

EXAMINING THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN DIGITAL ADDICTION, LONELINESS, AND SELF-ESTEEM: THE EXAMPLE OF YOUNG ADULTS

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Abstract: This article aims to comprehensively examine the relationships between digital addiction, loneliness, and self-esteem among young adults. The widespread use of digital technologies today profoundly impacts the social and psychological lives of young people, particularly, creating a new risk area called digital addiction. Digital addiction is a condition that occurs when individuals use the internet, social media, and digital platforms excessively and uncontrolledly, negatively impacting their daily functioning. This addiction is thought to increase feelings of loneliness and lower self-esteem. In this context, data was collected online from 380 young adults in Turkey as part of the study. The data collection process utilized the Young Internet Addiction Test (YIAT-20), the UCLA Loneliness Scale, and the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, all of which are highly valid and reliable.

The findings revealed a positive and significant relationship between digital addiction and loneliness; in other words, individuals with high digital addiction experience more intense loneliness. Additionally, digital addiction was found to have a negative and significant effect on self-esteem, and high digital addiction was found to lower self-esteem. A strong negative correlation was also found between loneliness and self-esteem; it was observed that a sense of social isolation significantly weakened self-esteem. Gender and age variables were found to have limited effects on these relationships. It was observed that women had slightly higher levels of loneliness than men, while men had stronger self-esteem than women.

This study makes a significant contribution to revealing the effects of digital addiction on the mental health of young adults. The findings provide guidance for educators, psychological counselors, and policymakers to combat digital addiction and enhance psychosocial well-being. Considering the limitations of this study, it is recommended that future studies conducted in different cultural contexts and using mixed methods further expand the findings.

Keywords: Self-esteem, State-government, State-society, State personality, Digital addiction, Evolution, Functional phenomena, Young adults, Internet use, Limited state power, Loneliness, Approach, Psychosocial effects.

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Introduction

Definition of the Research Problem

The development of digital technologies has led to radical changes in individuals' daily lives. Young adults, in particular, stand out as a generation with high levels of exposure to digital tools such as the internet and social media. This digital intensity has led to the emergence of new types of addictions that affect individuals' psychosocial worlds. Digital addiction is a disorder characterized by individuals' dysfunctional and uncontrolled use of digital tools such as the internet, smartphones, or social media (Young, 1998). This addiction can negatively impact an individual's academic success, social relationships, and psychological well-being.

In recent years, concepts such as loneliness and self-esteem have become a focus of scientific research related to digital addiction. Loneliness is a condition characterized by an

individual's inability to achieve their desired level of social interaction and a feeling of social isolation (Russell, Peplau & Cutrona, 1980).

Increased time spent in digital environments can cause individuals to withdraw from face-to-face social interactions, thereby increasing their feelings of loneliness. Similarly, self-esteem is a fundamental psychological variable encompassing an individual's positive or negative self-evaluations (Rosenberg, 1965). Research suggests that as digital addiction increases, self-esteem can decrease (Andreassen et al., 2012).

In this context, revealing the relationships between digital addiction, loneliness, and self-esteem is crucial for understanding the impact of the digital age on young adults. Digital media use has increased even further, particularly in the post-pandemic period, with education, social relationships, and even entertainment

shifting to online platforms. This has created new risks for individuals' psychological health.

Purpose of the Study

The primary purpose of the variables is to examine the relationships between digital addiction, loneliness, and self-esteem levels among young adults and to analyze how these variables influence each other. We will also assess whether these variables differ based on demographic factors (gender, age, education level, etc.).

Significance of the Research

This study aims to make significant contributions to both academic and applied research. While numerous studies exist in the literature on the relationships between digital addiction, loneliness, and self-esteem, studies evaluating these three variables within the same model are limited. This research, conducted with a sample of young adults most exposed to digital technologies, will provide a more in-depth understanding of the effects of digital addiction on individual psychology.

The study also provides important information for practitioners. Guidance services, psychological counselors, and educators, in particular, can benefit from these findings in developing strategies to cope with digital addiction and strengthening individuals' self-esteem by reducing their loneliness.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

The research will seek to answer the following basic questions:

- Is there a significant relationship between the level of digital addiction and the level of loneliness in young adults?
- Is there a significant relationship between the level of digital addiction and self-esteem?
- Is there a significant relationship between the level of loneliness and the level of self-esteem?
- Do these variables vary according to demographic factors such as gender, age, and education level?

Hypotheses:

- **H1:** There is a positive and significant relationship between the level of digital addiction and the level of loneliness.
- **H2:** There is a negative and significant relationship between the level of digital addiction and self-esteem.
- **H3:** There is a negative and significant relationship between the level of loneliness and self-esteem.
- **H4:** Digital addiction, loneliness, and self-esteem levels differ according to demographic variables.

Limitations and Assumptions

This study was conducted within certain limitations. Because the study sample consisted only of young adults, the results cannot be generalized to all age groups. Furthermore, the use of a self-report questionnaire as the data collection tool may have introduced subjectivity, as participants provided answers based on their own perceptions.

The following assumptions were made in the study:

- Participants responded honestly and sincerely to the survey questions.

- The scales used have valid and reliable psychometric properties.

Definitions

- **Digital Addiction:** An individual's uncontrolled, dysfunctional, and excessive addiction to digital devices (the internet, social media, smartphones) (Young, 1998).
- **Loneliness:** An individual's inability to meet their expectations in social relationships and feeling socially isolated (Russell et al., 1980).
- **Self-Esteem:** An individual's overall evaluation of themselves, whether positive or negative (Rosenberg, 1965).
- **Young Adult:** In this study, individuals between the ages of 18 and 30 are considered young adults.

Theoretical Framework and Literature Review

Digital Addiction

Digital addiction is defined as an individual's uncontrolled and excessive use of the internet, social media, smartphones, and digital games. Young (1998) first defined this concept as "internet addiction." Digital addiction is categorized into types such as internet, social media, smartphone, and game addiction. Symptoms include restlessness, secret use, and disruption to daily life. Causes include a desire for escape, seeking social approval, low self-esteem, and a lack of social skills. The consequences are negative in psychological, social, academic, and physical dimensions. The most common measurement tool is the Young Internet Addiction Test (YIAT-20).

Loneliness

Loneliness is a state of emotional deprivation that occurs when an individual fails to find the satisfaction they expect in their social relationships. It is divided into two types: emotional and social loneliness. Loneliness is associated with psychological problems such as depression, anxiety, and low self-esteem. While digital media can maintain social connections, replacing face-to-face interactions can increase loneliness. There is a negative correlation between loneliness and self-esteem. The most commonly used measurement tool is the UCLA Loneliness Scale.

Self-Esteem

Self-esteem is an individual's overall evaluation of themselves (Rosenberg, 1965). Positive self-esteem enhances psychological resilience, while low self-esteem is associated with depression, anxiety, and loneliness. Its theoretical foundations are based on Carl Rogers' humanistic approach and Bandura's social cognitive theory. Development begins in childhood and matures in young adulthood. Social comparisons in the digital environment can negatively impact self-esteem. The most common measurement tool is the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES).

Young Adulthood

Young adulthood (ages 18–25) is the period during which developmental tasks such as identity formation, establishing independent living, and exploring social roles are experienced. During this period, digital media use is high, and digital addiction can be a determining factor in loneliness and self-esteem. While social media attempts to meet the need for approval and belonging, social comparisons undermine self-esteem and can increase

loneliness. According to Erikson's theory, this period is the stage where the conflict of "closeness versus isolation" occurs.

Theoretical Approaches

This study is based on three main theoretical approaches:

- **Behavioral Addiction Theory:** Digital addiction develops through repetitive behaviors related to the reward system.
- **Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura):** Self-efficacy, observational learning, and social comparisons influence digital behavior.
- **Self-Determination Theory (Ryan & Deci):** Inadequate fulfillment of competence, autonomy, and relatedness needs in the digital environment can lead to addiction.

Furthermore, loneliness and self-esteem theories emphasize that these two concepts are related to the lack of social relationships and the individual's self-evaluation processes.

Related Field Research

Research conducted in recent years on digital addiction, loneliness, and self-esteem has shown significant relationships between these concepts.

- **Digital addiction:** Excessive use is associated with loneliness and low self-esteem (Young, 1998; Andreassen et al., 2017).
- **Loneliness:** Common among university students; social media use patterns influence loneliness levels (Nowland et al., 2018).
- **Self-esteem:** Low self-esteem is associated with depression and social shyness. Social media use can affect self-esteem.
- **Tripartite Relationship:** Research shows that individuals with high levels of digital addiction experience more loneliness and low self-esteem (Kircaburun et al., 2020; Shensa et al., 2017).

Method

Research Model

This research was conducted using a correlational screening model to understand the relationships between digital addiction, loneliness, and self-esteem among young adults. Screening models are one of the frequently preferred research methods in social sciences to explain individuals' current situations, attitudes, behaviors, and the relationships between these variables (Karasar, 2016). This model allows for the description of the current situation and the analysis of relationships without establishing a cause-and-effect relationship between variables.

This study investigated the effects of young adults' digital addiction levels on loneliness and self-esteem. In this context, the direction, strength, and significance of the relationships between variables were examined using correlation and regression analyses. Furthermore, analyses were conducted considering age, gender, and education level as control variables.

The research model aimed to reveal both direct and indirect effects of digital addiction on psychosocial variables. This aimed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the factors that contribute to or negatively impact the psychological well-being of young adults.

Universe and Sample

The research population consists of young adults between the ages of 18 and 25 studying at various universities in Turkey. This age group was chosen as the target population because it coincides with the developmental stage of young adulthood and is one of the periods when digital technology and social media use is most intense (Arnett, 2000).

A convenience sampling method was used for sample selection. This method is a practical and common sampling technique consisting of participants accessible to the researcher (Creswell, 2014). Various university student groups, social media platforms, and online forums were used to recruit participants.

400 participants were initially reached, but due to data cleaning and incomplete responses, data from 380 participants were included in the analyses. The demographic characteristics of the participants are as follows:

- **Age:** Mean 21.4 (SD=2.1), between 18 and 25 years old.
- **Gender:** 57% female, 43% male.
- **Education Level:** 85% associate/undergraduate students, 15% graduate students.

This distribution is close to and representative of the general demographic characteristics of young adults. However, due to the convenience sample, caution should be exercised when making generalizations.

Data Collection Tools

Young Internet Addiction Test (YIAT-20)

Developed by Young (1998), the YIAT-20 is one of the most widely used scales measuring internet addiction levels. The scale consists of 20 items covering the behavioral, cognitive, and emotional dimensions of internet use. These items are intended to assess an individual's internet usage habits and potential addiction symptoms.

Each item is scored on a 5-point Likert-type scale (1=Never, 5=Always). The total score ranges from 20 to 100, with higher scores indicating increased addiction levels. In an adaptation study conducted in Turkey by Demirci, Akgönül, and Akpinar (2014), the Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient for the scale was found to be .91. This high reliability supports the scale's usability in research.

Sample items:

- "I feel restless when I don't use the internet."
- "Internet use interferes with my other responsibilities."

UCLA Loneliness Scale

Developed by Russell (1996), this scale measures levels of social and emotional loneliness. It consists of 20 items and is assessed using a 4-point Likert-type scale (1=Never, 4=Always). Higher scores indicate higher feelings of loneliness.

The Turkish adaptation was conducted by Öner (1994), and validity and reliability studies of the scale yielded positive results. Cronbach's alpha coefficients are generally reported to be around .89.

Sample items:

- "I feel lonely."
- "I have weak ties to my social circle."

Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES)

Developed by Rosenberg (1965), this scale is one of the most widely used tools for assessing self-esteem. The 10-item scale is administered using a 4-point Likert-type scale (1=Strongly Disagree, 4=Strongly Agree). The total score ranges from 10 to 40; higher scores indicate higher self-esteem.

The Turkish adaptation was conducted by Çuhadaroğlu (1986), and reliability studies reported a Cronbach's alpha of .85.

Sample items:

- "I am generally satisfied with myself."
- "I sometimes feel ashamed of myself." (reverse-coded item)

Data Collection Process

The data collection process for the study was conducted between May and June 2025. First, an informational text regarding the purpose of the study and participant rights was prepared, and participants were encouraged to voluntarily complete the survey. Participants were informed of their rights to anonymity and confidentiality.

Data collection was conducted via an online survey form. The primary reasons for choosing an online survey were the ability to reach participants from a wide and diverse geography, the ability of participants to express themselves more easily, and the ability to adapt to pandemic conditions (Wright, 2005).

The survey link was shared through various university student communities, social media groups (Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp), and forums. Participants accessed and completed the survey in approximately 15-20 minutes.

After data collection, incomplete and inconsistent responses were checked, and forms with more than 5% missing data were excluded from the analysis. Ultimately, 380 valid data points were used for analysis.

Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics 26. The analysis process included the following steps:

Descriptive Statistics

The distributions, means, standard deviations, and frequencies of the variables used in the study were calculated. Frequencies and percentages are presented for demographic variables (age, gender, education).

Reliability Analysis

The internal consistencies of the YIAT-20, the UCLA Loneliness Scale, and the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale were tested using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient. Values of .70 and above were considered acceptable indicators of reliability (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994).

Correlation Analysis

Relationships between variables were determined using the Pearson correlation coefficient. This analysis examined the directional and magnitude relationships between digital addiction, loneliness, and self-esteem.

Regression Analysis

Multiple regression analysis was conducted to examine the impact of digital addiction on loneliness and self-esteem. Loneliness and self-esteem were assessed separately as dependent variables in the model, while digital addiction was used as the independent variable. Additionally, control variables such as age and gender were included in the model.

Assumption Checks

Prior to the regression analysis, basic assumptions such as normal distribution, multicollinearity, linear relationship, and independence of error terms were tested. These analyses are important for supporting the validity of the model (Field, 2013).

Findings

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics were first calculated for the data obtained in this study. The means, standard deviations, and minimum and maximum values of the participants' scores on the digital addiction, loneliness, and self-esteem scales are presented in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1. Descriptive Statistics of Variables

Variable	N	Average (\bar{X})	Standard Deviation (SD)	Min	Max
Digital Addiction	380	52.45	15.23	20	92
Loneliness	380	43.80	9.56	20	75
Self-Esteem	380	28.35	5.87	12	40

The average digital addiction score was 52.45, indicating that most participants exhibited moderate symptoms of digital addiction. Loneliness scores also showed moderate intensity. Self-esteem was generally moderate to high.

Descriptive statistics were also examined based on demographic variables, and age and gender distributions were assessed for homogeneity.

Correlations between Variables

Relationships between the main variables of the study were analyzed using the Pearson correlation coefficient. The results are shown in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2. Correlations Between Variables

Variable	1	2	3
1. Digital Addiction	1		
2. Loneliness	.45**	1	
3. Self-Esteem	-.50**	-.60**	1

Notes: $p < .01$ significance level.

The results indicated a moderate positive correlation between digital addiction and loneliness ($r = .45$, $p < .01$). In other words, individuals with high digital addiction also experience

increased feelings of loneliness. On the other hand, a moderate negative correlation was found between digital addiction and self-esteem ($r = -.50$, $p < .01$), indicating that individuals with high addiction also have lower self-esteem. A strong negative correlation was found between loneliness and self-esteem ($r = -.60$, $p < .01$).

Regression and Hypothesis Testing

Multiple regression analyses were conducted to test the hypotheses identified in the study. These analyses evaluated the cause-and-effect relationships among digital addiction, loneliness, and self-esteem.

The Effect of Digital Addiction on Loneliness

The regression analysis found that digital addiction had a significant positive effect on loneliness ($\beta = 0.43$, $t = 8.52$, $p < .001$). The explanatory power of the model was calculated as $R^2 = 0.20$. This means that digital addiction explained 20% of the variance in loneliness.

The Effect of Digital Addiction on Self-Esteem

The effect of digital addiction on self-esteem was found to be negative and significant ($\beta = -0.48$, $t = -9.65$, $p < .001$). The model's R^2 value is 0.25, and digital addiction explains 25% of the variance in self-esteem.

Hypotheses Evaluation

- **H1:** There is a positive relationship between digital addiction and loneliness. — Accepted
- **H2:** There is a negative relationship between digital addiction and self-esteem. — Accepted
- **H3:** There is a negative relationship between loneliness and self-esteem. — Accepted

Subgroup Analysis

The study also examined whether the variables differed by gender and age groups.

Differences by Gender

According to independent sample t-tests;

- No significant difference was found between men and women in digital addiction scores ($t = 1.23$, $p = .219$).
- Loneliness levels were found to be significantly higher in women than in men ($t = 2.45$, $p = .015$).
- Self-esteem scores were higher in men than in women ($t = -2.30$, $p = .022$).

Differences by Age Groups

The results of one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) conducted by age groups (18-20, 21-23, 24-25) are as follows:

- No significant difference was found between age groups in digital addiction ($F(2, 377) = 1.65$, $p = .193$).
- The 18-20 age group scored higher than the other groups in loneliness ($F(2, 377) = 4.11$, $p = .017$).
- No significant difference was found between age groups in self-esteem ($F(2, 377) = 1.02$, $p = .361$).

Summary and Assessment

The findings indicate that digital addiction has significant and strong effects on loneliness and self-esteem in young adults. Individuals with high digital addiction experience increased

feelings of loneliness and decreased self-esteem. These results are consistent with the psychosocial risks of the digital age reported in the literature (Andreassen et al., 2017; Kuss & Griffiths, 2015).

Analysis by gender and age revealed differences in loneliness and self-esteem. The slightly higher levels of loneliness among women and the slightly higher self-esteem scores among men may be explained by sociocultural factors.

Discussion

Comparison of Findings with the Literature

The results obtained in this study revealed the relationships between digital addiction, loneliness, and self-esteem in young adults. The positive and significant relationship between digital addiction and loneliness is consistent with many similar studies. For example, Kircaburun and Griffiths (2019), in their study examining the relationship between social media addiction and loneliness, emphasized that digital addiction increases social isolation. In this context, excessive use of the internet and social media can reduce individuals' face-to-face social interactions, causing them to become disconnected from social support systems (Şahin & Korkmaz, 2020). Our results support this literature, showing that individuals with high digital addiction tend to feel more lonely.

The negative relationship between self-esteem and digital addiction suggests that the difficulties young adults experience in the digital world damage their sense of self-worth. Andreassen and colleagues (2017) found a significant negative relationship between social media addiction and self-esteem, stating that this negatively impacts psychological well-being, particularly in young people. Digital addiction can lower self-esteem by leading young people to engage in social comparisons and increase self-criticism (Turel & Serenko, 2012). The findings are consistent with the literature and shed light on the psychosocial effects of digital environments.

The strong negative relationship between loneliness and self-esteem is consistent with fundamental assumptions in social psychology. Cacioppo and Hawkley (2009) emphasized that social isolation can reduce self-esteem by negatively impacting cognitive and emotional processes. Self-esteem, as an individual's level of self-worth, is higher in environments with strong social ties, while feelings of loneliness can weaken this perception (Lee et al., 2021). This study clearly demonstrated the negative effects of a lack of social connectedness on self-esteem.

Theoretical Interpretation of the Findings

The study's findings are particularly consistent with the perspectives of developmental psychology, attachment theory, and social cognitive theory. Arnett's (2000) theory of "Emerging Adulthood" states that young adults intensively pursue their search for identity and social belonging on digital platforms. However, excessive digital addiction can weaken real-life social relationships and lead to psychosocial problems. In this context, the research demonstrates that young adults' digital addiction levels are a determinant of loneliness and self-esteem.

Attachment theory (Bowlby, 1969), on the other hand, emphasizes that social bonds are fundamental to security and psychological well-being. The failure of superficial connections formed in the digital environment to meet genuine attachment needs can exacerbate loneliness and self-esteem problems.

Interpreting the negative relationship between digital addiction and self-esteem in this context is related to the impairment of attachment security.

Bandura's social cognitive theory (1986) links the development of an individual's sense of self-efficacy to social learning processes. Young people with high levels of digital addiction may experience disruptions in the development of genuine social skills, which can lead to lower self-esteem. This study supports the negative effects of digital addiction on social skills and self-efficacy.

Evaluation of Significant and Insignificant Results

The significant relationships found in the study demonstrated the importance of the dynamics between digital addiction, loneliness, and self-esteem. The high reliability of the scales and the significant correlations support the validity of the research model.

However, the lack of a significant difference in digital addiction levels between genders is consistent with the mixed results in the literature. While some studies indicate that males are at greater risk of digital addiction (Durak, 2020), others indicate no gender difference. This highlights the influence of cultural, social, and individual differences. Furthermore, sample size and selection may influence these results.

The lack of a difference in digital addiction and self-esteem between age groups suggests that young adults are a homogeneous group in their use of digital technology. However, the higher prevalence of loneliness among younger age groups suggests that seeking social support and psychosocial development may differ by age.

Such insignificant results should be supported in the future with larger samples, different cultural settings, and qualitative methods. In addition to quantitative data, it is recommended to examine young adults' digital addiction experiences and perceptions of social loneliness through in-depth interviews.

Limitations of the Study and Recommendations for Future Research

Limitations of this study include the collection of data from a limited geographic area using a convenience sample. This poses a risk of not being representative of all young adults in Turkey. Furthermore, the online nature of the data collection tool may lead to issues such as social desirability and self-report biases.

It is important for future studies to include diverse age groups, occupations, and cultural contexts. Collecting both quantitative and qualitative data through mixed-method research will contribute to a more in-depth understanding of digital addiction and its psychosocial impacts. Furthermore, the effectiveness of psychosocial interventions to combat digital addiction should be investigated.

Conclusions and Recommendations

General Conclusions

This study yielded significant findings by examining the relationships between digital addiction, loneliness, and self-esteem among young adults. It was concluded that digital addiction has a significant positive effect on loneliness, meaning that individuals with high digital addiction experience increased feelings of social loneliness. At the same time, a negative effect of digital addiction

on self-esteem was observed; individuals with high addiction experienced decreased self-esteem. A strong negative relationship between loneliness and self-esteem was also confirmed; loneliness negatively impacts self-esteem.

No significant differences were observed in digital addiction levels across gender and age variables. However, loneliness levels were higher in women than in men, while self-esteem was higher in men than in women. Significant differences in loneliness were observed between age groups, with younger age groups experiencing more intense feelings of loneliness.

These results offer important insights into the psychosocial health of young adults in today's digital age. Digital addiction has been shown to negatively impact social isolation and self-perception. The findings are consistent with many studies in the literature and reveal that digital technology presents both opportunities and risks.

Recommendations for Practitioners

The research has several implications for practitioners. Educators, psychologists, guidance counselors, and healthcare professionals should be aware of the psychosocial problems associated with digital addiction in young adults and develop preventive and interventional strategies.

- **Digital Addiction Awareness Training:** Awareness programs should be organized in schools and universities for young people about the risks of digital addiction. The development of balanced habits regarding digital technology use should be encouraged.
- **Psychological Support and Counseling Services:** Psychological support services should be expanded for individuals experiencing loneliness and self-esteem issues. Individual and group therapies and social skills development programs can be effective in this area.
- **Family and Social Network Participation:** The support of family and close social circles is important in combating digital addiction in young people. Guidance and training programs for families can help foster healthy communication patterns in the digital environment.
- **Technology Use Policies:** Policies and rules for the healthy and controlled use of digital devices should be developed in educational institutions and workplaces. This can create preventative environments against technology addiction.
- **Public Awareness Campaigns:** Media and public institutions should collaborate to raise public awareness about the harms and psychosocial impacts of digital addiction.

Recommendations for Academic Studies

The results of this study provide an important foundation for new academic studies. Some recommendations for researchers are as follows:

- **Mixed Methods Research:** Mixed methods studies that combine qualitative and quantitative methods are needed on digital addiction and its psychosocial effects. This allows for the collection of both numerical and in-depth qualitative data.
- **Examining Different Demographic Groups:** Comparative studies that take into account cultural, geographical, and socioeconomic differences should be

conducted. Digital addiction and psychosocial processes across different age, occupation, and education level groups can be examined.

- **Longitudinal Studies:** Long-term studies that track changes in digital addiction and its psychological effects over time are important. This allows for more robust causal relationships to be established.
- **Intervention and Program Evaluation:** Experimental research should be conducted on the effectiveness of preventive and remedial programs for digital addiction. Effective intervention strategies should be developed and implemented.
- **Examining New Concepts Related to Technology:** Digital addiction sub-dimensions such as social media addiction and gaming addiction, as well as new phenomena (e.g., TikTok addiction), should be examined in detail.

Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

This study has several limitations. First, the sample was limited to a specific group of young adults in Turkey, and a convenience sampling method was used. This limits the generalizability of the results. Furthermore, the data was collected through self-reporting, which carries the risk of social desirability and bias.

The research was conducted on online platforms, which limited it to individuals with access to digital technology and certain demographic characteristics. Furthermore, the limitations of the measurement tools and the cultural validity of the scales should also be taken into account.

Recommendations for future research are as follows:

- Studies with larger and more representative samples will increase the generalizability of the findings.
- Cross-cultural comparisons can be achieved by conducting similar studies in different cultural contexts.
- Young people's experiences of digital addiction and perceptions of loneliness can be examined in more depth through qualitative research methods.
- Experimental studies are necessary to develop and evaluate the effects of psychosocial intervention programs.

The interactions between other psychological variables associated with digital addiction (such as anxiety, depression, and stress) and self-esteem and loneliness can be investigated.

Limitations

This study is limited to previous scientific studies conducted worldwide. While the literature review was conducted within the existing framework, it was noted that it did not examine different geographic regions and cultural contexts from a broader perspective. However, given the specific methodology and time constraints of this study, it may have limitations regarding general validity.

Disclosures

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Ethical Statement

The publication ethics of our university's relevant regulations aim to ensure that scientific research and publications are conducted in accordance with fundamental principles such as honesty, openness, objectivity, and respect for the findings and creations of others. This is a nationally based scientific study that aims to achieve these principles in the relevant fields of science.

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