

Chapter 26

The Interaction of Social Media Addiction and Communication Anxiety During the COVID–19 Period: The Case of Individuals Over 65 in Konya Province

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ABSTRACT

While it is known that the COVID-19 epidemic has adversely affected many countries in the world, the stress and anxiety experienced by elderly individuals, especially during pandemic periods, has been more than that of younger individuals. The avoidance of the disease, especially by individuals over the age of 65, has prevented these individuals from communicating face-to-face with other people. In this context, the main purpose of the research is to determine the effect of communication concerns of individuals over the age of 65 on social media addiction. The research question was determined as “Does the communication anxiety seen in individuals over the age of 65 have an effect on social media addiction during the COVID-19 process?” In order to answer the research question, a study was conducted on the population of individuals over the age of 65 living in Konya. 423 individuals who use social media actively participated in the research. As a result of the research, it was determined that communication anxiety strengthens social media addiction behavior.

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INTRODUCTION

People live in society. It is known that the most basic communication occurs within the family because the individuals who make up society are brought up in the family environment. Communication within the family is also seen as the most religious education. It is known that the lack of communication is the basis of the conflicts and disagreements experienced by individuals in societies formed by families. Societies are prosperous with the spread of healthy communication to society, starting from the family. Family members then continue their education by establishing friendships with their external environment and then continue their lives with business friendship relations. In this context, bilateral relations are of great importance for the lives of individuals. Individuals meet their physical needs through their relationships with their external environment. On the other hand, in addition to their physical needs, individuals should also meet their psychological needs. Especially as Maslow explains in the hierarchy of needs pyramid, after the physiological needs of the individuals that make up the society are satisfied, individuals want their security needs to be met, and after these needs are met, they wait for their needs for love and socialization to come. Since the socialization and communication needs of individuals, who are social beings, are the most basic needs, it is vital to meet these needs.

Individuals living in societies live collectively in interaction with each other in order to maintain their lives. This does not mean that individuals only come together. It is used in the sense that individuals should live in a society by establishing relationships. Because individuals are expected to have this whole cultural, economic, and social relation at the point of meeting their needs from the most basic to the most complex, in this framework, society can be characterized as a complex set of relations rather than a numerical community. The most basic tool in establishing the interactions between individuals is communication. For this reason, individuals are in constant communication with each other, and communication is an activity that requires individuals to live in society. Establishing and maintaining these relations can only be achieved through communication activities. Although communication is the sharing of feelings and thoughts with other people, it contributes to the development of societies by ensuring that individuals exist in society. On the other hand, it will be possible for the individual to gain sufficient communication skills in establishing healthy human relations by recognizing their self. Individuals will live peacefully in society by continuing to interact with others. For this reason, communicating and acquiring communication skills are considered indispensable obligations for society.

Today, information and communication technologies are used intensively, and individuals have become more dependent on these networks by using information networks and are trying to use technology as a facilitator for their work. Communicating over the Internet has become an indispensable part of the modern age. People can communicate through emails, messaging apps, social media, and other online communication tools. With communication, individuals convey their emotions, such as anger, anxiety, fear, happiness, and joy, to others. These emotional behaviors occur through interaction and communication between individuals and are vital for individuals to live in society and share with others. In this context, it has become more difficult for the individuals who make up society to socialize during the COVID-19 pandemic. The compulsory isolation experienced by individuals during the pandemic has created an obstacle to the need for socialization, which Maslow also stated in the hierarchy of needs. During the pandemic, the problems of individuals not being able to socialize played a leading role in the occurrence of psychological and physical problems. Individuals who cannot fulfill their socialization needs will experience societal problems and take on a negative mood. In other words, with COVID-19, individuals may face negative emotional states such as anxiety, dissatisfaction, and dissatisfaction. However,

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