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The correlation between interaction-audience anxieties and internet addiction levels of adults

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Abstract

The objective of this study is to determine what kind of a relationship exists between the interaction and audience anxiety levels of adults and internet addiction. The study was performed in the scanning model and is considered as a descriptive research. 384 adults constitute the study group of this research. The research data was collected by using the Interaction and Audience Anxiety Scale and Internet Addiction Scale. As a result: Both the interaction and audience anxiety levels of adults are low. There is a positive correlation at a significant level between the interaction and audience anxiety levels and internet addiction.

Keywords: Adult; Interaction; Audience; Anxieties; Internet Addiction

1. Introduction

In general, adult education can be defined as the process of providing knowledge and skill to individuals, who regard themselves as adult with regard to age and social role and are conscious of being responsible for their own life, in parallel to their interest and needs in their daily or professional lives (Merriam & Brockett, 1996). When the respective literature is looked through, it is seen that adult education practices are mostly associated with the concepts of schooling and development and frequently carried out in informal education institutions such as businesses, continuing education practices at the level of secondary and higher education, institutions of distance education, vocational education courses and public education centers (Koc et al., 2009). In such educations, mostly trainings like utilizing leisure times and improving dexterities are given. Whereas, interpersonal communication can be came across as a subject that should be paid attention in adult education process.

Interpersonal communication difficulty may have plenty of reasons that can stem from individual itself and his/her surrounding. Social anxiety may be the most important of all these reasons (Ozturk, 2004). Environment is effective as much as heredity in shaping of social anxiety (Yuksel, 1995). Anxiety is a condition of being stimulated manifesting itself with physical, emotional and mental changes that a person experiences encountering with a stimulant. Anxiety can be identified as an unpleasant emotional condition characterized with a feeling of the possibility of a danger that might be faced, discomfort, tension and fear (Oktem, 1981). Once the intensity and persistence of anxiety increases, it appears as a problem for people (Cuceloglu, 1997). Normal level of anxieties help individual to desire, decide, produce energy in the direction of decisions taken and in terms of using this energy to increase their performances. But, if the anxiety that individual experienced is quiet intense, individual's use of

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his/her energy efficiently, direction of his/her focus and power to the work that he/she will do is hindered (Aydin & Dilmac, 2004). Likewise, anxiety is defined as an emotional condition, in which a feeling of impotence that is perceived during preparation for a sensed danger is experienced (Ellis, 1994). Anxiety has three different kinds including personality, circumstance and incident-originated. Personality-originated anxiety, which is encountered in some people as a constant condition, is a part of human personality. Circumstance-originated anxiety is defined as the anxiety that is encountered against a certain situation within a specific time. Finally, incident-originated anxiety is experienced in the face of apparent incidents (Ellis, 1994). Adults can experience various anxiety situations as well depending on both the causes in daily life process and the causes stemmed from work load. It can be argued that these anxieties experienced by adults stem from the lack of social skills and people feel anxious to step into social environments because they lack social skills and this situation affects individuals' life and accomplishments in their daily life.

It might possible to mention many negative impacts of computers and particularly internet such as having high levels of anxiety, being antisocial, over fondness or dependence for anything that can be harmful as well as their positive impacts on individuals and society in the present day (Weiner, 1996; Khasawneh & Al-Awidi, 2008; Kelleci, 2008; Calik & Cinar, 2009). Internet addiction can be counted as one of these negative impacts (Chou, Condron & Belland, 2005). Internet addiction is a term that denotes the harmful and uncontrolled use of internet. In recent years, internet addiction began to be dealt with as a psychological problem in the world of science by relating to various psychological issues. In particular, educators, psychological consultants, psychologists and psychiatrists turned towards various researches on the issue. The concept of internet addiction, which began to be used in 1995 for the first time, became a phenomenon that is attempted to be represented with different names in recent years such as "net addiction", "internet addiction", "online addiction", "internet addiction disorder", "pathologic internet use" and "cyber disorder" (Eichenberg & Ott, 1999). Although internet addiction does not yet have a standard definition (Chou, Condron & Belland, 2005), its most basic symptoms can be described as not being able to set a limit for internet use, going on to use albeit its social or academic damages and feeling an intense anxiety in case of limiting the access to internet (Ozturk et al. 2007). In this respect, determining the relationship between internet addiction and the interaction and audience anxiety is essential in terms of examining internet addiction better. Internet addiction and the interaction and audience anxiety can be effective for an adult to lead a healthy life socially. Setting out from this principle premise, the objective of this research is to identify what kind of a relationship exists between the interaction and audience anxiety levels of adults and internet addiction.

1.1. Sub Problems

1. How are the interaction and audience anxiety levels of adults in general?
2. Is there a relationship between the internet addiction and interaction and audience anxiety levels of adults?

2. Method

This study is considered as a descriptive research. It was performed in the scanning model. The study group consisted of 384 adults in total including 185 women and 199 men. The study data were collected from the target groups using the "The Interaction and Audience Anxiety Scale" and "Internet addiction scale". The Interaction and Audience Anxiety Scale was used for determining the interaction and audience anxiety levels of adults and "Internet Addiction Scale" was used for designating their internet addiction levels. "The Interaction and Audience Anxiety Scale", which was developed by Leary (1983) and adapted into Turkish by Ozturk (2004) and its validity and reliability studies were conducted, was employed to detect social anxiety levels of adults. The original scale consisted of 27 articles including 15 for interaction anxiety and 12 for audience anxiety. Cronbach's Alpha value of the sub-scale of interaction anxiety was calculated as 0.82, Cronbach's Alpha value of the sub-scale of audience anxiety was calculated as 0.87 and Cronbach's Alpha value of the whole scale was calculated as 0.91. Internet addiction scale was employed, which was designed by Hahn and Jerusalem (2001) intended for designating the internet addiction levels of adults, its original name was "Skala zur Erfassung der Internetsucht" and adapted into Turkish. The original scale developed by Hahn and Jerusalem consisted of 20 articles in total and 5 factors as 4 questions in each factor. Internal consistency coefficient (Cronbach's Alpha) of the first factor named as "the Loss of Control" is 0.82, internal consistency coefficient of the second factor called as "the Signs of Giving Up" is 0.83. Internal consistency coefficient of the third factor named as "the Improvement of Tolerance" is 0.81, internal consistency coefficient of the fourth factor called as "the Negative Result in Study and Efficiency" is 0.83 and

internal consistency coefficient of the last factor named as "the Negative Results in Social Relationships" is 0.82. Internal consistency coefficient for the whole scale is 0.93. Levels corresponding to the scores obtained from sub-scales can be summarized like this: 20-51: Low interaction and audience anxiety; 52-67: Medium interaction and audience anxiety; 68-100: High interaction and audience anxiety. In this respect, the interaction and audience anxiety levels of adults were examined by using arithmetic average, standard deviation, t, ANOVA and Scheffe analyses. The correlation between interaction and audience anxieties and internet addiction was examined via the Pearson' r correlation analysis. The p<0.5 level was found sufficient for the significance of inter-factor correlation

3. Findings and Interpretations

3.1. The Interaction and Anxiety Levels of Adults

The interaction and anxiety level scores of adults are summarized in Table 1.

Table1. The Interaction and Anxiety Levels of Adults

Variables	N	$\overline{X}$	S.S	Min	Max	Levels (f/%)					
						Low		Middle		High	
Interaction Anxiety	384	43,26	11,8	20,0	88,57	310	80,7	56	14,6	18	4,7
Audience Anxiety		46,63	17,6	20,0	100,0	254	66,1	84	21,9	46	12,0

As seen in Table 2, the interaction anxiety scores of adults varied between 20.0 and 88.57 and its average is 43.26. When the data regarding the interaction anxiety levels examined, it is observed that only 4.7% of adults have high interaction anxiety, 14.6% of them have medium interaction anxiety, but on the other hand, 80.7% have low interaction anxiety. The audience anxiety scores of adults varied between 20.0 and 100.00; its average is 46.63. When the data regarding the audience anxiety levels examined, it is observed that 12% of adults have high audience anxiety, 21.9% of them have medium audience anxiety, but on the other hand, 66.1% have low audience anxiety. According to this, it can be said that adults both have quite low interaction and audience anxiety levels, but their audience anxiety levels are higher than interaction anxiety levels. Findings regarding the interaction and audience anxiety levels of adults with respect to gender are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2. The Effect of Gender on the Interaction and Anxiety Levels of Adults

Variables		N	$\overline{X}$	Ss	t	sd	p
Interaction Anxiety	Female	185	43,61	13,29	0,563	382	0,573
	Male	199	42,93	10,16			
Audience Anxiety	Female	185	48,07	18,87	1,542	382	0,573
	Male	199	45,31	16,18			

As seen in Table 7, there is no significant difference between interaction and audience anxieties with respect to genders of adults (Interaction: $t_{(1-382)}$ =0,563; p>0,05; Audience: $t_{(1-382)}$=1,542; p>0,05). According to this, it can be stated that gender does not differentiate the interaction and audience anxiety levels of adults.

3.2. The Relationship between the Interaction and Audience Anxiety Levels and Internet Addictions of Adults

Findings concerning the correlation between the interaction and audience anxiety levels and internet addiction levels of adults are summarized in Table 3

Table 8. The Relationship between the Interaction and Audience Anxiety Levels and Internet Addictions of Adults

Internet Addictions		Interaction Anxiety	Audience Anxiety
Loss of control	Pearson r	,227(**)	,219(**)
Desire to remain online more	Pearson r	,032	,136(**)
Negativity in social relations	Pearson r	,054	,151(**)
Total	Pearson r	,171(**)	,265(**)

N=384; * p<0.05, ** p< 0.01.

When Table 8 is examined, although the extent of the relationship between the total scores of internet addiction of adults and both their interaction (r=0,171, p<0.01) and audience (r=0,265, p<0.01) anxiety levels is low, it is seen that there is a positive correlation at a significant level. When examined with respect to factors, there is a positive correlation at a significant level between the loss of control factor and both interaction (r=0,227, p<0.01) and audience anxieties (r=0,219, p<0.01); the factors of the desire to remain online more (r=0,136, p<0.01) and

negativity in social relations (r=0,151, p<0.01) and audience anxiety levels. As a result, it can be argued that as both interaction and audience anxiety levels increase, therefore, the internet addiction levels of adults using internet increase as well.

4. Conclusion and Discussion

Both interaction and audience anxiety levels of adults are quite low. However, their audience anxiety levels higher than interaction anxiety levels. Setting out from this finding, it can be said that individuals consider themselves socially skillful and their social interaction anxieties fall accordingly. The existence of many variables that can affect social anxiety both directly and indirectly can be mentioned. One of them is of course the social environment where people live. It can be asserted that the physical and populational magnitude of social environment can be essential on anxiety levels of people and affect individual's strategies to present himself/herself to the society. As a matter of fact, the city where research is carried out can be regarded as a small social environment. Owing to the fact that people can constantly see each other in limited and small social environments, they experience "visual acquaintance" and do not consider themselves strangers to each other; as a result, they can interact in a quite comfortable fashion. Likewise, the fears of that "I make mistake" or "it will be improper" can be high due to this visual acquaintance. This situation can increase audience anxiety levels. As a matter of fact, the research conducted by Leary (1995) seems to support this situation. According to Leary, human beings tend to make better impression on others in social context and environment. Similarly, if there are negative attributes such as the anxiety for being favored by society, insecurity and narcissism, individual's strategies to present himself/herself are effective eliminating them. By using these strategies, individuals try to leave the positive impression they desire within society. In Sanz and Grana's (1994) research conducted in Spain, they inferred that in case of individual act affected by expectations of social environment, in which individual lives, they become shy individuals with low self-respect, on the other hand, the ones, who live at peace with social life, become more social individuals with higher self respect.

The gender factor does not differentiate the interaction and audience anxiety levels of adults. The gender factor can put forth different results in respective literature in terms of social anxiety. As a matter of fact, Oztas (1996) and Gumus (1997) found in studies they performed that social anxiety levels does not differentiate depending on gender. It is also possible to come across researches, where the gender factor differentiates social anxiety. In Palanci and Ozbay's (2003) studies, social anxieties that university students experience were attempted to be explained via distinct variables and as a result of research, it was found that they were higher not in favor of men.

There is a positive correlation at a significant level between the interaction and audience anxiety levels and internet addiction. In other words, as both interaction and audience anxiety levels increase, accordingly, the internet addiction levels of adults using internet increase as well. Due to the fact that interaction and audience anxieties hinder adults to establish face to face communication in social life, these individuals to prefer establishing relationship over internet more by hiding their identities and personalities, as maybe a different individual might have resulted in that these individuals became addicted to internet in time. Arisoy (2009) states that epidemiological researches carried out regarding internet addiction put forward that 50% of internet addicts have also another psychiatric disorder.

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