Determining the effects of technological tool use habits on social lives

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ABSTRACT

Differences have arisen between newly developed technology and the consequently changing generation's integration of this technology into their social lives. In this study, research has been undertaken on students who use many different kinds of technological devices all together and their effects on their social lives. Also, students' habits of technological device use, social media, educational life and communication types are discussed in this study. The general scanning model was used in the study in order to determine the effects of students' technological device use on their social lives. These students are studying in educational departments at universities. The method determined was applied to the sampling group of the research. The questionnaire was determined in accordance with the method and was applied to all the educational faculties of universities during the scanning process. A total of 2334 students participated to the research. When the research findings were analysed in terms of friend choice, the students preferred communicating with people who use technology of the same quality as themselves. Also, the students claimed that they went through some problems with their families and friends as a result of intense technology use. It is obvious that students who spend more time on technological devices are more behind in their lessons and also have some inconveniences in their social lives. For instance; even when they go to the cinema they surf the Internet on their smart phones and while choosing a place to go they prefer places with a Wi–Fi connection. It has been observed that students can express themselves more easily in the Internet environment and they prefer places that are popular on the Internet.

1. Introduction

The quick development in communication technologies as well as general technologies has enabled world cultures to interact. Within this, the interaction between cultures has increased (Karaçor, 2009). As is well known, when an event happened in any country it took time to reach other countries. However, this situation has reversed nowadays. Wherever it happens, an event is heard immediately around the world within a few minutes, thanks to TV or the Internet (Maalouf, 2009).

The development of technology has produced many disadvantages as well as advantages. Unhealthiness and asociality are the two most prominent negativities in much research. When doing research – especially on the new generation's interest in technology – it is not very difficult to observe the negative and positive sides of technology (Atal & Usluel, 2011). But with the development of technology there are more negative sides than positive sides and even in some situations when technology is

mentioned there is negative thinking of it and this creates anxiety (Hammen & Brennan, 2001).

When mentioning technology, people remember the most used ones, which are computers, laptops, the Internet, mobile phones, tablet computers, televisions, game consoles and similar technological equipment. However, there are more technological devices that ease life. The refrigerator in the kitchen, washing machines and food processors are also technological devices which ease our lives. When considering these differences, it is seen that the most remembered technological devices are the technological devices that are known as creators of health problems in humans (Karal & Berigel, 2006).

Technology has developed in every area and has rendered people unable to live without it. Nearly all the things that humans use in their daily lives are related to technology. For instance, cars, mobile phones, laptops, the car's GPS systems, and mobile data on phones are daily activities done and used routinely and all those devices are related to technology (Yavuz & Coşkun, 2008). Because of this, it is inevitable that there is an increasing interest in technology. Even though some people use technology as needed, a number of people cannot live far from technology even for one

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minute of their daily lives (Choliz, Echeburua, & Labrador, 2012; Lee, Chang, Lin, & Cheng, 2014).

Tuti (2005) did a study about the analysis of student self-sufficiency perception, student perception, performance indicators and information technology use in education. The aim of the study was the determination of information technology use in education according to performance indicators in primary schools. It also aimed to analyse students' self-sufficiency perceptions and their perception about information technologies. A questionnaire was developed and used to gather data. The answers of students in the information technology questionnaire showed differences in terms of school type and gender. It was observed that the students' computer self-sufficiency perceptions are high and their perception about information technology use is positive.

All people agree that technology is in every moment of our lives and it makes our lives easier. Even though we mention its positive advantages it is harmful to human health. Due to overuse of technology, there are new illnesses nowadays (Yılmaz, Ulucan, & Pehlivan, 2010).

Mobile phones are also very important in our lives. Mobile phones – known as cell phones by people – have become the fastest communication device around the world. Their developed versions are nearly replacing computers and they are pocket size. These properties are the biggest proof of why they are so important in our lives (Skierkowski & Wood, 2012).

The fast development of mobile phones, tablets and applications has been the reason for technology playing such an important role in contributing to education. There are smart phones and tablet computers instead of normal mobile phones now and in terms of size they can be carried more easily. These two results have increased their usability greatly. Educationalists have turned this situation to their advantage and they have started to benefit from technology by using educational applications on these smart devices, which has developed mobile education (Mao, 2014).

However, it has been observed that mobile phones are a health risk for people, especially when they are overused because they are too important and too useful in our lives. In a study held by Tan, Pamuk, and Dönder (2013), the overuse of mobile devices caused people to suffer from anxiety of staying alone. Another study showed that the overuse of mobile phones is a kind of addiction and this kind of addiction threatens people's academic lives and personal health (Çağan, Ünsal, & Çelik, 2014).

Choliz et al. (2012), have done research on whether the addiction to information and communication technology is a new addiction or not. At the end of this study they decided that the prospective studies would explain the negative results of the overuse of information and communication technologies.

Hodis and Bruner (2009) did research on how the negative effects of technology use affect the user's tranquillity. At the end of the study they suggested that a study done among a bigger community would give better results in the future. Also they reached the conclusion that since the avoidance of technology use will not give any positive result from the addiction, the factors and stages that cause this addiction should be fought against. One of the biggest factors of some illnesses in the technology area is Internet use. It is accepted that Internet use provides us with benefits and facilities, but there is no common perception about whether these people's – whose overuse is excessive – behaviour disorders are related to their Internet use or not (Adiele & Olatokun, 2013). Due to the increase of the use of the Internet in the past ten years (Sinkkonen, Puhakka, & Merilainen, 2014), and the fast spread of Internet addiction disorder among youngsters (Kalaitzaki & Birtchnell, 2014), there have been many studies held about the effects of Internet overuse on human health and their behaviour disorders (Kuss, Griffiths, & Binder, 2013). The term Internet addiction contains a wide range of terms that include cybersex addiction, cyber friendship addiction and online game addiction (Craparo, 2011).

Because Internet addiction is a sensitive issue, the studies held about this topic need reliable and valid tools and equipment (Karim & Nigar, 2014). The studies show that; while the correct Internet use relaxes and makes people happy (Pénard, Poussing, & Suire, 2013), people who overuse the Internet suffer from a behaviour disorder or they have the feeling of being alone (Yao & Zhong, 2014).

According to the results from a study held in America, Internet use has increased to 93% since 2006 and remained stable at 93%. Social media use has increased every year to 80% (Floros & Siomos, 2013). According to a study held in Turkey with 300 people, Internet addiction can result in people suffering from depression or having excessive stress (Akın & İskender, 2011). Because of these reasons, Internet use started to be seen as an illness that needs to be treated (Yadav, Banwari, Parmar, & Maniar, 2013).

Nowadays, humans' normal lives are equipped with technological devices (Niculović, Živković, Manasijević, & Štrbac, 2014). Humans, during the day, spend their time engaged in many technological activities such as looking at their friends' photos, checking their friends' shares, communication or playing games (Khang, Kim, & Kim, 2013). Facebook, which is the most used social media tool around the world, has an important role in the increase of humans' Internet use. University students see Facebook – which has millions of visitors every day – as an important social cultural device (Hong, Huang, Lin, & Chiu, 2014). The use of technology being so excessive decreases the productivity of humans in their academic lives (Wentworth & Middleton, 2014).

Information and communication technologies have succeeded in changing our lives and having control of us. While in the past people used technology for different aims such as doing research, communication, or playing simple games, nowadays however, they can use their smartphones or other technological devices while moving around (Leftwich & Sabir, 2014; Salehan & Negahban, 2013).

Even though cell phones were just used for communication, with developing technology and the rise of smartphones, they have become humans' partners in their lives. The increasing smartphone use in the past ten years threatens human health by creating an addiction to them, especially in case of overuse, though they provide advantages (Chiu, 2014).

Another technological factor which threatens human health is game consoles, computers or other games played on portable technological devices (Seok & DaCosta, 2012). As well as affecting youngsters and children in many ways, they can bring personality disorders to light according to the type of games (Griffiths, 2000).

The development of technological devices addresses everyone of every age in their interest area. In the past game consoles addressed only children but with the development of technology they have become an irreplaceable entertainment resource for older people (Ventura, Shute, & Kim, 2012).

2. Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to determine the effects on the social lives of students who use many technological devices (TV, tablets, smartphones, social networking) all together in today's world.

The following questions were looked at:

1. What are the students' use habits of technological device?
2. What are the effects of social media on students' social lives?
3. What are the effects of technology on students' daily lives?
4. How does technology use affect student's learning lives?
5. How does technology use affect students' communication?