Exploring the Relationship between Self-Esteem Dimensions and Internet Addiction among Adolescents

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ABSTRACT

Aim: The study revealed compelling insights into the relationship between self-esteem and internet addiction among adolescents. Notably, general self-esteem, social self-esteem, family-home self-esteem, and total self-esteem demonstrated statistically significant and negative correlations with internet addiction. This implies that as self-esteem in these domains increased, internet addiction tended to decrease among the studied adolescents.

Method: A closer examination of the data highlighted that social self-esteem and family-home self-esteem emerged as noteworthy predictors of internet addiction. This suggests that the level of self-esteem within the social and family-home contexts plays a crucial role in influencing the likelihood of internet addiction among adolescents. The findings prompt a nuanced understanding of the intricate dynamics between self-esteem and internet addiction in this demographic. It is evident that not only the overall self-esteem but also specific dimensions such as social and family-home self-esteem contribute significantly to the occurrence and intensity of internet addiction.

Discussion: Various factors contributing to the observed correlations were explored. The social aspect of self-esteem, for instance, may influence adolescent's perception of acceptance and belonging, thereby impacting their online behaviors. Similarly, family-home self-esteem could be linked to the support and environment provided at home, influencing the adolescent's reliance on the internet as an escape or coping mechanism. Recognizing the role of self-esteem in Internet addiction can guide interventions and preventive measures. For instance, programs aimed at enhancing self-esteem, particularly in social and family contexts, may prove beneficial in mitigating the risk of internet addiction among adolescents.

Conclusion: This study contributes valuable insights into the intricate relationship between self-esteem and internet addiction among adolescents. The identified correlations and predictors explain on the multidimensional nature of this phenomenon. Future research and interventions can build upon these findings to foster a more comprehensive understanding and address the growing concern of internet addiction in the adolescent population.

Keywords: Adolescents; Internet use; self-esteem; Internet addiction

INTRODUCTION

The pervasive influence of online communication tools, notably the internet, has become a defining feature of contemporary society, impacting individuals across diverse age groups. Among the demographic groups notably affected are adolescents, whose engagement with the internet is influenced by specific factors such as a desire for freedom, easy communication, identity creation, and the formation of meaningful personal relationships. These desires contribute to an escalating rate of internet use among adolescents, giving rise to a spectrum of associated issues, with "internet addiction" emerging as a particularly noteworthy concern [1]. Across various cultures, excessive internet use is prevalent, with adolescents identified as

the demographic at the highest risk. The behaviors exhibited by adolescents during internet use are reflective of their beliefs and perceptions about themselves, highlighting the paramount role of self-esteem in this context. In essence, self-esteem, representing an individual's self-perception and evaluation of their self-concept, is positioned as a pivotal factor that may be intricately linked to internet addiction.

The exploration of this potential relationship has been the subject of numerous studies. These investigations have revealed that adolescents often present themselves differently on various online platforms, such as dating sites, social networks, and gaming platforms. Furthermore, research has delved into the connection between addiction and self-esteem, suggesting that varying levels of self-esteem may contribute to self-distrust, the development of an addicted personality, a sense of loss of control, and a pervasive sense of failure. This body of evidence leads to the plausible assertion that an individual's self-esteem levels could play a substantial role in determining the likelihood of internet addiction. As online communication becomes increasingly integrated into the societal fabric, especially among adolescents, there is a noticeable surge in Internet use. The observed relationship between self-esteem and internet-related behaviors underscores the need for a more comprehensive exploration of the intricate dynamics at play in this evolving landscape [2]. Recognizing the potential impact of self-esteem on internet addiction is paramount for developing targeted interventions and preventative measures specifically customized to address the unique challenges faced by adolescents in the digital age. As we navigate the complex intersection of technology and adolescent development, understanding the role of self-esteem becomes essential in fostering a healthier relationship with online communication tools.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature on excessive internet use encompasses a variety of conceptual frameworks, each providing unique perspectives on this phenomenon. Researchers have explored terms such as "internet addiction," "internet dependency," "pathological internet use," "problematic internet use," "internet abuse," "cyber addiction," and "obsessive video game playing." These conceptualizations collectively highlight the multifaceted nature of excessive internet engagement [3,4]. The internet addiction is depends on psychological dependency, emphasizing the compelling need for active engagement with the internet. Internet addiction with technology addiction, drawing parallels to behavioral addiction, particularly in the context of gambling. The conceptualization of problematic internet use as an impulse control disorder has been explored based on current experimental data, and the developing a cognitive-behavioral model for understanding problematic internet use.

In the Turkish context, several studies have focused on internet addiction and pathological internet use. However, an examination of the existing body of research reveals a perceived insufficiency, underscoring the need for further exploration in this domain. The implications of excessive internet use and its impact on individuals, particularly within the Turkish cultural context, remain an area ripe for continued investigation. The

link between self-esteem and addiction has been consistently documented in various studies, illustrating a robust relationship between these two variables. Research examining the relationship between internet addiction and self-esteem has been a focal point, revealing associations with personality traits and other psychiatric disorders. Distal factors associated with internet use, such as underlying psychopathology, encompass elements like depression, social anxiety, and other dependencies. Proximal factors involve maladaptive cognitions, including negative evaluations of self and the world. Notably, a significant majority of individuals identified as internet addicts have a history of experiencing depression and anxiety, often accompanied by low self-esteem.

Beyond the broad category of internet addiction, studies have delved into the association between self-esteem and adolescents' use of social networking sites. These investigations consistently indicate that individuals with lower self-esteem tend to spend more time on such platforms compared to their counterparts with higher self-esteem [5]. This exploration explain on the nuanced dynamics of online engagement, particularly in the context of adolescents navigating social networking spaces.

As the literature reveals, the complex interplay between excessive internet use, self-esteem, and associated psychological factors requires ongoing scrutiny. The need for further research is evident, both in the Turkish context and beyond, to deepen our understanding of these dynamics and inform targeted interventions aimed at mitigating the potential negative impacts of excessive Internet engagement.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study unveiled significant and negative correlations between various dimensions of self-esteem namely, general self-esteem, social self-esteem, home-family self-esteem, and total self-esteem and internet addiction among adolescents. Notably, social self-esteem and home-family self-esteem emerged as significant predictors of internet addiction. Existing literature extensively explores the link between self-esteem and pathological internet use [6-8]. The collective results of these studies point towards a consistent negative relationship between self-esteem and pathological internet use. Particularly, illuminates this relationship by highlighting the participants' use of the internet as closely tied to their perception of it as a coping mechanism and a compensatory tool for addressing deficiencies such as low self-esteem. According to Griffith [9], the internet provides an alternative space for individuals to adopt different personality and social identities, serving as a means of satisfaction and compensation for perceived inadequacies. Thus, individuals with negative self-perceptions may turn to increased internet use as a form of dependency to compensate for these deficiencies.

Adolescents, considered prime candidates for internet addiction, warrant specific attention due to unique issues associated with their internet usage. The pleasure derived from such interactions can lead to addictive patterns. Online games, with their endless goals and tasks, provide a platform for adolescents to experience a heightened sense of power and

status upon success. In essence, internet use may serve as a temporary remedy for perceived deficiencies and a means for positive self-evaluation. Another significant outcome of this study is the identification of social self-esteem and family-home self-esteem as significant predictors of internet addiction [9]. This emphasizes the crucial role of the family in shaping adolescents' self-esteem and its potential association with internet addiction. Family support, care, and involvement are recognized as influential factors in adolescents' self-perceptions. Autonomy granted by the family significantly contributes to adolescents' self-esteem and self-efficacy beliefs. The freedom to explore the world and engage in development-supporting activities, facilitated by family support, instills a sense of trust and responsibility in adolescents. Consequently, it is plausible to expect that adolescents who lack family support, attention, and freedom may be inclined to immerse themselves in a virtual environment where they perceive unlimited freedom [10]. This study underscores the complex interplay between self-esteem, family dynamics, and internet addiction among adolescents, illustrate on the multifaceted factors contributing to this phenomenon.

CONCLUSION

The study underscores the importance of considering self-esteem, both in its general and nuanced dimensions, as a significant determinant in the prevalence and intensity of internet addiction among adolescents. As digital technologies continue to play a central role in the lives of young individuals, this research provides a foundation for developing tailored strategies aimed at fostering healthier online behaviors and supporting adolescents in navigating the challenges of the digital age.

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