

The Effects of Internet Use on Individual's Socialization Based on Personality Traits

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: While it was found in some studies that the use of internet effects the socialisation of the individual positively in relation to the characteristics of the individual by alleviating the loneliness, it was found in some studies that the use of internet effects the socialisation of the individual negatively in relation to the characteristics of the individual by increasing the feeling of loneliness. The aim of this study is to investigate relation between using the internet and socialization process of individuals depending on their personality traits. The aim of this study is to investigate relation between using the internet and socialization process of individuals depending on their personality traits.

Method: The sample of this study consists of 1411 individuals (979 females, 432 males). Data were collected via the internet. The participants were administered Socio-Demographic Information Form, UCLA Loneliness Scale, Short-Form Revised Eysenck Personality Questionnaire and Online Cognition Scale.

Findings: In the regression models which are designed to examine the effects of the subdimensions of the cognitive state on the internet scale over the subdimensions of the personality scale, positive effect of decreased impulse control ($\beta=0.019$) and the positive effect of distraction ($\beta=0.039$) over neuroticism are seen. There is a negative effect of distraction ($\beta=-0.023$) over extraversion subdimension of personality. There is a positive effect of social support ($\beta=0.014$) over psychoticism subdimension of personality.

Discussion and Conclusion: The main hypothesis of the study personality is a mediator between online cognition and loneliness. So we constituted three different regression models to examine the effect of online cognition on loneliness, the effect of personality on loneliness and the effect of online cognition and personality on loneliness for this purpose. The results of these three separate regression models show that the personality is the moderator variable between decreased impulse control and loneliness. Furthermore, the results of the analyses show that the personality is the mediator variable between distraction and loneliness.

Keywords: personality traits, socialization, the internet

ÖZET

Kişilik Özelliklerine Bağlı Olarak İnternet Kullanımının Bireylerin Sosyalleşmesine Etkisi

Amaç: Yapılan bazı çalışmalarda internet kullanımının kişilik özellikleri ile ilişkili olarak bireyin sosyalleşmesini olumlu yönde etkilediği yani yalnızlığını azalttığı bulunurken, bir kısmında ise internet kullanımının kişilik özellikleri ile ilişkili olarak bireyin sosyalleşmesini olumsuz yönde etkilediği yani yalnızlığını arttırdığı bulunmuştur. Bu çalışmanın amacı bireylerin kişilik özelliklerine bağlı olarak internet kullanımları ile sosyalleşme süreçleri arasındaki ilişkiyi incelemektir.

Yöntem: Bu çalışmanın örneklemini 1411 kişi oluşturmaktadır (979 kadın, 432 erkek). Veriler internet üzerinden toplanmıştır. Çalışmada katılımcılara Sosyo-Demografik Bilgi Formu (SDBF), Ucla Yalnızlık Ölçeği (UCLA), Eysenck Kişilik Anketi Gözden Geçirilmiş/Kısaltılmış Formu (EKA-GGK) ve İnternette Bilişsel Durum Ölçeği (İB-DÖ) uygulanmıştır.

Bulgular: İnternette bilişsel durum ölçeğinin alt boyutlarının kişilik ölçeği alt boyutları üzerindeki etkilerini incelemek için yapılan regresyon analizlerinde nörotizm kişilik alt boyutuna azalmış impuls kontrolünün ($\beta=0.019$) ve dikkat dağıtmanın ($\beta=0.039$) pozitif etkisi görülmektedir. Dışa dönüklük kişilik alt boyutu üzerinde dikkat dağıtmanın negatif etkisi ($\beta=-0.023$) vardır. Psikotizm kişilik alt boyutu üzerinde sosyal desteğin

pozitif etkisi($\beta=0.014$) vardır.

Tartışma ve Sonuç: Bu çalışmanın ana hipotezi kişinin internet kullanımı ve yalnızlık arasında ara değişken olduğudur. Bu amaçla, sırayla internette bilişsel durumun yalnızlık üzerine etkisi, kişinin yalnızlık üzerine etkisi, internette bilişsel durum ve kişinin birlikte yalnızlık üzerine etkisinn incelemek için üç ayrı regresyon modeli yaptık. Yapılan bu üç ayrı regresyon modelinin sonuçları, kişinin azalmış impuls kontrol ile yalnızlık arasında tam ara değişken (moderator variable) olduğunu göstermektedir. Ayrıca analiz sonuçları kişinin dikkat dağıtma ile yalnızlık arasında da kısmi ara değişken (mediator variable) olduğunu göstermektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: kişilik özellikleri, sosyalleşme, internet

INTRODUCTION

It is clear that people do not resemble each other. Despite the similarities of the environmental situations, responses may change in the same situation for the same stimulus. When causes and consequences of these differences been determined it was observed that "concept of personality" became apparent (Hogan 1996). One's personality may undergo a change according to some factors such as inherent, environmental, genetic, natural etc. Looking at that, it would not be wrong to say that personality is a structured process. Undoubtedly, there are some other factors that affect the personality such as social settings and culture. Theorists, studying on personality development, posited a disparate theoretical framework to describe personality. In line with these theories of personality; there are some psychological factors that have effect on personality development; that is; to gain his/her independence, success and self-confidence wish, crave for being liked, congratulated, and demand of having good social interaction (Akiskal and Hirschfeld 1983, Kulaksızoglu 2000).

Group interaction or socialization is a fundamental thing shaping personality features (Aydın 2002). During the process of personality shaping, acculturation or with another name socialization debated with respect to social norms and standards transferred by constitutions like family, government and economic system, is significant. Isen and Batmaz (2002) describe socialization as a process that people learn to find social relationships. Experimental learning, taking part and social support comprise socialization.

Today, the concept of socialization has gained a new dimension with the spread of internet use. "Online communities" come in very different shapes and sizes. On the one hand, it consists of virtual communities that connect geographically distant people with no prior acquaintance who share similar interests. On the other hand, it facilitates interactions among friendship networks or family members. And, it provides community networks that focus on issues rele-

vant to a geographically defined neighborhood (Kollock and Smith 1998). Internet users are members of cyber society and live in cyber space. With the comfort brought by the technological development experienced today, interpersonal interactions were replaced by a world full of computers and machines. People do not need each other so as to live anymore and rather than trying to establish trusting meaningful relations they prefer to keep away from them (Demir 1990, Robins 1999, Inam 1999). Virtual world is not real; however it may bring us trustable contexts that will help questioning what real world is. One of the most important features of internet that make one happy is that the users have the chance to socialize with people and groups they choose. Virtual environments form new socialization fields alternative to the conditions of social reality (Subası 2001). Those coming together in internet socialize not as a result of coincidences or compulsory encounterings but because of their filed of interests and choices. However, users' world becomes narrow in here and their perception of reality changes (Aksoy 1996).

Since internet integrates dissimilar modalities of interaction as well as different kinds of content in a single channel, it is unique. These different methods of communication includes mutual interaction, broadcasting, personal reference-searching, discussions within the groups or person/machine interactions, and different kinds of discourse includes text, video, visual images, audio. This dexterity compares logical claims that the technology will be implicated in many kinds of social change; maybe it is more effective than television or radio (Di Maggio et al. 2001). Communication will be via e-mail and the internet, but people will not recognize it enter into our lives sneakingly. Much of the investigation into the psychology of the internet has focused on the nature of communication via internet. According to some researchers, this type of communication is totally different from face to face communication (Giles 2003, Gurcay and Kumbul 2001). Johnson and Lim (1964), discovered an inclination to internet users to disclose more personal information and generally

communicate in a less diffidently way than in face to face interaction. This may give birth to entangler factors for researchers expecting that the internet can be seen as a smooth vehicle for speeding up research.

There have been many empirical studies regarding the relationship between socialization or loneliness and the internet. First hypothesis is that over use of internet leads to loneliness (Morahan and Schumacher 2003, Gross 2000). The second hypothesis asserts that lonely individuals become more engaged with the use of internet due to the social web and changing internet relationships (Frieze et al. 1979, Sumer 2001, Nie and Erbring 2000). But some theorists have suggested that usage of internet increases social interaction and support (Silverman 1991, Lin 2001, Damer 1997).

As well as the relationship between the internet and socializing, some researches showed that there is a relation between usage the internet and personality traits. Hamburger and Artzi (2002) investigated the relation between personality traits, using of the internet and loneliness in their study. They found that using of the internet is a result of loneliness and neurotic personality. In a one-year longitudinal study, Kraut et al. (1998) found that people who spent more time on the internet subsequently developed higher levels of depression and loneliness. However, in a follow-up study among participants from the same sample, Kraut et al. (2002) found that the association between daily internet use and loneliness and depression disappeared. Also, they found that for extraverted individuals daily internet use was positively associated with well-being, whereas negative relationships were found for introverted individuals.

In short, recently, advanced technological developments, especially using of the internet, have influenced human beings in various ways. On the one hand, it makes human life easier and so positively influences it while on the other hand, using of the internet makes it difficult and make people some negative emotions such as loneliness or social isolation. The aim of this study is to investigate relation between using the internet and socialization process of individuals depending on their personality traits.

METHOD

Sample

In this study, data were collected from 1466 people. However, data gathered from 55 people, were taken out from the survey because of some blank parts. Therefore, the study sample consisted of 1411 people (979

women, 432 men). Data were collected via the internet.

The range of the ages of participants consists of the ages from 15 to 55. 53% of them are between 15 and 25 years of age. In addition, 38% of them are between 25 and 35 years of age. Most of the participants (75% of them) are single. Moreover, 64% of them graduated from the university. 40% of participants are students; only 2.5% of them are housewife and 5.2% of them is unemployed. And, 53.3% of them are working. Furthermore, 72% of them states that they have medium socioeconomic status.

When the internet use habits of the participants are analyzed, while 40% of the participants expresses that they use internet for 2-3 hours daily, 50% of the participants states that they use internet for more than 4 hours on a daily basis. A great majority of participants (75% of them) stated that they connected to the internet mostly at home. Again, most of the participants (93%) join and use the social networking sites. More than half of them (56%) chats through internet and most of them (80%) are pleased with their friends at the real-social life at most (sayı veya yüzde). The ratio of the individuals who meet through internet and become friends in the real life remains at about 40%. Participants give priority to the existence of real friendship (26% of them), age group (22%), interests (22%) and deep conservation (9%) when selecting the people they are communicating through the internet more than half of the participants (55%) stated that the use of internet did not influence their socialisation.

Data Collection Tools

Socio-demographic data form, UCLA Loneliness Scale (version3), Short-Form Revised Eysenck Personality Questionnaire (EKA-GGK) and Online Cognition Scale were applied to the participants.

Socio-Demographic Information Form

This form is designed for participants to collect information about their socio-demographic and internet usage characteristics. It consists of 18 questions. Seven of these questions related to participants' socio-demographic characteristics. These questions: Gender, age, education level, marital status, number of children, occupation, socio-economic status and place of residence.

The remaining 11 questions related to participants' internet usage characteristics. These questions: The daily use of the internet, in which the environment is connected to the internet the most, is using social networking, chat, whether on the internet did not make the most of what the media friendship happy, in to-

uch with the people on the internet looking for when choosing what is the priority, which is the most comfortable environment, feelings of shared, how it affects the use of internet socialization, wake up at night and does not enter into the internet, uses the internet according to the purposes for which the distribution of the most.

UCLA Loneliness Scale

All elements of UCLA (University of California Los Angeles Loneliness Scale) Loneliness Scale developed by Russell, Peplau and Ferguson in order to measure loneliness levels of individuals included negative items. However, thinking that it led to systemic bias Russell, Peplau and Cotrana revised the items and the items were made as half positive and half negative (Demir 1989). UCLA Loneliness Scale comprises of 20 items, 10 of them are regularly coded, and the other 10 are reverse coded. In each item of this scale, an expression stating feelings and thoughts about social relations is provided and the individuals are asked to mark how often they experience this situation over a Likert type quad rating scale. The items including positive expressions (1,4,5,6,9,10,15,16,19,20) are graded as "Never (4)", "Seldom" (3), "Sometimes" (2), "Often" (1). The items including negative expressions (2, 3, 7, 8, 11, 12, 13, 14, 17, 18) are graded on the contrary as "Never (1)", "Seldom" (2), "Sometimes" (3), "Often" (4). "General loneliness point" is acquired for each individual by summing the points they receive from the items. Since grading changes between 1-4 for each item, the highest possible point is 80 the lowest point is 20. If the point is high, it is accepted that loneliness level is high.

Short-Form Revised Eysenck Personality Questionnaire (EKA-GGK)

After Eysenck developed personality theory, many scales measuring personality were developed. These were respectively Maudsley Medicine Questionnaire (MTA 40 items), (Eysenck 1952), Maudsley Personality Inventory (MKE 48 items), (Eysenck 1959), Eysenck Personality Inventory (EKE, 57 items) (Eysenck and Eysenck 1964), Eysenck Personality Questionnaire (EKA, 90 items) (Eysenck and Eysenck 1975) and Revised Eysenck Personality Questionnaire (100 items) (cited in Karancı et al. 2007). All of these scales are reliable and valid measuring means in personality measure, since they are long scales they lead to a number of problems in evaluation of traits in research. Therefore, short personality scales were needed and studies in this direction were made. One of them

is Short-Form Revised Eysenck Personality Questionnaire (EKA-GGK 48 or originally EPQR-S) (Eysenck et al. 1985). EKA-GGK comprises of 48 items and 4 subscales (Karancı et al., 2007). These subscales are extroversion (12 items), neuroticism (12 items), psychoticism (12 items) and lie (12 items). Lie subscale is a control scale in which all the validity of test is tested. While EKA-GGK48 is a reliable and valid scale, thinking that it is still a long scale in order to measure personal characteristics in adult sample groups Francis (1993) reviewed Eysenck Personality Questionnaire (Eysenck and Eysenck 1975) and revised short form of the same questionnaire (48 items) (Eysenck and Eysenck, 1984) and formed EKA-GGK. Questionnaire includes totally 24 items and evaluates personality at 3 basic factors: extroversion, neuroticism, psychoticism. Besides, lie subscale aims to prevent the bias during the implementation of the questionnaire and to control its validity. In this questionnaire in which each factor is evaluated with 6 items, the participant is asked to answer 24 questions as Yes (1)-No (0). The point that can be taken for each trait varies between 0 and 6 (Karancı, Dirik &Yorulmaz, 2007).

Online Cognition Scale

OCS is scale that was built up by Davis (2002); assessing the usage of internet with problems, is a scale that is assessing the usage of internet with problems during four months, a scale in the type of septet likert, changing form "surely not agree" till "surely agree" with 36 items. OCS is assessing the ideas/comments about internet (Ozcan 2005). The scale is formed as "descending impulse control, social support, loneliness / depression and abstraction" with four sub scales. loneliness / depression (6 questions) includes the depressive ideas about worthlessness and loneliness for the usage of internet with problems. Descending Impulse Control (10 questions) includes following; descended impulse control for the usage of internet, getting no success eventhough thinking of descend of internet, getting no success eventhough thinking of descend of usage of internet and always thinking to do something about internet. Social Support (13 questions) is the most complex and acarpous social support group among the sub groups. Most of the researchers are mentioning about the usage of internet for the people who are searching the social support or who afraids of the socially refusing are heavily sensitive of this. Abstraction (7 questions) includes the escaping/ avoiding of an action that shoul be done. Evaluation of the scale is done with calculating the to-

Tablo 1. Scale Scores in a Representative Sample (N=1411)

	Min.	Max.	Average	S.d.
Loneliness	21.000	79.000	42.966	9.972
Social Support	13.000	91.000	29.853	13.619
Loneliness-depression	6.000	42.000	14.679	7.428
Decreased Impulse Control	9.000	69.000	25.651	11.699
Distraction	7.000	49.000	20.096	9.303
Neuroticism	0.000	6.000	3.320	1.893
Extraversion	0.000	6.000	3.709	1.997
Psychoticism	0.000	6.000	1.685	1.223
Lie	0.000	6.000	3.331	1.695

Tablo 2. Findings Related To Relations Between Cognitive State on the Internet, Personal Traits and Loneliness Points

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1 Loneliness		0.251**	0.274**	0.281**	0.309**	0.526**	-0.471**	0.141**	-0.146**
2 Social Support			0.690**	0.696**	0.592**	0.160**	-0.169**	0.202**	-0.106**
3 Loneliness-depression				0.755**	0.643**	0.195**	-0.183**	0.161**	-0.127**
4 Decreased Impulse Control					0.633**	0.217**	-0.172**	0.168**	-0.161**
5 Distraction						0.247**	-0.192**	0.159**	-0.213**
6 Neuroticism							-0.231**	0.084**	-0.139**
7 Extraversion								0.033	-0.000
8 Psychoticism									-0.157**
9 Lie									

*p<.05
**p<.01

Tablo 3. Effects of Cognitive State on the Internet (Independent Variable) Over Personal Traits (Mediator Variable)

Independent Variables	Distraction		Extraversion		Psychoticism		Lie	
	β	t	β	t	β	t	β	t
Constant	2.185	16.635**	4.731	33.713**	1.065	12.379**	4.116	34.645**
Social Support	-0.006	-1.137	-0.006	-1.096	0.014	3.817**	0.007	1.524
Loneliness-depression	0.004	0.342	-0.017	-1.47	0.001	0.074	0.011	1.077
Decreased Impuls Control	0.019	2.691**	-0.004	-0.566	0.003	0.680	-0.015	-2.370*
Distraction	0.039	5.328**	-0.023	-3.006**	0.006	1.341	-0.039	-5.904**
F	25.745	16.28	16.044	18.383				
R ²	0.066	0.042	0.041	0.047				

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$

tal points and sub scale points. The calculating the points of scale, the points of expressions are concatenated from 1 to 7 as from "surely not agree" to "surely agree". Whether the level of the point is higher means "the usage of internet with problems".

Process

Scale battery has been formed by adding directive that was mentioned in the data collection tools section as one of the scales.

In the directive it is indicated that it will be examined the relationship between using the internet of individuals and some different variables, responses will be used for only researching, datas of the obtained will be evaluated collectively and so there is no need to write the names. The majority of individuals who is participated in the study use the social sharing networks (friendfeed, facebook, twitter, etc.). The data were collected from the period covering the months of July and August of 2010. All participants completed the battery in about 20 minutes.

Statistical Analyses

SPSS 17.0 program was used for statistical analyses during findings of the study is being evaluated. Descriptive statistical methods (frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation) were used during the study of data is being evaluated. Anova, correlation and regression analyses were used as hypothesis testing.

The findings are interpreted in the 95% confidence interval 0.05 significance levels.

FINDINGS

UCLA Loneliness Scale, the four sub-dimensions of Short-Form Revised Eysenck Personality Questionnaire (EKA-GGK) and the four sub-dimensions Online Cognition Scale scores of the individuals who participated in the study have shown in the table 1.

The Correlations between the Variables in This Study

The Pearson correlation values between dependent, independent and mediator variables are shown in Table 2.

As seen in Table 2, loneliness is found to be related positively with social support, loneliness -depression, decreased impulse control and distraction which are the subdimensions of Online Cognition Scale. Likewise, loneliness is found to be related positively with neuroticism and psychoticism which are the subdimensions of Eysenck Personality Questionnaire (EKA-GGK) whereas it is found to be related negatively with extraversion and lie. Social support subdimension is found to be positively related to decreased impulse control, distraction, neuroticism and psychoticism whereas it is found to be related negatively with extraversion and lie. Loneliness-depression subdimension is found to be positively related to decreased impulse control, distraction, neuroticism and psychoticism whereas it is found to be related negatively with extraversion and lie. Decreased impulse control is found to be related positively with distraction, ne-

Tablo 4. Effects of Cognitive State on the Internet (Independent Variable) and Personal Traits (Moderator- Mediator Variable) over Loneliness (Dependent Variable)

Independent Variables	Loneliness (Model 1)		Loneliness (Model 2)		Loneliness (Model 3)	
	β	T	β	T	β	T
		51.622*				39.27
Constant	34.917	*	-	-	5	39.688
Social Support	0.024	0.868	-	-	0.019	0.831
Loneliness-depression	0.074	1.293	-	-	0.038	0.834
Decreased Impuls Control	0.079	2.192*	-	-	0.025	0.880
Distraction	0.210	5.608**	-	-	0.071	2.336*
			42.562			
Constant	-	-	2	51.206**	-	-
Distraction	-	-	2.208	19.891**	2.088	18.664**
Extraversion	-	-	-1.889	-18.148**	-1.775	-16.966**
Psychoticism	-	-	0.876	5.230**	0.705	4.173**
Lie	-	-	-0.419	-3.446**	-0.309	-2.526*
F	43.412		258.947		136.991	
R ²	0.107		0.423		0.436	

* p<0.05 ; ** p<0.

uroticism and psychoticism whereas it is found to be related negatively with extraversion and lie. Distraction is found to be related positively with neuroticism and psychoticism whereas it is found to be related negatively with extraversion and lie. Neuroticism is found to be related positively with psychoticism whereas it is found to be related negatively with extraversion and lie. There is a negative relation between psychoticism and lie.

Findings Related To Effects of Cognitive State on the Internet and Personal Traits over Loneliness Points

The aim of this study is to investigate relation between using the internet and socialization process of individuals depending on their personality traits. To examine the aim of the study regression analyses was performed with the mentioned variables.

According to Baron and Kenny (1986), the conditions for a variable to be mediator variables are:

- Independent variable has an effect on mediator variable,
- Independent variable has an effect on dependent variable,
- Mediator variable has an effect on dependent variable and when the mediator variable is added to the model, the independent variables lose their effects on the dependent variables (moderator variable) or decrease their effects (mediator variable). More detailed information is shown in Table 3.

In the regression models which are designed to examine the effects of the subdimensions of the cognitive state on the internet scale over the subdimensions of the personality scale, positive effect of decreased impulse control ($\beta=0.019$) and the positive effect of distraction ($\beta=0,039$) over neuroticism are seen.

There is a negative effect of distraction ($\beta=-0.023$) over extraversion subdimension of personality. There is a positive effect of social support ($\beta=0.014$) over psychoticism subdimension of personality. There are

negative effect of decreased impulse control ($\beta=0.015$) and the negative effect of distraction over lie subdimension of personality.

Examining Table 4, three regressions showing the effect of cognitive state on the internet over solitude, effect of personality over solitude and effect of both cognitive state on the internet and personality together over solitude are seen, respectively. Comparing Model 1 and 3, the effect of the decreased impulse control over solitude is $\beta=0.039$; $t:2.192^*$ but after the personality subdimensions are added to the model (Model 3), it is seen that this effect of the decreased impulse control is lost. This result shows us that personality is the moderator variable among decreased impulse control and loneliness. Namely, decreased impulse control affects the loneliness only by the mediation of personality.

Comparing Model 1 and 3 for one of the subdimensions of cognitive state on the internet, distraction, the effect of the distraction over solitude is $\beta=0.210$; $t:5.608^{**}$ but after the personality subdimensions are added to the model (Model 3), it is seen that this effect is decreased to $\beta=0.071$; $t:2.336^*$. This result shows us that personality is the mediator variable between distraction and loneliness. So, distraction affects loneliness both directly and the mediation of personality (see Table 4).

DISCUSSION

Communication network provides multidimensionality to many fields particularly education, health, defence, industry, public sector. Today science, trade, entertainment, advertisement and even chatting were moved to internet environment and people's social activities changed. Using the internet has influenced human beings in various ways. On the one hand, it makes human life easier, that is, it influences so positively human life. However, on the other hand, it makes human life difficult. Loneliness or social isolation, perhaps recently, is one of the emotions affecting human life the most. While it was found in some studies that the use of internet effects the socialisation of the individual positively in relation to the characteristics of the individual by alleviating the loneliness, it was found in some studies that the use of internet effects the socialisation of the individual negatively in relation to the characteristics of the individual by increasing the feeling of loneliness. This study aimed to show the relation between using the internet and socialization process of individuals depending on their personality traits.

In the regression models which are designed to examine the effects of the subdimensions of the online cognition scale over the subdimensions of the personality scale positive effect of decreased impulse control and the positive effect of distraction over neuroticism are seen. In other words, the increase in decreased impulse control and distraction has been found to be associated with the increase of neuroticism. In some studies, neuroticism has been referred to as low frustration tolerance, nervousness and rejection sensitivity (Karancı et al. 2007).

Within this scope, the results of the research are consistent with the expectations and literature. In the study carried out by Barratt (2005), the personality traits of impulsive and aggressive people were found to be less extroverted and more neurotic. In the study carried out by Gulec and Sayar (2005) with the patients, it was found that impulsive behaviors are highly associated with aggression, extroversion, neuroticism and anger. In other studies conducted with impulsive and distracted individuals, it can be seen that these people might become more introverted, lonely and angry and thus demonstrate neurotic personality traits (Ercan and Aydın 2000, Yavuzer 2000, Bagwell et al. 2001).

There is a negative effect of distraction on the extraversion sub-dimension of personality. In other words, the more extrovert the individual is, the less distracted he/she is. Distraction, which is the sub-dimension of Online Cognition Scale, includes using internet to avoid an activity which needs to be done. It is choosing internet to get away from stressful lives and thoughts constantly straying through the mind (Davis 2002). Bagby and Parker (2001) revealed in their studies that extroversion and distraction are associated with each other. Introvert and extravert's differ was argued with respect to their distraction by Eysenck (1967). They are ranged as introverts have been shown to have a lower optimum arousal threshold hence they do not need much stimulation before passing their optimum functioning level. The extraverts have higher optimum arousal thresholds and hence tend to seek arousal or stimulating situations. The extensive psychophysiology evidence that supports this hypothesis was reviewed Stelmach (1981). Gray (1964) connected these categories with the Russian ideas of strong (extravert) and weak (introvert) nervous systems. Actually, Gray's (1981) theory suggests that neuroticism may act as a mediating factor between extraversion and task performance. Vermonlayeva-Tomina (1964) found that those with a strong nervous system tended to learn more in distracting situations than those with a weak nervous system. Mor-

genstern, Hodgson and Law (1974) found that extraverts actually performed better in the presence of distractions than they did in silence, while introverts showed a deficit in performance.

Social support has a positive effect on the sub-dimension of personality. In other words, the increase in social support has been found to be associated with the increase in psychoticism. This result of the research is inconsistent with the literature and expectations, because many studies conducted in this area found that social support has a positive effect on the mental health of the individual (Hussong 2000, Yavuzer 1992, Kılıççı 1992). Barrera and Ainlay (1983) defined social support as the number of individuals whom the individual needs. Rosa (1987) defines social support as the incidents reducing the negative effects of behaviors. According to Caplan, social support is the support obtained from the relatives helping individuals to trigger their psychological resources and sharing their duties to cope with their emotional problems (cited in Eylen 2001). In our study, contrary to the literature, the positive relationship between the psychoticism and social support, which is the sub-dimension of Online Cognition Scale, is caused by the complexity of this sub-dimension rejection because many researchers assert that lonely individuals use the internet to seek social support and over rejection sensitive individuals use the internet not to live through any social. That is, social support sub-dimension defines an adaptive situation, not a pathologic one. However, the fact that the use of internet has surpassed the real life relations and the cases where individuals trust online relationships excessively might be defined within the pathological process (Davis 2002).

There have been many empirical studies regarding the relationship between loneliness and the internet. First hypothesis is that overuse of internet leads to loneliness (Morahan and Schumacher 2003). The second hypothesis asserts that lonely individuals become more engaged with the use of internet due to the social web and changing internet relationships (Frieze et al. 1979). But some theorists have suggested that usage of internet increases social interaction and support (Silverman 1991). The usage of internet may be beneficial or benign when kept to 'normal' levels, however high levels of internet usage which interfere with daily life have been linked to a range of problems, including decreased psychosocial well-being, relationship breakdown and neglect of domestic, academic and work responsibilities (Beard 2002, Weiser 2001). Brignall and Van Valey (2005) mentioned that young people who have grown up with the internet employ online acti-

vity as an important form of social interaction. Shaw and Gant's (2002) study of internet usage, loneliness and perceived support was based on 20 US undergraduate internet chat dyads. Likewise, Amichai-Hamburger and Ben-Artzi (2003) used a small sample of Israeli undergraduates in their study of personality, loneliness and internet usage. They tried to put forward whether the internet is the cause or effect of loneliness. A second model was developed in this phase of the study. These are:

Model 1- The use of internet increases loneliness.

Neuroticism-----> Use of Internet-----> Loneliness

Model 2- The use of internet is the result of loneliness.

Neuroticism-----> Loneliness-----> Use of Internet

As a result of the statistical analyses, Model 2 (the use of internet is the result of loneliness) has been found to be true especially for women. This clearly shows that lonely women often use the internet and try to cope with their loneliness this way. We conducted our study through the hypothesis that there is a mediator or moderator variable between the use of internet and loneliness. We constituted three different regression models to examine the effect of online cognition on loneliness, the effect of personality on loneliness and the effect of online cognition and personality on loneliness for this purpose. The results of these three separate regression models show that the personality is the moderator variable between decreased impulse control and loneliness (Baron and Kenny 1986). That is, decreased impulse control affects loneliness only through personality. Furthermore, the results of the analyses show that the personality is the mediator variable between distraction and loneliness. That is, Distraction affects loneliness both directly and via the personality. These findings support the main hypothesis of the study and are consistent with the expectations and literature. Decreased impulse control sub-dimension has been defined as the most determinant sub-group in identifying problematic internet use in studies of Davis (2002) and Ozcan and Buzlu (2005). Decreased impulse control causes the individual to constantly think about internet although he wants to reduce his use of internet. Decreased impulse control is also associated with dangerous and risky behaviors like online gambling, child pornography, sending viruses to others (Ozcan and Buzlu 2005). Innately vigilant and private people may drawn to such anonymous interactive features of the Internet as this allows them to converse with others in

uninhibited ways and form new relationships with greater ease than in real life circumstances. Anonymous electronic communication may also attract less conforming individuals who use the medium to rant radical ideologies or discuss taboo social belief systems they maintain, yet in real life either self-inhibit or find few others who share those views. If these individuals also display emotionally reactive tendencies, they may draw upon such a medium to emote in ways that are restricted by social convention. Outbursts of anger, over-sexualized comments, or blunt remarks which are typically self-monitored thoughts in real life may form the basis of typed messages to fellow on-line users in interactive forums. These specific personality traits may place an individual at a greater risk to develop pathological Internet usage because the on-line world created inside their screens becomes the only outlet for such expression (Young and Rodgers 1997, Yang 2001).

The Limitations of the Study

This research has some deficiencies. First of all, the findings are cross-sectional data. Thus, the relationships in some of the findings are bidirectional. You should be careful in explaining causality without experimental methods or longitudinal studies.

Secondly, the data have been collected on the internet. We applied the surveying method. It is possible to obtain good results using the interview method in these kinds of studies.

Lastly, the socialization variable has been assessed through the concept of loneliness which is a contrary concept. Therefore, the findings do not provide precise information about the socialization of individuals.

CONCLUSION

Clinical effects of This Study

The results of this study can spill some light on further research and clinical practices in identifying risk groups, and developing preventive interventions and treatment strategies. For example, effectuation of social skill training programs for improvement of communication skills and reducing loneliness are thought to be effective in prevention and treatment of internet dependency.

Suggestions for Future Studies

The method of interview rather than surveying should be applied to precisely determine the effect of personality on the use of internet and socialization.

The loneliness scale used in this study has been in-

adequate in assessing socialization. If the researchers decide to choose surveying method, they should employ a comprehensive and sophisticated socialization scale to precisely define the relationship between socialization, personality traits and the use of internet.

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