

Investigation of the Relationship between Digital Game Playing, Internet Addiction and Perceived Stress Levels in University Students

Authors : Sevim Ugur, Cemile Kutmec Yilmaz, Omer Us, Sevdenur Koksaldi

Abstract : Aim: This study aims to investigate the effect of digital game playing and Internet addiction on perceived stress levels in university students. Method: The descriptive study was conducted through face-to-face interview method with a total of 364 university students studying at Aksaray University between November 15 and December 30, 2017. The research data were collected using personal information form, a questionnaire to determine the characteristics of playing digital game, the Internet addiction scale and the perceived stress scale. In the evaluation of the data, Mann-Whitney U test was used for two-group comparison of the sample with non-normal distribution, Kruskal-Wallis H-test was used in the comparison of more than two groups, and the Spearman correlation test was used to determine the relationship between Internet addiction and the perceived stress level. Results: It was determined that the mean age of the students participated in the study was 20.13 ± 1.7 years, 67.6% was female, 35.7% was sophomore, and 62.1% had an income 500 TL or less. It was found that 83.5% of the students use the Internet every day and 70.6% uses the Internet for 5 hours or less per day. Of the students, 12.4% prefers digital games instead of spending time outdoors, 8% plays a game as the first activity in leisure time, 12.4% plays all day, 15.7% feels anger when he/she is prevented from playing, 14.8% prefers playing games to get away from his/her problems, 23.4% had his/her school achievement affected negatively because of game playing, and 8% argues with family members due to the time spent for gaming. Students who play games on the computer for a long time were found to feel back pain (30.8%), headache (28.6%), insomnia (26.9%), dryness and pain in the eyes (26.6%), pain in the wrist (21.2%), feeling excessive tension and anger (16.2%), humpback (12.9), vision loss (9.6%) and pain in the wrist and fingers (7.4%). In our study, students' Internet addiction scale mean score was found to be 45.47 ± 16.1 and mean perceived stress scale score was 28.56 ± 2.7 . A significant and negative correlation ($p=0.037$) was found between the total score of the Internet addiction scale and the total score of the perceived stress scale ($r=-0.110$). Conclusion: It was found in the study that Internet addiction and perceived stress of the students were at a moderate level and that there was a negative correlation between Internet addiction and perceived stress levels. Internet addiction was found to increase with the increasing perceived stress levels of students, and students were found to have health problems such as back pain, dryness in the eyes, pain, insomnia, headache, and humpback. Therefore, it is recommended to inform students about different coping methods other than spending time on the Internet to cope with the stress they perceive.

Keywords : digital game, internet addiction, student, stress level

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