

Online Social Network Sites for K-12 Students: Socialization or Loneliness

By

Serhat Bahadır KERT

Department of Computer Education and Instructional Technologies,
Yildiz Technical University, İstanbul, Turkey

Abstract

Social Network Sites (SNSs) are online environments used by many of internet users from different ages for years. These environments, which support inter-individual communication with multimedia sharing and multiuser online games, are updated and shaped in accordance with the needs of individuals who have to cope with the tensions of daily life. The main purpose of a SNS is to provide an online social sharing and communication platform, however, it is still ambiguous whether there is a significant correlation between the tendency to use social networks and loneliness. Loneliness has long been associated with excessive use of the Internet, however, the use of SNSs has caused internet to gain a new role related to social interaction. In this study, SNS usage preferences of 170 high school students were surveyed and some relations between these preferences and students' loneliness level were analyzed. Students' loneliness level was measured by means of UCLA loneliness scale developed by Russell, Peplau and Cutrona (1980). The results revealed that there was a negative correlation between the number of user's friends on SNS and the UCLA loneliness scale points.

Keywords: Social network sites (SNSs), Social interaction, online learning and interaction.