

AFFECTS OF SOCIAL MEDIA ADDICTION: A SURVEY

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INTRODUCTION

The rapid developments in technology and communication in the 21st century bring a necessity for human beings to access to information and use it in the most effective way. In today's world, the fastest and practical way to reach information is undoubtedly the Internet (Tektaş, 2014). Internet technology is rapidly evolving today and social networking is increasing the number of users every day. (Kırık et al., 2015).

Social media creates a world beyond the limitations of the physical world and differs in perceptions such as time, speed and space. This virtual world is as fast and temporary as the real world cannot be. This keeps users more active in the virtual world. The individual in the virtual space creates a new virtual identity, can hide real life mistakes and can eliminate the physical defects with the help of an editing program (Alanka and Cezik, 2016). Consumers have now become individuals publishing personal stories in their social networks. They become branded storytellers and brand ambassadors willing or unintentional (Booth and Matic, 2011).

Social media now facilitates some tasks that are difficult to do in real life. Opportunities such as volunteering, aid, charity organizations, performing and sharing art works, discussing ideas and projects with experts who are not easily accessible in real life can be shown among the benefits of social media. In addition to its benefits, social media is entered to our life with some negative effects. Most of the negative effects are on young people in particular. Improper content sharing, negativity of peer-to-peer relationships, online privacy breach, advertising and orienting consumer behavior, online harassment, online bullying are shown as some negative effects of social media (O'Keeffe and Pearson, 2018). Apart from these, sleep disorder, increase in the tendency to lie, personality change, decrease in sexual interest, distant from real life, energy loss are also the harmful effects of social media (Young, 2004). Whether a addiction on a substance develops can be understood by looking at the diagnoses in Table 1. When 3 of these diagnoses are seen together, the person is defined as addicted.

Table 1. Diagnosis Of Addiction

Diagnosis
1 Development of tolerance to the substance used
2 The emergence of withdrawal symptoms when the substance is discontinued or reduced
3 Efforts to prevent or control substance use
4 Spend great time to provide, use or leave the substance
5 Negative impact of social, professional and personal activities due to substance use
6 Longer and higher amounts of using substance
7 Maintaining substance use even if physical or mental problems arise or increase

According to the definition of addiction, the social media addiction of the person can be understood by some diagnoses. These are; the inability to prevent the overuse of social media, the need for more time spent on social media, the loss of importance of the time without being connected to social media, the emergence of extreme nervousness, tension, uneasiness when deprived, and the deterioration of work, social and family life. (Bozkurt et al., 2016). A typical social media addict uses social media tools between 40-80 hours per week.

METHOD

The research is a descriptive study in the screening model. The study was designed as a qualitative study. An online survey was prepared for the study. Surveys were distributed to each person via e-mail groups, regardless of the audience. 288 participants answered the questionnaire. The results of the survey were analyzed statistically and the attitudes of the users regarding social media and addiction were interpreted. 4 questions for demographic properties and 6 questions to measure social media habits were asked in the questionnaire. The recorded data were analyzed by the content analysis method used for qualitative research.

Table 2. Gender Distribution Of Participants

Answer	Count	Percentage
Female	97	33,7 %
Male	191	66,3 %

As seen in Table 2, %33,7 of the participants were female and 66,3% were male in gender. The survey was delivered to many users without looking their gender, but mostly male participants answered the questionnaire.

Table 3. Age Distribution Of Participants

Term	Value
Count of participants	191
Average	33,02
Standard deviation	12,43
Minimum	17
Maximum	70

The mean age of the participants is calculated as 33,02. The youngest participant is 17 years old and the oldest participant is 70 years old. As it is shown in Table 3, the standard deviation value of the participants is calculated as 12,43.

Table 4. Education Level Distribution Of Participants

Last graduated	Count	Percentage
High school graduate	39	13,5 %
Associate degree graduate	84	29,2 %
Undergraduate	128	44,4 %
Graduate	29	10,1 %
Doctoral graduate	8	2,8 %

The educational level of the participants was measured with a 5-choice question. High school, undergraduate, graduate, postgraduate and doctorate options were presented to the participants considering the 8 years compulsory education in Turkey. It is seen that 44,4% of the participants are graduated from

the bachelor's degree and 29,2% of them graduated from the associate degree program. As seen in Table 4, only the 13,5% of the participants did not study at the university, however, 19 out of 39 people are still under 20 years old.

Participants first answered the question whether they are actively using at least one of the social media tools or not. According to this, only 18 participant which are 6,25% of the 288 respondents stated that they are not using any social media tools. As the research data of “We Are Social” company in January 2018, there are 51 million social media users in Turkey which constitutes 63% of total population reputation and 44 million of them are actively using social media channels. According to the same research, the number of Internet users are 54,33 million people which is the 67% of total population. These data shows that only 6,3% of Internet users do not use any social media tools in Turkey. There is a negligible difference of 0,5% with the data in the survey we made on 288 users and the results of the survey of “We Are Social”. According to the same survey, average time spent in social media is calculated as 2 hours 48 minutes in Turkey.

Table 5. Approximate Time Spent On Social Media Per Day

Time	Count	Percentage
0 minutes	13	4,5 %
30 minutes	51	17,7 %
1 hour	64	22,2 %
2 hours	66	22,9 %
3 hours	43	14,9 %
4 hours	15	5,2 %
5 hours and more	36	12,5 %

In this study, participants were answered how much time they spent on average social media per day with the options in Table 5 were presented. More than 50% of the participants are concentrated on half, 1, 2 and 3 hours a day. Only 13 of participants who declare they use social media channels stated that they don't spend any time on social media as passive users.

Table 6. The First Thing Participants Check When They Connect To Internet

Term	Count	Percentage
Social media accounts	146	50,7 %
E-mail accounts	44	15,3 %
News	65	22,6 %
Games	10	3,5 %
Other	23	8,0 %

It is asked to participants “What do they look as soon as they are connected to Internet” and choices are presented which are shown in Table 6. 50,7% of the participants stated that they connect to social media accounts. In addition, the participants were answered whether they had 24 hours disconnected to social media in the last month or not. 134 of participants answered that, they hadn't. In other words, 46,5% of the participants stated that they did not have a day without social media in last month. It is asked that whether they would turn their social media accounts off with their own request without any excuses. 199 people who are 69% of the total participants stated that they cannot give up their social media accounts. In order to measure the perception of addiction criteria: “The emergence of withdrawal symptoms when the substance is discontinued or reduced”, it is asked “Would you feel bad when you did not check your social media accounts?”. Only 23,2% of the participants answers “Yes”.

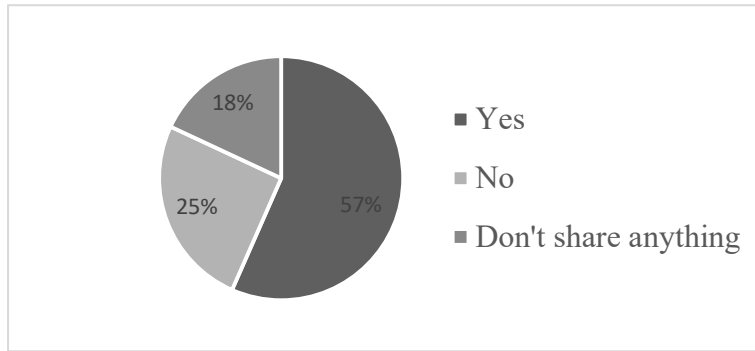


Figure 1. Percentage Of Participants Re-checking Their Accounts For Comments And Likes Just After Sharing Any Information Or Media.

The participants were answered the question whether they are checking comments or likes immediately after making a share in their social media profile. As it is seen in Figure 1, 164 people who are 57% of all participants answered “Yes”.

In order to measure the addictiob level of smoking addicts, it is checked that they smoke before sleeping at night and just after getting up in the morning. Many studies have shown that cigarette, alcohol and drug addiction have similar symptoms with Internet addiction. According to this data, two questions were asked to the participants in this study. First question is “Would you check your social media account just before going to sleep at night?”. 154 peoplewho are 53.47% of participants answered “yes”.Similarly, second question is “Do you first check your social media account as soon as you get up in the morning?”. 90 people who are 31,25% of participants answered “yes”. The number of participants who answered yes to these two questions at the same time is 84 and the number of participants who answered no to both is 132.72 of these 84 people who answered yes to both questionsare answered the question ”What do they look as soon as they are connected to Internet?” as social media accounts. Also, 48 of these 84 participants are answered yes to the question “Do you feel bad when you don’t check your social media accounts”. As a last question, it as asked “Are you addicted to social media?” to the participants. 83 people who are %28,82 of them answered yes and 205 people answered no to this question. This question tries to measure of personel awareness of addiction.

RESULTS

Collected data are analysed according to the last question: “Are you addicted to social media?”. 83 participants are aware of they are addicted. 65 of them are checking their social media accounts just before bedtime and just after getting up in the morning. Only 4 participants who accept addiction rejects these two behaviour, but they declare spending 3 hours on social media per day and they don’t even think to turn off their social accounts.

20 of 205 participants who rejects they are addicted to social media declare that they are checking their social media accounts just before bedtime and just after getting up in the morning. Also 97 of these 205 participants declare that they are checking comments or likes immediately after making a share in their social media profile.

It is seen that all participants who accept that they are addicted to social media answered questions appropriate to addiction definitons. 36 of the participants who stated that they did not make any share in

social media and that they were in the position of being an audience, stated that they were not addicted to social media, but also answered no to other questions showing addiction diagnoses.

In this study, it is seen that the participants are aware of their social media addiction level with social media usage habits. The level of addiction is higher in users who share on social media and lower in those who are only in the audience position. There is no significant relationship between social media addiction and age and education level. The average time spent on a day in social media is clearly higher in addicted people.

RESOURCES

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