



ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Social Media Addiction and Social Anxiety Levels: a Comparison Between High School Students who remain Active Vs Non-Active in Sports

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Abstract

The sample size of this study was a total of 322 students in the 2018-2019 academic year; 199 females and 123 males. The questionnaire method was used as a data collection tool. "Personal Information Form" was used in the first part of the questionnaire, which consists of three parts, the "Social Media Addiction Scale" in the second part, and the "Social Anxiety Scale for Adolescents" in the third part. As a result, it was determined that there is a relationship between the social media addiction levels of the participants and their social anxiety levels, and the social media addiction levels of the individuals who regularly participate in sports differ from those who were not in regular sports. It was determined that the social media addiction level of the participants differed according to the age variable, but did not differ according to the gender variable.

Introduction:

Today, with the high development of technology, changes have begun to occur in many areas. One such change is in the communication tools that we use frequently in our daily lives. Because of the development of technology and the internet, primitive communication tools have left their place for modern communication tools. Thanks to smartphones and computers, which are called modern communication tools, the individual and social lives of people have come to the fore and become more remarkable (Feyzioğlu, 2016). The rapid development and spread of digital technology and modern communication tools have enabled communication technology and social media to take an important place in our lives (Çemrek et al., 2014). The fact that social media and communication technology cover a wide area of our lives has led to the emergence of a new concept called social media addiction.

The concept of addiction is defined as faulty willpower that disrupts the mental, physical, and social lives of individuals and pushes individuals to exhibit negative behaviours (Campbell, 2003). As a result of the continuation of these situations in individuals, they may have difficulties in the process of adapting to the environment physically and psychologically. This is defined as behavioural addiction (Pektas & Mayda, 2018). Social media addiction is also considered a behavioural addiction (Savci & Aysan, 2017; Sahin, 2017). The symptoms of behavioural addiction are expressed as tolerance

development, withdrawal, repetition, and mood swings (Hawi & Samaha, 2016). Looking definition of social media addiction; is defined as a psychological and communicative problem that develops within the scope of problems occurring in the behavioural, cognitive, and emotional areas and causes occupation, mood disorder, communication problems, conflict, behaviour change, feeling of loneliness and anti-social behaviour problems, covering all areas in the lives of individuals (Ünal, 2018). Therefore, it can be said that individuals get away from social activities in their daily lives as a result of using social media too much, they experience some communication problems and therefore experience social anxiety.

The concept of social anxiety is defined by DSM-IV (1994) as the status of "a marked and persistent fear of the situation in which one or more social acts are performed, where the person encounters unfamiliar people or maybe in the eyes of others, fear that the person will behave in a way that will make him feel humiliated or embarrass him". As is included in the definition of the concept of social anxiety, individuals with social anxiety exhibit avoidance behaviour in social environments (Koyuncu, 2012) and avoid communicating in order not to create a negative impression on others (Leary & Kowalski, 1993). The period in which social anxiety is experienced the most is considered adolescence. Because in adolescence, friendship relations and being criticized or evaluated by others are more important for individuals. For this reason, individuals may exhibit abstaining and shy attitudes in new environments

(Sübası, 2007). In this case, it pushes individuals to communicate in virtual environments such as social media instead of face-to-face communication.

Sport is used as an important tool in the fight against both substance and behavioural addictions and constitutes the common denominator of both addiction types in the treatment and therapy process. Landale & Roderick (2014) state that although the psychological and physical benefits of sports on people are known, sports are not sufficiently included in addiction-fighting programs and sports lag behind drug treatment and other therapy methods. Tarhan (2005) states that regular and measured physical activity improves mental health (emotional discharge, calmness, comfort, and mental relaxation) as well as physical health and that happiness hormones such as endorphins and dopamine increase during sports. Mumcu (2019) states that regular physical activity activates happiness hormones, especially dopamine and serotonin, and thus sports-physical activity has an important role in coping with the effects of negative situations such as stress, anxiety, and fear that individuals encounter in daily life.

When the literature is examined, it is seen that searches mostly examine the differences and relationships between internet usage, smartphone usage, technology addiction and social anxiety (Zorbaz & Dost, 2014; Dogan & Tosun, 2016; Canogullari & Güçray, 2017; Biyikli, 2019; Görür, 2019; Dilmen-Bayar, 2019; Hayirci & Sari 2020; Oran, 2020; Bardakçi & Arslan, 2021). It is seen that studies involving social media and social anxiety and sports variables are limited (Aktan, 2018; Ciba, 2018; Agirtas & Güler, 2020; Çalis, 2020; Dikeç et al., 2020).

Today, with the development of technology, the use of social networks has spread to a wide area and has started to be used frequently, especially by young people. Therefore, it is seen that individuals prefer to spend their free time in virtual environments such as social media instead of filling their spare time with sports, music, or artistic activities. In this case, it removes individuals from society and causes some behavioural, cognitive, and communicative problems. Thus, it is aimed to examine the social media addiction levels and social anxiety levels of high school students who do and do not do sports regularly according to some variables and contribute to the literature.

Methodology

In this section, information about the research model, study group, measurement tool, and data analysis is given. The research was designed according to the quantitative research model and carried out within the framework of the relational survey model. Survey models are research approaches that aim to describe a past or present situation as it is. The main thing in this model is to observe the existing situation without changing it (Karasar, 2016).

As per the purpose of the research, the group consisting of all individuals (units) on which analysis can be made or

generalizations will be made is called the universe (Erkus, 2013). In this context, the research population consists of students studying in central high schools affiliated with the Nigde Provincial Directorate of National Education. In the selection of the sample, a convenient (accidental) sampling method, which is one of the non-random sampling methods, was used. The convenience (accidental) sampling method is the selection of the sample from easily accessible and applicable units due to the limitations in terms of time, money, and labour (Büyüköztürk *et al.*, 2017). In this context, the sample of the research consists of a total of 322 students, 199 females and 123 males, studying at Hüdavent Hatun Vocational and Technical Anatolian High School, Project Imam Hatip High School, and 15 July Martyrs Sports High School, which are affiliated to the Nigde Provincial Directorate of National Education, in the 2018-2019 academic year.

The questionnaire method was used as a data collection tool. "Personal Information Form" was used in the first part of the questionnaire, which consists of three parts, the "Social Media Addiction Scale" in the second part, and the "Social Anxiety Scale for Adolescents" in the third part.

As a personal information form, How Does The Gender, Age, Number of Siblings, Regular Sports, Licensed Sports Status, and Social Media Affect Your Academic Success? and For What Purpose Do You Use Social Media Most? variables are used.

Social Media Addiction Scale (SMAS), developed by Fırat & Barut (2018), was used to measure the social media addiction levels of adolescents, has 24 items, 2 sub-dimensions, and a 5-point Likert type. The maximum score of the scale, which was evaluated over the total score, is 120 and the minimum score was 24. The total score that can be obtained for the deprivation dimension varies between 14 and 70, and between 10 and 50 for the dimension of affecting daily life/lack of control. As the scores obtained by individuals from SMAS increase, their social media addictions increase. Within the scope of this study, the internal consistency coefficient of the scale was calculated as $\alpha=86$.

The "Social Anxiety Scale for Adolescents (SASA)", developed by Aydın & Tekinsav-Sütcü (2007), was used to measure the social anxiety levels of adolescents. It has 18 items, 3 sub-dimensions, and a 5-point Likert type. The sub-dimensions were named "Fear of Negative Evaluation (FNE)", "Social Avoidance and Anxiety in General Situations (SAAGS)" and "Social Avoidance and Anxiety in New Situations (SAANS)". Within the scope of this study, the internal consistency coefficient of the scale was calculated as $\alpha=82$.

The data were evaluated in SPSS 24 Package program and independent groups T-Test, One-Way ANOVA in multiple comparisons, and Pearson Correlation Analysis were used.

Results:

Table-1: T-test analysis results of SASA scores of the participants according to "gender" variable ($p < 0.05$)

Scale Scores	Gender	N	Mean	t	p
SASA TOTAL	Female	199	42.2714	-.417	.677
	Male	123	42.8049		
FNE	Female	199	15.4975	-2.517	.062
	Male	123	16.0650		
SAAGS	Female	199	10.6432	-.341	.734
	Male	123	10.7967		
SAANS	Female	199	29.0905	-.514	.608
	Male	123	29.5691		

No statistically significant difference between the SASA total scores and sub-dimension scores of the participants according to the "gender" variable.

Table-2: T-test analysis results of participants' SASA scores according to the variable of "doing sports regularly" ($p < 0.05$)

Scale Scores	Regularly	N	Mean	t	p
SASA TOTAL	Yes	158	43.2911	1.290	.198
	No	164	41.6890		
FNE	Yes	158	16.9114	1.646	.189
	No	164	16.3110		
SAAGS	Yes	158	10.9937	1.311	.191
	No	164	10.4207		
SAANS	Yes	158	29.8291	1.208	.228
	No	164	28.7378		

There was no statistically significant difference between the participants' SASA Total Scores, FNE sub-dimension scores, SAAGS sub-dimension scores and SAANS sub-dimension scores.

Table-3: The T-test analysis results of the participants' SMAS scores according to the "gender" variable ($p < 0.05$)

Scale Scores	Gender	N	Mean	t	p
SMAS TOTAL	Female	199	59.9548	-2.942	.004
	Male	123	67.1789		
DEPRIVATION	Female	199	40.8040	-2.395	.017
	Male	123	44.6829		
Affecting daily life/ lack of control	Female	199	21.5528	-3.172	.002
	Male	123	25.0407		

There was a statistically significant difference in favour of male participants between the total SMAS Scores, Deprivation sub-dimension scores and Affecting Daily Life/Lack of Control sub-dimension scores.

Table-4: T-test analysis results of the participants' SMAS scores according to the variable of "doing sports regularly" ($p < 0.05$)

Scale Scores	Regularly	N	Mean	t	p
SMAS TOTAL	No	158	68.2532	4.645	.000
	Yes	164	57.3780		
DEPRIVATION	No	158	45.5570	4.152	.000
	Yes	164	39.1341		
Affecting daily life/ lack of control	No	158	25.3481	4.600	.000
	Yes	164	20.5122		

There was a statistically significant difference in favour of the participants who did not do sports regularly between the SMAS total scores, the Deprivation sub-dimension scores and the Affecting Daily Life/Lack of Control sub-dimension scores.

Table-5: One-Way ANOVA analysis results of the participants' SASA scores according to the "age" variable ($p < 0.05$)

Scale Score	Age	N	Mean	F	p
SASA TOTAL	15.00	88	43.0795	.252	.778
	16.00	145	42.4690		
	17.00	89	41.8876		
FNE	15.00	88	16.9545	2.030	.133
	16.00	145	16.0621		
	17.00	89	15.3034		
SAAGS	15.00	88	10.9091	.186	.831
	16.00	145	10.5862		
	17.00	89	10.6854		
SAANS	15.00	88	29.4773	.348	.707
	16.00	145	29.5241		
	17.00	89	28.6629		

There was no statistically significant difference between the total SASA scores, FNE sub-dimension scores, SAAGS sub-dimension scores and SAANS sub-dimension scores.

Table-6: One-Way ANOVA analysis results of the participants' SMAS scores according to the "age" variable ($p < 0.05$)

Scale Score	Age	N	Mean	F	p	Fark
SMAS TOTAL	15.00	88	67.4205	3.123	.045	15*-16
	16.00	145	60.2000			
	17.00	89	62.1573			
DEPRIVATION	15.00	88	45.6364	3.555	.030	15*-16
	16.00	145	40.6414			
	17.00	89	41.6517			
Affecting daily life/ lack of control	15.00	88	24.3977	1.616	.200	-
	16.00	145	22.0483			
	17.00	89	22.7528			

The SMAS total scores and the Deprivation sub-dimension scores were higher than the 16-year-old group, in favour of the 15-year-old group, and this difference was statistically significant. It was determined that the sub-dimension scores of the participants' Affecting Daily Life/Lack of Control did not differ statistically according to the age variable.

Table-7: One-Way ANOVA analysis of SMAS scores according to the "purposes of using social media" variable of the participants.

Scale	Purpose	N	Mean	F	p	Discrepancy
SMAS	1-FCE	196	41.5051	3.101	.046	2*-1
	2-BuF	51	45.8235			
	3-Other	75	42.7333			
FNE	1-FCE	196	15.7041	4.297	.014	2*-1/2*-3
	2-BuF	51	18.1373			
	3-Other	75	15.7333			
SAAGS	1-FCE	196	10.5867	.284	.753	-
	2-BuF	51	11.0392			

	3-Other	75	10.7733			
SAANS	1-FCU	196	28.5051	3.881	.022	1*-2
	2-BuF	51	32.0196			
	3-Other	75	29.4133			

FCU- Following Current Events; BuF- Building Up Friendship
(groups favouring the difference in scores are indicated by “*”)

It was seen that the total scores of the participants differ according to the variable “purposes of using social media”. Further, the scores of the participants who use social media for “building up a friendship” were higher than those who use social media for “other” activities, and this difference is statistically significant. According to the “purposes of using social media” variable of the participants, the FNE Scores of the participants differ and the scores of the participants who use social media for “building up a friendship” are higher than those who use social media for “following current events” and “other” activities, and this difference was statistically significant. It is seen that the SAANS Scores of the participants differ according to the variable of “purposes of using social media” and that the scores of the participants who use social media to “following current events” are higher than those who use social media for “building up a friendship” and this difference is statistically significant.

Table-8: One-Way ANOVA analysis of the participants' SMAS scores according to the “purposes of using social media” variable

Scale	Purpose	N	Mean	F	p	Discrepancy
SMAS	1-FCE	196	63.4847	8.540	.000	1*-3/2*-3
	2-BuF	51	70.7843			
	3-Other	75	55.2133			
Depriva tion	1-FCE	196	43.0408	10.014	.000	1*-3/2*-3
	2-BuF	51	47.5490			
	3-Other	75	36.7333			
Affecting daily life/ Lack of con.	1-FCE	196	22.7806	4.802	.009	2*-3
	2-BuF	51	26.2549			
	3-Other	75	20.8667			

p<0.05 (groups favouring the difference in scores are indicated by “*”)

The total scores of SMAS and the total scores of the Deprivation sub-dimension differ, and the scores of the participants who use social media for “following current events” and “building up a friendship” are higher than those who use social media for “other” activities, and this difference was statistically significant. When the participants' Affecting Daily Life/Lack of Control sub-dimension scores are examined, it was seen that the scores of the participants who use social media for “building up a friendship” are higher than those who use it for “other” activities, and this difference is statistically significant.

Table-9: Pearson Correlation analysis of the scores of the participants on the social media anxiety and social anxiety scales.

Scales	Social Anxiety Total Score
Social Media Anxiety Total Score	.133*
	p .017
	N 322
	p<0.05

There was a positive relationship between the social media anxiety scale total score and the social anxiety scale total score of the participants, and this relationship was of low significance.

Discussion

Considering the scale score averages of the participants, it is seen that the social anxiety scores are generally low. As one of the main reasons for this situation could be the participants have similar feelings and thoughts in the interaction environment they are in, as they are individuals of education age and spend a significant part of their daily life together in a co-educational environment in schools. Aktan (2018) found that the social anxiety levels of the participants did not differ according to the gender variable.

While analysing the variable of “doing sports regularly”, there was no statistically significant difference between the participants' SASA Total Scores, FNE sub-dimension scores, SAAGS sub-dimension scores, and SAANS sub-dimension scores. As the main reasons for this situation could be the participants have similar feelings and thoughts because they have undergone similar physical, emotional, and social changes during adolescence and participate in the same type of activities within the scope of school sports. However, as per Tunç (2015), it was determined that the social anxiety levels of individuals who do sports are lower than that those who do not on university students

A statistically significant difference in favour of male participants between the SASA total scores, the “Deprivation” sub-dimension scores, and the “Affecting Daily Life/Lack of Control” sub-dimension scores was evidenced. Perhaps the male participants are shyer than female participants in communicating face-to-face with the opposite gender, and their use of social media is more intense than female participants (playing online games, etc.). Baz (2018) states that some individuals avoid face-to-face communication in daily life and prefer to communicate via social media instead. Çömlekçi & Basol (2019) state that in today's world, the communication and interaction that individuals generally establish in real life are now realized through virtual environments and social media. However, Çömlekçi & Basol (2019) stated that the social media addiction levels of individuals do not differ according to the gender factor. Koçak (2021), stated that the mean scores of social media addiction among university students did not differ significantly according to the gender variable.

Intensive use of social media creates many negative effects on individuals in terms of cognitive, affective, psychomotor, and social aspects. However, considering the positive effects of sports on the social development of individuals, especially in the fight against substance and behavioural addictions, and due to the participation of individuals who regularly do sports in sports activities as an alternative activity area to the use of social media. The fact that they use social media less and thus have lower

addiction levels is in line with the findings in the literature. (Eysenck, 1997; Tarhan, 2005; Griffiths, 2005; Yeltepe-Ercan, 2003; Bilgin, 2018).

Considering the developmental age characteristics of the participants, the fact that they are similar in terms of cognitive, psycho-social, and psychomotor characteristics can be shown as the reason for this situation. As per the “age” variable of the participants, the SMAS total scores and the “Deprivation” sub-dimension scores were higher than the 16-year-old group, in favour of the 15-year-old group, and this difference was statistically significant. It was determined that the sub-dimension scores of the participants “Affecting Daily Life/Lack of Control” did not differ statistically according to the age variable. Deniz & Gürültü (2018) concluded that social media addiction of high school students did not differ according to grade level, including all subscales. In this study, the difference in scores of the participants was considerably higher than that of the 16-year-old group, especially in favour of the 15-year-old group, and the main reason why this difference was statistically significant is that the participants in the 15-year-old group experienced a complete transition from childhood to adolescence and in this process, they got rid of parental control and adolescence period was It can be shown as their intense orientation to social media with the aim of adapting to their life. Ögel (2012) stated that the most critical periods in developmental periods are childhood and adolescence, and these periods are the most important periods in which the individual shows tendencies such as substance and behavioural addiction. Because the individual, who is under parental control and protection in the first childhood (3-6 years), with the transition to the second childhood (7-11 years) and adolescence (12-18 years), unlike the family environment, interacts with other people in order to adapt to the social environment he is in. communicate and interact and acquire many different knowledge and experiences about social life. Especially in this period, individuals are acquainted with negative behaviour types such as substance and behavioural addictions.

When the total scores of the participants according to the “purposes of using social media” variable was examined, it was seen that those who use social media for “building up a friendship” were higher than those who use social media for “other” activities, and this difference was statistically significant. It was seen that the FNE total scores, the scores of those who use social media to “build up a friend” were higher than those who use social media for “following current events” and “other” activities, and this difference is statistically significant. It is seen that the total SAANS scores of the participants differ and the scores of the participants who use social media to “follow current events” are higher than those who use social media for “building up a friendship”, and this difference was

statistically significant. When the scores of the participants were examined, it was seen that they use social media more especially for “building up a friendship” and “following current events”. Today, technology has created a brand new virtual world in social life, friendship relations are especially intense in this virtual world, and the use of the virtual world as a source of information in following current events can be shown as the reasons for this situation. In some studies, it was reported that the purposes of individuals’ use of social media were more such as “ building up a friendship” and “following current events” (Akin, 2017; Baz, 2018; Bilgin, 2018; Çömlekçi & Basol, 2019).

When the participants’ Affecting Daily Life/Lack of Control sub-dimension scores were examined, it was seen that the scores of the participants who use social media for “building up a friendship” were higher than those who use it for “other” activities, and this difference was statistically significant. It was also seen that the scores of the participants in the SASA scale were similar to the SMAS scale. Again, as the reason for this situation, friendship relations formed in the new virtual world created by technology were experienced more intensely in this virtual world and the use of this virtual world as a source of information in following current events can be shown as the reasons for this situation. Çömlekçi & Basol (2019) found that today’s youth use social media more to make friends and follow current events.

There was a positive relationship between the participants’ SMAS total scores and their SASA total scores, and this relationship was of low-level significance. The reason for this situation can be shown as the fact that young people have concerns such as being liked, approved by others, being popular, and using social media as a tool to eliminate these concerns, especially with the gradual decline of face-to-face communication in real life. Aktan (2018) found that individuals with high self-anxiety levels also have high social media anxiety levels. Aslan (2020) reported a positive and significant relationship between university students’ social media addiction and their social anxiety in social media environments. Dogan & Tosun (2016) concluded that adolescents with high social anxiety levels also have high social media anxiety levels, and explained the reason for this situation due to reasons such as the adolescents’ efforts to be liked, approved, and appreciated on social networks.

As a result, the positive relationship between the social media addiction levels of the participants and their social anxiety levels and the fact that the social media addiction levels of the individuals who regularly do sports were lower than those who do not regularly do sports are very important findings in terms of revealing the relationship between these variables.

It is an important limitation that this research was

designed and conducted only according to the quantitative research model. The use of quantitative and qualitative research models together in similar studies to be conducted in the following periods may contribute to obtaining more detailed findings on the problem situation and, in this direction, to bring more comprehensive solution proposals for the solution of the research problem.

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