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Disconnected By Connection: Exploring Digital Burnout in Open and Distance Education

Hakan Alt?npulluk , Hakan K?l?nç , Damla Aydu?

Anadolu University, Faculty of Education, Turkiye

Istanbul Gedik University, Faculty of Sport Science, Turkiye

Abstract

This study aims to examine the digital burnout levels of learners studying through open and distance education. The sample of the study consists of a total of 376 learners studying in Anadolu University Graduate School of Graduate Education Distance Education Non-Thesis Master's programmes in the 2024-2025 academic year. While forming the sample group of the study, convenient sampling method, which is one of the non-probability sampling methods, was preferred. Personal information form and 'Digital Burnout Scale' were used to collect data in the study. According to the findings obtained from this study, although the digital burnout levels of open and distance learners are generally low, they show significant differences depending on variables such as age, income, employment status and daily technology usage time. In particular, it was determined that individuals between the ages of 18-33 experienced higher levels of digital burnout and emotional exhaustion compared to older age groups. In addition, it was observed that low-income individuals and non-public employees had higher levels of digital burnout, and digital burnout increased significantly in all sub-dimensions in individuals who used technological devices for a long time. On the other hand, it was determined that variables such as gender and technology usage competence did not have a significant effect on digital burnout.

Keywords: Digital Burnout; Graduate Education; Open and Distance Education