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Evaluation of the relationship between social phobia and internet addiction in adolescents

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Statement of the Problem: Adolescents with social phobia are trying to socialize via the internet in order to avoid the stress of face-to-face communication with others. However, if they cannot cope with the social challenges in the real world, the increased use of the internet to provide social support increases the risk of the individual being addicted to the internet. The aim of the study was to determine the frequency of social phobia and to evaluate the relationship between internet addiction among high school students.

Methodology: This cross-sectional study was performed on high school students in semi-rural area of Eskisehir (Turkey) in 2017. The study group included 793 (91%) students educated in school during the study and agreed to participate in the study. Social phobia was assessed by the Social Phobia Scale for Çapa Children and Adolescents, and internet addiction was assessed by the Young Internet Addiction Scale. Logistic regression analysis was performed to determine the independent variables associated with social phobia.

Findings: Of the study group, 402 (50.7%) were male and 391 (49.3%) were female. The age of the students ranged from 14 to 18 years, with a mean age of 15.94±0.99 years. The frequency of social phobia was found 11.0% (n = 87) and internet addiction was found 11.7% (n = 93) in the study. In multivariate analysis, the prevalence of social phobia was higher in females (OR: 2.468), high school and over educated maternal education status (1.939), not good friend relationship (1.836) and have internet addiction groups (2.206) (for each; p≤0.05).

Conclusion & Significance: Social phobia and internet addiction are important health problems related to each other in adolescents. Social phobia can be prevented by controlled use of the internet. Screening programs on social phobia and internet addiction should be done in adolescents.

Variables		Social phobia (%)	OR (95% CI)	p
Gender	Male	6.7	1	<0.001
	Female	15.3	2.468 (1.501-4.058)	
Maternal education status	Primary and lower educated	9.7	1	0.017
	High school and over educated	16.5	1.939 (1.128-3.355)	
Friend relationship	Good	9.3	1	0.022
	Not good	16.9	1.836 (1.093-3.053)	
Internet addiction	No	9.4	1	0.005
	Yes	22.6	2.206 (1.234-3.941)	

Table 1. Multiple logistic regression results of social phobia related factors in the study group

Recent Publications:

1. Bayraktar, F. 2001. 'İnternet kullanımının ergen gelişimindeki rolü (Yüksek lisans tezi, Ege Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, İzmir)', UlusalTezMerkezi/tezSorguSonucYeni. jsp adresinden edinilmiştir.
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3. Ko, C-H, J-Y Yen, C-F Yen, C-S Chen, and C-C Chen. 2012. 'The association between Internet addiction and psychiatric disorder: a review of the literature', European Psychiatry, 27: 1-8.

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4. Shepherd, Robin-Marie, and Robert J Edelman. 2005. 'Reasons for internet use and social anxiety', *Personality and individual Differences*, 39: 949-58.
5. Young, Kimberly S. 1998. 'Internet addiction: The emergence of a new clinical disorder', *Cyberpsychology & behavior*, 1: 237-44.

Biography

Ramazan Saglan has been graduated from Cumhuriyet University, Turkey as medical doctor in 2013. He is a research assistant at Public Health Department of Eskisehir Osmangazi University Faculty of Medicine since 2015. He is interested in Preventive medicine and community mental health subjects.

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