

Extended Summary

Internet Addiction Research in Turkey: A Content Analysis Study*

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Abstract

Internet usage, while facilitating human life, can cause problems such as Internet, social media, mobile phone, and video game addictions. The aim of the study is to determine the research trends of scientific studies on Internet addiction between the years 2010-2019 and to investigate the content of these studies. This study is a descriptive study aimed at revealing the current situation in Turkey related to Internet addiction. In this context, the studies included in the research have been analyzed using the method of content analysis. This research examines a total of 153 studies (40 graduate theses and 113 articles in the National Thesis Center, ULAKBIM, Google Scholar, Web of Science, ERIC, and EBSCO databases). According to the results, a significant portion of the publications on Internet addiction have been designed according to the relational research design, a quantitative research method. In these studies, the experimental research and qualitative research have been determined to be quite limited. The most frequently studied variable/subject in Internet addiction studies is seen to be family relations (10.7%). This variable is followed by depression (9.6%), use of social networks (7.6%), social support (7.6%), and academic achievement (6.1%). As a result, quantitative and experimental methods have emerged as methods that should be included, as well as quantitative methods, in order to reach more comprehensive findings in studies on Internet addiction. In addition, studies on the primary and secondary school period are limited.

Keywords

Internet addiction • Social network • Content analysis • Problematic Internet usage • Addiction

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These days, Internet and technology use affect many areas of human life, such as socialization, learning, and family relations. Although Internet use facilitates the individual in many areas, particularly in accessing information, it also has some negative effects on human life (Iwaibara, Fukuda, Tsumura, & Kanda, 2019; İskender, Koç, Arıcı, & Güven, 2018; Neverkovich et al., 2018). Internet use in recent years has spread rapidly in the world as well as in Turkey. The Turkish Statistical Institute (TUIK), which explains annual statistics for Turkey, announced the proportion of households with Internet access to be 83.8% in 2018 (TUIK, 2018). Although the Internet contributes many things, such as increased communication and information in society, widespread Internet use can bring about various problems such as Internet addiction (Ertemel & Aydın, 2019; Pektaş & Mayda, 2018; Yang & Kim, 2018). The problem here is not widespread Internet use in society but abuse of the Internet and using it to the point where a person loses control.

Although world-wide research has shown Internet addiction to be a disorder seen in all genders at practically any age (Arsoy, 2009; Cerniglia et al., 2017), it is especially prominent in studies where youths, who make up the future of societies, are being heavily affected by Internet addiction and its derivatives (Evren et al., 2019; Lau et al., 2017; Pektaş & Mayda, 2018; Yang & Kim, 2018). Internet addiction is said to be more intense for youths in Turkey, compared to adults (Cetinkaya, 2019; Ertemel & Aydın, 2019). Therefore, the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) and the Green Crescent Organization started an addiction prevention program in Turkey, the Addiction Training Program of Turkey Project (TBM), and have conducted extensive studies on this issue (The Addiction Training Program of Turkey Project [TBM], 2019). The aim of this study is to examine the research on Internet addiction in Turkey between the years 2010-2019 alongside determining the trends in Internet addiction research in Turkey.

Method

Research Design

Content analysis has been preferred for the purpose of the research. Content analysis is a method for systematically analyzing many different materials such as tables, novels, articles, sound recordings, or pictures for a specific purpose (Cohen, Manion, & Morison, 2007; Drisko & Maschi, 2016; Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2012; Silverman, 2015). This study categorizes studies on Internet addiction according to themes and calculates their frequencies in accordance with the purpose of the study.

Sample

This study examines a total of 153 studies (40 graduate theses and 113 articles) that were published between 2010-2019 in the National Thesis Center, ULAKBİM,

Google Scholar, Web of Science, ERIC, or EBSCO databases. The keyword *Internet Addiction* (İnternet Bağımlılığı in Turkish) was used to search in the databases during the data collection process. The research examines theses and articles.

Data Collection Tools

A research evaluation form (REF) developed by the researcher has been used within the scope of the research. Similar studies are found in the literature to have created an REF (Bozkurt, Şahin, & Zoroğlu, 2016; Güven, Özhan, Kaynak, & Demirbaş, 2018). The REF has seven categories: year of publication, number of authors, type of study, method used, study group, sample size, and subjects/variables studied. The REF has been provided in Annex 1.

Data Analysis

After the studies to be included in this study were determined, their data were subjected to content analysis in five stages as suggested in the literature (Denzin & Lincoln, 2017; Silverman, 2015). With respect to these stages, data were coded, themes were created, codes and themes were arranged, measurements were made related to validity and reliability, and lastly frequencies were calculated and interpreted. Creswell (2012) proposed three stages to ensure the validity of a study undergoing content analysis: data diversity, participant confirmation, and expert opinion. In order to ensure data diversity in the current study, studies from as many different sampling groups as possible have been included in the research. In addition, expert opinion was obtained regarding the themes and codes that formed.

Findings

According to the results, an important section of the articles on Internet addiction have been designed according to the relational research design, a quantitative research method. Experimental research and qualitative research designs were found to be quite limited in the studies. Table 1 shows the variables (coded frequency of 2 or higher) and their distributions that have been studied alongside Internet addiction in the studies, which were then subjected to content analysis within the scope of the research. In cases with multiple variables related to Internet addiction, all the variables that were studied have been coded separately and included in the analysis.

The most frequently studied variable/subject in Internet addiction studies is seen to be family relations (10.7%), followed by depression (9.6%), use of social networks (7.6%), social support (7.6%), and academic achievement (6.1%). In addition, Table 6 shows these to have been included in studies at a frequency of two or higher. Moral maturity, peer pressure, metacognition, cognitive schemas, emotion regulation,

Table 1
Variables / Topics on Internet Addiction Research

| <i>Variables</i> | <i>Frequency (f)</i> | <i>Percentage (%)</i> |
|---|----------------------|-----------------------|
| Family Relations | 21 | 10.7 |
| Academic achievement | 12 | 6.1 |
| Alexithymia | 3 | 1.5 |
| Alcohol, cigarette, drug or other addiction | 12 | 6.1 |
| Attachment | 5 | 2.5 |
| Coping skills | 3 | 1.5 |
| Self esteem | 6 | 3 |
| Depression | 19 | 9.6 |
| Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) | 10 | 5.1 |
| Dissociative disorder | 2 | 1.4 |
| Communication skills | 4 | 2.8 |
| Personality | 10 | 4.8 |
| Psychological symptoms (Anxiety, stress etc.) | 16 | 6.8 |
| Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder | 2 | 1 |
| Online game addiction | 8 | 4.1 |
| Cyber bullying | 3 | 1.4 |
| Social network | 15 | 7.6 |
| Social support | 15 | 7.6 |
| Social phobia | 3 | 1.5 |
| Sleep disorder | 2 | 1 |
| Shyness | 4 | 2 |
| Loneliness | 13 | 6.6 |
| Life satisfaction | 7 | 3.6 |
| Eating disorder | 2 | 1 |
| Total | 197 | 100 |

emotional intelligence, physical activity, seeking excitement, risk taking behavior, suicide, self-disclosure, happiness, authenticity, anger, subjective well-being, self-efficacy, psychological needs, psychological capital, problem solving skills, social intelligence, trauma, hopelessness, group counseling, compassion, narcissism and time management variables were each studied only once.

Discussion and Recommendations

When examining the studies subjected to content analysis in terms of the method used, the majority of studies (88.8%) have been determined to be quantitative research, and the most commonly used method in these studies was the relational method. The use of experimental and qualitative methods was found to be quite limited, and mixed pattern studies were almost never used. The use of qualitative data to gain in-depth knowledge of a variable provides researchers with depth (Creswell, 2012; Patton, 2018; Silverman, 2015). In addition, mixed-method research in which qualitative and quantitative methods are used together has been preferred in recent years in terms of providing in-depth information on the subject (Creswell, 2012). From this point of view, experimental, qualitative, and mixed-design researches being so limited can

be seen as a significant problem in terms of developing tested preventive programs specific to Turkish culture.

This study shows the subjects studied related to Internet addiction to have been very diverse, with studies on family relations and family coming in first (10.7%). The fact that the majority of the data had been obtained from secondary education (41.2%) and university (44.8%) students is a limitation here, even though the role of family has been emphasized as important and effective; this is also the case in international research (Soh et al., 2018; Venkatesh et al., 2019). This should also be supported by collecting data directly from families and performing experimental research. That the family provides children with social support on various topics is known in the literature (Wu et al., 2016). When examining the studies, internet addiction's possible association with many dangerous problems such as loneliness, loss of emotion, eating disorder, depression and suicide has been emphasized (Arısoy, 2009; Cerniglia, 2017; İskender et al., 2019; Yang & Kim, 2018). In addition, cyber bullying is currently another problem that affects a significant part of society as a result of Internet abuse, and may even result in death (Beckman, Hellström, & von Kobyletzki, 2019; Morris & Thompson, 2019). For this reason, Internet addiction continues to be increasingly studied (Ayas et al., 2011; Cetinkaya, 2019; Iwaibara et al., 2019). As a result, this research presents the studies published between 2010-2019 on Internet addiction with a holistic approach and has aimed to facilitate researchers in the field on the literature review. Considering that Internet usage has become more widespread, especially in recent years, this study is thought to be an important resource that can be presented in studies to be conducted in the future.

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Ek 1*Araştırma Değerlendirme Formu (ADF)***Araştırma Numarası:****Araştırmanın Yılı:**

| | | | | | | | |
|---|--|----------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|--|----------------------------|--------------------|
| Araştırmanın Türü | Yüksek Lisans Tezi (1) | Uzmanlık Tezi (2) | Doktora Tezi (3) | Araştırma Makalesi (4) | Derleme Makale (5) | | |
| Yazar Sayısına Göre Dağılımı | Tek Yazarlı (1) | İki Yazarlı (2) | Üç Yazarlı (3) | Dört Yazarlı (4) | Beş ve Üstü Yazar (5) | | |
| Araştırmanın Yöntemine Göre Dağılımı | Nitel (İlişkisel, Nedensel vb.) (1) | Deneysel (2) | Nitel (3) | Karma (4) | Belirtilmemiş Diğer (5) | | |
| Çalışma Gruplarına Göre Dağılımı | İlkokul ve Okul Öncesi (1) | Ortaokul (2) | Lise (3) | Üniversite (4) | Yetişkinler (Ebeveynler, Öğretmenler vb.) (5) | Tanılanmış Hastalar (6) | |
| Örneklem Büyüklüğü | 1-100 (1) | 101-200 (2) | 201-400 (3) | 401-600 (4) | 601-800 (5) | 801-1000 (6) | 1001 ve Üst (7) |
| Çalışılan Değişkenler | Değişken 1 | Değişken 2 | Değişken 3 | Değişken 4 | Değişken 5 | Değişken 6 | Değişken 7 |