Chapter 2
A Review of Internet Addiction on the Basis of Different Countries (2007–2017)

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ABSTRACT

This chapter presents a review of Internet addiction on the basis of different countries between the years of 2007 and 2017. For this purpose, the term "addiction" is explained, some addiction types are examined, the differences between Internet addiction and the other ones are given and the Internet addiction status of different countries are presented. In today's world, Internet addiction is a privileged problem in almost all of the countries but especially a few countries have important number of studies about the subject. The most studies are completed in China, Turkey, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Korea. In this chapter, studies about these countries and some other ones are investigated. These studies show that the "Far East" is suffering from the problem a bit more than the others.

INTRODUCTION

The term "addiction" refers to a chronic and relapsing disease resulting from adaptive changes in brain structure and function (Al, 1997). People can be addicted to some materials such as cigarette, alcohol, drugs which have already addictivity property or some food such as chocolate, coffee or coke. These all stimulants have a common property and contain chemicals which makes dependency on brain. Based on the technological development in today's world, there is a new addiction without any chemicals defined for modern era: Internet addiction.

The term "Internet addiction" has been proposed as an explanation for uncontrollable and consequently damaging use of this technology (Beard and Wolf, 2001). Because it does not cause any physical symptom in a short time, it is very hard to determine whether a person is an Internet addict or not. For this reason, many researchers developed questionnaires that assessed Internet addiction. The most famous one of these questionnaires was developed in 1996 by a psychologist, Kimberly Young. In this Internet

Addiction Test, there are 20 questions based on the criteria used to diagnose compulsive gambling and alcoholism. The responders are expected to give a score between 0 – 5 to each question according to the frequency of the event in the question. The corresponding meanings of the scores are like this: 0 – does not reply, 1 – rarely, 2 – occasionally, 3 – frequently, 4 – often and 5 – always. After the response phase, the total of the scores is evaluated to determine the level of addiction. The questions are given below (Young, 2004):

- How often do you find that you stay online longer than you intended?
- How often do you neglect household chores to spend more time online?
- How often do you prefer the excitement of the Internet to intimacy with your partner?
- How often do you form new relationships with fellow online users?
- How often do others in your life complain to you about the amount of time you spend online?
- How often do your grades or school work suffer because of the amount of time you spend online?
- How often do you check your e-mail before something else that you need to do?
- How often does your job performance or productivity suffer because of the Internet?
- How often do you become defensive or secretive when anyone asks you what you do online?
- How often do you block out disturbing thoughts about your life with soothing thoughts of the Internet?
- How often do you find yourself anticipating when you will go online again?
- How often do you fear that life without the Internet would be boring, empty, and joyless?
- How often do you snap, yell, or act annoyed if someone bothers you while you are online?
- How often do you lose sleep due to late-night log-ins?
- How often do you feel preoccupied with the Internet when off-line, or fantasize about being online?
- How often do you find yourself saying "just a few more minutes" when online?
- How often do you try to cut down the amount of time you spend online and fail?
- How often do you try to hide how long you've been online?
- How often do you choose to spend more time online over going out with others?
- How often do you feel depressed, moody, or nervous when you are off-line, which goes away once you are back online?

The addiction level of a person is determined by the total points he/she gave to the question. After all the questions have been answered, the numbers for each response are added to eachother to obtain a final score. The higher the score, the greater the level of addiction. The severity impairment index is as follows:

- **NONE 0–30 Points:** If the person's questionnaire final score is between 0 and 30; it means that the person uses the Internet in normal levels, he/she doesn't have any addiction. But it must be known that, the Internet addiction and all of the addiction types are like spies and they can be shown up in a very short time period.
- **MILD 31–49 Points:** If the person's questionnaire final score is between 31 and 49; it means that the person is an average user. He/she may surf the Web a bit too long at times, but he/she has the control over his/her usage.
- **MODERATE 50–79 Points:** If the person's questionnaire final score is between 50 and 79; it means that the person is experiencing occasional or frequent problems because of the Internet. He/

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