Identifying the effective factors in students' pathological use of virtual space
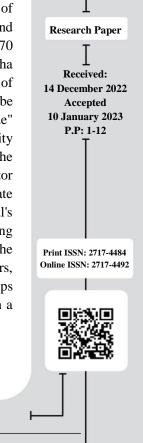
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Abstract

This research aimed to identify the influential factors in female students' pathological use of cyberspace. The statistical population of the research was 11,171 female students in the second period of secondary schools in the first district of Ardabil city. From among this population, 370 people were selected as a sample using the Karjesi and Morgan sample size table with alpha (0.05) based on the opinions of managers and teachers. Then, based on the two indicators of hours of virtual space use and pathological use, The questionnaire of 183 people could be analyzed. The research method was a descriptive correlation. To collect data, a "researcher-made" questionnaire was used. Experts confirmed the validity of the questionnaire, and its reliability coefficient was obtained using Cronbach's alpha by conducting a preliminary study (0.97). The data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical methods (exploratory factor analysis). The results showed that 12 factors (low-income family functioning, lack of intimate and friendly relationships, social isolation, seeking diversity, the anonymity of the individual's identity, religious beliefs, low self-confidence, duration and type of use of virtual space, feeling Loneliness, academic problems, low cost and depression, and social anxiety) in total; 73% of the variance of female students' pathological use of virtual space is explained. Among these factors, weak family functioning with a value of (11.461) and lack of sincere and friendly relationships with a value of (9.049) have the highest share, and depression and social anxiety factors with a value of (3.520) have the lowest share.

Keywords: Pathological use, virtual space, students, girls

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Introduction

The progress of science and technology has made human society face two parallel worlds: the natural and virtual worlds. In the virtual world, a person encounters a land with different cultures and without borders (Afshani et al., 2016). In fact, with the advent of the age of communication and information, as well as the phenomenon of globalization, we have witnessed tremendous changes in all aspects of human life, and a clear example of these changes can be pointed to the abnormal use of virtual space by users and, consequently, social networks. According to the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology report in Iran, cyberspace users are increasing significantly (Mousavi, 2019). Given that the virtual space has found a special place in the structure of social life today and is a phenomenon that has had many effects on its various aspects, including the most basic social institution - the family; The purpose of this research is to identify the influential factors in students' pathological use of virtual space; And it has been tried to answer this fundamental question, what are the influential factors in students' pathological use of virtual space?

Methodology

The current research is cross-sectional in terms of its practical purpose, the method of collecting descriptive information (correlation), and based on the time course of the research. The statistical population of the current research includes all female students of the second secondary level in one district of Ardabil city. It is known that they were studying in the academic year 2013-2014, and according to the latest statistics, their number reached 11171. In the first step, based on the opinion of school administrators and teachers, 370 students used the table to determine the sample of Morgan and Georgesi with alpha) 0.05) were selected as a sample by the non-probability sampling method. In the second step, based on the two indicators of hours of use of virtual space and its pathological use, the questionnaire of 183 people was analyzed. According to the methods of information gathering, the research method, and its objectives, the data collection tool is a researcher-made questionnaire used to identify the influential factors in students' pathological use of cyberspace.

Results
According to the students, the number 12 factors (small scale) can explain and investigate the variance of the pathological use of virtual space to 73%. According to the research literature and its background, these factors are named: factor 1) low-income family functioning, factor 2 (lack of sincere and friendly communication, factor 3 (social isolation), factor 4 (diversity), factor 5 (anonymity of the individual's identity), factor 6 (religious beliefs), factor 7 (low self-confidence), factor 8 (duration and type of use of virtual space, Factor 9 (feeling of

loneliness), factor 10 (educational problems), factor 11 (low cost) and factor 12 (social anxiety) have been named. The factor with the lowest contribution in explaining the variance is the "social anxiety factor," with a contribution of 3.520.

Discussion and conclusion

This research has been conducted to identify the influential factors in students' pathological use of virtual space, and using the factor analysis method, 12 factors with an explained variance percentage of 73% were extracted.

According to the research findings, it can be concluded that nowadays, virtual communication significantly contributes to the relationships and conversations of the generation of teenagers and young people of different societies. This role has become more prominent with the expansion of social networks and numerous media messages and has affected people's lives in all its dimensions. Virtual space is considered a valuable tool in nature, which has fast information networks with countless information sources that can be misused An extreme of them, drowning in virtual space and separating man from nature and its realities turns all the benefits of virtual space and the opportunities created by it into harm. According to the above and previous research, we can support the claim that the study of abnormal and pathological use of cyberspace by students and the identification of the factors affecting it is a new research approach that needs to be explored and discussed. It can open up new horizons for the education of students to learn the knowledge and skills of its application in daily life and how to use it correctly and scientifically for the families of students and those involved in the educational organizations of any society. The noteworthy point in this research and its distinction and specificity compared to the previous and mentioned research is the simultaneous examination of twelve factors of weak family functioning, lack of sincere and friendly relationships, social isolation, submissiveness, identity anonymity, religious beliefs, and trust. Low breath, virtual space, loneliness, academic problems, low cost, and depression and anxiety among teenagers who use virtual space to an unhealthy extent.

Reference

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