The Predictive Level of Social Media Addiction for Life Satisfaction: A Study on University Students[*]

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ABSTRACT
Social media addiction is considered as a sort of Internet addiction. Individuals who spend too much time on social media have a desire to be notified of anything immediately, which can cause virtual tolerance, virtual communication and virtual problems. Behaviours that force the person into these actions can be explained as social media addiction. This study aims to determine the relationship between social media addiction and life satisfaction among university students as well as the effect of social media addiction on predicting life satisfaction. The participants are composed of 612 (380 female, 232 male) university students. Social Media Addiction Scale-Adult Form (Şahin and Yağcı, 2017) and Life Satisfaction Scale (Diener, Emmons, Larsen and Griffin, 1985; Köker, 1991) were used in the data collection process. Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient and regression methods were used to analyse the data. The results indicated that there is a negative relationship and moderate correlation between life satisfaction and social media addiction. There is also a significant relationship, according to the regression analysis, between life satisfaction and social media addiction levels.

Keywords: Social media addiction, life satisfaction, university student.

INTRODUCTION

Internet is such technology that makes it possible for people to get all sorts of information in a snap and to communicate with other people at a fast pace. With this feature, internet has been a tool of communication penetrating every sphere of human life. Internet in today's world is a popular tool used by not only adults and teenagers but also children and seen as a free time activity in a multitude of countries across the globe.

According to the Internet World Stats (2017), the number of Internet users worldwide has reached to four billion. The proportion of Internet and social media usage (e.g. Facebook) to population is 27,7 and 11,7 % in Africa; 45,2 and 13,4 % in Asia; 77,4 and 39,9 % in Europe; 59,6 and 55,8 % in Latin America; 56,7 and 30,3 % in the Middle East; 88,1 and 62,1 % in North America; 68,1 and 51,7 % in Australia. In Turkey, according to the same survey, the proportion of Internet users is 59,6 % and that of social media (Facebook) is 53,2 %. The rate of increase over the last 15 years is 93,4 %. According to the Turkish Statistical Institute (TUIK, 2016), the proportion of individuals using the Internet in Turkey is 61.2%. As for the purposes of Internet usage in Turkey, 82.4% of individuals who use the Internet in the first three months of 2016 have shared their social networking profiles/photos, messages and content. This ratio is higher among adolescents and students when compared to the other age groups (TUIK, 2016).

Social media is one of the most important means of communication today. The frequency of social media usage has increased in parallel with the increase in frequency of Internet usage (Tektaş, 2014). Over the last few years, social media use has become an increasingly popular free time activity in a multitude of countries across the world (Kuss & Griffiths, 2011). Poeple visit social media sites to engage in many different types of entertainment and social activity, including games, time-wasting, socialising, posting photos, and communicating (Allen, Ryan, Gray, Mclnerney, & Waters, 2014). Excessive (Ceyhan, Ceyhan and Gürcan, 2007) or problematic use (Young, 1988; Davis, 2001) of the Internet or being online for 8,5 to 21,5 hours in a week (Yang and Tung, 2007) is defined as addiction.

Addiction is generally evaluated in terms of using substances like alcohol, drug, and tobacco. Recently, it is argued that such behaviours as gambling, eating, and sleeping cause addiction, too. As Fidan (2016) points out,

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addiction comprises technological devices and applications like computer, Internet, online games, mobile phone, etc. Internet addiction is accepted among the most common types of technological addiction today (Young, 1988; Şahin, 2011). Internet addiction (Young, 2004), online addiction (Tüzer, 2011), game addiction (Fisher, 1994; Horzum, 2011), social network addiction (Griffiths, 2012), cybersex addiction (Schwartz & Southern, 2000), mobile phone addiction (Bianchi & Phillips, 2005; Fidan, 2016), Facebook addiction (Andreassen, Torsheim, Brunborg & Pallesen, 2012), Twitter addiction (Said, Al-Rashid & Abdullah, 2014), and social media addiction (Andreassen, Torsheim, Brunborg and Pallesen, 2012; Şahin ve Yağcı, 2017) have been investigated in the context of behavioural addiction and are gaining importance in tandem with the developing technology.

Social media addiction is regarded as a kind of Internet addiction (Kuss and Griffiths, 2012). Being hooked on social media, wanting to be always online on social media, being directed with uncontrolled motivations and being affected negatively in other spheres of life due to this situation are regarded as the symptoms of social media addiction (Andreassen and Pallesen, 2014).

There are an increasing number of researches in the literature on the relationship between social media usage and human psychology (Pempek Yermolayeva and Calvert, 2009; Correa, Hinsley and de Zúñiga, 2010; Salehan and Negahban, 2013; Lepp, Barkley and Karpinski, 2014). Some indicate that social media use make people happy (Eren, Çelik and Aktürk, 2014). Others usually consider life satisfaction as personal contentment (Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin, 1985). Ellison et al. (2007) argue that mostly individuals with low levels of life satisfaction seek to join in social media in order to improve their psychological well-being.

The main argument about how life satisfaction leads to problematic Internet or social media use is that people prefer to spend more time on the Internet so as to avoid the feeling of dissatisfaction and to seek psychological satisfaction (Demir, Peker Özköklü and Aygün Tuğrul, 2015). Spending more time on the Internet to keep away from life dissatisfaction is seen as a significant factor increasing the possibility of problematic Internet use. Accordingly, Internet turns into a pretext to evade the sources of dissatisfaction and leads to problematic use (Çelik and Odacı, 2013; Esen, 2010).

Based on the reasons above, this study aims to determine the levels of life satisfaction and social media use among university students and put forth the relationship between their levels of life satisfaction and behaviours of social media use.

Objective of the Study
This study aims in general to analyse the relationship between social media addiction and life satisfaction as well as the effects of social media addiction on life satisfaction. The answers are sought for the following questions:
1. Is there a significant relationship between university students' social media addiction (virtual tolerance and virtual communication) and their life satisfaction?
2. Does university students' social media addiction significantly predict their life satisfaction?

METHOD
Study Model
This is a descriptive study based on a survey model. As it is known, survey models aim to reflect an existing situation as they are (Karasar, 2016). This study aims to examine the relationship between social media addiction and life satisfaction among the students of Faculty of Education.

Study Group
The participants included 612 students (380 female, 232 male) from different grade levels in the Ahi Evran University Faculty of Education. Distribution of the participants per grade level is as follows: 31,9 % of the participants (195 students) are first graders, 19,4% (119 students) second graders, 30,9 % (189 students) third graders and 17,8 % (109 students) fourth graders. The average age of the respondents is 20,34±1,10.

Data Collecting Instruments
The data were collected via "Demographical Information Form", "Social Media Addiction Scale: Adult Form" and "Life Satisfaction Scale". Psychometric properties of those measuring tools are specified below.

Demographical Information Form: Needed information about the participants' demographical characteristics such as grade level, gender, and department was obtained through a personal information form.

Social Media Addiction Scale - Adult Form: The SMAS-AF developed by Şahin and Yağcı (2017) is a five-point Likert type scale including 20 items that can be gathered under two factors (virtual tolerance and virtual

communication). Confirmatory factor analysis showed that the two-factor model fitted the data (χ2=7051,32; sd=190, p=0,00; RMSA=,059; SRMR=,060; NFI=,59; CFI=,96; GFI=,90; AGFI=,88). Internal consistency coefficients of the subdimensions were ,92 for virtual tolerance and ,91 for virtual communication. Coefficient of total internal consistency was ,94. Test-retest reliability coefficients were found as ,93 for the scale in total; ,91 for virtual tolerance and ,90 for virtual communication. The analysis proved that SMAS-AF is a valid and reliable scale that can be used to determine social media addiction among adults.

Life Satisfaction Scale: Life satisfaction was measured using the Turkish version of the Life Satisfaction Scale (Diener Emmons, Larsen and Griffin, 1985; Köker, 1991). This is a five-item, self-reported, seven-point Likert-type measurement scale (1=strongly disagree to 7=strongly agree). Higher scores indicated higher levels of psychological well-being. The scale measures overall life satisfaction and is suitable for use with individuals of all ages from adolescent to adult. The scale was translated to Turkish using the Face Validity technique developed by Köker (1991). The correlation between the scores of each item and the total scores of the scale were satisfactory. The test-retest reliability value of the scale was .86, the internal consistency coefficient was .80, and the test-retest reliability coefficient was .85.

Data Analysis
The students were divided into groups, and the scales were implemented in the classroom. The participants were fully informed of the purposes of the study before the scales were administered. Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient and regression methods were used to analyse the data. SPSS 22 was used while analysing the data.

RESULTS
This section includes the results of the analysis carried out to determine whether social media addiction and life satisfaction levels of students participating the research vary or not in accordance with the independent variables.

Findings related to students' social media addiction and life satisfaction levels are specified in Table 1.

Table 1: Students' social media addiction and life satisfaction levels

Variable	N	M	SD	Level
Virtual tolerance	612	24,72	9,26	Low
Virtual communication	612	17,20	7,01	Low
Social media addiction (Total)	612	41,92	15,03	Low
Life satisfaction	612	23,47	6,95	moderate

Table 1 shows that students' life satisfaction level is moderate, while their level of social media addiction and the relevant subdimensions is low. The relationship between students' life satisfaction and social media addiction and subdimensions was calculated via Pearson correlation technique and the results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Correlation between students' life satisfaction and social media addiction levels

Variable	VT	VC	SMA	LS
Virtual tolerance (VT)	1,00			
Virtual communication (VC)	,70*	1,00		
Social media addiction (SMA)	,94*	,90*		
Life satisfaction (LS)	-,27*	-,32*	-,31*	1,00

N=612,   *p<0.01

As seen in Table 2, there is a significant negative correlation between students' life satisfaction and social media addiction (r=-,31; p<.01) as well as their average scores of virtual tolerance (r=-,27; p<.01) and virtual communication (r=-,32; p<.01). This significant negative correlation between the scores means that the score the students get on a dimension decreases when their score on another dimension increases. We also studied whether the subdimensions of social media addiction predict life satisfaction.

Table 3: Multiple regression analysis of social media addiction in terms of life satisfaction

Variable	B	Std. Error	β	t	p	Partial R	Part r
Constant	29,469	,790		37,296	,000		
Virtual tolerance	-,067	,040	-,089	-1,657	,098	-,067	-,064
Virtual communication	-,252	,053	-,255	-4,743	,000	-,189	-,182

R=,323 R^2=.105 $F_{(2,-609)}$=35,540   p=.000

The results of multiple regression analysis on how social media addiction and its subdimensions predict life satisfaction are seen in Table 3. Accordingly, there is a low-level, negative and significant relationship between social media addiction and life satisfaction ($R=.323$, $R2=.105$, $p<.01$). Two subdimensions of social media addiction account for only 10 % of the total variance. T-test results regarding the significance of regression coefficients indicate that only virtual communication is a significant predictor of life satisfaction, whereas virtual tolerance, the other variable, is not effective to a considerable extent.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Internet as a mass communication tool is increasingly impacting and penetrating every sphere of human life, which gave rise to the emergence of sites of social networks called social media. This study examined the relationship between social media addiction and life satisfaction among university students.

The results indicated that the students' level of social media addiction is low while their level of life satisfaction is moderate. A significant negative correlation was observed between the students' life satisfaction and social media addiction and their average scores on virtual tolerance and virtual communication defined here as the subdimensions social media addiction. Social media addiction and its subdimensions show a high-level positive intercorrelation. The mentioned subdimensions are significantly coherent with each other. The more the participants are addicted to social media, the less they are satisfied with life.

As the regression analysis showed, social media addiction is an important predictor of life satisfaction, albeit affecting it negatively. According to the t-test results regarding the significance of standardized regression coefficients, virtual communication as a subdimension of social media addiction is an important predictor of life satisfaction ($p<.01$). However, virtual tolerance does not appear to be a significant predictor of life satisfaction ($p>.01$).

There are several studies supporting this result in the relevant literature. Balcı and Koçak (2017), Satıcı and Uysal (2015), and Spraggins (2009), for example, assert a positive relationship between social media use and life satisfaction. However, there are some studies not supporting the results of this study. Doğan (2016), Oh, Ozkaya and LaRose (2014), Mahan Iii, Seo, Jordan and Funk (2014), Ong and Lin (2015) argue that social media usage positively predicts life satisfaction.

In today's world, technology is progressing at an unbelievable speed and continually connects people of every age and type. This is the case for teenagers in particular. Considering the countries that are going through a process of change and development, e.g. Turkey, it is observed that technological processes and SNS are on the increase and becoming more of an issue (Doğan, 2016). From this point of view, social media use has a considerable place in students' life and negatively affects their life satisfaction.

In conclusion, there is a low-level, negative and noticeable relationship between social media addiction and life satisfaction. Social media addiction is an important variable in predicting life satisfaction. Social media addiction affects life satisfaction of university students in a negative way to a significant extent.

The number of studies examining the effects of social media on people in both Turkey and abroad is limited. We think it is worthwhile to carry out similar studies using different samples and variables.

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