

Investigation of University Students' Internet Addiction in Terms of Several Variables (Inonu University Sample)

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Abstract

Internet has spread to every area of our lives with the progress of technology and ceased to be a privileged service that can be accessed only with computers and in internet cafes. The widespread use of the internet also brings about many problems. Internet addiction is caused to occur depends on failure to set the time spent at the computer and individual's inability to control him/herself on using the internet. Internet addicted individuals confront with the problems such as psychological, social and academically as well as physical problems. In this study, the prevalence of internet addiction among college students and differentiation conditions of internet addictions according to several variables was analyzed. Statistical analysis of the data obtained via Internet Addiction Scale Kruskal Wallis H- test and Mann Whitney U-test were used. At the end of the study, the majority of students' internet addiction level was found to be "low" level. While significant differences were observed in the internet addiction levels of students according to the gender, perception of academic achievement, course attendance, daily internet usage time, places connected to the internet, connect to the internet by phone, whereas no significant differences observed according to the type of education and income level of families.

Key words: *Internet addiction, college students, internet usage*

SUMMARY

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to determine the internet addiction levels of college students and whether there is a difference between internet addiction level of students according to their gender, perception of academic achievement, course attendance, daily internet usage time, places connected to the internet, connect to the internet by phone,

living place, type of education and income level of families. In addition, the frequency of use of various internet services has been examined.

Methods

This research is a comparative descriptive study in type of survey models of relational model. The universe of study is the college and faculty students (n = 13,689) teaching in all classes at the undergraduate level of Inonu University. Accordingly 1325 students were selected as a sample group through stratified sampling from eight faculties and a college. Data were collected at the end of the spring semester of the 2011-2012 academic year. "Internet Addiction Scale" was used as a data collection tool which is designed by Hahn and Jerusalem, and adapted to Turkish by Şahin and Korkmaz (2011). Three subscale and 19 items is located in the scale. In this research Cronbach Alpha values of the subscales has been calculated between 0.916 and 0.848, and value of total scale has been calculated as 0.935. Items are five point likert scale ranked between "always" (5) and "never" (1). Non-parametric statistics was used in the analysis of data besides descriptive statistics such as percentage and frequency.

Results

The average scores of the students' internet addiction level were found to be low levels both for the sum of the total scale and sub scales. Indeed, the overall internet addiction level was low for the majority of students (83.6%). Students who have high internet addiction level were very small proportion (1.3%). The average order values of total and sub-dimensions of the scale were higher for male students than the girls'. According to the analysis the difference between average order values of total and sub-dimensions of the scale were statistically significant in favor of male students.

Students' internet addiction average order values of total and sub-dimensions of the scale levels have been significantly differentiated according to the variable of course attendance ($X^2_{(3)}=41.63, p<.05$). As a result of the analysis to determine whether the students' internet addiction level have changed or not according to the daily internet usage time significant differences were obtained from the total and the three dimensions of the scale. According to the places connected to the internet, the average value of the total and sub dimensions of the internet addiction scale levels of the students who connected the internet in the dormitories was significantly higher than those connected to the internet in the school, home, workplace and internet cafe. Students' addiction level was significantly differentiated with sub dimensions and total values of the scale according to the connection to the internet by mobile phone ($U=172422.50, p<.05$).

According to the place of residence, significant differences were obtained between the living with their families and living in the private dormitories in the sub dimension of "loss of control" in favor of staying in the dormitories. There were not any differences between the student internet addiction levels of the students according to the type of education and family income level. Students mostly use the internet to "access to current news".

Discussion

Although the vast majority of the college students' internet addiction level is "low", a considerable amount of "medium" level (15.1%) suggests that this group is "high" risk of addiction. It can be explained by social roles that attributed to the men who are more addicted to the internet than women. For men being more dominant and aggressive, and for women being more dependent and quiet are acceptable behaviors by Turkish society. There is negative correlation between internet addiction and perception of academic achievement and course attendance. Sleep disorders and concentration difficulties are adversely affected the addicted students' academic success and classroom attendance because of the time spending on the internet till the late hours. It can be said that there is a positive correlation between the times spending on the internet and internet addiction level.

Internet addiction levels of the students who connect the internet from school, home, work, and internet cafes are higher than those connected the internet from dormitories. It is thought to be the result of those students can spend for a long time on the internet and can reach the internet easily without being checked in the dormitories. Connecting to the internet via phone can be seen as a reason of increasing internet addiction. Ease of use, portability and being able to connect to the internet without a computer increase the utilization rate of mobile phones. Especially the information shared on social networks instantly is transmitted to mobile phones leads to control of this page continuously by mobile phone users. When the subject is examined in terms of where students live in, staying in private dormitories appear more addicted at the sub dimension of "loss of control" can be explained by lacking of parental supervision and prevalence of internet services in these places. Not to change of students' addiction level according to the type of education and family income may be related with especially internet services being offered to all students without any distinction in university settings.

Conclusion

The vast majority of college students' internet addiction level is "low". Students' internet addiction levels are significantly differentiate according to their gender, perception of academic achievement, course attendance, daily internet usage time, places connected to the internet, connecting to the internet with the phone, no difference was obtained according to type of education and family income level. It is concluded that students use to internet mostly in order to access to current news, communication / chat and fun. Due to high internet addiction scores of individuals who access to internet easily and having facilities debriefing can be made to fit the purpose of the internet and computer. Support groups can be provided for the individuals who are at risk of internet addiction by means of forming psycho-education groups based on cognitive behavioral approaches.

