



The relationship of social media addiction with interpersonal problem-solving and personality traits in university students

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the relationship of social media addiction with personality traits and interpersonal problem-solving style. Two hundred forty-four students participated in this cross-sectional study. Sociodemographic form, Social Media Addiction Scale, Short-Form Five Factor Personality Inventory, and Interpersonal Problem-Solving Inventory were used to collect the study's data. According to the result of analysis, it was determined that the agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness to improvement personality trait scores increased as the social media addiction score increased. As the scores of approaching problems in a negative way, unwillingness to take responsibility, and lack of self-confidence increased, it was observed that social media addiction scores were increased. It was determined as constructive problem-solving and insistent-preserving approach scores increased, social media addiction scores decreased. This study would contribute to the literature by introducing a new concept to the factors affecting social media addiction.

Introduction

Social media, which is perceived as a means of interpersonal interaction, provides information, and individuals share their thoughts and details of their lives, interests, and knowledge (Kwahk & Park, 2016). Individual differences affect the intended use of social media. Some individuals share their photos, videos, and blog content, and others use it to stay in touch with their friends and find new friends (Yıldız & Koçak, 2020). Addiction can arise with the problematic use of social media, which is used for many purposes. "Addiction is defined as the irrepensible desire for an object, person, or entity (tree, bird, religious items, Etc.) or the state of being under the authority of another will" (Tarhan & Nurmedov, 2011). It manifests in addiction-like symptoms, including salience, mood modification, tolerance, withdrawal, conflict, and relapse (Turel et al., 2018). The irrepensible desire or the situation of being driven by another will can be experienced against social media and is defined as social media addiction. Concepts related to social media addiction are under investigation due to these consequences and similar negative situations (Mennig et al., 2020). In light of this information, the relationship between personality and interpersonal problem-solving concepts with social media addiction was examined within the scope of this study.

Personality structure is known as a determinant of social media

usage (Akça et al., 2020; Işık & Kaptangil, 2018). Costa and McCrae (1995) used the concept of personality to define the difference in an individual's behaviors, emotions, and thoughts compared to others. They also emphasized that personality was continuous and not easy to change. Many theorists have different views on the definition and measurement of personality (Jusuf, 2018). The five-factor personality model integrates different views under one roof and is frequently used in evaluating personality (Oltmanns & Widiger, 2020). The basis of the five-factor personality model is a list derived from the study of Cattell (1947). These factors are extraversion, emotional balance/neuroticism, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness to improvement (Tatar, 2017). Studies indicate that personality traits and social media are related (Akça et al., 2020; Annisette & Lafreniere, 2017).

Problems experienced in interpersonal relationships are defined as interpersonal problems, and the cognitive and behavioral process involving efforts to eliminate the tension caused by this problem is called interpersonal problem-solving (Çam & Tümkaya, 2007). Social media affects creating and solving of problems (Jiang et al., 2021). However, it is observed that there is limited information on this matter. Problem-solving can be achieved through social media due to its communication environment, ease of sharing ideas, and the availability of open and facilitating comments and discussions (Jiang et al., 2021; Bibi et al., 2018). In addition, it is believed that social media could help

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to problem-solve by facilitating the provision of feedback and making contributions. These positive effects disappear with the problematic use of social media, and a negative process is experienced. Social media addiction can lead to deterioration in relationships and the emergence of interpersonal problems. It adds a different dimension to interpersonal relations and communication and restricts face-to-face communication (Yayman & Bilgin, 2020). Based on this information, the relationship between social media addiction and interpersonal problem-solving style has become interest.

The five-factor personality trait model has recently been used in our country; and it has been observed that there were limited resources on the relationship between social media and relevant factors. In addition, no study has been found to determine the relationship between interpersonal problem-solving style and social media addiction. Accordingly, this study aims to examine the relationship of social media addiction with personality traits and interpersonal problem-solving style.

Methods

This study was carried out in a cross-sectional method. The study population consisted of the students enrolled at one University in Turkey, Faculty of Health Sciences. The power analysis of the study was performed by using the formula $n = [z^2 p (1 - p) / e^2] / [1 + (z^2 p (1 - p) / (e^2 N))]$. Where: $z = 1.96$ for a confidence level (α) of % 90, $p =$ proportion (expressed as a decimal), $N =$ population size, $e =$ margin of error. ($z = 1.96$, $p = 0.5$, $N = 1000$ (the total number of students in faculties), $e = 0.05$). The sample size (with finite population correction) is found to be equal to 214 ($n = 214$). 249 students participated in this study. Among the inventories, five were canceled since they were repeated. Thus, the study was conducted with 244 students. The surveys were applied on the web between 08.07.2020–09.09.2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The criterion for exclusion from the study is a psychiatric diagnosis. The criteria for inclusion in the study are volunteering, being able to communicate in Turkish, and being a student in the institution where the study is conducted.

Data collection tools

Sociodemographic form

The form is composed of 15 questions and two parts as a result of the researchers' literature review. The first part consists of 11 questions on the age, gender, number of siblings and similar information regarding the individuals. The second part consists of four questions about the use of social media.

Social media addiction scale

This scale was developed by Tutgun-Ünal and Deniz (2015). There are 41 items on the scale, and answers to the items are scored between 1-Never and 5-Always. The scale includes four factors: occupation, mood modification, relapse, and conflict. The minimum score to be obtained from the Social Media Addiction Scale is 41, while the maximum score is 205. A higher score on the scale indicates higher level of addiction to social media (Tutgun-Ünal & Deniz, 2015). In the reliability analysis conducted within this study, Cronbach's α coefficient for the scale was calculated as 0.947.

Short form five-factor personality inventory (SF-5FPI)

This scale was developed by Tatar (2017) to create the short-form Turkish version of the 5FPI. The factors of SF-5FPI were extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and openness to improvement. There are ten items in each factor. The scale is scored in a five-point Likert type, consisting of 50 items. A high score from each sub-dimension indicates that it has the trait of that dimension (Tatar, 2017). In the reliability analysis conducted within this study, Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was 0.59 in the extraversion factor, 0.76 in the agreeableness factor, 0.76 in the conscientiousness factor, 0.83 in the neuroticism

factor, and 0.74 in the openness to improvement factor.

Interpersonal problem-solving inventory

It was developed by Çam & Tümkaya (2007) to measure the interpersonal problem-solving skills of university students between the ages of 18 and 30. The scale has five dimensions called Approaching Problems in A Negative Way (APANW), Constructive Problem-Solving (CPS), Lack of Self-Confidence (LOSC), Unwillingness to Take Responsibility (UTR), and Insistent-Preserving Approach (IPA). There are 16 items in APANW, 16 in CPS, 7 in LOSC, 5 in UTR, and 6 in IPA. It is a five-point Likert-type scale comprising 50 items. In addition, the high scores obtained from each sub-dimension indicate a higher ability for interpersonal problem-solving (Çam & Tümkaya, 2007). In the reliability analysis conducted within this study, Cronbach's α coefficient was 0.93 for APANW, 0.91 for CPS, 0.79 for LOSC, 0.70 for UTR, and 0.76 for IP.

Data analysis

The data obtained from the study were analyzed and interpreted using the SPSS 22.0 software. Categorical variables were summarized in frequencies and percentages. Since there was a normal distribution in the analyses, parametric test techniques were used. The Pearson Correlation test analyzed the relationship between scales and dimensions. In correlation analysis, the strength of the relationship between variables was determined as very low between 0 and 20, low between 21 and 40, medium between 41 and 60, high between 61 and 80, and very high between 81 and 100. Simple linear regression analysis was performed to examine the effect of the five-factor personality inventory's sub-dimensions and interpersonal problem-solving inventory sub-dimensions on social media addiction. For all analyses, p -value < 0.05 was considered statistically significant.

Ethical consent

Before the study, Bilecik Şeyh Edebali University Ethics Committee was consulted, and the ethics committee approval was obtained by resolution 13 of meeting no. 8 dated 29/06/2020. Institutional permissions have also been obtained from the schools where the research was conducted. The research has been based on volunteering by obtaining the consent of the participants. Participants were informed about the aim and scope of the study, and their informed consent was obtained.

Results

The mean age of the participants was 22, and the majority of the participants were aged between 18 and 22. The proportion of female participants (75.4 %) was approximately three times that of male participants (24.6 %). Considering the grade level, the participation rate of first graders was higher compared to the other grades (36.9 %). Of the participants, 88.9 lived with their families. It was observed that more than half of the mothers (71.7 %) and fathers (58.2 %) had primary-level education. A scale of 1–10 was used to assess the anxiety of the participants in the absence of social media. Participants were asked to score their anxiety according to their perceptions. Among the participants, 38.5 % marked one, 12.3 % marked five, and 11.5 % marked three. The percentage of participants, who used social media between 1 and 3 h per day, was 49.2; and the percentage of participants, who used social media between 4 and 6 h per day, was 40.2. Of the participants, 14.3 % believed that using social media caused problems. In addition, 36.9 % of the participants had tried to quit using social media.

When examined based on scales, the descriptive statistics of the social media addiction scale are $\bar{x}_{\max-\min} = 120-26$, $\bar{x} = 55.36$, and $sd = 18.19$. The descriptive statistics of the extraversion sub-dimension are $\bar{x}_{\max-\min} = 31-10$, $\bar{x} = 21.20$, and $sd = 4.95$. In agreeableness sub-dimension are $\bar{x}_{\max-\min} = 30-10$, $\bar{x} = 17.36$, and $sd = 5.58$. In

conscientiousness sub-dimension are $\bar{x}_{\max-\min} = 33-10$, $\bar{x} = 19.18$, and $sd = 6.02$. In neuroticism sub-dimension are $\bar{x}_{\max-\min} = 37-10$, $\bar{x} = 21.09$, and $sd = 7.03$. In openness to improvement sub-dimension are $\bar{x}_{\max-\min} = 33-10$, $\bar{x} = 21.23$, and $sd = 5.39$. The descriptive statistics for approaching problems in a negative way are $\bar{x}_{\max-\min} = 79-16$; $\bar{x} = 41.58$, and $sd = 15.43$. Constructive problem-solving is $\bar{x}_{\max-\min} = 80-30$; $\bar{x} = 54.84$, and $sd = 11.84$. Lack of self-confidence is $\bar{x}_{\max-\min} = 35-7$; $\bar{x} = 12.67$, and $sd = 5.09$. Unwillingness to take responsibility is $\bar{x}_{\max-\min} = 25-5$; $\bar{x} = 11.32$, and $sd = 4.20$. Insistent-preserving approach sub-dimension are $\bar{x}_{\max-\min} = 30-6$; $\bar{x} = 25$, and $sd = 4.69$.

According to the analysis on the correlation between short-form five factor personality inventory sub-dimensions with social media addiction scale; no statistically significant relationship was found between social media addiction and extraversion ($p > 0.01$). A positive, very weak statistically significant relationship was found between agreeableness and social media addiction ($r = 0.169$; $p < 0.01$). A positive, weak and statistically significant relationship was found between conscientiousness and social media addiction ($r = 0.324$; $p < 0.01$). There was no statistically significant relationship between neuroticism and social media addiction ($p > 0.01$). A positive, weak and statistically significant relationship was found between openness to improvement and social media addiction ($r = 0.214$; $p < 0.01$) (Table 1).

When the theoretical structure was examined in this study, it was decided to perform a simple regression analysis. Simple regression analysis was performed using the Enter method to measure the effect of the five-factor personality inventory's dimensions on social media addiction. The regression model established as a result of the analysis was not found to be significant ($F_{(1,242)} = 0.190$; $p = 0.664$). Accordingly, extraversion does not affect social media addiction ($B = 57,633$; $p > 0.05$). The regression model established as a result of the analysis was found to be significant ($F_{(1,242)} = 7142$; $p = 0.008$). Accordingly, agreeableness affects social media addiction ($B = 45,347$; $p < 0.05$). According to the regression model, the agreeableness dimension explains 2.5 % of social media addiction. Other variables are needed to explain the 97.5 % change. The regression model established as a result of the analysis was found to be significant ($F_{(1,242)} = 28,328$; $p = 0.000$). Accordingly, conscientiousness affects social media addiction ($B = 35,777$; $p < 0.05$). According to the regression model, the conscientiousness dimension explains 10.1 % of social media addiction. Other variables are needed to explain the 89.9 % change. The regression model established as a result of the analysis was not found to be significant ($F_{(1,242)} = 0.1400$; $p = 0.238$). Accordingly, neuroticism does not affect

social media addiction ($B = 59,680$; $p > 0.05$). The regression model established as a result of the analysis was found to be significant ($F_{(1,242)} = 11,573$; $p = 0.001$). Accordingly, openness to improvement affects social media addiction ($B = 39,376$; $p < 0.05$). According to the regression model, the openness to improvement dimension explains 4.2 % of social media addiction. Other variables are needed to explain 95.8 % change (Table 2).

According to the correlation analysis between interpersonal problem-solving inventory 'sub-dimensions with social media addiction; a positive, weak and statistically significant relationship was found between approaching problems in a negative way and social media addiction ($r = 0.310$; $p < 0.01$). A negative, very weak and statistically significant relationship was found between constructive problem-solving and social media addiction ($r = 0.172$; $p < 0.01$). A positive, very weak and statistically significant relationship was found between lack of self-confidence and social media addiction ($r = 0.146$; $p < 0.05$). A positive, very weak, and statistically significant relationship was found between unwillingness to take responsibility and social media addiction ($r = 0.147$; $p < 0.05$). A negative, weak, and statistically significant relationship was found between insistent-preserving approach and social media addiction ($r = 0.2014$; $p < 0.01$) (Table 3).

When the theoretical structure was examined in this study, it was decided to perform a simple regression analysis. The regression model established to measure the effect of approaching problems in a negative way on social media addiction was found to be significant ($F_{(1,242)} = 25,810$; $p = 0.000$). According to the regression model, approaching problems in a negative way affects social media addiction ($B = 39,472$; $p < 0.05$), explains 9.3 % of social media addiction, and creates a 38.2 % change in social media addiction. The regression model established to measure the effect of constructive problem-solving on social media addiction was found to be significant ($F_{(1,242)} = 7,420$; $p = 0.007$). According to the regression model, constructive problem-solving negatively affects social media addiction ($B = 70,533$; $p < 0.05$), which explains 2.6 % of social media addiction and creates a 27.7 % change in social media addiction. The regression model established to measure the effect of lack of self-confidence on social media addiction was found to be significant ($F_{(1,242)} = 5,281$; $p = 0.000$). According to the regression model, lack of self-confidence affects social media addiction ($B = 48,443$; $p < 0.05$), explains 1.7 % of social media addiction, and creates a 54.6 % change in social media addiction. The regression model established to measure the effect of unwillingness to take responsibility on social media addiction was found to be significant ($F_{(1,242)} = 5,326$; $p = 0.022$). According to the regression model, unwillingness to take

Table 1

The analysis on the correlation of short-form five factor personality inventory and its sub-dimensions with social media addiction scale and its sub-dimensions (Pearson test) $N = 244$.

Scales and sub-dimensions		1.	1.1.	1.2.	1.3.	1.4.	1.5.	2.	2.1.	2.2.
1. Short form five-factor personality inventory	r	1								
1.1. Extraversion	r	0.591**	1							
	p	0.000								
1.2. Agreeableness	r	0.715**	0.275**	1						
	p	0.000	0.000							
1.3. Conscientiousness	r	0.707**	0.202**	0.470**	1					
	p	0.000	0.002	0.000						
1.4. Neuroticism	r	0.664**	0.307**	0.256**	0.263**	1				
	p	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000					
1.5. Openness to improvement	r	0.752**	0.355**	0.495**	0.480**	0.308**	1			
	p	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000				
2. Social media addiction	r	0.170**	-0.028	0.169**	0.324**	-0.076	0.214**	1		
	p	0.008	0.664	0.008	0.000	0.238	0.001			
2.1. Functional deterioration	r	0.134*	-0.065	0.151*	0.298**	-0.104	0.203**	0.951**	1	
	p	0.036	0.309	0.018	0.000	0.104	0.001	0.000		
2.2. Control difficulty and deprivation	r	0.170**	-0.004	0.167**	0.315**	-0.068	0.196**	0.968**	0.852**	1
	p	0.008	0.955	0.009	0.000	0.293	0.002	0.000	0.000	
2.3. Social isolation	r	0.203**	-0.005	0.173**	0.319**	-0.012	0.233**	0.929**	0.865**	0.868**
	p	0.001	0.935	0.007	0.000	0.856	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000

** $p < 0.01$ (double quotes) (Statistical Significance Value); r = correlation coefficient; p = significance.

Table 2
Effect on social media addiction of the five-factor personality inventory's sub-dimensions.

Dependent variable	Independent variable	R ²	Adj. R ²	F	B	t	p
Social media addiction	Constant	0.001	−0.003	0.190	57,633	10,736	0.664
	Extraversion				−0.107	−0.435	
Social media addiction	Constant	0.029	0.025	7.142	45,347	11,530	0.008*
	Agreeableness				0.577	2.673	
Social media addiction	Constant	0.105	0.101	28,328	35,777	9281	0.000*
	Conscientiousness				1.021	5322	
Social media addiction	Constant	0.006	0.002	1400	59,680	15,500	0.238
	Neuroticism				−0.205	−1183	
Social media addiction	Constant	0.046	0.042	11,573	39,376	8126	0.001*
	Openness to improvement				0.753	3402	

* p < 0.05 (level of statistical significance).

Table 3
The analysis on the correlation of interpersonal problem-solving inventory' sub-dimensions, short-form five factor personality inventory and social media addiction scale (Pearson Test).

Scales and Sub-dimensions		1	1.1.	1.2.	1.3.	1.4.	1.5.	2
1. Interpersonal problem-solving inventory	r	1						
1.1. Approaching problems in a negative way	r	0.766	1					
	p	0.000**						
1.2. Constructive problem-solving	r	0.577	0.010	1				
	p	0.000**	0.871					
1.3. Lack of self-confidence	r	0.669	0.587	0.095	1			
	p	0.000**	0.000**	0.140				
1.4. Unwillingness to take responsibility	r	0.485	0.433	−0.039	0.534	1		
	p	0.000**	0.000**	0.546	0.000**			
1.5. Insistent-preserving approach	r	0.489	0.048*	0.637	0.050	−0.055	1	
	p	0.000**	0.459	0.000**	0.441	0.390		
2. Social media addiction	r	0.119	0.310	−0.172	0.146	0.147	−0.204	
	p	0.064	0.000**	0.007**	0.022*	0.022*	0.001**	

r = correlation coefficient; p = significance.

* p < 0.05 (double quotes).

** p < 0.01 (double quotes) (Statistical Significance Value).

responsibility affects social media addiction (B = 47,846; p < 0.05), explains 1.7 % of social media addiction, and creates a 66.3 % change in social media addiction. The regression model established to measure the effect of insistent-preserving approach on social media addiction was found to be significant (F_(1,242) = 10.470; p = 0.001). According to the regression model, insistent-preserving approach affects social media addiction, negatively (B = 72,883; p < 0.05), explains 3.8 % of social media addiction, and creates an 82.5 % change in social media addiction (Table 4).

Discussion

This study examined the relationship of social media addiction with personality traits and interpersonal problem-solving style. The findings obtained in line with the purpose of this study will be discussed in two sections: personality traits and interpersonal problem-solving style with social media addiction.

Social media addiction and personality traits

No statistically significant relationship was found between social media addiction and extraversion, which was one of the sub-dimensions of the short-form five-factor personality inventory. The extroverted personality trait presents itself with easy and frequent socialization, not being afraid of stimulating and exciting activities, and being energetic. Individuals with these characteristics exist in a social environment. In this study, extroverted participants do not prefer social media because they have many environments where they can socialize. While the findings of the study by Hawi and Samaha (2019) were similar to this study, it was observed in some studies that individuals with this feature had higher social media addiction scores (Annisette & Lafreniere, 2017; Chen & Roberts, 2019).

This study observed that the conscientiousness score increased as the social media addiction score increased. According to the regression model, a 1-unit increase in conscientiousness increase the social media

Table 4
Effect on social media addiction of the interpersonal problem-solving inventory' sub-dimensions.

Dependent variable	Independent variable	R ²	Adj.R ²	F	B	t	p
Social media addiction	Constant	0.096	0.093	25.810	39,472	11,838	0.000*
	Approaching problems in a negative way				0.382	5080	
Dependent variable	Independent variable	R ²	Adj.R ²	F	B	t	p
Social media addiction	Constant	0.030	0.026	7.420	70,533	12,377	0.007*
	Constructive problem-solving				-0.277	-2724	
Dependent variable	Independent variable	R ²	Adj.R ²	F	B	t	p
Social media addiction	Constant	0.021	0.017	5.281	48,443	14,947	0.000*
	Lack of self-confidence				0.546	2298	
Dependent variable	Independent variable	R ²	Adj.R ²	F	B	t	p
Social media addiction	Constant	0.022	0.017	5.326	47,846	13,788	0.022*
	Unwillingness to take responsibility				0.663	2308	
Dependent variable	Independent variable	R ²	Adj.R ²	F	B	t	p
Social media addiction	Constant	0.041	0.038	10.470	72,883	13,141	0.001*
	Insistent-preserving approach				-0.825	-3236	

* p < 0.05 (level of statistical significance).

addiction level by 1.021 units. It is believed that target-oriented, ambitious, organized, and controlled individuals with regularly defined responsibilities use social media to support these features of theirs. [Whaite et al. \(2018\)](#) stated that individuals with high scores in this feature used social media to achieve success and to see themselves as necessary. In a study, it was determined that the use of social media affected and increased smartphone addiction. It was observed that smartphone addiction was high in individuals with conscientiousness and personality traits ([Işık & Kaptangil, 2018](#)).

This study observed that the agreeableness score increased as the social media addiction score increased. According to the regression model, a 1-unit increase in the level of agreeableness increase the social media addiction level by 0.577 units. This result is explained by the fact that agreeable individuals have the motive to be friendly and harmonious. It is known that there are similar results to this study ([Chen & Roberts, 2019](#); [Hawi & Samaha, 2019](#)). A study on selfie addiction determined that individuals with higher addiction scores had lower agreeableness characteristics ([El Khoueiry et al., 2020](#)).

According to the result of analysis, it was observed that social media addiction had no significant relationship with neuroticism. While individuals with emotional balance personality traits exhibit a healthy reaction to stress, and experience more positive emotions and thoughts in daily life, neurotic individuals with impaired emotional balance generally tend to experience anxiety, anger and depression ([Costa & McCrae, 1995](#)). Unlike this study findings, studies demonstrate that neurotic individuals, defined as the opposite pole of emotional balance, have a higher risk of social media addiction. Among the reasons that increase this risk, neurotic people use social media to seek social support, reduce loneliness, and maintain less stressful interpersonal relationships ([Blackwell et al., 2017](#); [Lo, 2019](#)).

This study observed that the openness to improvement score increased as the Social Media Addiction score increased. A 1-unit increase in the level of the Openness to Improvement increase the Social Media Addiction level by 0.753 units. This positive relationship shows that social media meets the needs for seeking various different experiences, socializing, helping, and empathizing with individuals who love to dream and are curious, creative, and open to improvement. There is a

study with similar findings to this study ([Hawi & Samaha, 2019](#)). Unlike this study, [Annisette and Lafreniere \(2017\)](#) stated that openness was negatively related to the frequency of social media use, contrary to what was predicted. Furthermore, it was found that social media may be insufficient to meet the innovation-seeking needs of individuals who were open to experience; therefore, it was stated that there was no significant relationship between them ([Chen & Roberts, 2019](#)).

Social media addiction and interpersonal problem-solving

According to the findings of this study, a 1-unit increase in Constructive Problem-Solving (0.277 unit) and Insistent-Preserving Approach (0.825 unit) decreased the Social Media Addiction level. A 1-unit increase in the level of Approaching Problems in a Negative Way (0.382 unit), Lack of Self-Confidence (0.546 unit), and Unwillingness to Take Responsibility (0.663 unit) increase the Social Media Addiction level. Individuals, who approached problems in a negative way, were unwilling to take Responsibility, and lacked self-confidence regarding problem-solving, were determined to have high social media addiction scores. This result can be explained by trying to reduce the unrest experienced by individuals in the process of problem-solving through social media. Contrary to the anxious relationships experienced in real life, social media can provide a protected area and guarantee exposure to criticism and comments to the extent permitted ([Aksu et al., 2019](#)). From another point of view, it can be argued that social media addiction has a negative effect on problem-solving skills. Particularly in this context, the effect of addiction in deteriorating the functionality of the individual should be considered ([İbili, 2017](#)). Supporting these findings, this study finding showed that social media addiction had a negative relationship with constructive problem-solving and insistent-preserving approach, which positively affect interpersonal problem-solving. This result can be explained by the low social media addiction scores of individuals who try to solve their interpersonal problems effectively.

Looking at the studies in the literature, it was observed that there were no studies on the effect of interpersonal problem-solving on social media addiction. Therefore, studies on social problem-solving, which were directly or indirectly related to interpersonal problem-solving,

were examined. According to a study findings, it found a significant relationship between social media addiction and social problem-solving. Particularly there was a significant relationship between social problem-solving, negative problem orientation, avoidance style subscales and social media addiction (Aksu et al., 2019). Şahin et al. (2017) found a negative and significant relationship between the self-perception of social isolation and the self-perceptions of problem-solving, being self-organized and being self-confident; and a positive and significant relationship with the self-perception of being avoidant. In addition, a positive relationship was found between the perceived deprivation of internet addiction and the perceived avoidance of problem-solving. Furthermore, it is known that there is a positive relationship between internet addiction and avoiding coping mechanisms (Berezovskaya et al., 2019; Hasan & Jaber, 2019). It is believed that the findings of this study on the relationship between interpersonal problem-solving and social media addiction will contribute to the literature regarding its subjective nature, and it may be a resource for further studies.

Strengths and limitations

To our knowledge, this is the first study exploring the relationship between interpersonal problem-solving and social media addiction was investigated with this study. In addition, the results between social media addiction and personality traits contribute to the literature. Determining the concepts related to social media addiction is important to solve the problem of our age. Working with a group with a high risk of addiction can strengthen the results. The results of this study demonstrated that social media addiction had a relationship with personality traits and interpersonal problem-solving style. The study has some limitations. First, the study included only volunteers and a formal environment could not be created. Our sample was inadequate to analyze the data for a different age. Second, studies have yet to be found to determine the relationship between interpersonal problem-solving style and social media addiction. This has limited the discussion. In addition, the sample group is limited to this age range and cannot be generalized.

Conclusion

This study discussed social media addiction, which is known as a significant problem of our age. It was examined in terms of the concepts, which were believed to be related to social media. The results of this study demonstrated that social media addiction had a relationship with personality traits and interpersonal problem-solving style. This study would contribute to the literature by introducing a new concept to the factors affecting social media addiction.

CRedit authorship contribution statement

Study design: Nese Mercan.
Data collection: Burhanettin Uysal.
Data analysis: Burhanettin Uysal.
Study supervision: Neşe Mercan.
Manuscript writing: Neşe Mercan, Burhanettin Uysal.

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Declaration of competing interest

There is no conflict of interest to declare between authors.

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