

Digital Addiction and Sedentary Life Pandemic

Dijital Bağımlılık ve Sedanter Yaşam Pandemisi

Ramazan Cihad YILMAZ¹, Dilan DEMİRTAŞ KARAÖBA², Büşra CANDİRİ³

¹ Assistant Prof. Dr., Iğdır University, Faculty of Health Sciences, Department of Physiotherapy and Rehabilitation, Iğdır, Turkey, 0000-0002-2247-8123

² Assistant Prof. Dr., Iğdır University, Faculty of Health Sciences, Department of Physiotherapy and Rehabilitation, Iğdır, Turkey, 0000-0002-6754-9335

³ Assistant Prof. Dr., İnönü University, Faculty of Health Sciences, Department of Physiotherapy and Rehabilitation, Malatya, Turkey, 0000-0001-7413-6371

ABSTRACT

In recent years, the increasing prevalence of digital addiction has become the focus of research attention. Increasing digital addiction can have negative physical, psychological and social effects on individuals. In the general population, impairments in health, education, work and other social functions caused by digital addiction can be resolved with preventive and therapeutic methods. In today's world where physical inactivity is common, initiatives are needed to increase physical activity and reduce digital addiction. Exercise programs prepared by physiotherapists can improve the quality of life of individuals with digitally dependent sedentary lifestyles. In this context, it is necessary to develop policies that will reduce digital addiction.

Keywords: Digital addiction, Digital environment, Internet addiction, Physical activity, Sedentary life

ÖZET

Son yıllarda, dijital bağımlılık prevalansının artması araştırmaların ilgi odağı haline gelmiştir. Dijital bağımlılığın artması bireylerde fiziksel, psikolojik ve sosyal olarak olumsuz etkiler oluşturmaktadır. Genel popülasyonda, dijital bağımlılığın neden olduğu sağlık, eğitim, iş ve diğer sosyal işlevlerdeki bozulmalar önleyici ve tedavi edici yöntemler ile çözüme kavuşturulabilir. Fiziksel hareketsizliğin yaygın olarak karşımıza çıktığı günümüzde, fiziksel aktiviteyi artıracak ve dijital bağımlılığı azaltacak girişimlere ihtiyaç vardır. Fizyoterapistler tarafından hazırlanacak egzersiz programları dijital bağımlı sedanter yaşam stiline sahip bireylerin yaşam kalitesini artırabilir. Bu bağlamda, dijital bağımlılığı azaltacak politikaların geliştirilmesi gereklidir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Dijital çevre, Dijital bağımlılık, İnternet bağımlılığı, Fiziksel aktivite, Sedanter yaşam

Sorumlu yazar:

Dilan DEMİRTAŞ KARAÖBA, Iğdır University Faculty of Health Sciences, Department of Physiotherapy and Rehabilitation, dilandemirtas92@gmail.com

Başvuru/Submitted: 07.07.2024 **Kabul/Accepted:** 25.03.2025

Cite this article as: Yılmaz RC, Demirtaş Karaoba D, Candiri B. *Digital Addiction and Sedentary Life Pandemic* J TOGU Heal Sci. 2025;5(2):227-230

Dear Editor,

In recent years, the increasing prevalence of digital addiction has become the focus of research. Increasing digital addiction can have negative physical, psychological, and social effects on individuals. Increased time spent on devices, excessive dependence on devices, and the resulting mood swings can negatively affect addicts and those who interact with them. Anxiety, depression, deterioration in sleep quality, limitations in daily life activities, and reductions in social relationships are the most common problems resulting from digital addiction (1). Digital addiction is an umbrella term that includes internet addiction, game addiction, social media addiction, and other digital media addictions. It should be noted here that digital addiction does not only refer to internet addiction. Offline activities are also considered within the scope of digital addiction. The mechanism of digital addiction can be explained by the lack of self-control. As the self-control mechanism improves, the rate of digital addiction can also decrease (2). Furthermore, stimulating the amygdala, the brain's reward region with variable rewards, leads it into an endless habit loop waiting for larger rewards. The same mechanism is also seen in the behavior of individuals, for example, who become a continuous loop when they wonder how many people will like their posts on social media. Therefore, the habit loop also plays a critical role in defining the mechanism of digital addiction (3). Therefore, it is important to understand the effects of digital addiction, which is a condition that concerns the general society, on the general population. In the general population, the deterioration in health, education, work, and other social functions caused by digital addiction can be resolved with preventive and therapeutic methods (4).

The fact that things previously considered impossible have become more accessible in the digital age and have provided significant conveniences in almost every area of life has led to an increase in interest in digital technologies. However, digital addiction, which has become widespread today, has accelerated the transition to a sedentary life by increasing the risk of addiction in addition to the conveniences it provides. In digital addiction, as in other types of addiction (gambling, substance addiction, etc.), habit formation occurs. Individuals develop self-control problems. Although addicted individuals try to reduce their use of digital technology, they are not very successful in achieving this. They even deny this situation by saying that they are not addicted. And this situation, which gradually becomes a vicious circle, can push addicts to a more sedentary life. The sedentary lifestyle resulting from physical inactivity can cause various musculoskeletal system problems such as neck and back pain (5, 6). Exposure to digital devices and total daily inactivity are associated with excess risk of death

(7). Physical inactivity caused by addiction to digital devices is a serious problem that can negatively affect public health. This situation significantly increases the burden of morbidity and mortality due to chronic diseases in the general population (8). However, physical activity has an important role in the prevention and treatment of chronic diseases (9). In today's world where physical inactivity is common, initiatives are needed to increase physical activity and reduce digital addiction. Exercise programs prepared by physiotherapists can increase the quality of life of individuals with a digitally dependent sedentary lifestyle. In this context, policies that will reduce digital addiction need to be developed. Informative programs should be prepared to reduce the duration of digital technology use in children, adolescents, adults, and the elderly population as much as possible. Considering the widespread use of digital technologies in the entire population, this situation can be seen as an advantage and the time spent by individuals inactive can be reduced by following physical activity and exercise programs through these technologies.

Ethics Committee Approval: Ethical committee approval is not necessary.

Author Contributions: Authors contributed equally to the work.

Funding: The author declared that this study has received no financial support.

Conflict of interest: The authors have no conflict of interest.

REFERENCES

1. Cemiloglu D, Almourad MB, McAlaney J, Ali R. Combatting digital addiction: Current approaches and future directions. *Technology in Society*. 2022;68:101832.
2. Budak KS, Işıkoğlu N. Dijital oyun bağımlılık eğilimi ve ebeveyn rehberlik stratejileri ölçeklerinin geliştirilmesi. *Ankara University Journal of Faculty of Educational Sciences (JFES)*. 2022;55(3):693-740.
3. Ertemel AV, Menekse A, Camgoz Akdag H. Smartphone addiction assessment using Pythagorean fuzzy CRITIC-TOPSIS. *Sustainability*. 2023;15(5):3955.
4. Meng S-Q, Cheng J-L, Li Y-Y, Yang X-Q, Zheng J-W, Chang X-W, et al. Global prevalence of digital addiction in general population: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *Clinical psychology review*. 2022;92:102128.
5. Karakose T, Tülübaş T, Papadakis S. Revealing the intellectual structure and evolution of digital addiction research: An integrated bibliometric and science mapping approach. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*. 2022;19(22):14883.
6. Cihan E, Pirinççi CŞ. Dijital Oyun Bağımlılığının Fiziksel Aktivite, Bel/Boyun Ağrısı Ve Stres Düzeyi İle İlişkisi. *Sportmetre Beden Eğitimi ve Spor Bilimleri Dergisi*. 2024;22(4):53-62.
7. Katzmarzyk PT, Powell KE, Jakicic JM, Troiano RP, Piercy K, Tennant B, Committee PAGA. Sedentary behavior and health: update from the 2018 physical activity guidelines advisory committee. *Medicine and science in sports and exercise*. 2019;51(6):1227.
8. Katzmarzyk PT, Friedenreich C, Shiroma EJ, Lee I-M. Physical inactivity and non-communicable disease burden in low-income, middle-income and high-income countries. *British journal of sports medicine*. 2022;56(2):101-6.
9. Çalikuşu HR, Usluer İN, Tanrıverdi M. Kronik hastalıklarda koruyucu rehabilitasyon yaklaşımları ve fiziksel aktivite. *Anatolian Clinic the Journal of Medical Sciences*. 2023;28(2):225-34.