

The Impact of Sharing Accounts on Electronic Chance / Bet Gaming Platforms in Social Media on Gambling Behavior: A Research in the City of Istanbul

Sosyal Medyada Elektronik Şans/Bahis Oyun Platformlarında Hesap Paylaşımının Kumar Davranışına Etkisi: İstanbul Kentinde Bir Araştırma

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Araştırma Makalesi/Research Article

Abstract

Keywords:

electronic betting/
gaming platforms,
social media, gambling
behavior, gambling
addiction, gambling
disorder

Any development in the technological field can lead to changes in the standard of living and habits of individuals. These changes can sometimes have both negative and positive consequences. As a result of this transformation in the technological field, the need to reevaluate the concepts of habit and addiction has arisen. The concept of place attachment and time has disappeared for the display of gambling behavior, and it has become more accessible with electronic luck/betting platforms and the mobile applications that are part of these platforms. This study aims to examine the impact of this more accessible state on gambling/betting behavior. The research examined the relationship between electronic chance/betting platforms and the social media sharing of these platforms and gambling/betting behavior that has emerged as a result of technological developments. In addition, the study calculated the percentage of gambling-addicted individuals within the borders of Istanbul province in the sample size. While determining the sample for the study, a non-probability quota sampling was chosen. The scale was applied to 106 participants. The study itself has some limitations. The study includes individuals who reside in Istanbul, have an account(s) on social media, and have gambled/betted in the past 12 months. The applied scale consists of eight parts. Based on the information obtained, the percentage of gambling addicts in Istanbul was determined to be 11.3%. In addition, a significant relationship was found between following the social media accounts of electronic chance/betting games platforms by those who play betting/chance games and their level of gambling addiction. No association was found between gender, income level, and education level and gambling addiction. All data were analyzed using SPSS 22 software. All scale results are included in the research section.

Öz

Anahtar Kelimeler:

elektronik bahis/şans
oyunları platformları,
sosyal medya, kumar
oyun davranışı,
kumar bağımlılığı,
kumar oynama
bozukluğu

Teknolojik alanda yaşanan her gelişme ile bireyin yaşam standartlarında ve alışkanlıklarında bazı değişimler meydana gelmektedir. Bu değişimler, kimi zaman olumlu yönde olabileceği gibi kimi zamanda olumsuz sonuçlar içerebilmektedir. Teknolojik alanlarda yaşanan bu dönüşümün sonucunda, alışkanlık ve bağımlılık kavramlarını yeniden değerlendirmek mecburiyeti ortaya çıkmıştır. Kumar oynama davranışının sergilenmesi için mekâna bağlılık ve zaman kavramı ortadan kalkmış, elektronik şans/bahis platformları ve bu platformlara ait mobil uygulamalar ile söz konusu davranışın sergilenmesi, daha erişilebilir hale gelmiştir. Çalışma kapsamında söz konusu olan bu, daha erişilebilir halin, kumar/bahis oynama davranışı üzerine etkilerinin incelenmesi amaçlanmıştır. Bu çalışma ile; yaşanan teknolojik gelişmeler ışığında ortaya çıkan, elektronik şans/bahis platformları ve bu platformların sosyal medya paylaşımları ile kumar/bahis oynama davranışı arasındaki ilişki yapılan araştırma sonucu incelenmiştir. Ayrıca çalışma kapsamında İstanbul ili sınırları dahilinde kumar bağımlısı olan birey yüzdesi, örneklem boyutu dahilinde hesaplanmıştır. Araştırmanın örneklemi belirlenirken olasılıklı olmayan, kota örnekleme tercih edilmiştir. Ölçek 106 katılımcıya uygulanmıştır. Araştırmanın kendi içerisinde bazı sınırlamaları bulunmaktadır. Bu araştırma İstanbul ilinde ikamet eden, sosyal medya hesabı/hesapları olan ve son 12 ayda şans/bahis oyunu oynayan kişileri kapsamaktadır. Uygulanan ölçek 8 bölümden oluşmaktadır. Elde edilen bilgiler ışığında İstanbul'da kumar bağımlısı oranı %11,3 olarak tespit edilmiştir. Ayrıca elektronik şans/bahis oyunları platformlarına ait sosyal medya resmi hesaplarının, bahis/şans oyunu oynayanlar tarafından takip edilmesi ile kumar bağımlılık düzeyleri arasında anlamlı bir ilişki bulunmuştur. Cinsiyet, gelir düzeyi ve eğitim seviyesi ile kumar bağımlılığı arasında herhangi bir ilişki bulunamamıştır. Tüm veriler SPSS 22 yazılımı ile analiz edilmiştir. Ölçeğe ait tüm sonuçlar araştırma bölümünde yer almaktadır. Elinizdeki bu çalışmaya, yapılan araştırmanın yanı sıra, söz konusu kavramların literatürel bilgileri de eklenmiştir. Elde edilen tüm veriler ile söz konusu kavramların geçtiği alanlara bilimsel katkı sağlanmak amaçlanmaktadır.

Başvuru Tarihi: 14.04.2022

Yayına Kabul Tarihi: 17.05.2022

Kuş, Ö. A., Uğurlu Akbaş, Ö. (2022). The impact of sharing accounts on electronic chance / bet gaming platforms in social media on gambling behavior: a research in the city of Istanbul. *Kastamonu İletişim Araştırmaları Dergisi (KİAD)*, (8), 229-247.

Introduction

The development of technology brings about various changes and transformations of traditional methods in communication studies. In particular, with the establishment of digital platforms in people's daily lives, this process turns out to be a necessity for companies and brands, in addition to the increasing importance of social media. Looking at what, how and when brands share in their communication activities on social media from this point of view, content becomes an area that needs to be professionally managed.

Content management entails designing the texts, photographs, videos and the various animations shared on digital platforms according to the characteristics of the masses addressed by the brands. The shared content certainly varies according to the dynamics of social media, the needs and expectations of the mass, and the appeal of the posts. This study includes inferences about how the sharing, strategy, and content used on betting sites target and appeal to social media users. As a result of this shift in technology, changes have occurred in the context of habit and addiction. There is no need for dependence on places and times for gambling, with the brands that own electronic luck and betting platforms, it is more accessible to track behavior. Moreover, targeting gambling and betting behavior with content shared by the brands that own electronic luck and betting platforms stands out as an additional factor.

The first chapter includes the definitions of social media posts, content management, and gambling behavior with the assessments of the context of habit, addiction, types of addiction, and gambling addiction. The following chapter includes the research findings on the effects of social media posts on virtual betting websites on gambling behavior.

In the research part of the study, a scale consisting of eight parts was applied to 106 participants. While determining the sample, non-probability, quota sampling was preferred. Quota sampling was preferred because the study covers Istanbul province. While applying the scale, no restriction was made regarding age (up to 18 years), gender, occupation, educational level, line of business, etc. No demographic or social distinction was made. The eight sections that set up the scale measure whether the participants have played betting/games of chance in the last 12 months, whether they have an account(s) on social media, and whether they reside within the borders of Istanbul, specifically in the consent form. The fifth part includes demographic characteristics such as income level, education level, gender, etc. If the consent form is not accepted or the necessary conditions for the study are not met in the second, third and fourth sections, the survey will end in the corresponding section. The sixth and seventh sections cover the South Oaks Gambling Screening Inventory and measure various information about gambling behavior. The final section aims to measure user preferences regarding the use of social media, notifications of electronic betting/gambling platforms, social media, groups, and mobile applications. The scale applied to the participants consists of a total of 30 questions. The research basically aims to investigate:

- the relationship between following the social media accounts of electronic chance/

betting games platforms by those who play betting/chance games, and their gambling addiction levels,

- the relationship between those who follow groups or individuals who share coupons for betting predictions and their level of gambling addiction.

Content Management in Social Media and Gambling Behavior

Lifestyles are changing as technologies reshape consumer behavior and habits of consumption. This situation has become frequent and has made the continuity of change inevitable. In addition, life-dominating contexts such as mass culture, capitalism, and post-modernism have transfigured individuals' demands, searches, and relations with simply all of their thoughts and behavior patterns. The advent of the internet, the incorporation of Web 2.0 into our daily lives, and the development of mobile technologies that allow for instant interaction while reducing reliance on local resources have all contributed to the rise of social media.

Social Media Sharing and Content Management

Social media is basically based on the various posts of individuals and groups in the frame of a network and the interaction between these posts and other participants. There are a variety of social media definitions. By referring to the definition of Drury, who emphasized the basic qualities of the context, it is possible to define social media as an online source which is used to post videos, photos, texts, ideas, humor, gossip, news, etc. by individuals (Drury, 2008, p. 274). In today's world, every new social media tool that achieves permanence brings constant change to the definition of the context. It is no doubt that technological opportunities enable these changes. The following chapter will include the context of social media, and basic features of content management in social media will be mentioned, as well as classifications of social media tools.

Social media platforms' engagement dates back to the late 20th century. The networks founded at that time, sixdegrees.com, classmates.com and lunarstorm.se, failed to catch on. Engagement of such applications as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube in the 21st century has been a turning point for social media tools and reshaping users' habits. According to the results of a research named "Digital Around the World in 2020" published by We Are Social in January 2020, there are 3.8 billion social media users worldwide and 54 million users in Turkey (We Are Social, 2020). Social media differs from traditional media in several aspects and makes progress with different methods and styles compulsory. Communication actions taken by brands into consideration keep the several strategies updated and take action in both social media and content management.

When the target group is asked to make a communication work through digital platforms, it is obvious that the traditional areas must be considered. with the target group by posting with the right method, tools, and strategies on social media has become more important as time goes by. The interactivity, which is one of the main features of social media, is based on brands' or companies' strategies pursued by the evaluation

of the feedback and by listening to the groups. When a social media post is shared, a necessity for content management with the right action plans has emerged in addition to companies' and brands' active and fast usage. Content management includes the planning of which target group will be addressed and how to keep the attention and interest high with which kinds of posts. According to Kotler, Kartajaya, & Setiawan (2017, p. 167), it is a "marketing approach that aims to create interesting, appropriate, and beneficial content for a clearly determined target group, to host exterior content, to establish and support the content so that it aims to create conversations about the content".

In this sense, one of the most important factors in the field of content management in social media is to know the target group's specialties and to act accordingly. Which texts, which visuals, videos, or stories can make us take our target group's attention? What do we want to share? What kind of a message do we want to deliver? These questions create the basis of content management in social media. The strategies that will be built on these questions enable the progress of meaning, perception, and interaction in a targeted way. Recently, it has been admitted that content is composed of texts, videos, photos, and GIFs. However, rapid development in technology shows that different types might be added to these items in time.

Brands are characterized in social media posts with brand positioning, and appropriate discourse, visuals, texts, photos, and videos of how the brand should look and be perceived are shared. Another factor at this point is to be able to address the emotions of the target group during the creation and establishment of the content and to be able to maintain brand visibility with attraction by creating a connection between the group and the brand. Consequently, the shift of the content management utilized in social media to communication based on loyalty brings the possibility of the target group to prefer services and products and to buy them again and again. At this juncture, it must not be neglected; "What makes the content on social media attractive is the content that can be accessed on demand" (Kotler et al., 2017, p. 168). In other words, the customer chooses the content whenever and wherever s/he wants to consume it.

One of the most important points in social media content management and getting the attention of the target group is to follow the agenda and have the skill to integrate the updates. Besides, storytelling is seen as a useful tactic that is used by brands in their content often. Storytelling makes a difference to the brand and the message it delivers and maintains retention and memorability. From the perspective of social media management, when individuals feel close to the brands' contents, a sincerer communication process can be mentioned. This includes criteria including building sincerity and trust, which makes it easier for the target group to follow the brand's profile or the brand's posts. In other words, asking for the target group's opinion, sharing the updates with them, and using sincere language and wording play an important part in the likability of the contents.

Another factor that must be taken into consideration for content management in social media is the content's consistency and stability. Contents which are designed appropriate to a company or brand's identity can be evaluated as an important factor

for stability in raising the brand's worth. Contents need to be delivered as visuals or texts, to involve absolute quality, and be chosen appropriately for the brand's image. The message desired to be delivered maintains accurate information and information transfer by being posted with a clear language that will avoid misunderstanding. This information that needs to be adjusted through needs also has a power to cause a viral effect when it is qualified enough to be shared. Thus, it reaches more people and it makes the update seen by many more people possible. At this point, the demandable features of the content become vital in reaching wide groups and creating an agenda on social media. Saruhan (2018) underlies the specific titles on creating content strategy; "it is possible to order these as: specifying the target, defining the target group, specifying the brand's voice, edition of the placement on the platforms, making a calendar of posts and content, planning of how many posts to be shared, determination of ideal posting days and hours, and measurement" (Saruhan, 2018, pp. 50-60).

Content management in social media brings the feature that maintains the digital repetition and trust, gets support from the brand's advocates in crisis, and brings the feature of coming to mind first. In digital marketing strategies, companies or brands can develop interaction with their target groups with various methods. These can result in attracting visitors to a company or brand by using social media management and email marketing with various online PR and reputation tools, from search engine advertising to PPC advertising and search engine optimization.

When all these strategies are combined during content management on social media, they may constitute a meaningful whole. Getting feedback from social media users, managing their complaints, timing announcements and the introduction of new services correctly, and being sensitive to customer satisfaction principles are the first priorities in content creation. of creative and entertaining content towards social media users, usage of family messages, customers' encounter with personalized messages that make them feel special, coupons, raffles, and scoring channel further purchase behavior at the same time. Besides, according to the own dynamics of social media, usage of hashtags (#) and emojis, the size of the design, and the frequency of sharing content are the factors that require focus on the title of content management.

When these features are taken into consideration, the posts, strategies, and content used on betting websites enable one to make a deduction about how they target and affect social media users. Officially online luck/betting games platforms such as Bilyoner, Nesine, Misli, and Tuttur share various posts in accordance with their platform's concept and dynamics in addition to their active existence on social media platforms. In these posts, they maintain sustainable communication with the target group, so it aims to strengthen the brand image and to fully contact the consumer (the bettor) in every area, including technical support, crisis communication, customer satisfaction, etc. Besides, these electronic betting platforms inform the customer about competitions to be bet on, such as football, basketball, tennis, Formula 1, etc., by sharing information about promotions and campaigns. This information generally consists of match time, competition rates, injured or penalized players that are connected to the betting game. Followers of the accounts

who are also customers or potential customers are subjected to many messages with specific content during the day, with regular periods. Sharing content with the customer in repetition aims to make the existing customer take action. These tactics, articulated digitally with today's marketing strategies without drifting away from the traditional marketing mind, also target the consumers/users to make the account stay on their agenda. Wu (2017) expresses this process as "if it takes attention when the audience's perception is ready for the marketing message or when the audience needs to buy the product and creates brand awareness, a demand could be created in the consumption society" (Wu, 2017, p. 306). Apparently, the important point is to maintain the creativity, encouragement, and motivation to act. There can be mutual communication between these accounts' posts and the followers with the posts themselves and the comments on these posts. This type of communication, if it is done well, contributes to the rise of customer satisfaction and, owing to this, it also makes a contribution to directly strengthening brand loyalty among consumers.

It is remarkable that in the electronic luck/betting games platform accounts' posts the content, the correspondence of the language with the brand image and timing is conducted with a specific tactic. For instance, in the Twitter posts (tweets) of Bilyoner, it is remarkable that the tweets are posted with significant time planning. The account shares the time, rates, and publishing status of the matches with a graphic visual with the followers periodically, that is, in more than one-hour intervals. When the language is observed through one of Bilyoner's posts, "*#LaLigainBilyoner, PLAY AND WATCH LIVE. Atletico, the leader in the away game with Levante, who has 2 draws and 1 loss.*" it can primarily be seen that the Brand Bilyoner is remarked. It is also reported that followers can watch La Liga games live and play the bet live at the same time in Bilyoner. In addition, Levante's failure in the latest games, and due to this failure, Atletico's being the favorite in the content, carries the account's effort to motivate the user to bet. The information transfer, language and visuals used mainly focus on prompting the consumer who is prepared to bet. The next step is certainly based on the continuity of this action with the creativity of the contents and their fulfilling needs.

In addition to these evaluations, in the context of social media posts and content management, it is important to see how electronic luck/bet games trigger gambling behavior. Research made about the subject shows that gambling habits among youth have gained popularity generally as an entertainment activity in the last 10 years (Savolainen, Kaakinen, Sirola, Koivula, Hagfors, Zych, Paek, & Oksanen, 2020). Although the laws prohibit non-adult individuals, aged under 18 or 21 in most countries, from gambling activities, advanced technologies such as social media and digital platform gambling broaden the opportunity to bet. Due to this dramatic change in the gambling industry, gambling has become more visible to youth and different gambling types have become reachable for non-adult youth, skipping the legal age restriction efforts. As a result, they can be subjected to risky content about gambling on different platforms, including online video games and social networking services, or they can search for the content and groups actively on different sites. This process effects the youth's idea of gambling with the effect of social media content that leads to the rise of gambling behavior's popularity.

Many people perceive it as a socially acceptable and exciting form of entertainment. The possibility of making a fortune without much effort or extraordinary skills is also appealing to different age groups.

Another study states that “social media provides an effective space for gambling operators to spread gambling content, including marketing and promotional activities together with online gambling platforms” (Kaakinen, Sirola, Savolainen, & Oksanen, 2020). In addition, users have numerous and extensive opportunities to assess and interact with the shared content on social media. Most social media platforms offer users simple ways to understand and evaluate shared content, which drastically shapes user behavior, information transfer, and consumption on online platforms. Another study on gambling behavior and social media relationships also reveals concerns about youth exposure to gambling ads via social media, the volume of gambling ads in social media content, and the normalization of gambling (Killick & Griffiths, 2020). The Gambling Commission (2019) reports that Facebook is the most popular social media platform (19%), followed by YouTube (9%) and Twitter (8%). There are two important reports to be taken into consideration in this concern. One of them is a report assigned by the Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation (Australia) that has discovered the different social media marketing strategies used by Australian gambling operators, noting many endorsements involving strategies such as humor and interaction. Another report by the Responsible Gambling Trust (UK) underlines that social media gambling promotions, tips, and odds are part of a broader discussion of sports (e.g., major matches, tactics, and player transfers) (Miller, Jones, & Smith, 2016).

Habit and Addiction Concepts

Existentially, a human has various needs and desires and continues his or her life cycle in this direction. These needs sometimes change to meet basic needs and sometimes to fulfill personal desires. These needs and desires can be physiological as well as emotional and sensory in nature. If we leave aside the basic vital needs of people in line with the scope of the study, each individual has various desires and desires that s/he wants to realize in line with the experiences s/he has acquired during the hereditary or development process. These demands can be against material or spiritual elements and can vary from person to person. For individuals to achieve their wishes or desires, they must take various behavioral or intellectual actions. The desire of the individual against these internal demands sometimes ends with the realization of the demand and sometimes becomes a routine repetition.

The repetition of the above-mentioned demand creates the need to examine the concepts of addiction and habit. Habits are behaviors that constantly exist in people’s lives, have an effective and decisive role in their lives, and form their personalities and characters that direct their physical, emotional, mental, and social attitudes (Orhan, 2017, p. 302). If we define the concept of attitude in the definition in its most basic form, “*attitude is a tendency that is attributed to an individual and that regularly forms his thoughts, feelings, and behaviors about a psychological object*” (Smith, 1968). Attitudes

are learnable and can contain positivity or negativity towards an object, person, or behavior. Another important issue is the degree of strength of the attitudes of the person. While an individual may be firmly attached to one attitude, they may not feel a strong bond with another. As it can be understood from here, attitudes are feelings and behaviors that can change depending on the power state.

If we examine the concept of addiction in its general meaning, it can be defined as “*the inevitable desire for an object, person, or entity or a state of being under the direction of another will, and it reflects a pathological behavior associated with human mental activity. Although it harms their mental and physical health or social life, people feel an unavoidable desire to repeat a certain obsessive state and maintain it*” (Uzbay, 2009, p. 16). As stated in the definition, addiction is an involuntary recurrence, and this recurrence cannot be prevented. This is the main difference between the concept of habit and addiction. In simple language, habit is about choice, and the individual has the ability to stop the habit in line with the will and request of him or her. In the situation of addiction, the chance of choice disappears, and it is not possible to quit without medical help. Several studies have proved countless times that the state of addiction, considered as a moral weakness in most societies, is a disease that affects both the brain (reward punishment system) and behavior (Tarhan & Nurmedov, 2019, p. 18).

Gambling Addiction

For the gambling disorder, which is one of the first behavioral addictions and dominated by emotions of excitement and pleasure, to be within the scope of addiction according to DSM V, at least four of the nine criteria listed below must be seen in the individual within a period of 12 months alongside a persistent and repetitive problematic gambling behavior that causes a decrease in functionality or functionality (American Psychological Association, 2014, pp. 289-290):

- *S/he needs more and more money to gamble in order to get the excitement s/he wants.*
- *S/he becomes irritable or irritable when attempting to stop or stop gambling.*
- *S/he had repeated, inconclusive efforts to control, quit, or stop gambling.*
- *S/he often contemplates gambling (e.g., constantly contemplating re-living past gambling experiences, preventing, or planning his/her next attempt, thinking about ways to find money to gamble).*
- *Gambling frequently occurs when in distress (e.g., when helpless, guilty, overwhelmed, or depressed).*
- *After losing money gambling, people often exhibit the behavior of gambling another day to get even.*

- *S/he lies to hide how much he/she gambles.*
- *Endangered or lost an important relationship, job, education, or job opportunity due to gambling.*
- *Reliance on others to fund the desperate financial situation of gambling.*

The fulfilment of the above-mentioned diagnostic criteria in the individual (sufficient number of criteria for diagnosis) may be a state of continuity, or there may be processes in which symptoms subside between several periods. In addition, the level of gambling disorder depends on the number of symptoms in the individual; it is classified as non-heavy, medium, and heavy.

The ICD, on the other hand, includes gambling disorders through two different categories, mainly online and offline. Online predominantly refers to the gambling behavior that an individual generally engages in over the internet (virtual gambling). In offline gambling disorders, intensity is characterized by non-internet gambling behavior.

Factors Causing Gambling Addiction (Risk Factors)

Most of the time, there are multiple reasons underlying an individual's attitudes or actions in his or her life. It is not possible to mention a single factor when talking about the factors that affect gambling disorder, which is an operational disorder. Gambling behavior and the factors influencing the disorder caused by this behavior, like other addictions, may include psychological, behavioral, genetic, familial, social, and environmental factors.

The individual is psychologically inclined to seek risk and excitement most of the time. This search for risk and excitement varies from person to person, both in dose and in action. The person can try to meet this in as many ways as possible by looking for this in line with his personality and preferences. For instance, in sports activities (martial arts, jumping with rope or parachute from heights, etc.), relationships (cheating spouse/lover, incompatible environment preference, etc.), substance abuse, etc. Gambling behavior is also an action that meets both risk and excitement seeking. When a person makes a bet, s/he takes a risk and experiences a feeling of excitement while waiting for the bet's outcome. In addition to the aforementioned situation, the person's having a positive attitude towards games of chance or betting also increases the susceptibility to gambling disorder. In addition, being alienated from the environment and therefore loneliness, negative life events experienced, physical or mental traumas, and having any mood disorder can also trigger the possibility of gambling in someone's life. The environment in which people grow up and live within their families influences their susceptibility to gambling disorders. A higher prevalence of gambling disorders has been reported in family members of people diagnosed with gambling disorders (up to a 20% lifetime prevalence rate among first-degree relatives), suggesting that familial transmission plays a role in the aetiology of gambling disorders (Çakmak & Tamam, 2018, pp. 85,86). The commitment of the family members to each other, the family's attitudes and behaviors in the face of difficulties, problem-solving skills, belonging, love, respect, etc. affects the

gambling addiction as with all addictions. The fact that family ties are strong and contain the necessary elements in this direction plays an important role in both the prevention and treatment of addiction. The presence of necessary parental follow-up and support is another important factor in adolescents' formation of gambling behavior and their predisposition to addiction at later ages.

In the social context, the most important element to be addressed in the formation and spread of gambling disorders is the subculture of addiction. As in many subcultures, it is important that these addictive and abused substances or behaviors take place in mythological stories, legends, primitive religions, as well as monotheistic religions such as Christianity and Judaism, literary works, and songs (Köknel, 1998). Among the elements that make up the addiction subculture we have listed above, mythological stories, legends, literary works, and songs are factors that have an impact on the formation and disorder of gambling behavior. The best explanation for the fact that some individuals are affected by short-term money-making stories and tend to gamble in this direction lies in the concept of subculture that we have examined. In addition to subculture, in relation to the environment in which the individual lives, the lack of economic and social opportunities, the existence of social norms that legitimize or affirm gambling, high crime rates, and alienation can be considered as social factors affecting gambling behavior.

We can characterize the social, work, or school environment of the individual as environmental factors. In these environments, situations such as the presence of individuals who view or encourage gambling positively, the person's having poor social relationships and skills, or the loneliness of the person due to the attitudes or behaviors of the individuals in the environment, have an impact on gambling behavior and addiction.

Research On the Impacts of Virtual Betting Companies' Social Media Shares On Gaming Behavior

Purpose of the Research

Thanks to the development of mobile technologies, we live in a time when instant interaction is provided and we are free from spatial dependence (Kuş, 2017, p. 80). However, it does not seem possible to say that this constant connection only makes positive contributions to our lives. As habits have changed, new concepts such as social media, games, and Internet addiction have entered our lives. In addition to the new addictions caused by technological developments, the gambling disorder that existed in our lives before the development of the Internet has both theoretically differentiated (predominant online gambling addiction) and eliminated the need for dealers to bet.

This research investigates whether factors such as gender, income status, and education level affect gambling addiction, as well as measures gambling addiction in individuals living in Istanbul. Also, the items mentioned below are aimed at being examined with this research.

- The relationship between those who play betting/gambling games and those

who follow official social media accounts belonging to electronic chance/betting games platforms and the levels of gambling addiction

- The relationship between gambling addiction levels and those who follow groups or individuals who share coupons for betting predictions.

The Universe, Sampling and Limitations of the Research

The sample size of the study includes all individuals living in Istanbul. While determining the sample of the research, non-probabilistic quota sampling was preferred. "In quota sampling, a limited population is classified according to certain variables predicted by the researcher in accordance with the purpose of the research. These variables may be age, gender, educational status, occupation, illness, as well as ethnic origin, rural and urban variables" (Gökçe, 1988, p. 83). Quota sampling was preferred since the research was conducted within the scope of Istanbul province. While applying the scale; there is no demographic or social discrimination, such as age restrictions (provided that they are over 18), gender, profession, educational status, line of business, etc. Due to the conditions of the COVID-19 pandemic and the fact that the study was carried out by the researcher's own resources, the scale was limited to 106 participants. According to the TÜİK Data Portal, the population of Istanbul over the age of 18 was 15,462,452 people at the end of 2020 (TÜİK, 2021). While calculating the population of the study, when $100.000.000 \geq N \geq 1.000.000$ in studies aimed at determining the sample size for large populations, $n = 96$ units is considered sufficient at the 90% confidence level and in the value range $p = 0.5$ $q = 0.5$ (Yazıcıoğlu & Erdoğan, 2004, p. 50). In line with these findings, 106 participants are at a sufficient level for the study.

The research has some limitations in itself. This research covers people who reside in the city of Istanbul, have social media accounts / accounts, and have played chance / betting games in the last 12 months. Those who reside in other provinces or countries, those who do not use a social media account, and those who have not played betting / chance games in the last 12 months were excluded from the study. The person participating in the scale must meet these conditions, otherwise the scale is terminated and cannot be reopened over the same IP.

Research Method, Data Collection and Analysis

The scale consists of eight parts. The first part consists of the consent form for participation in the study. The second, third, and fourth parts, respectively, ask the participant whether s/he has played betting or games of chance in the last 12 months, whether s/he has a social media account or accounts, and whether s/he lives within the boundaries of Istanbul. If the consent form is not accepted or if the conditions for the study are not met in the second, third, or fourth sections, the questionnaire ends in the relevant section. The sixth section aims to measure the questions about the demographic characteristics of the person. The seventh section includes the South Oaks Gambling Screening Inventory, and the last section aims to measure the user preferences regarding social media usage, electronic betting/gaming platforms' notifications of social media,

groups, and mobile applications.

To increase the validity and reliability of the research, a national and international source research was first conducted; both physical libraries and electronic databases were used. Prior to the research, the scale was planned to be done face-to-face. However, popular prejudice against face-to-face surveys and the pandemic conditions in which we find ourselves meant that attempts to conduct the scale face-to-face were unsuccessful. These inconclusive attempts made it impossible for the survey to reach the valid number. For this reason, the scale was prepared on the googleform.com web platform, published on the Internet for approximately 4 weeks (29.12. 2021- 28.01. 2022), and delivered to participants. The web address that allows access to the content was disseminated through various universities, forums, websites and social media.

The survey reached 295 people in total. 189 attempts, except for the sample of the study (no bets in the last 12 months, no social media account, and no residence in Istanbul) to fill the scale were disabled by the system. In order to prevent replenishment of the questionnaire by the same person, IP blocking has been applied.

The data was analyzed using the SPSS 22.0 program on a Windows 10 operating system.

The Üsküdar University Non-Interventional Research Ethics Board adopted the decision of Ethics Board No. **61351342** at the meeting held on **28.7.2021 No. 07**.

South Oaks Gambling Screening Test

The South Oaks Gambling Screen Test (SOGS) was developed in 1987 by Lesieur and Blume. This test evaluates the level of gambling problems in both adults and adolescents. It is among the most frequently used inventories to provide estimates of the social prevalence and lifetime prevalence of gambling problems (Wiebe, Cox, & Mehmel, 2000). The reliability and validity study of the Turkish form of the SOGS was performed, and the internal consistency coefficient of the scale was reported as Cronbach alpha.87 and test-retest correlation coefficient.95 (Duvarc & Varan, 2001).

The Turkish SOGS form consists of 16 questions in total. The evaluation of the scale is calculated by adding the scores of the questions containing risky answers. Questions 1, 2, 3, and 12 are not taken into consideration. The maximum score a person can get is calculated over 12 points. A score of 8 or higher is considered “a potential pathological gambling addict (gambler)”. 7 points can be considered borderline.

Findings and Interpretation

Table-1: Distribution of demographic data of the individuals participating in the study

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Male	79	74.5	74.5	74.5
Female	27	25.5	25.5	100.0
2000 or later	25	23.6	23.6	23.6
Between 1980-1990	70	66.0	66.0	89.6
1979 or before	11	10.4	10.4	100.0
Illiterate	1	.9	.9	.9
Literate	1	.9	.9	1.9
Primary School	7	6.6	6.6	8.5
High School	25	23.6	23.6	32.1
Associate Degree	9	8.5	8.5	40.6
Bachelor Degree	46	43.4	43.4	84.0
Post Graduate Degree	17	16.0	16.0	100.0
2000 TL or below	24	22.6	22.6	22.6
Between 2001TL-3000TL	14	13.2	13.2	35.8
Between 3001TL-4000TL	21	19.8	19.8	55.7
Between 4001TL-6000TL	13	12.3	12.3	67.9
Between 6001TL-8000TL	14	13.2	13.2	81.1
8001 or above	20	18.9	18.9	100.0

When we examine Table 1, it is striking that there is no homogeneous distribution in any demographic feature. The gender distribution is thought to be due to males' more intense gambling and betting behavior than females. When we look at the reliability of the South Oats Gambling Screening Inventory within the scale, our Cronbach's Alpha coefficient is .744. With this result, the scale is considered quite reliable since our alpha coefficient value is between $0.60 \leq \alpha < 0.80$.

According to the results of the South Oats Gambling Screening Inventory, which was applied to 106 people, 87 participants (82.1%) were not addicted to pathological

gambling, 7 individuals (6.6%) were determined as borderline, and 12 participants (11.3%) were “possibly pathological gambling addicts.” With these results, it is possible to say that 11.3% of individuals living within the boundaries of Istanbul province are possible pathological gambling addicts. It was determined by the Mann Whitney U Test that there was no significant relationship between the gender, income level, and education level included in the study and the level of gambling addiction.

H₀: There is no significant relationship between those who play gambling and gambling games and the social media official accounts of electronic gambling and betting games platforms.

H₁: There is a significant relationship between those who play gambling and the social media official accounts of electronic gambling and betting games platforms that they follow.

A Chi-Square Test was applied to the relationship between these two variables. Test results are as follows:

Table-2: Chi-Square Test of the Hypothesis

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	8.544 ^a	1	.003		
Continuity Correction^b	6.703	1	.010		
Likelihood Ratio	7.761	1	.005		
Fisher’s Exact Test				.006	.006
Linear-by-Linear Association	8.463	1	.004		
N of Valid Cases	106				

a. 1 cells (25.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3.62.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

Among the theoretical frequencies calculated for each eye, if the percentage of those less than 5 is less than 20%, Pearson’s chi-square test should be used; if greater than 20%, Fisher’s exact method should be used (Çolak, n.d.). The p value should be less than 0.05 when we are going to make a “statistically significant difference” decision in a comparison. Since the p value we obtained is 0006, **H₁** is valid. In other words, there is a significant relationship between the social media official accounts of electronic chance/betting games platforms being followed by those who play gambling/gambling games and their gambling addiction levels.

H₀: There is no significant relationship between gambling addiction levels and those who follow groups or individuals who share coupons for betting predictions.

H₁: There is a significant relationship between gambling addiction levels and those who follow the groups or individuals who share coupons for betting predictions.

The Chi-Square Test was applied to the above hypothesis again (Table 3). As can be seen below, our p value is 014, and it is concluded that there is a significant relationship between gambling addiction levels and those who follow the groups or people who share coupons for betting predictions.

Table-3: Chi-Square Test of the Hypothesis

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	7.092 ^a	1	.008		
Continuity Correction^b	5.362	1	.021		
Likelihood Ratio	6.236	1	.013		
Fisher's Exact Test				.014	.014
Linear-by-Linear Association	7.026	1	.008		
N of Valid Cases	106				

a. 1 cells (25,0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3.17.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

Conclusion and Discussion

Gambling behavior, both online and offline, has become a behavior that can be seen in every culture all over the world. The scarcity of statistical data on this behavior and addiction, which is also seen in our country, draws attention. According to a news published in the Sabah newspaper, it is stated that gambling, which has become widespread thanks to the internet, has reached terrible dimensions, and that there are two million virtual gambling addicts in Turkey (Sabah, 2014). When we look at the date of the news, it is possible to say that seven years have passed and that the specified figure is out of date. The scarcity of research on the subject is a major obstacle to the updating of statistical data. The number of dealers of betting/chance games and electronic gambling/betting games platforms, which have been increasing during the said period, gives us important clues about the progress in gambling behavior and addiction. In this study, evaluations are made on the social media shares of gambling addiction and electronic betting/chance sites.

Accordingly, the fact that digitalization is at the center of human life, the increasing popularity of social media channels, and especially the management of the content shared on these platforms, has made it necessary. In social media, content, all kinds of text, visuals, videos, moving images, etc. are presented to the groups in accordance with the characteristics of the target audience. The creation of content aimed at increasing direct motivation, the application of special design, movement, and sound techniques to attract attention and interest can be viewed as among the quite common uses. At the same time, adapting the content to the dominant social media culture and language of the period

allows the users to exhibit the desired attitude and behavior and ultimately convince them.

According to the results of the research,

- The results of the South Oats Gambling Screening Inventory, which was applied to 106 people, showed that 87 participants (82.1%) were not addicted to pathological gambling, 7 individuals (6.6%) were determined as borderline, and 12 participants (11.3%) were “possibly pathological gambling addicts.” It is possible to say that 11.3% of individuals living within the boundaries of Istanbul province are possible pathological gambling addicts.

- Content that is managed and edited in accordance with the expectations and needs of the target audience in social media is also used as an important strategy, especially in electronic betting and gambling platforms.

- It has been revealed that the shares made by electronic betting and gambling platforms on social media and the notifications sent to smart phones via mobile applications are effective in driving betting behavior.

- There is a significant relationship between following the official social media accounts of electronic chance/betting games platforms by those who play betting/chance games and their gambling addiction levels. On the other hand, this significant relationship reveals that the increase in addiction and the content shared by electronic gambling platforms on social media accounts are also related. It can be concluded that the content is used to tactically mobilize individuals who bet or play luck on these platforms, to motivate them, to create the ambition to win, and to continue this cycle.

- There is a significant relationship between those who follow groups or individuals who share coupons for betting predictions and their gambling addiction levels. In the light of all these evaluations, it is possible to say that the shares made by electronic betting/chance sites on social media are presented and managed with content that can strategically encourage gambling addiction.

As a result, both individual and social gambling behavior have been linked to significant financial losses as well as problems in family, business, and educational settings (Yeşilay, 2017). In order to prevent gambling behavior and thus prevent addiction, some measures should be taken by the state. The awareness-raising activities of the relevant institutions and organizations are important here. In addition, just as there are legal regulations on encouraging the use of alcohol, cigarettes, and substances, this should also be the case against betting and encouraging it. The shares of betting platforms on social media and the advertisements made through traditional media should be limited by legal changes. It should be noted that this is not just a problem of today. The adults of the future, who belong to the Alpha Generation, also use social media intensively and follow traditional media. To reduce the potential for gambling behavior and prevent addiction in the future, it is important not to encourage this generation with the methods used.

Etik Beyanı: Üsküdar Üniversitesi Girişimsel Olmayan Araştırmalar Etik Kurulu 28/7/2021 tarihli 07 No'lu toplantıda 61351342 karar sayılı Etik Kurul onayı alınmıştır.

Yazar Katkıları: 1. Yazarın katkı oranı %60, 2. Yazarın katkı oranı ise %40'dır.

Çıkar Çatışması Beyanı: Yazarlar herhangi bir çıkar çatışması olmadığını beyan etmektedirler.

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