



INTERNET CAFES, YOUNG PEOPLE AND GAME INTERACTION: A STUDY IN THE CONTEXT OF SUBCULTURE

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Abstract

This study examines the digital game interactions of young people who go to internet cafes in the Aksaray province of Turkey. In the study, the in-depth interview method was used in internet cafes to collect the data. The use of digital games by young people in internet cafés was examined as a form of subculture. The results show that young people stated that they often went to these places to spend their free time and that they are exposed to digital violence. Participants also stated that they were not satisfied with this situation. However, the findings also indicate that young people who play in internet cafes enjoy some of the violence in the games they play and also that the use of slang and abusive communication sometimes helps them to have a good time.

Keywords: Internet Cafe, Youth, Subculture, Game Interaction.

İNTERNET KAFE, GENÇLİK VE OYUN ETKİLEŞİMİ: ALT KÜLTÜR BAĞLAMINDA BİR İNCELEME

Öz

Bu çalışmada, Türkiye'nin Aksaray ilinde bulunan internet kafelere giden gençlerin dijital oyun etkileşimi araştırılmaktadır. Araştırmada internet kafe ortamlarında derinlemesine görüşme yöntemi kullanılarak veriler alınmıştır. Çalışmada, internet kafe ortamlarında gençlerin dijital oyun kullanımı alt kültür bağlamında incelenmiştir. İnceleme sonucunda gençler, çoğunlukla boş zamanlarını geçirmek için bu mekânlara gittikleri ve burada dijital şiddet içeren unsurlara maruz kaldıklarını ifade etmektedirler. Katılımcılar ayrıca bu durumdan memnun olmadıklarını da ifade etmektedirler. Fakat internet kafede oyun oynayan gençlerin, oynadıkları oyunlarda yer alan bazı şiddet unsurlarından hoşlandıkları, argo ve küfür içerikli gerçekleştirilen iletişimlerin de genelde kendilerinin hoş zaman geçirmelerine fayda sağladığı yönünde bulgular da araştırma kapsamında elde edilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: İnternet Kafe, Gençlik, Alt Kültür, Oyun Etkileşimi.

1. Introduction

Nowadays, younger generations are living in an era in which mobile phones, instant messaging and video conversations are used to communicate, as opposed to the era when communication could only be made face-to-face or through telephones. These forms of communication, which are indirect or allow one to have more than one transaction at the same

time, are slowly beginning to replace face-to-face communication in today's world. In the past, young people gathered on the streets, in other words, often directly outside their homes; now, they can carry out their activities in alternative spaces and can have multiple conversations via instant messaging programs (Erdoğan Tuğran, 2016; Görkemli, 2017).

One of those alternative spaces is internet cafes. Young people come together in internet cafes in urban settings and chat with other people on virtual platforms. Furthermore, young people can interact both with each other in internet cafes and with people anywhere in the world by playing video games and chatting on virtual gaming platforms.

This leads to various problems. According to Doğan (1994), it is difficult for long-standing societies to transfer permanent, consistent and effective values to younger generations. If the balance of technology and values does not occur in a society, it will only lead to social conflicts, depression and an unbalanced individual.

Moreover, it is known that children and young people turn to the mass media to pass their free time. Parallel to the diversity of the mass media and technological developments, the multitude of commercial entertainment tools makes it difficult to control this form of communication. This situation can have a negative effect on young users and lead them into illegal behaviours.

Furthermore, there are also broadcasts and applications that present forms of violence, aggression and anger to children and young people through the unlimited resources of mass media (Dilber, 2014). One of these mediums is video games. Young people have sometimes gathered together in internet cafes and played video games for hours on end. It is possible that the negative impact of the video games on young people may be reflected in their real lives as well. In this case, the subculture of young people may play a role in pointing them towards internet cafés and their encounters with violent, sexual, verbally offensive and abusive games. For this reason, in this study, the young people who meet in internet cafés to play digital games and their experiences in such environments are discussed in terms of the subculture involved.

2. Internet Cafes and Young People

The reason for the first appearance of internet cafes was desire of people who did not own a computer to connect to the internet. Two knowledgeable entrepreneurs, Eva Pascoe and Gene Teare, opened the first internet café in England in 1994. Following this, as in Europe and the USA, internet cafes also spread rapidly in Turkey (Gürol & Sevindik, 2006). This growth was also seen in many developed countries at the same time (Hong & Huang, 2005).

Like so many technological innovations, the internet directly and indirectly influences the lives of people and societies. Especially among young people, the internet means the

discovery of a world that contains many novelties. However, the environment where internet access is provided, control of the resources that are accessed on the internet, as well as health and physical, mental and social development are all significant issues in regard to children and young people (Can, 2008).

The internet has now become part of daily life due to major developments in recent years. Internet cafes have emerged as a significant industry under the new wave of internet use. On the other hand, internet cafes create new problems. One of these is internet cafe addiction. For example, as this addiction is very common among adolescents in Taiwan, young people have been known to spend many hours in internet cafes (Wu & Cheng, 2007). This addiction affects a wide range of areas, ranging from the everyday activities of young people to their ability to carry out specific actions.

People in China usually have access to the internet primarily through internet cafes because computers are still luxuries for most families. The majority of internet cafe users live in small and medium-sized cities and towns. Most of these are relatively economically weak, geographically remote and politically marginalised. For this reason, internet cafes in China generally help people who have a low level of income and who live in rural areas (Hong & Huan, 2005). In other words, as in the case of China, the cultural setting in which an individual lives influences her/his use of technology and influences this process.

Internet cafes differ according to young people's residential conditions, socio-economic status and their home regions. Factors such as the country in which people live and the cultural situation and legal infrastructure of that country cause differences in the use of internet and internet cafes. For example, comparing the use of internet cafes in Turkey and Europe, it is seen that women in Turkey use internet cafes less. In addition, internet cafes, which are sometimes open 24 hours a day in Europe, remain open for fewer hours in Turkey (Gürol & Sevindik, 2006).

3. Subculture

Culture is a concept that involves all the material and moral behaviours in people's lives and is the entirety of their beliefs and values regarding everything about life. Moreover, culture is an element which includes both the individual and society and provides indications about a society. While human beings shape culture, culture also shapes human beings. Therefore, culture is the life of human, and the human is the life source of culture (Nişancı, 2012). In other words, culture is how an individual fits in with her/his environment. Furthermore, it can be seen as a concept that encompasses the values and beliefs of a society

along with its patterns of life (Emekli, 2006).

Based on these definitions, it is possible to conclude that there are social behaviours that occur on the basis of cultural activities. Parsons (1968) describes social action in his book *The Structure of Social Action* using the “unit act model”. According to this model, social action must have five characteristics:

- Purposes: The purpose of the action;
- Means: The things that make it possible for the actor to complete the action;
- Conditions : Conditions and limitations in action;
- Norms: Comprehension of appropriate and acceptable purposes and means;
- Effort: It is the work of the actor to complete the action.

Parsons is here trying to develop a multidimensional model of human action (Smith, 2001; 43).

In spite of the generic nature of culture, there are subcultures within the dominant culture that form lifestyle and behavioral patterns which separate a group or community from others. Subculture is a conceptual field that is crucial in defining a specific area within the overall culture and in identifying groups with their own identity.

There are various definitions of subculture. In one of these definitions, “subculture” is referred to define where cultures differ in certain criteria from the common culture of a society. That is to say, a subculture has a different view of the general social sphere, one which differs from the general structure of the society. In this context, subcultures have different lifestyles, forms of speech, and behaviors than the traditional lifestyles and values of the communities they belong to. Today there are many subcultures in modern society (Çakır, 2016). Therefore, the subculture consists of a group of people living differently from the people in the main or dominant culture (Nicholas, 2015: 7).

A subculture can manifest itself in many different areas. The young people who constitute the subject of this study form one of these areas. Given the significance of youth subcultures, the emergence of such groups provides very clear indications of the deterioration of the post-World War II consensus. The objections and contradictions found in Lefebvre's subculture context can be seen.

Nevertheless, revolts against the hegemony are not directly promulgated by these subcultural groups. Rather, revolt is expressed implicitly. These oppositions are tentatively stated, they have contradictions and then they are dissolved magically. This process takes place at the level of images that are highly artificial; in other words, in the general sense, at

the level of signs, a symbolic society, or a myth-consumer society, is not homogeneous, but divided by classes (Hebdige, 2004: 23).

The comments of Jenks (2007; 190) on subcultures are also very significant. Jenks aims to contribute to the understanding of the subculture with this statements: “Subcultures are new sources of identity, subcultures are new different indicatives. The results of such theoretical activities are regressive, nihilistic and totally relative but ultra-modern. They can not be justified by any political system or morality. To call youth as the vanguard of the new dawn sounds exciting and liberal, on the other hand, it is not appealing to address all negative behaviors to the surrounding area of pathology, distance and personal responsibility. What about pedophiles as new scapegoats? Do they not create a new subculture, communicate on the internet, make meetings? They don't have common languages, symbolic repertoires, no lifestyle? Aren't they bank clerk, accountant, civil servant, father, citizen, athlete and members of the Labor Party? What about the people who seem to live on your side all the time and listen to loud music? Can they create a subculture?”

When the above definitions are analysed, a subculture can be characterized as a culture in which a group of people is separated from others by words and behaviors at a certain period of their lives, has a different style, and is different from the society in general. It is a fact that young people who go internet cafés are known to have a unique lifestyle in the internet cafes, either during or after their game-playing. Young people also use the words and behaviors which they have learned during their gaming in their own lives. This creates the subcultures that young people inhabit in internet cafes.

4. Video Games

Video games, which have become an integral part of people's entertainment within a daily culture of consumption in recent years (Hamari & Keronen, 2017), have been described by a PricewaterhouseCoopers' report (Shebi, Chu, & Wang, 2017) as a field of machine-human interaction. Video games, originally developed on analogue computers, are today hybrid structures that combine all the elements in a system created by the latest computer models and its components. The machine-tools used by an Avatar within a game can be seen as different types of interconnected machines, including the artificial intelligence, cursor-driven options, and graphical interfaces with displays that allow players to interact with NCPs (Non-Player Characters) in dialogs and behaviors. It can be seen from Table 1 that each new system established in the process of moving from real life to virtual life deepens a layer of simulation (Fidaner, 2009; 85).

Table 1. Machine-Human Interaction

	Form of relation	Examples
Tool	Setting and Monitoring	Radio, analogue computers, control panel
Actor	Request-response, dialog	Cursor, command line, artificial intelligence, intelligent robot
Interface	Manage and edit	Mouse, screen, windows, bars, symbols
System	Movement and action	Avatar, atmosphere of the game, map, NCPs

Source: Fidaner, 2009; 85.

In the transition from real life to virtual life in machine-human interactions, the versatile features of the machines now make it possible for the individual to spend hours playing video games. Lucas and Sherry point out that people play video games for six reasons. These are as follows (Lucas & Sherry, 2004):

- Competition: To be the best player of the game;
- Challenge: To push oneself to beat the game or get to the next highest level;
- Social interaction: To play as a social experience with friends;
- Diversion: To pass time or to alleviate boredom;
- Fantasy: To do things that you cannot do in real life such as driving racing cars or flying
- Stimulation: To play because the game is exciting.

Video games, on the other hand, do not only mediate communications between the machine and the human being. It has also been observed that video gaming has enabled individuals to communicate both online (He, 2017) and offline. Individuals are often in virtual communication during game play. This in-game interaction can take place in the form of conversation, violence, sexuality, and the use of slang or swear words.

When it comes to the potential effects of video games as a form of immersive media on violent and aggressive behavior in young people (Ferguson etc., 2015), it has been determined that there are violent elements in various forms in a large number of games. This violence in video games can occur in three forms (Yenğın, 2010; 137-145). These are:

1. Coded violence: The “code” or “code word” is a significant factor in the communication between people and with society in general. These codes can indicate verbal, symbolic, visual, pornographic violence. For example, if the eye and face of the actor appears to be ugly, scary, and not normal, this can be an indicative of a violent act.

2. Instrumental violence: This is specifically the type of violence carried out by means of guns, rifles or knives. In addition, tools such as swords, axes, chains, spears, bows, whips are elements of violence in video games.

3. Physical violence: This is violence carried out using various parts of the human body. The most common action is to strike or to punch the opponent using the hand and/or arm. In addition to that, violence using the head, feet and legs also takes place in video games.

Because these types of violence appear in digital games, the criticism has been made that the players become used to violence and aggression in real life or are less influenced by situations based on violence (Ferguson etc., 2015).

Moreover, this technology may also lead to sexual interactions (Hearn, 2006). Sometimes this can be educational in terms of sexuality (Appel, 2012) and may inform users about sexual health matters. But sometimes it causes young people to be sexually exploited or it can negatively affect their cognitive and psychological development.

Virtual sexuality can be considered a very significant concept at present. Even today, topics such as “Internet sexuality”, “Pornography on the Internet”, “Sex shops on the Internet”, “Sex work on the Internet”, “Sex contacts on the Internet”, “Sexual subcultures on the Internet” (Döring, 2009) constitute fields in which various research has been frequently carried out.

Furthermore, players who interact with video games also develop a game-specific language they use among themselves. This language uses a lot of slang and/or abusive words. Through this language, which is created collaboratively by the players, a form of socialization unique to the game and the internet café occurs.

Related Studies

This study has examined the research found in the literature in Turkey. Among this research, Can and Kara (2010) indicate that individuals who go to the internet cafes do not possess their own unique characteristics which are different from the society in general. Their findings show that it is not easy to define a subculture to which these people belong. However, findings such as the existence of a friends’ group for playing games on the internet and that these individuals are also having problems in school or with the police, and are dissatisfied with the existing system, can be considered significant.

According to another study conducted, the basic environment of the internet café has an important influence on preferences. While playing games, social interactions increase motivation and add to young people’s experience. In addition, features of the game, such as its style, visual approach, purpose, story, music and characters all seem to influence young people’s lives (Kara & Çağiltay, 2013).

The results of the questionnaire of 408 people in Niğde province of Turkey were as follows (Can, 2008):

- Relations with parents and siblings were healthier for students who did not habitually go to internet cafes;

- As the frequency of going to an internet cafe increases, the relationship of the students with the teachers and the school administrators deteriorates and success at school decreases.

- There is a relationship between smoking, drinking alcohol, being involved in a fight, approval of violent behaviors and the habit of going to internet cafes.

Research on 336 participants by Gürol and Sevindik (2006) suggested that the most important reason for individuals in the 15-24 age group going to internet cafes was playing video games. In addition to this, pornographic, war and thriller games were the most significant types of games encountered by those participants who played in internet cafes.

In a questionnaire conducted by Taşpınar and Gümüş (2005) in 81 Turkish provinces with 2,748 people, it was observed that the internet café environments were found to be partially adequate and that users preferred internet cafes which had gaming sections.

5. Methodology

In this study examining young people who go to internet cafes and their interaction in games, the in-depth interview technique, which is a qualitative research method, was used. Interviewing is the technique of data collection or investigation through verbal communication. Interviews can be carried out through voice and image transmitters such as phones, even if they are mostly carried out face-to-face. In general, there are three main objectives of the interview. These are: a) To provide and maintain cooperation, b) Treatment (to increase self-confidence), c) To collect research data. Interviewing has been used as the quickest way to learn about an individuals' knowledge, attitudes and behaviors in various fields and the possible reasons for them (Karasar, 2000; 165).

Internet cafes are one of most the significant places where young people living in urban centers encounter technology. Young people surf, chat, participate in virtual sports' competitions and play video games in internet cafés. This study aims to investigate the interaction of young people playing video games in internet cafes with these digital games. The study is limited to Aksaray province. Young people who were going to internet cafes in Aksaray province were selected as the sample. Data collection began in November 2016 and was completed in January 2017. The universe of the research was the internet cafes in the Aksaray province. There are 48 active internet cafes in Aksaray and the research was carried out in 6 internet cafes. However, interviewees also pointed out that they used different internet cafes.

The primary goal of the study was to explore in detail the reasons why young people go to internet cafes, why they play video games and the effects of digital games on them. This would thus give us indications about how video games affect their lives. The study will therefore serve as a guide for young people and their families and those who study this field academically. The main research questions were as follows:

1. Why do you go to an internet cafe?
2. Why do you prefer to go to internet cafes to play games? (What is your family's and school's opinion about this?)
3. What are the most popular games among young people in internet cafes? Why are you playing them?
4. What in the video games affects you the most?
5. How long do you play games for? (On weekdays and at the weekend.)
6. What types of dialogs, images and activities (such as violence, slang, sexuality, vulgar behavior) occur in the games?

6. Findings

This research was carried out with young people who went to internet cafes. The first aim was to investigate the behaviors of the young people going to the internet café, then to investigate how they used video games. Research data was mostly collected from players in the internet cafes. Some data was collected from internet cafe owners who also played video games and used the internet in the same place. Demographic characteristics, internet cafe habits and video game usage were taken into consideration within the context of the subculture involved. It is thought that such a review will offer a closer examination of young people who go to internet cafes and their video game usage.

Trends in and reasons for going to Internet cafés

According to the information collected from the 14 people interviewed, 13 of the participants constantly went to internet cafés, whereas one participant used to go to the internet café regularly, but now goes less because he has his own computer and internet connection at home.

As a result of the interviews, it was understood that all participants went to play games in internet cafes and to pass their free time. Despite the fact that participants can spend their time in various ways at home online on their own computer, participants in the interview linked the reasons for going to the internet café to the opportunity to meet, communicate and interact with larger groups of people. In other words, participants said that they preferred to

go to internet cafés because of their need to be with other individuals instead of playing games or performing various activities on the internet alone in their homes.

Reasons for going to the internet cafe:

Participant 1 stated: “We have a community in the internet cafe, everyone can communicate better with each other, we can play games frequently.”

Participant 2 explained: “We can't all go home together. We want to play a game and so we go to internet cafes because the location is more convenient and it becomes more enjoyable because it is full of people.”

Participant 12 stated: “I can be with my friends in the internet cafe.”

According to these responses, it can be concluded that group interaction, which occurs in internet cafes was a crucial reason for individuals to go to internet cafes.

Participants were also asked questions about what their parents and schools think about playing games in the internet café, and how they influenced them. They stated that the majority of their parents and schools had put pressure on them and warned them that internet cafés and long playing times are dangerous to them.

Participant 2 answered the question thus: “My family warns me that I should not play in the internet café, because a big part of my life is influenced by games. Sometimes I did not go to school in order to play games in the internet café. The game is another world. You can forget this world; If you do not like your real life friends, you love your friends in the game. You trust friends you do not see or hear. When you are playing games, you can be both with friends in the internet cafe and the ones you don't see”.

Participant 4 says: “My parents do not support my going to the internet cafe. They want me to communicate mainly with people who don't go there. Teachers in the school say to me stay away but my schoolmates support me, we go together.”

Participant 5 says: “My family does not have a good opinion about playing video games, they gets a bit tough sometimes. My father recently broke my laptop for this reason.”

When the findings are examined, it is understood that the participants' family and schools had negative attitudes towards them going to an internet cafe and playing games there. On the other hand, the participants tended to go to the internet cafe and play games despite all the warnings. It can be said that this situation is influenced by the group interaction of the participants and the addiction that the games create in the individuals, as mentioned above.

Video game playing trends and reasons

Participants in the study were asked why they played video games in internet cafes. According to their responses, being part of a group and doing things together were seen as the reasons for playing video games. Gaining a sense of power, controlling strong characters, being appreciated, being successful, an attraction to violence, slang and abusive language, and generating income were also among the reasons why participants play video games.

In the interview, Participant 4 explained the reason for playing games: “In the game I play, it's important to tear down the towers, to kill and win. I like destroying, killing, shooting things with my friends. The happiness my friends give me in video games affects me. In fact, the fun and the noisy atmosphere affect me rather than the game itself. I like wanting to win and being ambitious.”

Furthermore, Participant 3 stated his reasons: “I like killing someone in a game. You get ahead of your rivals and get points. There are no points except for killing. So there's competition between friends. You try to get in front, and it finishes either positively or negatively.”

Participant 5 explained: “I like rising in the rankings and getting points in the game I'm playing. Sometimes there is trading, you can sell the game character for cash. I've sold 15-20. You put your character up for sale, the recipient deposits money in your bank account or gives you cash. Depending on the condition of the character, I've sold them for 3-5 tl or 100-200 tl”.

Participant 7 stated: “The games with weapons are good, the other games are unappealing, so the games with weapons are good.”

Participant 10 answered: “There is a goal in the game, there is progress; over time the game becomes familiar. After a while you can even earn money. Some people can sponsor you, tournaments are organized, if you make money, you enjoy the game more.”

Participant 12 answered: “Friends and chatting are things that give me pleasure.”

Responses show that participants turned to digital games because they thought that they would be involved in a group activity, win, be successful, be strong, and enjoy getting some income. These results are crucial in terms of rewarding some of the instincts that are inherent in the human being. It can be concluded that the young people who play in internet cafes get such rewards and that is why they play video games.

Undesired features in video games

In spite of the reasons why the participants liked and played video games, there were also some points that did not appeal to gamers. For example, participants generally thought

that children can be deceived in illegal ways in games and the idea that video games cause addiction is not appealing to them.

In this regard Participant 2 stated: “A 7-year-old child or a 70-year-old man can play games. A child aged 7 can be exposed to risks. There are mobile numbers on the screen while playing games and mobile payments can be made for them. A child can make payments via that phone line if his father’s line is postpaid. In this case, for example, the child's father could get a bill for 90 TL instead of 30 TL. This can cause upset in the family.” Moreover, one participant said: “I get very attached to a game, I can't carry out other tasks or my responsibilities. For example, I was expelled from high school because of playing video games in an internet cafe. I finished public high school. I took my university exam; I am very regretful. I had a circle of friends. Half of them were expelled, too”.

Slang, abusive language, sexuality and the tendency to violence in video games

As a result of the interviews, it was found that video games also contain slang, abusive language, and sexual and violent content. All of the participants said that the games they played contained this. At the same time, the participants declared their own practices related to such content. For example, participants stated that when they play games they use words that contain swearing and slang and that other gamers behave in this way too.

From these results, it can be concluded that video gaming environments are a form of release for young people as well as a way for them to address sexual content and situations based on slang, profanity and violence.

Participants were asked during the interviews, “Is there slang / profanity / sexuality and violence in the games you play?” and Participant 13 answered explicitly: “Yes, there is. You strike the head of a warrior and he dies. As he dies, you hear a juicy sound and I like it. You don't need to have a military training. If you have the game, you have the military training.” Furthermore, participants emphasized that content with slang and profanities is forbidden in the common dialog window, but that in the private messaging system content with slang and profanities can be used easily.

In addition, Participant 4 answered this question: “Yes. The players insult each other in the game, they swear at each other's parents. Words like "stupid" and "idiot" can be used normally. There is nothing pornographic in the game. There is always a warning that says: ‘Are you at least 18 years old?’”

Participant 3 answered: “Yes. It’s normally prohibited, so that if you swear you can’t enter with that character again; it might be forbidden. But in the private section, there is

profanity. The game has an erotic view of female characters; girls often use female characters in the game. There are also slang words for girls.”

Participant 3: “Yes, they are all in the game but there is much more swearing in the internet cafe. ‘Admin’ prohibits vocal or written profanity on the server. There are no erotic images in the Counter Strike game which I play but there are some images in the Metin2 game.”

As a result of the data collected, it is understood that young people frequently encounter with slang, profanity, and sexual and violent contents in video games. It is also noteworthy that some of the participants expressed their discomfort with this situation and that, on the other hand, some participants expressed the sense of release this gave. For example, Participant 12 suggested: “While playing video games in the internet cafe, my friends and I are chatting. Sometimes we say bad words to each other, which is nice.”

7. Conclusion and Suggestions

Subculture is the name given to a cultural form of a group that has its own structure, characteristics and practices and modes of communication deviating from the general culture of a society. This study aimed to demonstrate how young people who go to internet cafes and play video games, are influenced by them in subcultural terms.

According to the findings collected, the majority of the young people who go to internet cafes and play video games share a common language, modes of behavior and common practices. When the topic is approached in the context of subculture, it is concluded that young people participating in the research play similar games, the topics they like or dislike are also similar, they go to the internet cafe together to play games, so they act as a group and develop common behavior patterns for the group.

According to the cultural, social and religious values of Turkey, slang and profanity are met with shame and are not welcomed by society. It is even a fact that individuals who exhibit such behavior are excluded from social groups. In spite of this, within the scope of the research, it is concluded that young people who are interviewed swear about each other's parents – who are seen as very precious in Turkish society – in internet cafes. As a matter of fact, this situation sometimes makes them very happy. This can be interpreted as a reflection of the subculture formed in the internet cafe during their interactions when playing games.

In the context of the research, it was also found that the young people who went to internet cafes and played games gained pleasure from situations such as slaughter, shooting, and feel a sense of growth and empowerment from killing and gaining rewards by killing. This can also be interpreted as showing that individuals in the same environment have the

same modes of communication, and that their performing similar actions while thinking in a similar way is a subculture of these environments.

All of the young people involved in the investigation are involved in killing, wars, shooting, using axes, knives etc. in the games they play and they state that they have to get their character to a higher level and kill other characters to score points. Analysing these answers suggests that such violent content is deliberately put in the games by the producers. The deliberate placing of elements of violence in games can lead participants to become prone to violence in real life. This can harm the process of reducing and eliminating violence all over the world.

Sexualised characters and scenes related to sexuality in the content of the games are among the elements that participants are aware of and their behavior may change in regard to this. The sexual objects and figures in the games may have some negative effects on young people who are still in the stages of developments and can be considered an issue that should not be ignored.

Moreover, addictions caused by video games are among the factors that negatively impact the familial and school relations of young people. The result is that the participants have problems with their family and school due to the fact that they are all going to internet cafes and have been playing games for a long time. Because of this addiction, some of the participants' school life has ended and some have been exposed to violence by their family. Furthermore, it is concluded that participants are able to communicate via electronic means with online contacts they have not met, but that they are unable to communicate with other circles of friends in the real world, so their socialization is limited to this environment only. It is clear that this form of socialization has its own subcultural characteristics.

This research has revealed that young people who go to internet cafes and play games do experience positive factors, such as group interaction, leisure time and socialization with their peer group in internet cafés. On the other hand, they also experience negative factors such as slang or abusive language, violence, sexual content, addiction.

It would be appropriate to take some measures in order to avoid these negative aspects. For example, at all educational levels, computer courses should be taught to the youth with topics such as the aims of computer and internet use, computer ethics, ethical problems in the information age, computer and internet addiction and how to protect from addiction added to the content (Korkmaz & Mahiroğlu, 2007).

In order to efficiently use internet cafes for achieving the objective of an information society they need to also be used for educational and research purposes. It is very important to

assess the internet cafes and user profiles in Turkey and to utilize these places as digital library facilities (Taşpınar, 2005).

Also, it would be appropriate for producers to reconsider the contents of games and to remove the elements of slang, abusive language, sexuality and violence from the games. Moreover, it may be appropriate to educate parents about internet cafes and gaming environments and to prevent violence against children who play video games. Furthermore, cyber-security measures should be ensured to protect children and young people from cyber threats. It is not enough for young people to be in digital environments alone in terms of their development. In order to provide for healthy physical and psychological development, non-gaming and communication activities should be developed alongside digital game environments and presented to young people as alternatives by their families, schools and community.

This research is limited to six internet cafes and fourteen participants in Aksaray. Similar research could be performed in a larger geographical area with more participants. In addition, the study could also be extended to allow comparison between different countries, thereby making these subcultural aspects more explicit and open.

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