



Triangling in Family of Origin, Internet Addiction, and Social Media Addiction: What Is the Role of Experiential Avoidance in the Relationship?

Mustafa Alperen Kurşuncu¹ · Mark D. Griffiths² · Şule Baştemur¹ · Fatih Şal¹

Accepted: 5 December 2023

© The Author(s), under exclusive licence to Springer Science+Business Media, LLC, part of Springer Nature 2023

Abstract

One of the factors contributing towards a better understanding of social media addiction and internet addiction among university students is family-of-origin experiences. Triangling is one of the factors associated with these online addictions. Moreover, university students with higher experiential avoidance (lower psychological flexibility) may fail to cope with the adverse effects of triangling and develop problematic online behaviors. The present cross-sectional study investigated the mediating role of experiential avoidance in the relationship between triangling, internet addiction, and social media addiction. The sample comprised 839 university students, the majority aged between 18 and 25 years, from more than 50 universities across several regions of Turkey. Participants responded to items in a survey including the Acceptance and Action Questionnaire-II (AAQ-II), Triangular Relationship Inventory (TRI), Bergen Social Media Addiction Scale (BSMAS), Young's Internet Addiction Test-Short Form (YIAT-SF), and a Demographic Information Form. Findings showed that experiential avoidance mediated the association between triangling, social media addiction, and internet addiction. The path of triangling to experiential avoidance to internet addiction to social media addiction explained 65% of the variance. Triangling did not directly contribute to internet addiction and social media addiction unless participants reported experiential avoidance. The present study emphasizes the potential threats associated with triangling on social media addiction and the internet addiction among university students, in which the risks tend to increase as university students use dysfunctional emotional or cognitive coping strategies.

Keywords Experiential avoidance · Family triangulation · Triangling · Social media addiction · Internet addiction · Differentiation of self

Abstract

One of the factors contributing towards a better understanding of social media addiction and internet addiction among university students is family-of-origin experiences. Triangling is one of the factors associated with these online addictions. Moreover, university students with higher experiential avoidance (lower psychological flexibility) may fail to cope with the adverse effects of triangling and develop problematic online behaviors. The present cross-sectional study investigated the mediating role of experiential avoidance in the relationship

between triangling, internet addiction, and social media addiction. The sample comprised 839 university students aged between 18 and 25 years from more than 50 universities across several regions of Türkiye. Participants responded to items in a survey including Acceptance and Action Questionnaire-II (AAQ-II), Triangular Relationship Inventory (TRI), Bergen Social Media Addiction Scale (BSMAS), Young's Internet Addiction Test-Short Form (YIAT-SF), and a Demographic Information Form. Findings showed that experiential avoidance mediated the association between triangling, social media addiction, and internet addiction. The path of triangling to experiential avoidance to social media addiction to internet addiction explained 65% of the variance. Triangling did not directly contribute to internet addiction and social media addiction unless participants reported experiential avoidance. The present study emphasizes the potential threats associated with triangling on social media and the internet among university students, in which the risks tend to increase as university students use dysfunctional emotional or cognitive coping strategies.

Introduction

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the internet and the use of social media provided the opportunity for millions of university students to get remote education and keep in touch with friends and family from their homes. However, the current estimated number of internet users worldwide reached 5.16 billion (of which 4.76 billion are social media users) (Kemp, 2023). A similar trend is seen in Türkiye (where the present study was conducted), in which 86.8% of Turkish individuals use the internet to participate in social networking. Internet use is especially pervasive among Turks aged 16 to 24 years (96.6%) (Turkish Statistics Institute [TurkStat], 2023). Although Turkish researchers mainly prefer to focus on adolescents and university students when considering internet and social media addictions (e.g., Aksu et al., 2019; Aktan, 2018; Bilgin et al., 2020), university students may be more vulnerable to

developing internet addiction than other developmental age groups for several reasons (Kandell, 1998): (i) psychological characteristics of this stage may involve identity formation and intimacy (Erikson, 1963). Internet addiction may impact negatively on processes such as identity formation, and forming intimate (offline) human relationships, as well as developing personal autonomy; (ii) internet access is easy and free for many university students using campus-wide networks for personal use alongside its use for educational purposes; and (iii) university students are encouraged to use the internet for educational purposes as a part of their courses, which may be problematic for some students to balance with other online activities that can be time-consuming use (e.g., story viewing on Instagram).

These data suggest that the internet and social media are widely used in the world (generally) and Türkiye (more specifically) with many benefits. However, individuals' excessive social media or internet use may cause harm and negative consequences leading to addiction for a small percentage of users (Griffiths et al., 2016; Kuss & Griffiths, 2017). For some, excessive internet and social media use via smartphones, tablets, laptops, and other digital devices may result in loss of control and negative social, academic, and occupational consequences (WHO, 2019).

Internet addiction and social media addiction as behavioral addictions

There is much debate as to whether problematic use of the internet and social media can be called addictions. Some scholars prefer the terms 'problematic internet use' and 'problematic social media use' (Zendle, 2019), and some scholars view such behaviors as non-substance (i.e., behavioural) addictions (e.g., Griffiths, 1996; 2005; 2013, Young, 1998). Behavioral addictions are addiction disorders that do not involve in ingestion of a psychoactive drug. However, the only officially recognized disorders classified as behavioral addictions in the fifth edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5) are gambling disorder and internet gaming disorder (IGD) (American Psychiatric Association

[APA], 2013). IGD shows similar characteristics to substance dependence. For instance, excessive involvement gaming may produce the desire to play more over time (tolerance), loss of control, impulsivity, compulsivity, a feeling of deprivation in its absence, and an inability to stop gaming despite the detrimental consequences such as the compromising of occupation, education and/or interpersonal relationships (APA, 2013).

Griffiths (2005) posits that all genuine addictions (i.e. substance and non-substance) include six crucial characteristics (i.e., mood modification, tolerance, withdrawal, salience, conflict, and relapse) within a biopsychosocial framework. According to this framework, addiction is a complex system involving an interaction of biological factors (e.g., genetics), psychological factors (e.g., personality traits, motivations, attitudes, expectations, beliefs), and social factors (e.g., culture, family, friends) (Griffiths, 2005). Griffiths also argues that both situational and structural factors of the activity influence the addiction process. This contrasts with single perspective approaches (e.g., a biochemical disease model). Instead, the biopsychosocial process, which is an eclectic approach, appears to be the most pragmatic way to understand the common etiology of addictive behaviors better and provides better scope in the prevention and treatment of addictive behaviors (Griffiths, 2005). Since the biopsychosocial approach focuses on individual differences, recognizes the brain and body as interconnected and interacting components, and considers the equal importance of these components (alongside the environment in which the behavior occurs and the structural factors of the activity itself), it provides a more comprehensive and integrative framework for understanding addictive behaviors.

Griffiths (2005) asserts that any individual involved in a behavior that endorses the six criteria should be operationally classified as addicted, irrespective of the type of behavior. According to these criteria, in case of online addictions, (i) *mood modification* refers to the subjective experience of excitement or relief due to engaging with technological devices and/or

online applications. Here, internet use and digital technologies may be employed as a coping mechanism to reduce stress or alleviate depression, which provides individuals with an alternative reality by allowing them to feel psychological rewards and leads to altered states of consciousness; (ii) *tolerance* refers to increasing amounts of time spent online and/or with technological devices to obtain the initial mood modifying effect (e.g., excitement, escape); (iii) *withdrawal* refers to the unpleasant feelings associated with the discontinuation or sudden reduction in the activity. For example, online addicts may experience irritability, frustration and/or moodiness when they are prevented from being online; (iv) *salience* refers to the online activity (e.g., social media use) becoming the most crucial aspect of the individual's living and dominating their thoughts, feelings, and behaviors; (v) *conflict* refers to the online activity compromising and impairing everyday activities (e.g., occupation, education) and detrimentally affecting relationships with family and friends; and (vi) *relapse* refers to the return of the addictive online behavior after a period of abstinence.

Research also supported that a small percentage of users exhibit addiction-like symptoms and detrimental outcomes on excessive internet use (Kuss et al., 2014). Moreover, research (e.g., Giordano et al., 2022; Marino et al., 2023) asserts that one of the factors in understanding social media and internet addictions is emotion regulation. Effective emotion regulation is the ability of individuals to recognize and accept their feelings which provides an effective coping mechanism for dealing with stressful conditions as well as helping to fulfill personal goals and meet social needs (Thompson, 2019). Consequently, one risk factor is emotional dysregulation for poor social and mental functioning, and can lead to increased suppression (Chervonsky & Hunt, 2019). Suppression is a typical example of emotional dysregulation. Suppressed thoughts can function as a coping strategy and inhibit addiction (Gross, 2007). Research by Chervonsky and Hunt (2019) indicated that the avoiding unpleasant feelings has a destructive effect on mental health. Adolescents with mental health

dysfunctioning (i.e., depression, anxiety problems) may have difficulty expressing adverse feelings (e.g., anger), and prefer to suppress these feelings to keep their problems hidden from their peers (Chervonsky & Hunt, 2019). This relationship between avoidance and mental health has been elaborated in acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT) into experiential avoidance, which is the reluctance to stay in touch with uncomfortable personal experiences and take committed steps to change them.

Internet addiction and social media addiction in Türkiye

Internet addiction and social media addiction are important topics for Turkish researchers because Türkiye is one of the countries in the world where the prevalence of internet use is high (83.4%), and above the world average (64.4%) (Kemp, 2023). At the time of writing, Türkiye ranks 15th in the world for the highest daily average internet use (7 hours and 24 minutes) on any device among those aged 16 to 64 years. Turkish individuals are also very active users of social media platforms. For instance, Turkish individuals have the highest average number of hours per month on Instagram (21.4 hours), which is above the world average (12 hours) (Kemp, 2023). Higher internet use is a risk factor for social media addiction among Turkish university students. Moreover, Turkish university students with excessive daily use of social media (four hours or more) access the internet to meet psychological needs, socialize, and entertain (Akar, 2021).

However, excessive social media use may pose some risks for Turkish university students and is associated with symptoms such as depression (Balcı & Baloğlu, 2018) and emotional loneliness (Uyaroğlu et al. 2022). Internet addiction and social media addiction negatively predict Turkish students' social connectedness levels (Savcı & Aysan, 2017). Moreover, the research in Türkiye on internet addiction and social media addiction also considers the role of avoidance-focused coping strategies and self-regulation skills. For instance, Aktan (2018) reported that increased preoccupation with social media use might be

related to the dysfunctional emotion-regulation strategies (e.g., emotional avoidance) among Turkish university students. Turkish students who use an avoidance style in social problem-solving tended to report greater social media addiction (Aksu et al., 2019). Ekşi et al. (2019) reported that Turkish university students with lower self-control skills reported greater general procrastination behaviors and social media addiction. On the contrary, Turkish university students with higher levels of social media addiction have lower levels of acceptance (i.e., the ability to accept situations that may be challenging and that an individual cannot control) (Kocabıyık & Bacıoğlu, 2022).

Experiential avoidance

Experiential avoidance is a pervasive dysfunctional coping mechanism comprising undesired intrapsychic experiences of emotions, thoughts, memories, and behavioral dispositions, and implies a simultaneous persistent use of avoidant behavioral, psychological, or intellectual efforts to suppress aversive cues (Hayes et al., 1999). ACT criticizes the cultural perspective of emotion regulation, which suggests controlling these unpleasant emotions. However, the effort of controlling unpleasant emotions may become the problem itself because these emotions do not mechanically produce destructive behavioral outcomes (Blackledge & Hayes 2001). A great deal of these emotions' detrimental effects are triggered by the fallout from unsuccessful attempts to prevent them. In turn, emotional intensity increases, and individuals may regulate their emotional turbulences by avoidance or detrimental behaviors (e.g., addictions) (Blackledge & Hayes 2001). Cognitive defusion and emotional acceptance are suggested as the remedies for experiential avoidance (Kashdan et al., 2010). Psychological dysfunction arises with systemic avoidance behaviors (or thoughts and emotions) that become increasingly resistive and pathological to improvement (Hayes, et al., 1999). Experiential avoidance appears nontoxic and adaptive in some situations (e.g., concealing signs of boredom while spending time with a partner) and the short-term. However, it becomes a disorder when

individuals spend great energy or time controlling unwanted internal events with no resilience (Kashdan et al., 2006).

In their review, Chawla and Ostafin (2007) indicated the relationship between experiential avoidance and the development of pathologies such as anxiety, depression, or self-harm behaviors. The association between experiential avoidance, technology and internet-based addictions in different cultures has been emphasized (Chou et al., 2017; Ekşi, 2019; Garcia-Oliva & Piqueras, 2016). Chou et al. (2018) suggested that university students with higher experiential avoidance were at greater risk for internet addiction, depression, and suicidality. Hsieh et al. (2019) also indicated that prevention programs should consider experiential avoidance with self-identity when focusing on internet addiction among university students. Similarly, Teymouri Farkush et al. (2022) indicated that experiential avoidance with the feeling of shame is a risk factor for internet addiction among university students.

Some research has focused on the family of origin and the role of experiential avoidance. The overprotecting parenting styles of families with anxious children may reflect the fear of negative feelings that children experience (Tiwari et al., 2008). Although literature shows that anxiety among young adults may be influenced by parental overprotection through a mechanism known as experiential avoidance (Fulton et al., 2014), it is less well-known the underlying structure in the relationship between the family of origin experiences and experiential avoidance, which cause behavioral disorders (i.e., addictions). The present study extended previous literature on the family of origin variables and internet/social media addiction by investigating the mediating role of experiential avoidance, reflecting an emotion dysregulation.

Additionally, the family of origin seems to be one of the factors that researchers have recently focused on the development of internet and social media addiction. Behavioral disorders among children may signpost a larger problem in their family of origin rather than

their own problems (Young, 1998). Meta-analysis findings also indicate association between family dysfunctionality and youth internet addiction (Li et al., 2014). Therefore, the current study concentrated on the maladaptive patterns within intergenerational family relationships. Bowen's (1978) concept of triangling was one of the specific examples of bridging the gap between dysfunctional family dynamics and behavioral disorders.

Triangling

One of the most polarized ideas in human relationships is intimacy comprises several inherent needs and dilemmas (i.e., separateness vs. closeness). One theoretical approach that addresses these fundamental problems within family dynamics is Bowen's Family Systems Theory (BFST; Bowen, 1978), which uses some psychological constructs (e.g., triangling, differentiation of self [DoS]). DoS refers to individuals' abilities in two ways (Bowen, 1978; Kerr & Bowen, 1988). First, individuals can defuse their thoughts from emotions and become more able to act in making appropriate decisions to deal with stressful conditions (intrapsychic dimension). Secondly, individuals can sustain authentic relationships with significant others while maintaining their individuality (interpersonal dimension). In the case of the lack of a greater DoS within the family system, triangles emerge as symptoms. According to Kerr and Bowen (1988), a triangle comprises a trio of individuals or family members. Triangles emerge because interpersonal interactions can become tense and anxious over time, especially in stressful conditions (e.g., conflicts). Triangling is the presence of a third party (e.g., child, parent, friend, or therapist) in a dyadic relationship to relieve personal or dyadic anxiety and tension (Kerr & Bowen, 1988). Families with greater chronic anxiety are more susceptible to triangling, which frequently occurs between two parents and a child.

Bell et al. (2001) categorized parent-initiated triangles into four categories. First, the dyad can address their conflicts constructively in the balanced type, where family members are equidistant from enmeshed relationships. Secondly, the child can be drawn into a dyadic

conflict, the mediator type, where children act as a bridge between parents and have closer relationships with either parent than the parents do. Thirdly, cross-generational coalition emerges when one parent and one child take a stand against the other parent (i.e., side-taking). Fourthly, scapegoating reflects the child's position being pushed out to stabilize the dyadic relationship. Instead of concentrating on their marriage, the dyad is more concerned with the child's matters (or problems). Dyads (emotionally) take sides against their scapegoated children. The couple's capacity for handling emotional stress will determine whether the child is affected by the conflict. The healthier the dyadic relationship with stress, the less likely children are part of the triangle. Although BFST links substance abuse with DoS (i.e., alcoholism, Bowen, 1978), limited research carried out on triangling indicates substantial adverse outcomes on children, including substance abuse (Pinheiro et al., 2006). However, to the best of the authors' knowledge, no study has inspected triangling in relation to internet or social media addiction.

Triangling is a symptom in a nuclear family's emotional system that disturbs family boundaries, resulting in underdevelopment of individuality for young adults (Kerr & Bowen, 1988). From a cultural standpoint, Türkiye offers an ideal context for the present study's variables because Turkish families have both individualistic and emotionally interdependent characteristics (İmamoğlu, 2003; Kağıtçıbaşı, 2007). Although Turkish families typically have interdependence (Sunar & Fişek, 2005), which contributes to the identity formation of Turkish children (Karakitapoğlu-Aygun, 2004), intergenerational hierarchy is not considered a threat to children's self-growth or individuation (Kağıtçıbaşı, 2007). Triangling is a psychological construct that originated in Western culture. However, how it manifests in Turkish culture (where autonomy and interrelatedness are equally important) and whether triangling predicts behavioral addictions makes the examination of these issues among a Turkish sample of particular interest.

Rationale for the present study

There appears to be an overlap between several of Griffiths' (2005) criteria for internet and social media addiction, and experiential avoidance. For instance, *mood modification* indicates a coping mechanism for addicts' own relief against unwanted emotions and mood states (e.g., stress, anxiety). Therefore, they may consistently turn to substances and/or behaviors that reliably change or regulate their mood state. An individual's primary method of mood modification or emotional regulation may be a factor in the development of addictive behavior. Mood modification in internet or social media addictions may reflect experiential avoidance because addicts continually ignore their negative emotions and thoughts and try to modify such aversive stimuli through excessive internet or social media use.

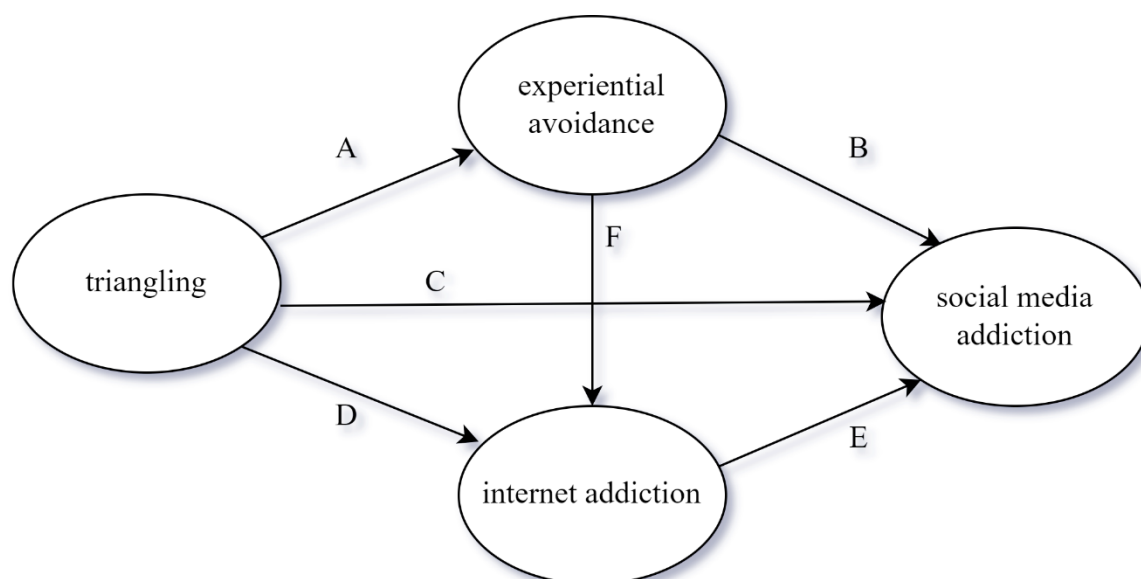
The literal and appraisal features of an individual's language and cognition provide the basis for comprehending the destructive effects of experiential avoidance (Blackledge & Hayes 2001). For instance, in a family system, a male university student may have a rigid feeling of distance toward the father because of the mother-son side-taking (cross-generational coalition). The son may have a cognitive appraisal of 'father hurts my mom' (cognition) which may result in the feeling of 'anger' (emotion) toward the father. Through the chronic repetition of this cycle with dyadic conflicts and the involvement of the son in side-taking (cross-generational coalition), the son may begin to distance emotionally and physically from the father (behavioral disposition). On the other hand, having such negative feelings (i.e., anger, hate) against the father may be confusing and aversive for the student because of feeling guilty for hating the father. The student may label such an experience (regarding emotions) with the connotation of being 'uncomfortable' as the inherent characteristic of the emotion itself.

However, it is not the emotion itself, which causes the feeling of being uncomfortable, but labeling it in this way. When the appraisal of 'this feeling is annoying' is more predominant than 'this is a feeling, and I appraise it as uncomfortable', the student may emotionally suffer

and seek dysfunctional behavioral strategies to regulate emotions. Instead of accepting and processing the experiences (i.e., emotions or cognitions), the student continually uses avoidant behaviors (such as potentially addictive behaviors). For the present study, it is speculated that excessive internet or social media use may be one of the dysfunctional coping mechanisms among some youth when they need to regulate the challenging emotions or feelings that arise in their involvement in triangles, which in turn, worsens with experiential avoidance. Research also supports a similar mechanism that father-child alienation results in internet addiction (Lei & Wu, 2007). Moreover, family conflicts have been associated with experiential avoidance and emotional symptoms (i.e., depression) (Biglan et al., 2015). However, to date, no previous research has ever examined the mediating role of experiential avoidance examining the associations between family-of-origin variables (i.e., triangling) and social media/internet addictions from an integrative perspective. The present study formulated three hypotheses:

- H₁ (triangling in family of origin to experiential avoidance to social media addiction): Experiential avoidance will mediate the structural path from triangling to social media addiction. Individuals involved more in triangling will report greater experiential avoidance, increasing social media addiction.
- H₂ (triangling in family of origin to experiential avoidance to internet addiction): Experiential avoidance will mediate the structural path from triangling to internet addiction. Individuals involved more in triangling will report greater experiential avoidance, increasing internet addiction.
- H₃ (triangling in family of origin to experiential avoidance to internet addiction to social media addiction): Experiential avoidance and internet addiction will indirectly (serially) mediate the structural path from triangling to social media addiction. Individuals involved more in triangling will report greater experiential avoidance, increasing

internet addiction. Moreover, participants with greater experiential avoidance and internet addiction (serially) will report higher social media addiction.



Hypothesis 1 = A + B; Hypothesis 2 = A + F; Hypothesis 3 = A + F + E

Figure 1. Study’s structural model representing the hypotheses

Method

Participants and sampling

The sample comprised 839 undergraduate students (597 females [71.2%] and 242 male [28.8%]) from more than 50 universities across several regions of Türkiye. Data collection for the study utilized purposive sampling (because all participants had to be an active user of social media and the internet). The majority were aged between 18 and 25 years old (90.7%) ($M = 21.67$ years, $SD = 4.03$). The participants spent more (daily) time on the internet ($M = 5.43$ hours, $SD = 2.86$) than on social media ($M = 3.05$ years, $SD = 1.81$). However, it is impossible to spend more time on social media than the internet because social media use is a type of internet use. Table 1 indicates that the most frequently used social media platform by participants was *Instagram* (89.9%).

Table 1. Social media use and internet use by participants (N=839)

		<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Social media platforms	<i>Instagram</i>	750	89.9
	<i>Twitter</i>	541	64.9
	<i>Facebook</i>	271	32.5
	Others	134	16.1
Purpose of social media use	Being informed about events and other people	657	78.6
	Having fun	619	74.0
	Following people and institutions	579	69.3
	Having contact with old friends	388	46.4
	Having more about interests	383	45.8
	Being known by people	316	37.8
	Joining groups	203	24.3
	Having new friends	94	11.2
	Other	14	1.7
Purpose of internet use	Searching on the information	765	91.2
	Watching films and videos	749	89.3
	Searching for education	740	88.2
	Communication	738	88.0
	Music	696	83.0
	Shopping	665	79.3
	Online education	647	77.1
	Internet banking	529	63.1
	Socializing	492	58.6
	Games	313	37.3
Content of social media posts	Photographs/videos	559	66.6
	Stories	555	66.2
	Opinions	305	36.4
	Personal issues	179	21.3

Note. Some questions resulted in multiple answers.

Measures

Triangular Relationship Inventory (TRI): The TRI (Bresin et al., 2017; Turkish version: Kurşuncu & Baştumur, 2020) was used to assess triangling in family-of-origin. It comprises 24 items (e.g., “*My parents handle tension between one another without including me*”) rated on a five-point Likert scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). The TRI’s scores range from 24 to 120, and higher scores indicate higher triangling. In the present study, the Cronbach’s alpha and McDonald’s omega coefficients of the TRI total were .85 and .86 respectively.

Young’s Internet Addiction Test-Short Form (YIAT-SF): The short form of the YIAT-SF (original version: Young, 1998; short-form version: Pawlikowski et al., 2013; Turkish short-

form version: Kutlu et al., 2016) assesses internet addiction. It comprises 12 items (e.g., “*How often do you stay online longer than you planned?*”) rated on a five-point Likert scale from 1 (*never*) to 5 (*always*). The scores range from 12 to 60, and higher scores indicate higher level of internet addiction. In the present study, the Cronbach’s alpha and McDonald’s omega coefficients of the YIAT-SF were both .88.

Bergen Social Media Addiction Scale (BSMAS): The BSMAS (Andreassen et al., 2016; Turkish version: Demirci, 2019) assesses social media addiction. The BSMAS has six items (e.g., “*Have you used social media to forget about your personal problems?*”) rated on a five-point Likert scale from 1 (*rarely*) to 5 (*quite often*). The scores range from 6 to 30. Higher scores show higher risk of being addicted to social media use. In the present study, the Cronbach’s alpha and McDonald’s omega coefficients of the BSMAS were both .80.

Acceptance and Action Questionnaire-II (AAQ-II): The AAQ-II (Bond et al., 2011; Turkish version: Yavuz et al., 2016) assesses experiential avoidance (EA). The AAQ-II has seven items (e.g., “*Emotions cause problems in my life*”) rated on a seven-point Likert scale from 1 (*never true*) to 7 (*always true*). The scores range from 7 to 49, and higher scores indicate higher EA (i.e., lower psychological flexibility). In the present study, the Cronbach’s alpha and McDonald’s omega coefficients of the AAQ were both .88.

Demographic Information Form: The survey also included questions related to age, gender, the name of the university participants enrolled in, the names of social media platforms that participants use, the purposes that participants used social media and internet, daily estimated frequency of social media and internet use in hours, and what kind of content is shared on social media.

Procedure, ethics, and data analysis

The Social and Human Sciences Ethics Committee at Ordu University granted ethical approval. The data were gathered via online survey method (due to COVID-19 conditions)

between November 2020 to January 2021 in Türkiye. The opening page of *Google Forms* included a consent form where participants could declare their intent to take part voluntarily. A link to the study was sent via students' *WhatsApp* groups along with the purpose of the study. These *WhatsApp* groups were created by university students (during the COVID-19 pandemic) to maintain coordination among students and academic members concerning their distance education. Researchers reached academics at different universities and departments via personal contact (e.g., telephone call, e-mail, or WhatsApp) and asked them to share the study link with their students. Since the aim was to reach as many students from different universities as possible, no criteria (e.g., a specific course or class level) were determined for potential participants.

Preliminary analyses to carry out the descriptive statistics was carried out using SPSS 22. Maximum Likelihood Estimation was utilized via bootstrapping because it is robust to the data's multivariate non-normality (MLE in AMOS 24; Arbuckle, 2016). The fit indices and the cutoff values for SEM results were χ^2/df -ratio < 5 close fit; NNFI $\geq .90$ of acceptable fit; and close fit: $.05 < RMSEA < .08$ (Schumacker & Lomax, 2016); SRMR $< .08$ (Browne & Cudeck, 1993); and CFI $\geq .93$ (Byrne, 2010). Item parcels in the mediation model were applied to adjust inflated measurement (or correlated) errors, and the bias in structural parameters (Bandalos, 2002), as some of the scales had many items relating to a single latent variable (e.g., 24 items for triangling; 12 items for internet addiction). Therefore, four parcels for triangling and three for internet addiction as measurement indicators were produced within the model. The individual items of triangling and internet addiction were assigned to these parcels using a random assignment technique on the mean values of the items from highest to lowest (Little et al., 2002).

Results

Data preparation, descriptive statistics, and bivariate correlations

Because incomplete online surveys could not be submitted, there were no missing data. The data were free from outliers, and skewness (highest, 1.28) and kurtosis (highest, 1.33) values were within required limits (Kline, 2011). The associations did not exceed the cutoff value .90 (Kline 2011) among study variables ($r = .69$ max.) with the tolerance values well above .20 for each variable (minimum tolerance = .52). No violation of linearity and homoscedasticity was observed. The sample exhibited low ranging scores for triangling ($M = 61.45$, $SD = 15.37$), EA ($M = 24.31$, $SD = 9.15$), internet addiction ($M = 27.25$, $SD = 8.04$), and social media addiction ($M = 16.10$, $SD = 5.35$) (Table 1). All study variables were significantly correlated, and internet addiction and social media addiction had the strongest bivariate Pearson correlation ($r = .69$, $p < .01$).

Table 2. Descriptives, bivariate Pearson correlations, and reliabilities ($N=839$)

	1.	2.	3.	4.
1.Triangling	-			
2.Experiential Avoidance	.31**	-		
3.Internet Addiction	.17**	.39**	-	
4.Social-Media Addiction	.19**	.38**	.69**	-
<i>M</i>	61.45	24.31	27.25	16.10
<i>SD</i>	15.37	9.15	8.04	5.35
Range	24-106	7-49	12-60	6-30

Note. ** $p < 0.01$; * $p < 0.05$ level (two-tailed).

Measurement invariance

Gender differences in the model were investigated with the four-phase (configural, metric, scalar, and error variance invariance; Milfont & Fischer, 2010) via the JASP Team (2019). The changes in Δ TLI, Δ CFI, and Δ RMSEA between -0.01 and 0.01 were examined (Cheung & Rensvold, 2002). The changes in four steps were 0.006 for TLI; 0.002 for RMSEA, and 0.003 for CFI, in which the model was speculated to be gender invariant.

Mediation model

As can be seen in Figure 1, the model investigated the indirect relationships between triangling and EA in predicting the scores for internet addiction and social media addiction. Analysis found a moderate model fit of $\chi^2(162) = 703.28$, $p < .001$; χ^2/df -ratio = 4.34, CFI = .94, NNFI

= .93, SRMR = .04, RMSEA = .063 (90% CI=.058-.068). Factor loadings ranged significantly between .55 and .90 in the model. Triangling accounted for 13% of the variation in EA. Together, triangling and EA accounted for 20% of the variation in internet addiction. Overall, triangling, EA, and internet addiction together explained 65% of the variance in social media addiction. The direct effects of triangling on internet addiction ($\beta = .03$) and social media addiction ($\beta = .04$) were not significant.

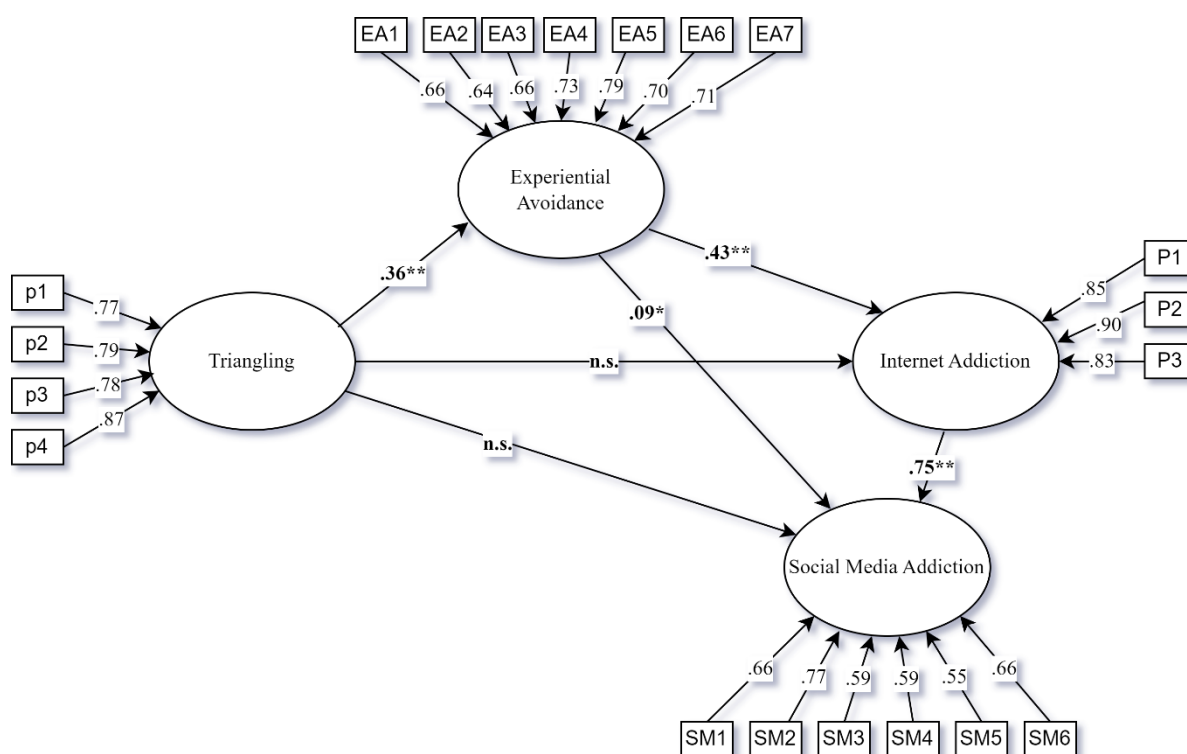


Figure 2. Standardized coefficients and paths of mediation model (** $p < .001$, * $p < .05$)

H_1 (triangling in family of origin to experiential avoidance to social media addiction)

The path from triangling ($\beta = .01$, $p < .015$, [CI=.00, .01]) to social media addiction (via experiential avoidance) was significant, and experiential avoidance fully explained the relationship as a mediator. In sum, when university students had higher scores of triangling, they tended to report more avoidance attitudes and have a greater level of social media addiction.

H₂ (triangling in family of origin to experiential avoidance to internet addiction)

The path from triangling ($\beta = .11, p < .015, [CI = .08, .14]$) to internet addiction (via experiential avoidance) was significant, and experiential avoidance fully explained the relationship as a mediator. In sum, when university students had higher scores of triangling, they tended to report more avoidance attitudes and have a greater level internet addiction.

H₃ (triangling in family of origin to experiential avoidance to internet addiction to social media addiction)

The path of triangling ($\beta = .03, p < .010, [CI = .02, .04]$) on social media addiction (via experiential avoidance to internet addiction) was significant. In sum, when university students had higher scores of triangling, they tended to report more avoidance attitudes and have greater levels of internet addiction and social media addiction.

Discussion

Triangling in family of origin to experiential avoidance to social media addiction (H₁)

The first hypothesis examined if triangling predicted social media addiction via experiential avoidance. The analysis indicated statistically significant indirect relationships on the full mediating role of experiential avoidance. More specifically, triangling did not directly correlate with social media addiction unless Turkish university students reported experiential avoidance. Previous research with Turkish samples has associated triangling (i.e., cross-generational coalitions) to social media addiction. Children, especially those who felt caught up in the middle of parental dysfunction, have reported higher levels of social media addiction, and may use social media excessively as a way to escape such an unpleasant circumstance (Bilgin et al., 2020). Similarly, the participants in the current study may have been coping with their aversive inner experience of exposure to triangling in their family of origin by increasing their social media and internet use.

Triangling in family of origin to experiential avoidance to internet addiction (H₂)

The findings regarding the second hypothesis indicated that triangling predicted internet addiction via experiential avoidance, and that triangling did not directly contribute to internet addiction unless participants reported experiential avoidance. However, experiential avoidance may also emerge in university students' cognitions. Theoretical approaches in the study (i.e., ACT and BFST) indicated individuals' ability to defuse or differentiate themselves from thoughts. Such an ability prevents that thought from appearing as an individual's unique reality. ACT (Hayes, 2004) defines the construct of cognitive fusion, which sustains experiential avoidance. A Turkish university student may have a mediating position in a triangle with the unconscious mind of 'as a good child, I need to reconcile my parents' in which a feeling of self-blame otherwise arises. Such a thought reflects a typical example of cognitive distortions in interpersonal relationships. The association between social media addiction or internet addiction and cognitive distortions (e.g., perfectionism) in interpersonal relationships has also been supported by research examining Turkish samples (Bilgin et al., 2020; Çelik & Odacı, 2013; Şahan & Erarslan-Çapan, 2017). Although the present study did not examine participants' interpersonal cognitive distortions, their cognitive fusion levels, which may result in the personalization or over-responsibility of their parent's marital tension, have also contributed to their experiential avoidance levels.

Triangling in family of origin to experiential avoidance to internet addiction to social media addiction (H₃)

The indirect effect's direction in the first hypothesis was not changed when internet addiction was involved in the model. The current study theoretically consolidated the association between triangling and internet addiction through experiential avoidance and social media addiction. This finding confirmed H₃ because previous studies have reported a positive association between internet use/addiction and social media addiction among Turkish samples (e.g., Kircaburun, 2016; Sariçam & Adam Karduz, 2018), similar to Far East (e.g., Leung,

2014), and US samples (Longstreet & Brooks, 2017). However, there is a difference between being addicted to the internet and using the internet as a tool for other addictions (Griffiths, 2000). For instance, gaming and gambling addicts who use the medium of internet to engage in their chosen behaviors are not internet addicts – they are gambling and gaming addicts. Griffiths' distinction may also be valid for problematic social media use because the purposes for using social media (i.e., self-presentation or social acceptance, Nadkarni & Hofmann, 2012) may differ from more general internet use. Likewise, when the data in the present study were examined descriptively, it was found that the reasons for social media use were mostly related to social interactions (i.e., being known by people) whereas the reasons for internet use were wider and included reasons such as information gathering (i.e., searching for information or education). Furthermore, H₃ in the structural model may also indicate that internet addiction predicts the social media addiction, and the present study's findings may also contribute to the research emphasizing the need to focus on sub-types of internet addiction rather than internet addiction in general (Su et al., 2020).

Triangling is one of the boundary violation constellations (Mayseless & Scharf, 2009), reflecting Kerr and Bowen's (1988) 'closed' family relationship systems that exacerbate family members' functioning symptoms. For instance, in a previous study, triangling and global family stress predicted social media addiction among a Turkish sample (e.g., Bilgin et al., 2020). Moreover, dysfunctional families may experience more triangling and problematic internet use unless children have higher self-esteem (van Dijk et al., 2021). Experiential avoidance in the present study may have also buffered the association between triangling and social media addiction or internet addiction (similar to self-esteem). When university students in the present sample had higher psychological flexibility (i.e., lower experiential avoidance), they may have been more likely to report lower triangling and social media/internet addiction. Lastly, adolescents who live with their parents are more likely exposed to triangling than those

who do not live with their parents (Wang et al., 2017). Given that the data in the present study were collected during the COVID-19 pandemic where most participants lived with their extended families due to distance education conditions, they may have been exposed to more triangling than before the COVID-19 pandemic.

Implications for theory and research

The findings confirmed the original theoretical structure of triangling being associated with dysfunctioning patterns (e.g., addictions) among family members. The results are valuable because they showed how Turkish university students tended to cope with dysfunctional family relationship mechanisms especially during the COVID-19 pandemic conditions. Further research with similar integrative perspectives is needed across diverse cultural groups to see whether these constructs are employed similarly. The results here can aid researchers and practitioners to revise their focus or practice and assist them in developing their interventions. For instance, academics in mental health fields (i.e., psychological counseling, psychiatry) may assist universities' psychological counseling centers by constructing psychosocial intervention programs on internet addiction and social media addiction using integrative theoretical models comparable to the model outlined in the present study. Moreover, cognitive defusion is a salient factor in tandem with experiential avoidance. Further studies may consider including this variable in their models to investigate how these constructs explain social media and internet addiction among university students.

Implications for practice

Psychological counselors should be aware of triangling's association with excessive social media or internet use and develop strategies for de-triangling. Practitioners can help university students in three interrelated ways on Titelman's (2008) configurations: (i) assisting university students to refine their skills to maintain a "neutral, person-to-person contact" (Titelman, 2008, p. 48) in their emotionally dysfunctional family context. These skills provide

a more objective evaluation of the emotional functioning patterns of individuals' own families. Nevertheless, this objective focus reflects an initial step. The ultimate goal should be towards a more functional family relationship without having emotional symptoms (e.g., emotional distance); (ii) assisting university students to act emotionally less reactively in their family relationships by practicing self-regulation and self-observation skills regarding their cognitions and feelings. This skill may also reflect higher DoS (and lower triangling), indicating a theoretical concurrence with the concept of *cognitive defusion* (Hayes et al., 1999) which reflects more psychological flexibility; (iii) assisting university students' skills to keep themselves out of the family's dysfunctional emotional system without emotionally distancing. This would mean they can be more aware of their family's dysfunctional mechanisms by also evaluating their contribution to those mechanisms.

Limitations

The present study has a number of limitations. The participants mainly lived with their family of origin during the data collection. Future research examining triangling should utilize samples including university students who live apart from their parents. The findings were based on the self-reports of the participants. Intergenerational interviews with parents are needed alongside children's self-reports for a more accurate evaluation of triangles. The sample was also gender imbalanced given that the majority of the participants were female (71.2%). Future studies should be more demographically representative (e.g., gender-balanced) to improve representativeness. Moreover, longitudinal studies may provide better empirical evidence for evaluating changes in triangling and how university students respond to these dysfunctional mechanisms (i.e., triangling, EA).

Conclusions

Overall, triangling was negatively associated with university students' psychological functioning (i.e., experiential avoidance) and may predict the development of internet and

social media addiction. The present study highlights the integration of experiential avoidance into the model which tend to exacerbate dysfunctional family dynamics (i.e., triangling), and social media/internet addiction among university students. However, higher psychological flexibility with acceptance of experiences in the family-of-origin and commitment behaviors (i.e., detriangling with an effort to higher DoS) can protect university students from the harmful effects of social media use and internet use. Moreover, as university students navigate their interpersonal relationships, they must cultivate healthy coping mechanisms (i.e., cognitive defusion) to regulate unpleasant emotions. Therefore, the potential harms associated with triangling and promoting mental health strategies need to be addressed to prevent addiction and increase psychological well-being among university students.

References

- Akar, F., (2021). The examination of the internet usage properties and relationship between purposes of internet usage and social media addiction among university students. *Third Sector Social Economic Review*, 56(4), 2758-2781.
<https://doi.org/10.15659/3.sektor-sosyal-ekonomi.21.11.1681>
- Aksu, M. H., Yiğman, F., Ünver, H. & Özdel, K., (2019). The relationship between social problem solving, cognitive factors and social media addiction in young adults: A pilot study. *Journal of Cognitive-Behavioral Psychotherapy and Research*, 8(3), 164-169.
<https://doi.org/10.5455/jcbpr.51403>
- Aktan, E. (2018). Assessment of social media addiction levels of university students by numerous variables. *Journal of Erciyes Communication*, 5(4), 405-421.
<https://doi.org/10.17680/erciyesiletisim.379886>
- Andreassen, C. S., Billieux, J., Griffiths, M. D., Kuss, D. J., Demetrovics, Z., Mazzoni, E., & Pallesen, S. (2016). The relationship between addictive use of social media and video

- games and symptoms of psychiatric disorders: A large-scale cross-sectional study. *Psychology of Addictive Behaviors*, 30(2), 252–262. <https://doi.org/10.1037/adb0000160>
- American Psychiatric Association (2013). *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders (5th ed.)*. American Psychiatric Press
- Arbuckle, J. L. (2016). *IBM SPSS Amos 24 user's guide*. [Computer software and manual]. IBM
- Balcı, Ş., & Baloğlu, E. (2018). The relationship between social media addiction and depression: A survey among university youth. *İletişim*, 29, 209-233. <https://doi.org/10.16878/gsuilet.500860>
- Bandalos, D. L. (2002). The effects of item parceling on goodness-of-fit and parameter estimate bias in structural equation modeling. *Structural Equation Modeling*, 9(1), 78–102. https://doi.org/10.1207/S15328007SEM0901_5
- Bell, L. G., Bell, D. C., & Nakata, Y. A. (2001). Triangulation and adolescent development in the USA and Japan. *Family Process*, 40(2), 173–186. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1545-5300.2001.4020100173.x>
- Biglan, A., Gau, J. M., Jones, L. B., Hinds, E., Rusby, J. C., Cody, C., & Sprague, J. (2015). The role of experiential avoidance in the relationship between family conflict and depression among early adolescents. *Journal of Contextual Behavioral Science*, 4(1), 30-36. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jcbs.2014.12.001>
- Bilgin, M., Şahin, İ., & Togay, A. (2020). Social media addiction in adolescents and parent-adolescent relationship. *Eğitim ve Bilim*, 45(202). <https://doi.org/10.15390/EB.2020.8202>
- Blackledge, J. T., & Hayes, S. C. (2001). Emotion regulation in acceptance and commitment therapy. *Clinical Psychology Science and Practice*, 57(2), 243–255. [https://doi.org/10.1002/1097-4679\(200102\)57:2<243::AID-JCLP9>3.0.CO;2-X](https://doi.org/10.1002/1097-4679(200102)57:2<243::AID-JCLP9>3.0.CO;2-X)

- Bond, F. W., Hayes, S. C., Baer, R. A., Carpenter, K. M., Guenole, N., Orcutt, H. K., ... & Zettle, R. D. (2011). Preliminary psychometric properties of the Acceptance and Action Questionnaire–II: A revised measure of psychological inflexibility and experiential avoidance. *Behavior Therapy, 42*(4), 676-688. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.beth.2011.03.007>.
- Bowen, M. (1978). *Family therapy in clinical practice*. Jason Aronson.
- Bresin, R. C., Murdock, N. L., Marszalek, J. M., & Stapley, L. A. (2017). The Triangular Relationship Inventory: Development and validation. *Couple and Family Psychology: Research and Practice, 6*(4), 287. <https://doi.org/10.1037/cfp0000094>.
- Browne, M. W., & Cudeck, R. (1993). Alternative ways of assessing model fit. In K. A. Bollen, & J. S. Long (Eds.), *Testing structural equation models* (pp. 136–162). Sage
- Byrne, B. M. (2010). *Structural equation modeling with AMOS: Basic concepts, applications and programming*. Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Chawla, N., & Ostafin, B. (2007). Experiential avoidance as a functional dimensional approach to psychopathology: An empirical review. *Journal of Clinical Psychology, 63*(9), 871–890. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jclp.20400>.
- Chervonsky, E., & Hunt, C. (2019). Emotion regulation, mental health, and social wellbeing in a young adolescent sample: A concurrent and longitudinal investigation. *Emotion, 19*(2), 270–282. <https://doi.org/10.1037/emo0000432>
- Cheung, G. W., & Rensvold, R. B. (2002). Evaluating goodness-of-fit indexes for testing measurement invariance. *Structural Equation Modeling, 9*(2), 233-255. https://doi.org/10.1207/S15328007SEM0902_5.
- Chou, W. P., Lee, K. H., Ko, C. H., Liu, T. L., Hsiao, R. C., Lin, H. F., & Yen, C. F. (2017). Relationship between psychological inflexibility and experiential avoidance and internet

- addiction: Mediating effects of mental health problems. *Psychiatry Research*, 257, 40-44. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychres.2017.07.021>
- Chou, W. P., Yen, C. F., & Liu, T. L. (2018). Predicting effects of psychological inflexibility/experiential avoidance and stress coping strategies for internet addiction, significant depression, and suicidality in college students: a prospective study. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 15(4), 788. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph15040788>
- Çelik, Ç. B., & Odacı, H. (2013). The relationship between problematic internet use and interpersonal cognitive distortions and life satisfaction in university students. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 35(3), 505-508. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chilyouth.2013.01.001>
- Demirci, İ. (2019). The adaptation of the Bergen Social Media Addiction Scale to Turkish and its evaluation of relationship with depression and anxiety symptoms. *Anatolian Journal of Psychiatry*, 20 (Suppl.1), 15-22. <https://doi.org/10.5455/apd.41585>
- Ekşi, F. (2019). The mediating role of social media disorder in the relationship of experiential avoidance with psychological symptoms. *Addicta: The Turkish Journal on Addictions*, 6, 497–507. <https://doi.org/10.15805/addicta.2019.6.3.002>
- Ekşi, H., Turgut, T., & Sevim, E. (2019). The mediating role of general procrastination behaviors in the relationship between self-control and social media addiction in university students. *Addicta: The Turkish Journal on Addictions*, 6(3), 717-745. <https://doi.org/10.15805/addicta.2019.6.3.0069>
- Erikson, E. H. (1963). *Childhood and society* (2nd ed.). Norton.
- Fulton, J. J., Kiel, E. J., Tull, M. T., & Gratz, K. L. (2014). Associations between perceived parental overprotection, experiential avoidance, and anxiety. *Journal of Experimental Psychopathology*, 5(2), 200-211. <https://doi.org/10.5127/jep.034813>

- Garcia-Oliva, C., & Piqueras, J. A. (2016). Experiential avoidance and technological addictions in adolescents. *Journal of Behavioral Addictions*, 5(2), 293-303. <https://doi.org/10.1556/2006.5.2016.041>
- Giordano, A. L., Schmit, M. K., & McCall, J. (2022). Exploring adolescent social media and internet gaming addiction: The role of emotion regulation. *Journal of Addictions & Offender Counseling*, 44, 69-80. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jaoc.12116>
- Griffiths, M. D. (1996). Internet addiction: An issue for clinical psychology? *Clinical Psychology Forum*, 97, 32–36.
- Griffiths, M. (2000). Internet addiction-time to be taken seriously? *Addiction research*, 8(5), 413-418. <https://doi.org/10.3109/16066350009005587>
- Griffiths, M. (2005). A ‘components’ model of addiction within a biopsychosocial framework. *Journal of Substance Use*, 10(4), 191-197. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14659890500114359>
- Griffiths, M. (2005). The biopsychosocial approach to addiction. *Psyke & Logos*, 26(1), 9-26.
- Griffiths, M. D. (2013). Social networking addiction: Emerging themes and issues. *Journal of Addiction Research & Therapy*, 4(5). <https://doi.org/10.4172/2155-6105.1000e118>
- Griffiths, M. D., Pontes, H., & Kuss, D. (2016). Online addictions: Conceptualization, debates and controversies. *Addicta: The Turkish Journal on Addictions*, 3(2), 151–164. <https://doi.org/10.15805/addicta.2016.3.0101>
- Gross, J. J. (Ed.). (2007). *Handbook of emotion regulation*. The Guilford Press.
- Hayes, S. C., Strosahl, K., & Wilson, K. G. (1999). *Acceptance and commitment therapy: An experiential approach to behavior change*. Guilford.
- Hayes, S. C. (2004). Acceptance and commitment therapy, relational frame theory, and the third wave of behavioral and cognitive therapies. *Behavior Therapy* 35(4), 639–665. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0005-7894\(04\)80013-3](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0005-7894(04)80013-3)

- Hsieh, K. Y., Hsiao, R. C., Yang, Y. H., Lee, K. H., & Yen, C. F. (2019). Relationship between self-identity confusion and internet addiction among college students: the mediating effects of psychological inflexibility and experiential avoidance. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 16(17), 3225. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph16173225>
- İmamoğlu, E. O. (2003). Individuation and relatedness: Not opposing but distinct and complementary. *Genetic, Social, and General Psychology Monographs*, 129(4), 367–402.
- JASP Team (2019). *JASP (Version 0.11.1)* [Computer software].
- Kağitçıbaşı, Ç. (2007). *Family, self and human development across cultures: Theory and applications* (2nd ed.). Erlbaum.
- Kandell, J. J. (1998). Internet addiction on campus: The vulnerability of college students. *CyberPsychology & Behavior*, 1(1), 11–17. <https://doi.org/10.1089/cpb.1998.1.11>
- Karakitapoğlu-Aygun, Z. (2004). Self, identity and well-being among Turkish university students. *Journal of Psychology*, 138(5), 457–478. <https://doi.org/10.3200/JRLP.138.5.457-480>
- Kashdan, T. B., Barrios, V., Forsyth, J. P., & Steger, M. F. (2006). Experiential avoidance as a generalized psychological vulnerability: Comparisons with coping and emotion regulation strategies. *Behaviour Research and Therapy*, 44(9), 1301–1320. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.brat.2005.10.003>
- Kashdan, T. B., Ferrisizidis, P., Collins, R. L., & Muraven, M. (2010). Emotion differentiation as resilience against excessive alcohol use. *Psychological Science*, 21(9), 1341–1347. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0956797610379863>
- Kemp, S. (2023, January 26). *Digital 2023: Global Overview Report*. We are social. <https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2023-global-overview->

report?utm_source=DataReportal&utm_medium=Country_Article_Hyperlink&utm_campaign=Digital_2023&utm_term=Turkey&utm_content=Global_Promo_Block

- Kerr, M. E., & Bowen, M. (1988). *Family evaluation: An approach based on Bowen theory*. W. W. Norton & Co.
- Kircaburun, K. (2016). Self-esteem, daily internet use and social media addiction as predictors of depression among Turkish adolescents. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 7(24), 64-72. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1112856.pdf>
- Kline, R.B. (2011). *Principles and practice of structural equation modeling (3rd Edition)*. The Guilford Press.
- Kocabıyık, O. O., & Bacioğlu, S. D. (2022). Predictive roles of psychological resilience and coping skills on social media addiction. *Current Approaches in Psychiatry*, 14 (Suppl 1), 137-146. <https://doi.org/10.18863/pgy.1137812>
- Kurşuncu, M. A. & Baştemur, Ş. (2020). The adaptation of the Triangular Relationship Inventory into Turkish: the study of validity and reliability for university students. *Anatolian Journal of Psychiatry*, 21 (Supp. 2). <https://doi.org/10.5455/apd.137794>.
- Kuss, D. J., Griffiths, M. D., Karila, L., & Billieux, J. (2014). Internet addiction: A systematic review of epidemiological research for the last decade. *Current Pharmaceutical Design*, 20(25), 4026–4052. <https://doi.org/10.2174/13816128113199990617>
- Kuss, D. J., & Griffiths, M. D. (2017). Social networking sites and addiction: Ten lessons learned. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 14, 311. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph14030311>
- Kutlu, M., Savci, M., Demir, Y., & Aysan, F. (2016). Turkish adaptation of Young's Internet Addiction Test-Short Form: a reliability and validity study on university students and

- Adolescents, *Anatolian Journal of Psychiatry*, 17(Suppl 1), 69-77. <https://doi.org/10.5455/apd.190501>
- Lei, L., & Wu, Y. (2007). Adolescents' paternal attachment and Internet use. *CyberPsychology & Behavior*, 10(5), 633-639. <https://doi.org/10.1089/cpb.2007.9976>
- Leung, L. (2014). Predicting internet risks: a longitudinal panel study of gratifications-sought, Internet addiction symptoms, and social media use among children and adolescents. *Health Psychology and Behavioral Medicine*, 2(1), 424-439. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21642850.2014.902316>
- Li, W., Garland, E. L., & Howard, M. O. (2014). Family factors in internet addiction among Chinese youth: A review of English- and Chinese-language studies. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 31, 393-411. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2013.11.004>
- Little, T. D., Cunningham, W. A., Shahar, G., & Widaman, K. F. (2002). To parcel or not to parcel: Exploring the question, weighing the merits. *Structural Equation Modeling*, 9(2), 151–173. https://doi.org/10.1207/S15328007SEM0902_1
- Longstreet, P., & Brooks, S. (2017). Life satisfaction: A key to managing internet & social media addiction. *Technology in Society*, 50, 73-77. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techsoc.2017.05.003>
- Marino, C., Manari, T., Vieno, A., Imperato, C., Spada, M. M., Franceschini, C., & Musetti, A. (2023). Problematic social networking sites use and online social anxiety: The role of attachment, emotion dysregulation and motives. *Addictive Behaviors*, 138, 107572. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.addbeh.2022.107572>
- Mayseless, O., & Scharf, M. (2009). Too close for comfort: Inadequate boundaries with parents and individuation in late adolescent girls. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 79(2), 191–202. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0015623>.

- Milfont, T. L. & Fischer, R. (2010). Testing measurement invariance across groups: Applications in cross-cultural research. *International Journal of Psychological Research*, 3(1), 111-121. <https://doi.org/10.21500/20112084.857>
- Nadkarni, A., & Hofmann, S. G. (2012). Why do people use Facebook? *Personality and Individual Differences*, 52(3), 243-249. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2011.11.007>
- Pawlikowski, M., Altstötter-Gleich, C., & Brand, M. (2013). Validation and psychometric properties of a short version of Young's Internet Addiction Test. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 29(3), 1212-1223. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2012.10.014>
- Pinheiro, R. T., Pinheiro, K. A. T., Magalhães, P. V. D. S., Horta, B. L., da Silva, R. A., Sousa, P. L. R., & Fleming, M. (2006). Cocaine addiction and family dysfunction: A case-control study in Southern Brazil. *Substance Use & Misuse*, 41(3), 307-316. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10826080500409167>
- Sarıçam H. & Adam Karduz, F. F. (2018). The adaptation of the Social Media Disorder scale to Turkish culture: Validity and reliability study. *Journal of Measurement and Evaluation in Education and Psychology*, 9(2), 116–135. <https://doi.org/10.21031/epod.335607>
- Savci M. & Aysan F. (2017). Technological addictions and social connectedness: predictor effect of internet addiction, social media addiction, digital game addiction and smartphone addiction on social connectedness. *Dusunen Adam The Journal of Psychiatry and Neurological Sciences*, 30, 202-216. <https://doi.org/10.5350/DAJPN2017300304>
- Schumacker, R. E., & Lomax, R. G. (2016). *A beginner's guide to structural equation modeling* (4th ed.). Routledge.
- Skewes, M.C. & Gonzalez, V. M. (2013). The biopsychosocial model of addiction. In Miller, P. (Ed.), *Principles of addiction: Comprehensive addictive behaviors and disorders* (pp.61-70). Elseiver. <https://doi.org/10.1016/b978-0-12-398336-7.00006-1>.

- Su, W., Han, X., Yu, H., Wu, Y., & Potenza, M. N. (2020). Do men become addicted to internet gaming and women to social media? A meta-analysis examining gender-related differences in specific internet addiction. *Computers in Human Behavior, 113*, 106480. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2020.106480>
- Sunar, D., & Fişek, G. (2005). Contemporary Turkish families. In U. Gielen & J. Roopnarine (Eds.), *Families in global perspective* (pp. 169–183). Allyn & Bacon.
- Şahan, M., & Erarslan-Çapan, B. (2017). Ergenlerin problemleri internet kullanımında kişilerarası ilişkilerle ilgili bilişsel çarpıtmaların ve sosyal kaygının rolü. *Ege Eğitim Dergisi, 18*(2), 887-913. <https://doi.org/10.12984/egeefd.336391>
- Teymouri Farkush, F., Kachooei, M., & Vahidi, E. (2022). The relationship between shame and internet addiction among university students: the mediating role of experiential avoidance. *International Journal of Adolescence and Youth, 27*(1), 102-110. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02673843.2021.2025116>
- Thompson RA (2019). Emotion dysregulation: A theme in search of definition. *Development and Psychopathology 31*, 805–815. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0954579419000282>
- Titelman, P. (2008). The concept of the triangle in Bowen Theory: An overview, in P. Titelman (Ed.), *Triangles: Bowen family systems theory perspectives* (pp. 3–63). The Haworth Press.
- Tiwari, S., Podell, J. C., Martin, E. D., Mychailyszyn, M. P., Furr, J. M., & Kendall, P. C. (2008). Experiential avoidance in the parenting of anxious youth: Theory, research, and future directions. *Cognition and Emotion, 22*(3), 480-496. <https://dx.doi.org/10.1080/02699930801886599>
- Turkey Statistics Institute [TurkStat] (2023). *Survey on Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Usage in Households and by Individuals*. <http://www.tuik.gov.tr>

- Uyaroğlu, A. K., Ergin, E., Tosun, A. S., & Erdem, Ö. (2022). A cross-sectional study of social media addiction and social and emotional loneliness in university students in Turkey. *Perspectives in Psychiatric Care*, 58(4), 2263-2271. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ppc.13056>
- van Dijk, R., van der Valk, I. E., Vossen, H. G., Branje, S., & Deković, M. (2021). Problematic internet use in adolescents from divorced families: the role of family factors and adolescents' self-esteem. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 18(7), 3385. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph18073385>
- Wang, M., Liu, S., & Belsky, J. (2017). Triangulation processes experienced by children in contemporary China. *International Journal of Behavioral Development*, 41(6), 688–695. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0165025416662345>
- World Health Organization (2019). *ICD-11 for mortality and morbidity statistics*. <https://icd.who.int/browse11/l-m/en>
- Yavuz, F., Ulusoy, S., Iskin, M., Esen, F. B., Burhan, H. S., Karadere, M. E., & Yavuz, N. (2016). Turkish version of Acceptance and Action Questionnaire-II (AAQ-II): A reliability and validity analysis in clinical and non-clinical samples. *Bulletin of Clinical Psychopharmacology*, 26(4), 397-408. <https://doi.org/10.5455/bcp.20160223124107>.
- Young, K. S. (1998). *Caught in the net: How to recognize the signs of internet addiction and a winning strategy for recovery*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Zendle, D., & Bowden-Jones, H. (2019). Is excessive use of social media an addiction? *BMJ Clinical Research*, 365, l2171. <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.l2171>