# Technology Addiction

Addiction is a mixture of psychological, neurological and chronic disorder and prevalent in the society. It comes in different forms and if left untreated, it could negatively effect the society's economy, social, and psychological aspects.

Technology addiction is a broad term that refers to the uncontrollable urge to use technological devices such as computers, smartphones, and gaming systems, and in the last few years experts believed it to be a serious problem at least like that of substance addiction.[1]

Technology and drug addiction create similar impacts in the human brain and body, from harming one's health to creating spiritual dependency, in which it could deprive a person when one's need of the addictive substance, in this case technological devices, is not met.

Actually thanks to the Internet, access to information in many areas is facilitated. Therefore using the internet or other technological tools is not completely harmful. In fact, it contributes to the ease in the busy pace of life. For this reason, it is wise not to just put the internet itself to blame for the current social and psychological problems of technology addiction, but we have to realize that perhaps, this technology only becomes a problem when it is abused to a certain degree that it creates some kind of dependency. If people use technological devices in the right time and in the right amount, it should not be harmful. But when people start to fail in completing in their daily activities, are not able to take on their responsibilities and when the absences of technological devices disturb them, then technology dependency or even addiction might exist and treatment would become necessary.

## Types of Technology Addiction

There are a numbe of technology addiction, they include:

- Internet Addiction
- Game Addiction
- Online Socializating Addiction
- Online Shopping Addiction
- Social Media Addiction
- Smartphones Addiction
- Tablet Computer Addiction
- Television Addiction

## Causes of Technology Addiction

There are many causes of technology addiction such as biological, genetic, psychological, social aspects, as well as the unlimited and various opportunity of Internet usage. The most common causes of technology addiction are:

- Lacking the ability to establish and mintain human relationships
- Being introverted and antisocial
- Has trouble of self-expressing in social relations
- Exclusion by the society and loneliness
- Family problems and lack of quality time with the family
- Absence of friends
- Drug addicted friends
- Not practicing a healthy life and not excercising
- Weak school success

- Not being able to express emotions and ideas without anxiety and deprive necessity social acceptance, making addicts turn into online places to do so.
- Inability to introduce oneself at will.
- Not being able to create true friendships and other relationships, hence the idea of having online friends would feel less of a burden.
- Prefering the idea to connect with foreign people without the necessity of meeting them in person.
- Having the possibility to access games and fun things easier than in real life
- Unable to practice freedom of expression in real life

# Facts of Technology Addiction

Frequent usage of the Internet without control and aim become serious problem nowadays. The probability of technology addiction on men is two-three times more than women.

Findings regarding technology addiction mentions that there are 1,8% technology addicts in the society; they include [2] 1% of children under eight years old using a cell phone, iPod, or iPad / tablet. 66% of all children under the age of two have watched television. Television watching typically begins at nine months of age. 96% of eight year old children have watched TV, 90% have used a computer, 81% have played console video games, and 60% have played games or used apps on a portable device (cell phone, handheld gaming system, iPod, or tablet).[3] All these facts are worrying and precautions are needed.

If a person has five or more symptoms as follow, then the person moght suffer from technology addiction:

- Spending too much time with technological tools consciously or unconsciously.
- Being too busy with technological tools and still want to increase the time to use them.
- Being busy with technological tools and using the internet until late at night.
- Changes in the appearance or physical problems from spending so much time in front of the computer or game consoles.
- Having many fake accounts and prefer to communicate with others through the internet/social media with these accounts instead of from a real account or face-to-face communication.
- Neglecting normal daily activities such as eating, sleeping, studying from over-usage of the internet.
- Feeling guilty from spending so much time in front of the computer, on the other hand enjoying this situation and alternating between these two feelings.
- Feeling nervous, aggressive when they are far away from the computer and technological device.
- Using the internet to avoid daily life difficulties or negative emotions.
- Continuation in the overuse of technological devices despite facing problems caused by it.
- Always thinking about the internet and busy thinking about using technological devices even without the ability of using the internet and technological devices [4]

# The Problems Caused by Technology Addiction

- Physical problems
- Obesity
- Disorder in body posture
- Burning in the eyes
- Numbness in the hands
- Pain in the neck muscles
- Headaches
- Groggy feeling
- Disruption in sleeping pattern
- Disruption in eating pattern
- Lost of vision and hearing ability
- Loss of attention
- Psychosocial problem
- Become introverted
- Decline in academic achievements
- Neglecting responsibilities

- Decrease or failure in real life social relations
- Personal or family problems
- Being far away from social activities
- Becoming blunt in social and cognitive abilities
- Stress and other stress-related problems
- Anxiety
- Lying
- Sense of guilt and loss of control
- Legal problems
- Tendency to be aggressive
- Depression
- Damage to the country's economy

## Dos and Dont's of Technology Usage

- Parents and caregivers should not forget that they are the role models for their children, therefore they need to protect them from this type of addiction and be careful about the amount of gadget usage.
- Spending time with children is psychologically and physically healthier instead of spending time in front of the computer; because this would prevent over using the internet. Therefore firstly, adults should prevent themselves from having technology addiction and set a good example with their own technological device use and then they need to protect children from the addiction.
- Increase spending time with family and friends
- Develop real relationship with people
- Make an agreement with family members about the appropriate amount of time to use the internet and other technological devices. The agreement should be in accordance to the age of children as follows:

  - Preschool age: 30 minutes in a day
  - Primary school age: 45 minutes in a day
  - Secondary school age: 1 hour in a day
  - High school age: 2 hours[5]

- If people consciously use the time with technology as agreed, addiction will not become a threat. Rather it helps people to develop themselves and increase the level of academic success.
- Parents particularly should control their children's time of internet consumption and make some changes when needed.
- Parents should put parental lock to computer and certain websites to protect children from websites unsuitable for their age and spend time with children when they go on websites.
- Parents should not give permission to games which include violance and sexual contents.
- As much as possible, technological devices should be in a family areas in the house, not in the children's rooms.
- Make children busy with sports and other social activities.
- Do not give technological devices to children whenever they cry for he sake of calming them down.
- Do not eat while using technological devices.
- Children should not have smartphones, computer and tablet before reaching an appropriate age, most experts recommend parents to wait until their children reach at least two years old, and it should only be given after an agreement is made with them.

Putting children far away from internet is not a realistic attitude. However using the internet too much and without control is also not recommended. Both of them can cause problems. Therefore, firstly parents should be a good and healthy role models to their children and then protect them from all kinds of addiction. Parents should stay together as a family and provide thier children with love and care. If children have these, then surely the possibility of many kinds of addiction will be small and the society will have less problem to face.

[1]Millicent Kelly, ''What is Technology Addiction? - Definition & Signs'',
https://study.com/academy/lesson/what-is-technology-addiction-definition-signs.html

[2] ''Teknoloji Bağımlılığı'', *NP Anatem Bağımlılık Merkezi*, https://npistanbul.com/amatem/teknoloji-bagimliligi

[3] Brent Conrad, ''Media Statistics - Children's Use of TV, Internet, and Video Games'',
http://www.techaddiction.ca/media-statistics.html

[4] *Teknoloji Canavara Dönüşmeden!, Yeşilay*, TC. Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı,
http://tbm.org.tr/media/1891/ortaokul_teknoloji_kitap.pdf

[5] ''Teknoloji Bağımlılığı'', *Yeşilay*, https://www.yesilay.org.tr/tr/bagimlilik/teknoloji-bagimliligi