turnalar-Kurtan, 2008), adolescent psychiatry (Ceyhan, 2008), social support and peer pressure (Esen, 2007), loneliness (Ayaroğlu, 2002) and social relations (Baran and Kuloğlu, 2001). As it may be seen in studies carried out in educational and social fields, generally negative effects of Internet are emphasized.

Awareness should be raised on issues which may be encountered by individuals being foundation of social structure at physical, psychological and social dimensions as well as especially, well-being and satisfaction sources of individuals should be assessed (Doğan, 2003). World Health Organization described the health as “a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity” (Ünal and Şahin, 2013). Witmer and Sweeney (1992) describe the well-being as “a state of being well and a life style tend to optimal health at which the body, mind and soul unite for fully functional living of an individual in a social and natural environment”.

The concept of life satisfaction suggested by Neugarten for the first time in year 1961 and being a prerequisite to ensure well-being is described as the condition or result obtained after comparing expectations of a human being with what the one possesses (Doğan, 2006). Life satisfaction being a multidimensional concept doesn't represent only the satisfaction in a single field but the satisfaction in all fields of life. Factors affecting individual's life satisfaction are being happy about daily life, finding life meaningful, adaptability in achieving goals, positive individual identity, feeling himself fine physically, economic security and social relations (Ünal and Şahin, 2013).

It may be specified based on the aforementioned assessments that internet may affect life satisfaction adversely. Fundamental problem of this study consists of whether especially, psychological counselor candidates gain awareness or not on negative effects of Internet as a matter of their occupational formation and how their life satisfaction levels are influenced of that condition.



### **Objective of the Study**

General objective of this study is to examine the relationship between Internet addiction and life satisfaction levels of students studying in guidance and psychological counseling as per gender and class level. In direction with general objective of the study, answers have been sought for following questions:

1. How are students' Internet addiction and life satisfaction levels?
2. Do students' Internet addiction and life satisfaction levels differ as per gender and class level?
3. Is there a significant relationship between students' Internet addiction and life satisfaction levels?

### **Materials and Method**

#### **Study Model**

This is a descriptive study in which a survey model was used. As it is known, survey models aim to indicate an existing situation as they are (Karasar, 2000). In this study aims to examine the relationship between life satisfaction and Internet addiction of the students in psychological counseling and guidance departments.

#### **Study Group**

The participants included 336 students (152 female, 164 male) at different class levels in Ahi Evran University Faculty of Education psychological counseling and guidance departments. Distributions of participants as per their class levels have been examined. In this context, 23,2% of students (77persons) are at first class, 27,7% (92 persons) at second class, 24,1% (80 persons) at third class and 25,0% (83 persons) at fourth class.

#### **Data Collection**

Data of this study have been collected by “Demographical Information Form”, “Internet Addiction Scale” and “Satisfaction with Life Scale” psychometric features of measuring tools used in the study have been specified herein below.

*Demographical Information Form:* Information on participants in relation with their demographical characteristics such as class level, gender, they study has been obtained by personal information form.

*Satisfaction with Life Scale-SWL:* Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWL) developed by Diener et al.(1985) is the measuring tool used for measurement of cognitive dimension of subjective well-being. It is a measurement tool consisting of five items in total of seven point likert type. As long as the point level obtained from the scale increases, it is assumed that the individual has a high life satisfaction. For adaptation of the scale to our language, it is seen in the examination carried out by Köker (1991) that correlation coefficients of scale items with total point vary between .73 and .90 and Cronbach- Alpha reliability coefficient related to the scale is found .76. Test- retest reliability coefficient applied at three weeks interval has been determined as .85.

*Internet Addiction Scale:* The scale designed by Hahn and Jerusalem (2001) to determine internet addiction levels of the individuals and adapted into Turkish by Şahin and Korkmaz



(2011) was used. The original title of the scale is “Skala zur Erfassung der Internetsucht”. The scale contains 19 items and 3 factors. The first factor is “Loss of Control”; the second factor is “Tolerance Development” and the third factor is “Negative Consequences for Social Relationships”. In order to test structural validity of the scale, Kaiser-Meyer-Oklin (KMO) and Bartlett test analyses were firstly performed. It was indicated that KMO= 0,919; Bartlett test value was  $\chi^2= 6087,383$ ;  $sd=171$  ( $p=0,000$ ). It was found that the items within the scale concentrated on three factors and explained 68.095% of total variance. Confirmatory factor analyses showed that the model had an acceptable adaptation. To calculate discriminative power of items, the correlations between the scores obtained from each item and the scores obtained from the factors were calculated and it was found that each item had a significant and positive relationship with factor score. Internal consistency analyses were conducted to calculate internal consistency of the scale. Analyses showed that internal consistency coefficients of the factors varied between 0.887 and 0.926 and that internal consistency coefficient for the general of the scale was 0.858. In that study, it was also indicated that Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient was .890.

### Data analysis

In order to get answers of the questions mentioned in the study aims section, arithmetic mean, standard deviation, independent sampling t test, ANOVA and Scheffe tests and r analysis were performed. For significant test, level of  $p<.05$  is accepted.

### Findings

In this section, findings obtained in relation with results of analysis carried out in order to determine whether Internet addiction and life satisfaction levels of students attending the research vary or not as per independent variables have been presented and assessed in tables.

#### Students' Internet addiction and life satisfaction levels

Findings related to students' Internet addiction and life satisfaction levels have been specified in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Students' Internet addiction and life satisfaction levels

Variable	N	Minimum	Maksimum	Mean	Std. Dev.	Level	
		Puan	Puan				
Internet addiction	Loss of Control	332	7,00	32,00	15,89	4,88	low
	ToleranceDevelopment	332	3,00	15,00	7,54	2,98	low
	Negative Consequences for Social Relationships	332	9,00	40,00	15,56	5,80	low
Internet addiction (Total)		332	19,00	85,00	38,99	11,92	low
Life satisfaction		332	7,00	34,00	24,03	5,43	high

Table 1 shows that students' Internet addiction level is low and life satisfaction level is high.



**Adolescents' Internet addiction and life satisfaction levels as per class level and gender**

Regarding scales used in the study, average, standard deviation and test values have been examined. Points obtained from the scales by participants basing on result of the examination have been shown in Table 1.

**Table 2.** Statistics related to scale point averages of students as per class level and gender

Variable	Statistics	Internet addiction				Life satisfaction				
		N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Test value *p	Scheffe	Mean	Std. Dev.	Test value *p	Scheffe
Class	1	77	38,02	12,80			24,38	4,97		
	2	92	40,02	11,88	F=-,41		23,82	5,39	F=-4,10	3-4
	3	80	38,71	10,87	p>.05		22,51	5,72	p<.01*	
	4	83	39,03	12,22			25,39	5,28		
Gender	Female	204	37,80	11,60	t=-2,30		24,86	5,28	t=-3,57	
	Male	128	40,89	12,24	p<.05*		22,71	5,42	p<.01*	

Data in Table 2 show that students' Internet addiction and life satisfaction points as per their class levels are close to each other. According to the result of analysis carried out to determine whether the difference observed is significant or not, it has been stated that difference between students' class level and Internet addiction points is not significant ( $F(3-328)=-,41$ ;  $P>.05$ ); difference between life satisfaction points is significant ( $F(3-328)=-4,10$ ;  $P<.01$ ). It is seen that the difference between the groups according to Scheffe test appears between 3rd and 4th class point averages.

Considering gender, it is seen that male students' Internet addiction point ( $40,89\pm 12,24$ ) is higher than female students' Internet addiction point ( $37,80\pm 11,60$ ). As the result of statistical analysis carried out, it has been determined that difference between Internet addiction points of male students and female students is significant ( $t(331)=2,30$ ;  $P<.05$ ). It is seen that male students' life satisfaction point ( $22,71\pm 5,42$ ) is lower than female students' life satisfaction point ( $24,86\pm 5,28$ ). As the result of statistical analysis carried out, it has been determined that difference between life satisfaction points of male students and female students is significant ( $t(331)=3,57$ ;  $P<.01$ ).

**Relationship between students' Internet addiction and life satisfaction levels**

Relationship between students' Internet addiction and life satisfaction points was calculated as per Pearson correlation technique and results have been presented in Table 3.

**Table 3.** Correlation between students' Internet addiction and life satisfaction levels

	Internet addiction	Life satisfaction
Internet addiction	1,0	-,168*
Life satisfaction		1,0

$N=332$ , \* $p<0.01$



As seen in Table 3, a significant negative correlation has been found between students' Internet addiction levels and life satisfaction point averages ( $r=-,168$ ,  $p<.01$ ). Existence of a significant negative correlation between scale points means that while point level of a dimension increases, point of the other dimension decreases.

## **Discussion and Conclusion**

Consequently, this study aims to examine the relationship between Internet addiction and life satisfaction levels of guidance and psychological counseling students as per class and gender. The study has determined that students' Internet addiction level is low and life satisfaction level is high. Upon evaluation of Internet addiction point as per gender, it has been found that points of men are higher than points of women and life satisfaction points of women are higher compared to men. While no significant difference has been determined between students' Internet addiction points as per class level, there is a significant difference between their life satisfaction points. Finally, a significant negative relation has been determined between students' Internet addiction levels and life satisfaction levels.

The study has determined that students' Internet addiction level is low and life satisfaction level is high. According to researches carried out in various communities on Internet addiction, it is possible to come across with various researches specifying that number of Internet addicted individuals is quite low (Şahin and Ercan, 2011; Saville et al., 2010; Ceyhan, Ceyhan and Gürçan, 2007; Özcan and Buzlu, 2005). In similar studies implemented, it has been observed that majority of individuals has a very low Internet addiction (Şahin, Aydın and Balay, 2016; Niesing, 2001; Hahn and Jerusalem, 2001). It is seen that findings of the study match up with the literature.

It has been determined in the study that students' life satisfaction levels are high. It is an expected condition that students who are enrolled to the department they wish and has no employment issues have higher life satisfaction. This finding is consistent with finding of the study showing similarity (Gündoğar et al., 2007). It has been observed that life satisfaction of university students who stated that they selected their department to practice the profession they wish is higher than students who chose their department to not remain uncovered.

Upon evaluation of Internet addiction point as per gender, it has been found that points of men are higher compared to women. This finding may be construed as a risk factor for male gender in terms of Internet addiction. Majority of studies carried out have reached the conclusion that computer and Internet usage is higher for men at all age groups (TÜİK, 2015; Morahan-Martin ve Schumacher, 2000; Chou, Condrón and Belland, 2005 ). In the literature, it has been determined that addiction levels of male students are higher than addiction levels of female students (Üneri and Tanıdır, 2011; Yılmaz, 2010; Durak, Batıgün and Hasta, 2010; Jang, Hwang and Choi, 2008; Ceyhan and Ceyhan, 2007). In another study carried out by Hahn and Jerusalem (2001), it has been revealed that men use Internet more than women, however, women's Internet usage increases by years. Şahin (2011b) has determined in his study examining Internet addiction levels of individuals at various age groups that men's Internet addiction levels are higher compared to women. According to research of TUIK (2015), it has been noted that women's Internet usage rate remains behind men at all age groups in Turkey. However, there are also studies showing that no difference is available between gender and Internet addiction (Kim et al., 2006).



Upon evaluation of students' life satisfaction points as per gender, the study has found that women's points are higher than men's points. This finding (Kubilay Özel, 2015; Çetinkaya, 2013; Alaçam, 2012; Aslan, 2011; Üçkardeş, 2010; Esen, 2010; Günüç, 2009; Cenkseven and Akbaş, 2007; Tuzgöl Dost, 2007; Keser, 2005; Özdevioğlu, 2003; Bayraktar, 2001) is in parallel with findings of the study. The study carried out by Karimi (2009) has stated that life satisfaction of women is lower. Majority of studies carried out indicates that there is no relationship between life satisfaction and gender (Hampton and Marshall, 2000; Hintikka, 2001; Katja et al., 2002).

No significant difference has been found between points of students at both scale type as per class level. It is seen that Internet addiction level doesn't vary too much among age groups of university students (Çavuş and Göktaş, 2006). There are also some studies coming to the conclusion that there is no significant difference between Internet addiction and age (Üçkardeş, 2010; Alaçam, 2012). It is seen that these findings match up with findings of the study. Absence of a significant difference between life satisfaction points as per class level may be attributed to similar life styles of university students.

Study has revealed that there is a significant negative relationship between Internet addiction and life satisfaction points. This finding may be construed as that students' life satisfaction levels decrease while Internet addiction levels increase and that addiction levels decrease while life satisfaction levels increase. Life satisfaction levels of students who are able to look to the future optimistically are higher than those who believe that some of their expectations will come true in future (Tuzgöl Dost, 2007). Life satisfaction of university students increases if their level of positive thinking about future increases.

An important restriction of this study is that the research group consists of guidance and psychological counseling students studying in a state university. Therefore, obtained results may be generalized to groups having similar characteristics. Larger researches are needed to generalize. An important characteristic of this study is that it was carried out on guidance and psychological counseling students studying in the Faculty of Education.

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