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# Digital Game Addiction: Its Relationship with Perceived Social Competence in Turkish Nursing Students

Dijital Oyun Bağımlılığı: Türk Hemşirelik Öğrencilerinde Algılanan Sosyal Yetkinlik ile İlişkisi

#### **ABSTRACT**

**Objective:** The aim was to determine the relationship between digital game addiction and perceived social competence levels among nursing students.

**Methods:** The descriptive and correlational study was conducted with 310 nursing students who met the inclusion criteria at a university's faculty of health sciences. Data were collected using a descriptive characteristics form, the Digital Game Addiction Scale for University Students, and the Perceived Social Competence Scale.

**Results:** It was determined that the nursing students' average total Digital Game Addiction Scale for University Students Scale score was 45.14±19.24, which is considered low, and 43.2% were in the low-risk group for addiction levels. The average total Perceived Social Competence Scale score was found to be high at 24.13±3.91. Significant higher Digital Game Addiction Scale for University Students Scale scores were identified in males, those living in student housing, and those playing games on personal computers. A negative correlation of low magnitude was found between the average scores of Digital Game Addiction Scale for University Students and Perceived Social Competence Scale.

**Conclusion:** Although nursing students are in the low-risk group for digital game addiction, it is recommended to increase activities such as sports and cultural events and to provide education to students about digital game addiction to eliminate this risk. about digital game addiction to eliminate this risk.

Keywords: Addiction, digital game addiction, nursing, social competence.

# ÖZ

**Amaç:** Bu çalışmanın amacı, hemşirelik öğrencilerinin dijital oyun bağımlılığı ile algılanan sosyal yetkinlik düzeyleri arasındaki ilişkiyi belirlemektir.

Yöntemler: Tanımlayıcı ve ilişki arayıcı bir tasarıma sahip olan bu çalışma, bir üniversitenin sağlık bilimleri fakültesinde katılım kriterlerini karşılayan 310 hemşirelik öğrencisi ile gerçekleştirilmiştir. Veriler, tanımlayıcı özellikler formu, Üniversite Öğrencileri için Dijital Oyun Bağımlılığı Ölçeği ve Algılanan Sosyal Yetkinlik Ölçeği kullanılarak toplanmıştır.

**Bulgular:** Hemşirelik öğrencilerinin ortalama toplam Üniversite Öğrencileri için Dijital Oyun Bağımlılığı Ölçeği puanı 45.14±19.24 olarak, düşük düzeyde bulunmuştur. Öğrencilerin %43.2'si düşük risk grubunda yer almaktadır. Ortalama toplam Algılanan Sosyal Yetkinlik Ölçeği puanı ise 24.13±3.91 olarak yüksek düzeyde saptanmıştır. Erkek öğrencilerde, öğrenci evinde yaşayanlarda ve kişisel bilgisayarda oyun oynayanlarda Üniversite Öğrencileri için Dijital Oyun Bağımlılığı Ölçeği puanlarının anlamlı derecede yüksek olduğu belirlenmiştir. Üniversite Öğrencileri için Dijital Oyun Bağımlılığı Ölçeği ve Algılanan Sosyal Yetkinlik Ölçeği ortalama puanları arasında düşük dereceli negatif bir ilişki bulunmuştur.

**Sonuç:** Hemşirelik öğrencileri dijital oyun bağımlılığı açısından düşük risk grubunda yer almakla birlikte, bu riskin ortadan kaldırılması için spor ve kültürel etkinliklerin artırılması ve öğrencilere dijital oyun bağımlılığı konusunda eğitim verilmesi önerilmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Bağımlılık, dijital oyun bağımlılığı, hemşirelik, sosyal yetkinlik.

#### Introduction

The increasing prevalence of digital games in recent years has turned digital game addiction into a significant public health concern, especially among young adults. This condition may adversely impact individuals' psychosocial functioning as well as their perceived social competence (Meng et al., 2022).

Digital games are electronic games that individuals interact with through an interface. These games are becoming increasingly widespread every day, thanks to platforms like tablets and mobile phones that can provide an internet connection and are portable (Cumhurbaşkanlığı Dijital Dönüşüm Ofisi, 2023). According to the January 2023 report by the UKbased global social media agency We Are Social, 81.9% of internet users aged 16-64 worldwide have stated that they play video games on any device (We Are Social, 2023). In Turkey, this rate is 92.3%, and our country has risen from the 7th most video gameplaying country in January 2022 to the 5th in January 2023. Some internet users choose to play games on different devices depending on the type of game, their location, or circumstances. While approximately 8 out of every 10 internet users worldwide play video games on any device, 66.2% of participants stated that they play games on smartphones, and 37.9% play on laptops or personal computer (PC). Video games, which both men and women of different age groups are interested in, are very popular worldwide ( We Are Social, 2023). According to the Gaming & Esports 2023 report (YouGov, 2023), individuals play games for an average of 8 hours a week, and those aged 18-24 play approximately 10 hours a week. However, the weekly gaming time sharply decreases for individuals aged 55 and over (YouGov, 2023).

The digital gaming industry holds significant potential for all countries in terms of player numbers and economic size. However, this sector also carries certain risks. Individuals, whether children or adolescents, who exhibit excessive interest in digital games, may face a problem akin to drug addiction (Bülbül et al., 2018; Irmak & Erdoğan, 2019). This situation causes concern among various sectors, including parents, educators, and policymakers. Digital game addiction can lead to significant impairments in health, work, education, and other social functions, as well as considerable distress in personal, familial, and social well-being (Dahl & Bergmark, 2020). Moreover, it may negatively affect the psychological and social well-being of children and adolescents. Issues such as a tendency toward violence, aggression, desensitization, loneliness, and anxiety are among the psychosocial problems associated with this negative impact (Meng et al., 2022; Goswami & Singh, 2016). While digital games offer several positive attributes- such as encouraging sharing, goal-setting, logical reasoning, concentration, decisionmaking, and a sense of achievement-they also pose certain risks, particularly when gaming behavior becomes excessive or addictive (Anderson-Butcher et al., 2007; Bülbül et al., 2018). One of the most evident areas negatively impacted by digital game addiction is educational life. Students who spend an excessive amount of time playing games often fail to allocate adequate time

for studying, neglect their academic responsibilities, and enter exams unprepared (Anderson-Butcher et al., 2007; Bülbül et al., 2018). Empirical studies have shown that violent video games are positively associated with aggression and delinquency, with this relationship being especially pronounced among male players. Furthermore, academic performance has been found to decline as the duration of gameplay increases (Anderson-Butcher et al., 2007; Bülbül et al., 2018).

These educational challenges, however, represent only one dimension of the broader impact of digital game addiction (Arıkan & Öztürk, 2020; Orak et al., 2021). Beyond academics, digital games can adversely affect multiple aspects of individuals' daily lives, leading to more serious psychological and social consequences (Orak et al., 2021). In recent years, digital game addiction has increasingly been recognized as a public health issue. Research indicates that individuals suffering from this form of addiction often struggle to maintain their daily routines and responsibilities due to psychological distress and diminished social functioning (Arıkan & Öztürk, 2020; Orak et al., 2021). In light of the constant developments and changes in modern life, individuals are now expected to possess strong social skills in order to navigate interpersonal relationships effectively and lead a high-quality social life. Social skill, encompassing both psychological and societal dimensions, has been defined by Sarıçam et al. (2013) as the capacity to effectively utilize one's existing social and communication abilities. Social skills are essential and necessary for coping with challenges, maintaining and enhancing social relationships, effective learning, and active participation in community and group activities (Turan et al., 2023; Ates, 2016). Social skills emerge as a personal attribute throughout an individual's life and play a significant role in their social and emotional development (Turan et al., 2023; Eksi et al., 2019; Ateş, 2016). They assist an individual in feeling more secure, efficient, and competent during interpersonal interactions, as well as in their perception and evaluation of these interactions (Turan et al., 2023; Eksi et al., 2019; Ateş, 2016).

Digital game addiction can negatively affect individuals' social lives by reducing their ability to engage in social interactions, which may lead to a decline in their perceived social competence. Social competence is defined as the ability to establish and maintain social relationships and to communicate effectively in social settings, playing a functional role in many areas of life (Ateş, 2016). Studies have shown that individuals who spend excessive amounts of time on digital games tend to participate less in face-to-face social interactions, which in turn negatively affects the development of their social skills (Caplan, 2007; Lemmens et al., 2011). In this context, it can be argued that digital game addiction may weaken an individual's perception of social competence and create adverse effects on both psychological and social well-being.

The nursing profession holds a significant position in terms of social competence due to the necessity of establishing close relationships with patients and health team members. Nurses must effectively utilize their communication skills to meet the treatment and care needs of patients. Literature indicates that digital game addiction negatively affects social competence. The

university years, which contribute to the development of nursing students' social competence, also coincide with the age group most affected by digital game addiction (Baltacı et al., 2020; Dost et al., 2021).

Studies on nursing students' internet addiction reveal that the addiction is at a moderate level and is on the rise. It is believed that digital game addiction can negatively affect many aspects of nursing students' lives, such as social competence, academic success, professionalism, and communication, as well as potentially disrupt loneliness and sleep quality (Chrzan-Rodak et al., 2022; Dost et al., 2021). This situation poses a risk not only for the care and safety of patients but also for the physical and mental health of the students. In the literature, there is a lack of comprehensive studies on the digital game addiction and social competence of nursing students. The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between digital game addiction and perceived social competence levels among nursing students.

#### Methods

# Type of Research

The study used descriptive and correlational methods.

## **Population and Sample**

The population of the study consisted of 515 nursing students enrolled at Niğde Ömer Halisdemir University, Zübeyde Hanım Faculty of Health Sciences during the spring semester of the 2023–2024 academic year. However, 42 of these students, despite being officially registered, were not actively attending classes. Therefore, the actual population was accepted as 473 students.

The sample of the study consisted of nursing students who were present at the faculty during the data collection period, regularly attending classes, and voluntarily agreed to participate in the study. During the data collection process, 45 students were not present at the faculty, 62 students declined to participate, and 56 students were excluded due to incomplete data collection forms. Consequently, the study was completed with 310 students. Thus, 66% of the target population (473 students) was reached.

## **Data Collection Tools**

The Descriptive Characteristics Form: This form, which includes information such as age and gender of students, is prepared by the researcher in line with the literature (Hazar & Hazar, 2019; Sarıçam et al., 2013).

Digital Game Addiction Scale for University Students (DGAS-US): Developed by Hazar & Hazar in 2019, this 21-item scale features three sub-dimensions: excessive focus and procrastination; conflict, deprivation, and pursuit; and emotional change and immersion. The scale scores range from a minimum

of 21 to a maximum of 105, with 1-21 points indicating a normal group, 22-42 points a low-risk group, 43-63 points a risk group, 64-84 points an addicted group, and finally, 85-105 points indicating a highly addicted group. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient for internal consistency was reported as .95 in the original study, while it was calculated as .90 for the present study (Hazar & Hazar, 2019).

The Perceived Social Competence Scale (PSCS): The Perceived Social Competence Scale, developed by Anderson-Butcher, lachini, & Amorose (2007), is a self-report measurement tool that evaluates the concept of social competence based on how individuals perceive themselves in social relationships and how they express self-related information. The scale consists of 6 items and is structured using a 5-point Likert-type rating system (1 = Strongly disagree, 5 = Strongly agree). Scores on the scale range from 6 to 30. There are no reverse-coded items on the scale. The factor loadings of the items range between .57 and .80. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient for internal consistency was reported as .80 in the original study, while it was calculated as .81 for the present study.

#### **Data Collection**

The implementation of the study commenced following the acquisition of the necessary permissions from the Ethics Committee of Niğde Ömer Halisdemir University (Date: November 29, 2023, Decision no: 2023/18-16) and the Zübeyde Hanım Faculty of Health Sciences. Data for the study were collected between April 1, 2024, and May 31, 2024, through surveys administered face-to-face to nursing department students by the researcher. At the beginning of the study, participants were informed about the objectives, scope, ethical considerations, and potential benefits of the research, and their consent was obtained prior to the administration of the data collection forms. The data were collected based on self-reports from the participants by the researcher at the end of class, with a 15-minute time allocation.

## The Analysis of the Data

The data was conducted using the SPSS 24.00 (IBM SPSS Corp., Armonk, NY, USA) software package, with frequency distributions applied for categorical variables and descriptive statistics utilized for numerical variables. The normality of the data distribution was assessed using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. Due to the data not following a normal distribution, nonparametric tests were employed. The Mann-Whitney U Test was used for pairwise comparisons, while the Kruskal-Wallis Variance Analysis was applied for multiple comparisons. To examine the relationships between variables, Spearman's correlation analysis was conducted. A p-value of less than .05 was considered statistically significant.

#### Results

This study, which determined the relationship between digital game addiction and perceived social competence, found that the average age of participants was 20.80±1.92.

It was identified that 72% of the participants were female, and 30% were in their fourth year of study. Additionally, 71.3% reported a medium level of academic achievement, while 79.4% came from a middle socioeconomic background. A majority of the students (84.8%) lived in urban areas, and 82.6% were graduates of Anatolian high schools.

Furthermore, 66.8% resided in student dormitories, and 51.9% were the youngest child in their families. Regarding parental attitudes, 81.9% described their mothers and 77.7% their fathers as democratic. In terms of extracurricular engagement, 56.1% participated in sociocultural activities, and 74.8% reported spending time with friends outdoors.

Additionally, 80.6% stated that they played digital games via mobile phones. The participants' weighted grade point average (WGPA) was  $2.85 \pm 0.40$  (Table 1). Upon examining Table 1, it was determined that the average scores of males in DGAS (54.31 $\pm$ 21.31) were high and statistically significant. When PSCS was analyzed in terms of gender, it was found that the difference in scores was not statistically significant.

Participants with a high socioeconomic status had high average scores in PSCS (25.33±4.17), and this difference was determined to be statistically significant. When DGAS was examined from a socioeconomic perspective, the difference in scores was found to be statistically insignificant (Table 1).

It was determined that the average score of the DGAS for participants residing in student housing was high (51.93±22.13) and statistically significant. When the PSCS was examined in terms of the place of residence, it was found that the difference in scores was not statistically significant (Table 1).

Participants who engaged in sociocultural activities had high average scores on the PSCS (24.68±3.71), and this difference was determined to be statistically significant. When the DGAS was examined in terms of participation in sociocultural activities, it was found that the difference in scores was not statistically significant (Table 1).

It was determined that individuals who play digital games on PCs have a high average score in the DGAS (53.96±21.73), and this difference is statistically significant. PSCS scores were analyzed based on the platform on which digital games were played, it was found that the difference in scores was not statistically significant (Table 1).

Participants who go out with their friends were found to have high average scores on the PSCS (24.63±3.72), and this difference is statistically significant. However, when the DGAS scores of those who go out with their friends were examined, it was

determined that the difference in scores was not statistically significant (Table 1).

**Table 1.**Comparison of participants' descriptive characteristics and scale scores

scores		Scala Scara	Avorages
		Scale Score Mean	
Variables	n(%)	DGAS	PSCS
Gender	11(70)	DOAS	1303
Female	225 (72.6)	41.67± 17.22	24.28±3.50
Male	85 (27.4)	54.31±21.31	23.74±4.85
Test= MU	03 (27.1)	4.883	0.835
p		.00	.40
Class			
1st Grade	83 (26.8)	42.63±16.05	23.79±3.96
2nd Grade	88 (28.4)	45.73±18.12	23.98±4.16
3rd Grade	46 (14.8)	50.23±23.03	24.39±3.44
4th Grade	93 (30)	44.29±20.60	24.45±3.88
Test=KW	, ,	3.458	1.237
р		.32	.74
Academic success	s		_
Low	23 (7.4)	57.39±26.33	22.08±6.70
Medium	221 (71.3)	43.71±17.24	24.23±3.67
High	66 (21.3)	45.63±21.43	24.53±3.21
Test=KW		5.858	2.556
р		.05	.27
Social-Economic	Perception Leve		
Insufficient	19 (6.1)	48.21±23.08	22.31±5.43
Medium	246 (79.4)	44.97±18.62	24.05±3.67
High	45 (14.5)	44.73 <b>±</b> 21.16	25.33±4.17
Test=KW		0.633	10.550
р		.72	.00
Where You Spend	d Most of Your L	ife	
Rural	47 (15.2)	44.91±19.14	23.76±3.18
Urban	263 (84.8)	45.18±19.30	24.20±4.03
Test=MU		-0.034	0.550
р		.97	.58
Type of High Scho	ool You Graduat	ed From	
Vocational High School	25 (8.1)	46.72 <b>±</b> 21.76	24.36±4.10
Anatolian High School	256 (82.6)	45.10 <b>±</b> 19.38	24.06±3.91
Science High School	11 (3.5)	39.66±12.80	25.00±2.82
High Schools Accepting Students with Special Talent	18 (5.8)	45.94 <b>±</b> 17.96	24.05±4.31
Exams			
Test=KW		1.044	3.790
p		.95	.58
Where you stay/			
Student house	74 (23.9)	51.93±22.13	23.95±4.17
Student	207 (66.8)	43.71±18.23	24.20±3.89
dormitory			
Family house	28 (9.3)	38.03±13.48	24.17±3.56
Test=KW		10.418	1.252
р		.01	.74

Birth Order			
Odd	24 (7.7)	56.50±19.39	23.00±5.12
First	125 (40.3)	46.08±19.01	24.18±3.58
Last	161 (51.9)	43.96±21.80	24.01±3.49
Test=KW		11.373	2.671
p		.10	.44
Your Perception o	f Mother's Attit	ude	
Democratic	254 (81.9)	45.11±18.34	24.11±4.03
Not democratic	56 (18.1)	44.27±22.08	24.14±3.29
Test=MU		3.520	2.470
p		.17	.27
Your Perception o	f Father's Attitu	de	
Democratic	241 (77.7)	45.32±18.39	24.09±4.08
Not democratic	69 (22.3)	44.50±22.10	24.27±3.31
Test=MU		-0.897	0.800
р		.37	.93
Your Participation	in Social-Cultur	al Activities	
I don't	136 (43.9)	45.36±19.27	23.44±4.08
Participate	130 (43.9)	45.30119.27	
I participate	174 (56.1)	45.06±19.29	24.68±3.71
Test=MU		0.716	6.991
р		.69	.03
Platform where ye	ou usually play d	ligital games	
Mobile	250 (80.6)	43.77±18.19	24.34 ±3.51
PC	50 (16.1)	53.96±21.73	23.18±4.92
Console	10 (3.2)	37.10±20.53	23.10±6.67
Test=KW		13.662	3.889
р		.00	.27
I often spend time	outside with m	y friends	
Yes	232 (74.8)	44.87±19.78	24.63±3.72
No	78 (25.2)	45.92±17.63	22.64±4.12
Test=MU		0.823	0.410
р		.41	.00
WGPA (Mean	2.85±0.40		
±SD)	2.03±0.40		
Age (Mean ±SD)	20.80±1.92		

When examining the class level, academic success, the place where most of life was spent, the high school from which they graduated, birth order, and the attitudes of parents, no significant statistical difference was found in terms of the average scores of DGAS and PSCS (Table 1).

It was determined that the participants' average total score on the DGAS was  $45.14\pm19.24$ , which is considered low, and 43.2% of them were categorized as being at low risk in terms of dependency levels (Table 2 and Table 3). The participants' average total score on the PSCS was found to be high at  $24.13\pm3.91$  (Table 2).

**Table 2.**Participants' digital game addiction and perceived social competence scale total and sub-dimension total score averages

Total Scale Scores	Mean±SD	Min-Max
DGAS Total Score	45.14±19.24	(21-105)
Excessive focus and procrastination	24.69±10.62	(11-78)
Conflict, deprivation and search	12.35±5.87	(6-30)
Emotional change and absorption	8.21±4.06	(4-20)
PSCS Total Score	24.13±3.91	(6-30)

**Table 3**.

Participants' digital game addiction levels

	n (%)	Min-Max
Normal	23 (7.4)	(1-21)
Low Risk	134 (43.2)	(22-42)
Risky	98 (31.6)	(43-63)
Addicted	43 (13.9)	(64-84)
Highly addicted	12 (3.9)	(85-105)

Upon examining Table 4, it was determined that there is a low-level negative correlation between the average scores of DGAS and PSCS.

**Table 4.**Relationship between participants' DGAS and PSCS score averages

		DGAS	PSCS	
DGAS	r	1	-0.167	
	р		.00	
PSCS	r	-0.167	1	
	р	.00		

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

#### Discussion

This study aimed to determine the relationship between digital game addiction and perceived social competence among nursing students, finding that the participants' average age was 20.80±1.92. It was observed that the level of digital game addiction among the participants was low, placing them in a group at minimal risk in terms of addiction levels.

This study has identified that the level of digital game addiction is higher among male participants. Similarly, research conducted by van den Eijnden et al. (2018), Başdaş & Özbey (2020), Orak et al. (2021), and Boz & Dinç (2023) also found that digital game addiction levels were higher in males. This phenomenon may be attributed to the addictive qualities of the game types played by males, the design of digital games that appeal to male interests, sexism in online gaming environments, and easier access for males to gaming platforms. Based on these data and the literatüre (van den Eijnden et al., 2018; Başdaş & Özbey, 2020; Orak et al., 2021; Boz & Dinç, 2023), it can be said that males are at risk for digital game addiction. This study has determined that participants residing in student houses have a higher level of digital game addiction. No research has been encountered in the literature demonstrating the relationship between the place of residence and digital game addiction. This situation can be explained by the participant's greater freedom in the student house, the absence of a control mechanism, and the decision on time management being entirely under the student's control. Furthermore, it has been identified that individuals who play games on PCs exhibit a higher level of digital game addiction. Contrary to the findings of this study, the literature indicates a higher frequency of playing digital games on mobile devices (Başdaş & Özbey, 2020; Orak et al., 2021). This discrepancy may stem from the ease of access to mobile devices, while playing

games on a PC's larger screen may be perceived as more enjoyable. This study has determined that the level of digital game addiction is not influenced by socioeconomic status, participation in sociocultural activities, or spending time with friends outdoors. In contrast to this study, Başdaş & Özbey (2020) as well as the research by Orak et al. (2021) indicate that a higher socioeconomic level increases the level of digital game addiction. This discrepancy may stem from the similar socioeconomic statuses of nursing students studying in the same city and school. Additionally, the financial means required for gaming may also be necessary for education-related expenses such as internet, computers, and mobile phones. In other words, the internet, computers, and mobile phones used for educational purposes can also be utilized for gaming.

In the literatüre (Başdaş & Özbey, 2020; Orak et al., 2021), it has been found that participation in sociocultural activities and spending time with friends outdoors can reduce digital game addiction. This difference may be attributed to the use of mobile devices, which allows individuals to continue playing games even while socializing with friends in outdoor settings. Thus, although the environment changes, they can continue to engage in gaming.

This study found that social competence levels were higher among participants with a good socioeconomic status. In contrast, Hukkelberg et al.'s study conducted in 2019 determined that social competence levels were not associated with socioeconomic status. This discrepancy could be attributed to the location and age differences where the studies were conducted. Additionally, it may stem from the belief among participants in the age group sampled in this study that social competence can be achieved with a higher economic level.

This study has found that the level of social competence is higher among participants who engage in sociocultural activities and spend time outside with friends. Similarly, Ateş's (2016) study determined that participation in sociocultural activities increases the perceived level of social competence.

This study has determined that there is a negative and low-level relationship between digital game addiction and perceived social competence. Similarly, Budak & Işıkoğlu's study (2022) found that as digital game addiction increases, the level of perceived social competence decreases. It can be considered that playing digital games is a form of escape and hiding for individuals with low social competence.

This study has determined that students' levels of social competence are not influenced by the participants' gender, where they live, or the platform they prefer for playing games. Additionally, it has been established that there is no significant relationship between digital game addiction and social competence with participants' grade level, academic success, the place where they have spent most of their life, the high school they graduated from, birth order, and parental attitudes.

#### Conclusion

This This study has determined that nursing students have a low level of digital game addiction, with 43.2% being in the low-risk group. It has been found that perceived social competence is

high. Digital game addiction has been significantly higher among males, those living in student houses, and those playing games on their personal computers. A low-level negative correlation between digital game addiction and perceived social competence levels has been identified.

Although nursing students were found to be in the low-risk group regarding digital game addiction, this does not entirely eliminate the potential for future risk. Therefore, it is recommended to implement preventive strategies to maintain and further reduce this risk. Increasing students' participation in physical activities such as sports, as well as in cultural and social events, may serve as protective factors by promoting healthy time management and reducing excessive screen time. Additionally, incorporating educational programs into the nursing curriculum that raise awareness about the signs, consequences, and coping strategies related to digital game addiction can help students develop healthier digital habits and recognize problematic behaviors early on.

The cross-sectional design of the study limits the ability to establish causal relationships between the variables. Furthermore, the fact that the study was conducted in a single institution restricts the generalizability of the results to broader populations or different cultural and academic settings.

Ethics Committee Approval: Ethical approval was obtained from the "Nigde Omer Halisdemir University Ethics Committee" (Meeting Date: November 29, 2023, Decision No: 2023/18-16).

**Informed Consent**: All individuals included in the study were informed and signed voluntary consent forms.

 $\label{peer-review} \textbf{Peer-review} : \textbf{Externally peer-reviewed}.$ 

**Author Contributions:** Concept – Z. E. K., K. K. S.; Design – Z. E. K., K. K. S.; Supervision – K. K. S.; Resources – Z. E. K., K. K. S.; Materials – K. K. S. Data Collection and/or Processing – Z. E. K.; Analysis and/or Interpretation – K.K.S.; Literature Search – Z. E. K., K. K. S.; Writing – Z. E. K., K. K. S.; Critical Review – K.K.S.

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