

Case report / Olgu sunumu**THREE DIFFERENT SPECIFIC INTERNET ADDICTION CASES FROM THE INTERNET ADDICTION CLINIC OF A TRAINING AND RESEARCH HOSPITAL\*****Ömer ŞENORMANCI,<sup>1\*\*</sup> Ramazan KONKAN,<sup>1</sup> Oya GÜÇLÜ,<sup>1</sup> Güliz ŞENORMANCI<sup>1</sup>**

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**ABSTRACT**

Internet use had been distinguished in two categories such as 'specific' and 'generalized' according to the intention. In the specific type, internet is used for a particular purpose such as online sex, gaming, gambling, stock tracking or shopping. Motivational interviewing is important in the treatment of Internet addiction as it is in all behavioral dependencies. This case study includes three different patients with specific internet addiction who presented to the Internet Addiction Clinic of Bakirkoy Training and Research Hospital for Psychiatry, Neurology and Neurosurgery.

**Key words:** specific internet addiction, motivational interviewing, cognitive behavioral therapy, medical treatment.

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**BİR EĞİTİM ARAŞTIRMA HASTANESİ İNTERNET BAĞIMLILIĞI POLİKLİNİĞİNE BAŞVURAN ÜÇ FARKLI ÖZGÜL İNTERNET BAĞIMLILIĞI OLGUSU****ÖZET**

İnternet kullanımı, kullanım amacına göre 'özümlü' ve 'yaygın' olarak iki gruba ayrılmıştır. Özümlü tipte internet, internette seks, oyun, kumar, borsa takibi, alışveriş gibi özel amaçlar doğrultusunda kullanılır. Motivasyonel görüşme tüm davranışsal bağımlılıklarda olduğu gibi internet bağımlılığının tedavisinde de önemlidir. Bu olgu sunumlarında Bakırköy Ruh Sağlığı ve Hastalıkları Eğitim ve Araştırma Hastanesi bünyesindeki internet bağımlılığı polikliniğine başvuran üç farklı özümlü tipteki hasta sunuldu.

**Anahtar sözcükler:** Özümlü internet bağımlılığı, motivasyonel görüşme, bilişsel davranışçı terapi, tıbbi tedavi

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**INTRODUCTION**

While internet addiction is still controversial, it has been suggested to be classified in the 'Other conditions that may be a focus of clinical

attention' in the DSM-V diagnostic system.<sup>1</sup> Although the prevalence of internet addiction varies considerably across cultures, it has been

reported to be up to 9% in Europe.<sup>2</sup> Davis distinguishes pathological internet use in two categories such as 'specific' and 'generalized' according to the intention. In the specific type, internet is used for a particular purpose such as online sex, gaming, gambling, stock tracking or shopping. Generalized pathological internet use, on the other hand, involves overuse of

internet, either for several purposes or wasting too much online with no direct purpose.<sup>3</sup>

This case study includes three different patients with specific internet addiction who presented to the Internet Addiction Clinic of Bakirkoy Training and Research Hospital for Psychiatry, Neurology and Neurosurgery.

### **CASE 1. THE INTERNET SHOPPING ADDICTION**

AG is a 40 year-old, married man as father of two, and he owns his textile business. The patient, who started to use the internet 17 years ago, came to our clinic with the complaint of being on the internet at least seven hours a day, especially in recent years. His Internet use was mainly at home or his workplace. He had continuous access to the Internet through a laptop computer and a smartphone. Each time he spent at least three hours on the Internet, during which he was reviewing some items on the shopping sites in extensive detail at least for

two hours and finally feeling relief after make purchases in large amounts. The patient indicated that once he purchased 15 sun-glasses and 20 watches, all in the same day. Despite showing characteristics of adult attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and scoring high on the screening test for adult ADHD, he was not diagnosed with ADHD following psychiatric examination and evaluation of his detailed medical history. Psychiatric examination revealed no disorders other than an online-shopping addiction.

### **CASE 2. THE INTERNET GAME ADDICTION**

HOE is a 16 year-old, 11<sup>th</sup> grade student, and he lives with his mother, father and brother. The patient presented to our clinic at the request of his family. He was addicted to an interactive online game called 'Massively multiplayer online role-playing game (MMORPG)', involving thousands of people at the same time. He used to play over 15 hours a day. He had been using the Internet for the past seven years, during which he reached to an addictive level within last three years. He had started to go to an internet café instead of school. He kept failing his classes and had many absentee days but stayed in school by his parents' initiating. His detailed history showed his physically and verbally offensive responses to his family's at-

tempts to cut off the internet connection. He was hospitalized in a private psychiatric hospital twice in the last two years, one for 10 days and one for 12 days for treatment of his internet addiction. Before contacting us, he had been on extended-release risperidone, oral risperidone, atomoxetine, olanzapine, naltrexone and aripiprazole prescribed to control his internet use. When he was referred to us, he said that nothing was more important in his life than the internet game, and he was ready to face up all challenges and he did not want any treatment. After a psychiatric examination, he was diagnosed with internet game addiction and conduct disorder.

### **CASE 3. THE INTERNET GAMBLING AND SEX ADDICTION**

BC is a 33 year-old, high school graduate, 10 years married with two children, unemployed for 3.5 years. He presented to our clinic at the request of his wife. She told us that her husband had been coming home late or not at all showing up for the last four years, and he had been neglecting her and their children, and she thought that he was involved in extramarital affairs and that she could only provide for their

family with the help of their relatives. During the interview, the patient told that he had an Internet sex and gambling addiction that he couldn't control, which started four years ago. He indicated that he left the house for work, but instead he went to an internet café. In the last two years, he moved into a small rental shop that costed him 200 TL (approximately € 90) per month, where he spent his entire day busy on

the internet gambling and sex sites. His family and friends were not aware of this place. He had lost over 50000 TL (approximately € 20.000) and made up by borrowing that amount

from his family. His psychiatric diagnosis is internet sex and gambling addiction in addition antisocial personality traits.

## DISCUSSION

Opinions differ on specific type internet addiction. Some researchers argue that specific type internet users are dependent on the content, and suggest that their dependence would continue regardless of internet access. Motivational interviewing is important in the treatment of internet addiction as it is in all behavioral dependencies.<sup>4</sup>

Case 1 was already motivated for treatment and he expressed that he was ready for the challenges of treatment by saying "I've waited for years for this clinic to open". Having received high scores on the adult attention deficiency disorder scale, and due to the detection of Adult ADD characteristics from his medical history, bupropion 150 mg/day was initiated, and then increased to 300 mg/day.<sup>5,6</sup> We also started cognitive behavioral therapy sessions,<sup>7</sup> mainly behavioral therapy. After eight sessions of cognitive behavioral therapy, once every two weeks, he was able to take his Internet use under control. He has been followed by our clinic for strengthening therapy sessions and evaluation of his medical treatment.

Case 2 was a young patient who received a prior ineffective treatment, leading to several side effects such as EPS and weight gain.

Therefore, we did not initiate any medical treatment. Although he was rejecting the medication, he came to the sessions. Motivational interviewing techniques were used to ensure his participation. However, the patient discontinued therapy after three sessions.

Case 3 accepted to continue with the therapy although he presented at his wife's request. Due to his Internet gambling and sexual addiction, a treatment with fluvoxamine 100 mg/day, an efficient treatment for pathological gambling and spectrum of obsessive-compulsive disorders,<sup>8</sup> was started and the dose was gradually increased. Simultaneous cognitive-behavioral therapy focused particularly on reference errors compelling him to gambling, the automatic thoughts driving him to internet sex, and permission giving thoughts as a result of internet sex. Situational triggers were identified, and ways to avoid them were addressed. The dose of fluvoxamine dose was increased to 300 mg/day, and naltrexone 50 mg/day was added<sup>9</sup> as some difficulties were experienced during his cognitive-behavioral therapy. After 16 sessions of cognitive-behavioral therapy, once every two to three weeks, he was able to control his internet use.

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