OPINIONS OF FAMILIES OF CHIDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS ABOUT DIGITAL GAMES

Research article

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Abstract

Today, it is observed that children with special needs first eliminate their loneliness with digital technologies when they feel lonely. Families are unable to establish a healthy communication for their children with special needs. In this study, the opinions and suggestions of the families of children with special needs with digital game addiction were evaluated, the problems experienced with their children were mentioned and solution suggestions were presented. The working group of the study consists of families with children with special needs. The study group of the research was 5. A total of 26 parents with children diagnosed with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), learning difficulties or mild intellectual disability who were studying in the classroom formed a total of. In this research, phenomenology, one of the qualitative research patterns, was used. When the communication of families with children with special needs with game addiction was evaluated, the participants stated that they had difficulty communicating with their children. A small part of the participants also found that their children have addictions to digital tools. In order to prevent digital game addiction, the majority of families have stated that they have imposed a ban on their children's access to digital games. In addition, families have stated that they apply the reward and punishment method to their children to stay away from digital technologies. The vast majority of the participants had children with digital game addiction, and a small number of the participants received professional support to prevent this addiction.

Failure in children's lessons has caused anger in children. The failures of children have brought with them many negative factors. Parents have stated that children tend to be violent when deprived of digital tools.

Key Words: Special education, special needs, digital technologies, digital gaming.

1. Introduction

While digital technologies and Internet environments make our lives easier in many areas, on the one hand, gaming and entertainment are an area of interest that appeals to people from almost all walks of life, reaching a wide audience as a means of communication. Today, technologies that are developing more and more every day, especially in the last 15-20 years, have taken their place in the digital-based gaming world by enriching and expanding the place of traditional, social games that closely concern children, computers and the Internet, which are moving away from street games (Horzum, 2011).

Digitally based games, which are expressed as games played with the help of synchronous (online) or asynchronous (offline) computers or different digital tools, are developed over time, more realistic graphic scenarios are written and created and appeal to people of all ages (Martinez-Garza, Clark, Killingsworth, & Adams, 2016). In addition, it can be said that children's families are an important factor in this regard, as well as rich content for children or

useful activities on digital platforms, the idea that children are not conscious individuals like their families, which is an important risk factor for digital games (Ülken and Kılınç, 2018). There are opinions that excessive behavioral use of digital games can lead to addiction (Griffiths, 2005). The behavior associated with addiction includes excessive compulsiveness, uncontrollable and mentally or physically exhausting behaviors (Mendelson and Mello, 1986). As a result, social and emotional problems are among the reasons why individuals with digital game addiction experience (Lemmens, Valkenburg and Peter Dec, 2009). In the studies conducted, it is seen that digital game addiction causes behavioral problems especially in adolescent individuals and adults. Isolation from real life, the desire to be alone, decreased school achievement of those who spend excessive time on digital gaming platforms appear as psychological and behavioral problems (Mustafaoglu and Yasaci, 2018). The American Psychiatric Association of Boston has stated that behavioral disorder is usually expressed as a destructive behavior that enters social norms (APA, 2022).

The child experiences some symptoms related to the detection of digital game addiction. These are (Parekh, 2018):

• Constantly interested in the game,

* Withdrawal symptoms (sadness, anxiety, irritability) when it is not possible to play games,

* Devoting more time to playing games to satisfy cravings and desires,

• do not fail in attempts not to play games

* Do not give up other activities,

•being uninterested in activities that have been enjoyed before to play games,

The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of gaming disorder on digital platforms version 5 (DSM-5) has been studied in detail in the research Octobers. In many different studies, adolescents who spend too much time on internet platforms experience a decrease in their academic achievement at school, they are irregular in everyday life, and they encounter negative factors in friendship relationships (Chou and Hsiao, 2000; Rideout, Foehr and Roberts, 2010).

Parents have stated that they are concerned about the impact of violent digital games and digital technologies (Berk, 2013). It is seen that parents who show negative behavior towards their children's digital games direct their children to digital games less. While there is no tendency related to addiction in the children of parents who apply active methods, it has been stated that the children of parents who apply freelance and digital platform orientation strategies have an increased tendency to addiction to digital games (Budak, 2020).

It is a situation where digital tools have an impact on children's physical development. Children who are exposed to intense computer screen during childhood face with stress, visual impairment, obesity and health problems caused by being sedentary (Karaşahin, 2021). As the ages of children get younger, the need for support they will receive from their families has also increased. October 2010, teachers should organize the trainings according to the needs of individuals with special needs who need additional support at all stages of learning (Rita Petretto, Masala and Masala, 2020). October 2015, teachers should organize the trainings according to the needs of individuals with special needs who need additional support at all stages of learning (Rita Petretto).

When the literature is examined, it has been found that there are almost no studies on digital game addiction of children with special needs. Today, it is observed that children with special

needs first eliminate their loneliness with digital technologies when they feel lonely. Families are unable to establish a healthy communication for their children with special needs.

It is thought that this study will contribute to the literature on what are the problems experienced with their children and what measures can be taken by evaluating the opinions and suggestions of the families of children with special needs with digital game addiction.

In the research, the answers to the following questions were sought;

1.What is your communication status with your children with special needs who have game/screen addiction on digital platforms?

2.What sanctions do you have to prevent your children's gaming/screen addiction? What kind of problems did you encounter in practice?

3. How do you have difficulties coping with problems against your children with game/screen addiction?

4. What are your opinions and suggestions, if any, about your children's course success status?

5.What are the situations where you have the most psychological conflicts with your children?

2. Method

2.1.The research design

In this research, phenomenology, one of the qualitative research patterns, was used. Phenomenological research is a pattern that aims to reveal these experiences in our own life by making sense of our experiences and by taking into account the phenomena that we experience in daily life but do not have a detailed and in-depth thought (Titchen and Hobson, 2005; Yıldırım and Simsek, 2006). The aim of phenomenology research is to interpret by revealing personal perceptions and experiences about a phenomenon (Creswell, 20018; Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2016). In this study, it is aimed to evaluate the views of the families of children with special needs with digital game addiction from a factual point of view.

2.2.Working Group

The working group of the study consists of families with children with special needs. The study group of the research was 5. They have formed families with children who are studying in the classroom and have been diagnosed with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), learning difficulties or mild intellectual disability. The criteria determined within the scope of the research are: 5. It is to have a child who is studying in the classroom, is gifted, has been diagnosed with learning disabilities or mild intellectual disability. In this context, the study group of the research 5. A total of 26 parents, including 11 parents with a child who is studying at the classroom level and has been diagnosed with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), 8 parents with a child diagnosed with learning disabilities and 7 parents with a child diagnosed with mild mental disability, make up the total of 26 parents.

2.3.The Process of Data Collection

In this research, phenomenology, one of the qualitative research patterns, was used. Phenomenological research is a pattern that aims to reveal these experiences in our own life by making sense of our experiences and by taking into account the phenomena that we experience in daily life but do not have a detailed and in-depth thought (Titchen and Hobson, 2005; Yıldırım and Simsek, 2006). The aim of phenomenology research is to interpret by revealing personal perceptions and experiences about a phenomenon (Creswell, 20018; Yıldırım and

Şimşek, 2016). In this study, it is aimed to evaluate the views of the families of children with special needs with digital game addiction from a factual point of view.

Table 1: Characteristics of the Parents Participating in the Study

code	Parent	Age	Job	Education	diagnosis of the child
K1	Father	30	Sales consultant	Elementary Education	ADHD
K2	Mother	40	Academician	Postgraduate	ADHD
K3	Mother	35	Teacher	University	ADHD
K4	Mother	48	Housewife	high school	Learning Disabilities
K5	Father	56	Physical Engineer	Post graduate	Mild mental disability
K6	Father	45	Civil engineer	University	Mild mental disability
K7	Father	55	Trade	University	ADHD
K8	Mother	35	Tourism	high school	Learning Disabilities
K9	Mother	47	Staff	high school	Mild mental disability
K10	Mother	29	Teacher	University	ADHD
K11	Mother	26	Housewife	high school	ADHD
K12	Father	37	Academician	postgraduate	Mild mental disability
K13	Father	29	Teacher	University	Learning Disabilities
K14	Father	35	Civil engineer	University	Learning Disabilities
K15	Father	60	Academician	Post graduate	ADHD
K16	Mother	54	Housewife	high school	Learning Disabilities
K17	Mother	43	Staff	high school	Learning Disabilities
K18	Father	27	Teacher	University	Mild mental disability
K19	Mother	35	Housewife	elementary education	ADHD
K20	Father	39	Academician	postgraduate	ADHD
K21	Mother	35	Housewife	high school	Learning Disabilities
K22	Baba	58	Trade	high school	Mild mental disability
K23	Mother	60	Teacher	University	Mild mental disability
K24	Mother	42	Store manager	University	ADHD
K25	Mother	29	Teacher	University	Learning Disabilities
K26	Father	35	Jeweller	University	ADHD

14 of the participants participating in the research are women and 12 male participants. When the education levels of the participants were examined, 11 participants were university graduates, 8 participants were high school graduates, 3 participants were doctoral graduates, 2 participants were master's graduates and 2 participants were elementary school graduates. When the occupations of the participants are evaluated, 6 teachers, 1 jeweler, 1 sales consultant, 1 store manager, 1 jeweler, 5 housewives, 4 academicians, 1 physics engineer, 2 civil engineers, 2 people trade, 2 people personnel consist of the participants. the participants were examined, 5 people in the age range of 25-30 years, 6 people in the age range of 31-36 years, 4 people in the age range of 37-42 years, 4 people in the age range of 43-48 years and 7 people 49 and older constituted the participants of the study.

   2.4.Data Analysis

Criterion sampling method, one of the purposeful sampling methods, was used in the study. Criterion sampling consists of people, events, or situations that bear the characteristics determined by the sample group in accordance with the purpose of the research (Büyüköztürk V.d., 2016). Creating a sample based on maximum diversity allows to Decipher whether there

is a common or shared phenomenon among the diverse situations and to reveal the different dimensions of the problem according to this diversity. In the criterion sampling method, the situations that meet the predetermined criteria are investigated (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2016). The analysis processes were started by giving certain codes to the participants of the study, for example, by coding them as participant (K1). It was tried to ensure the internal validity of the research by making continuous citations to the participants. The basic criteria determined by the researcher in accordance with the selection of the group determined for the research; it was stated that parents' children should play digital games. It was tried to ensure the internal validity of the research by making continuous citations to the participants.

3. Findings and Interpretation

26 Families participated in the research and stated their opinions and suggestions.

Table 2: Communication of Families with Children with Digital Game Addiction

Theme	N	%
Difficulty communicating	12	46,15
Digital addiction	7	26.92
Not wanting to do homework	5	19.23
Communication for basic needs	2	7,69
Total	26	100

When Table 1 was examined, 12 people (46.15%) stated that they had difficulty communicating the most in line with the participants' views on digital game addiction. The least part of the participants (7.69%) 2 people also stated their children's dependence on digital technologies. The opinions of the participants are given below:

K3: 'I'm having trouble communicating. The child's reactions are quite a lot. He just wants to play online games at home.'

K8: 'Communication is not very good, he is moving forward as if he has dedicated his life to the phone.'

K15: 'He just doesn't like doing homework. He can't quit a computer game when he has homework.'

K3: 'He only talks to us for personal needs.'

Table 3: The rules applied by the family to prevent digital game addiction

Theme	N	%
Prohibition of Access	9	34.6
Different Activities	7	26.9
Time Limit	6	23
Reward and Punishment	4	15.3
Total	26	100

When the table was examined, the vast majority of the participants (34.6) 9 people stated that they had applied a ban on access to digital games for their children. A small part of the participants also expressed the opinion that they applied the reward and punishment method to their children to stay away from digital games.

K3: 'I have restricted access to the Internet. But it didn't feel like enough. He even comes to us again about communication. And when we turn off the Internet, it interferes with our phones. If he doesn't, he'll scream and scream.'

K17:' The computer on which he plays games should be banned.'

K1: 'I try to play mind games, I try to get him to read books, I try to direct him to other activities, but I will be successful for a short time.'

K20: 'I know you can say that we will play more beautiful games together and reduce it to 3 hours a day'

K6: 'I use the internet as a reward'

Table 4: Methods of coping with problems against children with Digital Game addiction

Theme	N	%
Digital gaming/screen addict	9	34.6
The unsolvable problem	7	26.9
Uncontrollable anger	6	23
The desire to be alone	3	11.5
Psychological support	1	3.8
Total	26	100

When the table was examined, the vast majority of the participants stated that 9 (34.6%) were addicted to digital games. In addition, only 1 (3.8%) of the participants believed that they received professional support.

K25:' He is in front of a computer or a smartphone at every opportunity. If we let him, he'll always spend his day there in front of the screen.'

K6: 'I'm trying to take precautions on my own for a child who is addicted to gaming-screen. He spends most of his time playing online games'

K2: 'We were faced with an unsolvable problem. Even though we tried solutions, we didn't get any results.'

K19: 'There are emotional states of crying, anger and anger when dropping the phone tablet .'

K5: 'We have a hard time sending them to school. We even have a hard time getting it out.'

K1:' Psychological professional support was sought.'

Table 5: Children's course achievement status and responsibilities

Theme	N	%
No awareness of responsibility	8	30,7
Failing in classes	7	26,9
Addicted to screen/gaming	6	23,0
Not doing homework	5	19,2
Total	26	100

When the table was examined, 8 people (30.7%) stated that the responsibility consciousness of the children of the families with digital game addiction did not develop. At least some of the participants also stated that they suffered from children not doing homework.

K3: 'He never studies for his classes. If I push too hard, it works a little. He never studies individually in his classes.'

K25: 'He is not active in his classes at all, he does not fulfill his responsibilities'

K11: 'Course success is low because he is addicted to digital games.'

K7: 'He never studies, he always wants to play games, he cries when he does lessons.'

K21: 'He doesn't like doing homework at all.'

Table 6: The situations in which you have the most psychological conflicts with your children

Theme	N	%
When deprived of a digital tool	13	50
Difficulty in setting boundaries	5	19,2
Anger management	4	15,3
Setting goals for the future	4	15,3
Total	26	100

When the table was examined, half of the participants stated that they had problems with the child when they were deprived of digital tools with their children, and at least half of the participants had difficulty in maintaining control of the EC about their children and setting goals about the child's future.

K14: 'I have a lot of problems when I take the phone, tablet out of his hand, even when I take the charger away from him.'

K19: 'I have great difficulties when I don't allow him to use digital tools and fulfill his responsibilities.'

K2: 'I have big problems with the child when I limit his use of technological tools.'

K17: 'He acts angry when he stays away from technology.'

K24: 'My child does not want to choose a profession related to the future because of a computer game. He has no thoughts for the future.'

4. Conclusion, Discussion and Suggestions

In this study, the views of families with special needs children on digital game addiction were examined and interpreted. In this direction, the problems experienced by families with children with digital game addiction have been identified and information has been provided on the measures that can be taken.

When the communication of families with children with special needs with game addiction was evaluated, the participants stated that they had difficulty communicating with their children. A small part of the participants also found that their children have addictions to digital tools.

In a similar study, it was found that while games with digital violent content trigger violent and aggressive behavior, children who spend a long time in digital games also experience addiction. Digital games that turn into addiction have had negative effects on the child's life. From school life to social life, even in family relationships, game addiction affects children in a negative way (Uzunoglu, 2021).

When the rules applied by the family to prevent digital game addiction were evaluated, the vast majority of the participants stated that their children were banned from accessing digital games, and at least some of the participants stated that they applied the reward and punishment method to their children to stay away from digital technologies. In a study, they stated that parents' opinions about digital games are generally negative. Health professionals have emphasized that digital games will have a negative impact on children's health and social relationships and lesson achievement (Durmaz and Ulukol, 2022).

Regarding the methods of coping with problems against children with digital game addiction, it was emphasized that the vast majority of the participants' children had digital game addiction, and a small part of the participants received professional support to prevent this addiction. In another study, parents stated that they take precautions about the content of digital games and stated that expert support related to digital games is absolutely necessary (Söğüt, 2020).

When the children's lesson achievement situations and responsibilities were examined, they emphasized that the responsibility consciousness of the participating families did not develop in the children with digital game addiction. All kinds of results that increase anxiety, affect achievement in lessons, cause time loss or cause jealousy provide important clues about the children's condition (Yücel, 2019).

When the situations where you have the most psychological conflicts with your children were examined, half of the participants stated that they had problems with the child when they were deprived of digital tools with their children, and at least half of the participants had difficulty controlling anger about their children and setting goals about the child's future. In a study, they emphasized that digital games increase anxiety, affect the level of course achievement and that they should be more careful in the face of online games (Yücel, 2019).

In this study, only the opinions of the families were examined. In other studies, children's opinions can be evaluated and opinions and suggestions about digital games can be developed. The number of participants in this study is limited. In another study, the number of participants can be expanded further.

In addition, the opinions of families with special needs children were examined and interpreted in the study. In other studies, digital game addiction related to children with normal development can be examined.

This study is a qualitative study. Another study can be done quantitatively. In this study, the opinions of families regarding digital games were determined and interpreted. Opinions and suggestions of different participants may be included in other studies to be conducted. The number of participants in the study is limited, and a similar study can be done by reaching more participants in other studies.

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