

Dünya İnsan Bilimleri Dergisi

World Journal of Human Sciences

ISSN: 2717-6665

Ocak 2025

Cilt/Volume: 2025

Sayı/Issue: 1

Examining the Relationship of Loneliness and Social Anxiety with Modern Time Traps in University Students

Üniversite Öğrencilerinde Yalnızlık ve Sosyal Kaygının Modern Zaman Tuzakları ile İlişkisinin incelenmesi

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Özet

Modern çağın zaman tuzakları, dijital teknoloji ve yeniliklerle birlikte ortaya çıkan, bireylerin zamanını farkında olmadan kontrolsüzce tüketen alışkanlıklar veya dikkat dağıtıcı faaliyetlerdir. Teknolojinin hızla gelişmesi ve günlük yaşamın karmaşıklaşması bu tuzakları daha yaygın hale getirmiş ve günden güne siyasi, ekonomik, sosyolojik ve psikolojik açıdan çeşitli sonuçlar doğurmaya başlamıştır. Bu araştırma, konunun psikolojik faktörlerle ilişkisine odaklanarak, üniversite öğrencilerinin sosyal kaygı, yalnızlık ve modern çağın zaman tuzaklarına yakalanma düzeyleri arasındaki ilişkiyi incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. İlişkisel tarama modelinin kullanıldığı çalışmada çalışma grubu, iki farklı devlet üniversitesinden toplam 378 öğrenciden oluşmaktadır. Veri toplama araçları olarak "Modern Çağın Zaman Tuzakları Ölçeği" (Tortumlu ve Uzun, 2023), "Sosyal Kaygı Ölçeği" (Can ve Bozgün, 2021) ve "Yetişkinler İçin Sosyal ve Duygusal Yalnızlık Ölçeği" (Akgül, 2020) kullanılmıştır. Verilerin analizi SPSS ve AMOS programlarıyla gerçekleştirilmiştir. Bulgular, öğrencilerin modern çağın zaman tuzaklarına yakalanma düzeylerinin ortalamasının üzerinde, sosyal kaygı düzeylerinin ortalama seviyede ve yalnızlık düzeylerinin ortalamasının altında olduğunu

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Atf/Citation: Tortumlu, M. (2025). Examining the Relationship of Loneliness and Social Anxiety with Modern Time Traps in University Students. *Dünya İnsan Bilimleri Dergisi*. 2025 (1), 72-92.

göstermektedir. Ayrıca, modern çağın zaman tuzakları ve sosyal kaygı arasında pozitif bir ilişki bulunurken, yalnızlıkla modern çağın zaman tuzakları arasında anlamlı bir ilişki olmadığı görülmüştür. Son olarak, sosyal kaygı ve yalnızlık arasında pozitif yönde anlamlı bir ilişki tespit edilmiştir.

Anahtar sözcükler: Modern çağın zaman tuzakları, sosyal kaygı, yalnızlık, sosyal medya

Abstract

Time traps of the modern age refer to habits or distracting activities that arise with digital technology and innovations, leading individuals to consume their time unconsciously and uncontrollably. The rapid advancement of technology and the increasing complexity of daily life have made these traps more prevalent, gradually resulting in various political, economic, sociological, and psychological implications. This study focuses on the psychological aspects of this phenomenon, aiming to examine the relationship between university students' levels of social anxiety, loneliness, and susceptibility to the time traps of the modern age. The study group consists of a total of 378 students from two different state universities, using a relational screening model. The data collection tools used are the "Time Traps Scale of the Modern Age Scale" (Tortumlu and Uzun, 2023), the "Social Anxiety Scale" (Can and Bozgün, 2021), and the "Social and Emotional Loneliness Scale for Adults" (Akgül, 2020). Data analysis was conducted using SPSS and AMOS programs. The findings indicate that students' levels of falling into the time traps of the modern age are above average, their social anxiety levels are at an average level, and their loneliness levels are below average. Additionally, a positive relationship was found between the time traps of the modern age and social anxiety, while no significant relationship was observed between loneliness and the time traps of the modern age. Finally, a significant positive relationship was identified between social anxiety and loneliness.

Keywords: Time traps of the modern age, social anxiety, loneliness, social media.

Introduction

People's lifestyles have constantly changed according to the characteristics of the era they live in. However, it can be said that these inter-era changes occurred more slowly compared to the rapid changes in today's modern age. To better understand the impact of changes on humans, different generations have been defined in the last hundred years; among these are groups such as Baby Boomers, Generation X, Millennials, and Generation Z (Levickaite, 2010; Dhanapal, Vashu & Subramaniam, 2015). Each generation has experienced unique cultural and technological experiences based on the years they were born. Rapidly developing technology and cultural transformations have led to the emergence of new behaviors and habits.

Today, in the Information Age, people can communicate through digital technologies and artificial intelligence applications, access information effortlessly, and manage their tasks efficiently. This situation reduces the need for face-to-face interaction and increases people's preferences for interacting with screens. Digital applications offer advantages such as the practicality of work, the closeness of long distances, and the acceleration of lengthy processes. However, the allure of these advantages also brings various traps for individuals in terms of time management. Excessive use of video platforms (YouTube, etc.) beyond the targeted duration, losing time control in online chat groups on smartphones (WhatsApp, etc.), and watching more episodes than planned on streaming platforms are behaviors defined as "time traps of the modern age" (Tortumlu et al., 2021; Tortumlu and Uzun, 2023).

The time traps of the modern era can have particularly critical consequences for university students. Spending long hours in front of screens may reduce students' need for social interaction and face-to-face communication, which can, in turn, affect their feelings of loneliness and social anxiety. Several studies have yielded varying results in this regard. Gezgin et al. (2019), in their study, found that smartphone addiction had a significant negative impact on family and romantic relationships, particularly by decreasing the quality of face-to-face communication and increasing conflict levels. However, the study did not find a significant relationship between smartphone use and social loneliness, suggesting that digital interactions may partially substitute for face-to-face social interactions in certain contexts. However Güner et al. (2022), in their research among university students, reported a positive relationship between social media addiction and loneliness. Another meta-analysis found a weak positive relationship between loneliness and internet addiction, smartphone addiction, and digital

gaming addiction, with a moderate relationship observed between social media addiction and loneliness (Seki & Kurnaz, 2022). In addition to these studies, many others have reported a low relationship between problematic internet use or internet addiction and loneliness (Gülaçtı, 2020; Malas & Arıkan, 2022).

University students experience the most critical period for their future lives and careers during their years of study. It is clear that both their academic and social development during this period directly influence their success in professional life. Therefore, it is essential to manage time effectively and efficiently during university years. However, today, effective time management requires more self-management, self-control, and discipline. Digital tools and applications are used for a variety of purposes, including accessing information, as well as for entertainment, work, and education. For example, a video platform accessed for the purpose of obtaining information may also be used simultaneously for listening to music or passing the time. This situation can be explained by the following metaphor: A person enters a store intending only to buy a television remote. However, the store also offers products such as food, furniture, and textiles. Even though the person may not need these items, they may leave the store with a variety of products. Smartphones and digital applications are like living in this "store" at all times. Thus, avoiding the time traps of the digital age requires effective time management, effort, and awareness; otherwise, negative emotional and behavioral outcomes may occur. Research has shown that the inability to manage time effectively leads to outcomes such as guilt, unease, sadness, anxiety about falling behind, and self-blame (Tortumlu & Uzun, 2023). Moreover, the time traps of the modern era have been found to decrease tendencies toward self-forgiveness among university students (Uzun & Tortumlu, 2023).

In the context of the points discussed above, the importance of studying the relationship between the time traps of the modern era, loneliness, and social anxiety is emphasized. The relationship between these concepts can be examined from two different perspectives. From the first perspective, falling into time traps in the modern age can increase feelings of loneliness and social anxiety. That is, the rapid passage of time and constant busyness may lead to a sense of isolation and exacerbate social anxiety. From the second perspective, individuals who experience loneliness and high levels of social anxiety may be more susceptible to falling into the time traps of the modern era. These two approaches can theoretically be explained through the Social Cognitive Theory and the Compensatory Use Theory.

According to Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1986), individuals' behaviors are shaped by learning from their environment and observations. The tendency to spend excessive

time in digital environments is influenced by the content and social norms encountered on digital platforms, which individuals observe in their social surroundings. University students are frequently exposed to idealized examples of social lives on social media and online platforms, which may lead them to compare their own lives to these examples. This constant exposure to carefully curated portrayals of others' success and happiness can amplify feelings of inadequacy, loneliness, and social anxiety. Research suggests that the more time individuals spend on social media, the more they may engage in upward social comparisons, which can increase negative self-perceptions (Vogel et al., 2014). For students caught in time traps, continuously observing others' social successes can create a distorted sense of social reality, leading to heightened loneliness and social anxiety. Social media addiction, characterized by compulsive use and emotional dependence on online interactions, further exacerbates these feelings by limiting face-to-face communication and increasing social withdrawal. As the time spent on such online platforms increases, students may experience a weakening of their face-to-face communication skills, and their desire to engage in real-world social environments may diminish. Studies have shown that excessive social media use can impair real-life social skills and contribute to feelings of social isolation (Kuss & Griffiths, 2017).

On the other hand, the Compensatory Use Theory suggests that individuals turn to specific media content to compensate for deficiencies or dissatisfaction in their lives (Weidman et al., 2012). This concept has been explored in several studies, which show that individuals who experience social anxiety or loneliness may use social media, binge-watching TV series, or consuming video content as a way to alleviate feelings of isolation and emotional distress (Kuss & Griffiths, 2017). In particular, students with social anxiety may find these digital platforms to be a safe space where they can engage in social interaction without the immediate pressure of face-to-face communication, as it allows for greater control over their social environment (Valkenburg & Peter, 2013). However, although these platforms may provide temporary relief, they can hinder the development of essential social skills and contribute to long-term feelings of loneliness and social isolation (Primack et al., 2017). This pattern of compensatory media use can create a cycle where individuals increasingly rely on digital interactions, further distancing themselves from in-person relationships and reinforcing their anxiety (Weidman et al., 2012). In particular, students with high levels of social anxiety are at a higher risk of developing social media addiction, which can exacerbate the very issues they are trying to escape from (Rosen et al., 2013).

Effective time management requires awareness of time traps. Students who prefer increased isolation and experience high social anxiety may be more likely to turn to digital tools. While these students may attempt to connect with the outside world through digital platforms, the superficial nature of these interactions and the lack of meaningful social connections can feed their deep loneliness and social anxiety. Additionally, social media and online communities create a constant need for comparison and validation, which can trigger psychological issues such as social anxiety and low self-esteem. Individuals with social anxiety experience fear and worry in social situations where they perceive they may be negatively evaluated or judged by others, potentially limiting their opportunities to form meaningful social relationships (Alden & Taylor, 2004; Hoffman, 2007; Rapee & Heimberg, 1997). As a potential consequence of maladaptive social beliefs, socially anxious individuals may prefer online interactions over face-to-face communication, which can increase the likelihood of more frequent online engagement (Erwin et al., 2004; Weidman et al., 2012). Those with high social anxiety and loneliness may use social media more frequently to compensate for the lack of face-to-face relationships (O'Day & Heimberg, 2021). As social anxiety levels increase, time management skills tend to decrease (Kaya et al., 2012). Particularly among university students, the interaction between psychological factors such as social anxiety, loneliness, and digital media usage can also affect their personal and academic lives. In this context, examining the relationships between social anxiety, loneliness, and the time traps of the modern era can be an important step toward improving the quality of life of these individuals and developing strategies to support their academic and social development.

Aim of the Study

The aim of this study is to examine the relationships between university students' levels of social anxiety, loneliness, and their tendency to fall into the time traps of the modern era. In line with this aim, the research questions of the study are as follows:

1. What are the levels of social anxiety, loneliness, and tendency to fall into the time traps of the modern era among university students?
2. Is there a significant relationship between university students' levels of social anxiety and loneliness?
3. Is there a significant relationship between university students' levels of social anxiety and their tendency to fall into the time traps of the modern era?

4. Is there a significant relationship between university students' levels of loneliness and their tendency to fall into the time traps of the modern era?

Methodology

This study was conducted to examine the relationships between university students' levels of social anxiety, loneliness, and their tendency to fall into the time traps of the modern era. In line with this objective, a correlational survey model was adopted as the research method. The correlational survey model is a research approach that aims to describe a situation as it exists in the past or present. In this model, the events, individuals, or objects of interest are studied within their natural conditions, and their current status is described in detail. Correlational research investigates how two or more variables are related to one another or how they change together, thereby revealing the degree of connection between the variables (Karasar, 2013).

The aim of selecting this model is to provide a more comprehensive analysis of the relationships between social anxiety, loneliness, and the tendency to fall into time traps. It is believed that the findings of this study will contribute to understanding how students can cope with social and psychological challenges in today's world and how these factors interact with one another.

Study Group

The study group of this research consists of 378 students enrolled at two different state universities. The average age of the study group is 21.7 years. Among the participants, 59.8% (n = 226) are female, and 40% (n = 152) are male. Of the participants, 3.7% (n = 14) are first-year students, 48.1% (n = 182) are second-year students, 46% (n = 174) are third-year students, and 2% (n = 7) are fourth-year students. Additionally, 3.7% (n = 14) are attending faculty, and 21.2% (n = 80) are enrolled in vocational schools.

Data Collection Process

In the data collection process, a demographic information form and an application form consisting of four different scales were prepared as an online form via Google Forms. The survey was shared with the participants after the purpose and scope of the research were explained to them in detail in the classes they were attending. This approach ensured that participants received comprehensive information about the purpose of the research and that a transparent process was followed. Participants filled out the survey voluntarily and submitted

their responses securely within the framework of anonymity provided by the online environment. Detailed explanations about the study were included at the beginning of the form; after reading this information, participants agreed by selecting the statement, "I have read the explanation, understood the purpose of the study, and voluntarily agree to participate," before proceeding with the survey. Following this consent, participants were included in the data collection process.

Data Collection Tools and Reliability-Validity Analyses

In this study, the data collection tools included a personal information form to gather demographic details of university students, the Time Traps Scale of the Modern Era, the Social and Emotional Loneliness Scale for Adults, and the Social Anxiety Scale. Ethical approval for the research was obtained, and throughout the study, ethical principles and guidelines were strictly adhered to.

Personal Information Form. A personal information form was developed by the researchers to collect demographic information about the university students participating in the study. This form includes personal details such as gender, age, educational unit, and grade level.

Modern Era Time Traps Scale (METTS). The METTS was developed by Tortumlu and Uzun (2023) and is designed to assess the extent to which young adults are exposed to the time traps of the 21st century. The scale consists of 10 items and is presented in a 5-point Likert format. The items are rated on a scale from "[1] Does not reflect me at all" to "[5] Fully reflects me." Example items include, "I find myself watching many unrelated things while using video platforms (e.g., YouTube)" and "I delay tasks by getting involved in online chat group conversations (e.g., WhatsApp)." The total score on the scale ranges from 10 to 50, with higher scores indicating a higher level of exposure to time traps. The scale is unidimensional and explains 48.17% of the total variance, with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .82 (Tortumlu & Uzun, 2023).

To ensure the validity and reliability of the METTS for this study, validity and reliability analyses were first conducted. To provide evidence for the construct validity of the scale, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was performed using the AMOS 23 software. Based on the CFA results, modifications suggested by the program, including merging error terms of items 2, 3, and 4, and 5, were applied to achieve better model-data fit. The final results indicated

acceptable model fit ($\chi^2 = 114.596$, $df = 30$, $p = .000$, $\chi^2/df = 3.820$, $CFI = .92$, $IFI = .92$, $GFI = .94$, $RMSEA = .079$).

To assess the reliability of the scale, Cronbach's alpha internal consistency coefficient was calculated. The overall internal consistency coefficient was found to be .79. Considering these values, it can be concluded that the scale is both valid (Kline, 2014) and reliable (Büyüköztürk, 2014) for use in this research.

Social and Emotional Loneliness Scale for Adults (SELSA-S). The SELSA is a scale developed by DiTommaso and Spinner (1993, 1997) to measure the feeling of loneliness. This scale is designed based on Weiss's (1973) distinction between emotional isolation (emotional loneliness) and social isolation (social loneliness), and it follows a theoretical, multidimensional structure. The SELSA-S version consists of 15 items selected from the subscales of Social Loneliness and Emotional Loneliness (Emotional Romantic Loneliness and Emotional family emotional Loneliness) of the original SELSA (DiTommaso, 1997). Validity and reliability studies for adults were conducted by DiTommaso, Brannen, and Best in 2004.

This scale consists of a total of 15 items and includes three subscales. The Social Loneliness subscale includes items 2, 5, 7, 9, and 13. The Emotional Loneliness subscale includes items for family emotional Loneliness (FL) (1, 4, 8, 11, 12) and Romantic Loneliness (RL) (3, 6, 10, 14, 15). The emotional loneliness score is the sum of the scores from the family emotional and Romantic subscales. The total loneliness score is obtained by summing the scores from both social loneliness and emotional loneliness. Each item in the scale is rated on a Likert-type scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree), reflecting the degree to which the statement corresponds to the individual's situation. Responses are marked according to the option that best fits the individual's situation. Among the 15 items, 6 are rated directly (1, 4, 7, 10, 13, 15), while 9 items are reverse-coded (2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 11, 12, 14). The total score range for the scale is from 15 to 105.

The Turkish adaptation of the SELSA-S was conducted by Akgül (2020) for validity and reliability. In the Turkish adaptation study, the fit indices from the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) for the three-factor model of the Social and Emotional Loneliness Scale for Adults were found as follows: $\chi^2 = 428$ ($N = 447$, $df = 87$, $p = .000$), $\chi^2/df = 4.91$, $RMSEA = .09$, $SRMR = .08$, $TLI = .88$, $CFI = .90$. In the reliability analysis, the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was found to be .83 (Akgül, 2020).

For this research, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted using AMOS 23 to provide evidence of the scale's validity. Based on the results of the CFA, modification suggestions by the program were applied, including merging error terms of items 7 and 13 for the social loneliness dimension, items 1 and 4 for the familial emotional loneliness dimension, and items 10 and 15 for the romantic emotional loneliness dimension. After applying these modifications, the fit statistics were as follows: $X^2 = 346$, $df = 82$, $p = .000$, $X^2/df = 4.22$, $RMSEA = .08$, $IFI = .93$, $TLI = .90$, $CFI = .93$.

To assess the reliability of the scale, Cronbach's alpha internal consistency coefficient was calculated. The overall internal consistency coefficient for the scale was found to be .80. The internal consistency coefficients for the subscales were as follows: Social Loneliness .86, Familial Emotional Loneliness .80, and Romantic Emotional Loneliness .84. Both the CFA fit indices and the reliability analysis results, including the Cronbach's alpha coefficient, indicate that the scale is valid and reliable for use in this research (Kline, 2014; Büyüköztürk, 2014).

Social Anxiety Scale (SAS). The Social Anxiety Scale (SAS) was originally developed by La Greca and Lopez (1998) with 18 items, and later revised to 12 items by Nunes, Ayala-Nunes, Pechorro, and La Greca (2018). The scale, designed with a 5-point Likert format, was adapted into Turkish by Can and Bozgün (2021). The SAS consists of three subscales: Fear of Negative Evaluation (FNE, the first four items), Social Fear and Discomfort in New Situations (SFDSNS, the next four items), and Social Fear and Discomfort in General Situations (SFDSGS, the last four items). In the analysis by Can and Bozgün (2021), the overall Cronbach's alpha internal consistency coefficient of the scale was found to be 0.90, with the subscale coefficients being .92 for FNE, .87 for SFDSNS, and .78 for SFDSGS. Scores on the scale range from 12 to 60, with higher scores indicating a higher level of social anxiety.

For the validity of the scale in this research, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was conducted using the AMOS 23 program. Based on the CFA results, the program suggested modifications, including merging the error terms of items 1 and 3 in the FNE dimension. After these modifications, the following fit indices were obtained: $X^2 = 169$, $df = 50$, $p = .000$, $X^2/df = 3.39$, $RMSEA = .08$, $IFI = .95$, $TLI = .93$, $CFI = .95$.

To assess the reliability of the scale, Cronbach's alpha internal consistency coefficient was calculated. The overall internal consistency coefficient of the scale was found to be .90. The internal consistency coefficients for the subscales were as follows: .91 for FNE, .79 for SFDSNS, and .74 for SFDSGS. Both the CFA fit indices and the Cronbach's alpha coefficients

obtained in the reliability analysis indicate that the scale is valid and reliable for use in this study (Kline, 2014; Büyüköztürk, 2014).

Data Analysis. The data collected via Google Forms were initially coded in Excel. Subsequently, they were transferred to SPSS 21 software for analysis preparation. Before proceeding with statistical analyses, the normality of the data was assessed. According to Büyüköztürk (2014), when the sample size exceeds 50, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test should be used, whereas if the sample size is below 50, the Shapiro-Wilk test results should be examined. Since the sample size in this study is greater than 50, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was applied, and its p-value was found to be less than 0.05. This result suggests that the data do not follow a normal distribution. However, Tabachnick and Fidell (2013) state that if the skewness and kurtosis values are within the range of -1.5 to +1.5, the data can still be considered as normally distributed. For the scales used in this study, the skewness and kurtosis values were calculated as follows: for the Modern Age Time Traps Scale, skewness = -0.09 and kurtosis = -0.13; for the Social Anxiety Scale Short Form, skewness = 0.34 and kurtosis = -0.29; and for the Social and Emotional Loneliness Scale for Adults, skewness = 0.51 and kurtosis = 0.28. Based on these results, it was determined that parametric tests were appropriate for the analysis.

Therefore, during the data analysis process, frequency and percentage calculations were performed, and Pearson Correlation Analysis was used to examine the relationships between variables. The significance level for all statistical analyses was set at $p < 0.05$.

Findings

The first research question pertains to the levels of social anxiety, loneliness, and the tendency to fall into the time traps of the modern age among university students. Table 1 presents the findings related to the average scores of the Modern Age Time Traps Scale, the Social Anxiety Scale and its subdimensions, and the Social and Emotional Loneliness Scale for Adults and its subdimensions.

Table 1. Mean Scores of Total Points

Scales and Subdimensions	N	Minimum	Maximum	\bar{x}	Ss
METTS	378	1	5	2.80	.629
SAS Total	378	1	5	2.68	.787
FNE	378	1	5	2.70	1.02
SFDSNS	378	1	5	2.95	.913
SFDSGS	378	1	5	2.42	.821

SELSA-S Total	378	1	7	3.17	.971
SL	378	1	7	2.70	1.20
EFL	378	1	7	2.33	1.27
ERL	378	1	7	4.50	1.80

METTS: Modern Era Time Traps Scale; **SAS:** Social Anxiety Scale; **FNE:** Fear of Negative Evaluation; **SFDSNS:** Social Fear and Discomfort in New Situations; **SFDSGS:** Social Fear and Discomfort in General Situations; **SELSA-S:** Social and Emotional Loneliness Scale for Adults; **SL:** Social Loneliness; **EFL:** Family Emotional Loneliness; **ERL:** Romantic Loneliness.

When the average scores in Table 1 are examined, it is observed that participants' tendency to fall into the time traps of the modern age is generally above the middle level ($\bar{x} = 2.80$). In contrast, their social anxiety levels are generally at the middle level ($\bar{x} = 2.68$). Looking at the subdimensions of the social anxiety scale, it can be seen that the "fear of negative evaluation" score is above the middle level ($\bar{x} = 2.70$), while the "social fear and discomfort in general situations" score is below the middle level ($\bar{x} = 2.42$). On the other hand, the "social fear and discomfort in new situations" dimension shows a higher average (above average) than the other dimensions of social anxiety ($\bar{x} = 2.95$).

The average levels of social and emotional loneliness are generally below the middle level ($\bar{x} = 3.17$). Within the social and emotional loneliness scale, the "family-emotional loneliness" subdimension has the lowest average (below average) ($\bar{x} = 2.33$). Similarly, the "social loneliness" dimension is also below average ($\bar{x} = 2.70$). However, the "romantic-emotional loneliness" dimension has a higher average (above average) compared to the other subdimensions ($\bar{x} = 4.50$).

The 2nd, 3rd, and 4th research questions are concerned with explaining the relationships between modern age time traps, loneliness, and social anxiety. In this context, the relationships between the variables were examined using Pearson Correlation Analysis, and the results are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Pearson Product-Moment Correlations for the Research Variables

Variables	METTS	SAS	FNE	SFDSNS	SFDSGS	SELSA-S	SL	EFL	ERL
METTS	1								
SAS	0.365**	1							
FNE	0.356**	0.868**	1						
SFDSNS	0.334**	0.856**	0.594**	1					
SFDSGS	0.233**	0.836**	0.582**	0.605**	1				
SELSA-S	0.044	0.368**	0.306**	0.297**	0.344**	1			
SL	0.002	0.367**	0.283**	0.263**	0.410**	0.687**	1		
EFL	0.097	0.323**	0.231**	0.256**	0.353**	0.684**	0.522**	1	
ERL	0.001	0.121*	0.142*	0.123*	0.33**	0.671**	0.072	0.337**	1

When Table 2 is examined, it can be observed that the relationships among the research variables range from .001 to .868. To indicate a multicollinearity issue, the relationships must

not exceed the reference value of .90 (Ullman, 2013). Based on these results, it can be concluded that the model does not present multicollinearity problems.

The relationship between the variables was examined using Pearson's correlation coefficient analysis. For the second research question, a significant positive relationship was found between loneliness and social anxiety ($r = 0.368, p < .05$). For the third research question, a significant positive relationship was also observed between the time traps of the modern age and social anxiety ($r = 0.365, p < .05$). Regarding the final research question, no significant relationship was found between the time traps of the modern age and loneliness ($r = 0.044, p > .05$). In summary, while the time traps of the modern age are positively and significantly related to social anxiety, they do not have a significant relationship with loneliness. Loneliness and social anxiety, on the other hand, are positively and significantly related.

Discussion

Today, the time traps of the modern age are not limited to social media alone. Extended periods spent on video games and platforms like YouTube can also hinder students' ability to manage their time effectively. This can result in students losing valuable time that should be dedicated to their studies and lead to imbalances in their daily lives. Digital addiction and time traps may have increasingly negative effects on students' academic performance, personal development, and psychological well-being. For example, time spent on social media platforms, initially intended for entertainment or information gathering, can gradually turn into hours of activity. This situation can prevent students from using their time productively. Feelings such as "FOMO" (Fear of Missing Out) can further increase social media usage.

Achieving goals requires efficient time management and awareness of time traps. Individuals who fall into time traps are more likely to engage in procrastination (Tortumlu & Uzun, 2024). The tendency to fall into time traps and poor time management is becoming a widespread issue, especially among university students. This not only leads to various psychological disorders but can also lay the foundation for a range of other challenges in students' academic and social lives. Therefore, examining how university students fall into the time traps of the modern age and how these traps interact with their emotional states is critical for their academic and social success.

The aim of this study was to determine the levels of social anxiety, loneliness, and the tendency to fall into the time traps of the modern age among university students, as well as to

examine the relationships among these variables. The results revealed that university students' tendency to fall into the time traps of the modern age was above average. This finding is consistent with results from similar studies in the literature (Uzun & Tortumlu, 2023; Tortumlu & Uzun, 2024). It can be said that university students have deficiencies in combating and raising awareness about the time traps of the modern age. Several factors may explain the emergence of this result. Social media platforms, in particular, serve as powerful tools for identity construction and the pursuit of social validation, especially for individuals in university age. At this stage of life, individuals may continuously subject themselves to social evaluation by comparing online social interactions with their real-world social successes. This can lead them to spend most of their time on digital platforms, neglecting their personal and social responsibilities. Time spent in the pursuit of identity and a sense of belonging can thus become a time trap. Indeed, the amount of time individuals spend on screens has been increasing year by year (Twenge, 2017).

The results of the study revealed that university students' levels of social anxiety were moderate, while their levels of loneliness were below average. The moderate levels of social anxiety suggest that students sometimes experience anxiety and worry in social interactions, but this anxiety is not constant or highly intense. The university environment is a period of intense social interactions and identity development. Therefore, moderate anxiety levels can be viewed as a natural part of the integration process into the social environment. On the other hand, the below-average levels of loneliness indicate that students generally have satisfactory social connections, and the feeling of loneliness may be less of an issue than social anxiety. University students typically find opportunities to create social networks and form friendships, which may help keep feelings of loneliness at lower levels.

Another finding of the study revealed that there was no significant relationship between university students' tendency to fall into the time traps of the modern age and their feelings of loneliness. This suggests that students' feelings of loneliness do not lead to a greater tendency to fall into time traps, nor does being caught in time traps increase their feelings of loneliness. Loneliness is more often related to a lack of social support, low social interaction, or difficulties in face-to-face relationships. Therefore, loneliness may not be directly associated with time spent on digital platforms. For instance, an individual may spend a lot of time on digital platforms such as social media or the internet but still maintain strong face-to-face relationships and not experience loneliness. This suggests that feelings of loneliness can stem from various factors, and therefore, time spent in digital environments may not be related to loneliness.

Twenge (2017) has argued that screen time has a more detrimental effect compared to previous generations and has pointed out that feelings of loneliness have increased since 2007, with a notable rise in 2011. However, it can also be argued that the need for face-to-face interactions has decreased in modern times. Feelings of loneliness typically arise when individuals' relational expectations are unmet. The fulfillment of these expectations in online, virtual environments may explain why loneliness is not associated with the time traps of the modern age.

Finally, the study found a significant positive relationship between university students' tendency to fall into the time traps of the modern age and their levels of social anxiety. In other words, students who fall into time traps more frequently also experience higher levels of social anxiety. This suggests that, in addition to struggling to manage their time effectively due to digital media and other distractions, these students may also experience anxiety and stress in social interactions. Indeed, research has shown that increased screen time is associated with higher levels of anxiety and depression (Twenge, 2017). Falling into time traps may cause individuals to become more cautious and anxious in their social relationships, as they may feel inadequate or anxious due to the lack of time they can devote to social interactions. Therefore, the increase in social anxiety among students who spend excessive time in digital environments could also create challenges in their face-to-face relationships.

From a different perspective, this result may also suggest that students with higher levels of social anxiety are more likely to fall into time traps. Social anxiety may lead students to avoid or delay social interactions, which could then result in them spending more time on digital media and other distractions. This situation implies that individuals with high social anxiety may not only struggle to use their time effectively but may also spend more time in virtual environments to avoid social interactions.

Limitations and Suggestions

As with any scientific study, the present research has certain limitations; these limitations should be considered when interpreting the findings and assessing their generalizability. The study was conducted at two public universities with a total of 378 students. Therefore, the findings are limited to the students of these two universities and cannot be generalized to all university students. Research conducted at different universities, departments, or among groups with different demographic characteristics could increase the diversity and generalizability of the results. Secondly the universities involved in this study may be situated

within a specific cultural and social context, and students' lifestyles, values, and issues may differ across various cultural or social environments. This may limit the generalizability of the findings to different geographical regions or types of universities. Additionally, data in the study were collected through surveys using scales. The content of the survey collects data through a specific set of questions. While this may be an appropriate method for measuring students' emotional states such as time traps, loneliness, and social anxiety, a more in-depth and multi-dimensional understanding would require the use of qualitative or mixed methods (e.g., interviews, focus groups, etc.). Lastly, the cross-sectional design of the study should be considered as a limitation, as it restricts the examination of causal relationships.

The findings of this study emphasize the relationship between modern age time traps and social anxiety, suggesting that university students' time management skills may have a significant impact on their psychological well-being. Based on these results, several interventions can be implemented to positively influence students' time management and mental health.

First and foremost, raising awareness about the negative effects of digital media and screen addiction is essential. Educational programs should be developed to inform students about how excessive screen time can impact their mental health and productivity, and strategies should be created to help them avoid time traps. Furthermore, workshops, seminars, and group activities aimed at enhancing self-management, self-control, and motivation should be organized to help students strengthen these crucial skills. These activities can support students in managing stress, improving attention control, and boosting motivation.

To reduce social anxiety and improve students' social skills, increasing the activity of university clubs may be a beneficial step. Students should be provided with opportunities for face-to-face interactions through these clubs, and group work and events that support the development of social skills should be encouraged. In addition, a more comprehensive evaluation model that considers not only students' academic achievements but also their participation in social activities and events could be established. Such a holistic assessment model would allow for the integrated tracking of students' academic and social development.

Finally, students should be taught effective time management strategies, including daily planning, prioritization, and focus techniques. Additionally, utilizing application-based time tracking software and digital tools can help students develop efficient study habits.

For future research, longitudinal study designs are recommended to explore the relationship between time management skills, social anxiety, and loneliness in greater depth. Furthermore, conducting studies that examine how the relationship between time traps and psychological health manifests across different demographic groups and cultural contexts would contribute to broadening the understanding of this issue. This approach could help confirm the current findings and provide more generalizable insights.

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