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The study of the teachers' problematic internet usage

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Abstract

Although the internet has many benefits for our lives, we encounter studies which reveals problems in one's social and individual lives due to excessive and uncontrolled usage of the internet. The excessive and uncontrolled usage of internet, which is also called as problematic internet usage, may cause serious damages in one's life. In this study, problematic internet usages of teachers are examined regarding to some variables. The participants of the study are 248 teachers from Bartın in Turkey who voluntarily take part. Data is collected through "Personal Information Form" and "Problematic Internet Usage Scale". As conclusion of the study, the degree of teachers' problematic internet usage is revealed and the sub-dimensions of the scale which are "negative consequences of the internet", "social benefit/social comfort" and "excessive usage" are evaluated regarding to the variables within the study. Study puts emphasis on what can be done to prevent teachers from using the internet excessively and gives suggestions to the other researchers.

Keywords: problematic internet usage, teachers, internet

1. INTRODUCTION

With the developing technology, the use of the internet is spreading rapidly in our country as well as many other developed countries. Internet is seen as an environment in which people can meet their friends, carry out their jobs, meet their needs related to expertise, entertainment and education (Karaođlan Yılmaz, Yılmaz, Öztürk, Sezer, & Karademir, 2015). Therefore, the use of internet affects individuals' social and academic lives (Anderson, 2001).

In the recent years, the increase in the use of internet requires the investigation of its effects on humans as a rapidly developing communication environment especially in terms of its services. It was seen that while some of the individuals could limit their internet use in accordance with their needs, some of them could not limit it and faced with various losses due to that excessive internet use (Gönül, 2002). It is seen in the literature that there are different definitions about this situation stated as problematic or pathological internet use.

According to Morahan-Martin and Schumacher (2000), problematic internet use is that the internet is densely used, it cannot be taken under control and it damages one's life seriously. According to Beard and Wolf (2001), problematic internet use is defined as a person's excessive use at home, and in business/school, social and psychological life that creates problems. It is seen that many researchers assume the use people spend with internet as a characteristic use while explaining pathological or problematic internet use (Nalwa & Anand, 2003; Young, 1996). The increase in the total use of internet is understood to lead to increase in the problematic internet use (Anderson, 2001; Balta & Horzum, 2008; Ceyhan & Ceyhan, 2007; Morahan-Martin & Schumacher, 2000; Odabaşıođlu, Öztürk, Genç, & Pektaş, 2007; Odacı & Kalkan, 2010; Young, 1996).

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The main purpose of the internet's emergence is to increase communication and opportunities of researchers by making knowledge sharing easier (Öztürk, Odabaşoğlu, Eraslan, Genç, & Kalyoncu, 2007). However, the fact that the internet has become widespread faster and more uncontrolled than predicted has brought many problems along. As mentioned before, while some individuals control the time they spend on the internet, some cannot control it and they can face with problems in their family, business/work and social lives due to excessive internet use (Karaoğlu Yılmaz, Yılmaz, Tekel, & Keser, 2014). It is seen that mobile internet access opportunities have become widespread depending upon the fact that information and communication technologies (ICT) have become widespread today. Thanks to using mobile tools, individuals are able to connect to the internet wherever and whenever they want. Meanwhile, internet access opportunities in the schools increase along with ICT integration applications to the schools today. While internet access in the schools may bring various benefits to education process, it is thought that this situation could lead to teachers' problematic internet uses. This situation may reflect on teachers' daily lives and performances at work, and also affect teachers' life quality and work performances negatively. When the literature is examined, it is seen that there are various studies conducted on problematic internet use and these studies are mostly conducted with several groups such as university students or young people. It is seen that the number of the studies conducted on teachers is limited. In this study, it was aimed to present a profile of teachers by investigating teachers' problematic internet use cases in terms of various variables. Thus, it is necessary to identify problematic internet use of teachers and take precautions to solve the problems encountered.

The purpose of the current study conducted according to the reasons explained above is to investigate the problematic internet use of the teachers in terms of different variables and to identify the relationship between them. The following questions were tried to be answered within the frame of this purpose:

1. What is the level of teachers' problematic internet use?
2. Do the levels of teachers' problematic internet use differ by;
 - a) their gender,
 - b) their daily internet usage time,
 - c) for how many years they have been using the internet?

2. METHOD

In this section, information was presented about the model of the research, participants, instruments and data analysis.

2.1. Research Design

In this study, survey model was used in order to present teachers' problematic internet use. As is known, survey models are the models that aim to describe a situation or event as so. The situation or the event is defined in its own conditions and its own way (Karasar, 2003).

2.2. Participants and Instruments

The participants of the study are 248 teachers working in Bartın city center in 2014-2015 academic year and participating in the study on voluntary basis.

Instruments in the research were Personal Information Form and Problematic Internet Usage Scale. Personal Information Form was used in order to get information about several demographical characteristics such as teachers' gender, daily internet usage time etc., and it was delivered to the teachers.

In order to determine teachers' problematic internet use situations, Problematic Internet Use Scale developed by Ceyhan, Ceyhan and Gürcan (2007) was used. The scale consists of three factors: "negative consequences of the internet", "social benefit/social comfort", and "excessive usage". The scale is composed of 5-point likert. As for the reliability of the scale, internal consistency coefficient was found as (α) 0.95. As for internal consistency coefficients of three factors creating the scale, it was found as 0.94 for the negative consequences of the internet; it was found as 0.85 for social benefit/social comfort factor; and it was found as 0.75 for excessive usage. The results in the study indicate that problematic internet usage scale has a high internal consistency and is quite reliable. 7. and 12. Items are calculated reversely, and the lowest score to be gained from the scale is 33 and the highest is 165. High scores in

the scale are judged as an indicator that participants' internet use is problematic, it affects their lives negatively, and it could lead them to have tendencies towards a pathology such as addiction.

3. FINDINGS

The findings and comments about gender, daily internet usage time, and for how many years they have been using the internet are presented in order below within the scope of the problem and sub-problem of the study.

In accordance with the first sub-problem of the study, descriptive statistics of problematic internet use levels of the teachers are indicated in Table 1.

Table 1. Distribution of the scores of teachers' problematic internet use levels

Scales	Number of Items	Lowest Score	Highest Score	\bar{X}	sd	\bar{X}/k
Problematic Internet Usage Scale	33	34.00	155.00	61.73	22.27	1.87

According to Table 1, total score average of teachers from problematic internet usage scale is 61.73 (1.87 out of 5). Within this context, it could be said that problematic internet use of the teachers is low.

Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was applied in order to find out whether the teachers in the study group had a normal distribution concerning their problematic internet use levels. As a result of the findings gained from the test, it was determined that the data from problematic internet usage scale did not have normal distribution ($p>0.05$). Thus, Mann Whitney U and Kruskal Wallis tests among non-parametric tests were used while analyzing the data not having normal distribution. In the significance tests of the study, .05 reliability level was based on.

In accordance with the sub-problem of the research, descriptive statistics of teachers' problematic internet use levels by gender are given in Table 2.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics of teachers' problematic internet use levels by gender

Gender	N	\bar{X}	sd
Female	135	58.06	20.12
Male	113	66.11	23.95

When Table 2 was analyzed, it was seen that the mean score that female teachers got from problematic internet usage scale was 58.06 and the mean score of male teachers was 66.11. In terms of gender variable, it is seen that there are differences in the scores gained from problematic internet usage scale. In order to determine whether this difference is statistically significant or not, non-parametric Mann Whitney U test was applied. The test results were shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Mann whitney u test results of teachers' problematic internet use levels by gender

Gender	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	U	P
Female	135	112.20	15147.00	5967.00	.003
Male	113	139.19	15729.00		

When Table 3 is analyzed, it is seen that problematic internet use levels of teachers by genders show statistically meaningful differences ($U=5967.00$, $p<.05$). In other words, it was seen that male teachers' problematic internet use levels were higher than female teachers.

In accordance with the second sub-problem of the study, descriptive statistics of teachers' problematic internet use levels by their daily use time are given in Table 4.

Table 4. Descriptive statistics of teachers' problematic internet use levels by their daily internet usage time

Daily internet usage time	N	\bar{x}	sd
less than 1 hour	58	52.69	17.12
1-3 hours	117	58.02	16.93
4-6 hours	48	72.65	26.95
7-9 hours	12	85.50	34.99
10 hours or more	13	73.15	19.10

When Table 4 was analyzed, it was seen that the mean scores that teachers got from problematic internet usage scale were as such respectively; the score of the teachers that use internet for "less than 1 hour" was 52.69, the score of the teachers that use internet for "1-3 hours" was 58.02, the score of the teachers that use internet for "4-6 hours" was 72.65, the score of the teachers that use internet for "7-9 hours" was 85.50, and the score of the teachers that use internet for "10 hours or more" was 73.15. It is seen that there are differences in the mean scores that the teachers got from problematic internet usage scale according to the daily internet usage time variable. In order to find out whether this difference is statistically significant or not, Kruskal Wallis test was used for unrelated measurement. The test results were given in Table 5.

Table 5. The results of kruskal wallis test on the problematic internet usage levels of teachers by their daily internet usage time

Daily internet usage time	N	Mean Rank	df	χ^2	P	Sig.
less than 1 hour	58	89.57	4	36.60	.000	less than 1 hour - 1-3 hours
1-3 hours	117	118.15				less than 1 hour - 4-6 hours
4-6 hours	48	155.13				less than 1 hour - 7-9 hours
7-9 hours	12	178.83				less than 1 hour - 10 hours or more
10 hours or more	13	174.31				1-3 hours - 4-6 hours 1-3 hours - 7-9 hours 1-3 hours - 10 hours or more

When the Table 5 was analyzed, the scores that the teachers obtained from the problematic internet usage scale showed a statistically significant difference from the daily internet usage time [$\chi^2(df=4, n=248)=3660, p<.05$]. In order to determine between which usage times this significant difference occurred, Mann Whitney U test was applied. According to the test, in the problematic internet usage scale, the scores of those who used the internet for "1-3 hours", "4-6 hours", "7-9 hours" and "more than 10 hours" were found to differentiate from the scores of those went online for "less than 1 hour". The ones who used the internet "less than 1 hour" were stated to have lower scores in the problematic internet usage scale. Furthermore, those who went online for "1-3 hours" "4-6 hours", "7-9 hours" and "more than 10 hours" had various scores in the scale. The scores of the ones who used the internet for "1-3 hours" were found to be lower than the other ones with varying internet usage times. When the mean of the scores obtained from the problematic internet usage scale was analyzed, the highest mean was discovered to be of the teachers who went online for "7-9 hours" whereas the lowest mean belonged to the teachers who used the internet for "less than 1 hour".

In accordance with the second sub-problem of the study, descriptive statistics of teachers' problematic internet use levels by for how many years they have been using the internet were given in Table 6.

Table 6. Descriptive statistics of teachers' problematic internet use levels by for how many years they have been using the internet

How many years they have been using the internet	N	\bar{x}	sd
1-4 years	82	58.23	19.93
5-8 years	128	62.68	23.76
9-12 years	32	64.88	19.57
13 years or more	6	72.33	30.51

When Table 6 was analyzed, it was seen that the mean scores that teachers got from problematic internet usage scale were as such respectively; the score of the ones that have been using the internet for “1-4 years” is 58.23, the score of the ones that have been using the internet for “5-8 years” is 62.68, the score of the ones that have been using the internet for “9-12 years” is 64.88, and the score of the ones that have been using the internet for “13 years or more” is 72.33. It is seen that there are differences in the mean scores that the teachers got from problematic internet usage scale according to for how many years they have been using the internet variable. In order to find out whether this difference is statistically significant or not, Kruskal Wallis test was used for unrelated measurement. The test results were given in Table 7.

Table 7. Kruskal wallis test results of teachers’ problematic internet use levels and for how many years they have been using the internet

How many years they have been using the internet	N	Mean Rank	df	χ^2	P
1-4 years	82	113.03	3	4.79	.188
5-8 years	128	126.36			
9-12 years	32	141.56			
13 years or more	6	150.58			

When Table 7 was examined, it is seen that the scores of the teachers from problematic internet usage scale do not show statistically meaningful differences according to for how many years they have been using the internet [$\chi^2(df=3, n=248)=4.79, p>.05$]. When the mean scores of for how many years they have been using the internet, the participants who have been using the internet for 13 years or more have the highest mean score, and the ones that have been using the internet for 1-4 years at an internet cafe have the lowest mean score.

4. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The results of this research, realized to find out the problematic internet use situations of teachers, show that the level of problematic internet usage of the teachers, constituting the participants of the research, is low. Considering the research results from the view of gender variable, it was found out that the level of problematic internet usage of male teachers is higher than female teachers. When the literature is analyzed, it is observed that there are similar results, showing that the level of problematic internet use of males is higher than females (Ceyhan & Ceyhan, 2007; Ceyhan, 2008; Sirakaya, 2011). From this view, it can be argued that the results of the research related to gender are consistent with the literature. As for the daily internet usage time variable, it is observed that there are differences in problematic internet usage situations of teachers and generally problematic internet usage situation increases depending on the increase in the duration of internet usage. Similarly, Sirakaya (2011), Karaođlan Yılmaz et al. (2014) concluded that problematic internet usage situations of individuals differ according to the daily internet usage time. However, it is observed that there is no significant difference among variable how long internet has been used. When related literature is studied, there are found a variety of studies reaching the conclusion that there is no significant difference between how long individuals use internet, thus, corroborating the results of this research (Balta & Horzum, 2008; Karaođlan Yılmaz et al., 2014; Sirakaya, 2011).

When problematic internet use was estimated according to gender, it was seen that male teachers were more inclined to problematic internet use than females. In order to identify the factors leading to this result, a study could be conducted with male teachers. Studies can be started in order to prevent possible negative situations by making tests to identify problematic internet use in the schools. Also, in-service trainings, seminars, etc. can be organized in order to increase teachers’ knowledge and awareness in this point and to reduce teachers’ problematic internet use. Also, deeper qualitative studies can be conducted to identify the relationship of problematic internet use with personal and psychological conditions. It should be acknowledged that this study done in accordance with survey model has several limitations. First of all, the data of the study were gained from the teachers working in Bartın city center. In order to generalize the findings to the whole population, the study could be repeated with participants determined by sampling with bigger groups. Furthermore, qualitative methods could be used to collect data as well as quantitative methods.

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