Türk Ergenlerin İnternet Bağımlılığı ve Algılanan Sosyal Destek Düzeyleri Arasındaki İlişki

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ÖZET

Bu çalışmanın amacı Türk ergenlerinin internet bağımlılığı ve algılanan sosyal destek arasındaki ilişkinin cinsiyet, sınıf düzeyi, akademik başarı ve ailenin gelir düzeyi değişkenleri açısından incelenmesidir. Araştırma nicel araştırma yöntemleri arasından tarama desenine göre yürütülmüştür. Araştırmanın evrenini Türkiye'nin illerinden biri olan Kayseri'deki devlet liseleri oluştururken örneklemini çeşitli liselerde öğrenim gören 318'i kız, 413'ü erkek olmak üzere toplam 731 öğrenci oluşturmaktadır. Verilerin toplanmasında Kişisel Bilgi Formu, Bağımlılık Profil İndeksi-İnternet Formu ve Algılanan Sosyal Destek Düzeyi Ölçeği-R'den yararlanılmıştır. Verilerin analiz edilmesi için betimleyici istatistik, Pearson korelasyon analizi, bağımsız örneklemler için *t* testi ve tek yönlü varyans analizi uygulanmıştır. Sonuçlar, internet bağımlılığı ve algılanan sosyal destek arasında negatif bir korelasyon olduğunu göstermektedir. Ayrıca katılımcıların cinsiyet, sınıf düzeyi ve akademik başarıya göre algılanan sosyal desteğin anlamlı bir fark gösterdiği; akademik başarıya göre internet bağımlılığın anlamlı fark gösterdiği bulunmuştur. Sonuç olarak alan yazındaki araştırmalarla benzer bulgulara ulaşılmasına ek olarak internet bağımlılığının cinsiyete göre fark göstermemesinin sebepleri tartışılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: İnternet bağımlılığı, algılanan sosyal destek, lise öğrencileri, ergenler.

The Relationship Between Turkish Adolescents' Internet Addiction and Their Perceived Social Support Levels

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to the relationship between internet addiction and perceived social support of Turkish adolescents in terms of gender, grade level, type of high school, academic achievement, and family income level. The research was designed with survey research as a quantitative method. The research population is the state high schools in Kayseri, one of Turkey's provinces. The sample consists of 731 students, 318 girls and 413 boys, studying at various high schools. Personal Information Form, Addiction Profile Index-Internet Form, and Perceived Social Support Level Scale-R were used for data collection. Descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation analysis, independent samples t-test, and one-way analysis of variance were used to analyze the data. The results showed that a negative relationship was found between internet addiction and perceived social support. In addition, it was observed that the perceived social support significantly differentiated according to the variables of gender, grade level, and academic achievement of the participants; It is seen that internet addiction differs significantly only according to the academic achievement variable. As a result, in addition to reaching similar findings with the research in the literature, the reasons why internet addiction does not differ according to gender are discussed.
Keywords: Internet addiction, perceived social support, high school students, adolescents.

INTRODUCTION

The widespread use of the internet today has started to bring the most distant countries of the world closer. Today, we can learn about any event in the world within minutes. Therefore, the internet has facilitated communications and many people's works. However, the internet has disadvantages. Its long-term use can lead to internet addiction (Young, 1996). Young (2004) defines internet addiction (IA) as using the internet for a long time, decreasing the importance of the time spent without the internet, experiencing withdrawal symptoms, and negatively affecting the individual's life. Some researchers name internet addiction as problematic internet use (Shapira et al., 2003). Like other addictions, internet addiction / problematic internet use is a problem that reduces the person's quality of life. The fact that the internet has become a part of human life has caused people to spend more time on the internet. However, one of the factors' determining IA is not how many hours the internet is used, but how time is spent during the time, it is used (Şahin, Aydın, & Balay, 2016).

When studies conducted with adolescents are examined, it is stated that internet access at home, gender, and family income are predictors of IA (Ak, Koruklu, & Yılmaz, 2013). Another study states that these predictors are gender, academic success, loneliness, and perceived social support from the family (Esen & Siyez, 2011). Studies on the IA levels of high school students show that male students have higher internet addiction scores compared to female students (Ayas, 2012; Derin & Bilge, 2016; Durak-Batıgün & Kılıç, 2011; Eryılmaz & Çukurluöz, 2018; Esen & Gündoğdu, 2010; Gökçearslan and Günbatar, 2012; Kılıç, Avcı, and Uzunçakmak, 2016; Siyez, 2014; Yılmaz, Şahin, Haseski & Erol, 2014; Zorbaz & Tuzgöl-Dost, 2014). However, recent studies reveal that the mean of IA between male and female students does not significantly differ (Anlayışlı & Bulut-Serin, 2019; Hekim et al., 2019; Moral & Kumcak, 2019; Tekin, 2020). Therefore, the results of studies on the role of gender in IA differ. Studies on IA levels of high school students according to their grade levels show that there is no significant difference (Eryılmaz & Çukurluöz, 2018; Öner, 2015; Taş, 2018). Considering the students' ease of internet access, it can be thought that it may not have a significant effect. However, preparing for the university entrance exams of 12 students in Turkey may affect the students' level of dependence on the internet. Therefore, to clarify this issue, the grade level variable is considered. Academic success can also have an impact on IA. Studies show that students with low academic achievement have higher IA levels (Anlayışlı & Serin, 2019; Eldeleklioğlu & Vural, 2013; Esen & Siyez, 2011; Kılıç, Avcı & Uzunçakmak, 2016; Yavuz, 2018). Finally, family income level could affect adolescents' IA levels. A study states that individuals with high socioeconomic status have high levels of IA (Kayri & Günüç, 2016).

Perceived social support, which is the other variable of the study, refers to the social and psychological support people get from their environment (Yıldırım, 1997). Perceived social support (PSS) consists of family, friends, and teacher sub-dimensions and describes the person's environment (Yıldırım, 2004). When studies on PSS are examined; It is seen that PSS predicts internet addiction (Esen & Siyez, 2011), academic achievement (Kapıkıran & Özgüngör, 2009; Yıldırım, 2000; Yıldırım, 2006; Yıldırım & Ergene, 2003) and gender (Yıldırım, 2006).

Studies on the difference in PSS by gender show that female students' levels are significantly higher (Karataş, 2012; Mahon, Yarcheski, & Yarcheski, 1994; Rueger, Malecki, & Demaray, 2008). It has been determined that the PSS scores differ by grade level (Aliyev & Tunç, 2017; Karataş, 2012). It is observed that students' PSS scores, especially those who have just started secondary education, are higher. Finally, it was observed that the PSS did not differ in terms of family income (Aliyev & Tunç, 2017).

There is a negative relationship between IA and PSS (Barut, 2019; Gunuc & Dogan, 2013; Karaer & Akdemir, 2019; Prievara, Piko, & Luszczynska, 2019; Wu et al., 2016). In other words, as IA increases, PSS decreases. However, there are also opinions stating that IA increases PSS (Shaw & Gant, 2002). Therefore, this study aimed to clarify the relationship between IA and PSS.

In this study, the relationship between IA and PSS levels of adolescents and the status of these variables by gender, grade level, academic achievement, and family income were examined. The research problems created in this direction are as follows:

1.   Is there a significant relationship between the adolescents' IA and PSS levels?

2.   Do the adolescents' IA and PSS levels differ according to

•   gender,

•   grade level,

•   academic achievement,

•   family income level?

METHODOLOGY

Research Model

This research is designed according to the quantitative research method. A cross-sectional survey model was used among quantitative research methods.

Study Group

Participants. The study group of the research was formed by selecting 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th-grade students from seven high schools affiliated to the Ministry of National Education in Kayseri province in the 2019-2020 academic year. A two-stage random sampling method, one of the random sampling types, was used to determine the study group. (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2012). Therefore, the population of the research is high school students in Kayseri. To creating the sample, firstly the schools were divided into clusters (Science High Schools, Anatolian High Schools, Vocational High Schools, Anatolian Imam Hatip High Schools, Social Sciences High Schools) and then high schools were randomly selected from these clusters. A total of 838 students from the mentioned high schools participated in the study. It was observed that 107 participants among participants did not fill in the items in the measurement tool and the data of these people were not evaluated. Therefore, the participants of the research are 318 girls and 413 boys; It consists of a total of 731 high school students, 194 from 9th grade, 195 to 10th grade, 186 from 11th grade, and 156 from 12th grade.

Data Collection Tools

Personal information form. With this form prepared by the researcher, the demographic information of the participants (gender, school type, grade level, academic success average, family income level, internet access status) were determined.

Addiction Profile Index-Internet Form (APIINT). The Addiction Profile Index-Internet Form (APIINT) developed by Ögel, Karadağ, Satgan, and Koç (2015), is aimed to measure the IA. There is a total of 18 items in the APIINT. The first item of the scale is a 6-point Likert-type scale as "Never" and "6 hours a day or more", and the remaining items are a 5-point Likert-type scale graded as "Never" and "Almost always". The scale consists of 5 dimensions: "Internet usage frequency", "Diagnosis", "Effects on life", "Craving" and "Motivation". According to the results of the exploratory factor analysis, 4 dimensions graded as a 5-point Likert, except for the first item (it also refers to the "Internet usage frequency" dimension), constitute 57.4% of the total variance. The Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient for the whole scale was found to be .88 and the Cronbach alpha coefficients of the sub-dimensions were between .64 and .77. Item-total score correlation coefficients were determined between .44 and .68. The calculated Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient of the scale for this study is .88.

Perceived Social Support Level Scale-R (PSSS-R). Perceived Social Support Scale-Revision developed by Yıldırım (2004) consists of 3 sub-dimensions and 50 items: "Family support", "Friend support" and "Teacher support". This scale is a 3-point Likert type scale with "Not suitable for me", "Partially suitable" and "Suitable for me". High scores from the scale indicate that perceived social support is also high. The Cronbach alpha coefficient for the whole scale was found to be .93. The calculated Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient of the scale for this study is .95.

Data collection

Data were collected from randomly selected schools following permission from the Ministry of National Education Provincial Directorate. In collecting the data, the researchers entered the classes where the

students were studying and informed the students about the study. After reminding the students that this study was voluntary, information was given about the purpose of the research. After obtaining approval for their participation in the study, the application was started, and information was given on how they would respond to the measurement tools. The application took about 15 minutes.

Data analysis

The analysis of the data was made using the SPSS 25.0 package program by the order of the sub-dimensions. Normality distributions were tested before analyzing the sub-problems of the study. When the kurtosis, skewness values, and sample size were evaluated, parametric analysis was found appropriate. Independent samples t-test, one-way analysis of variance, and Pearson correlation analysis were used to analyze the data. The level of significance for all analyzes in the study was accepted as .05.

FINDINGS

The findings of the study are given under the headings of sub-problems. First, the findings of the relationship between "Perceived Social Support" and "Internet Addiction" and the differences of both dependent variables according to gender, grade level, academic achievement, and family income were examined.

Findings of the relationship between PSS and IA levels.

Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between the participants' PSS and IA levels. The correlation analysis results are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. *Correlation analysis results regarding IA and PSS levels*

Variables	Perceived Social Support	Internet addiction
Perceived Social Support	1	-,223*
Internet Addiction	-,223*	1

* p<.05

When Table 1 is examined, a low level of negative correlation was observed between PSS and IA levels (r = -, 223; p <.05). In other words, as the PSS increases, the IA score decreases.

Findings regarding PSS and IA levels by gender.

Independent samples *t*-test was conducted to examine the difference between the PSS and IA levels of the adolescents in terms of gender. The results of the *t*-test analysis made regarding the gender factor are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. *t-test results regarding PSS and IA levels by gender*

	Gender	n	x̄	S	*t*	*p*
Internet Addiction	Female	318	2,06	,678	,869	,385
	Male	413	2,02	,652		
Perceived Social Support	Female	318	124,24	17,004	2,615*	,009
	Male	413	120,83	17,858		

* p<.05

When Table 2 is examined; There is no significant difference between adolescents' gender and IA levels [t (729) =, 869, p> .05]. However, there is a significant difference between PSS levels and their gender [t (729) = 2,615, p <.05].

Findings regarding PSS and IA levels by grade level.

One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to examine the difference between the PSS and IA levels of the participants in terms of the grade level. The results of the analysis made regarding the factor of the grade level are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. *One-way analysis of variance results related to the differentiation of PSS and IA level by grade level variable*

	Grade Level	n	x̄	S		sd	F	p	Difference
Social Perceived Support	9th grade (1)	194	126,36	15,77					2-4
	10th grade (2)	195	120,38	17,42	Between Groups	3			1
	11th grade (3)	186	122,96	18,38			6,373*	,000	
	12th grade (4)	156	118,92	17,94	Within Group	727			1
	Total	731	122,31	17,56		730			
Internet addiction	9th grade (1)	194	1,98	,56					
	10th grade (2)	195	2,07	,69	Between Groups	3			
	11th grade (3)	186	2,04	,69			,564	,639	
	12th grade (4)	156	2,05	,69	Within Group	727			
	Total	731	2,03	,66		730			

*p<.05

When Table 3 is examined, the highest average score of the adolescents' PSS levels belongs to 9th-grade students with 126.36, followed by 11th-grade students with an average of 122.96, 10th-grade students with an average of 120.38, 12th-grade students with an average of 118.92. In terms of IA, it is seen that 10th-grade students have the highest mean score with an average of 2.07, followed respectively by 12th-grade students with an average of 2.05, and 11th-grade students with an average of 2.04, 9th-grade students with an average of 1.98.

The F value calculated on the average IA level [F (3,727) =, 564; p> .05] shows that there is no significant difference between the groups. In addition, the F value calculated on the averages of the PSS level [F (3,727) = 6,373; p <.05] shows that there is a significant difference between the 9th, 10th, and 12th grades. As a result of the Tukey test conducted to determine the source of the difference between the groups' mean scores, a significant difference was observed between the PSS levels of the 9th and 10th-grade students and the PSS levels of the 9th and 12th-grade students. According to this finding, the PSS levels of 9th-grade students are significantly higher than the PSS levels of 10th and 12th-grade students.

Findings regarding PSS and IA levels according to academic achievement level.

One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to examine the difference between the PSS and IA levels of the participants in terms of academic achievement. Analysis results regarding the academic achievement average factor are shown in Table 4.

Table 4. *One-way analysis of variance results regarding the differentiation of PSS and IA levels according to the academic achievement level*

	Academic Achievement Level	n	x̄	S		sd	F	p	Difference
Perceived Social Support	0-44 (1)	12	109,58	16,76	Between Groups	4	7,759*	,000	5
	45-54 (2)	37	120,59	16,64					
	55-69 (3)	140	116,52	19,05					4-5
	70-84 (4)	217	123,01	17,54	Within Group	726			3
	85-100 (5)	325	125,01	16,28					1-3
	Total	731	122,31	17,56		730			
Internet addiction	0-44	12	2,32	,69	Between Groups	4	2,996*	,018	
	45-54	37	2,19	,76					
	55-69	140	2,08	,67					
	70-84	217	2,09	,63	Within Group	726			
	85-100	325	1,95	,65		730			

*p<.05

When Table 4 is examined; It is observed that the highest mean score in the PSS levels of the adolescents belongs to the students in the 85-100 point range with an average of 125.01, followed respectively by students in the 70-84 point range with an average of 123.01, the students in the 45-54 point range with an average of 120.59, the students in the 55-69 point range with an average of 116.52 and the students in the 0-44 point range with an average of 109.58. In addition, in the IA level of the participants, the students in the 0-44 score range with an average of 2.32 have the highest score and followed respectively by the students in the 45-54-point range with an average of 2.19, the students in the 70–84-point range with an average of 2,09, the students in the 55–69-point range with an average of 2,08 and finally the students in the 85-100 point range with an average of 1,95.

F value calculated on the average IA level [F (4,726) = 2,996; Although p <.05] suggests that there is a significant difference between the groups, the results of the Tukey test were performed to find the source of the difference show that there is no significant difference. In addition, the F value calculated on the averages of the PSS level [F (4,726) = 7,759; p <.05] shows that there is a significant difference between groups. As a result of the Tukey test conducted to determine the source of the difference between groups, a significant difference was observed in terms of PSS levels of the students;

a) Between students in the 0-44-point range and the students in the 85-100-point range,

b) Between the students in the 55-69-point range and both in the 70-84-point range and the 85-100-point range.

According to these findings, the PSS levels of adolescents in the 85-100-point range are significantly higher than the PSS levels of the students in the 0-44-point range. In addition, the PSS of adolescents in the 70-84 and 85-100-point range were found to be significantly higher than the PSS levels of the students between the 55-69-point range.

Findings regarding PSS and IA levels by family income level.

One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to examine the difference between the PSS and IA levels of the participants in terms of family income level. The analysis results regarding the family income level factor are shown in Table 5.

Table 5. *One-way analysis of variance results on the differentiation of PSS and IA levels by family income level*

	Family Income Level	n	x̄	S		sd	F	*p*	Difference
Social Perceived Support	0-3000 TL	321	122,20	17,38					
	3000-6000 TL	278	121,98	17,14	Between Groups	3			
	6000-9000 TL	80	121,36	18,42			,976	,403	
	9000+ TL	52	126,23	19,43	Within Group	727			
	Total	731	122,31	17,56		730			
Internet addiction	0-3000 TL	321	2,06	,66					
	3000-6000 TL	278	2,01	,67	Between Groups	3			
	6000-9000 TL	80	2,03	,62			,321	,810	
	9000+ TL	52	1,99	,65	Within Group	727			
	Total	731	2,03	,66		730			

*p<.05

When Table 5 is examined; The highest mean score in the PSS level of the participants belongs to the students with a family income level of 9000+ TL with an average of 126.23, followed respectively by students with family income levels in the range of 0-3000 TL with an average of 121.98, students with family income level in the range of 3000-6000 TL with an average of 121,98, and students with family income level in the range of 6000-9000 TL with an average of 121,36. At the level of IA, it is observed that students with an average of 2.06 and family income levels in the range of 0-3000 TL have the highest score average, followed respectively by students with an average of 2,03 and family income levels in the range of 6000-9000 TL, students with an average of 2,01 and family income levels in the range of 3000-6000 TL, students with an average of 1,99 and family income level of 9000+ TL.

F value calculated on the average of PSS level [F (3,727) =, 976; p> .05] shows that there is no significant difference between the groups. In addition, the F value calculated on the average IA level [F (7,727) =, 321; p> .05] shows that there is no significant difference between the groups.

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION, and IMPLICATIONS

According to the research findings, it was determined that there is a negative relationship between the IA levels of the adolescents and their PSS levels. When the literature is examined; there is a negative relationship between internet addiction / problematic internet use and perceived social support in adolescent groups (Barut, 2019; Gunuc & Dogan, 2013; Karaer & Akdemir, 2019; Prievara, Piko, & Luszczynska, 2019; Wu et al., 2016). For this reason, the findings of this research reveal similar results to the related studies in the literature. Moreover, it seems that low PSS predicts IA (Büyükşahin-Çevik & Yıldız, 2017; Kılıç, Avcı, & Uzunçakmak, 2016; Tudorel & Vintilă, 2018). In addition, the absence of father support rather than friend or mother support predicts IA (Piko, 2000). In addition, meta-analysis studies show a negative correlation between IA and PSS (Lei, Li, Chiu, & Lu, 2018). Therefore, the decrease in PSS increases IA. In the literature, there are also opinions that IA increases PSS (Shaw & Gant, 2002), contrary to the studies supporting this view (Kraut et al., 1998). However, our research findings do not support the second opinion. In this respect, some suggestions could be made similarly with Lei, Li, Chiu, and Lu (2018). Considering the family sub-dimension of PSS, increasing parenting skills and creating activities that contribute to parents' taking care of their children can reduce children's IA levels. Considering the friend sub-dimension of PSS, it is thought that adolescents 'skills to communicate effectively, express themselves and set limits may also reduce adolescents' IA levels. Finally, considering the teacher sub-dimension, it is thought that using interactive methods in the classroom environment, being a good role model, and having a structure that takes care of their students can also reduce the IA levels of adolescents. While there was no difference in IA level according to the

gender of the adolescents, a significant difference is observed in their PSS. When the literature is examined, it is seen that males have higher levels of IA compared to females (Ayas, 2012; Derin & Bilge, 2016; Durak-Batıgün & Kılıç, 2011; Eryılmaz & Çukurluöz, 2018; Esen & Gündoğdu, 2010; Gökçearslan & Günbatar, 2012; Kilic, Avci and Uzuncakmak, 2016; Siyez, 2014; Yılmaz, Şahin, Haseski, & Erol, 2014; Zorbaz & Tuzgöl-Dost, 2014). Significantly, the fact that many adolescents who use internet cafes are boys may explain the higher IA levels than girls. However, the use of smartphones, which facilitates access to technology, and the widespread use of the internet, may explain that the participants do not differ according to their gender in current studies. As a matter of fact, recent studies show that gender has no effect on IA (Anlayışlı & Bulut-Serin, 2019; Hekim et al, 2019; Moral & Kumcak, 2019; Tekin, 2020). On the other hand, it is determined that there are significant differences in terms of gender in other countries except for Turkey (Peris de la Barrera, Schoeps, and Montoya-Castilla, 2020). Intercultural work may be recommended to interpret these differences.

On the other hand, finding a significant difference in the PSS score average by gender is like the studies in the literature. These studies show that girls have higher PSS than boys (Karataş, 2012; Mahon, Yarcheski, & Yarcheski, 1994; Rueger, Malecki, & Demaray, 2008). This may be because female students are more dependent on the family. Considering the cultural characteristics, these predispositions of girls may have affected both their friends and school support. While there is no significant difference in IA level according to grade level; There was a significant difference between the PSS level. The finding that the average score for IA does not differ according to the grade level is like the studies in the literature (Eryılmaz & Çukurluöz, 2018; Öner, 2015; Taş, 2018). Again, the ease of access to the internet may explain the lack of difference according to the grade level. When the literature on PSS is examined, like our research finding, it is seen that the PSS scores of the 9th-grade students are the highest (Aliyev & Tunç, 2017; Karataş, 2012). One of the reasons for this may be that the 9th-grade students have attempted to support family, friends, and teachers since they moved to a new education level. The lowest PSS level average of 12th-grade students may be due to their concentration on university entrance exam preparations. As another reason, developmental period characteristics of 9th-grade students may explain their higher social support. In the face of physical and mental changes, 9th-grade students may need more support from family, friends, and teachers.

It was found that there is a significant difference between both IA and PSS levels according to academic achievement. While the IA score of the students with an academic achievement average of 0-44 was the highest, their PSS score average is the lowest. This finding is like previous studies (Anlayışlı & Serin, 2019; Eldeleklioğlu & Vural, 2013; Esen & Siyez, 2011; Kilic, Avci & Uzuncakmak, 2016; Yavuz, 2018). In addition, PSS predicts academic achievement (Kapıkıran & Özgüngör, 2009; Yıldırım, 2000; Yıldırım, 2006; Yıldırım & Ergene, 2003). In the light of these findings, low academic achievement can be considered a risk factor. The role of academic achievement in terms of both IA and PSS should be considered. It may be necessary for school counselors to provide educational or personal guidance with students whose academic achievement is low or falling.

Finally, there was no significant difference between IA and PSS according to family income level. When the literature is examined, studies show similar results (Dülger, 2009; Esen & Siyez, 2011; Öner, 2015). As the justification for this, it is stated that the factors that provide moral support are important (Dülger, 2009). In addition, parental attitudes rather than the family's income status are one of the sources of social support and can be effective in internet addiction / problematic internet use. Therefore, it was found that income level does not significantly affect IA and PSS. However, other studies showed that there is significant difference between IA and PSS according to family income level (Ak et al., 2013; Tulunay-Ateş, 2016). As a result, it is thought that this study conducted on adolescents will clarify adolescents' IA and PSS levels. Finally, this research has some limitations. Firstly, since the research population is the state high schools in Kayseri, the research results can only be generalized to these high schools. The participants' responses limit the other to measurement tools.

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