

University students' computer-internet usage and parental perspective evaluations

Abstract

This paper presents the results of a survey of undergraduate students of Konya Technical University. The results indicate that 97.20% of the participants use the internet daily. When the purposes of using the Internet were examined, it was determined that 19.39% watched online videos and 17.36% used it for homework. In addition, when asked about the process in that they spend the most time in front of the computer, 22.13% stated that they use it for homework, 15.57% watch online videos, and 11.48% play computer games. 33.80% of the participants stated that their families were worried about the use of the internet, and 44.60% stated that their families talked to their children about the correct use of the computer. When the subjects that families talk about with their children are examined, it is stated that 26.60% of them are about being safe online, 18.35% of them are the time they can use the media, and 16.51% are about complying with ethical rules on the internet. Correlation analysis "How many hours do you spend at the computer?" with "Has your family talked to you about the proper use of the computer?" It shows that there is a very high level ($r=903$) relationship between the questions. Also "How many hours do you spend at the computer?" and "Has your computer use affected your relationships with your friends?" It was determined that there was a high level ($r=892$) relationship between the questions. Despite the anxiety of the families, 95.90% of the young people stated that they want their parents to trust them in computer use. In the study, the perspectives of young people on computer and internet use and the determination of parents' views through their children are of great importance in terms of fulfilling the relevant duties and responsibilities of parents, and the idea that it will guide the future practices has formed the starting point of this study.

Keywords: University students, internet use purpose, parent, anxiety

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Introduction

The most discussed issue in today's families is computer-internet use at home. Families experience various anxieties due to the dangers that their children may encounter while using computers and the internet. In addition, young people who spend a lot of time in front of the computer are worried that they may have physical, social, and psychological problems. It is stated that encountering harmful content at an early age, which is one of the risks that may occur during computer-internet use, causes various harms in the development of children and young people.¹ In addition to encountering unwanted content on the Internet, another important threat is the possibility of coming face-to-face with malicious people online.² In addition, it is reported that the sensitivity to the risks of computer-internet use in our country is low; parents stay away from the subject due to their low interest in computer technologies and the relevant units do not take adequate precautions to protect young people against such threats and dangers.^{3,4} Many studies have been carried out on the level of awareness of young people about the risks that occur when using computers and what parents should pay attention to in this regard. However, the risk mostly affects young people who have to leave home and live alone in the first years of university and are not conscious of such threats and dangers. Preventing computer use and canceling the internet is not a solution in combating the risks of computer-internet use by young people. Information security, protection of information-containing environments, physical security, human factor, firewalls, anti-virus software, digital signature, anti-spyware, attack detection systems, virtual keyboards, and encryption methods have also taken their place in this field. Considering the diversity of computer crimes, 44% theft of money, 16% damage to software, 16% theft of information, 12% damage or alteration of information, 10% unauthorized use of services,

and unauthorized security breaches. So just surfing the internet without harm is 2%. Considering the diversity of computer crimes, 44% are about money theft, 16% are about damaging software, 16% are about stealing information, 12% are about damaging or changing information, and 10% are about the unauthorized use of services.⁵ Monitoring software such as keyboard listening systems that can monitor all activities on the computer is also used for parents to use the computer and internet safely. Keyboard listening systems stand out with their encrypted storage feature on the disk, whether the user is aware of it or not.^{6,7}

Parents have very serious anxiety about computer internet addiction. This situation, which parents see as a big problem for young people, also negatively affects family relationships. Findings of studies with parents in Turkey show that they are not equipped to protect their children against risks. The Covid-19 outbreak has also changed the habits of society. The epidemic has radically shaped social life as well as health. The situation of spending more time at home, the use of computers and the internet by young people who need socialization at their most active age, became the basis of education life and triggered addiction. Young people in different age groups need to learn about their feelings when they are stuck in closed spaces at home, learn ways to cope with difficult emotions, find activities to do when they are bored, and improve their ability to talk to their parents about problems. Otherwise, problems such as introversion and escaping to the virtual environment are experienced. While young people spend more time in front of the screen for many reasons, parents had even more difficulty regulating screen use. The biggest fear of parents is computer-internet addiction. When young people say that they spend time for fun, the family is afraid that their children will become addicted. Because, regardless of age, people may experience a loss

of control over time in internet use.⁸ Internet addiction is defined by Young⁹ as the inability to rein in the desire to use the Internet for the individual, the time spent without the Internet is irrelevant, and the withdrawal symptoms (extreme irritability and aggression) when the individual cannot access the Internet, as in other addictions. In excessive use of the Internet, individuals move away from real social environments, triggering various problems such as loneliness and deterioration in psycho-social functions.¹⁰ The unconscious use of computers and the Internet is physical (problems in the head, eyes, neck, shoulders, elbows, arms, wrists, forearms, hands and fingers, back and waist, knees, feet, and ankles) and/or psychological (stress, nervousness, hasty) can cause addiction problems as well as problems.¹¹ It is also reported that internet addiction can cause mental and behavioral disorders such as attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder, social phobia, anxiety, and depression, as in substance use.¹² In addition, concepts such as digital diseases, diseases caused by technology, e-diseases, or e-syndromes are also frequently on the agenda. At the point where parents do not reach and parental control ends, the young person cannot limit computer-internet use of his own will. At this point, awareness of young people is a very important point. The use of anti-spam or anti-virus programs is around 72% for European parents, while it is 46% for Turkish parents. It is reported that 83.4% of children consider themselves to be very knowledgeable about internet use, and 85% think that they can cope with unwanted content alone. It is known that young people do not have the chance to be controlled at any time and in every environment, and no matter how diligent their parents are, they cannot be enough. For this reason, it is of great importance for young people to make internal controls and studies on this subject will raise awareness. Today, computers and the internet are necessary for people of all age groups to socialize, communicate, meet their daily needs and enter business life, and they are important as long as the computer remains at a level that will not distract from life and not be harmful. It will continue to occupy an important place in human life in the future. For these reasons, instead of completely banning the use of computers and the internet, it is

necessary to be prepared to take part in life without being deprived of its benefits by raising awareness. Because computer addiction is like any other addiction. Computer addiction is not a problem, it's just a symptom. For this reason, determining the factor that is effective in excessive computer internet use by young people will provide the solution. The results of the study on the causes of computer-internet use by young people will shed light on this issue. For this reason, the point of departure of this study is that young people's perspectives on computer and internet use and their parents' anxiety levels will guide further studies.

Material method

This research was carried out on the students of Konya Technical University and Konya Selcuk University to evaluate the internet use of university students and to determine the effects of the internet on themselves and their families. The phase of the research consists of university students operating in Konya. The quantitative research method was used in the study. The questionnaire form, which was prepared as a data collection tool, was determined by face-to-face interviews with 74 university students who agreed to participate voluntarily. As seen in Table 1, 36 (48.6%) of the 74 university students participating in the survey are male and 38 (51.4%) are female. While creating the questionnaire, expressions that would reveal the variables representing the characteristics of students' computer use, internet preferences, duration, and social life were included. The survey questions consisted of two parts. In the first part, demographic information such as gender, age, monthly income, and family information of the participants are included. In the second part, the family's confidence and anxiety for their children in the use of the Internet, the distribution of the topics that families talk about with their children, the purpose of computer use of the participants, and the process they spend the most time on the computer are included. In addition, the results of the correlation analysis between the internet usage duration of the participants and other variables are also included.

Table 1 Gender status of the young people who participated in the survey by age

Age	Gender				Frequency	Rate (%)
	Male		Female			
	Frequency	Rate (%)	Frequency	Rate (%)		
18	3	7,90	10	27,78	13	17,57
19	19	50,00	16	44,43	35	47,30
20	7	18,42	5	13,89	12	16,21
21	7	18,42	2	5,56	9	12,17
22	1	2,63	1	2,78	2	2,70
23	1	2,63	1	2,78	2	2,70
24	0	0	1	2,78	1	1,35
Total	38	100,00	36	100,00	74	100,0

The answers given by 74 students participating in the study formed the data of this study. The surveys were administered and completed in November 2021. The obtained data were processed electronically using the SPSS 17.0 statistical program. The answers of the participants to the questionnaire consisting of open-ended questions were evaluated using descriptive statistical methods (number, percent, mean, standard deviation). In addition, the relationship between the dependent variables of the data obtained from the answers given to the survey questions was tested with Pearson correlation analysis.

Correlation values between scales (r) 0.00-0.25 very weak, 0.26-0.49 weak, 0.50-0.69 moderate, 0.70-0.89 high, 0.90-1, 00 is rated very high (Kalaycı, 2006). The findings were evaluated at the 95% confidence interval at the 5% significance level.

Results

The number and percentage values of the age and gender of the young people who participated in the survey are given in Table 1.

When the age status of the university youth participating in the survey is examined in Table 1, it is seen that the age group with the highest rate for both men and women is 19. The ratio of 19-year-old participants to total participants was 47.30%.

When the places where the young people participating in the survey stay are examined in Table 2, it is understood that both male and female students stay in the dormitories at the highest rate. The rate of staying in a dormitory was calculated as 92.10% for women and 52.78% for men. Table 2 shows that the number of female students staying at home with their families is 3 and the number of male students is 12. The survey questions about the socio-economic characteristics of the students participating in the survey and the numbers and percentages of these questions are shown in Table 3 (Figure 1).

Table 2 Distribution of the places of residence of the youth participating in the survey by gender

Gender	With family	With friends	Home alone	In the dormitory
Female	3	0	0	35
Male	12	4	1	19
Total	15	4	1	54
Rate (%)	20,26	5,40	1,34	73,00

Table 3 Socio-economic characteristics of the participants

Survey questions	Questions/ options	Frequency	Rate (%)
Family monthly income	1500-3000	13	0,18
	3100-4900	14	0,19
	5000-6900	21	0,28
	7000-8500	9	0,12
	8600-15000	9	0,12
Student's monthly expenditure	Unanswered	8	0,11
	200-700	21	0,28
	710-1600	33	0,45
	1610-2500	41	0,55
Participation in social activity	2550-6500	3	0,04
	Unanswered	9	0,12
	Yes	44	0,59
Certificate training	No	30	0,41
	Yes	36	48,6
State of having a computer	No	37	50,0
	Yes	56	75,66
	No	18	24,34

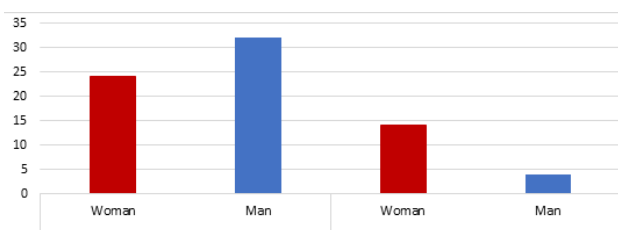


Figure 1 Whether or not the participants have their computers by gender.

When the average monthly income of the families of the young people participating in the survey is examined, it is stated in Table 4 that the highest income is between 5000-6900 TL and this rate is 28%. In addition, 19% of the families' average monthly income is 3100-4900 TL, 18% is 1500-3000 TL, and according to the results of the research, it is seen that most of the families have a middle-income level.

Table 4 Computer and internet usage status of the participants

Survey questions	Question options	Frequency	Rate (%)
Where are you connecting to the internet?	From home	19	25,65
	From the phone	25	33,80
	From university	11	14,90
How much is your internet usage experience?	All	19	25,65
	3-4 years	9	12,20
	5-6 years	13	17,60
	6 years	52	70,20
Your internet usage frequency	Unanswered	1	1,40
	Daily	72	97,20
	Weekly	1	1,40
Internet use skill level	Beginning level	2	2,70
	Very good	16	21,60
	Good	33	44,60
How many hours do you spend on the computer?	Middle	23	31,10
	1-3 hours a day	37	50,00
	4-5 hours a day	15	20,30
Does prolonged computer use negatively affect your health?	more than 5 hours a day	11	14,85
	2-3 hours a week	11	14,85
	Yes	58	78,40
	No	16	21,60

When the monthly expenditures of the students participating in the survey are examined, it is seen in Table 4 that the highest amount of expenditure is 1610-2500 TL and the rate is 55%, the rate of those who participate in social activities is 59%, and the rate of students who receive certificate training or participate in certificate training is 48.6%. In addition, it is seen that 75.66% of the youth have a computer. It is seen that 14 of the 38 female students and 4 of the 36 male students who answered the questionnaire do not have their computers. The computer and internet usage status of the participants is given in Table 4.

When the computer and internet usage status of the participants is examined in Table 4, it is seen that the highest rate of connecting to the internet is by phone with 33.80%. When their internet usage experiences are examined, it is stated that the participants have been using computers for 6 years (70.20%), 97.20% of them use the internet daily, and 44.60% of them have good internet usage skills. Most of the participants (78.40%) stated that long computer usage time affects their health negatively.

It was stated that 50% of all students participating in the survey spend 1-3 hours a day on the computer. The maximum time spent by male participants per day ranged from 1-3 hours to 4-5 hours (Table

5). Among female participants, the maximum duration is between 1-and 3 hours a day (Figure 2).

Table 5 Time spent by the participants on the computer according to their male and female status

		1-3 hours a day	4-5 hours a day	More than 5 hours a day	2-3 hours a week	Total
Gender	Man	14	13	7	2	36
	Woman	23	2	4	9	38
Total		37	15	11	11	74

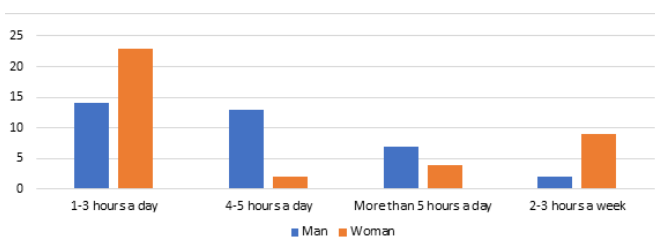


Figure 2 Time spent by the participants on the computer according to their male and female status.

In Table 6, the families of the young people informing their children about the correct use of the computer, the parent's confidence in the computer, and the family's anxiety about the use of the Internet are examined. As a result of the survey, 55.40% stated that families do not talk to their children about the correct use of the computer, and 95.90% of the young people want their parents to trust them in computer use. In addition, 66.20% of the participants stated that their families were not worried about internet use.

Table 6 Level of family information, level of trust, and anxiety about internet use

Survey questions	Question options	Frequency	Rate (%)
Has your family talked to you about the correct use of the computer?	Yes	33	44,60
	No	41	55,40
Do you want parents to trust you with computer use?	Yes	71	95,90
	No	3	4,10
Is your family worried about internet use?	Yes	25	33,80
	No	49	66,20

The ratio of families who talk to their children about the correct use of the computer is 44.60%. When examining the distribution of topics that families talk about with their children about computer use, the highest rate is about being safe in the online environment with 26.60%, and how long they can use the media with a rate of 18.35%. 15.60% of the participants left this question unanswered (Table 7).

It is seen that the young people who participated in the survey use the computer at home with a rate of 71.60% at most. 68.90% of the participants stated that computer use did not affect their relationships with their friends, 75.70% were not members of any non-governmental organizations, and 60.80% were not members of friendship clubs (Table 8).

Table 7 Distribution of topics that families talk to their children about computer use

Survey questions	Frequency*	Rate (%)
Unanswered	17	15,60
When they can use social media	9	8,26
How long they can use the media	20	18,35
Being safe online	29	26,60
Played/video computer games	16	14,68
Behaving ethically and respectfully on the Internet	18	16,51

*Participants who answered more than one question were also included

Table 8 The environment in which the participants use the computer and their relationship with their friends

Survey questions	Question options	Rate (%)	Rate (%)
In which environment do you use the computer the most?	At home	53	71,60
	At the cafe	1	1,40
	At school	12	16,20
	Other	7	9,50
Has your computer use affected your relationships with your friends?	Yes	23	31,10
	No	51	68,90
Are you a member of any non-governmental organization?	Yes	18	24,30
	No	56	75,70
Are you a member of the friendship club?	Yes	29	39,20
	No	45	60,80

The number of answers given by the young people who participated in the survey to the question of the purpose of use and the process they spend the most time in front of the computer in line with this purpose is given below.

It is understood that the purpose of computer use of the youth participating in the survey is to play computer games, watch online videos, provide economic benefits, watch online TV, browse websites, listen to music, use social media, video chat, and for homework

purposes (Table 9). In Table 9, it was stated that the most common use of computers was watching online videos (19.39%) and using them for homework (17.36%). It is also seen that the process where he spends the most time at the computer is using it for homework

with 22.13% and watching online videos with 15.57%. The process in which young people spend the least time at the computer is to provide economic benefits with a rate of 4.92% and watch TV online with a rate of 5.74%.

Table 9 The purpose of using computers and the process they spend the most time with

Survey questions	Computer intended use*		The process where you spend the most time in front of the computer*	
	Rate (%)	Rate (%)	Rate (%)	Rate (%)
Playing computer games	27	9,18	14	11,48
Watching online videos	57	19,39	19	15,57
Provide economic benefits	15	5,10	6	4,92
Watching TV online	20	6,80	7	5,74
Browsing websites	37	12,59	15	12,30
Listen to music	36	12,24	12	9,84
Using social media	32	10,88	13	10,65
Video chat	19	6,46	9	7,37
Using for homework	51	17,36	27	22,13

*Participants who answered more than one question were also included

Correlation analysis was performed to define the relationship between the participants' Internet use duration and other factors (Table 10). It is noteworthy that the strongest relationships in the analysis are between the questions "How many hours do you spend at the computer?" and "Has your computer use affected your relationships with your friends?" ($r = .89, p < .05$), and "How many hours do you spend at the computer?" and "Has your family talked to you about the correct use of the computer?" ($r = .90, p < .05$). This means that those who answer the question of "How many hours do you spend on the computer"; Also, "Has your computer use affected your relationships with your friends?" and "Has your family talked to you about the correct use of the computer?" they also consider their questions

important. Similarly, "Is your family worried about internet use?" with the question "Has your family talked to you about the correct use of the computer?" there is a moderately significant relationship between the question ($r = .576$). Also, "Has your computer use affected your relationships with your friends?" with the question "Has your family talked to you about the correct use of the computer?" also there is a moderately significant relationship between the question ($r = .532$) (Table 10). The detailed data on the relationship between the participants' internet use duration and other variables ("Is your family worried about internet use?", "Has your computer use affected your relationships with your friends?", "Has your family talked to you about the correct use of the computer?") are shown in Table 10.

Table 10 Correlation analysis results between participants' internet usage time and other variables

	How many hours do you spend on the computer?	Is your family worried about internet use?	Has your computer use affected your relationships with your friends?	Has your family talked to you about the correct use of the computer?
How many hours do you spend on the computer?	1			
Is your family worried about internet use?	,481	1		
Has your computer use affected your relationships with your friends?	,892**	,242	1	
Has your family talked to you about the correct use of the computer?	,903**	,576	,532	1

** $p < .05$

Discussion

In the present study, the gender, socioeconomic characteristics of university students, computer and Internet use status of participants, and duration of internet use were examined. In addition, the families'

opinions from the children's point of the children, such as their children's level of education about safe Internet use, their trust in their children, and their fears, were also included in the study. The variables such as the environment in which the participants use the computer and their relationship with their friends, the purpose of using the

computer, and the process by which they spend the most of their time on the computer were also examined. The result of the analysis: 0.20% of the adolescents have been using the Internet for 6 years, 97.20% of them use the Internet daily, 50% of them use the Internet 1-3 hours a day, 33.80% are connected by phone, 44.60% have high Internet use competence. And they believe that using computer and internet for a long time is not healthy for their life. Among the adolescents, 95.90% of them said that their families trust them, 55.4% of them said that their families inform them about how to use computers properly, and 66.20% of them had no problems in their families. It was found that the adolescents who participated in the survey used the computer most frequently to watch online videos (19.39%) and to do homework (17.36%). Correlations between adolescents' computer use time and information about family information and relationships with friends were found to be 89-90%. The results of this study are consistent with the report of Cengizhan¹³ report but higher than those of Karaahmetoğlu.¹⁴ Fidancıoğlu et al.¹⁵ found that some of the students are connected to the Internet on a daily basis and that computer and Internet use in general is important for their future careers. Shapira et al.⁸ reported that people lose control over their computer use and time spent on the Internet over time, even if they are on the Internet for a short period of time initially, regardless of age. Yalçın¹⁶ reported that there is a risk of computer addiction when people spend 18 hours per week (2.5 hours per day) in front of the computer and using the Internet. Durak and Şenol-Durak¹⁷ state that adolescents use computers and the Internet as a means of relaxation, in difficult homework situations, difficulties in school life, separation from family and inability to make friends. Guillot et al.¹⁸ found that young people at ages 18, 19, and 25 are under pressure to acquire the skills and education necessary for a career. Chiu, et al.¹⁹ linked 33.80% of parents' concerns about their children's computer use to the negative effects found. Paschal et al.²⁰ and Smetana et al.,²¹ reported that parents with their children play a protective role against advanced antisocial behaviors and depression. Many reports^{11,22,23} reported that students believe that computer use in education is moderately effective for health. Suhail and Bargees²³ found among 200 college students it was determined that Internet use causes problems in interpersonal relationships among young people. It is found that children and adolescents who spend a lot of time on the Internet become increasingly lonely and have difficulty communicating face-to-face.²⁴ In the current study, 31.10% of the participants in the questionnaire "Has your computer use affected your relationships with your friends?" stated that it affected their friendship relationships. He stated that 75.70% of the adolescents are not members of any non-governmental organization and 60.80% are not members of a friendship club. Many factors have led young people to be interested in computers. Especially among children and teenagers who are still in the developmental stage. Considering that today there is a computer in every home (apart from smartphones and tablets), it is not difficult for children and teenagers to access technology. But the most important thing is their relationship with technology. According to the study TUIK, 60.5 percent of children aged 6-15 in Turkey use computers, 50.8 percent use the Internet and 24.3% percent use cell phones. Parents also play an important role in this regard. In general, the studies emphasize the importance of family awareness and support by drawing attention to the duration and purpose of young people's computer use of young people, similar to this study.

Conclusion

Information technologies have entered people's lives very quickly. In our age, conscious use of computers is a very important detail. 10.5 percent of young people in Turkey are addicted to computers. In such cases, serious conflicts may arise between families and their children.

Experts, on the other hand, point out that it is wrong to ban computer use completely. In this context, while it is very important to raise awareness among young people and support families, this issue is new for both generations. In the study, the perspectives of young people on computer and internet use and the determination of parents' views through their children are of great importance in terms of fulfilling the relevant duties and responsibilities of parents, and the idea that it will guide the future study.

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Conflicts of interest

Authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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