

ADULTS' LIVED EXPERIENCES OF EXCESSIVE ONLINE GAME PLAYING

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO
THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
OF
MIDDLE EAST TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

BY

ECE ÖZCAN

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SCIENCE
IN
THE DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

SEPTEMBER 2020

Approval of the thesis:

**ADULTS' LIVED EXPERIENCES OF EXCESSIVE ONLINE GAME
PLAYING**

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ABSTRACT

ADULTS' LIVED EXPERIENCES OF EXCESSIVE ONLINE GAME PLAYING

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September 2020, 176 pages

The aim of this thesis is to explore the lived experiences of adults who play online games excessively. In particular, it aims at investigating the individuals' accounts of their engagement in excessive online gaming in terms of the effects of online gaming in their lives and the meanings they attribute to it. Qualitative research is used for this purpose. Semi-structured interviews are done with eight male adults who state that their online gaming behavior is excessive. The data is analyzed to identify superordinate themes using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis method. In the current thesis five superordinate themes were emerged, which are (1) escapist motivations to engage in excessive online gaming, (2) ambition to win and to be satisfied in online game spaces, (3) burst of emotions while playing online games, (4) omnipotent self-presentations as reflected in narratives of gameplay, and (5) reactive positioning with respect to a superior other. These results are discussed in the light of existing relevant literature.

Keywords: Excessive Online Gaming, Male Adults, Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis, Lacanian Psychoanalysis

ÖZ

YETİŞKİNLERİN AŞIRI DÜZEYDE ÇEVİRİMİÇİ OYUN OYNAMA DENEYİMLERİ

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Eylül 2020, 176 sayfa

Bu tezin amacı, yetişkinlerin aşırı düzeyde çevrimiçi oyun oynama deneyimlerini araştırmaktır. Bilhassa, kişilerin kendi anlatıları üzerinden, aşırı düzeyde çevrimiçi oyun oynamanın hayatlarındaki etkileri ve bu uğraşa attettikleri anlamları incelemektir. Bu amaç doğrultusunda nitel araştırma yöntemi seçilmiştir. Çevrimiçi oyunları aşırı düzeyde oynadıklarını ifade eden sekiz yetişkin erkekle yarı-yapılandırılmış görüşmeler yapılmıştır. Veri analizi Yorumlayıcı Fenomenolojik Analiz metodu ile yapılmış ve beş üst tema belirlenmiştir. Belirlenen temalar (1) çevrimiçi oyun oynamaya dair kaçınan nitelikteki motivasyonlar, (2) çevrimiçi oyun ortamlarında kazanma ve tatmin olma hırsı, (3) çevrimiçi oyunları oynarken yaşanan yoğun duygular, (4) oyunun oynanabilirliğiyle ilgili anlatılarda yansıtılan tümgüçlü benlik-sunumları ve (5) üstün görülen bir başkasına göre tepkisel konumlanmadır. Bu temalar ilgili literatür ışığında tartışılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Aşırı Düzeyde Çevrimiçi Oyun Oynama, Erkek Yetişkinler, Yorumlayıcı Fenomenolojik Analiz, Lacanyen Psikanaliz

To My Family
Ömer, Meral, Gizem & Ülki

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to begin with expressing my gratitude to my supervisor Prof. Dr. Tülin Gençöz for her teaching, encouragement and guidance both in the process of writing this thesis and in my path to become a clinical psychologist. Her way of being, seeing, and doing, not only as a professor and academician, but also as a person and role model, have been helping me enormously to learn, to grow up and to finally be independent. I will always be proud of having the chance to be one of her students. I hope to have the endless passion she has for working, learning, and contributing. She will always remain as a person that I will look up to for the rest of my life.

My gratitude for my co-advisor Asst. Prof. Dr. Fazilet Canbolat is difficult to put into words because completing this thesis might not be possible without her guidance. She shared her knowledge and experience in conducting a qualitative research at every phase of this study, from clarifying what I want to work on, what I can work on and how I will work on. She has always been sensitive to my personal experiences during this research and has been more than a mentor in the best way possible for me to handle those and to flourish.

I also want to express my thanks to Prof. Dr. Faruk Gençöz, who taught me how to learn from others and myself. He has been a true guide with all his genuineness and wisdom. His approach to science, art, and life in general inspires me more every day. My words are not enough to describe how much I appreciate the fact that he taught me how to move forward with, rather than become fixated on, certain setbacks of reality.

I want to say my thanks to the committee members. I appreciate Elif Ünal for that I benefited very much from her thesis and other publications. She was so nice and helpful. Also, I am so grateful that Bahar Öz was in my thesis committee, who was so kind and supportive in the process.

My supervisors and my peer group have had a huge and valuable part in my training and basically my daily life since the day I started to the journey in graduate school. My supervisors taught me precious knowledge which I could not possibly gain anywhere else. A special thanks goes for my supervisor Selin Uçar, who genuinely saw me through when I had difficulties. Also, the support of my peers was the most valuable thing for me. I want to say thanks for their companionship. It has been such a great and colorful journey thanks to them.

I want to express my feelings about my close friends. Tuğba Gedik, my dearest friend, was always understanding to the fullest, gave me motivation and inspiration all the time, and never let me down. Elif Emiroğlu Demirel, my most openhearted friend, was always there to help, to listen and to share. I appreciate her tactfulness and regardfulness at all hours of the day and night. Yusuf Çetin was an inspiring and helpful flat mate with his passion for video games and other things far too numerous, and his curiosity in this study made me cherish my work even more. Bertuğ Kaan Demir was such a great friend and companion in the way that he was always ready to support me without hesitation. I am so lucky to have these wonderful people in my life.

My mother and my sisters were so supportive and influential for me to become a clinical psychologist as I desired, and to wend my way to where I want to be in life. It is due to these beautiful and strong women that I am who I am. Also, I want to thank my boyfriend, Doğa Volkan Altundağ, for that he has been my safe harbor. He brightened my days, encouraged me, and made me believe in myself. In addition, I want to express my grateful feelings to my psychoanalyst Dr. Derya Gürsel, who was the ultimate driving force for me to continue undauntedly in the pursuit for answers. I learnt how to become curious of myself thanks to her.

Lastly, I want to say thanks to the participants of this study. Their genuine accounts were what made this thesis fruitful. The fact that they volunteered to participate in a very strange times of pandemic was so precious. Good game, well played!

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background and Conceptualization

Internet use has been increasing rapidly since 1990s and has started to take up a considerably vast space in people's lives. More and more people now spend most of their time online in front of their computers, as a part of their profession or as a leisure activity. As the time went by, an internet culture has emerged. For example, there is a 'PC Bang' culture in Korea, where people connect to the Internet and play games with groups of other people in a place which is not a café or a library (Chee, 2006). Similarly, mediums called as 'Internet café's are common in Turkey, where the people's sole purpose is to be online and/or to play video games. On the other hand, some people prefer to be online by themselves, isolated in their rooms at home. Together or alone, individuals spend more hours compared to past in the online world. As a result, the virtual globe has started to trade places with the real globe.

For the most part, people spend time on the Internet for a while and then go back to their business, but there are some individuals who are more committed than the others to the online world. In this new virtual world, it is possible for people to reflect themselves as they are in their everyday lives, but there are certain differences between online and offline motivations of life. For example, one difference between online social interactions and face-to-face interactions is that being online allows individuals to be anonymous, thus taking fewer social risks (Heng, 2017). However, this preferred engagement in or inclination to get into social relationships online is done in expense of the social energy necessary for offline relationships (Reddy, 2008). Then, there must

be a reason for individuals to prefer to be online more than needed if they accept to lose something in real world in order to win something in the virtual one.

Within the realm of online world, there is the world of gamers, and there are gamers who engage in playing more than the others. Their situation, which is seen as a subtype of video game addiction, or a component of a different diagnosis as internet addiction, or a completely different phenomenon, is called with different phrases in the literature such as ‘excessive online game playing’ or ‘problematic online game playing’ (Rosenberg, Király, Nagygyörgy, Griffiths, & Demetrovics, 2014). That is to say, there is no consensus about definition or description of this notion. In the literature, it is seen important to look at whether individuals, who are extremely engaged in computers and virtual world, show withdrawal symptoms in order to decide in diagnosing them as ‘addicts’ (Charlton & Danforth, 2007), or to look at the negative consequences in their lives to decide if their action is ‘pathological’ (Griffiths, 2005; Charlton & Danforth, 2007). Researchers put forward certain diagnostic symptoms for so-called internet addiction, suggesting individuals’ symptoms and neural activities are similar to those of impulse-control disorders such as drug abuse and gambling (Heng, 2017), especially for who play online role playing games excessively (King & Delfabbro, 2009). These symptom categories, which are salience, mood modification, tolerance, withdrawal, conflict and relapse (Griffith, 2005), are also the criteria proposed for Internet Gaming Disorder in DSM-5 (American Psychiatric Association, 2013).

Problematic internet use may point to other underlying pathological conditions (Davis, 2001), and several studies indicate parallel findings also for online gaming. Aggression and narcissistic personality traits (Kim, Namkoong, Ku, & Kim, 2008), obsessive-compulsive disorders and attention deficit disorders (Reddy, 2008), dissociative states (Guglielmucci, Monti, Franzoi, Santoro, Granieri, Billieux, & Schimmenti, 2019), and depressive symptoms (Rosenberg et al., 2014) are found to be associated with problematic online gaming. It is claimed that problematic levels of ‘massively multiplayer online role playing game’ (MMORPG) engagement come with an underlying psychopathology such as social anxiety, which may be compensated by playing online games excessively, and diagnosing individuals with Internet Gaming

Disorder may be an oversimplification of clinical situation (Karfedelt-Winther, 2014; Billieux, Thorens, Khazaal, Zullino, Achab, & Linden, 2015; Heng, 2017). Moreover, there are other researchers who are cautious to label online game involvement as an addiction because they think it may mean to pathologize causal events (Snodgrass, Dengah, Polzer, & Else, 2019). To sum, there is no causation reported between other psychopathology and excessive online game playing, the direction of the association is not agreed on, and it would be too restrictive to call the notion as a behavior addiction (Billieux et al., 2015). Accordingly, I think it is essential to look at excessive online gaming as a complex and subjective phenomenon rather than a mere behavior problem.

In order to explore and understand this phenomenon, rather than labeling it, qualitative studies may be beneficial. There are few qualitative studies conducted with online game players in the literature. Existing results suggest that online gaming is integrated to day-to-day lives, is dissociative and time consuming, is helpful for alleviating negative states of mind (Hussain & Griffiths, 2009); it is seriously addictive, and is seen with an ambivalent attitude by players (Chappell, Eatough, Davies, & Griffiths, 2006).

Considering the lack of qualitative research on the topic of online gaming in the clinical psychology literature, I got interested in my research attempt for the current thesis. My psychoanalytical background and orientation shaped my approach to the notion of excessive online gaming. In my opinion, concerning excessive online game playing within the framework of psychopathology and behavior disorders is tangential in terms of clinical practice. I thought that tackling this issue extends beyond diagnostics, and in the current thesis, I tried to approach to this topic from a psychoanalytical perspective. Accordingly, some basic information about the way playing is defined in psychoanalytic literature will be given in the following paragraphs.

Freud (1920) writes about the concept of playing, from his observation of his grandson playing the Fort-Da game, where his grandson sent away and received back a ball of wool. He concludes that it is the symbolization effort of the child for the mother's

absence and presence, and this process is pleasurable as it gives a chance to master over feelings of loss and anxiety. The symbolization quality of play has a therapeutic role for the child. In addition to Freud, Winnicott (1971) claims that a child's play emerges with the use of transitional objects as tools to reduce anxiety and feelings of loneliness when the mother is not there, and the play results in 'creating a potential existence' as the child undoes and reorders the bits of reality related to loss (i.e., mother's absence). It is also stated that excess in anxiety results in repetitive, compulsive and impossible play (Winnicott, 1975). These statements may refer to a starting point to grasp the nature of excessive online game playing.

In psychoanalytical literature, playing games is also seen as something resembling masturbation and physical sensations related to masturbation. When we see a person playing, it is relevant to ask the question of 'What is the fantasy?', just as it would be relevant to ask the same question when we see a person masturbating (Freud, 1920; Winnicott, 1971). The answer is that the fantasy in play is about real objects (Freud, 1920; Barnett & Storm, 1981). Then, what is the fantasy of players of online games? Although the words 'game' and 'play' are used interchangeably, 'games' include achievements determined by their designers (Johannsen, 2018; Thorne, 2017). Parallel to this, online players are bound to perform certain acts according to their choice of game, meaning that there is less room for creativity in comparison with children's play. Interestingly, as online players choose which game to play – or which fantasy to revive – they may have an "unknown" knowledge of the real objects linked to the fantasy, and their relation to these objects. From this point on, it is plausible to mention Jacques Lacan's terms for relational aspects of human psyche.

Although Lacan did not specifically make formulations of 'playing', his theorization by rereading of Freud and many other scholars, brought a variety of terms which may be useful for exploring excessive online gaming (Rehak, 2003). One of the most important contribution of his theory to the literature is the concept of 'mirror stage'. Mirror stage forms the main pillar of what Lacan (1977a) calls as Imaginary order. In this stage, the infant, who experiences its body as fragmented, encounters its image on mirror as a whole object, and this meeting creates an aggressive conflict within (Evans, 2003). This aggressive tension is resolved when the baby is identified with the 'whole'

image, and the ego is formed through identification. The subject now recognizes her/his image as something she/he owns and feels mastery on. The unsteady sense of mastery is endorsed by the Other, whose eyes the subject sees through from now on (Lacan, 1977a; Evans, 2003). The mirror stage offers a standpoint for exploring gamers' relation to their characters in the game, which are reflected on the computer screens. In addition, Lacan presents another order, the Symbolic order, which he links to the language and paternal function (i.e., castration), and to psychoanalysts' practice (Lacan, 1956-1957; Kemp, 2011). Castration in Lacanian psychoanalysis refers to "the symbolic lack of an imaginary object", namely the phallus (Lacan, 1956-1957). Anxiety related to castration in real world and in games may be explored by investigating the subject's positioning in the language. Besides, behaviors addictive in nature are also constituted as identity and expressed in identity in a stream of language (Kemp, 2011). Then, exploring the speech of individuals may be valuable in terms of exploring their excessive online gaming experience. Lastly, the Real order operates in a tense interaction with Imaginary and Symbolic registers. *Jouissance*, which has roots in this Real order and is related to repetition, is the term describing subject's enjoyment beyond the pleasure principle (Lacan, 2014). Repetition seeks *jouissance* while *jouissance* drives repetition (Lacan, 2007). The degree of online game playing as excessive and addictive might correspond to repetition, and thus, to *jouissance*. These conceptualizations were the theoretical backbone of this thesis.

1.2. Problem Statement

Playing online games excessively in adulthood shows itself as a symptom in today's clinic more often than before (Thorne, 2017). Either as the only symptom, or as an accompanying symptom, clinicians have a higher chance to encounter a gamer complaining about it and seeking for their professional help. Thus, more research is needed to investigate this notion. In this work, the concept of playing online games excessively is not seen as a strictly defined behavioral symptom. Rather, players' reflective elaborations of their condition were given more importance. As mentioned earlier, online game players may choose to engage in gaming excessively for several reasons. One important and common reason may be the wish to escape from the anxiety brought about by the reality of the offline – or real – world, i.e., castration. The

Law or the Other castrates the subject in the way the subject gives up some satisfaction, or *jouissance*, derived from ‘wholeness’ in their relation to the object of fantasy (Fink, 1997). Thus, the subject’s position in relation to her/his object may give insight about the processes and the experiences of everlasting castration of the Other.

Playing enables formation of emotional relationships and development of social contacts which keep individuals whole (Winnicott, 1975). A question arises, consequently, asking why are grown-ups, who might be assumed to have progressed to adulthood, are still in the need for the virtual plays to keep themselves ‘whole’? To answer this question, we must understand that each person who engages in online games has a personal experience although the game is the same, similar to the fact that each person who is watching a play at theatre has a different experience because each one has a different relationship with their desire (Lacan, 2017). Then, we may ask the previous question differently: How is the players’ relationship with their desire?

1.3. Research Statement and Research Questions

The main purpose of this study is to investigate the experiences of playing online games excessively in adulthood. In line with and above this objective, exploring underlying mechanisms and accompanying conditions of online gaming in excess is also aimed at. For this purpose, I attempted to understand how these individuals position themselves according to the Other and how this positioning regulates the individuals’ state of *jouissance* and vice versa. While the position related to the Other points out the alienation and separation processes of the participants, investigating the individuals’ state of *jouissance* helps to understand the repetitive and excessive nature of their game playing.

1.4. Data Collection Strategy

The current thesis is aimed at understanding how adult gamers subjectively go through and make sense of the perseveration in their excessive online gaming. I chose to conduct a qualitative study because it is appropriate for my research purpose and research questions in which subjectivity is fundamental. The focus of my education and training as a clinical psychologist is Lacanian psychoanalysis. Psychoanalysis can

be a convenient method for a person whose symptom has an addictive nature (O'Dowd, 2010), and in this case, for committed online gamers. Qualitative research is a scientifically convenient and appropriate methodology for applied psychoanalysis (Vanheule, 2002). Accordingly, and in particular, I have chosen to do Interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) as the methodology of this research. The focus of IPA is to explain profoundly how participants give meaning to their personal and social worlds, by examining the meanings of certain lived experiences and situations as the main bits of information (Smith & Osborn, 2007). An IPA researcher aims at discovering the individual's personal experience and perception of a phenomenon, contrary to reproducing an objective judgement about an object or an event. Understanding the impact of the researcher herself is another purpose of IPA. In other words, the researcher is in an active position where she attempts to interpret both the participants' meaning making efforts, and her own influence and experience in this process (Smith & Osborn, 2007). The mentioned characteristics of IPA is in line with Lacanian theory and my psychoanalytical approach in which transference has uttermost importance. Also, choosing IPA as the method may have led to a copious coincidence, as the term coined for transference by Freud in German language *übertragung* can also be translated as 'translation' (O'Dowd, 2010) and as 'transcription', all of which were fundamental stages of this research endeavor.

The participants are included to the study only if they state that they play online games in excess, so the participants' evaluation about their behavior is crucial, and contributes to the qualitative research effort. Because of its idiographic nature, the number of participants is much less in IPA compared to quantitative methods, which means that it studies individual differences and correspondences (Howitt, 2016). The sample size is determined according to the mentioned research methodology in which the richness and depth of the obtained data is aspired and is seen as more important. In order to ensure homogeneity of the sample, the participants are chosen by using purposive and convenience sampling methods, which is suitable for the research design (Smith & Osborn, 2007). Although common sense implies that the players who engage in excessive online game playing are adolescent boys, the most committed gamers are reported to be males who are older than 19 (Chappell et al., 2006). With this information in mind and in accordance with the research purpose, methodology

and questions, several inclusion criteria were decided. Individuals' own evaluation about their online gaming as excessive was the main criterion. In addition, biological sex as male, age range as between 20-30 years and marital status as single were determined to be additional inclusion criteria.

Possible participants were informed about the study with an announcement message shared in social media newsgroups. Eight individuals who met the criteria were included in the study. This research took place during the quarantine days of the pandemic in 2020, which resulted from the rapid spread of a type of coronavirus, COVID-19. Thus, online meetings were arranged with participants, and interviews were conducted on Skype. In other words, I ended up doing interviews with online gamers in an online setting. This unpredictable change in the nature of interviews was taken into consideration throughout the research and writing process. A question related to the pandemic and quarantine days was asked as a part of the interview. Participants were also asked about their motivations for participating in an online interview instead of participating in a face-to-face meeting.

1.5. Implications

This thesis may contribute to the literature in several ways. Psychologists in general, and clinicians in particular, may gain deeper insight about the experiential features of online game playing in adults. In the study, subthemes and superordinate themes are basically the patterns caught in participants' speech while communicating with an 'other'. From a Lacanian perspective, results of this study may give an opportunity to gather information about online game players' relation to the other, and to the Other. That is to say, it can draw a picture portraying imaginary relationships and symbolic relationships of the participants, which were reflected in the subjective preferences for their narratives, and in their spoken language. This picture may enable looking into the clinical structures of online gamers who play excessively. For example, it is claimed that individuals who are unable to stop doing a certain pleasurable act (such as taking drugs, or playing games) and complain about it, actually address to the Other who seems indifferent to their pleasure or pain (O'Dowd, 2010), and their symptom can be viewed as a demand for affection in the form of projection to the therapist. The

experience of transference in psychoanalysis makes other significant relationships of the patient brought onto surface because “what had formerly been projected to the inanimate object, the screen of the video game or the computer, into the transference relation with the therapist, and to play it out” (Williams, 2001). Concurrently, this thesis may allow clinicians and psychoanalysts to identify transference patterns of prospective patients who complain about excessive online gaming, and transferences of their own for patients with similar clinical structures since the method takes the communication dynamics between researcher and participant into account.

Further research may be conducted to obtain subjective data from samples with different nature, to explore the motivations of players of different games, and to widen the scope of knowledge available in clinical psychology literature in terms of clinical structures of excessive online gamers. This is the first qualitative study conducted with Turkish speakers and is the first study which has a Lacanian perspective, so follow-up studies may follow, leading to emergence of culturally significant research. A possible limitation is that one interview with each participant may not be enough to gather all relevant information about the issue at hand. Also, more than one interview may be needed for a deeper relationship to be established between two people, and for the researcher to grasp more of the nature of players’ relation to others, and her relation to the participants. Nevertheless, there is still a communication process in one interview, and players’ communication with an unknown other who is in a position such as researcher may be properly portrayed. In addition, the interview questions in this study focused less on whether participants engage in other kinds of addictive behaviors excessively. More information about engagement in other repetitive and addictive actions may be important to evaluate individuals’ online game playing as a way of sublimation or as a part of a self-destructive pattern. Lastly, further qualitative studies may be centered on research questions exploring sexual phenomena in excessive online gamers. In approaching the issue of excessive online gaming, the concept of sexualization which is not addressed in this thesis, may be relevant since it refers to specific positioning to *jouissance* and to the object (Aydoğ, 2020).

1.6. Structure of the Thesis

The introduction part is reserved for the general information about the thesis. In the next part, Chapter 2, an in-depth literature review is given. In the Chapter 3, research methodology is explained and argued thoroughly. Next, the findings in the form of subthemes and superordinate themes are shared in the Chapter 4. A discussion which involves theoretical and practical conclusions is presented in the Chapter 5. The implications, limitations, and further research are discussed in the Chapter 6. Lastly, conclusion of the thesis is given in the Chapter 7.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, results of the previous qualitative studies on gaming, relevant psychoanalytical discussions about play and related concepts such as addiction, repetition, narcissism and ego development were given. In addition, these concepts were explored in the scope of three constitutive registers for the subject in Lacanian psychoanalytical thought.

2.1. Qualitative Studies on Gaming

The individuals living in technology era of today's world are offered a plenty of different types of games. Before the times when the Internet had not been invented yet, the only kind of technologically supplied games were video games. In these games, a player used to sit in front of a screen of television or of a device specifically made for the purpose of gaming, and she/he used to be the only living person who interacts within the game at that moment even if there is an audience watching her/his play. In those times, few articles about gaming were published by the researchers from disciplines such as psychology (Cooper & Mackie, 1986; Silvern & Williamson, 1987; Keepers; 1990) and sociology (Kaplan, 1983; Ellis; 1984). These papers were usually based on observations of children who witness violence in video games, and predictions related to the effects of violent video games in future. Then, the Internet connection became established globally, and the possibility for playing in interaction with other players emerged. This resulted in a dramatic increase in the number of games with different nature and consequently in the number of gamers. However, there is little research about the concept of playing games in the clinical psychology literature even though the number of players has been increased enormously and problematic engagement in games has become a prevalent complaint in terms of

psychological health. Almost all existing studies have been conducted with the aim of determining diagnostic criteria for problematic gaming. Indeed, there has been even less interest in qualitative researchers to study the experiences of players. This fact points to a neglect or underestimation of the notion of gaming. Nonetheless, more comprehensive interest for this issue begins to develop, and there are several qualitative studies that report important findings regarding the subjective gaming experience of players. In the following paragraphs, findings of these studies will be summarized.

Chappell, Eatough, Davies and Griffiths (2006), conducted a study in which interpretative phenomenological analysis was used in order to study excessive online gaming experiences that players shared on a range of online forums. For this study, they included players who perceived themselves to be excessively playing a specific game, *Everquest*. In this qualitative research, two superordinate themes are reported namely the participants' ambivalent thoughts on the impact of the game in their lives, and their accounts for becoming addicted to the game in a similar way with alcohol or gambling addiction. Researchers suggest that main features of addiction were displayed by the participants (Chappell et al., 2006).

Hussain and Griffiths (2009), carried out a thematic analysis to investigate experiences and feelings of players of massively multiplayer role-playing games (MMORPG), and they report that online games are dissociative, time-consuming, integrated into the daily lives of the players and associated with problems when played excessively. Also, excessive online gaming has components of addiction and effects on relationships of gamers, and players use online gaming to relieve adverse feelings. In a later thematic analysis done by the same researchers, it is found that players experience social interactions and get rewarded in games, feel as a part of a community, learn skills applicable to real-life, play nonterminating games on contrary to their intention, escape from real life, and become obligated to other players of the game (Hussain & Griffiths, 2014).

Another qualitative research using grounded theory approach as the method of choice, suggests that most prevalent concepts were players' pursuit for enjoyment, friendships

in virtuality, escapism or dissociation, the contextual characteristics of the game, control, and conflict (Beranuy, Carbonell & Griffiths, 2012). The researchers conclude that the main motivations for online gaming addiction stem from seeking entertainment, escapism, and virtual friendship.

Wang & Zhu (2011) used hermeneutics approach in a qualitative study investigating online gaming addiction among university students. They suggest that students who play online games suffer from problems in their health and studies, and their family and peer relationships may not be favorable although it varies among individuals. It is concluded that individuals, who are most prone to become addicted to online gaming, had socialization problems formerly and are destitute of self-control (Wang & Zhu, 2011).

In a qualitative study using interpretative phenomenological analysis aiming to explore experiences of players of *Halo 3: ODST*, which is a single-player video game, it is reported that individuals emphasize feelings of nostalgia in the engulfing atmosphere of the game, and their conspicuous experiences in the game are situated in visual imagery and world-building, auditory content such as sound and music, and the main character of the game (Meyers, 2018).

Although the available choices of behaving in games such as *World of Warcraft* (*WoW*), which belongs to genre of massively multiplayer online role playing game (MMORPG), seem far different from the options for action in real world, it was found that the players made choices that reflect their real-life tendencies, and in-game self-presentations of the players are found to be consistent with reality (Worth, 2015). In the findings of this research, games are seen as an area that consisted parallelism with reality rather than a place where real life restrictions were merely avoided.

2.2. An Exploration of Psychoanalytical Theory

In the literature, psychoanalytic approach was reported to be a fruitful contributor to explore the explicit or implicit roles of excessive video gaming, and to implement this understanding in the care of individuals who engage in problematic gaming (Janiri,

Ferri, Giuseppin & Pivetta, 2019). Similarly, it may also be beneficial for investigating the phenomenon of excessive online gaming with the aim of listening closely to the players' lived experiences, and implementing acquired knowledge into the scientific literature, and clinical practice. Since symptomatic engagement in online gaming became widespread in our time, and virtual games had capacity to influence a person's psychological life subjectively, each person would express a unique experience involving symbolic components about gaming, which must be recognized by psychotherapists and psychoanalysts (Petry, 2012). Moreover, excessive online gaming is found to be sharing similar characteristics to addiction. Considering its addictive components, psychoanalytically oriented therapy can be the choice of treatment (O'Dowd, 2010). Also, tackling the experiences of gaming in psychoanalytical practice, is required in order to have a profound understanding of the phenomenon (Bertolini & Nissim, 2002). All in all, some recent psychoanalytical works and discussions about gaming were outlined.

Essig (2012) suggests that individuals, whose symptom presents itself as problematic gaming, are not open to be surprised by the real world. In other words, individuals who do not assent to the possible vicissitudes of the reality may be drawn to play games symptomatically. This inclination for turning toward games may be due to that the factor of surprise is minimized when playing "because all that is unknown can be known" in the games (Janiri et al., 2019). Unlike real world, games offer virtuality in which the players are not risking anything since they can always restart the game or die voluntarily to compensate for prior failures (Jansz, 2005). In addition, if a person believes that losing is the only option in real life, she might be prone to get caught in the virtual world (Jansz, 2005), where losing can be practiced, and does not bring an actual loss. Also, players actively choose to play a game more frequently (or to have control in a particular virtual world to a higher degree) considering what to expect from the experience in terms of emotions, which can be seen as a solid attempt to exclude certain feelings from, or include those to, the gaming experience (Jansz, 2005; Weisel, 2015).

Unconscious fantasies can manifest themselves in the way the players control the actions or decisions while playing video games (Jansz, 2005; Janiri et al., 2019).

Unconscious fantasies, involving the individual's projective and introjective identifications (Klein, 1975 as cited in Jansz, 2005), participate in the player's comprehension of each event during game (Jansz, 2005). Projective and introjective identification defenses belong to the times when a subject was only an infant who cannot sense the line between itself and the outside, and as a result, misconceives the experiences which originate from inside as if those originate from outside and vice versa (McWilliams, 2011).

Similarly, Weisel (2015) suggests that unconscious material and expectations purport in the visual and fictive support of the video games. He says that excessive game players aim to ward off psychic death, but they also choose to be present in a place where frequent encounters with death happens. Game place, as a parallel universe structured in such a way that the player's imagination is out of context, provides the player to repetitively try to manage the anxiety about death and life (Weisel, 2015). In order to feel alive and avoid the anxiety related to definitiveness of death, the player not only needs to die and be born over and over again, but also needs to witness these resurrection scenes.

Kestenbaum & Weinstein (1985), suggest that video games enable adolescent boys to express their aggression and release this hostile energy which cannot be done without any consequence in real world. They also claim that Oedipal issues which an individual re-experiences through adolescence might be offered a relief by playing aggressive video games. According to Kirkland (2015), Oedipal structures are exceptionally engaged by individuals in videogames than other methods of storytelling because video games uniquely combine movements in its space and its stories. Jagodzinski (2006), states that interaction feature offered in video games is what distinguishes them from other types of media which demonstrates violent graphics, and players mostly display an obsessive addictive symptom since they are in control of the game through this interaction.

Rehak (2003) claims that in a video game, the player makes peace and reunites with her avatar, which reflects contradictions related to her self-image as an idealized other, and this reunification is rendered possible by the repetitive encounters with the images

of destruction and fragmentation of her character in the game that hosts virulent enemies. Players who witness the images of their destructed reflections on the screen sense their bodily selves as whole, and this sensation points to aggressivity between the player and the reflected image which can be seen as a constitutive other (Rehak, 2003). For example, first-person shooting (FPS) genre locates the player in the game as the authority in charge, and the character in the game is a continuation of that person who is in charge (Spittle, 2011). Thus, as opposed to other kinds of media, the player does not only identify with a ready-made character but gains the second identity of the character that she controls in the game (Spittle, 2011). FPS games make its players sense themselves as the main characters of the game as if they hear by their characters' ears and see by their characters' eyes to comprehend the game space (Black, 2017; Laurier & Reeves, 2013). This unification of perspectives and bodies of the player and the character creates an illusion of agency in the game space and reduces the number of possible perspectives to only one, namely the player's (Black, 2017; Lahti, 2003). Third person perspective games, on the other hand, provide players a wider scope of observation and more exhaustive control for game environment than their characters' perspectives (Laurier & Reeves, 2013). Another important characteristic of most video games is that they display images of a world which is claimed to be three-dimensional, but players interact with the images of this world which are reflected on a two-dimensional screen (Black, 2017). This is comparable to the way people form interactions with the images of themselves and the real world that they see in the mirrors.

Early literature of psychoanalysis mostly offers theoretical background, observations, and conclusions about children's play. Recognizing the characteristics of children's play contributed substantially to approach the notion of playing online games. However, play was not the only concept concerning us for exploring its excessive degree, virtual quality, and occurrence and/or persistence during adulthood. In order to compass the scope of the research interest in this thesis, psychoanalytical literature on addiction and repetition was also reviewed and elaborated. Moreover, another distinctive concept such as narcissism, which is interrelated with aforementioned phenomena, was explained.

2.2.1. Conceptualization of Play in Early Psychoanalytic Writings

Sigmund Freud (1920) claims that play allows representations of one's frustrating experiences, and thus it enables to discharge a tension that is emotionally accumulated in other areas of life. He draws conclusions from his observations of his grandson's two different kinds of games. From first game, where his grandson throws a piece of wool to a distant place, and receives it back, he concluded that the play occurs due to the child's attempt to symbolize his mother's absence and presence, and that he does so to cope with what he felt when separated from his mother (Freud, 1920). By engaging in this symbolization, the child lives the separation scene as an experience not so anxiety-provoking and something he could actively influence, and by repeating this symbolization of separation and reunion, the child becomes less agitated when his mother leaves (Holowchak, 2011). Pleasure or unpleasure felt in the original experience (i.e., losing the mother from the sight) is not important in terms of its voluntary repetition because main pleasure comes from the satisfaction of the drive for mastery, also a change in the position of the child from passivity to activity occurs by repetitively playing the game as the author of the game (Freud, 1920). For Freud, the child is passive and is at the mercy of the mother about whether she comes back or not when she is gone, but the child takes an active position through playing separation games such as this game, in facing with this unfortunate loss which is the mother's absence (1920). Even if the event itself is not pleasurable, each time it is repeated, the child gets more control over it, and this is pleasurable (Holowchak, 2011). According to Jagozinski (2006), this game of Freud's grandson, which is a desire game marked by failure, and his second game, which is a drive game marked by satisfaction, has a dialectic to grasp the notion of playing video games. He claims that a child who plays this kind of game ensures his stance in language when he loses his object, calls for his lost object (her wool or her mother so to speak), fails to retrieve it, feels consequent negative emotions, then he retrieves, feels like complete, but again he throws it away to fail again. Basically, the later feeling of completeness underlines the former state of being with a lack, which is necessary to desire something and move towards it. In the second game, however, the child repetitively lies low of a mirror until he suddenly hops before a mirror to see his image, bursting into laughter. There is no way that he fails in this game, and he can only enjoy it.

Anna Freud (1937) claims that play is an adaptive defense involving repetition of the situations that have caused anxiety on the child's part, and by playing, the child can alleviate invasive anxiety and master over the related situations. Play has a cathartic function for emotions, and in addition, is defensive since it is a more sublimated way of expression for socially unfavored behavior and for or-else rejected aspects of personality (Giddens, 1964; Holowchak, 2011). A child's play involves an indirect symbolic attempt to manifest one thing and veil another thing at the same time (Erikson, 1943).

Klein (1930) sees children's play as having a significant role in development of ego because play relates internal reality to external reality. She sees the function of representation and fulfillment of wishes as the common aspects in playing and dreaming. Also, play functions as a recurrent masturbatory practice as it allows to discharge for the infantile sexual and autoerotic fantasies (Klein, 1929).

According to Klein, the child is subjected to object-relations from birth onwards, noting breastfeeding experience as of a paramount importance where the mother's breast is perceived as a good (present and nurturing) or a bad (absent and neglecting) object depending on the child's projection of his/her internal reality (Klein, 1955). In these projections of the child, envy, destructive drives and primary sadism become prominent (Klein, 1932), and the ego is founded on those. While bad and good objects are completely split in the beginning, marking paranoid-schizoid position, they are later recognized as inseparable in the infant's mind, marking depressive-position in which the infant realizes her aggressivity for the bad object may destroy the good object, too (McDonald, 2012).

When frustration and destruction are not in the foreground of the child's experience, the child is able to form symbols (i.e., symbol-formation) that are necessary to play in which the child displaces her anxiety onto external objects (Klein, 1930 as cited in Ramires, 2016). The displacement of emotions makes playing a relieving experience because targeted objects are now other external objects than the mother or the father, who are, in fact, primary targets of destructive fantasies (Ramires, 2016).

Weisel (2015), claims that a child can acquire symbol-formation as a result of the fact that she experiences herself, thinks her thoughts, and feels her emotions. Although symbolization ability is gained in early childhood, stressful circumstances in life or ongoing conflicts of an individual may erode it (Jansz, 2005).

Winnicott (1988) suggests that the baby's aggression must be survived by the mother for the baby to gain a sense of omnipotence even if this is essentially an illusion. After the omnipotence on the part of the child is established, it must diminish steadily, resulting in the child's disappointment, which would later create a medium for imagination and creative play. This space would be internalized by the baby to be a container for oneself, or to develop a sense of a unique and viable self (Winnicott, 1970). Accordingly, one description of psychotherapy is that it is a playground for the patient and for the therapist, and the role of the therapist is to evoke the patient's ability to play (Winnicott, 1970; Haskell, 2017). Different types of games, such as children's make-believe games, or adults' role-playing games, and even dreaming with its playful quality, can occur, for that these are referenced by a sense of self (Haskell, 2017).

Fantasy and play are described as resembling masturbatory acts (Winnicott, 1971) in which the subject is an agent who not only acts but also spectates the scene of the fantasy (Harari, 2001) and of the play. The main difference is that the child plays, and the adult fantasizes (Dion, 2012). Fantasy and child's play diverge in terms of the child's ability to differentiate the play from the reality, and her attempt to tie the objects of her imaginary to the visible reality through play, while this is not the case for fantasy (Freud, 1908 as cited in Dion, 2012, p. 167). Also, play remains closer to the real world as it gets inspired more from it, and fantasy is influenced predominantly by internal experiences and wishes that were repressed which were not necessarily determined by the events in reality (Dion, 2012).

One shared feature of play and fantasy is that they are cut-out from reality, leading to possibility of catharsis, so an otherwise unpleasant experience becomes pleasurable (Dion, 2012). On the other hand, the function of playing differs for children and adults. While children attempt to master external reality through playing, adults play to flee

the scene of their reality for a defined period of time (Erikson, 1943). Playing for an adult is an attempt to get pleasure that has a resemblance of the pleasure of playing in childhood when adults' restrictions imposed upon her were much loose, and by contrast, playing for a child is an attempt to practice being an adult by repetition of familiar experiences and mastering those (Freud, 1905).

Games do not necessarily involve the act of playing, because in games, individuals should agree on certain rules for a specified period of time to set boundaries between real world and game activity (Giddens, 1964). The games include obstacles which functions as elevating libidinal tension so that its release would potentially create more pleasure, and in this sense obstacles in games are found as working likewise as sexual foreplay (Holowchak, 2011).

To sum, Freud emphasizes on symbolization processes and pleasure through repetition in play of children. Klein puts more emphasis on destructive and sexual wishes in play, whereas Winnicott sets everything aside while approaching a child's play and evaluates it in and of itself (Ramires, 2016). Playing games is different from playing for the sake of itself, and adults and children engage in games for different reasons in relation to manage reality. The main point is that the core component of playing is attempting to form symbols to project feelings and fantasies on objects, and to gain mastery of reality which is formed by these objects.

2.2.2. On Addiction and Repetition

The first observation in psychoanalytical literature is that repetition of words occurs while children learn how to talk and get pleasure from the familiarity and constancy of voices which are provided by repetition (Freud, 1905). Later, Freud (1914a) introduces the term compulsion to repeat to refer to acting out, which includes repetitively and unconsciously performing the repressed material instead of remembering them as memories in the consciousness. He elaborates on compulsion to repeat unconscious patterns of behavior within the scope of transference between the patient and the analyst (1914a). In other words, the patient resists to the analytical

work as manifested in her actions by compulsively repeating what she repressed, rather than remembering and conveying those to the analyst.

Compulsion to repeat is claimed to be tied to pleasure principle. Something familiar (or homely or *Heimlich*) and repressed, is being repeated and creates uncanny (or unhomely or *Unheimlich*) feelings instead of pleasurable feelings (Freud, 1919). This seems contradictory to pleasure principle in which the individual directs her actions in order to gain pleasure and escape pain as much as possible. Thus, it is concluded that compulsion to repeat precedes pleasure principle and is rooted in repressed unconscious rather than defenses of the ego (Freud, 1919). Moreover, Freud connects compulsion to repeat to death drive, which is the tendency of organisms to return to the initial state of inorganic material (Freud, 1920). Death drive, characterized by repetition and destruction, is in fact a primitive urge to destruct oneself, and destructive actions directed to any other target than oneself is basically a secondary defense for this urge (Freud, 1933).

Repetition in play, which decreases the degree of uncomfortable feelings that were attached to original negative events, results from seeking pleasure and avoidance of pain. By impulsive repetition, which is a characteristic of playing, the individual aims to return to an initial, more secure state (Barnett & Storm, 1981). As mentioned earlier, this attempt demonstrates a similar purpose and mechanism to that of death drive. Unconscious wishes, fantasies, and identifications are reflected in virtual video games in pre-symbolic forms, however, they do not even find any chance to be represented outside of the game since the emotions, the imagined meanings and the linguistic symbols for those are torn apart from each other (Weisel, 2015). Thus, they can only be repeated in actions.

Repetition and addiction have an unconditional relationship for that addiction requires the repetition of a certain action directed at a specific object. Narcissism, depression, mania and paranoia are associated with addiction (Loose, 2000). In parallel, addiction needs to be comprehended as compassing a wider field than a mere attempt to drive satisfaction through a targeted object (Laurita, 2011). For example, Laurita (2011) reports an obsessional neurotic patient with perverse defenses is reported to be

displaying symbolic structure around a real and impulsive experience of being addicted, which can be worked through symbolically through speaking within the frame of language in analytical setting.

Addiction is seen as manifesting common characteristics to masturbation, and in fact, masturbation is the first kind of addiction that an individual has engaged, creating a potential place to be filled and only substituted by other addictive objects (Freud, 1954; Loose, 1998) such as drinking alcohol, money from gambling, or smoking cannabis etc.. Any addiction to a fantasy object, which may be a drug, carries parallelism to masturbation because the individual withdraws from outside world and others, turns to inside and to herself/himself, and dives into her/his own direct pleasure of a particular object, rejecting any less direct pleasure she/he may get from relations to other objects or people (Proudfoot, 2017; Loose, 2000).

In oral stage of psychosexual development, infantile sexual instincts and fantasies are located on the mouth because it is the erotogenic zone of individuals in this stage, and it is suggested to be the stage which individuals, who are addicted to alcohol or other substances, are fixated on through over-stimulation or under-stimulation, thus their addiction is seen as an oral perversion (Loose, 2000). It is claimed to be a perversion since individuals cannot handle feelings of frustration stemming from their fixation on orality (Harari, 2001), and immediately satisfy their unconscious infantile sexual instincts by extreme engagement with a particular object without any kind of mediation such as sublimation (Loose, 2000).

In summary, repetition is a tendency of unconscious material to be manifested in actions, and it seeks satisfaction of drives based primarily on the lead of death drive. Addiction includes repetition of a fixated channeling to a determined object of fantasy for immediate pleasure, and avoidance of other means which offers less immediate pleasures such as companionship of others. Also, addiction is thought of together with narcissism (Loose, 2000). In the next section, certain aspects of narcissism will be elaborated.

2.2.3. Narcissism

In 1914, Freud mainly writes about the notion of narcissism in his article 'On Narcissism: An Introduction'. According to him, the ego and its narcissistic tendencies are not present from the beginning of life although autoerotic instincts are always present within an individual. Freud (1914b) explains narcissism as an inevitable state of the ego, and the ego development is necessary for narcissism to occur because narcissism needs a unity to be built on. At first, a human baby believes the omnipotence of her ego as all her wishes are realized until the reality takes precedence and lowers the impact of the ego and the consequent megalomania (Loose, 2000). As Loose puts it, for the purpose of holding the ego together, narcissistic recompensation or self-love must be pursued from the outside world unlike the way the infant experiences it from within earlier (2000). What happens is that a libidinal distribution takes place in addition to autoerotic world of the individual, and narcissism emerges. This distribution includes a change in direction of interest, from ongoing internal disturbance and pain of the organism, to the outer world consisting of real or imaginary objects which are suitable for libido to get attached to (Freud, 1914b).

Primary narcissism manifest in every single person since all people have two kinds of sexual objects in the beginning of their lives, and these objects are themselves and their caregivers who feed them (Freud, 1914b). In accordance, Freud distinguishes two kinds of love-objects as anaclitic and narcissistic. The former is demonstrated as that the first sexual and love object of the individual is chosen as her caregiver, and mostly her/his mother. In the latter, the individual's libido is directed on herself/himself as her/his own self is chosen as love object, and this choice is called narcissistic object choice. Moreover, Freud (1914b) exemplifies this kind of choice as more observable and magnified in homosexuality and perversion. Nonetheless, self as love object is normal and present in every person, and is what primary narcissism is based on, whereas, secondary narcissism is problematic because it includes withdrawal of libido from outside and turning of the libido to inside, which creates megalomania such as in schizophrenic conditions (Zuern, n.d.). Either hysterical or obsessional, neurotics, whose primary defense for castration is repression, are in a position where they tie their libidos to a fantasy even if they are seemingly withdrawn from the outside world

whereas dissociation in schizophrenia results in the detachment of libido both from outside world and from fantasy (Freud, 1914b). As Freud states that censorships of ego-ideal in the path to getting the libido satisfied are present when repression is at play, absence of ego-ideal results in infantile or immature means for reaching the perfect libidinal satisfaction and happiness such as in the sexual acts of perversion (Freud, 1914b).

Self-love or self-regard that is dependent on narcissistic libido and was experienced in those earlier times of development by immature ego itself, gives birth to the ideal ego of the individual, which is essentially a perfect image of the ego and is an extension of earlier infantile narcissistic supremacy that once offered an enormous satisfaction for the individual (Freud, 1914b). The individual does not want to renounce the lost satisfaction of it and insists on establishing it again in adulthood by striving for this ideal ego although she/he fails by being pointed out her/his impotence by the interventions of contradictory events in real world, and by her/his own critical inner voice (Freud, 1914b). Freud emphasizes that ideal ego should not be considered as a sublimation of libidinal drives because a strengthened ideal ego would increase the demands of the ego and the need for repression whereas sublimation fulfills the demands of the ego without repression.

In the same article, Freud continues to talk about the narcissistic components in love relationships. Self-love, which is partially remainder of narcissism in infancy, comes partially from meeting the standards of ego ideal, and is partially a result of libidinal investment to a love object, and is present in love-relationships (Freud, 1914b). According to him, all achievements or possessions of valuable objects validate the primal state of omnipotence, heightens self-love, and may lead to overvaluation of the self. However, relationships based on love functions as long as self-love is considered, as follows: If one is loved, self-love increases and if one is not loved, self-love decreases. The main purpose of choosing, and getting satisfied through a narcissistic object, is being loved, so an individual who attached her libido to an object (e.g., a person, or a goal), gives up a certain part of her narcissism that can only be substituted by being loved. When a person becomes aware of her inability to love as a result of psychological or medical conditions, she starts to show regard for herself less and less

(Freud, 1914b), thus, not being able to love decreases self-love which contains a place for being loved, even if it is by one's self.

Aggression which is not attenuated is revealed in individuals who are not able to make sense of the meaning and quality of relationships with significant others, and who get defensive by means of dramatically increased self-love for consequent narcissistic injuries on their ego (i.e., narcissistic fragility), which leads to problems in inter- and intra-personal fields of psychic life (Herzog, 2004).

Considering the necessity of ego development for narcissism to emerge and the significant contributions of playing for the ego development during childhood (Klein, 1930), it can be concluded that narcissism and playing have a strong connection. The conditions of this connection which may be traced in excessive online gaming in adulthood has not been described yet. In addition, narcissism is found to be associated with addiction (Loose, 2000). As mentioned in earlier sections, the excessive degree of playing online games has components of addiction. Thus, there may be possible connections between narcissism and excessive online game playing.

In brief, playing is a functional symbolization and discharge attempt for individuals in very early times of life, is essential for mastering feelings of separation from main caregiver, and contributes to ego development. Since playing is characterized by infantile and omnipotent libidinal attachment to objects, repetitive play resembles masturbation which is autoerotic and narcissistic. Narcissism is founded on, and as an extension of, the ego, which includes love for self through love for a narcissistic object. Unorganized and magnified aggression may ensue from increased self-love as a result of narcissistic fragility.

2.3. Lacanian Approach

Lacan does not specifically comment on the concept of playing but his elaborations on the subject's relations to objects is crucial to understand the experience of playing in terms of the relational characteristics of playing for the subject. Lacan's theorization of human psychic development based on his psychoanalytic practice can be taken as

contributing and adding more to his contemporaries' reflections on playing. In psychoanalytically oriented clinical psychology literature, playing is discussed as an action which is more prominent in childhood period although analogies were drawn between play and fantasy, or dream, or any form of symbolic work such as art or science (Winnicott, 1971). However, the way Lacan demonstrates the constitution of the subject would also be essential because it is able to address the subject's relations to objects in every developmental stage of human psyche, without any specific restriction for age. In other words, exploring Lacanian psychoanalysis would be beneficial to tackle the problem of excessive online game playing in adulthood. In this thesis, I attempted to elaborate on excessive online gaming in the framework of three constitutive registers suggested by Jacques Lacan (1988a).

2.3.1. Imaginary

Imaginary register, which is already formed before the resolution of Oedipus complex through intervention of father in the dual relationship between mother and child, is the main feature of pre-Oedipal phase of psychic development. The determinant of imaginary register is mirror stage in which the subject is constituted essentially through alienation, and alienation results from this constitution of the ego's identification with its mirror-duplicate (Evans, 2003).

The ego is formed when an infant recognizes her image as a whole body reflected on the mirror, and consequently the recognition ties one's libido into the relationship with this image of the body (Lacan, 1953). This mirror is not necessarily an actual mirror. The caregiver of the infant functions like a mirror for her, pointing the image on the mirror to her, and naming this image by her name (Lacan, 1977a). In other words, a subject who has not been aware of any kind of boundaries between herself and her caregiver until then, realizes that the other and herself are separate bodies and beings. Since the ego of the infant is founded on this mirror-image, it is, in effect, an alter ego for the subject (Lacan, 1988b). It should be noted that the baby in this stage starts to see its specular image as an object in the eye of the Other (Chanter, 2008).

Alienation is the process that establishes the subject whereas the ego, which is an 'other' for the subject, is also formed at this stage, offering an illusion reflected from the mirror; and the subject needs this image to form through alienating from it (Lacan, 1988b). Lacan specifies this 'other' to be written as lowercase.

The mentioned relationship is a narcissistic and imaginary relationship between the subject and its image, and it creates the foundation of future relationships with any other human beings (Lacan, 1988b). Also, the ideal-ego starts to develop from the specular image of the subject in this phase, which always comes along with the ego, and during a lifetime, the ideal-ego brings the ever-lasting endeavor for re-acquisition of initial omnipotence of the specular image (Evans, 2003). Lacan claims that imaginary projections of the ego emanate from the ideal-ego (2015). Indeed, projections are, by definition, imaginary defensive strategies of the ego, and are strongly connected to images (Lacan, 1977b).

All phases of this mentioned process are possible due to incapability and vulnerability of the newborn baby who is fully dependent on the caregiver, in most cases, the mother (Evans, 2003). A human baby is in a state of fusion with her mother until weaning, that is to say, this amorphous type of relationship between the two gets interrupted through weaning, making a mark in the baby's psychic world (Evans, 2003). This mark ends the esemplastic former state which all subjects essentially hanker after and want to return to (Lacan, 1938). Until this period, the baby's needs are fulfilled by the mother, particularly by her breast as a satisfying object, as if she knows exactly what her baby needs. The baby finds herself in a position where she gets pleased from satisfaction of her needs, and accompanying love and attention. During weaning, this position is no longer available for her because now her mother's breast is not always in her reach. It comes and goes less and less frequently. In other words, the mother does not answer her baby's demands all the time, and that causes mother to become real in the perception of the baby, who perceives the mother only as a symbolic entity until then (Lacan, 1956-1957). This imaginary lack of the real breast by the symbolic mother creates frustration for the baby the baby in the form of rejection of love (Lacan, 1956-1957). In addition, the trauma of absence of mother and rejection as a result of

weaning is tried to be worked through symbolically in the form of playing separation games (Freud, 1920).

On the other hand, weaning is also a solution for the baby's frustration caused by the perceived possible threat of poisoning through being fed by the breast (Lacan, 1938), yet she/he still depends on this both satisfying and dangerous object for survival. This creates ambivalent feelings towards the first object of the individual, and the mentioned ambivalence is the basis for the unconscious perceptions of all future love-objects.

Simultaneously in the development of the psychic world of the subject, narcissism starts to form for the baby who identified with her mirror reflection. The identification with the mirror image is erotic and aggressive at the same time, which Lacan names as 'narcissistic suicidal aggression' (1977b), for the subject bears positive feelings towards the wholeness of specular image and its resemblance for other human objects, but also experiences the discrepancy between disorganized sensations of its real body and the perfectly integrated imaginary body that is reflected on the mirror (Evans, 2003). However, aggression is not seen as a defense for any possible attacks that may come from this perfect alter ego, instead it is the active offense of the ego, on the ego, for what it imaginarily and deceivingly reflects itself as a whole image (Loose, 2000). The aim of any narcissistic aggression, that is to return back to the initial state of disjointedness and is in line with the aim of the death drive, cannot be accomplished in reality, so it is directed at other objects outside (Loose, 2000). According to Lacan (1977b), narcissistic love involves aggressivity as much as offensive actions do.

Lacan prefers to speak about concept of defense, which has been named as defense by other predecessors or contemporaries in psychoanalytical thought, as fantasy (Evans, 2003). Lacan emphasizes the protective function of fantasy (Evans, 2003). It can be said that he finds these so-called defenses of the ego as imaginary fantasies because they have phantasmatic quality for that they are formed only by the ego's own perceptual world.

Considering the issue of playing online games, Petry (2012) suggests that a game cannot mirror a reality since it is fiction; but this statement seems to be based on a false assumption that a true mirror can duplicate reality, which is in fact not true. For instance, the child's imitation of other's activity is called play (Giddens, 1964), and the play of children very often includes fictive components, too, besides imitation. This imitation may have roots in identification with the other that is reflected on mirror, i.e., specular image of the child. Thus, play can be seen as an extension and exercise of the ego.

Jagodzinski (2006) claims that the individual who play video games feel alive when in game spaces and feels dead when acts in actual world, where she/he faces with unknown, anticipated, possibly anxiety-provoking adversities, which may come true but also be imagined, and most of the time, the imaginary order operates for the subject in games, making him anchored in the imaginary. However, Thorne (2017) claims that games do not solely offer imaginary experience because it has certain rules, bottom operations, and its own structure although avatars of characters may point to the imaginary reflections of the gamers.

2.3.2. Symbolic

In order to explain symbolic register, certain related terms must be explained. First, the term 'symbolic' needs to be clearly defined. The concept of symbolic order in Lacanian thought is heavily influenced by structuralism (Johnston, 2018). For Lacan, speaking through symbols (i.e., use of language) and consequent accumulated culture of social medium are imposed on the nature of human beings, and this symbolization is what makes them people (Lacan, 1977b; Lacan, 1998). Language is institutionalized socially in the way it requires presupposition of all others are subjected to it (Lacan, 1998). What is symbolic about language is that it consists of signifiers, which do not mean anything by themselves but exhibit a quality relative to each other, and which 'represents a subject for another subject' (Lacan, 1998).

In Lacanian psychoanalytical thought, symbolic function is embedded in the names-of-the-Father, which stands for all formations and figures representing the law. Law,

in the sense of Oedipus complex, is described by Freud as prohibition of incest by the primordial and omnipotent father who imposes the law on all other members of the primal clan except himself (Evans, 2003). Drawing conclusion on this prohibition, Lacan (1992) points to the strict relationship between desire and the Law. The Law is interchangeable with what Lacan calls as the symbolic Other, written with a capital 'o'. The Other stands for authority, power, and knowledge (Johnston, 2018), and comprehending the limits of its extent is outside of the subject's reach. The foundation of the Other is based on conceptual definitions of the first other people in subjects' lives, namely their caregivers. The first big Other that is recognized is the first caregiver, mostly the m(O)ther, because she has an omnipotent influence in terms of power (such as that she could deprive her baby by not providing for the baby's needs) and knowledge (both about the needs of her baby and outside world in general). Later, when the Law and the father's (or a second influential figure's) authority on the child and the mother (who has been the Other until then) is also recognized by the child by the intervention of castration and introduction of the names-of-the-father, an association between the concepts of Law, the father, and the Other is established.

Another fundamental term is phallus. Lacan (1956-1957) distinguishes phallus from penis by emphasizing the imaginary nature of the phallus. Imaginary phallus stands for the mother's desire that is noticed by the child in the pre-Oedipal period, by the recognition of the fact that the mother wants something beyond the child (Glowinski, Marks, & Murphy, 2001), which makes the child strive for identification with this something (Evans, 2003) that cannot be invariably defined because it does not mean anything by itself (as it is the case for signifiers). This is because the lack cannot be seen since it depends on other references (i.e., is marked by phallus) to be present, which locates it in the realm of signifiers (Wolf, 2015). In other words, the phallus is "the signifier for the desire of the big Other" (Lacan, 1977b), and the signifier of *jouissance* (Lacan, 1977b) as it promises the anticipation of possible experience of a perfect *jouissance* by completely filling the lack in the Other.

Having mentioned important terms, we can continue from the subject's developmental states. The initial dependency of the infant transforms into the dependency on language to satisfy her needs (Lacan, 1977b). Whatever it is necessary to fulfill those needs, the

child now needs to demand it from her/his caregiver with the aid of language of her/his caregiver. This demand is necessary because the child is a helpless and dependent being, and she/he gives some part of herself/himself away when she/he agrees to be subjected to laws of the language (Evans, 2003).

After the threat of the disintegration of the body encountered in the mirror phase is resolved by identification with the image, there comes a period such that the subject begins to feel the threat of her/his body parts being cut, of castration, which means cutting the penis in Freud's words. In his seminar on object relations, Lacan (1956-1957) states that castration, which he proposed as a state of object deficiency, is the symbolic lack of power, namely the phallus, which is an object imaginarily thought to be having by the first Other (mother), and to be being by the subject. It is important to note that the agent of castration is the real father, object of castration is imaginary phallus, and lack in castration is a symbolic lack (Lacan, 1956-1957). The real father is the father who has his place in the discourse of the mother.

In Lacanian psychoanalytical theory, lack is a crucial concept which is required for the subject to desire and one cannot desire if she/he does not have any lack (Lacan, 2015). In addition, as language imposes certain laws which the child cannot influence and must obey if she/he wants to communicate her/his demands for her/his needs to the caregiver, language splits the subject and castrates the subject by creating an undefined lack in her/his demands, which would later become her/his desire (Lacan, 1977b).

In castration, the subject also moves away from the imaginary idea that she/he is the object that fills the mother's lack by the intervention of the father, who stands where the mother's gaze is directed, and this gaze essentially alludes to the fact that the father has the phallus. Despite Freud's claim that anxiety is caused by castration, Lacan claims the opposite, saying that castration is one of the most fundamental interventions for the subject to get rid of anxiety because castration is symbolic and what is symbolic is what can be worked on (Lacan, 1956-1957). Also, castration makes desire possible because desire is not related to an object but to the lack of the object (Evans, 2003). Desire is the Other's desire (Lacan, 1998) which means that it is both having the desire to be someone else's lacking object and desiring in the way which someone else desires

(Lacan, 1977b). Moreover, in order to take on someone else's desire, it is necessary to recognize the Other and to be lacking something. The most fundamental desire is the desire for the first Other, who is the mother (Lacan, 1992). Initially, the child is subjected to the mother's desire, until the father comes to the stage and a deficiency occurs in the mother, which saves the child from the desire for the mother (Evans, 2003).

A defense for this confrontation is disavowal, which can be a harsher strategy to cope with castration but equally functional under the conditions of the subject, and which establishes the subject in a perverse structure (Lacan, 1977). Disavowal (or *Verleugnung* as the term coined by Freud) is rejection of the traumatic awareness of that the first Other, who is mother, lacks phallus, so that she desires (Evans, 2003). In other words, the subject denies the fact that there is a causation between lack and desire, and insists on a phantasmatic solution that involves making something present in order to desire, such as fetish (Evans, 2003). The important point for the mechanism of disavowal is that there is the knowledge of the relationship between lack of symbolic phallus (i.e., castration) and desire, yet there is also denial of this reality. Hence, individuals with perverse structure are cognizant of castration although they deny that it happened. In perversion, the subject insists that her/his image is the phallus or may become the phallus and she/he does not intend to have the phallus just as the father does. Besides, in perversion, the father is stripped down of his symbolic function and is reduced to be the imaginary father (Lacan, 1956-1957).

The subject who is structured by mechanism of disavowal, aims for inflicting anxiety in the Other and making the Other articulate the Law (Fink, 1997), so that she can maintain her fantasy, which suggests that her position is being the object of *jouissance* of the Other, and she can attempt to complement the Other by giving pleasure to the Other (Wolf, 2015). That is to say, the individual plays a game of anxiety and pleasure with the Other. However, the subject who is structured by mechanism of repression, recognizes herself as lacking and attempts to find the complementary piece in the Other for her own lack (Wolf, 2015).

Considering the perverse structure as protective for the Real aspect of mortality, gaming experience, which takes place in virtual places where a person cannot physically die, and where the worst case of disastrous scenarios are rehearsed repetitively, seems to contain common elements with disavowal (Thorne, 2017). Game space, by definition, sustains itself through self-imposed laws and this is similar to rituals of pervert subjects in which same scenes are repetitively put into play without an actual ending (Thorne, 2017). For a person who is immortal and repetitively engages in the same acts, the only measure of enjoyment is insured by and comes from the dependence on the restrictions of the game (Thorne, 2017).

On the other hand, repression is the mechanism which subjects with neurotic structures use as a strategy when encountered with castration of the Other. In Freudian definition, repression is excluding unwanted psychic material such as memories from consciousness and restraining them in unconscious (Freud, 1910). For Lacan, what is repressed is the signifier (Lacan, 1998). Although neurotic structures include hysteric and obsessive structures due to their primary defense as repression, a hysteric subject is very sensitive to wishes of others whereas an obsessive subject puts effort for neutralizing others for that he does not want his image to be an extension of the Other (Laurita, 2010; Fink, 1997).

Symptoms are symbolic for that it shares a crucial characteristic with signifiers. As signifiers do not represent anything by themselves but exhibits a value with reference to a subject, symptoms do not stand for anything by themselves without a reference to the subject who displays the symptom (Verhaeghe & Declercq, 2002). In this aspect, a symptom is a signifier. According to Loose (2000), addictive objects work for an incomplete and repeated solution of intrapsychic conflicts, and psychoanalytically speaking, by this function they are symptomatic and symbolic. Moreover, if the subject continues to use the symptom as a solution even if it is essentially a complaint, there is an inalienable factor in that symptom which the subjects hold on to (Loose, 2000). In addition, symbolic function is broken in problematic gaming in two different ways according to Weisel (2015); first is demonstrated as that the bond between fantasy and reality vanishes just as it happens in dissociative pathologies, and second is

demonstrated as that the bond between meaning and the signifier vanishes which creates numbness.

2.3.3. Real

The terms such as *jouissance*, anxiety, and repetition, have their foundations in Real register. Lacan situates anything that is real, in the pre-Oedipal stage of psychic development, that is characterized as being ineffable, vital and real (Miller, 2011). After a child is symbolically castrated by real father, the Oedipal complex is resolved, and the symbolic quality of Oedipal resolution means that the real body of the subject is dead (Lacan, 2006 as cited in Miller, 2011).

Jouissance is the chosen word to refer to several meanings such as getting sexual pleasure out of an object (Lacan, 1977b) or by masturbation (Lacan, 1956-1957) which is basically the subtype of the former, as function of death drive (Lacan, 2007), as having a physical essence (Lacan, 1999), and as being related to enjoyment of phallus (Lacan, 1974-1975); however, the most inclusive definition is that *jouissance* indicates the perplexing and antithetical painful enjoyment, which is derived from the symptom that the subject has been complaining all the time and has been getting satisfaction out of it (Lacan, 1992 as cited in Evans, 2003). In the psychic development of the subject, certain amount of *jouissance* needs to be given up by the intervention of castration because the subject renounces her position as imaginary phallus of her mother when being castrated (Evans, 2003). Neurotics who cope with castration by repression, are drawn into the illusion that *jouissance* is possible if there was no prohibition for it (Evans, 2003). To give up *jouissance* is necessary to live a normal life since entrance to social world is possible only by being forbidden to experience full *jouissance* (Proudfoot, 2017).

There are three forms of *jouissance* that are described by the course of development in Lacan's theory. The original *Jouissance* (written with a capital 'J') refers to the initial experiences and state of oneness with the Other in the beginning of life and this *jouissance* is not available for any subject (Dimitriadis, 2017). It can only be conceptualized as such. The second one is phallic *jouissance* that is related to phallus,

inherent in signifiers and made possible by castration of language (Dimitriadis, 2017). That is to say, signifiers represent a kind of *jouissance* in relation to phallus for the subject. Last one is Other *jouissance* that cannot be articulated in or reduced to words, thus has no relation whatsoever with signifiers, and is attributed to the ineffable experiences of mystics and some women (Dimitriadis, 2017). Jagodzinski (2006) suggests that individuals who play video games to an extreme degree experience a kind of enjoyment that becomes excessive and starts to induce pain. This enjoyment is phallic *jouissance*. He likens this to a tickle game which must be ended because one side starts to laugh painfully as the joy becomes too much.

Another related concept of Real register is anxiety. Anxiety is felt when there is a lack of lack (Salecl, 2004). It originates in the Real for that it is unspeakable and unconveyable. In fact, what is real is the object of anxiety (Lacan, 1991), and this real object of anxiety, which cannot be imaginarily encountered with and cannot be symbolically articulated, is manifested as the manner of trauma (Lacan, 1998). The real object is named with the term '*objet petit a*' to designate the object that cause desire, and if something claims to be this object, anxiety emerges (Evans, 2003). Achieving to this 'object cause of desire' produces anxiety, rather than failing to achieve it, contrary to mainstream definitions of anxiety, since acquisition of the 'object cause of desire' would result in the loss of desire (Salecl, 2004). This means that anxiety functions as a cushion between *jouissance* and desire because reaching the object would allow the subject to experience full *jouissance*, and lack of this object enables the subject to desire. Similar to the sustainability which anxiety offers for desire, desire functions as an antidote for anxiety as it is always presented with a lack in the place of '*objet petit a*' (Lacan, 2015).

One must consider the extent of repetition before elaborating on addiction. Freud connected repetition compulsion to acting out which is manifested in the transference between the patient and the psychoanalyst (1914a). On the other hand, Lacan (2007) describes repetition as the comeback of *jouissance* which is superabundant, is re-lived repeatedly to exceed the restrictions determined by pleasure principle and has the ultimate goal of death.

When the subject cannot comprehend a past event which is already distorted as a memory, she/he fails and leaves the path that pleasure principle offers, and repeats the unconscious material in the original event (Wolf, 2015). In this respect, repetition gives a promise to the subject to change the course of events, yet the failure is inevitable due to the unchanged unconscious component in itself (Wolf, 2015). Thus, repetition has two facades in the forms of a continuously relived trauma, and a possible chance to catch and identify the unconscious (Wolf, 2015). Repetition is also depicted as the main quality of the chain of signifiers which is the representative of the unconscious for all the speaking-subjects (Lacan, 2015 as cited in Evans, 2003). In other words, signifiers are repeated just as symptoms are repeated. Moreover, Lacan claims that transference is a particular form of repetition by its nature although transference and repetition cannot be taken as identical (Lacan, 2015)

If addictions are considered, it can be said that the addictive object takes the place of ‘object cause of desire’ and it becomes the ‘object cause of *jouissance*’, thus, it creates anxiety and results in excessive *jouissance* that is directly achievable (Proudfoot, 2017). Considering the connections between castration of language and desire, an addicted subject is in denial of castration, consequently does not speak through words and does not desire because she is now a ‘subject of *jouissance*’ (Meyer, 2011) who runs after the ‘object cause of *jouissance*’ in the form of the addictive object (Proudfoot, 2017) and who speaks only through the symptom of addiction.

Games have already-established worlds formed by their designers although players are free to experience those worlds subjectively, but there are games in which playing is absent on the part of the ‘gamer’ due to the strong emphasis on enjoyment derived from dependence on the structure and restrictions of the game, instead of playing for the sake of the joy of creative playing, just as the mechanism in clinical structure of perversion that Lacan suggested (Thorne, 2017). This perverse pattern is a defense for the impact of the Real in the form of *jouissance* and death drive.

In summary, anxiety and *jouissance* have roots in Real register and the experiences of anxiety and phallic *jouissance* influence and are influenced by Symbolic and Imaginary registers. Anxiety occurs when an object is defined in the place of object

that cause the subject to desire. Repetition around this object takes places of desiring, at it brings about certain *jouissance*. *Jouissance* also requires repetition, and the two are related to the concept of addiction where the addicted subject denies the castration of the Law of the Other, and thus is unable to desire. Also, death drive functions in these processes and allows the individual to experience a pleasure resembling the one that is precedent of pleasure principle.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

In this section, qualitative research and interpretative phenomenological analysis were explained. Following this, the reasons for choosing qualitative research approach for exploring experiences of excessive online game playing, participants and sampling method, procedure, data analysis, trustworthiness of the study were described.

3.1. Qualitative Research and Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis

Qualitative research is used for exploring individuals' experiences, perspectives, attributions in life with consideration of the context of their own realities, and for expounding social and thought-related processes based on the vision gained from relevant existing or emergent notions (Yin, 2016). The main difference between quantitative and qualitative research is that objectivity is a very important aim in terms of reliability of the findings in quantitative methods, whereas in qualitative methods, the researcher's aim is to explain explicitly her own possible biases and presumptions to herself and others in order to lay a trustworthy foundation for the results (Patton, 1990).

Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) is a qualitative method suggested by Smith (1996), aiming at a comprehensive analysis of similarities and differences in individuals' narratives as data, which are preferably from semi-structured interviews where individuals are encouraged by the researcher to speak as freely as possible, and by this feature, it is claimed to be well-suited for psychological research (Howitt, 2016). IPA is rooted on the ideas of phenomenology of Husserl, hermeneutics of Heidegger, symbolic interactionism of Mead, and idiography of Allport (Howitt, 2016). Phenomenology is interested in consciousness while symbolic interactionism claims

that consciousness emerges from social interactions in which individuals are also active participants, and hermeneutics basically means interpretation (Howitt, 2016). Idiographic approach emphasizes the importance of detailed analysis of individual cases as opposed to nomothetic approach which focuses on postulating laws for populations by doing research with a group of individuals which is thought to be representative of those populations. Also, qualitative researchers approach to the data as a whole and inspect the points where and how the parts of this body of data interrelate (Morrow, 2005) rather than reducing data into unnatural pieces of information (Fischer, 2009). Since all these characteristics contribute to bring focus on individuals' subjective perspectives, it is a favorable choice of methodology for psychological research (Larkin, Watts & Clifton, 2006).

One important aspect of conducting IPA is that the main emphasis is on the contribution of the relationship and communication dynamics between the researcher and the participant, because the researcher is also an active agent in the medium of speech and life of other individuals (Larkin, Watts & Clifton, 2006). Since researcher holds an active position, looking from an insider's perspective of the subjective world of participants is aspired in IPA (Smith & Osborn, 2007) as long as the researcher is able to catch her subjective influence on the discoveries made in the study (Larkin, Watts & Clifton, 2006). The active role of the researcher and the necessary inclusion of self-disclosure in the outcome of the research is similar to the recognition of counter-transference in psychoanalytical practice. The continuous effort for self-awareness in terms of the influence on the relationship between two parties is similar to the constant effort for recognition of what Lacan calls as resistance of analyst instead of counter-transference, which is in fact the transference of the analyst (Lacan, 1977b). For Lacan, it is resistance because transference of the analyst creates an obstacle for the course of psychoanalytical treatment if not worked through. Concurrently, if the researcher is not able to identify and indicate her subjective prejudgements, attitudes, and values, it may become a resistance in the way of conducting a trustworthy qualitative study.

Bracketing is used as the strategy proposed by phenomenologists, to describe the researcher's ongoing and developing insight about her own subjective influence, such as implicit attitudes, personal characteristics, and presumptions related to the focus of research on each phase of the research, so that she can put them aside to prevent their effects (Husserl, 1931). However, this complete prevention of biases would not be possible since there would always be unknown biases (Morrow, 2005; Yin, 2016). There are several types of bracketing and existentialist bracketing is used in this study. Existentialist bracketing suggests that the impact of the researcher, including theoretical orientation, presumptions about possible findings and so on, cannot be erased but may be identified and made transparent in the research, so that the self-aware researcher can approach more freely to the heart of the phenomenon of the interest (Ashworth, 1999).

Fischer (2009) claim that bracketing involves two interpretative stages (i.e., double hermeneutics) in terms of analyzing the accounts of individuals, which are interpreting the participants' meaning-making processes, and interpreting our own meaning-making processes. In other words, IPA uses a double hermeneutics strategy (i.e., interpretation in two phases), which includes participants' meaning-making processes of the subject matter during interviews, and the researcher's personal meaning-making processes of meaning making processes of the participants during the interviews and the process of data analysis (Smith & Osborn, 2007; Smith & Osborn, 2007, Smith, Jarman, Osborn, & Chamberlain, 1999). The researcher gets closer to looking at the subject matter from an insider's perspective just as the participants because IPA involves this double-hermeneutics approach (Smith & Osborn, 2007). Lastly, comparing the reasons for similarities and dissimilarities continuously, being alert for conflicting or variable cases, and challenging oneself with possible alternative explanations are some of the procedures which can be used to reduce the impact of unknown biases (Yin, 2016).

3.2. Reasons of Choosing Qualitative Research for Studying Experience of Excessive Online Game Playing

Quantitative research methodology, which has been extremely prominent in psychology literature, is useful if a researcher aims to collect data from individuals as many as possible and convert data into numerical scores to analyze them statistically to test hypotheses and make generalizations about issue at hand (i.e., nomothetic), as a neutral outsider (i.e., etic) (Morrow & Smith, 2000). Qualitative research methodology, on the other hand, is more beneficial if a researcher aims to collect data from a relatively small sample or to study individual cases (i.e., idiographic), and by converting the data into interpretable codes, to get to know the data at a very close proximity and to put forward more subjective explorations about issue at hand (i.e., emic) (Morrow & Smith, 2000). My purpose in this study was to get a grasp about the subjective experience of playing online games excessively in adulthood since very few explorations has been reported in the literature. Also, I have a psychoanalytical perspective as a researcher, which is well-matched with the approach held in qualitative research. Vanheule (2002), suggests that qualitative research is more expedient in terms of its ability to reserve individual realities in the data, and its aim as ameliorating a theory. For the purposes of this thesis, doing qualitative research with a psychoanalytical approach created a scientific combination, which helped to interpretatively decode signifiers of unconscious material in speech, and contributing to the theory (Vanheule, 2002). In addition, interpretative phenomenological analysis allows researchers to reinforce participants to talk freely and in detail about their experiences (Howitt, 2016), which is consistent with practice and theory of Lacanian psychoanalysis. Consequently, qualitative research was the most suitable method for the research question asking how adult gamers experience playing online games excessively, and what meanings they give to those experiences.

3.3. Participants and Sampling Method

In the current study, purposive and convenience sampling method were used, which are consistent with IPA guidelines (Smith & Osborn, 2007). Four inclusion criteria were determined. The first and main inclusion criterion for recruiting participants was individuals' statements about their commitment in online games as excessive. In other

words, people who stated that they engaged in online gaming to an excessive degree, could be potential participants. This was due to the given weight on the accounts of the individuals, in evaluation of their own experience; it was also due to the fact that restricting inclusion criteria by numbers, such as number of hours played, or labels, such as psychiatric diagnoses, would be counter intuitive and also contradictory for the qualitative research purpose. In order to form homogeneity of the sample, three other inclusion criteria were added. Since male adults who are older than 19 years of age were reported to be the most committed gamers (Chappell et al., 2006), participants decided to be males, who were adults between 20 and 30 years of age. The upper limit for age was set, so that participants would be going through similar developmental stages in their lives, such as early young adulthood. This shared aspect established more homogeneity among sample. Last criterion was that participants' marital status had to be single, which was also reported to be a one of the most common descriptive characteristics among online gamers (Snodgrass et al., 2019). Individuals who are participants of a qualitative study and who undergo treatment for online gaming addiction also reported to be single and living with their families (Beranuy, Carbonell, & Griffiths, 2012).

The study was announced in a newsgroup on one of the most used social media platforms. Nine individuals volunteered to participate in the study. An interview was decided to be excluded due to the technical setbacks which occurred on the voice-recording software. This sample size of eight participants was viable according to the guidelines for IPA as it made possible to conduct in an in-depth interpretative data analysis (Smith & Osborn, 2007).

The age range of the participants was between 20-27 years. The participants were mostly engineering students from different universities, except for two participants who had graduated and had jobs, and two other participants who were working but also graduate level students. The most played games by the participants were *League of Legends (LoL)*, *Defense of the Ancients 2 (DotA 2)*, *Counter-Strike: Global Offensive (CS:GO)*, and *World of Warcraft (WoW)*. The genre of *LoL* and *DotA 2* is multiplayer online battle arena (MOBA), whereas the genre of *CS: Go* is first-person shooter, and the genre of *WoW* is massively multiplayer online role-playing game

(MMORPG). In general, participants reported that they started to play online games in high school, except for one participant, Celil, who started to play online games around 7-8 years of age.

Table 1. Information about participants

Participant Number	Nicknames	Age	First Played Game	Most Played Game	When Started	Job
1	Celil	27	Knight Online	League of Legends	Age 7-8	Family Business
2	Kutay	27	Call of Duty	League of Legends	High School (HS)	Student
3	Ali	22	League of Legends	CS: Go	9th	Student
4	Burak	20	Metin 2	CS: Go	1 st -2nd Grade of HS	Student
5	Onur	25	DotA	DotA	1st Grade of HS	Engineer/ Student
6	Kaan	26	Ultima Online	DotA	1st Grade of HS	Business Owner/Student
7	Erdem	25	CS: Go	WoW	High School	Student
8	Murat	27	DotA	DotA/ League of Legends	1st Grade of HS	Sales Analyst

3.4. Procedure

Ethical approval for this research was obtained from ethics committee of Middle East Technical University. Semi-structured interviews were conducted via online meetings instead of face-to-face interviews because Coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic broke out in the course of this thesis. At the beginning of each interview, participants were informed about the nature of the study and sent informed consent forms (see APPENDIX B) via e-mail. After filling the informed consent forms, the participants sent those via e-mail back to the researcher, stating in the text part of the e-mail that they read, understood and gave consent. They were also told that they would be talking as freely as possible about their excessive online gaming experiences, and that they could choose to end the interview any time if they feel uncomfortable. The interviews involved open-ended questions (see APPENDIX D) which were intended to gain knowledge about participants' online gaming habits, and their experiences before, during and after playing. In addition, participants' choice of characters, roles and materials in games were asked as well as what aims they tried to reach by online gaming and what motivations they had. Following, their perceptions and attitudes regarding general rules and authority were asked. Lastly, since the interviews were conducted on online platforms due to Coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic, additional questions were included, about participants' online gaming experiences in quarantine days during pandemic, and their motivations to participate in an online study. The interviews lasted approximately one and a half hour on average. In order to ensure confidentiality, participants names were changed to pseudonyms. All data were collected in six weeks.

3.5. Data Analysis

All the meetings with the participants took place on Skype in the form of online interviews. These interviews were audio recorded, and later transcribed. As the data collection process continued, I kept notes of the significant events that happened in the interviews, and the participants' accounts that I find most intriguing. In other words, I kept a journal in which I wrote down my impressions, feelings, and interpretations throughout data collection and data analysis since it was in line with double hermeneutics approach in IPA and it contributed to the quality and adequacy of

interpretations in terms of reflexivity (Vicary, Young & Hicks, 2016). I followed the instructions in the IPA guidelines for data-analysis. The coding process has two stages while doing IPA. First, I identified and classified the experiences of participants according to their wording preference and the meanings they aimed to deliver. Second, I attempted to interpret those from my point of view. Accordingly, I coded the transcriptions line by line. Also, I took notes about what meanings, emotions, and experiences were evoked in me during the process of reading, coding, and rereading. I used these notes to finalize my decision about a code for a particular part of a participant's speech. After transcribing, reading the transcription, and writing down the codes and emerging themes of the first case, I thought of some additional questions which might be relevant to ask other participants in subsequent interviews. Having finished the first case, I moved on to the second case to exercise the same procedure. After all the interviews were done, I organized emerging themes into subthemes, and later by converging in and diverging from each other, these subthemes formed the superordinate themes. During data analysis process, my supervisors and I had conversations, which mostly included deliberations related to decision and organization of the subthemes and superordinate themes.

3.6. Trustworthiness of the Study

According to Morrow & Smith (2000), it is crucial to ensure that groundwork of the discipline and basis of the research match to increase trustworthiness of a qualitative study. Indeed, qualitative research and clinical psychology share a huge common ground which is the necessity for consideration and emphasis on subjectivity for the both parties, the researcher and the participant, and the clinician and the patient. The researcher conducting a qualitative study in general, and interpretative phenomenological analysis in particular, has a more active role, and it is crucial that she is aware of her subjectivity before, and during the research endeavor consisting data collection and data analysis phases (Larkin, Watts, & Clifton, 2006), which emphasizes the importance of reflexivity of the researcher (Ünal, 2019).

In accordance, during the process of analyzing the data, we had regular meetings with my supervisors who are knowledgeable in qualitative research, to discuss data, to

review transcripts, and to exchange opinions about emerging themes. Consequently, triangulation strategy which is offered for more expansive understanding of a concept in qualitative research by using multiple methods and/or different perspectives for data analysis or theoretical conceptualizations (Patton, 1990), is employed. However, use of multiple methods is not applied in this study.

The qualitative method encourages transparency of researcher's subjectivity as it would ensure reflexivity, strengthen the foundation of the research and enrich the contributions. Based on this, I chose to study this topic out of my own experience. I was playing online games excessively when I was a teenager who had just started to high school. Those times that I most excessively engaged in online gaming, coincided with the divorce of my parents, when I was also going through issues related to puberty. For example, I skipped school, or rejected to sleep at nights in order to advance in games and to communicate with strangers. My curiosity related to the topic of excessive online gaming came to the fore when I realized that I did not really know or remember how and why I started, continued, and stopped being present in online game spaces. The only knowledge I had was about my individual experiences of playing in there and being in there. Consequently, I wondered about how other committed players of online games lived their own experiences, and what stories they would share about those experiences.

In the process of writing this thesis, I found myself identifying with the participants, and had both positive and negative feelings towards them. Sometimes I recognized that they were individuals who were living a similar life, and having similar opinions with me. Other times, I was inclined to judge them in a somewhat harsh way, assuming their explanations for their experiences were unreasonable and far-fetched. I got mistaken the self-awareness of my biases up, which is encouraged in a qualitative study, for the attempt to establish an unbiased stance as a researcher, which is aspired in a quantitative study. Indeed, it happened that I was more like a dissociated person or a bystander rather than a researcher who was aware of the inevitable, subjective and in fact preferred impact of her/his subjectivity. A fine line was treaded between all the mentioned distal approaches by taking notice about my preconceptions of online game players, my personal values in life, and my professional perspective as a psychologist.

This progress was possible thanks to the iterative process of the methodology itself, and discerning discussions with my supervisors.

While writing this thesis, another important change occurred in the way I position myself in relationships with an authority figure. In this case, this figure happened to be my supervisor, whom I idealize to a maximum degree. Sometimes this idealization caused feelings of vulnerability in presence of her authority as I was picturing myself in imaginary situations where I was too little to be seen by her. In those times, feelings of resentment followed, and I felt unmotivated to keep doing my research. This bumpy road has lasted until I realized my impact on the relationship, thanks to my co-supervisor, my psychoanalyst, and my supervisor herself. This change was also due to the content of this research in which I was able to recognize my similar ways of relating to others which had common grounds with the excessive online game players. My impact included both withdrawal from speaking, and acting in the real world, and dwelling in the sphere of my own thoughts. I knew that speaking could end the fixated thinking on my flaws, which I thought my supervisor, as an idealized authority, could see in me. However, I somehow maintained my shaky stance for months. Maintaining the mentioned kind of self-defeating fantasies, which were detached from real events, was embedded in the position I imagined myself to be in. At the end, these issues were resolved as I realized the role that I tend to select for myself, and took a step out of the realm of it by speaking. To sum, putting all the mentioned efforts, I came to a position where I was able to carry out this qualitative study.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

In the current study, six super-ordinate themes emerged after conducting Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). The superordinate themes are escapist motivations for engaging in excessive online gaming, ambition to win and be satisfied in online game spaces, burst of emotions while playing online games, omnipotent self-representations of players as reflected in narratives of gameplay, and reactive positioning with respect to a superior other (see Table 2).

Table 2. Emerging Themes of the Current Study

1. Escapist motivations for engaging in excessive online gaming
a. Need to distance from the real world and act in another world
b. Seeking feelings of togetherness with real-life friends in a virtual setting
c. Engaging excessively in responsibility-free times
2. Ambition to win and to be satisfied in online game spaces
a. Sacrificing other things in life to advance in the game
b. Losing interest in the game when defeated consecutively
c. Getting satisfied as comparable to different kinds of bodily satisfactions
3. Burst of emotions while playing online games
a. Aggression and contempt
b. Pleasure
4. Omnipotent self-presentations of online gamers reflected in narratives of gameplay
a. Ambition to win to feel superior: Competitiveness
b. Desire to succeed by killing: Destructiveness
c. Use of language of their own
d. "It becomes an addiction, but I'm not addicted"

Table 2. Emerging Themes of the Current Study (continued)

-
5. Reactive positioning with respect to a superior other
 - a. Perceptions of authority figures as negligible
 - b. Defiant attitudes toward restrictions and law
 - c. Uncertain positioning while talking to the researcher
-

At the end of the data analysis after coding through transcripts of interviews, some parts of participants' speech belonged to more than one subtheme. This led me to put those parts under multiple relevant subthemes. Moreover, some passages were chosen to be included under only one subtheme, yet still quite relevant to another subtheme. Thus, it can be said that boundaries between themes were fluid. For example, *losing interest in the game when defeated consecutively* subtheme, *aggression and contempt* subtheme, and *ambition to win to feel superior to others: competitiveness* subtheme were enmeshed in participants' speech. Moreover, excerpts for *seeking feelings of togetherness with real-life friends in a virtual setting* subtheme, and *pleasure* subtheme belonged to same parts of speech in the interviews. Also, *getting satisfied as comparable to bodily satisfactions* subtheme and "It becomes an addiction, but I am not addicted" subtheme shared common components. However, they also diverge from each other because chosen parts of speech carried more weight for the theme it belonged despite the fact that some subthemes were intertwined in the words of the participants. In the next sections, the subthemes will be given.

4.1. Escapist Motivations for Engaging in Excessive Online Gaming

The first superordinate theme represents the participants' accounts of their motivations for playing online games excessively. The participants were making meanings for why they choose to take part in online world over the real one. The subthemes are *need to distance from the real world and act in another world*, *seeking feelings of togetherness with real-life friends in virtual world*, and *engaging excessively in responsibility-free times*.

4.1.1. Need to Distance from the Real World and Act in Another World

One of the mostly shared motivation that the participants express is their wish to be far away from this world. According to them, this wish drives them to participate in an alternative space, the online world, which offers different features that do not exist in real world. They reported that their involvement in online games comes with the need of withdrawal from what the real world offers. Kutay stated that he wants to be distant from this world and go to a different atmosphere where he sees interesting and unusual events. He paused when he used ‘I’ as the subject of the sentence and changed the subject of the sentence to ‘you’. There he distanced himself yet again. He explained his reason by referring to his despise for humankind both in real world and in virtual world:

Kutay (K): This is the reason that I play these games, to distance myself from here a bit. I mean I- You do this to distance from this world as that is a fantastic world and the characters are not human beings, but some strange races. Some peculiar things are happening, they all have curious stories. That is exactly why you like it ... I mean you try to distance from this world a bit and try to enter a different atmosphere after all.

R (Researcher): Why wish to distance from this world?

K: So, I find all dull and foul anything human or humane... For example, every video game has human race, but I have never ever created a human race. Even goblins, which are from lowest of the lowest races, appeal me much more because their evil traits are certain. I mean they do this or do that on this or that aspect since they are such scums, these are certain; but their good traits are also certain. I mean humans are insatiable, I mean, you wouldn't be able to say “He would never betray, a human would never do it”. Insatiable, hungry for power, unpredictable.

Original

K: Bu oyunları oynuyor olmamın sebebi birazcık burdan uzaklaşmak. Bu dünyadan uzaklaşmak için yapıyorsun çünkü orası fantastik bir dünya ve karakterler böyle insan filan değil, değişik değişik ırklar. Böyle garip garip şeyler yaşıyor, ilginç hikayeleri var hepsinin. İşte bu yüzden zaten seviyorsun ... Bu dünyadan biraz uzaklaşıp farklı bir atmosfere girmeye çalışıyorsun sonuçta.

R: Bu dünyadan bu kadar uzaklaşmak istemek niye?

K: Yani çok sıkıcı ve iğrenç geliyor yani insan, insana dair herhangi bir şey ... Mesela her oyunda insan ırkı var ama hayatım boyunca hiçbir insan ırkı açmadım. En en aşağılık ırklardan böyle goblinler bile insanlardan çok daha iyi geliyor çünkü onların kötü özellikleri çok belirli. Yani şu şu açıdan şöyle yaparlar, şöyle pislikler diye belirli, ama iyi olduğu şeyler de belli ... İnsanlar doyumsuz, yani ne yapacağını bilemezsin, yani “Asla ihanet etmez,

bir insan asla bunu yapmaz” diyemiyorsun. Doyumsuz, güce aç, tahmin edilemez.

Onur also mentioned his interest in seeing different places and characters in other media such as TV series and documentaries. His interest is reflected in online games as choosing different characters because different characters allowed him to have different perspectives. He says:

O (Onur): Seeing series- I mean or different concepts or different countries, different people, different characters interest me frankly, that’s why the series or documentaries interest me, well, they widen one’s horizon.

R (Researcher): So how does it happen in the game?

O: In the game though, selecting different categories of games yet lets one to achieve different point of views.

Original

O: Ya diziler, ya farklı konsept ya farklı ülkeler, farklı insanlar, farklı karakterler görmek ilgimi çekiyor açıkçası. O yüzden diziler, atıyorum belgeseller benim çok ilgimi çeker, yani ufkunu açıyor insanın.

R: Peki bu oyunda nasıl oluyor?

O: Oyunda da farklı kategorilerde oyunlar seçmek yine insanın ya farklı bakış açıları elde etmesini sağlıyor.

When I asked a question such as “If you were doing a research on excessive online gaming, what kind of a question would you definitely ask to the players?”, Erdem gave a rather unique answer. He started with his reason for gaming, which was also to distance from this world, and he wondered about the future possibilities which may come with the advancements in technology. He shared an imagined situation where everyone was at home and playing games. In his opinion, this would be nice for the player since he would be able to do anything he longed for. In addition, Erdem was curious of why people choose virtuality over reality:

WoW players, in fact most gamers including me, it is to distance from this world a bit. For example, there are things called VR ... In a couple of years, some real fine applications will be made for this. People will be able to play games. Then it may get a little chaotic, I suppose. Think about it, everybody is home, nobody goes out, attaches a VR and playing games there. On one hand it is nice for the one who plays, as you can do anything you want but it is virtual after all. Like, the answer for why a person wouldn’t push himself in real life but does to a virtual thing, like, maybe only if it was me, I would seek for such

a thing. Because for most people, there are plenty of people playing games for this reason.

Original

WoW oynayan insanlar, aslında çoğu oyun oynayan ben de dahil, biraz gerçek hayattan uzaklaşmak için. Mesela VR denen şeyler var ... Bundan birkaç sene sonra gerçekten buna çok güzel uygulamalar oyunlar yapılacak. İnsanlar oyun oynayabilecek. O zaman biraz daha kaotik bi' durum olabilir diye düşünüyorum. Düşünsenize, herkes evde, kimse dışarı çıkmıyor ve VR takmış, oradan oyun oynuyor. Bi' yandan güzel oynayan kişi için, çünkü istediğiniz her şeyi yapabiliyorsunuz. Ama sanal bir şey sonuçta. Hani insanın gerçek hayata kendini itmediği de sanal bi' şeye ittiğinin işte cevabını belki sadece, hani ben olsaydım böyle bir şeyi arardım. Çünkü çoğu insan, bu sebepten çok fazla oyun oynayan insan var.

While sharing how he started to play online games, Burak described online game spaces as somewhere far away from the risks that he may encounter in the real world. A possible risk came to his mind, including an anticipation of conversations with an older man. He says:

B (Burak): Let's put it this way, the school, like, the things I am able to do are limited as an elementary school student. But there I could do, like, commercial business, I could chat with the ones I'd like, well, without taking any risk in fact, I thought.

R (Researcher): What risk?

B: I mean I can think of it as a world far from daily dangers. Or, like, for instance, there I am 7 and I talk with a 35-year-old but he doesn't know that I'm 7.

Original

B: Şöyle şimdi yani okul hani bir ilkokul öğrencisi olarak yapabileceklerim sınırlı. Ama ordayken hani ticaret yapabiliyordum, istediğim insanlarla sohbet edebiliyordum, hani hiçbir eee risk taşımadan aslında diye düşünüyordum.

R: Risk derken?

B: Yani güncel hayattaki tehlikelerden uzak, daha güvenli bir dünya olarak düşünebilirim. Veya hani orda hani atıyorum 7 yaşındayım 35 yaşında biriyle konuşuyorum ama o benim 7 yaşında olduğumu bilmiyor.

Overall, the participants have a desire to withdraw from the real world for moments, to go to somewhere else, to see a strange place where different events happen, to see through eyes of a different being, to act in a risk-free world which is full of chances.

4.1.2. Seeking Feelings of Togetherness with Real-life Friends in Virtual World

Celil elaborated on why he still plays online games as a grown-up. In his opinion, being connected to his friends whom he knows from outside of the game space was the main reason. He stated that they do a lot of activities together both in real and virtual worlds, and thus they create a community. He claims:

The reason for us to play games after growing up was that, I mean in general, chat is fun. Because we laugh. Four five people, for example, we play our game, for example, then we go outside and meet each other alike, after the game, for example, you make a game critique, other topics. Either you go to dine or to drink some tea. Thus, you create a certain ‘community’, community.

Original

Büyüdükten sonraki oyun oynamamızdaki amaç şeydi, yani genelde, muhabbet eğlenceli. Çünkü gülüyoruz. Dört beş kişi mesela, oyunumuzu oynuyoruz mesela, sonra dışarı çıkıyoruz. Dışarda görüşüyoruz aynı, oyundan sonra mesela oyunun kritiğini yapıyorsun. Başka muhabbetler. Ya yemeğe gidiyorsun, çay içmeye gidiyorsun. Yani belli bi’ ‘community’, topluluk oluşturuyorsun.

Kutay also emphasized the importance of the connection with real-life friends sustained by the aid of online games. It seems that, for him and his friends, online games give opportunity to stay together even if they are not physically together. Kutay stated that his unwillingness about separation from his friends is the cause of engaging in online gaming. He says:

When we began to spend much time outside, with friends, we didn’t want to be separated when we had to return home. When we are each at home no such things like phone calls are happening. For this reason, something online had to be done. Like even if we are separated and are not passing time outside, we decided on playing some games while talking, to spend time together, that’s that.

Original

Çok fazla dışarda zaman geçirmeye, arkadaşlarla zaman geçirmeye başladığımız zamanlarda, eve de gelmek zorunda olduğumuzda yine ayrılmak istemiyorduk. Birlikte, evdeyken de böyle telefonla falan konuşmak olmuyor. O yüzden online bir şeyler yapmak gerekiyordu birlikte. Hâlâ hani ayrılmış olsak da, dışarda zaman geçirmiyor olsak da evde nasıl birlikte zaman geçirebiliriz diye oyun yapalım dedik. Birlikte oyun oynayalım konuşarak diye öyle.

Burak told that he played with the same group of people from the very beginning of his engagement in online games. According to him, being able to play together with the friends from school was the main factor for their choice of game. He expressed his wish to stay together with these friends. He states:

We had begun playing this game yet again with my same crew. I recall spending lots of time on this game those times, I mean, actually playing it together was pushing us to play that game. As we were together at school but, well, we also wanted to remain together out of the school.

Original

Bu oyunu oynamaya başlamıştık, yine aynı arkadaş grubumla. Bu oyunda da bayağı zaman geçirdiğimizi hatırlıyorum o zamanlar. Yani aslında birlikte oynamak bizi itiyordu o oyunu oynamaya. Çünkü hani okulda birlikteydik ama sonra hani okulun dışında da birlikte olmak istiyorduk.

Kaan spoke about the difference between playing with friends and playing with strangers. This difference was mainly about the difficulties in terms of verbal and vocal communication throughout the game. Kaan said that he cannot get a clear sense of stranger players' way of playing because he cannot "understand their language". The example sentences which he gave to explain his way of playing with real-friends are mostly commands, and one sentence was a call for help. As a result of this kind of communication, he stated, he could feel the team spirit and he can get whatever result he wants. He says:

I don't know, so you have much fun, much fun is had, I mean, when I play it with my friends all together. For you can provide a sense of a team. In my opinion, when you play with strangers, it is a little more difficult to communicate vocally. You don't get his sense, don't know how he plays. However when you play with your friends you talk all the time, you are always in it, "You do this that much", "You do that", "You come this spot", "I need support there", "Come here" and such and such, you get a better feeling of being in a team and as you feel that more, the matters tend to go the way you rather want.

Original

Bilmiyorum çok eğleniyorsunuz, ya çok eğleniliyor yani arkadaşlarımla bir arada oynayınca. O takım hissiyatını tam sağlayabiliyorsun çünkü. Bence başka insanlarla, tanımadığın insanlarla oynayınca, böyle onları tanımadığın için böyle onlarla sesli iletişim kurman biraz daha zor oluyor. Dilinden çok

anlamıyorsun. Nasıl oynadığını bilmiyorsun. Ama arkadaşlarıyla oynadığın zaman sürekli onlarla konuşarak oynuyorsun, sürekli olayın içindesin. “Sen şu kadar şunu yap”, “Sen şu kadar şunu”, “Sen şuraya gel”, “Şurada desteğe ihtiyacım var”, “Şuraya gelin” bilmem ne falan filan. Böyle daha bir takım olduğunu hissediyorsun. Ve daha bir takım olduğunu hissettiğin için böyle işler istediğin gibi gitmeye daha yatkın oluyor.

Erdem stated that he preferred to have fun with his friends after school and that is how he started to play games. He and his friends were not into doing other social activities such as going out together. He said that games are more pleasurable in comparison to other activities. It should be noted that pleasure is an emotional experience about online gaming, and the following passage also related to pleasure subtheme under burst of emotions while playing online games superordinate theme. Feelings of pleasure, according to Erdem, are utilized through playing online games. He explains:

For me, rather than the game itself, it is much more fun to do something together with your friends instead ... When we left the school, I’m talking about high school times, like there were, like not much to do outside, like how should I put it, spend some time, go somewhere, like, go to some cafe ... we didn’t enjoy such things, we wanted to utilize our time this way. Well, games pleased us much more, to play games.

Original

Benim için öyle oyundan ziyade arkadaşlarınızla beraber bi’ şey yapıyor olmak daha çok keyifli ... Okuldan çıktığımızda, lise zamanı için örnek veriyorum hani, çok hani dışarı çıkıp yapacağımız bi’ şey yoktu hani u nasıl diyeyim, zaman geçirip bi’ yere gideceğimiz, hani işte kafeye gidelim ... o tarz şeylerden hoşlanmadığımız için biz bu şekilde değerlendirmek istiyorduk zamanımızı. Ya oyun çok daha fazla keyif veriyordu hani, oyun oynamak.

Murat said that it is them who give a meaning to the experience of online gaming, and essentially, they would not win anything at all besides that meaning. He explained this meaning which they assign by referring to a sense of being a team. He also mentioned that he gets pleasure out of it. Again, the pleasure component in giving a meaning to an activity together with others also belongs to pleasure subtheme under burst of emotions while playing online games superordinate theme. He states:

M (Murat): That is to say, because in general, when we join by five, we enter some significant games and we assign it a meaning, essentially... We don’t win anything. It’s just that we assign it a meaning.

R (Researcher): What meaning do you assign?

M: That is to say, we talk before joining, create tactics. We say “Let’s join a game”. Afterwards, defeating the opposing side has its pleasure. That is, we want to win based upon our personal ambitions and the aura that we created as a team.

Original

M: Ya şöyle, çünkü biz genelde bir arada beş kişi girdiğimizde önemli oyunlara giriyoruz ve ona bir anlam yüklüyoruz yani aslında... Herhangi bir şey kazanmıyoruz. Sadece buna biz anlam yüklüyoruz.

R: Ne anlamı yüklüyorsunuz?

M: Ya şöyle, kendi aramızda girmeden konuşuyoruz, taktik yapıyoruz. Hadi bir oyuna girelim diyoruz. Ondan sonra karşı tarafı yenmenin hazzı da var. Yani kendi kişisel hırslarımız ve takım olarak yarattığımız bir aura nedeniyle kazanmak istiyoruz aslında.

4.1.3. Engaging Excessively in Responsibility-free times

Another common reason the participants reported for the excessive nature of their gaming and the times when the degree of playing escalated was related to free time. By free, they mostly refer to being free from responsibilities. Moreover, by emphasizing the concept of ‘time’, they sometimes refer to habitual nature of playing. As in Kutay’s words: “So it is all about time, you know, it’s due to the free time and habitude, that we are habituated so much [*Yani tamamen zaman olayı, böyle yani boş zamandan ve alışkanlıktan dolayı, o kadar alışmışız ki*]”. Celil also reflected on the times when he was playing online games daily for very long hours. He explained those times with a reference to the fact that he was at home and he was free:

I was playing games for 12-13 hours a day in my times at university because we are at home, we are in university. We were idle, we didn’t go to school either (laughing) roughly some 10, 12-13 hours, or even nonstop.

Original

Üniversitede yaklaşık günde 12-13 saat oyun oynadığım oluyordu. Yani evdeyiz çünkü, üniversitedeyiz. Boş duruyorduk, okula da gitmiyorduk (gülüyor). Yaklaşık bi’ 10, 12-13 saat, hatta aralıksız.

While answering my question asking if there are any specific times that the degree of excessivity of his gaming behavior increase, Kutay referred to the quarantine days of

COVID-19 pandemic which yields more free time. Then, he started to talk about ambivalent feelings caused by living in his parents' home, and how grateful he is that gaming exists as an option:

These periods happen, in fact right now is an excellent example as I don't have anything to do, that is, there isn't anything you would do. You can't go outside, ultimately what can I do at home? Also, this is family home. Honestly, it is truly the best moneywise and also the worst psychologically, so in a period of hard times I don't know what else I would do if there weren't for PC games.

Original

Böyle dönemler oluyor, mesela şu an mükemmel bir örnek çünkü şu an yapacağım hiçbir şey yok, yani yapacağınız hiçbir şey yok. Dışarı çıkamıyorsun, evde n'apabilirim ki yani? Bi' de burası aile evi. Yani gerçekten hem maddi olarak en güzel, psikolojik olarak da en kötü yer yani. Yaşaması zor bir süreçte bu bilgisayar oyunları olmasa ne yapardım bilmiyorum.

Burak also spoke about how he started to play online games more during quarantine days. He mentioned of how he gradually quit his school responsibilities, and turn to the games for socializing. Then, the emphasis was on the fact that he makes the time pass faster by playing when he was responsibility-free. He states:

B (Burak): At first, schools were suspended for 3 weeks... And as it ended, it was extended I suppose. At that time, because of inadequacy of the school, well, and maybe my laziness also, I didn't have the drive to study and my interest, hmm, shifted to games and so it became near impossible for me to study anymore ... We are already at home all the time, not much responsibilities, we are in pursuit of something to do all the time. We can both socialize as we play and, well, as I said so, pass our time quicker.

R (Researcher): What is that related to the time, what does it imply to you that you want time to pass so quickly?

B: ... It is like I pass some time doing something quick instead of doing nothing and getting bored.

Original

B: İlk, okullar 3 hafta tatil edilmişti ... 3. haftadan itibaren sanırım tekrar uzatıldı. O zaman hani okulun da yetersizliği sebebiyle, hani biraz da benim de tembelliğim olabilir, hani ders çalışmam gelmedi ve daha çok oyuna ilgim hani arkadaşların da sayesinde ee kaydı ve hani ders çalışamaz oldum nerdeyse... Sürekli evde, evdeyiz. Zaten çok bi' sorumluluğumuz da yok ve hani yapacak bir şey arıyoruz sürekli. Hem sosyalleşebiliyoruz oyun oynadığımızda, hem de ee hani dediğim gibi zamanın daha hızlı geçmesini sağlayabiliyoruz.

R: Zamanla ilgili ne var, size ne ifade ediyor bu zaman, bu kadar çabuk geçsin istiyorsunuz?

B: ... Hiçbir şey yapmadan sıkılmaktansa hani hızlıca bir şeyler yaparak geçsin gibi.

Onur reported that the time he spends on online games increased significantly during quarantine because he got bored. When Onur says that he plays online games when he was bored, he got a question from me, asking the thing which draws him into the games instead of any other activity. Onur also stated that it is about being free and not being able to go outside because of the quarantine. His purpose is to pass the time. He says:

It's all getting bored, passing time, I mean filling the day... It went up in quarantine period as such that as you have more time, the free time increased, and you cannot find a thing to do. Then you play games again because you are not able to go outdoors. Otherwise I would say "I'd go out and meet my friends", but during this process there isn't any such condition and anything to do, so you play games again. You get bored, as you get bored you don't get any desire to do anything. Thus- I mean you play games, so time passes.

Original

Tamamen sıkılmak yani zaman geçirmek yani günü doldurmak ... Karantina döneminde şöyle arttı, daha çok zamanımız olduğu için, 'free time' daha fazla olduğu için yapacak da bir şey bulamıyorsunuz. Yine oyun oynuyorsunuz çünkü çıkma şansınız yok. Yani öbür türlü hani dışarı çıkarım, arkadaşlarımla buluşurum, görüşürüm diyorsunuz ama şu anki süreçte öyle bir durum söz konusu olmadığı için yapacak bir şey yok, yine oyun oynuyorsunuz ... Sıkılıyorsunuz sadece, sıkıldıkça da hani bi' şey de yapasınız gelmiyor. Dolayısıyla- ya oyun oynuyorsunuz, biraz zaman geçsin.

Kaan evaluated the possible alternative activities other than playing, which he could have done when he got free time. He listed those alternatives as if they are shallow tasks, and not pleasurable leisure activities comparable to playing games in which he enjoys. Moreover, he also somehow complained a little about starting to play excessively again, by describing it with the word "falling":

Once again all is great, yes, now I have some free time in my life. What to do in free time? Okay, I hung out with friends, went out somewhere. Then again to the game. And then it begins to stuck, and me not being able to control that moment, falling back again to 3 hours of gaming, 4 hours of gaming.

Original

Tekrardan her şey çok iyi, evet artık hayatımda boş vakitler var. Boş vakitte ne yapacağız? Tamam, arkadaşlarımla gezdim tozdum, dışarıya çıktım falan. Sonra tekrar oyuna falan. Sonra tekrar sıkışmaya başlıyor, o anı kontrol edememe, gene günde 3 saat oyuna düşme, 4 saat oyuna düşme.

4.2. Ambition to Win and Be Satisfied in Excessive Online Gaming

Players recurrently indicated that they have a strong ambition to win, but this ambition may be divided into a superordinate theme involving related attributions for the gaming experience, and a subtheme as a characteristic related to online gamers' self-presentations. The former is the second super-ordinate theme which is ambition to win and to be satisfied in excessive online gaming. The subthemes are *sacrificing other things in life to advance in the game, losing interest in the game when defeated consecutively, and getting satisfied as comparable to different kinds of bodily satisfactions.*

4.2.1. Sacrificing Other Things in Life to Advance in the Game

Kaan said that he was a really busy man and he described his workload for his job as very demanding. However, increase in his desire for playing online games coincided with time periods when his job started to get even more demanding. His choice of words included accumulation and compensation, and these word choices might be important to understand his experience during those times. He says:

My work starts to get incredibly busy. Because I play for 3-4 hours a day for that month, everything goes halting and halting, accumulating and accumulating. As it accumulated that much, it exceeds a point that is leaving me helpless ... The work I put in to compensate the workload of a month, which I spent by gaming instead, takes one month, two months ... The reason led me stay up all night is that I stood up is my gaming. For instance I play, say two, three rounds of a game; then psychology of those two, three rounds, the transition of getting my mind together and starting to run somehow and such and such, in total god knows how many thousands of hours pass in vain anyhow. To save time for duties, you don't even sleep, so to speak.

Original

İşlerim inanılmaz yoğunlaşmaya başlıyor. O bir ay boyunca günde üç dört saat oyun oynamam yüzünden her şey aksıyor, aksıyor, aksıyor, birikiyor birikiyor,

birikiyor. Ve bu kadar birikimin sonunda artık böyle durduramayacağım artık hani çaresiz raddeye geliyor ... Bir ay boyunca o oyun oynamamdan dolayı biriken işleri ve aksayan şeyleri toparlamam bir ay sürüyor iki ay sürüyor Sabahlamama neden olan oyun oynamamdır mesela. Hani iki el, üç ellik bir oyun oynuyorum; sonra o iki el, üç ellik oyunun psikolojisi, kafamın tekrar odaklanmaya geçişi, verimli bir şekilde çalışması falan filan cartı curtuyla toplayınca bilmem kaç bin saat kaybettirmiş oluyor zaten size. Ne yapıyorsunuz, uyumuyorsunuz ki başka işlerinizi yetiştirebilesiniz gibi.

Burak used the word self-improvement very often during the interview. This concept showed up both when talking about the game spaces and when talking about his daily life. At the point where he was asked about the significance of self-improvement for him personally, Burak said that improving oneself is a crucial act in one's life. Then, he connected his thought with the times that he spent in online gaming, and he pointed to the contradiction that the two ideas have:

I believe self-improvement is important all in all. However, like, it's not that my aim is to improve myself and thus I play this game or so. Because, like hmm, in fact I am aware that if I would do something else instead of sparing my time for it, I would honestly improve myself, let's say, 10 times more and much faster, in my opinion.

Original

Ya kendini geliştirmenin önemi olduğunu düşünüyorum sonuçta. Ama hani amacım o, direkt hani kendimi geliştirmek, o yüzden bunu oyun oynuyorum falan diyemem. Çünkü hani, eee, aslında şeyin de farkındayım, bu zamanımı buna ayırmaktansa hani başka bir şey yapsam gerçekten kendimi hani belki on kat daha fazla, daha hızlı bir şekilde geliştireceğimi düşünüyorum.

Celil described one time that he played *League of Legends (LoL)* for almost a day, nonstop. He explained his ambition to go up in ranking and so he was playing in such a density. Then, Celil referred to a memory about one of his birthdays in which he chose to continue playing *LoL* over celebrating his own birthday at a surprise birthday party that his friends had planned for him. In other words, it can be inferred that he was unable to trade the experience which he lived by playing online games for the experience which he could have lived by being with his friends on a special occasion in the real world. In addition, Celil gave another example of how online gaming interfered with his educational life, a medium which is, in a way, a part of the real world as education has its certain consequences in one's reality. He states:

I started on around 11 pm, well next evening- until 9 pm, so I almost played for 21-22 hours... I wanted to climb one league, I wanted to promote. I play nice but I couldn't succeed. Persisting on it, I played too much that day... I mean, I could do that in another time but I got ambitious that time... They used to criticise me often since I played games all the time. Yet one day they would celebrate my birthday at home, of which I wasn't aware, while I was in the middle of a LoL match, which means I couldn't leave the desk, that I'd be there for 40 minutes ... They walk in the house and I notice that, people come, girls, boys, and I notice, well, it is my birthday and so, my friends call me out saying "Come on, join us". And I couldn't leave the game for 20-30 minutes, had them waiting right there. I had to keep on playing ... We went for make-up exams ... We went early to study some more, two weeks prior and we all play LoL but, but we all have make-up exams and haven't study at all, playing LoL all the time. And on the last day we pretended to study a little and returned back home without attending the exams (laughing).

Original

Gece 11'de falan başladım, yani ertesi gün- yaklaşık akşam dokuz, nerdeyse 21-22 saat oynadım ... Çıkmak istiyordum bir lig, lig yükselmem gerekiyordu. İyi oynuyorum ama başaramıyordum. İnat ede ede o gün aşırı oynadım... Yani başka zaman da yapabilirdim ama o ara hırs yaptık ... Bana çok laf yaparlardı çünkü böyle hep oyun oynuyordum. Benim hatta bi' gün doğum günümü kutlayacaklardı evde. Daha doğrusu kutlayacaklarmış. Ben oyunun başındayım. LoL oynuyorum. Kalkmam, yani kırk dakika başındayım ... Eve giriyorlar, fark ediyorum birileri geliyor, kızlar erkekler. Aklıma da geliyor hani doğum günüm moğum günüm. Beni çağırıyorlar "Hadi gel, hadi gel", arkadaşlar. Hiç kalkamıyorum da oyundan, 25-30 dakika herkesi oturttum orada. Mecbur, kalkmam, oyunu bırakmam ... Bütlere gittik ... Erken gittik ders çalışacağız diye. Bütten iki hafta önce gittik, hepimiz de LoL oynuyoruz ama hepimizin de bütü var. Hiç ders çalışmadık, hep LoL oynadık. Son günde bi' bakar gibi yaptık filan. Bütlere girmeden oyun oynayıp evlerimize geri döndük (gülüyor).

Erdem gave examples of other activities that he enjoyed and wanted to pursue in more. However, he concluded that playing online games prevented him to manage to do so. Because of his inclination to play online games when he was free, he could not achieve what he wishes to achieve in reality:

I really enjoy listening to electronic music, and there are some required dj programs that I'd want to download and improve myself. This has been on my mind for a long time actually. Well I gave a thought that, in quarantine with lots of time, I anticipated it would be a nice time, and started to do those. I started to play some piano and ukelele which I had bought in order to learn to play afterwards ... Later when I started gaming, I erased them all. Well, it

worried me so to speak. Well, it somehow keeps me back from achieving the things I desire.

Original

Elektronik müzik dinlemeyi çok seviyorum ya da işte gerekli işte bazı dj programları var, bunları indirip hani kendimi bu şeyde geliştirmek istiyorum. Bu işte geçmişten beri istediğim bir şey aslında benim. Hani hazır karantinadayken de güzel bi' zaman olur diye düşünüp bu karantinanın başlarında bunları yapmaya başlamıştım aslında. İşte evde piyano ve ukelele var, kendim almıştım öğrenirim diye. Onları çalmaya başlamıştım ... Sonra oyuna başlayınca onların hepsini sildim mesela. Bu da beni biraz şey yaptı yani düşündürdü hani. Başka istediğim şeyleri yapmamı bi' noktada engelliyor aslında.

4.2.2. Losing Interest in the Game When Defeated Consecutively

The participants usually become disinterested in online games, under a specific and shared condition, which is losing against opponents in the game over and over again. This loss of interest in the games persists for ranging durations that varies for each individual. A shared aspect, however, is that they always end up playing again after a while. For example, Murat said that he gets disinterested for short periods of time because he gets angry when defeats happen in sequence:

If I get beaten five times consecutively, then I would never enter a next round that day. Such short-term repulsions happen too for these sometimes truly drive me mad. I immediately go out to running to refresh my own mind and so. However, five consecutive losses happen once a month at the utmost, so such mini-repulsions happen like that too, that's that.

Original

Üst üste beş kere yenilirse ondan sonra aynı gün içinde falan bir sonrakine hayatta girmem mesela. Böyle kısa vadeli soğumalar da var çünkü hani gerçekten delirtiyor beni. Hemen gidip dışarda koşuyorum falan böyle kendi kafamı dağıtmak için falan. Ama eğer üst üste 5 kere yenildiğim de taş çatlasa ayda bir kere falan oluyordur o yüzden ayda bir kere böyle mini soğumalar da oluyor, öyle.

Kaan indicated that he was a patient person and he could have deleted the game long ago if he did not have such a patience. He described the feeling of being defeated

consecutively because of another player's mistakes, from another person's perspective who was a friend of his. In other words, he agreed that getting beaten many times in a row as a result of others' mistakes was frustrating and may lead a player to delete the game although he could not say as such from his own perspective because his self-image also involved being a patient person:

I get unbelievably annoyed sometimes in the game. But I am truly a patient person for real. If someone else were in my shoes, he would have deleted all these games long ago. Well I have a friend called B., for instance. Well, he also plays so good. And whenever a person plays quite poorly, and when it happens again and again because of somebody else, after some point he cannot put up with it and deletes the game. I did the same very few times, when I was in a quite high rank. But he does it every so often, well conceiving me from his eyes, I pretty much never deleted the game.

Original

Ya inanılmaz gıcık olduğum zamanlar oluyor oyunda ama ben çok sabırlı bir insanım gerçekten. Benim yerimde başka biri olsaydı çoktan silmişti bu oyunları. Yani takımındaki benim bir arkadaşım var mesela B.. diye, çok iyi oynar o da. Ve takımındaki bir kişi çok kötü oynadığında ve bu üst üste başına geldiğinde ve sürekli başka insanlar yüzünden yenildiğinde artık belli noktadan sonra dayanamıyor ve oyunu siliyor. Bu bana çok ama çok çok nadir oldu, gerçekten çok bir üst seviyedeyken oldu yani. Ama zırt pırt bunu yapıyor yani o, bana- karşıdan baktığımda neredeyse hiç silmedim oyunu.

Onur takes a break when he starts to get defeated frequently since his purpose is to promote in ranking. He conveyed that one's psychology becomes conditioned to lose, and to avoid losing, one must take a break if he starts to lose. In his opinion, taking a break brings relief. As he started to utter the following sentences, he made a lapsus which can be translated into English as follows: "To lose too many loss". He says:

O (Onur): It's when losing for too many times. Because my aim was to reach the high ranks. When taking so many losses, I quit for some time, for a couple of months once...

R (Researcher): How is that feeling of losing for so many times?

O: Let me put it that way, you lose. You go a constant streak of losing. And you say that you need to stop, quit playing for some time, so that you could get your head straight. Also because your psychology, you set your psychology for that, losing I mean. Consequently, after some time off, you get a relief. You get to a point to be able to say that you can start all over again. That this happened to me many times. And I benefitted them many times, namely those breaks...

R: You told about setting your psychology for losing.

O: Yes.

R: What is that like?

O: Well it is tough. Tough. There is a level thing in the game as I said before. And the biggest problem about the game is that, you give one and it takes one to tell the truth. For instance, you put in a work worth a full day. Some matches take 70-80 minutes and let's say ultimately you win and obtain 25 points. However, the other game might end in 30 minutes and you lose and that 25 points is gone.

Original

O: Çok fazla kayıp kaybedince- ya çünkü amacım benim yüksek seviyeye gelmekti. Çok fazla kayıp yaşayınca bir süre bıraktım, birkaç ay bıraktığım oldu...

R: O üst üste kaybetmek nasıl bir his?

O: Ya şöyle söyliyim kaybediyorsun. Sürekli kaybetme serisine giriyorsunuz. Diyorsunuz ki hani benim durmam lazım. Bi' süre oynamamam lazım ki kendime geleyim. Hem çünkü psikolojizini, psikolojinizi de buna alıştıyorsunuz yani kaybetme üzerine. Dolayısıyla bir süre ara verdikten sonra bir rahatlama geliyor. Hani her şeye baştan başlayabilirim diyebiliyorsunuz ki bu çok oldu bende. Çok da yararını gördüm yani ara vermelerin...

R: Psikolojinizi kaybetmeye alıştıyorsunuz gibi bir şey dediniz.

O: Evet.

R: O nasıl bir şey yani?

O: Ya ağır. Ağır. Mesela yani orda seviye var dedim işte. Oyundaki en büyük sorun da şu. Ya bir verip bir gidiyor açıkçası. Çünkü atıyorum bir gün bir emek verdiniz o kadar, ya atıyorum 70 dakika 80 dakika süren oyunlar da oluyor ve bu dakikanın sonucunda siz bir galibiyet elde ediyorsunuz. 25 puan kazanıyorsunuz. Ama atıyorum bir sonraki oyunda 20-30 dakikada oyun bitebiliyor ve yeniliyorsunuz ve 25 puanınız gitmiş oluyor.

Celil reported feelings of incompetency as a result of failures in online games. These feelings lead to anger, to the point where he gets tears in his eyes. He claimed to delete the game when he cannot play good enough. He also compared the types of defeats in terms of what caused them. According to him, getting defeated because of others' faults and being insulted for the loss, makes him lose yet again, and this time in terms of interest for the game. He states:

When you can't play the game, such a feeling of incompetence ... When I play bad, well, I get so mad that I get to the point that my eyes get watery. Because I get so serious and obsessed about it, it is quite a bad thing that shouldn't happen, I need to stay calm. When I couldn't play, I closed the game ... If you lose, there is one kind and another, if you lose the right way you don't object. However, the other way, when your team is awful, and you play well and can't do enough, then you get nervous, and at the top of that they roast you. ... Many

times, I drew away from the game so many times that I can't count. But after a month, or a couple of weeks, you join once, as I you so I might have deleted the game ten times with anger saying not to play ever again, and you install the game once again.

Original

Oyunu oynayamadığınızda o kadar yetersizlik hissi ki ... Oynamayadığım zaman, kötü oynadığım zaman yani o kadar sinirleniyorum ki hani böyle yani gözlerin şey oluyor, gözlerin yaşaracak şeye geliyorsun. Çünkü o kadar takmışsın, ciddiye almışsın ki çok kötü bir şey, yani olmaması gerekiyor. Sakin olman lazım. Oynamadığım zaman kapatıyodum oyunu... Yenildiğin zaman- yani yenilme var yenilme var. Hakkınla yenildiğin zaman itiraz edemiyorsun, zoruna gitmiyor ama haksız yeniliyorsun. Takımın çok kötü, sen iyi oynuyorsun, gücün yetmiyor, o zaman sinirlerin bozuluyor. Bir de üstüne adam sana sövüyor ... Oyundan soğuduğum çok dönem oldu yani o kadar çok dönem oldu ki sayamam, sayamam. Ama sonra bir ay sonra geçiyor, iki hafta sonra, bir hafta sonra bi' giriyorsunuz. Dedim ya, oyunu on kere silmişimdir belki sinirden. "Ben bu oyunu oynamayacağım" diyorsun, "Bu oyun çok kötü" filan dediğimiz oldu, sonra bi' daha yükledik.

4.2.3. Getting Satisfied as Comparable to Bodily Satisfactions

The participants described the satisfaction they get from playing online games by referring to using an addictive substance such as cigarettes or alcohol, or drawing analogy between online gaming and sexual relations. For instance, Celil, someone who would frequently wish to play online games, thought himself similar to a smoker who would want to smoke again when a certain period of time passes since the last cigarette. He continued by stating that the game itself is not satisfactory for long, and if one wants to get the satisfaction, one needs to engage in the game again after a short while. At that point, he first hesitated to draw the analogy about playing as sexual intercourse. It is notable that, "to play a round" was translated word for word from Turkish original "to throw hand" which Celil uses, and this word homonymously means "to help himself". These meanings connotes to masturbation both in English and in Turkish. Celil also mentioned about a kind of saturation state after playing. This state that he described resembled refractory period, a phase of male orgasm. He states:

C (Celil): Let's say you smoke every 2-5 hours, when you think 10 hours have passed for instance, so, like that, you cannot quit the game. You need to smoke the second one also, for instance. After a meal you need to smoke, right?

Gaming is just like that. One game is not enough, you want another round. You don't get satisfied. Another foul thing about this game is that it is not that greatly satisfying. Well, I'm not talking about every game, there are too many kinds, I don't know them so well.

R (Researcher): Satisfaction?

C: I mean it doesn't satisfy you. I mean, I don't want to give this, that example but there is no end, you play again and again, doing it once doesn't satisfy, you want it once more... There isn't complete satisfaction ever, only temporary satisfactions, I can say. You play 2-3 hours, OK, you are satisfied, then you want it again after 1 hour, I think you got it. Well, it's like, a little like sexual intercourse ... Like, you play 2-3 hours then you get bored, then after 4-5 hours you kinda want it once again but not right after that 3 hours.

Original

C: Üç saat beş saatte bir sigara içiyorsan örneğin, on saat geçtiğini düşündüğünüzde, mesela yani şey yapıyorsun sürekli, yani ayrılamıyorsun oyundan. İkinci sigarayı da içmen lazım mesela. Bir yemek yedin, sigara içmen lazım di' mi? Oyun da böyle bir şey. Bir tane oynadın yetmiyor yani, bir el canın istiyor. Tatmin olmuyorsun. Bi' de öyle bi' pisliği var bu oyunun. Hani çok inanılmaz tatmin edici bir özelliği yok ...

R: Tatmin?

C: Yani seni çok tatmin etmiyor oyun. Yani bu, o örneği vermek istemiyorum ama sonu yok yani. Bir daha bir daha oynuyorsun yani. Bir kere yapınca bir tatmin olmuyor, bir daha canın çekiyor ... Hiçbir zaman tam tatmin etmez, anlık tatminler oluyor öyle söyleyeyim. Yani sonra atıyorum şey olursun, iki üç saat oynarsın, tamam tatmin olursun. Sonra bir saat sonra bir daha canın çeker öyle söyleyeyim. Oyun yani anlamışsınızdır, o şey gibidir yani biraz cinsel ilişkiye benziyor yani ... Mesela oynarsın iki üç saat canın sıkılır, sonra dört beş saat sonra bir daha canın çeker gibi. Ama üç saatin hemen sonunda canın çekmez.

Kaan commented that online games provided more enjoy than many other fun activities such as having sex or ingesting alcohol. Even though he conveyed that he finds the online games more fun, his choice of entities for comparison points to a shared quality amongst themselves. At the end of his description, after a rather rational comparison, Kaan revealed that he ends up binge-playing. He says:

More fun than most things, like, now for instance, it is more fun than whatever I think is fun in my life ... More fun than a good sex, for example. More fun than hitting the booze. It causes much mess ... I say "It's a 40 minutes game, what would 40 minutes cost me anyway, 40 minutes is OK". But for the case of alcohol, if I start having it, well, 3 hours or the whole night is gone. But after 2 rounds of game, I can keep studying all night. But that doesn't happen either, that 2 rounds become 4 rounds, that's another matter.

Original

Çoğu şeyden eğlenceli, yani şu an mesela hayatımda düşündüğüm zaman bana ne, en eğlenceli gelen ne kadar varsa çoğu şeyden eğlenceli ... İyi bir seksten eğlenceli mesela. Alkol alıp kafa olmaktan eğlenceli. Ya o çok uğraştırır mesela yani ... Bu 40 dakikalık bir oyun, diyorum “E 40 dakika bana ne kaybettirir, 40 dakika okey” diyorum. Ama mesela alkol almaya başlasam üç saat, bütün gece gitti yani. Ama iki oyun oynayıp bütün gece çalışmaya devam edebilirim mesela. Ama o öyle olmuyor, iki oyun oluyor sana dört oyun falan tabi o ayrı.

4.3. Burst of Emotions While Playing Online Games

The participants reported intense emotions that were felt both during online game episodes, and about online games in general. Their emotional experiences were not very diverse but depicted with adjectives and adverbs indicating density and redundancy. The subthemes are *aggression and contempt*, and *pleasure*.

4.3.1. Aggression and Contempt

The most prominent emotions articulated very frequently by the participants were anger, annoyance, indignation, and contempt. Since anger, annoyance, and indignation are interwoven emotional experiences, they are subsumed under aggression. When the participants talked about moments of anger throughout online gaming experiences, they usually referred to a following aggressive action. Contempt is distinguished by inference to power related positions regarding the person who feels it, and whom he feels it for. Nonetheless, according to the participants' accounts, contempt resulted in an aggressive action, and contempt and aggression accompanied each other. For example, Celil told about other characteristics of players which he finds repulsive. He thought that most of the players are aggressors who swear for no reason. Celil also used foul language in the online games although he justified his behavior as joking, outspokenness, or self-defense. The memories of these kind of encounters with other players, which were plenty, gave him suffering, and mostly he suffered from the online games rather than getting pleasure from them. He also elaborated on how other players intentionally make him lose, and so made him mad. He says:

C (Celil): There is such a hideous thing in online games, too many egoists- I mean, most probably he'd play well in real life but he would be, like, selfish.

... Now, there are many of those in games, that's the reason you become cold ... Because everybody, like, once you play bad, they swear to your mother. You don't do anything, but you hear nonsensical swears, some get sulky and quit playing. For example, just as you join a game, someone goes that and that your mother, such foul swears, well you swear back too but that guy, with no frankness, after a slight move, swears to your mother right away, or your sister. Or another, goes racist and so. It is really awful.

R (Researcher): Well, in what situations do you swear, if you might?

C: At what point I swear? I swear as a joke. I beep what you're doing and such, or he swears to you and you start to do it back ... Otherwise, if we divide the game into a hundred pieces, if you inquire about on how many of these I enjoyed in, I enjoyed it in only one. Rather, I have suffered a lot in the 50-60 ... Such an agony that we play so much, I start to see it in my dreams, we played so many games at one point... Because you get so mad, well I once smashed the keyboard. Because you get so mad, even if it's a tiny issue. I mean thanks to a few people. Sometimes they do it on purpose, play bad on purpose. They feed the opponents on purpose. They set your defeat ... make you lose. If it is your rank match, achievement match, you get so mad.

Original

C: Çevrimiçi oyunlarda şöyle bir pislik var, çok fazla egoist- yani gerçek hayatta büyük ihtimal iyi oynuyordur ama şeydir, bencildir. ... Şu an oyunlarda o çok fazla var, o yüzden mesela oyundan soğuyorsun ... Çünkü herkes bi' yani kötü oynuyorsun anana sövüyor. Yani bi' şey yapıyorsun, saçma sapan küfür ediyor, küsüyor, oynamıyor ... Mesela oyuna giriyorsun, girer girmez biri senin anneni bilmem ne yapayım falan, pis küfürler şeyler hani. Sen de küfrediyorsun ama adam- yani içten samimiyet yok. Yanlış bir hareketinde hemen anana sövüyor, kız kardeşine sövüyor bilmem neyine sövüyor. Irkçılık yapıyor yok bilmem senin neyine diye. Hani gerçekten çok kötü.

R: Peki siz hangi durumlarda küfrediyorsunuz küfretseniz?

C: Hangi noktada küfrediyorum? Şakasına küfür ederim bu bir. Yani yapacağın işi bilmem ne yapayım tarzında vesaire. Ya da o sana küfür etmiştir artık sen de salmışsındır... Sorarsan oyunu yüze bölsek, ne kadardır zevk aldığın dersin, birlik anında zevk almışsındır, atıyorum 50-60'luk anında da çok ızdırap çekmişsindir mesela ... şöyle bir ızdırap yani çok fazla oyun oynuyoruz, bu oynaya oynaya artık rüyamda görür olmuştum. Bi' anda çok oyun oynamıştık ... Çünkü çok sinirleniliyor yani klavye kırmışlığım var öyle söyleyeyim size. Çünkü o kadar sinirleniyorsun ki yani küçük bir şey olsa bile. Yani birkaç kişi yüzünden. Bilerek yapıyorlar mesela. Bazen bilerek kötü oynuyor. Bilerek karşı tarafı güçlendiriyor. Senin yenilmeni sağlıyor ... Kaybetmene sebep oluyor. Senin seviye maçınsa, yükselme maçınsa o kadar sinirleniyor oluyorsun ki.

Burak said that he used online game spaces for purging by swearing, purging the feelings of frustration caused by real-life events. He and his friends usually swear at

each other such words as “armless”, which emphasize a lack of an important organ.

He states:

B (Burak): I don't usually swear much in real life but when I play with friends, hmm- Well it's based on a little that, we go to internet café (laughing), hmm, while playing, we swear more and relief the stress inside better, I feel. I can say I enjoy these swearing sessions... In my life, maybe I got angry with someone, or got a low grade in school, like, I may not be able to spill out the hatred at times. I let that go in the games.

R (Researcher): Do you swear at the game or at the other people?

B: We swear at each other actually, like “You are armless, you are stupid” and such.

Original

B: Ben genelde çok gerçek hayatımda küfreden bi' insan değilim ama arkadaşlarımla oynarken eee- Hani aslında bu şeye dayanıyor, bizim internet kafeye gitmemize dayanıyor biraz (gülüyor). Oyun oynarken daha çok küfür edip böyle daha içimizdeki stresi döktüğümüzü hissediyorum. Hani bu küfür etme seansları aslında benim hoşuma gidiyor diyebilirim ... Hayatımda işte birine sinirlenmişimdir veya hani okulda işte sınavda düşük not almışım gibi. Hani bunu eee bunun işte öfkesini kusamadığım zamanlar olabiliyor. Ben de bunu oyundan çıkarıyorum diyebilirim.

R: Siz oyuna mı küfrediyorsunuz peki, diğer kişilere mi?

B: Birbirimize ediyoruz aslında, hani işte “Kolsuzsun, salaksın” gibisinden.

Murat expressed that he trembled when he could not play well at the very crucial moments of a match. However, the reason why he trembled also referred to the fact that it happened only when he was playing with his friends. In other words, his body reacted by shaking, under the condition that the known others' gaze was present. When he was unable to play well with strangers, swearing took the place of trembling. He states:

When I mess up, I feel really awful. It is not a good feeling. In fact it is such that my hands start shaking a little. That's why first 25-30 minutes of the game is of great importance to me. 3-4 critical things happen in first 25-30 minutes. If I don't end up doing the right things on at least one of those things, in other words if I fail, if I screw up all three, four of them I start getting nervous in the game. Especially in the important games that I join with my teammates. Else, with strangers, it doesn't happen. I mess around there. If some swears to me, I swear back, and it passes away.

Original

Oyunda batırdığımda çok kötü hissediyorum gerçekten. Yani pek iyi bir his değil. Hatta şöyle, ellerim falan biraz titremeye başlar. O yüzden ilk 25-30 dakikası çok önemli benim için oyunun. İlk 25-30 dakikada çok kritik üç dört tane şey oluyor. O üç dördün en azından bir tanesinden doğru şeyleri yaparak ve doğru sonuca vararak çıkamazsam, yani üç dördün hepsinden fail edersem, sıçarsam bayağı bir gerilmeye başlıyorum oyunda yani. Özellikle takım arkadaşlarımla girdiğim önemli oyunlarda. Yoksa şeylerle böyle tanımadığım insanlarla girdiklerimde öyle bir şey olmuyor. Daha orda goygoyuna takılıyorum yani. Bana küfrederse ben de ona ediyorum geçiyor.

In addition, Murat retracted himself from saying the bad words he directs to other players in online games. He rather gave examples of offensive words that belongs gaming jargon. One example incident was about his teammates who give advantage to the opponent team. He called them as “feeder”. This word has a literal meaning of the person who feeds. Murat’s flow of speech continued by uttering the words “shit”, and “death”. He says:

In those situations, if I don’t know him, I swear on chat. Like, I call him ‘feeder’. After that, if he is a foreigner, I swear in foreign language. After that, like, “Go play in ‘noob’ games”. Let’s not say the swears right now. After that... ‘Feeder’ means the one who feeds the opponent. You got killed all the time, you aren’t good for shit, on top of that you fed the opponent. Because, as I said so, when the opponent kills you, they get their normal gold and also some extra gold. So death of the heroes is a problem. One should get killed as few as possible.

Original

O tip durumlarda tanımadığım insansa küfür ediyorum chatten. İşte ‘feeder’ diyorum. Ondan sonra yabancıysa işte yabancı küfürler ediyorum. Ondan sonra işte git ‘noob’ oyunlarında oyna. Şimdi küfürleri söylemeyeyim. Ondan sonra... ‘feeder’ besleyen demek. Yani rakibi besliyorsun. Sürekli öldün, hiçbir boka yaramadın, üstüne bir de gittin bir de rakibi besledin. Çünkü rakip seni, demiştim ya, öldürdüğünde ekstra altın alıyor, para alıyor. O yüzden oyunda ‘feeder’ olmak çok kötü. Çünkü seni öldürdüğünde hem normal altın alıyor bir de ekstra altın alıyor. O yüzden ‘hero’ların ölmesi problem. Olabildiğince az ölmek lazım.

Kutay talked about an ideal way of communicating with other players who makes mistakes during matches in the game. He spoke in such a way that he scorned those who played bad although he advised to use a decent tone to point out their mistakes. According to Kutay, he also could not use that tone even if he was aware of the ideal

approach. He also resorted to use words of gaming jargon to describe his anger and aggressivity caused by frustration. He says:

You cannot either win or lose by yourself. But for being able to be a team player, you need to have good communicational skills and the communication is never good. I mean, when one person in that five does things so wrong, you can write on 'chat' all the time, and nobody holds back from writing on 'chat', everybody is in contact all the time. And when someone makes a mistake, well, no one says "My friend, you did that move wrong, if you do it such instead of such we'll have a higher chance to win" ... Directly they say "You do it that way because you are a loser" (laughing). Yes, we do that also. Me for example, I am the most critic about this but in the game, you get so competitive and mad. You do it right and put effort on it and someone else nullifies it by doing wrong. You get frustrated and start to 'flame' that person. You might say so humiliating and offensive things, but it doesn't do any help. It causes more harm as that person's knees knock together and as he is novice to the game, he does something wrong and as you push him more- like the ones learning how to drive, someone cannot control clutch and accelerator, and horns coming from back during the red light don't help at all, it's like that.

Original

Tek başına kazanılmıyor, tek başına kaybedilmiyor da. Ama takımın bir oyuncusu olabilmek için iletişimin güzel olması gerekiyor ve iletişim hiçbir zaman güzel olmuyor. Yani bi' o beş kişinin arasında bir kişi bir şeyi çok yanlış yapıyor olduğu zaman 'chat'ten sürekli yazabiliyorsun. Ve kimse 'chat'e yazmaktan geri kalmıyor. Herkes iletişim halinde. Sürekli bir kişi yanlış yaptığı zaman işte "Dostum o hareketi yanlış yaptın, onu öyle değil de şöyle yapsan kazanma ihtimalimiz artar" demiyor kimse ... Direkt "Onu öyle yapıyorsun çünkü sen eziksin deniyor (gülüyor). Evet bunu biz de yapıyoruz. Ben mesela bunu en çok eleştiren adamım ama oyun içinde o kadar hırslı bi' hale geliyorsun ve o kadar sinirleniyorsun ki. Senin doğru yapıp emeğini harcadığın bir şeyi, başka biri yanlış bir şey yaparak hiç ediyor. Ya buna sinirleniyorsun ve o adamı 'flame'liyorsun, yani bayağı aşağılayıcı, ofansif laflar edebiliyorsun ama bunun hiçbir faydası olmuyor. Daha zararı oluyor çünkü o adamın iyice eli ayağı birbirine dolaşiyor. Zaten acemi olduğu için bir şeyi yanlış yapıyor ve sen onun üstüne gittiğin için iyice- yani böyle çok arabayı yeni öğrenen birinin, debriyaj gaz ayarını tutturamayan birinin kırmızı ışıkta arkadan korna geldiğinde yardımcı olmaması gibi bi' şey yani.

4.3.2. Pleasure

Pleasure came to the fore while talking about positive emotions in the participants' online gaming experiences. It is notable that almost all participants referred to get

feelings of pleasure as one of the motivations for online gaming. However, the emotional charge related to pleasure in their narratives was pronounced more, so some parts of these narratives were included to pleasure subtheme.

The first reference about pleasure is to Celil, where he compared the degrees of the pleasure and the agony caused by online gaming. This passage was from his accounts for his annoying experiences, and was also included under aggression and contempt subtheme. One significant point in his speech was that when comparing the times he got pleasure and the times he got agony, he articulated such sentence translated verbatim as “I have gotten pleasure at the moment of unity [*birlik anında zevk almışumdur*]”. Celil states:

It gives pleasure, I mean we liked it. I enjoyed it when I had been winning or when I promoted up the league or I went to the very top. Otherwise, if we divide the game into a hundred pieces, if you inquire about on how many of these I enjoyed in, I enjoyed it in only one. Rather, I have suffered a lot in the 50-60.

Original

Zevk veriyor, yani hoşumuza gidiyordu. Yeniyordum ya da lig yükseldiğim zaman, en top noktaya çıktığım zaman zevk almışumdur. Yoksa ama, sorarsan oyunu yüze bölsek ne kadardır zevk aldığın dersin, birlik anında zevk almışumdur. Atıyorum 50-60'lık anında da çok ıstırap çekmişimdir mesela.

Kutay expressed that the most pleasurable moments of the game belonged to the learning phase in which he had been a novice player. The source of this pleasure of online gaming was to be able to learn so many information. Moreover, the information to be learned with so much pleasure was about power dynamics of the game in order to get stronger, and to win eventually. He says:

When I first started, the learning phase was very pleasant because there are more than hundred heroes and they all possess more than four or five skills, You need to learn all of them one by one, you need to know how they are all related, which is strong against each other, which are stronger with which items, on which sides they need to be to played. There are so many factors that need to be known. The stage of learning these are very nice because there is a lot of information you can access.

Original

İlk başladığım zaman öğrenirken, öğrenme aşaması çok keyifli çünkü 100'den fazla hero var ve hepsinin dörtten beşten fazla 'skill'i var. Hepsini tek tek

öğrenmen lazım. Hepsinin birbiriyle ilişkisini bilmen lazım. Kimin karşısında kim güçlü, hangisi hangi eşyalarla daha güçlü oluyor, kim nerede oynuyor. Ya çok fazla faktör var bilinmesi gereken. Bunları öğrenme aşaması çok güzel çünkü çok fazla bilgi var erişebileceğin.

Onur stated that his purpose of playing online games was to get pleasure of the moment instantly, rather than playing to reach a specific or professional goal. Talking to his friends while playing the game was what gives the pleasure, he said. He states:

Actually, I have no main goal. I mean, I don't have any professional thoughts. I try to enjoy the moment; I try to get pleasure. Whilst we play with friends, we play as we are having conversation over "D..." (which is a software program for vocal communication). We are getting pleasure.

Original

Aslında temel hedefim yok. Yani profesyonel anlamda bir düşüncem yok. Anın tadını çıkarmaya çalışıyorum, zevk almaya çalışıyorum. Hani arkadaşlarla beraber oynadıkça, sürekli D... üzerinden de muhabbet ede ede oyun oynuyoruz. Zevk alıyoruz.

Kaan gets pleasure out of being able to take instant strategic actions which are very difficult, and critical for winning the game. He described an issue of potency on the edge between winning and losing. He states:

It is very difficult to play the game. The moves and strategic thoughts to be made are very difficult and it is necessary to make extremely instant decisions. I mean a 10-second error in a forty-minute game can cause you to lose completely. Although this situation is extremely difficult, I can say that I am accomplishing something in the game, I suppose, hmm doing something well, satisfies. So it gives pleasure.

Original

Oyunu oynaması çok zor. Yapılacak hamleler ve stratejik düşünceler çok zor ve ani karar vermek gerekiyor aşırı. Yani kırk dakikalık bir oyunda yapacağınız 10 saniyelik bir hata tamamen kaybetmenize sebep olabiliyor. İşte bu aşırı zor olmasına rağmen bir şeyleri başarıyor olmam herhalde oyunda, şey yapıyor, tatmin ediyor diyebilirim. Yani zevk veriyor.

For Erdem, playing with his friends was the source of a great pleasure. In addition, he emphasized on the importance of decentralization for roles in a team formed by his friends. He says:

It is not that I am not playing alone, we are playing with our friends. Indeed what I enjoy the most is when we go with them, everyone does their part- and for example, we entered the 'battleground' ... There is a task for everyone. When everyone does this, it gives a huge pleasure because you did it with your friends, that is because you did it together.

Original

Tek başıma değil de zaten hani arkadaşlarımızla beraber oynuyoruz. Zaten en çok zevk aldığım şey o onlarla beraber girip, herkesin üstüne düşen görevi yapıp- işte atıyorum 'battleground' girmişiz ... Herkesin üstüne düşen bir görev var. Herkes bunu yerine getirip yaptığı zaman, bu arkadaşlarınızla yapmış olduğunuz için, bunu yani beraberce yapmış olduğunuz için, bu çok haz veriyor.

The pleasure Onur spoke about was somehow different from the ones articulated by other participants. Onur brought up this feeling, not as a part of winning, but as a part of failing. He detached pleasure from challenge. For him, pleasure starts when challenge ends. He states:

People inevitably get demoralized. Because you work so hard and put effort but you can't see the same from your teammates. Therefore, it demoralizes you. On the other hand, there are some games, at the end it is you who play bad ... So for you, there is no challenge any more. When I feel I go bad, I say to myself, let's enjoy, no challenge is left after all.

Original

İster istemez demoralize oluyor insanlar. Çünkü sen o kadar emek veriyorsun, çabalyorsun ama kendi takım arkadaşlarından bunu göremiyorsun. Dolayısıyla bi' demoralize ediyor sizi. Ama sizin kötü olduğunuz oyunlar da oluyor sonuçta ... Bir yerden sonra 'challenge' ı kalmıyor aslında. Baktım kötü gidiyorum, gidişat kötü, 'challenge' unsuru kalmadıktan sonra bari işin zevkini alayım diyorum.

4.4. Omnipotent Self-presentations of Online Gamers as Reflected in Narratives of Gameplay

The players who participated in this study convey a picture of themselves while giving accounts of their excessive online gaming experiences. In the participants' narratives, the prominent patterns demonstrating mechanics, structure and roles in their choices

of online games, were also key indicators for the participants' own self-representations. In other words, these demonstrations of the gameplay in the individual's speech can also be seen as a demonstration of themselves, because they spoke to another person, the researcher. These self-representations were mostly self-images as omnipotent figures. The subthemes are *ambition to win to feel superior to others: competitiveness, desire to succeed by killing: destructiveness, use of language of their own*, and *"It becomes an addiction, but I am not addicted"*.

4.4.1. Ambition to Win to Feel Superior to Others: Competitiveness

Kutay reiterated the competitive nature of his most played game, *League of Legends (LoL)*. Because the effort put for victory by a player is visible to others, everyone puts even more effort, in his opinion. Then, he told a memory of a surprise victory. He says:

K (Kutay): It's a very 'competitive' game. It is a very competitive game, well, how much time you spent playing is reflected on everything. So the way you play that game can reflect how long and how efficiently you are capable of playing it. Thus, everyone is taking more time, playing more and trying to be better and better... We fell incredibly behind and got crushed, I mean, we were not losing in a casual way. They were winning by making fun of us ... We couldn't even fight ... They were giving us advance time and then killing us afterwards ... We wrote "Enough is enough, finish the game, we are bored, no chance for us to win, you are very strong, don't mock us". They started to swerb and called as losers ... They said, "It will be over whenever we want it to be". At that point, we had a couple of advantages with their one or two mistakes and we reached their strength in two or three minutes. Thanks to those two mistakes, we went and finished the game very suddenly ... That feeling of coming back is very nice, 'comeback' is always nice.

R (Researcher): Why is comeback so nice?

K: Because, everyone always loves underdogs. Anyone loves such victimhood when living it or playing it. Coming from behind and overcoming the stronger, from the such position of the weak to win, relegate the stronger one are for sure satisfying feelings.

Original

K: Çok 'competitive' bi' oyun, çok rekabetçi bi' oyun. Çok, ne kadar zaman geçirdiğin oyunun başında, her şeye yansıyor. Yani senin o oyunu oynayış şeklin, o oyunu ne kadar süredir oynadığını ve ne kadar verimli şekilde oynadığını yansıtabiliyor. Bu yüzden herkes daha fazla zamanını ayırıp, herkes daha fazla oynayıp, herkes daha iyi olmaya çalışıyor... İnanılmaz gerideydik ve eziliyorduk, yani böyle normal kaybetmiyorduk. Çok bizle dalga geçerek yeniyorlardı ... Mücadele bile edemiyorduk ... Kendilerince işte bize avans

veriyorlar, gelip öldürüyorlar ... Biz de chat'ten karşı takıma "Bitirin artık, yeter, sıkıldık, yani bizim kazanma şansımız yok bu oyunu, çok güçlendiniz, dalga geçmeyin, artık bitirin, rica ediyoruz." falan dedik. Onlar da işte küfür kıyamet işte, "Siz eziksiniz ... Biz ne zaman istersek o zaman biter" gibi şey yaparken, biz bir anda bunların bir iki hatasıyla, bir şımarmasıyla bir iki avantaj elde ettik. İki üç dakika sonra onların gücüne ulaşmıştık. O bir iki hata sayesinde ve gidip biz bitirdik oyunu çok ani bir şekilde ... Geri dönüş hissi yani çok güzel, 'comeback' her zaman güzel oluyo

R: 'Comeback' neden bu kadar güzel?

K: Çünkü yani herkes underdogları seviyor. Böyle bi' mağduriyet şeyini herkes bi' sever. İzlerken de yaşarken de. Böyle geriden gelip daha güçlü olanı alt etmek, böyle bi' zayıfın kazanması, güçlü olanın işte hani pozisyonundan edilmesi filan hep tatmin edici hisler yani.

While speaking on a different issue which was about the greed that human beings have, Kutay mentioned superiority again, emphasizing how he puts himself in a position above others. He referred to himself as a source of information about human greed although he contradicted with himself one sentence later by saying he was not that self-important. He states:

I already know these bad characteristics from myself. I am also greedy, and I want something, although I don't need it. When somebody says something to me, I say "How can you tell me, who you are?". I mean, because I see myself above him and so on. I'm doing these things too. I know these from myself. In this sense, I am not a very bad or very smug man.

Original

Kendimden biliyorum zaten bu kötü özellikleri. Ben de hırslanıyorum, ben de bir şeyi daha fazla istiyorum, ihtiyacım olmamasına rağmen istiyorum. İşte birinden biri bana bi' şey söylediğinde işte "Sen bana bunu nasıl diyebilirsin ki, sen kimsin?" diyorum. Yani çünkü kendimi onun üstünde görüyorum falan, bunları ben de yapıyorum. Bunları kendimden biliyorum yani, ki bu anlamda da öyle çok kötü çok kendini beğenmiş bi' adam değilim.

Ali said that he feels happiness when he is able to kill all the players of the opponent team by himself. This was different from the accounts of other participants who lay more emphasis on togetherness with their friends. Ali mentioned a very high number of hours that he spent playing to get to the top of rankings in his most played game, *Counter Strike: Global Offensive (CS:GO)*. By reaching such a high rank, he proved himself that he wins more and loses less, and that he is a good player. This can be understood as he is in a need for proof. He states:

A (Ali): When you kill the entire opposing team alone, you are happy ... of course, it makes you feel that you are a good player which is nice... The game puts you in a certain league with respect to the winning and losing rate. This promotion is achieved by playing the games that we call ranked games. Naturally, it is nice to promote. For example, I am playing in the highest league for now ... It was a little hard to reach ... It took about three thousand hours ... My main goal was to get there, I got there and my goal now is to stay there.

R (Researcher): What does it mean for you to be there and stay there?

A: I prove myself (laughs), you know.

R: To whom?

A: To myself.

Original

A: Karşı takımın tamamını tek başına öldürmek, o öyle olunca bi' mutlu olunuyor tabi...İyi bir oyuncu olduğun hissini yaratması güzel oluyor... Kazanıp kaybetme oranına göre belli bir lige yerleştiriyor oyun sizi. Dereceli oyun dediğimiz oyunları oynayarak bu yükselme sağlanıyor. Yükselme e tabi güzel oluyor hani ... Ben mesela şu anda en yüksek ligde oynuyorum...Gelmek birazcık zordu üç bin saat falan aldı ... Temel hedefim oraya ulaşmaktı, oraya ulaştım, şu anda da kalmak.

R: Ne ifade ediyor size orda olmak ve orda kalmak?

A: Kendimi kanıtliyorum (gülüyor) bildiğin.

R: Kime?

A: Kendime.

On the other hand, Erdem stressed more on the competitiveness between him and his friends. This competition which was participated and experienced as a group makes online games more pleasurable according to Erdem. He spoke about his interest in competitive team sports to corroborate this argument about himself. The pleasure illustrated by him depended on beating or defeating an opponent team. An interesting point was that his word of choice in Turkish for beating or defeating, that is “yenmek”, has another meaning in Turkish, which is “to be eaten”. Erdem says:

Because it gives more pleasure to play with other people... Actually, it satisfied more, to be doing something there together rather than alone. You know, this is the biggest difference between a ‘single’ player and an ‘online’ game. If you are playing a competitive game, if you compete with other players, if you are playing to outperform them, or if you are doing a game on grind, if you are constantly trying to get something, this started to give more joy than ‘single player games’. Because the game has a continuity. Otherwise, in ‘single player’ games, you are only playing the story, it ends. It remains as a good memory in your mind ... I only play in terms of competitiveness. Because of that- I am a person who loves to play sports such like that, I am very competitive in sports,

I have been playing American football, for seven or eight years or so. I love to do team sports more ... I like to have a superiority against the opponent... For me, the pleasure that I get from defeating the opposing team is much higher.

Original

Başka insanlarla oynamak daha çok zevk verdiği için aslında ... Tek başınıza değil de orda beraber bir şey yapıyor olmak daha çok tatmin etti oyun oynama açısından. Hani single playerla zaten ya da bi' online oyunun hani en çok farkı bu. Ya da işte competitive bir oyun oynuyorsanız hani rekabet diğer oyuncularla rekabet içine giriyorsanız, işte hani onlardan işte daha iyi oynayıp ya da işte grind üstüne bi oyun yapıyorsanız, sürekli hani bi şeyleri çabalayıp çabalayıp çabalayıp bi şey elde etme üzerine çalışıyorsanız- ya bu daha çok zevk vermeye başladı single player oyunlardansa. Çünkü oyunun bir devamlılığı oluyor. Öbür türlü single player oyunlarda yani hikâyeyi oynuyorsunuz, bitiyor. Bu sizin aklınızda güzel bi' anı olarak kalıyor ... Ben sadece competitive olması açısından oynuyorum çünkü o da yani şu şekil spor yapmayı çok seven biriyim. Hani sporda da çok rekabetçi oluyorum, amerikan futbolu oynuyorum yedi sekiz yıldır falan. Orda da böyle rekabetçi bi' şeyler oynamayı seven- hani takım sporu yapmayı daha çok seviyorum ... Onlara karşı bir üstünlük sağlamayı çok daha seviyorum ... Benim için hani karşı takımı yendiğim haz benim için çok daha yüksektir.

Murat finds joy in online games because he can make a real person accept that he is the superior one. After a round, he enjoys having conversations including critic of the game with his teammates. The fact that his teammates are his real-life friends makes these conversations possible because jokes and humiliation can get intertwined. Murat says:

Achievements we won, games we played, matches we played, etc. Considering that we do it all alone, I think the pleasure we get from those would decrease to 10%. That's why we always take a break after playing a game, we used to go to the garden. The winning team in the garden makes fun of the defeated team. After that, we tell them about their mistakes, and convey their mistakes for the aim of establishing the strategy. These were very pleasant conversations. In fact, I think the point of joy is a bit there. In other words, the feeling of defeating the real person and by making him accept your superiority both because he is your friend and with a little fooling around, a little bit of conversation and a little chat. That's what creates pleasure.

Original

Kazandığımız başarılar, oynadığımız oyunlar, yaptığımız maçlar vs. işte hepsini tek yaptığımızı düşünelim ve bundan bunlardan alacağımız keyif bence %10'a falan düşer. O yüzden de hani orda mesela bir oyun attıktan sonra her zaman böyle bir mola veririz, bahçeye çıkardık. Bahçede işte yenen takım yenilenle dalga geçer. Ondan sonra onun hatalarını söyler, stratejiyi kurma

noktasındaki yanlışlarını aktarır falan filan. Ya bunlar çok keyifli sohbetlerdi. Aslında işin bence keyif noktası birazcık orası. Yani gerçek insana o üstünlüğünü hem arkadaşın olduğu için hem de birazcık goygoyla, biraz muhabbetle biraz sohbetle ona kabul ettirmek ve onu böyle yenme hissi. Yani yaratan haz birazcık o.

Celil does not even bother to play a casual game which gives no rank points because his main reason is to get his superiority proven in the game. He evaluated some types of getting defeated as valuable lessons for possible future victories. He talked about the good aspects of “to be beaten [“yenilmek”] (or as in literal translation of the original word, which is “to be eaten”). The lesson learned included imitation of the victorious rival in the future. He expressed that playing alone and winning alone is not significant, because superiority does not make sense unless others witness it. Mentioning about showing off his abilities in the game to younger children, he remembered the times when he had been the child who watched the more capable one. He says:

You're trying to be better all the time, I didn't play because I had lots of pleasure. I liked it because, I liked to beat, achive, promote... It is not about how I shoot the man or something like an ordinary game. That you defeat, that you establish superiority to the opponent was pleasurable ... Or I- There are two kinds of game. One is ranked and the other is unranked. In unranked, it is only for fun. You lose or win nothing. I can't play them. I play something that I win something eventually ... Let me say the ambition to win. Like success in real life, nothing else. I lost a lot of games this way. I mean, you are watching professionals, they are doing very smart moves. And you are developing something in your own way as you play. You create your own mechanics or go with the ones you see. This gives pleasure too. You become superior to other people ... I have a champion A, he has a champion B, he was superior to me in the match. I remember whatsoever the man did to me in the same match. I do the same to my opponent for in next game. Because I bought it, I learnt it. It has this kind of good aspects ... I love the internet cafe environment because I play with little kids and stuff, I play for two hours and then leave. I met with people there and became friends. We play together. Such a good experience it is. Besides, it is nonsense to play alone, win alone, be the best. It makes sense when you show your friends that you succeed. When I go to internet cafe, kids gather around me, watching me play, not because I do something extraordinary but only because I play better than them. Once, others used to do the same to us when we were younger. It is not a showoff, I mean, you like it.

Original

Deniyorsun sürekli daha iyi olmak için, ya hani çok çok aşırı zevk aldığımdan oynamıyordum. Yani şeyi seviyordum, yenmek hani, başarmak, yükselmek. Yoksa oyun çok eğlenceli, nasıl adama da ateş ettim filan değil, yani böyle

sıradan şey oyun gibi değil. Hani o yenmek, üstünlük kurmak karşıya, o zevkliydi ... Mesela ben dereceli oyun var bi bunda, bi' de derecesiz var eğlencesine. Yensen de yenilsen de bi' şey kaybetmiyorsun. Onu oynayamam pek, ben sadece yenip yenince bir şey kazandığım oyunu oynarım ... Kazanma şeyi ya, hani kazanma hırsı diyeyim. Normal gerçek hayattaki gibi başarı yani, başka bir şey değil. Yani böyle çok oyun da çok kaybettim. Yani izliyorsun profesyonelleri, yani çok zekice şeyler yapıyorlar ya, sen de oynaya oynaya kendince bir şeyler geliştiriyorsun. Kendi mekaniklerini oluşturuyorsun ya da gördüğün mekanikleri sen de yapıyorsun. Bu da zevk veriyor yani. Hani diğer insanlardan üstün oluyorsun ... Benim A şampiyonum var onun B şampiyonu. O bana üstün geldi mesela. Aynı eşleşmede adamın bana ne yaptığını hatırlıyorum, ben rakibe aynısını yapıyorum bir sonraki oyun. Çünkü ben yedim onu, yani öğrendim. Bu tarz güzel yönleri var yenildiğin zaman ... İnternet kafe ortamını seviyorum çünkü orada küçük çocuklarla filan oynuyoruz, bir iki saat oynayıp çıkıyorum. Mesela orda da insanlarla tanıştım, arkadaşlarım oldu, beraber oynuyoruz filan. Hoş bir deneyim. Yoksa hani tek başıma gireyim, başarılı olayım, en iyisi ben olayım- e zaten takım arkadaşlarına da göstermen lazım ki hani biraz da şey olsun hani senin iyi oynadığını. Mesela gidiyorum internet kafeye çok iyi oynuyorum ya, çocuklar falan topluyor etrafıma, izliyor beni ... Aslında çok iyi bir şey yapmıyorum ama onlardan iyi oynadığım için ... Aynı şekilde bize yapıyorlardı mesela, surf onun için, yani gösteriş için değil de hoşunuza gidiyor.

Murat stated that the appearance of his character in the game has no value for him.

Reputation points, which are given by the counterparts, are also unimportant for him.

What he cares about is whether he wins or not. He says:

If the game has set goals for me, the goals I set for myself and - or I think very momentarily. Actually, winning that game at that moment. I mean, for example, I am not affected by things, unlike other people, like skins they earn for their heroes, because you can earn clothes for heroes. After that, at the same time, when you play a hero very well, other people give you reputation points. For example, you can earn such points, etc. For example, increasing these points and reaching a certain level is very important for other people. But it doesn't matter to me at all. I don't even care about them. I just play to win. Every game I enter, I have a perspective focusing on enjoying by winning.

Original

Oyunun bana koyduğu hedefler varsa benim kendime koyduğum hedefler veya ben çok anlık düşünüyorum. O an o maçı kazanmak aslında. Yani mesela şeylerden çok etkilenmiyorum diğer insanların aksine. Mesela diğer insanlar için herolarına kazandıkları skinler, çünkü herolara kıyafet kazanabiliyorsunuz. Ondan sonra, aynı zamanda mesela bir heroyu çok çok iyi oynadığınızda size reputation puanları veriyor diğer insanlar. Mesela bu tarz puanlar kazanabiliyorsunuz vs. Mesela bu puanları arttırmak ve belli bi' seviyeye gelmek çok önemli diğer insanlar için. Ama benim için bunların hiçbir

önemi yok. Zaten buralara hiç girmem bile. Ben sadece kazanmak için. Ondan sonra yani girdiğim her oyunda, ondan sonra, keyif alıp kazanmaya odaklı ve o şekilde bir bakış açım var.

When I asked Burak the thing which captivates him about strategy games, he mentioned his desire for power to rule like a tyrant. He saw it as a fantasy of ruling his country emerging victorious thanks to him. Superiority was also articulated by Burak:

Ruling and feeling of power because you rule like a dictator. Ultimately, the game does anything you tell it to do. There are lots of people under your command. Well, it is mostly like a fantasy. Assume that, I choose Turkey to be managed and I become the reason to make Turkey victorious in the World War II. I like this. In fact, it is not because of nationalist things. Rather it is about a feeling of power. Well, you like to see that you are stronger in the game and that you are superior to others with the strategies you have established yourself.

Original

Yönetmek ve güç hissi olabilir çünkü hani diktatör gibi yönetiyorsunuz sonuçta. Her dediğinizi yapıyor hani bi', emrinizde bi' sürü insan var gibi. Ya şey gibi, fantezi gibi düşünebilirsiniz bunu aslında. Hani mesela atıyorum, Türkiye'yi seçiyorum yönetecek olarak, İkinci Dünya Savaşı'ndan galip ayrılmasına sebep oluyorum falan. Bu da benim hoşuma gidiyor aslında. Ya milliyetçi şeylerle değil de böyle daha bi' güç hissi olarak. Yani oyunda güçlendiğinizi, kendi yönettiğiniz hani kendi kurduğunuz stratejilerle diğerlerinden daha üstün olduğunuzu görmek hoşunuza gidiyor.

Kutay described the online game space as a world under his total control. By total control, he meant that he could exit without any hesitation if he experienced something bad. Exit allows him to become deaf to others, and to be unreachable and unspeakable to. He states:

In this game, because you have a little bit of those good moments, you ignore bad moments a bit. I mean, I don't know, but it's not like something in your normal life, because when you press that top-right cross there, it ends. You know, no matter how much you get stressed there, when you press it, when you hit it, everyone's voice is cut off and they can never reach you again, and the event you experience is completely over, so the game is like something completely under your control.

Original

Bu oyunda birazcık o iyi anları da yaşadığın için kötü anları biraz görmezden geliyorsun. Yani bilmiyorum ama bu işte yani bu normal hayatında olan bi' şey gibi değil. Çünkü orada, o sağ üstteki çarpıya bastığın zaman bitiyor yani olay.

Hani orada ne kadar sen strese giriyor olursan ol, yani bastığında, o çarpıya bastığında hem herkesin sesi kesiliyor ve sana bir daha asla ulaşamıyorlar, hem de o yaşadığın olay tam anlamıyla bitiyor. Yani aslında senin denetiminde olan bi' şey gibi oyun tamamen.

Celil told about the time when he wanted to play with superior players. He mentioned about the effort he put for the purpose of to become a player like them. For example, he said that he spent real money to get more powerful. He specified that he put these efforts only few years ago. This seems as if he finds his behavior immature. Celil states:

I play in the same place with them, but I don't know them. I see them in the game, but I really don't know of them. I said to myself, I started to switch to their clan to play together. For instance, I bought extra items with real money to get stronger, to get stronger to play with them or something. This is not at a time when I was at a very young age. It was about three or four years ago. Because I wanted to get between them.

Original

Ben de aynı yerde oynuyorum ama tanımıyorum onları. Oyunda görüyorum ama gerçekte bilmiyorum. Ben kendime şey dedim, yani bunların klanına geçiş yapmaya başladım, onlarla beraber oynarım falan diye. Mesela gittim parayla ekstra eşyalar falan aldım, güçlenmek için, onlarla beraber oynamak için falan. Ya bu da çok küçük yaşta değil, üç dört yıl önceden bahsediyorum. çünkü çok istiyordum onların arasına girmek.

In addition, Celil got most delighted when he talked about a memory of meeting with professional gamers as a reward for winning an online game tournament. He also emphasized the fact that others were watching him succeed. He says:

We met with the professional players, we sat together and had dinner for example. It was a very nice memory for me, it was very nice ... For instance, we had been watching the players, we came side by side with them because we won as well. We are introduced to them, we chatted, hang out with them. We are told to be able to hang out there for that day long. Even, we were the real winners. There, in the university tournament, for example, ten-fifteen thousand people watched us live. Of course, while you are playing, your friends are watching and supporting you. These were good things.

Original

Profesyonel oyuncularla tanıştık, oturduk, yemek yedik onlarla. Mesela çok güzel bir anıydı benim için, çok güzeldi ... İzliyorduk mesela oyuncuları,

onlarla yan yana geldik biz de kazandığımız için. Bizi de onlarla tanıştırdılar, muhabbet ettik, takıldık onlarla. Ya da burada mesela bugün takılabiliyorsunuz dediler. Hatta bir de kazanan yine bizdik. Orada üniversite turnuvasında mesela, bizi izledi, on bin on beş bin kişi bizi izledi canlı. Ve tabi bir de sen oynuyorsun, arkadaşların seni izliyor, destekliyor falan. Çok güzel şeylerdi.

For Ali, playing with professional players was also important. However, he essentially enjoyed destroying and devaluation of the professional one in the presence of others' witnessing. He found it delightful that the person, whom he defeated in front of everyone, was humiliated. He stressed that this person made money out of gaming, and yet he was able to crush him. Ali articulated the word "amount" ["meblağ"] wrongly, by saying "authority" ["merci"] instead, which seems a significant slip. He says:

A (Ali): Well, such famous players come to my game and it feels nice... For example, there was a streamer who came during his broadcast, I crushed the man, I crushed the man real hard, for example, that made me feel so good because everyone made fun of that guy.

R (Researcher): That the guy was made fun of felt you good.

A: Well, after all, this person is a person who plays this game professionally, he is making money off it, even not the little authorities (a lapsus, instead of the word 'amount' he said authorities), he is making a lot of money and it is a source of motivation for me to see that I am better than him.

R: What does it mean for you to see that you are better than him?

A: It doesn't mean a lot; it just means I'm good at the game.

Original

A: Böyle ünlü insanlar falan geliyor oyunuma o da güzel bi' his... Mesela bi' tane yayıncı gelmişti. O yayıncıyı, yayını sırasında hani adama- adamı ezdim, bayağı ezdim. Mesela o çok güzel hissettirmişti çünkü herkes o adamla dalga geçti.

R: Adamla dalga geçilmesi sizi iyi hissettirdi, güzel hissettirdi.

A: E tabi şimdi sonuçta bu insan profesyonel olarak bu oyunu oynayan bir insan. Hani bunun için para kazanıyo hani küçük merciiler de değil, bayağı yüksek paralar kazanıyor. E ondan iyi olduğumu görmek benim için bir motivasyon kaynağı.

R: Ondan iyi olduğunuzu görmek ne ifade ediyor sizin için?

A: Çok bi' şey ifade etmiyor aslında, sadece oyunda iyi olduğumu ifade ediyor.

Onur talked about his experiences of playing online games with people who he saw playing in world championships. He became excited talking about these memories since he could think himself as having reached their level of competence. He states:

When I played very often three years ago, I came across even the guys from the world championship. To be able to reach the level of the men in the world championship is, of course, a great motivation... actually, reaching their level is motivating because there are tournaments and these tournaments are the world championships... It is a great success for one to come across in the games with the players that I have seen there.

Original

Bundan üç yıl önce çok sık oynadığım zamanlar, ya dünya şampiyonasından adamlarla bile denk geldiğim oldu benim. E tabi dünya şampiyonasındaki adamların seviyesine erişebilmek büyük bi' motivasyon sağlıyor ... Onların seviyesine erişmek de insanı açıkçası motive ediyor çünkü turnuvalar oluyor, dünya şampiyonasının bu turnuvalar ... Orada gördüğüm insanlarla aynı oyunlara denk gelmek insan için büyük bir başarı oluyor açıkçası.

4.4.2. Desire to Succeed by Killing: Destructiveness

Celil described the course of his most played game, *League of Legends (LoL)*, by using the words 'hero', 'to control', 'opposite', 'main center (which can also be translated verbatim as "mother home base")', 'towers', 'to destroy', and 'to kill'. He states:

Two teams choose their champions then move towards the middle. Everyone has a hero, everybody can control his heroes, he can't control anything else. Just his hero. And it gives you four skills, 'skill'. You use these. There are main centers and towers on the opposite side. At the back are the main centers. You are trying to destroy this main center. Whoever destroys the main center wins. Of course, there are towers until you reach the main center and there are champions, rival champions. You should be able to kill him/it too.

Original

İki takım şampiyonlarını seçiyor, sonra ortaya doğru ilerliyorlar. Herkesin bir herosu var, herkes herosunu kontrol edebiliyor, başka bir şeyi kontrol edemiyor. Sadece herosunu. Ve dört tane sana yetenek veriyor, 'skill'. Bunları kullanıyorsun. Karşı tarafta ana merkezler var, kuleler var. En arkada ana merkezler var. Bu ana merkezi yok etmeye çalışıyorsun. Kim ana merkezi yok ederse o kazanır. Tabi ana merkeze gelene kadar kuleler var ve karşında şampiyonlar var, rakip şampiyonlar. Onu da öldürebilmen lazım.

Kutay also talked about destructing and protecting "mother home bases" for illustrating the aim of a match and determinant of victory in *LoL*. He mentioned about proving superiority by killing characters of opponents. He says:

Yes, so five people in one team, five people in other, both have the main base. Two teams are trying to defeat the one on other side while trying to protect theirs. By this time, they can become more superior by killing each other's characters.

Original

Evet yani beş kişi bir takım, beş kişi bir takım, iki kişinin de merkez üssü var. İki takım da onu korumaya çalışırken karşı tarafını alt etmeye çalışıyor. Bu sırada işte birbirlerinin karakterlerini öldürerek daha üstün hale gelebiliyorlar gibi.

Moreover, Kutay highlighted the significance of collective action and being synchronous during a match. As a result of this harmonious activity, he said, one can feel himself as complete. He claims:

When you make a joint action with your friend you entered with and kill the opponent or overthrow their structures , it's fun because he has to do something and you have to do something and those things you do together have to be synchronized. When you achieve this, a very feeling of completion or succession comes with it.

Original

Birlikte girdiğin arkadaşınla ortak bir hareket yapıp karşı düşmana, düşmanı öldürdüğünde veya bir onları yapılarını alt ettiğinde keyif veriyor tabii. Çünkü onun bir şey yapması ve senin bir şey yapman ve bu birlikte yaptığınız şeylerin senkronize olması gerekiyor. Bunu başardığın zaman bayağı bir tamamlama, böyle başarıma hissiyatı geliyor.

The first most played game by Ali has a scenario which offers you to be either a police officer or a terrorist although your means and ends are basically the same which is destruction of the opponent. The second most played game by Ali is structured as the games that Celil and Kutay described as mentioned before. Ali defined the thing, what Celil and Kutay called as “mother home base”, as “the ultimate goal”. The aim is to destruct it by blowing. He says:

There are two teams as the police team and the terrorist team. These two teams are trying to destroy each other in general. Either they try to kill each other ... Again, teams of five, it is a little bit different. There are different roles, and the roles are, well again there is a war of fives, you are fighting with each other ... In the farthest edge there is a thing called as “Nexus”, the aim is to blow it up.

When it is blown away, you win. Nexus is a thing that, hmm, well, let's say ultimate goal. Something like the game over whenever you kill it.

Original

İki tane takım var işte polis takımı ve terörist takımı diye. Bu iki takım işte birbirini yok etmeye çalışıyor genel olarak. Ya birbirlerini öldürmeye çalışıyorlar ... Yine beşer kişilik takımlar, o birazcık daha değişik. Böyle farklı roller var işte roller de yine bi' savaş hani, beşer kişilik, birbirinizle savaşıyorsunuz ... Amaç o en uçtaki bi' tane nexus dediğimiz bi' şey var, onu patlatmak. Onu patlatınca oyunu kazanıyorsun ... Nexus şey hani o, şey diyelim ona, ne diyelim, işte o son hedefyani. Hani onu öldürünce oyun bitiyor gibi bi' şey, bir yapı kendisi.

The game Burak plays the most is CS:GO in which one's main tool is a deadly weapon. When Burak said that he wanted to relieve stress (original Turkish phrase can be translated verbatim as "blow head up"), it occurred to me that one could blow one's head up with the weapons he would use in the game. Thus, I asked him the weapon he used most frequently. His weapon had main features of carrying many bullets and shooting in line with your gaze without deviation:

B (Burak): I just play to let myself go (to blow head up) and relieve the stress, rather than competitive, my preference is in this direction.

R (Researcher): Hmm, to blow head up?

B: Yes.

R: Which weapon do you play with?

B: (laughs) I mean, I play with all of them, but it sounds easy, so there is a weapon called "negev" ... Cheap, well, there are a lot of bullets of this weapon ... It is like a laser weapon because it goes wherever you look. It has no deviation at all. You can eliminate people easily, get them kicked out off the game.

Original

B: Ben sadece hani kafa dağıtmak ve stres atmak için oynuyorum rekabetçiden daha çok, benim tercihim bu yönde oluyor.

R: Hmm, kafa dağıtmak?

B: Evet.

R: Hangi silahla oynuyorsunuz?

B: (gülüyor) Yani hepsiyle oynuyorum aslında ben ama yani şey kolay geliyor, hani 'negev' diye bir silah var ... Ucuz, çok mermisi var bu silahın ... Hani lazer silahı gibi çünkü hani baktığınız yere gidiyor, hiç sapması falan yok. Hani kolayca insanları eleyebiliyorsunuz, attırabiliyorsunuz oyundan.

When asked about his favorite moments while playing his game of choice, Onur articulated words such as cutting and killing. These actions were directed towards the enemy or the rival. As a result of such actions, he said, he was able to gain access to resources such as game money which is necessary for possessing items. A slip of the tongue occurred when he said ‘equalizing’ [“egale etmek”] (égaler in French) instead of ‘discarding’ [“ekarte etmek”] (écarté in French) which he used correctly in other times during the interview. In other words, Onur’s articulation implies that he becomes equals with the rival by killing, and the aim of killing is not to get rid of the rival per se. He says:

Cutting men... I mean killing, killing the enemy. Actually, we call it cutting men. To equalize the rival, rival player. We kill enemies, we earn money and buy items. And we get stronger as we buy items, and in fact, we end the game in this way by crushing the enemy and earning money ... ‘Combo’s are actually things that give taste to the game or events that are very momentary in the game. The surprises which even the opposing team did not expect happen. So you can kill all rival players in an instant. These moments are important frankly, for us players.

Original

Adam kesmek ... yani öldürmek, düşmanı öldürmek yani. Biz adam kesmek diyoruz da ona. Rakip, rakip oyuncuyu egale etmek ... Düşmanları öldürüyoruz, para kazanıyoruz ve item alıyoruz bi’ de. Üstümüze item aldıkça da güçleniyoruz ve aslında ya oyunu böylelikle bitiriyoruz, düşmanı ezerek, para kazanarak, item kasarak ... Oyunda yaptığınız kombolar aslında oyuna tat veren şeyler. Ya oyunda çok anlık olan olaylar oluyor, karşı takımın bile beklemediği sürprizler oluyor. Böylelikle bir anda tüm rakip oyuncularını öldürebiliyorsunuz. Bu tarz anlar önemli oluyor açıkçası biz oyuncular için.

4.4.3. Use of A Language of Their Own

All the participants used words from gaming jargon, somehow automatically, while talking in the interviews. They often expected me to understand those words without any explanation. Sometimes, they suddenly realized that I may not have known those words, interrupted their own speech, and started to explain. Other times, they seemed to be aware beforehand that they were not talking in Turkish, and put remark on the fact that they were translating to me. Kutay, for example, explained right away that what the word “flame” means in gaming jargon. He says:

Something you do right and spend your effort, someone else does nothing right. You get angry at it and you ‘flame’ that man. That means you may say pretty humiliating and offensive words.

Original

Senin doğru yapıp emeğini harcadığın bir şeyi başka biri yanlış bir şey yaparak hiç ediyor ya, buna sinirleniyorsun ve o adamı ‘flame’liyorsun. Yani bayağı aşağılayıcı ofansif laflar edebiliyorsun.

Ali used many words that has a specific meaning for gamers. These included mostly offensive and power-related words. He sometimes explained the meanings to the researcher. However, sometimes I was the one who asked for a word’s meaning. This conversation, in a way, resembled me that two foreigners was trying to talk with the help of a shared language. He states:

A (Ali): There is a thing called throwing ‘ace’, killing the entire opposing team all by yourself ... There is a thing that we call as throwing ‘penta’, League of Legends version of ‘ace’, killing the entire of opposite team by yourself. You are going with your team, but you take the ‘kill’s, you make the last hits.

R (Researcher): To take ‘kill’? I think there is such a term.

A: Yes, making the lethal strike.

Original

A: Ace atmak diye bi olay var karşı takımın tamamını tek başına öldürmek ... ‘Penta’ atmak dediğimiz bi’ olay var, ‘ace’in league of legends versiyonu. Karşı takımın tamamını tek başına öldürmek ... Takımınla beraber gidiyorsun işte ama ‘kill’leri sen alıyorsun, hani son vuruşları sen yapıyorsun.

R: Kill almak? Öyle bir terim var sanırım.

A: Evet, öldürücü vuruşu yapmak.

Onur usually emphasized on the fact that he was explaining and translating those words at that moment. At one point, he shared his assumption of me as a person who must know English. He used gaming jargon to describe the roles in a team, some of which are support and carry. He says:

There are a hundred and ten, a hundred and eleven heroes and you choose one of these heroes. Depending on the position you choose, such like, support, middle, or top or ‘carry’, I mean, main character that attacks ... You must know English, so I tried to translate a little bit of English into Turkish ... There is thing called ‘gang’, let me explain the gang like this. When you see that a ‘hero’

has disappeared in the opponent team, you are trying to guess more or less where he is headed to.

Original

Yüz on tane, yüz on bir tane hero var, kahraman var ve bu kahramanlardan birini seçiyorsunuz. Seçtiğiniz pozisyona göre atıyorum destek, orta yani üst ya da carry yani saldırı yapan asıl karakter gibi ... Zaten ingilizce biliyorsunuzdur ben o yüzden biraz ingilizceyi türkçeye çevirmeye çalıştım da ... Gang diye bi' olay var gangin açıklamasını şöyle yapayım. Rakip takımda mesela bir hero'nun kaybolduğunu gördüğün zaman onun az çok nereye gittiğini tahmin etmeye çalışıyorsunuz.

Erdem also used words that might be foreign to a non-gamer, such as rogue, to describe his character in the game. What he stressed was that the meaning cannot be accurately conveyed with his explanation. He states:

I wanted to play the elven, so I opened a character like that, my character is also a 'rogue' character, so how can I say in Turkish, I can say that it is like Ninja. So you can think of it as an assassin with two 'dagger's in order to make it more understandable in Turkish. These are not very accurate, I can only tell by making it more Turkish-like, but these are not the right terms.

Original

Elf oynamak istedim, o yüzden öyle bi karakter açtım. Karakterim de 'rog' bir karakter. Yani nasıl diyeyim, türkçeleştireceksem yani ninja diyebilirim. Yani mesela daha anlaşılır olması için. Elinde iki tane 'dagger'ı olan ve suikastçi olarak da düşünebilirsiniz. Yani çok doğru şeyler değil de daha türkçeleştirmek için böyle anlatabilirim. Hani doğru terimler değil aslında ama.

Murat used gaming jargon when he told about how he swore in a foreign language when he got angry at a foreigner during a match. His use of the jargon included the words such as 'feeder', for the ones who feed the rival. Murat says:

In that kind of situations, I swear via chat if I don't know the person. I say, 'feeder'. Then, if he is foreigner, I swear with foreign words. Then, like, "go play in 'noob' games".

Original

O tip durumlarda tanımadığım insansa küfür ediyorum chatten. İşte 'feeder' diyorum. Ondan sonra, yabancıysa işte yabancı küfürler ediyorum. Ondan sonra işte "git 'noob' oyunlarında oyna".

4.4.4. “It becomes an addiction, but I’m not addicted”

Addiction was a prominent concept which is articulated in the participants’ accounts about online gaming. Mostly, they did not see, thus did not exhibit, themselves as addicts. However, addiction had its place in their online gaming discourse. For example, Burak kept justifying his behavior as not addictive by reference to some information he had read somewhere. According to this piece of information, he could not possibly be evaluated as an addict. Yet, when I asked him if he had any suggestion in terms of a possible interview question, he thought of a question that is related to addiction. Burak says:

Well, I don’t think that I go home to play games, leave my friends or, well, finish school to go home and play. In fact, in this sense I don’t see myself as addict. I don’t of whether it is true or not but I’ve read something like, if you stop doing something for 24 hours or without thinking of doing it, you are not addicted to that thing, something like that ... There are days when I am, I did not play two days in a row without thinking, because my mind was busy with other things ... You can ask the thing whether I think I am addicted, or I am able to quit anytime I’d like to. It is a question like, well, “Can you quit anytime you want?”, well, I think it is like cigarette, you might ask such question.

Original

Hani eve gideyim de oyun oynayayım, şu arkadaşlarımdan ayrılalım veya hani okulu bitireyim de eve gideyim oynayayım diye düşünmüyorum. Aslında hani bu anlamda kendimi hani çok bağımlı olarak görmüyorum. Ne kadar doğrudur bilmiyorum da şöyle bi’ şey okumuştum. Hani bir şeyi 24 saat yapmadan, hani hiç düşünmeden durabilirseniz o şeye bağımlı değilsiniz gibi bir şey ... Öyle olduğum günler oluyor, hani iki gün üst üste aklıma gelmeden oynamadım çünkü aklım başka şeylerle meşgul oluyor ... Şey sorabilirsiniz hani “Bağımlı olduğunuzu düşünüyor musunuz?” gibi bir soru veya hani “İstedığınız zaman bırakabilir misiniz?” gibi bir soru. Yani sigara gibi düşündüm de, öyle bi’ soru sorabilirsiniz.

Kaan elaborated on whether he was addicted to online games or not. His statements about this issue changed throughout the interview. He began by describing his pattern of engagement in online games:

In first grade of high school ... there was no such game addiction at all in that period. Am I actually incredibly addicted right now? Guess I am not. Because sometimes I can put it over some of my priorities but sometimes I cannot. There are times when it comes out with points that hurt my life. There are times when

it creates obstacles, it creates problems in my life. Sometimes, for instance, I am not playing any games for six or seven months. But then I start to play, for three months I only play games.

Original

Lise 1 zamanlarında ... O süreçte hiç böyle bir oyun bağımlılığı falan gibi bir şey yoktu. Şu an da aslında inanılmaz bağımlı mıyım, değilim gibi. çünkü bazen bazı önceliklerimin önüne koyabiliyorum ama bazen de bazı önceliklerimin önüne koyamıyorum. Böyle zarar verdiği noktalar oluyor, hayatıma engel yarattığı, sorun yarattığı çıkardığı zamanlar oluyor. Bazen mesela altı ay yedi ay boyunca hiç oyun oynamıyorum. Bi' oyun oynamaya başlıyorum, üç ay boyunca sırf oyun oynuyorum gibi.

When the same participant, Kaan, recounted his favourite moments of his game of choice, he describes some bodily sensations. After he told that he had shared the video of one of these moments with his friends, and that he had sent it for streaming on an online platform, he stopped and shared his thoughts about being addicted:

K (Kaan): I took all five of them with my regular strike.

R (Researcher): What kind of feeling was it that you get all five with your regular strike?

K: I remember that my heart beats fast, yes. There happened such a thing... There was such an excitement in it. I recorded it as a video and sent it to my friends ... There is one Youtube channel, I sent it there where successful scenes related to this game are being watched. Because I had done such a difficult thing. It feels funny when I tell you so, isn't it? I feel addicted.

Original

K: Düz vuruşumla beşini birden almıştım o an.

R: Nasıl bir histi o, düz vuruşunuzla beşini birden almak?

K: Kalbimin hızlı attığını hatırlıyorum evet. Böyle bir şey olmuştu... Böyle bir heyecan vardı içimde. Videosunu çekip arkadaşlarıma göndermiştim. ... Bir tane youtube kanalı var, böyle oyunla ilgili başarılı sahnelerin izlendiği, oraya falan göndermiştim. Böyle çok aşırı şey olmuştu. Böyle zor bir şey yapmıştım diye. Böyle anlatınca komik oluyor di' mi? Bağımlı hissettim de.

The game of choice for Erdem requires buying a monthly subscription. Erdem talked about how he and his friends crave for the game if someone from the group buys the game. He said that he could not hold himself back from playing it. He again emphasized the importance of playing it with his friends. In terms of addiction, he thought that he was not addicted [*“bağımlı”*] to the game itself, but connected or tied [*“bağlı”*] to the game because of his friends. He claims:

When you buy it, the others in your friend squad crave for it because everyone is playing. For example, when a friend buy it, I know that I will buy it too. I won't be able to hold and will buy it, I mean I cannot hold myself together. In fact, rather than being addicted to the game, here the subject for me and for my friend group is that we cannot do any activity together and because we love to play the game so we are actually connected to game at some point.

Original

Siz alınca bunu, arkadaş ekibimizdeki herkes oynadığı için canı çekiyor insanın. Mesela bir arkadaşım aldığı zaman yani ben de, biliyorum, bunu ben de alacağım. Kendime şey yapamayıp alacağım, yani hakim olamıyorum. Yani burada aslında olay benim için öyle, yani kendi arkadaş grubum için de öyle. Oyuna bağımlılıktan çok beraber hani bi' aktivite yapamıyoruz ve oyun oynamayı çok sevdiğimiz için aslında bi' noktada oyuna bağlanmış oluyoruz.

When I asked Murat what kind of an experience he would go through if he cannot have access to online games, he also mentioned of craving. Then, he started to evaluate whether he has an addiction. While doing that, he used a sentence such as “I succeed in sticking myself into something else [*başka bir şeye kendimi saptırmayı başlarım*]”. It is notable that sticking evokes an aggressive tone. By the end of his elaboration on addiction, it was evident that he had a need to see himself as “not seriously addicted”. Another notable thing in his speech was that, when listened without punctuation, he defined himself also as “someone who extremely loves himself [*ben kendimi aşırı seven ... olarak tanımlıyorum*]”. Murat states:

Well, for the first five minutes, I get a little crazy. “It would be good if I could have played, I crave it right now” etc. But somehow I succeed in sticking myself into something else that will eliminate this ... Of course, after that one hour passed, I desire it again. But then again, I bury it inside of me as much as possible, and whenever possible, I enter the game at that moment. At this point, I feel like, I love playing games, playing online games so much. But at the level of addiction, I think I'm not addicted. Because, as I told it so, for example, a Saturday plan is said to be at 9 o'clock, I don't entirely ditch them to play games. I may go there at 12 but I go for sure. I think this is, for example, if there is a level of addiction, it is the lower level of addiction. Because, as I said, even if I am a little late, sometimes it does not precisely prevent what I am aiming or determining in life. Therefore, I define myself as over-loving with some addiction but not seriously addicted.

Original

Ya şöyle, buna ilk bir beş dakika kafayı takarım biraz. Ya oynasaydım iyiydi. Şu an canım istiyor falan filan. Ama bir şekilde onu bertaraf edecek başka bir şeye kendimi saptlamayı başarırım ... Tabi sonra o bir saat geçtikten sonra tekrar canım istiyor. Orda da olabildiğince bunu içime gömüp ilk anı ne zamansa o zaman oyuna giriyorum aslında. Ya bu noktada kendimi hani şöyle hissediyorum ben, oyun oynamayı, çevrimiçi oyun oynamayı aşırı seviyorum. Ama bağımlılık düzeyinde bence bağımlı değilim. Çünkü şöyle, dedim ya mesela hiçbir, mesela bir Cumartesi planını, saat dokuz denmiştir, ben oyun oynamak için komple ekmem mesela. On birde giderim, on ikide giderim ama hep gittim. Bu bence mesela bağımlılığın düzeyi varsa bir bağımlılık seviyesinin alt bir düzeyi bence. Çünkü dediğim gibi bir miktar geç de kalsam kimi zaman sonuç olarak hayatta hedeflediğim ya da amaçladığım şeye tam olarak engel olmuyor. O yüzden ben kendimi aşırı seven, bir miktar bağımlılığı da olan ama ciddi anlamda bağımlı olmayan olarak tanımlıyorum.

Kutay described a nostalgic experience in which he goes back in time by hearing the voice of the music plays in the generic of the game he played for a long time. Even if he does not enter the game, he said, he opens the game and puts his name on the screen. The reason was that it became habitual for him to do so. He states:

Now you open the 'lite', there it comes the music of this 'lite'. For instance, that generics is directly turning me back to 2012. That sound takes me back, it is a sudden nostalgia, I like it very much. Even if I don't play, I open the 'lite' just out of habit, you enter your username and password, just out of habit.

Original

Şimdi işte açıyorsun 'lite'I, o 'lite'in müziği geliyor mesela. Jeneriği, o jenerik böyle direkt beni 2012'ye döndürüyor yani. O aynı ses beni geriye götürüyor, böyle nostalji oluyor bi' anda, çok hoşuma gidiyor. Ya hiç oynamayacak olsam bile 'lite'I açıyorsun yani alışkanlıktan, bi' şeyini, kullanıcı adını şifreni giriyorsun oraya, alışkanlıktan.

In addition, Kutay explained his pattern of online gaming as surrounding all of his life. The other activities he engages in are eating and laying down (having a connotation for "having sex" in Turkish). When game offers features that he finds beautiful and wonderful, he finds it impossible not to play. He says:

I play games whenever I am at home, I play games whenever I do not eat, for example, after playing a game for a long time, I get tired and bored after the game. But I do not say that I am going to sit in bed for a half an hour to feel refreshed. For instance, When I am resting in the bed, in a mobile game, I make a character 70 levels there. It is my resting activity. They have done exactly the

same for mobile. Missions, characters, all races, classes; it's all the same, and being able to play it from where you lay down like this is incredibly beautiful. And they have made their mechanics incredibly successful, how can you not play it now?

Original

Evde olduğum her an oyun oynuyorum, yemek yemediğim anlarda oyun oynuyorum. Mesela bir oyunu çok fazla uzun süre oynadıktan sonra yoruluyorsun ve sıkılıyorsun oyundan. Ondan sonra işte demiyorum ki “ya bi' gideyim de içerde bi' yarım saat oturayım, kendime geleyim” demiyorum mesela. Dinlenirken şurada yatağa geçtiğimde tablette mobil oyunda oradaki karakteri 70 level yapıyorum mesela, dinlenme aktivitem de o ... Mobil için ve birebir aynısını yapmışlar; görevler, karakterler, bütün ırklar, klaslar, hepsi aynı. Ve onu böyle yattığın yerden oynayabiliyor olmak inanılmaz güzel bi' şey. Ve mekaniklerini inanılmaz başarılı yapmışlar, şimdi onu nasıl oynamayabilirsin ki?

Celil said that online games can be addictive, but through anticipation of the situation for others. He indicated that online gaming may affect a person's life in many areas, and later said that it is the case for him. He states:

A game can be addictive, it means that it ties you up in front of the computer, in a room, in a house, and if you become addicted because of that- there are very high levels, as I said, there are crazy people. I mean these people flip out. Relationships with friends are affected, social life and everything, and school life can be affected. You can also ask this. It affected my school life.

Original

Oyun bağımlılık yapabilir, oyun demek seni bilgisayarın başına bağlaması demek ve evin içinde bir odada demek, ya bundan dolayı bağımlılık yaşarsa- Çok üst seviyeleri var dediğim gibi, deliler var. Yani kafayı yemişler bunlar. Arkadaşlık ilişkileri etkileniyor, sosyal hayatı vesairesi her şeyi, okul hayatı etkilenabiliyor. Bunu da sorabilirsin, benim okul hayatımı etkiledi.

4.5. Reactive Positioning with Respect to a Superior Other

While participants shared their views on issues related to an authority besides themselves, they took a reactive stance, neutralizing or devaluating the other who was seen as superior to them. The subthemes are *perceptions about authority figures as negligible, defiant attitudes toward restrictions and law, and uncertain positioning while talking to the researcher.*

4.5.1. Perceptions About Authority Figures as Negligible

While talking about the rules of the household, Kutay claimed that he feels as if he is being judged despite the fact that they do not have any strict rules whatsoever. The judgement comes from his father, whom Kutay described as a “weightless” person. While talking about the family dynamics, he mentioned that he still feels like an adolescent. He explained the feeling of being judged by giving an example of an encounter with his father at home, late at night, while playing online games in his room. Disgust was the feeling that Kutay could read from his father’s facial expression. A similar example included his parents’ comments on his smoking, and he found those comments judgmental and psychologically challenging. Nevertheless, he neither ends his behaviors such as smoking or swearing in the house nor leaves his parents’ house. Then, he shared a strategy in which he leaves house for a period of time, to feel missed and loved by his parents. He says:

K (Kutay): Nobody sets up rules. Actually, we do not have any rules. Everybody acts as he pleases but he is judged by my father or anybody else, so there are no strict rules.

R (Researcher): Who has more influence on others?

K: I cannot say there is anyone. My father never puts weight on and he is always in his own state. I never hear my father say, “Do it this way or that way”. He never interferes with anything. Everybody does whatever they wish, and everybody is relaxed at home. However, you are being judged this way and although I care about them at a minimum level, things add up. Even when I am judged about the fact that I do not care much, then I become down. It is kind of teenage talks. For example, whatever parents do would annoy the adolescent. The adolescent always says, “You are obsessed with me” or “Your actions are abhorrent to me”, it feels like this way after a certain point. Everybody starts to get annoyed from each other’s attitudes so I think that I cannot behave freely ... It is so hard psychologically. For example, recently, it was 05:30 or 06:00 am. While we were playing LoL with my four friends including me, I had lost the sense of time and place. When I died in the game, I swore loudly. My father was passing by my door at that moment. When he heard I was swearing, he opened the door and stared at me. He looked so disgusted. He looked at the clock first, and then he looked at me. He felt disgusted. He did not say anything verbally, but he said with his eyes that what kind of life you live and what kind of person you are so. He pulled the door without saying anything and went away. I was judged this way because I was late that morning and I swore. Another example is that I cannot smoke comfortably at home. Whenever I smoke, I have to listen to medical conversations for half an hour or so. I was abroad before the Corona happened and I had to return. At that time, they had missed me... Sometimes, I am

running away from home and I am not going back for some time, so I let them miss me. I try to create a feeling on my parents that “we should love our son and he is our son no matter how unsuccessful and how much of a loser he is”, and then I return to them. At such times, I enjoy it.

Original

K: Kimse kural koymuyor yani aslında bizde bir kural yok. Yani herkes istediğini yapıyor ama babam veya birileri tarafından yargılanıyor. Yani aslında öyle katı kurallar yok.

R: Daha böyle sözü geçen kişi kim?

K: Yani kimse diyemeyeceğim ya. Babam hiçbir zaman ağırlık koymaz, her zaman kendi halinde. Hiç öyle “Şunu şöyle yapın, bunu böyle yapın.” dediğini duymam. Hiç karışmaz hiçbir şeye. Herkes kendi halinde, herkes istediğini yapar evde çok rahat. Ama işte yargılanıyorsun bu şekilde ve ben bunları çok çok en minimum düzeyde umursuyorum ama birikiyor, birikiyor ... Hatta umursamıyor olmam bile yargılandığında artık canım sıkılıyor. Ergen muhabbetleri birazcık yani. Böyle mesela ergenlikte sürekli batır ya ebeveynlerin yaptığı her şey, işte “Siz bana takmışsınız”, işte “Her hareketiniz bana ters” falan filan, öyle gelmeye başlıyor bi’ süre sonra. Yani herkes, birbirinin hareketleri batmaya başlıyor yani, rahat hareket edemediğimi düşünüyorum ... Psikolojik olarak çok zor. Yani en basitinden mesela geçen saat 5:30, 6:00 falan olmuş sabaha karşı. Ben böyle kaptırmışım hani kendimi, böyle bizim çocuklarla dört kişi LoL’deydik. O sırada işte öldüm ve bi’ de böyle çok unutmuşum saati, işte bulunduğum yeri tamamen. Böyle bağırdım küfrederek. Babam da tam o sırada benim kapımın önünden geçiyormuş. Küfrümü duyunca şu kapıyı açtı, böyle bana bi’ baktı öyle öğrenerek baktı ki. Saate baktı, bana baktı, böyle öğrendi resmen. Yani “Bu nasıl bir hayat, sen nasıl bir insansın yani” dedi. Demedi de, gözleriyle dedi. Sonra hiçbir şey demeden çekti kapıyı gitti yani. Bu mesela sırf o sabah geç saate kaldığım için ve küfür ettiğim için mesela yargılandım. Bu şekilde ya da sigara içemiyorum mesela rahat bi’ şekilde. Her sigara içtiğimde yarım saat falan tıbbi muhabbetler dinlemek zorunda kalıyorum ... Şu korona olayı çıkmadan önce yurtdışındaydım, dönmek zorunda kaldım. O sırada yine bi’ özlemişlerdi beni. Arada bir kaçıyorum bi’ yerlere, eve gelmiyorum, özletiyorum. Hani “ne olursa olsun o bizim oğlumuz, ne kadar başarısız, ne kadar ezik de olsa o bizim oğlumuz, onu sevmeliyiz” hissiyatını yaratıp onlarda, dönüyorum.

After mentioning his antipathy for authority, Ali shared information for describing their relationship with his father and his mother. The nature of these two relationships was not differentiated. Ali reported a discomfort in the presence of these figures because they attempt to make him learn lessons whenever he talks. The fact that Ali neglects going to the university seems parallel with his avoidance for learning a lesson from his parents. He states:

A (Ali): I have an antipathy to authority in general ... I have an intimate relationship with my father. Usually, we go to a place to drink and chat. But when we are at home, we cannot stay together. I have this kind of relationship both with my mother and with my father.

R (Researcher): What is happening that you can't stand there?

A: We can stay together if we want but we prefer not to. I do not feel myself at ease when we are together.

R: What disturbs you at that moment?

A: They are trying to give advices and I do not like it so much. Whenever I open my mouth, they try to teach me a lesson. It becomes boring after a while.

Original

A: Genel olarak otoriteye karşı bi' zaten antipatim var... Babamla samimiyiz hani, daha çok böyle bir yerlere gidip bir şeyler içilir, hani sohbet edilir falan filan. Ama evdeyken hani bir arada durulmaz, öyle bi ilişkimiz var hem annemle hem babamla.

R: Ne oluyor da orada durulamıyor?

A: Ya durmamayı tercih ediyoruz. Hani durmak istesek dururuz ama ben çok rahat değilim ailemin yanında o yüzden.

R: Yani rahatsız olduğunuz şey ne oluyor orada?

A: Böyle nasihat vermeye falan çalışıyorlar, o da benim çok hoşuma gitmiyor. Hani çünkü her ağzımı açtığımda, böyle her söylediğim sözden bir ders çıkarma, bana ders çıkartmaya çalışıyorlar falan. O artık sıkıyor yani bi' yerden sonra.

While talking about rules exerted on him, Burak thought about his inclination to obey rules coming from his parents. He thought that his parents would not wish unfavorable things for him by imposing their rules, yet he placed his own logic to forefront to decide to do some action. As he explained his probable strategy to persuading his parents, Burak chose the Turkish word “*yattırmak*”, which, taken alone, means “to make someone lay down” or “to make someone sleep together”:

B (Burak): It depends on who puts it. I mean if it is someone who has an impact on my life or someone who really takes care of me, I try to obey. However, I do not want to compromise myself much because I think that I am a free person, eventually. Other than that, I do not care about a person I don't value, saying “Do not do that”, I never mind it.

R (Researcher): You said someone who had an impact on your life?

B: I can think as my mother and my father ... I think they do not want something bad for me. When they say something to me or impose something, I think they have some experiences. However, at first, I make it pass through my filter of logic and if it does not fit in my logic, I try to explain it, make it stand by their reason.

Original

B: Kimin koyduğuna bağlı. Hayatımda hani bir etkisi olmuş, bana hani gerçekten emek vermiş biriye olabildiğince uymaya çalışırım. Ama çok kendimden de ödün vermek istemem sonuçta hani özgür bir insan olduğumu düşünüyorum. Ama onun dışında hani değer vermediğim biri “Şunu yapmayacaksın” falan derse hiç sallamam yani.

R: Hayatınızda etkisi olmuş biri dediniz?

B: Annem, babam gibi düşünebilirim ... Bence onlar benim kötülüğümü istemez diye düşünüyorum ve hani bir deneyimleri vardır diye düşünüyorum, bi’ şeyi söylemelerinde, bi’ şeyi dayatmalarında. Ama önce tabi kendi mantık süzgecimden geçirip eğer hani mantığa sığmıyorsa onlara da bunu açıklamaya, akıllarına yattırmaya çalışırım.

Having talked about rules, Kaan mentioned the pressures related to school responsibilities. He complained about the fact that the members of his family are working in educational professions. The way he chose to show them his success besides school, he said, is a reaction. He states:

My family is an educator family. My mother, my father, and my sister are all educators. Because of being educators, they have a huge school related pressure on me. I guess the reason why I do different things is their pressure because when I am interested in other things, they tell me “You can do it after your graduation, you should care about your school now”. I guess that mine is a little bit of obstinate reaction against them. I am extremely opposed to that they see my school success as the success of my life. That is why, I can say, to my people I like to show my success in life in something other than school.

Original

Ailem eğitimci bir aile, annem, babam, ablam hepsi eğitimci. Eğitimci oldukları için üzerimde okulla ilgili çok büyük bir baskıları var. Sanırım benim farklı işler yapmamdaki sebep de onların bu baskıları. Çünkü başka işler yaptığım zaman, “Aman onları mezun olunca yaparsın, aman sen şimdi okuluna bak” muhabbetleri. Ama onlara birazcık inat benimki de herhalde... Okul başarısını benim hayatımın başarısı olarak görmelerine aşırı karşıyım. Bu yüzden hayattaki başarıyı okul dışında başka şeylerle göstermeyi seviyorum bizimkilere diyebilirim.

To sum, speaking about rules precedes a rule imposing figure, which evokes the images of their parents in the participants’ speech. The participants reported that they usually do not follow what these figures asked from them, and that they are uncomfortable to be liable to their parents’ direction. Consequently, they act in ways to neutralize the impact of their parents although continuous complaints about their

parents were articulated, pointing to that the desires of the parents function as a driving force for the participants' thoughts and actions.

4.5.2. Defiant Attitudes towards Restrictions and Law

Consistent with their perceptions of the authority as something they must neutralize, the participants reported how they would behave in the conditions where they have to follow certain rules. For example, Celil told one memory of the times when he had just started to play online games at an Internet cafe, mentioning his escape from school. He states:

It starts from elementary school. I mean, as I said, I escaped from school. When I escaped from the school, I remember that my elementary school teacher, not my primary school but my sixth grade or seventh grade English teacher, pulled my ears and took me back to school.

Original

Bu ilkokuldan başlıyor, yani okuldan kaçardık dediğim gibi. Okuldan kaçtığımda benim ilkokul öğretmenim, ilkokul değil de altıncı sınıf ya da yedinci sınıf ingilizce öğretmenim gelip kulağımdan çekip tekrar okula götürdüğünü bilirim.

Celil also spoke about the household rules, together with the government rules, as agreed instructions designated for all individuals to follow. He said that it is possible to find a rule as irrational for himself. A solution he suggested was leaving the community and staying by himself in this case. Celil thinks that the same applies in the games, which may mean that he finds games as a place not free from rules, but a place which gives a chance to leave the virtual community rules, and live by the rules one sets for oneself. For him, a person is not able to change others into what he likes them to be:

If a state has set a rule which is not irrational, not only for the state but also for the family, if it is not irrational, you obey it. Otherwise, if you do not comply with it, you get out of the system ... I may find a rule too illogical ... At that moment, I say- Do I not comply with this rule or do I not adopt this rule? Then I should no longer be a part of that community. I go act on my own and I am on my own ... The same holds true for games as well. If you belong to a group or a certain clan, you leave that group or clan and you hang out alone ... You cannot change other people much.

Original

Bir devlet bir kural koyduysa, mantıkdışı değilse hani mantıkdışı olmayan bir kuralsa, sadece devlet için değil aile için de mantıkdışı olmayan bir kuralsa, uyarsın ona. Diğer türlü uymuyorsan sistemin dışına çıkarısın ... Bir kural bana çok mantıksız da geliyor olabilir ... Ben bu kurala uymuyor muyum? Ben bu kuralı benimsemiyor muyum? Zaten o toplulukta olmam, hakikaten kendi başıma hareket ederim ... Ama bir gruba dahilseniz, oyunlarda da böyle, belli bir grupta, belli bir klandaysanız, o gruptan ayrılır tek solo takılırsınız ... Diğer insanları çok fazla düzeltemezsin.

Speaking about the household rules, Celil mentioned about his parents' thoughts about consumption of substances such as cigarettes or alcoholic beverages. Even though he said that he follows this rule for the sake of being respectful to his parents, he emphasized on the importance of whether his parents look him in the eye. Otherwise, he stated, he can break the rule in secret:

C (Celil): It is necessary to be respectful. I do not consume alcohol, or smoking is different, I don't smoke in front of them. Actually, I smoke but I cannot make an eye contact ...

R (Researcher): If you look at their faces or if you look at their eyes, how would you feel?

C: ... First of all, it depends on who says this. If my mother or father says, for example, "Do not drink alcohol, it is forbidden" right? ... I say "OK" and I do not react, but I do it secretly.

Original

C: Saygılı olmak lazım. Alkol tüketmem, sigara şöyle başka, göz göze bakıp içmem. İçerim ama yüzüne bakmam...

R: Peki mesela yüzüne baksanız, gözüne baksanız ne hissedersiniz? Nasıl bir şey olur o?

C: ... Söyleyenin kim olduğuna bağlı bu bir, annem babam söylüyorsa mesela dese ki "Alkol almayacaksın, yasak" değil mi? ... Derim ki "Tamam", itiraz etmem ama gizliden yaparım.

Kutay crisply spoke about the hate he has for the restrictions. However, he prefers not to come into prominence by being rebellious. Rather, he chooses to stay silent, erasing himself from the scene. Although he would not break the rules, he said, he attributes the feeling of excitement to such situation. He ended up talking about his disgust when seeing mutilated animals for the sake of people's enjoyment, indicating that he sees powerful or superior figures as tormentors. In fact, this kind of mutilations are

generally done for the sake of animals' physical safety. Nonetheless, what Kutay sees in these images, is that animals are mutilated for joy. He says:

K (Kutay): I hate rules. I don't mean, by contradicting, opposing, standing up or breaking the rules etc. I'm trying to do this by remaining uninspiring. For example, if there is a rule and I do not want to comply with it, for example, I don't show myself or I don't stand out...

R (Researcher): What kind of experience would it be for you to break the rule?

K: I guess, it would be exciting ... People who are social creatures live together, and in order to live together, everyone needs to respect each other for the continuation of this togetherness in a civilized manner. These kinds of rules are exactly for this ... People who are aware of this, people who are sophisticated, that is, protecting the freedom and rights of someone else before their own wishes, are damaged by such ungracious types of others. For example, I cannot tolerate this ... People are disgusting, I mean, as I think about animals, I am really starting to have feeling of hate that I cannot carry on my body, such incredibly bad. When I think about animals, I completely get disgusted ... It really makes me feel like hell to know these people exist and to see them. I mean, seeing the tails of cats or dogs cut off or seeing 'pitbull's ears cut off etc. This makes me feel disgusted. I don't know why I am telling this and what you asked (laughs).

Original

K: Kurallardan da nefret ediyorum yani böyle ve buna böyle aykırı olarak, karşı çıkarak, karşısında durarak, kuralları çiğneyerek falan değil de sönük kalarak bunu şey yapmaya çalışıyorum. Mesela yani kural varsa ve ben ona uymak istemiyorsam mesela çok belli etmem kendimi, çok göze batmam ...

R: Sizin için nasıl bir deneyim olur kuralı çiğnemek?

K: Yani heyecan verici olur herhalde ... İnsanlar böyle sosyal canlılar, birlikte yaşıyorlar ve bu birlikte yaşamının, bu birlikteliğin seviyeli, medeni bir şekilde sürebilmesi için herkesin birbirine saygı göstermesi gerekiyor ve bu tarz kurallar da tamamen bu aslında ... Bunların farkında olan, bu bilgili yani kendi isteğinden önce başkasının özgürlüğünü ve haklarını kollayan insanlar, böyle çomar tipler yüzünden zarar görüyor mesela. Yani ben buna mesela katlanamıyorum ... İnsanlar iğrenç, yani hayvanlar bazında düşündükçe ben gerçekten böyle çok çok kötü, böyle inanılmaz, taşıyamayacağım, böyle vücudumun kaldıramayacağı nefret boyutlarına sahip olmaya başlıyorum. Hayvanları falan düşündüğümde o zaman iyice tiksiniyorum ... Bana gerçekten cehennem gibi hissettiriyor bu insanların var olduğunu görmek, bilmek. İşte kuyruğu kesilmiş kediler, köpekler görmek, kulakları kesilmiş 'pitpull'lar görmek falan, yani iğrenç hissettiriyor. Ne sordunuz da bunu anlatıyorum hiç bilmiyorum (gülüyor).

Ali justified his defiant actions regarding rules by relating it to the antipathy he feels towards authority. He claimed that obedience is not an option for him because he does

not like to act under someone's direction. However, he too made an exception referring to his logic, and stated that he would follow rules which he thinks is logical. On the other hand, his wishes were more important when it came to decision in doing something. He said that not obeying the rules had not caused him trouble yet because he disguises well. Then, he gave an example of the most extreme trouble which may occur for him, referring to his addiction to cannabis. Ali states:

A (Ali): I already have an antipathy towards authority in general. Generally - not generally - but naturally I have a hostile attitude towards the rules in general ... Someone set a rule for me would be overwhelming and I won't obey that rule ... I don't like people telling me what to do. If I find the rule logical, if I agree with the rule, I will follow that rule. But if there is a rule saying "You cannot do" about something I want to do, I will never obey that rule ... I haven't had such a big problem yet because of not following the rule because I hide well the rules I broken. For example, the worst thing I can think of is that I use cannabis regularly. I am a regular cannabis user. I can go to jail right now because of not following the rules in our country.

R (Researcher): So, what do you feel, if something like this happens?

A: It wouldn't be nice, so I would be in jail ... I would probably try all the way out at that moment, I would try to lie, I would try to escape somehow. It is important what I was doing at that moment or how I got caught. For example, if I have the opportunity to destroy the 'evidence', I would try it at that time.

Original

A: Genel olarak otoriteye karşı bi' zaten antipatim var. Genel olarak- değil, doğal olarak kurallara karşı da düşmancıl yaklaşım sergiliyorum genelde ... Birinin bana kural koyması bunaltıcı olur ve muhtemelen o kurala uymayacağım, uymam yani ... İnsanların bana ne yapacağımı söylemesini sevmiyorum. Hani ya kuralı mantıklı buluyosam hani kurala ben de katılıyorsam o kurala uyarım. Ama hani benim yapmak istediğim bir şey bana "Yapamazsın" diye kural şeklinde konulduğu zaman o kurala kesinlikle uymam ... Ya henüz öyle büyük bir sorun yaşamadım kurala uymamaktan dolayı çünkü hep güzel gizlerim yıktığım kuralları. Ama mesela hani aklıma gelebilecek en kötü şey, ben düzenli olarak kenevir kullanıyorum, düzenli bir kenevir kullanıcısıyım. Ülkemizde de yasak hani. Kurala uymadığım için en fazla hapse girebilirim şu anda.

R: Peki ne hissedersiniz yani böyle bi' şey, böyle bi' durum olursa?

A: Hoş olmaz tabi yani hapiste olurum ... O anda muhtemelen bütün çıkış yollarını bir denerim hani. Yalan söylemeye çalışırım, kaçmaya çalışırım bi' şekilde. Eğer mümkünse o anda hani- Ne yapıyorken ya da nasıl yakalandığım da önemli tabi. Hani mesela bi' şeyi, 'evidence', kanıt ha kanıtı yok etme fırsatım varsa hani o sırada onu bi' denerim.

When I asked about his relationship with rules in general, Kaan answered by saying that this relationship is non-existent. He reported his indifference to rules if they do not come from an entity which he has a love for. Kaan referred to also non-existent restrictions at home. Then, he started to talk about the restrictions imposed on him by his job requirements. In the way he described his relationship with rules, he switched to articulate the word “rule” instead of “rules”. In other words, he spoke about a single rule which was not specified. He emphasized that he sacrificed everything in order not to break one rule. It is curious which rule he cannot possibly break. Kaan states:

Zero ... I mean, I don't care. If something that I don't care, I don't care about any rule or something. Ok, how can I tell you, for example, I don't care about a lesson at school because I didn't like the lesson. I don't care whether the course has a homework deadline, I deliver it three days later. It isn't very important for me, if I don't like it. But if it's something I love and care, then it's very difficult for me to break that rule in general. But if you are talking about the rules inside the house, we do not have so many family rules. The rules that they gave me are just about the lessons. Other than that, there are no rules or anything they restrict... We actually break most of the rules, but we do our best not to break them and this causes some self-devotion ... It is as if it is the rule that determines everything. Because you somehow break that rule, but indeed we make a sacrifice of many things in return, so as not to break the rules.

Original

Sıfır... Yani umursamıyorsam, umrumda olmayan bir şeye hiç kural falan kuralı da umursamam yani ... Mesela okuldaki bir dersimi çok umursamıyorum çünkü dersi sevmедim. Dersin ödev teslim tarihi var, umursamam o tarihi, üç gün sonra teslim ederim. Sevmiyorsam şey yapmıyorsam çok önemli değil benim için. Ama sevdiğim ve değer verdiğim bir şeye o zaman o kuralı çiğnemem genelde çok zor. Ama ev içindeki kurallar diyorsanız, aile kuralları, bizim öyle çok bir kuralımız yok. Ya sadece derslerle ilgili verdiği kurallar var bizinkilerin bana, onun dışında hiçbir kural yok kısıtladıkları bir şey yok ... Aslında kuralları çoğunu çiğniyoruz ama çiğnememek için elimizden geleni yapıyoruz ... Hani her şeyi belirleyen o kuralmış gibi oluyor çünkü o kuralı her türlü çiğniyorsun ama çiğnememek için çok şey böyle çok şey veriyoruz yani karşılığında.

Erdem explained how he takes position in terms of behaving in accordance with the rules imposed on him. His emphasis was that he accepts rules based on how rational or irrational a rule sounded to him. Then, he in fact talked about whether he likes the direction of the rule or not. When asked about his frame of reference in terms of rationality, he answered by stating that he is able to look at the issue from a third

person's perspective, so that his judgements can be objective. In fact, he admitted that it would still be his own judgement even from a third person's point of view, yet he thought that he makes the right call regardless. He tells:

E (Erdem): If it sounds irrational, I mean, if what I have to do seems ridiculous and unreasonable to me, I usually debate. When I say to argue, I do not mean using a bad language. I try to explain why it is ridiculous, wrong, or inappropriate in terms of logic. And if I don't like it, I don't do. Is it called stubbornness or being self-ordained? It is like that for me.

R (Researcher): You mentioned about reason. How do you decide it, I mean, whether a rule is reasonable or unreasonable?

E: Well, yes, how do I decide on it? I mean, I do not think that my decision is right. So, I am trying to take myself away and look at the situation as a third person. I am trying to evaluate it objectively. So, I am trying to think how a logical person would think of it. Of course, since I think about it with my own logic, if it is wrong, the result will be wrong. But I do not think that it is very different in general.

Original

E: Eğer mantıksız geliyorsa yani bana karşı, şöyle, yapmam gereken şey saçma ve mantıksız geliyorsa genelde tartışırım. Ya tartışmak derken üslup olarak kendimi bozarak değil de hani mantık çerçevesi içerisinde hani bence saçma olduğunu ya da yanlış ya da işte uygun olmadığını anlatmaya çalışırım. Ve hoşuma gitmiyorsa da yapmam yani. O da dikkafalılık mı denir, başına buyruklu, o tarz. Öyle benim için.

R: Mantıksız gelmesinden bahsettiniz. Ona nasıl karar veriyorsunuz, yani bir kuralın mantıklı ya da mantıksız olup olmadığına?

E: Evet, ona nasıl karar veriyorum? Ya tabi benim karar doğru diye bir şey düşüncem yok. Hani ben yani şöyle kendimi uzaklaştırıp, üçüncü kişi olarak bakmaya çalışıyorum olaya. Yani objektif olarak yaklaşmaya çalışıyorum. Hani mantıklı bir insan bunu nasıl düşünür diye düşünmeye çalışıyorum. Tabi ben de bunu kendi mantığımla düşündüğüm için eğer o yanlışsa sonuç da yanlış oluyor ama genelde yani çok da farklı olduğunu düşünmüyorum.

Murat looked down on other people who, unlike him, are liable to follow the rules. Murat claimed this because he thinks that rules are established based on the lowest standards of a society in terms of agnosy, which is not a condition that he represents, he said. That is why he makes himself exempt from the fact that rules should be followed. In addition, it seems that he presumptively harped on the enjoyment component of the rule making process, and he denies being a means for the rule maker's enjoyment. Murat states:

Actually, the rules are always based on the lowest level because of humans being insensible and ignorant... In fact, it is wasting time and lots of other things for those who are at much much higher level like us, understand things better, and make rules much more appropriate and applicable. That is why I do not follow the rules, of course within certain limits, if I won't get into trouble. I said I do not follow the rules, but when the car passes from right or left, I do not pass in red light because I have to wait there, already. By passing it through my brain filter, I always ask myself, does following the rule benefit any person or anything? Otherwise, am I just doing it to be compatible or just because someone wants it? If there is such a rule just because someone sets it up or wants it, I do not follow that rule.

Original

Aslında insanođlu bilinçsiz ve cahil olduđu için kurallar da hep en alt seviyeye, yani en alt seviyede olana göre konduđu için ... Aslında bizim gibi çok çok daha üst seviyede olup, bir şeyleri çok daha rahat anlayıp, kuralları çok daha uygun hâle ve uygulanabilir hâle getirenler için aslında vakit, zaman ve bir sürü açıdan kayıp oluyor. Ben o yüzden de bu tarz şeylerde başıma çok büyük işler gelmeyecekse, ki onun sınırları var, kurallara o noktalarda uymuyorum. Ama mesela şöyle de bir şeyim yok yani, kurala da uymuyorum derken, kırmızı ışık sağdan soldan araba geçiyor ben ortalarına atlıyorum, bunu yapmıyorum. Çünkü orada zaten benim orada beklemem lazım. Ama eđer ki, ben kendime hep şunu soruyorum kafamda yani o beyin süzgecimden geçirip, hani buna uymamın herhangi bir kişiye herhangi bir şeye faydası var mı? Yoksa sadece uyumu sadece birisi istediđi için mi yapıyorum? Eđer sadece birileri bu kuralı koyduđu için ve onlar istediđi için bu kural varsa o an, ben onu yapmıyorum.

4.5.3. Uncertain Positioning While Talking to the Researcher

During the interviews, the participants positioned themselves in an ambiguous way. For example, they often undecidedly used to address me both with a pronoun which is, in Turkish, the polite and respectful form of “you [siz]”, and a pronoun meaning “you [sen]” but is mostly used for the people already known. Their choice for addressing changed even between two consecutive sentences and changed in the following sentence again. Similarly, they had a tendency to flex the limits of the structure of interviews, or to change the nature of the communication into which can occur between peers. Celil, for instance, was curious if I made any interview before our meeting, questioning the researcher’s experience. He anticipated a situation where I might be an unexperienced researcher, and this made him laugh:

R (Researcher): I just briefly give you some information. The interview takes about an hour, but it can change-

C (Celil): Have you done before, haven't you?

R: Yes, I have done before. Why did you ask this question?

C: No, I mean, I don't know (laughs) maybe you've just started.

Original

R: Kısaca bi' bilgi vereyim yani bu yaklaşık bir saat sürüyor görüşme, değişebiliyor-

C: Daha önce yaptınız, değil mi?

R: Evet daha önce yaptım. Bu soruyu niye sordunuz?

C: Hayır yani bilmiyorum (gülüyor) belki daha yeni başlamışsınızdır.

Most of the participants wanted to smoke in the interviews, as it may seem more plausible to them because we were in separate rooms, far away, seeing each other on the computer screens. Yet, interviews were still part of a scientific research, officially conducted, by a person whom they did not have any other relationships besides researcher-participant communication:

O (Onur): Actually, I saw it in the Internet cafe and then I tried it. I taught it to my friends, we started playing together.

R (Researcher): You taught your friends there.

O: Yes. Do you mind if I smoke?

R: It might be better if you don't smoke.

O: It's OK (laughs), OK.

Original

O: İnternet kafede açıkçası gördüm, sonra denedim. Arkadaşlarıma da öğrettim, beraber başladık oynamaya.

R: Siz arkadaşlarınıza öğrettiniz orda.

O: Evet. Sigara içmemin bir sakıncası var mı?

R: Yani içmeseniz daha iyi olabilir aslında.

O: Tamamdır (gülüyor), tamam.

Sometimes, they did not even ask if the researcher minds whether they smoke or not, and they started to smoke. This made the researcher to articulate the words to remind them the nature of the meeting. For example:

R (Researcher): I briefly give some information about the meeting. This is a semi-structured interview. (Sees Ali smoking) It may be better if you do not smoke in order to maintain the formality.

A (Ali): Hıı OK.

Original

R: Ben kısaca bi' tekrar bilgi vereyim görüşme hakkında. Bu yarı yapılandırılmış bir görüşme. (Ali'nin sigara içtiğini görüyor)Belki sigara içmeseniz daha iyi olabilir formaliteyi korumak açısından.

A: Hu 'okey'.

Moreover, the point where Kaan had a need for asking to smoke was interesting because it followed the sentence he used to describe his escapist motivation in the game. He says:

R (Researcher): What motivates you to play Dota now?

K (Kaan): Avoiding my responsibilities. By the way, can I smoke, would it be a problem?

R: So, it might be better if you don't smoke in terms of ensuring formality.

K: OK.

R: Sizi şimdi DotA oynamaya motive eden şey ne?

K: Sorumluluklarımdan kaçmak. Bu arada bir tane sigara yakabilir miyim, sıkıntı olur mu?

R: Yani içmeseniz daha iyi olabilir. Formaliteyi sağlamak açısından.

K: Tamam.

The concept of smoking cigarettes occasionally became a means for the participants' attempt to make the communication more casual between me and them. Celil said that he finds the online games similar to the cigarettes which are filthy. He, then, asked if I smoke or not. It seemed that he expected the researcher to understand him more if that was the case. This points to his wish to communicate through shared experiences rather than talking by putting those experiences into words. Moreover, he seemed to make the communication more casual. He says:

R (Researcher): What is happening there, and you can't leave the game?

C (Celil): As I said, what is preventing me from leaving the game, I don't know, it attracts. I mean filthy- something like a cigarette. Do you use cigarettes?

Original

R: Ne oluyor orada, oyunu bıraktırmayan ne oluyor?

C: Oyunu bıraktırmayan dediğim gibi bilmiyorum çekiyor işte. Yani pis bi'- Sigara gibi bi' şey, sigara kullanıyor musunuz?

Later, Celil talked about the girlfriends he had by meeting in the online game spaces. After he mentioned their places of residence by giving city names, he confirmed where I live by asking. This shift in the focus of his attention to me after talking about girlfriends, may refer to his placement of the researcher to an informal and unconstrained position, and to his perception of the researcher in a horizontal relation:

C (Celil): I have so many stories about the people I met from the game. For example, I had girlfriends from the game. I mean, people I never met before ... then, in time, you only play with that person. Then you realize that this person is a girl. You speak to her. There was a girl who lives in Bursa and I saw her face to face. Also, there was a girl in Samsun. Are you in Ankara?

R (Researcher): I'm in Ankara.

C: In Ankara. There were also in Ankara. I am still talking with one of them and seeing her.

Original

C: Benim oyundan tanıştığım insanlarla ilgili yani çok fazla hikayem var. Mesela kız arkadaşlarım oldu oyundan. Yani hiç tanımadığım insanlar... Sonra işte zamanla tabi sadece o kişiyle oynuyorsun, sonra onu kız olduğunu anlıyorsun, bayan olduğunu anlıyorsun, konuşuyorsun. Sonra hatta Bursa'da olan çıktı. Görüşmüşlüğüm var. Samsun'da vardı. Sen Ankara'dasın di' mi?

R: Hı hı ben Ankara'dayım.

C: Ankara'da. Vardı Ankara'da mesela bi' tane. Bi' tanesiyle hâlâ konuşuyorum, görüşüyoruz.

Murat used a similar style of communication. He warded off a question which I asked about his intense daily routine, by shifting the focus of his speech, friskily redirecting a question to me. He states:

R (Researcher): You said constantly stress stress, effort effort. What is this effort for?

M (Murat): What is this effort for?

R: For example, why are you strive for staying 50 hours without sleep?

M: Oyyy, isn't that a deep and philosophical issue, don't you think so?

Original

R: Sürekli stres stres, çaba çaba dediniz. Bu çaba ne içindi?

M: Bu çaba ne için mi?

R: Mesela 50 saat uykusuz kalma neyin çabası sonucu?

M: Oyyy bu çok derin ve felsefik bir konu değil mi sence de?

Another incident which occurred in several interviews was that participants used bad language while talking. In addition, expressions of pleasure preceded this kind of talk. For example, Celil spoke about the pleasure he can get from the game by succeeding. He states:

Of course, when you play game, you get more or less pleasure in many different ways from the game. But as I said, the main thing for me is to be successful as for most people. You are both playing games and of course, it feels like you succeed in something. In fact, I'm not doing shit (laughs)... It was one of the mistakes we made during the university education. Sometimes, we took the shit too much. We play so many games. You do not go out, when you are called by your friends, "No, I will play".

Original

Oyun oynarken az çok farklı zevkler alıyorsun oyundan tabi. Ama dediğim gibi benim için temel şey, çoğu insan için böyle, başarılı olmak. Yani oyunda hem oyun oynuyorsun hem de tabi sanki bir şey yapmışsın gibi geliyor, aslında bir bok yaptığım da yok da (gülüyor)... Arada üniversitede yaptığımız hatalardan biri oydu, bi ara çok bokunu çıkarıyoduk. Çok fazla oyun oynuyoruz. Arkadaşlar dışarı çağırıyor, çıkmıyorsun, "Hayır, oyun oynayacağım".

Onur also talked about getting pleasure if he messes up in the game. He used the word "shitting" to figuratively describe his failure. He says:

You actually enjoy after a point. If I realize that I am messing things up, I focus on getting the pleasure of the game ... When I see I shit, I go on shitting on it more (laughs) you know.

Original

Aslında bi' yerden sonra zevk alıyorsunuz. Baktım batırdım işleri, artık zevkine bakıyorum oyunun ... Baktım sıçtım, sıvıyorum (gülüyor) ya işte hani.

Murat used bad language while telling about the times his teammates got killed during a match in the game. He talked about the importance of minimizing the death rate, otherwise the description of the situation involves a person's mouth and feces, either his, or his friend's. Also, his friends addressed him as "son". He states:

The death of heroes is a problem. You have to die as little as possible.... If this is my friend in the game, "You shit in our mouth!" I'm talking about something like a bit goy goy a little bit ... In the same situation, if I think they are reacting

to me in this way. So "Yunus, what the shit did you eat, uff!" like. "Son, didn't I tell you to throw this?" like or something.

Original

'Hero'ların ölmesi problem. Olabildiğince az ölmek lazım.... bu benim arkadaşımın oyun içinde "Lan sıçtın ağzımıza!" falan tadında biraz goy goy biraz sitem içeren laflar ediyorum. ... Aynı durumda bense bana da yine bu şekilde tepkiler veriyorlar aslında. Yani "Yunus ne bok yedin ya uff!" falan. "Oğlum ben sana şunu at demedim mi?" falan gibi filan.

In addition to use of bad language, Murat seemed to have an unsure opinion about the researcher. When elaborating on whether he was addicted to online games, he pointed out my profession as a psychologist, and said that it is me who had to decide about defining him about addiction. This demonstrated an unmasked superior position he put me early in the interview. He states:

Therefore, I define myself as extreme lover who has a little addiction but not have seriously an addiction. But I do not know, you are the psychologist. You define me (laughs).

Original

O yüzden ben kendimi aşırı seven, bir miktar bağımlılığı da olan ama ciddi anlamda bağımlı olmayan olarak tanımlıyorum. Ama bilmiyorum artık psikolog olan sensin sen beni tanımlarsın (gülüyor).

By the end of the interview, however, when his thoughts on participating in an online interview are asked, Murat answered by talking about how I, the researcher, would be the one who is affected by the fact that interview was conducted in an online setting. He indicated that his accounts may not be interpreted accurately or completely, and that the research would be devoid of his contribution. In other words, he decided on the things that I would not be able to say in the thesis. Thus, he took me off from the superior position where he earlier put me into. He says:

It did not make any difference for me to make the interview 'online' or face-to-face. I got used to showing all my feelings in online conversations because of my work ... Maybe for you, I mean, it may be a problem for your assessment. You may perceive gestures and facial expressions better on the face-to-face. I think that you can notice and analyze more easily on the face-to-face ... Because, for example, you cannot observe in online such as how much I sweat, did my hand shiver, what happened to my hair or something else

... But, for example, if we had a face-to-face interview, maybe I will swelt, get nervous and think about something at a certain point. All of these give you a separate psychological assessment. You would normally have included the interpretation of these in a different dimension in your thesis ... But you won't be able to say that right now.

Original

'Online' olması ya da yüz yüze olması benim için hiçbir şey fark etmedi bir kere. Zaten işten dolayı 'online'de tüm duyguları ve hissettiklerimi vermeye çok alıştım Belki senin açımdan sizin yani değerlendirmeniz açısından sıkıntı olabilir. Yüzyüzedeki jest ve mimikleri sen daha iyi algılayabilirsin belki. Orada da senin yapabileceğin tespitler ve analizler bence yüzyüzedeki daha rahat olur ... Çünkü mesela sen mesela şimdi mesela siz bugün bakarken atıyorum ben ne kadar terledim, elim mi titriyor, şurdan ter mi aktı, saçıma ne oldu falan filan bunları mesela 'online'da çok gözlemleyemiyorsunuz ... Bunların hepsi sonuçta ayrı bir psikolojik sonuçta sonuçlar ifade ediyor. Ya da bunun yorumunu, analizini sen aslında boyut olarak tezine katabilirdin normalde ... Ama bunu diyemeyeceksin şu anda.

Overall, discourse of the participants pointed to their inclination to take a reactive positioning towards authority, law, and the researcher whom they interacted within the frame of an official interview and did not personally know. They demonstrated this by articulating their perceptions of authority figures as negligible, their hostile or reactive attitudes regarding law imposed on them, and their unsure position when talking to the researcher who had been recognized neither as a superior nor as an inferior other yet.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

In this section, superordinate themes were discussed from a Lacanian psychoanalytical perspective. Results were tackled in terms of the relevant concepts in theory. In addition, possible implementations to therapeutic practice were suggested.

Results indicate that participants of this study, who are adult males playing online games excessively, have escapist motivations, are ambitious to win and to be satisfied through online gaming, experience burst of emotions such as aggression, contempt and pleasure, demonstrate omnipotent self-presentations as they give accounts of gameplay, and they become reactive to others whom they perceive as superior to them.

The participants often refer to being at home and not being able leave home when they talk about their motivations for playing online games excessively, particularly in the first superordinate theme which include participants' accounts for their escapist motivations. Being at home may symbolically mean being in mother or being with mother as Freud describe home as mother's womb (1919). Also, for Lacan, mother is the first big Other that a human being encounters with (1956-1957). Not being able to leave home may be parallel to not being able to separate from this first Other.

The individuals also emphasize anxious feelings regarding separation from their friends. Friendship is a derivative of imaginary relationship which occurs on the imaginary axis between two others, i.e., two mirror images. Pleasure of togetherness is the main motivation for playing online games with these others most of the time. This seems contradictory for that they also report dislike for human beings in general, yet they look for an activity where they are dependent on others.

The players perceive the game space as providing them limitless opportunities for doing whatever they want. In addition, individuals' excessive gaming behavior increases drastically when they are not obliged to do something in real life. Considering the lack of obligation in these times and the certain rules and obligations that the games offer, they may be calling for a frame of law by engaging in games although imaginarily. There is a semblance for the disavowal mechanism in this aspect, in which the subject calls for the Law (Fink, 1997). Also, escapism shows itself in avoiding witnessing the passage of time that cannot be controlled by any subject. That is to say, the time castrates the subjects by its unstoppable flow, and the individuals, by playing games in virtuality, prefer not to be subjected to the law of time. In a way, they disguise their death drive under the veil of playing online games. Overall, the superordinate theme of escapist motivations for engaging in excessive online gaming is related to resistance to separation and longing for being a part of a unity without submitting to any intervention from outside, namely castration.

The superordinate theme of ambition to win and to be satisfied in online game spaces refer to intense experiences of the participants' during game which include sacrifice of important things in real-life, disappointment when they are defeated and getting a type of bodily satisfaction through winning. This ambition results in accumulation of responsibilities in real life, perceived as undone duties by the participants, compensation for those, and discharging are emphasized in the participants' speech. This loop points to obsessional defense mechanisms (Rousselle, 2016). Also, the word choices of participants for describing victories and defeats in games are "to eat, to beat, to be eaten, to be beaten", which connote to be fed and orality (Harari, 2001; Evans, 2003) and indicative of a fixation in pre-Oedipal stage of development (Loose, 2000). The accounts of players include correspondence with bodily pleasures through winning, thus, with the phallic *jouissance* they derive from playing.

Ambition to win and to be satisfied in online games superordinate theme has many common points with the superordinate theme about participants' self-presentations. Considering self-presentations as self-images, and self-images as related to mirror stage, it may be concluded that there is a fixation in this stage of development where the foundation of ego occurs by weaning and by the encounter with the image of the

self from Other's point of view for the first time. One participant's slip of tongue as "losing a loss" is particularly significant to explain this fixation. In perverse structure, Lacan (2014) specifies that the subjects experience anxiety because of a lack of a lack. In other words, they still hold on to the imaginary perception of themselves and their Other as complementing each other, leaving no lack whatsoever in each other. Excessive online gamers claim to be playing to win and to satisfy their urge to win, but could it be possible that they also play to lose if losing is inevitable? It seems that their gaming behavior is an attempt to create a lack in themselves by losing. However, this lack is not a symbolic lack, but an imaginary lack that can be filled up and be created again in game spaces by game narratives. This lack does not cause castration in the players, but instead creates frustration (Lacan, 1956-1957).

Feelings of incompetency and indignation when defeated consecutively have a reciprocal relationship with this frustration because the subject does not recognize any other position besides herself and her complementary other, and any intervention from an outside source can be perceived by her as an offense to her powerful ego. This may cause her to put herself in a victimized position where she perceives herself as the target of the other's debilitating attempts, and in fact, the other is none other than her reflected self.

The participants also report strong feelings of aggression, contempt and pleasure in gaming experience. Aggression and pleasure are related to narcissism (Lacan, 1977b). Another important point is that these are emotional and thus sensational experiences, which are located within the body that is physical and connected to real Register. Playing without separation from the significant others gives the players pleasure although sometimes they become aggressive towards these counterparts, and this loop of pleasure and aggression continues repeatedly. Burst of emotions while playing online games superordinate theme has many common features with their self-presentations because the tense emotions which players report are byproducts of their perceived omnipotence, and these emotions also serves for the establishment and sustainability of their omnipotent self-images.

Since the participants communicate their subjective perceptions and experiences related to the concept of online game playing in interviews with another person, their accounts mostly consist of the ways they see themselves and present themselves to others (i.e., self-presentation). In the interviews, these self-presentations are demonstrated by participants within the narratives of gameplay including the mechanics, stories, and structure of the online games that they choose to play. The self-presentations of players are based on images, and these images have roots in the mirror stage (Lacan, 1977a). The subject is structured as a rival with its specular image (Lacan, 1977b) in mirror stage through 'primary identification' that forms ideal-ego of the subject (Evans, 2003). Thus, when the context is about self-presentation or self-image, it is consequently about ideal-ego of the individuals. In addition, all these concepts are situated within the imaginary order (Lacan, 1988a). The characters of the players in games may be functioning for achieving to what their ideal-ego portrays for them.

Lacan places both eroticism and aggressivity in this imaginary relationship of the subject who identifies with his own image in the mirror phase. The imaginary relationship carrying aggression and eroticism, forms the basis of the subject's narcissism, and all identifications can be built upon it (Lacan, 1977b). Correspondingly, the narcissistic and ambivalent attitudes of the players directed towards themselves and others with whom they are in a mirror relationship are manifested in their speech. These subjects position themselves in the axis of an imaginary relationship. Related to this and as pointed out in the subthemes of the participants' omnipotent self-presentations, other characteristics encompassed by the omnipotent image are the need to prove superiority to the other by competitiveness, and destructiveness in the form of their desire to kill. Also, they give themselves a different and divergent, if not privileged, position by choosing to use their own language as a result of not even bothering to communicate with a third party. Lastly, rejection of addictive nature of online game playing for themselves but giving descriptions of its addictiveness through stories of others since they perceive addiction as a weakness, is in line with the powerful self-presentation mentioned above. In other words, they locate any weakness such as addiction outside themselves although they can ascribe it to other players without hesitation.

Given that the concept of the self-presentation is the image presented to another, regardless of whether it is an external or internal other, it is necessary for players to prove their power against their specular images which are reflected by team mates, real-life friends, or avatars of their own characters in games that are reflected on screens. Players compete with those images, want to destroy those images and want to destroy within those images at the same time. In other words, the images which they want to destroy, or to beat, are also the images which they want to possess. Moreover, players communicate in a language that the outsiders cannot understand, which demonstrates the dimension related to language in imaginary register as signified and signification (Evans, 2003), or the dimension related to imaginary register in language, considering that signified is the intended or purely subjective meaning of a word or a signifier. The statements of players such as not being able to convey what they really mean seems related to refusal or inability of using signifiers of common spoken language for signification.

On the other hand, a player can communicate with a similar other who also plays online games, but the player becomes unavailable for communication when a third person who is perceived as dissimilar to them. This is related to the subtheme of use of a language of their own. Thus, the relationship seems to include only one perspective, again indicating its imaginary and omnipotent nature. The perspectives that games offer as first-person or third-person are in line with this idea that there is only one position for the subjects, as 'I', which includes 'you' only in the 'I's perspective (i.e., an imaginary 'you'), and there is no third other as 's/he' who can intervene in the relation between these 'I' and 'I's 'you'. Third person perspective games offer the individual to possess the perspective of the third from the position of 'I', and the character of the player is still an extension of this 'I', so again no other third perspective is present. In addition, the tendency of players as not accepting that themselves are addicted to the enjoyment or *jouissance* which the games contain, but indicating others are addicted, shows how omnipotent their self-presentations are and how crucial and significant their mirror image and the mirror phase is for the players psychic world.

Having elaborated on related concepts for the self-presentations of the players and in the light of the players' statements about gaming experience as distressing and anguished, while the most uttered word is pleasure in their speeches, I must return to the concept of *jouissance* in order to discuss more about the superordinate theme of burst of emotions while playing online games. The repetition of an action which makes the players experience distress, or displeasure, is in parallel with the concept *jouissance*, which is translated as painful enjoyment and is related to satisfaction of drives and the destructive component of death drive which Freud proposes (Vincent, 2020). Also, *jouissance* can manifest itself in the form of sexual pleasure but also destructive pleasure (Vincent, 2020). For Lacan, this drive is displayed its most charged form in infantile masturbation (1956-1957).

By looking at the speech of participants on the issue of authority, law, rules and restrictions, and how they position themselves in the interviews, it may be concluded that individuals see themselves as above the authority which means they see themselves as the authority. This tendency of the players usually reflect itself as a reactive attitude toward the entities which they perceive as superior to them. Depending on the clinical structure of each subject, this tendency may be due to an obsessional structure where the Other is seen as 'dead' or 'dad' (Fink, 1997; Hook, 2015), or a perverse structure where the mechanism of disavowal functions as the main defense. The former is related to the some individuals' conscientious and voluntary acceptance of the hypothetical laws and restrictions of life or of games elaborated in the interviews, although they almost always refer to their own perceptual infallible logic to decide about whether or not to follow any rule imposed specifically on themselves. The latter is related to individuals' accounts for easily covering up their violations of laws, or disguising when departed from the rule. When the gaze of the Other is not there, they do not hesitate to break any rule and try to cover it up if necessary. Indeed, this may be an active attempt to turn the Other's gaze on themselves. Parallel to this, it can be said that the participants occupy a position where they are objects of *jouissance* of the Other (Fink, 1997). They live as attached to their parents' lives, in their parents' houses, by their parents' demands. Consequently, they may be calling for a "No!" from the Other to cut to cord in their family relationships. In game spaces, the only authority which can impose any restrictions on the individuals

is the game itself, which they can easily end by clicking on an exit button, similar to the use of safe words of the masochist (Aardse, 2014). In a similar vein, the structure of ego of a gamer is claimed to be sadomasochistic (Jagodzinski, 2006).

Freud's discussion of sadomasochistic actions may benefit the understanding of violence in video games (Aardse, 2014). It is masochistic behavior for the player to voluntarily experience uncanny in the game environment. It creates uncanny feelings rather than terror because in games, it is obvious that the experience is a fiction and the person feels safe by the rules determined within the framework of consent to play. Another thing that contributes to this is that all of this happens inside the screen. Players enjoy showing their strength on the game and making the inevitable mistakes they would make as they progress towards their goals. Video games are generally described as a place of escape. In this sense, masochism is defined as an attempt for escape by losing self-awareness (Baumester, 1988 as cited in Aardse, 2014). Accordingly, the behavior of playing games can be seen as a kind of masochistic act with the feature of temporarily getting out of the bodily self and creating a virtual self in game spaces (Aardse, 2014).

Individuals seem to vacillate during the interviews where they interact with an unknown other. On one hand, they are aware of the fact that the interviews proceed as an official encounter. On the other hand, they attempt to test the limits of this setting or the boundaries between the researcher and themselves by acting or articulating. For example, they either articulate their request to smoke cigarettes or directly start smoking. Moreover, they make comments and assumptions on whether I play online games, whether I can speak foreign languages, whether I could possibly understand them. Based on these observations, I suggest that excessive online game players are inclined to maintain a narcissistic mirror relation with unknown others regardless of the setting in which the encounter happens. In other words, they position in an ego-to-ego relationship, which is based on imaginary. This may come into the picture in a psychoanalytical work with online gamers.

Anxiety is a concept that I must examine and reflect on in order to evaluate the superordinate themes of this study. We see that by excessive engagement in online

games, which the participants use as an escape strategy, they escape from something that creates anxiety for them and, according to their own expressions, they do not succeed in this for that they also experience anxiety through games. Contrary to Freud's definition of anxiety as something that is experienced when separated from the mother, according to Lacan (1956-1957), anxiety is actually something that is experienced when threatened with disintegration and is experienced when faced with the threat of not being separated from the pervasive mother (Evans, 2003). This pervasive image of the mother is located in the register of imaginary, and the pervasive function of the mother is due to the fantasy of mother as having the imaginary phallus (Evans, 2003).

In games, players who engage in online games excessively may experience identification with imaginary phallus which is object of desire of the mother in the pre-Oedipal mother-child relationship (Lacan, 1988b). The emphasis on the lack of father's authority in households of the players, which indicates the absence of father in the mother's discourse, may be related to the ongoing anxiety that the players goes through in real world. Moreover, this would explain the frequent anguished experiences in gaming if we consider the player's attachment to the game object as resembling their attachment to their love object, namely, the mother.

In addition, anxiety is the only emotion that will not mislead the subject, so it is valid (Lacan, 1998). The words referring to the mother, which the participants choose to use to describe what they try to destroy in games by collaborating with their siblings, namely their teammates, as well as words such as the main goal, etc., may indicate that their aggression, which turns into destructive actions, is channeled to the mother, who creates anxiety about disintegration. The secondary obstacles they encounter on this path in games are phallic objects such as towers or guns of opponents which may imply the phallus that the father has. On the other hand, players are also trying to reach the object they are trying to destroy. Hence, their destructive self-presentations may have roots mainly in the relationships with their mothers and consequent relationships with their fathers.

Having spoken about possession of phallic objects and anxiety, it should be mentioned that it is the phallic *jouissance* that players experience so insatiably through the game and become addicted to. Lacan (1974-1975) argues that anxiety is inherent in the body and that it is due to being occupied with overflowing phallic *jouissance*, which is the pleasure derived from signification by the castrated subject through phallic function (Dimitriadis, 2017; Vincent, 2020). *Jouissance* and death drive contradict with pleasure principle because pleasure principle aims at lowering the tension to the basal amount so that the organism can survive in real world (Vincent, 2020); and, pleasure principle may restrict the excessive *jouissance* although *jouissance* may also overrun pleasure principle (Lacan, 2007). Thus, the players seem to act via the path of *jouissance* instead of the mediation of pleasure principle.

I mentioned earlier about the fixation of players in the mirror phase, which is characterized by omnipotence of the ego. In parallel, anxiety stems from lack of a lack (Evans, 2003). Lacan says that anxiety is also present in the feeling of alienation from the image of the subject in the mirror phase and compares this situation to the uncanny in Freudian thought (Evans, 2003). Freud (1919) says that there is an uncanny feeling evoked in us because of the animistic way of thinking that we carry from primitive times, which includes narcissistic overestimation of our personal way of thinking, and we can think of the world under the influence of omnipotent thoughts. Our attitude towards death, our non-voluntary repetitions and castration complexes are also uncanny (Freud, 1919). One of the uncanny fantasies is to return to the home, or to the womb which is the ultimate home, and the prefix of '-un' comes due to repression of this familiar fantasy. The womb and the tomb are linguistically and descriptively two of a kind (Freud, 1919). A person, who imagines herself as buried alive in a tomb, is brought into uncanny feelings just as the feeling in anticipation of being in the womb (Kirkland, 2015). If phallic *jouissance*, omnipotence and uncanny feelings are considered together, the reason why participants claim that they are not addicted even though they say online gaming is addictive becomes clearer. They refuse to give up phallic *jouissance* and they do not see themselves as weak enough to be an addict, yet they are allured by the uncanny feelings.

Uncanny feelings increase as the resemblance to reality of what creates that feeling increases and decreases as that thing fictionalizes (Freud, 1919). In online games, we see the fictive state of a fantasy. In the scenarios of the video games, abandoned houses and homelands, or motherlands that need to be reclaimed, evoke an uncanny feeling as they represent the place that was once home but no longer is (Spittle, 2011). The stories and scenes offered in online games are likewise, but they also include other players as team-mates or rivals, which may correspond to sibling-rivalry that indicates the subject's obligation to be in a place where other similar beings are present in order to experience its self, and the subject's jealousy for those others who claim to occupy and share the place of the subject on the eyes of the parents (Lacan, 1977b).

The participants' gaming discourse is full of words related to death and life. The concept of death is required for comprehension of the meaning of life, and a human being is a living thing because of inevitable death. The obsessive subject's relationing, which is built on the primary question of whether he is dead or alive (Fink, 1997), is perhaps in line with the players' purpose of gaining mastery by repeating the anxiety created by this problematic question in endless living and dying cycle of these games and in the language of games based on the theme of death. In another aspect, players may be experiencing the psychic state, of what Lacan calls 'narcissistic suicidal aggression' (Lacan, 1977b) of the mirror stage, to the fullest in the mirror stage within the game frame.

Since Lacan positions the death drive at the basis of each drive - the players' discourse is also woven with connotations to death - the impulsive side of repetitive playing behavior should also be evaluated in terms of the death drive. This drive (Lacan, 1977b), which is positioned earlier than triangulation of Oedipal stage and is seen as a demand for a return to the state of unity with the mother's breast, or a wish to destroy the self in the narcissistic relationship, belongs to the imaginary axis. The subject's drive seeks to bring its own death (since it is something that will vanish when it arrives its destination), it is repetitive, and it attempts to go beyond the pleasure principle and experience pleasure in pain (Lacan, 1998). For Lacan, every drive is death drive and is "excessive, repetitive, and ultimately destructive" (Lacan, 1977b as cited in Evans, 2003). According to Freud (1926), if one is afraid of death, that means one is afraid of

castration. However, online gamers are repeating their deaths, though imaginarily, calling for castration to fend it off once again.

On the other hand, Lacan defines a drive circuit. In the first two autoerotic stages, the urges to see, and to see oneself are autoerotic and non-subjective, and he says that the subject emerges only in the third stage, which is characterized by making himself be seen (Lacan, 1998). Demand is characterized by oral and anal drives that are present in the first two autoerotic stages, in which the actions are sucking and shitting, and the objects are nipple and feces, respectively. However, desire is about seeing and hearing, which are functions of scopic and invocatory drives (Evans, 2003). The satisfaction of the drive is not dependent on the addictive object but corresponds more to the position which this object occupies and to the consequent process of the circuit of drive (Lacan, 1998). Excessive online players are at the stage of seeing and hearing themselves. This is the fundamental desire of the individuals who play online games. Their desires are hidden in their demands, but where the subject is formed, there must be an active attempt to making oneself be seen and be heard. Nevertheless, players cannot get rid of repetition, they are in an impulsivity that allows them to only partially fulfill their desires because the Other is disavowed in the game, and in reality they cannot tolerate existence of the Other because they are positioned against the Other.

Even the participants who say, “I don't care about looks”, aim to have the image of being a winner, and it is important for him to see and to be seen as it is demonstrated in the superordinate theme of omnipotent self-presentations. At this point, it is obvious that the line between “to be eaten [*yenmek/yenilmek*]” and “to be seen” is actually drawn between oral drive and scopic drive. Also, the material of games demonstrates an exclusive exercise of having the phallus in the form of weapons, guns, magical spells, advanced knowledge of strategies and so on. In this way, excessive gaming is a rigorous attempt to move from demand (from being the imaginary phallus) to desire (to attempting to have the phallus). However, they get stuck between oral drive and scopic drive because this endeavor does not present itself in the symbolic register of the Other, and it does not have the active position necessary for the change in the process of drive circuit (Harari, 2001; Evans, 2003). In accordance, Jagodzinski (2006) claims that video games distort the structure of desire by imposing the mechanisms

that evoke the function of drives and lead to be captured by excessive jouissance through the continuous cycle of living and dying of one's character.

Since the demand contains desire (Lacan, 1956-1957), the subject that is asked to speak in analytical work, regresses (Evans, 2003) and produces his own demand, therefore he can express something that hides his desire in it. It should be intended for the player to recall what he acts out by repeating (Freud, 1914a), and to express those to the big Other, rather than directing his demands to small others who do not hear and are not the actual target for the player's demands even if they hear. Analytical work requires a triangular relationship (Lacan, 1988a). If the mirror relationship is maintained, which is what other psychoanalytic and psychodynamic object relations theorists suggest, 'a fight to the death' characterized by aggressivity begins between the analyst and the analysand (Evans, 2003), just as the aggression that online players share and attribute to the small others in their online gaming experiences. Hence, if the imaginary stance is maintained also by the analyst, what would be the point and function of psychoanalytic intervention?

Psychoanalysis focuses on the subject whose addiction functions as a defense and denial against the obligation to obey the rules of speech and language to reach the Other (Meyer, 2011). On the other hand, addicts may have a tendency to phallically direct their weaknesses or lacks, that is to say they may use those as a signifier of (lack of) power, so the analyst's desire to listen is most crucial in order not to be blocked by their strategy (Miller, 2011).

Lacanian psychoanalysis highlights the analyst's desire to know in treatment, just like in psychosis, perversion, and neurosis clinics (Meyer, 2011). This desire creates a space for the dependent subject to speak because the analyst's aim is not to respond to the subject's demand; its purpose is shaped by the desire to hear the subject. In addictions to other objects just as to gaming, if the main problem of the subject is not articulated and conceptualized through language, it is not possible to be heard (Borch, 2015). In addition, the message of the subjects for the Other would be particular for each subject (Proudfoot, 2017), so there is neither common and universal message of individuals who have a tendency for addictions, nor they encompass a specific a

clinical structure such as psychosis, perversion, or neurosis (Loose, 2002). This is also true for excessive online gamers. It should be noted that the withdrawal displayed by players from real world by online gaming is not aimed at breaking relations off with others but is an attempt to reach them (Proudfoot, 2017). Nonetheless, this study shows that perverse defenses regarding the gaze of the Other and the jouissance of the Other are possible to be observed in excessive online gamers.

Problematic online gamers intentionally choose the material that they will come across in the games, thus intentionally and actively taking part of the inclusion of psychological states which may occur in them, so they may be trying to give themselves a remedy in the form of a symptom; however, since this symptom would lose its influence on the person's psychic world, it would only result in an repeated obsessional engagement (Weisel, 2015). The solution of what creates strains psychologically is in the creation of a place for a third party in the analysis room, and thus encouraging the individual to express symbolically what she thinks is inexpressible (Weisel, 2015).

5.1. Final Comments

The participants of this study often refer to the concept of being a part of a community, which is suggestive of the significance of the notion of community. The pursuit for a community may be another facade of the call for a new Other (Salecl, 2004), which is facing with extinction in our times, not only to hear the demands of the individuals, but also to convey its demands to the individuals who is drawn into the feelings of terror when any demand is absent (Salecl, 2004).

Although committed gamers are stereotypically seen as having mental problems, infantile or immature, their condition corresponds beneficially to psychoanalytical exploration since the component of uncanny in games and defensive mechanisms in the form of actions and experiences of the players are present (Kirkland, 2009). Also, it is beneficial to know which type of game an individual is excessively engages in when this person becomes a patient in psychoanalytical situation because we may gain

insight about this individual's subjective world including personal tendencies and attitudes that are reflected in speech (Janiri, 2019).

When the subject cannot remember the repressed, this occurs in repetitive actions, in other words, in acting out (Freud, 1914a). The goal of psychoanalytic treatment is to make the patient remember. However, this remembrance is not just a remembrance, it is also announcing it to the other through speech. What will end the repetitive action will be the Other's hearing (Evans, 2003).

Moreover, children who display psychotic symptoms engage in playing in the way they wish and put effort to negate reality, and they do not include any characters in their plays (Klein, 1929). However, in online games, the characters of players are present, and they repeat actions that resembles the reality of players although scenarios are different. Thus, it is important to be cautious to specify the players' clinical structure as psychosis without any preliminary clinical interviews. Nonetheless, the participants of this study do not show any speech problems or disorganization, which is the primary criterion for psychosis (Fink, 1997). Instead, they give impression of having certain perverse defenses which must be considered in analytical situation, and at first, a room should be created for the Other when working with these individuals.

According to Miller (2011), individuals with an inclination to become addicted to certain objects, also have a tendency to benefit from psychoanalytical treatment; however, the analyst or psychoanalytically oriented psychotherapist must be cautious for the subject's attempts to exploit the symptom of addiction in the form of a demand directed at the analyst. Lastly, as it is mentioned earlier, narcissism and aggressivity are some main characteristics of excessive online gamers. Possible narcissistic fragility of the individuals with the symptom of excessive online gaming must be considered in the psychoanalytical setting, and must be approached carefully for a dialogue, rather than a monologue, to emerge (Herzog, 2004). When working with individuals who display this kind of features, the analyst must frustrate the subject to reanimate the aggressivity as early as possible because it would be the foundation of transference and backbone of the psychoanalytical situation, although the transference would most possibly be a negative one (Lacan, 1977b). In other words, in

psychoanalytical work, when working with people whose aggressivity is dominant, revealing the negative transfer at the beginning of the process may give the motor power to analytical work.

CHAPTER 6

IMPLICATIONS, LIMITATIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH

This is the first qualitative study which attempts to understand the experiences of adult online gamers who perceive themselves playing heavily, and which uses interpretative phenomenological analysis of interviews done with them for this purpose. It is also the first study which was conducted with Turkish-speaking players and had a Lacanian perspective. The implications of this research include theoretical ground and insights for relationship patterns of online gamers, and practical suggestions in working with these individuals in a therapeutic setting.

There are several limitations of this study. First, each participant was interviewed only once. Arranging more than one interview with each participant might be beneficial since transferences of the participants and the researcher would become more apparent as the relationship persists with more interviews. Second limitation is that only male players were included to this study as participants, so the results might be mostly reflecting male adults' experiences. A follow-up qualitative study can be conducted with female adults who play online games excessively, whose number in online games is on the rise although they are reported to be minority in online gaming communities. Parallel to this, interview questions may be shaped by considering the concept of sexuation which Lacan put forward in terms of the subject's positioning to phallus and *jouissance* (Aydoğ, 2020), and which was not elaborated in this research. Also, a research team including fellow researchers for data collection may be beneficial in terms of making use of different perspectives (Patton, 1990). In this work, triangulation is used during data analysis, but triangulation during data collection may also be beneficial. Lastly, other repetitive or addictive behaviors of participants are not investigated in the scope of this thesis. However, asking relevant interview questions

in future studies may contribute to comprehension and formulation of excessive online gaming phenomenon.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this thesis investigated the experiences of male adults who play online games excessively. The findings of the research revealed that escapism from the probabilities of real world was an important motivation for individuals to prefer playing online games heavily. In addition, online gamers were ambitious to win and to satisfy themselves through games in which they experienced tense emotions, particularly aggression and contempt, and pleasure. Their ambition about winning became manifested in their omnipotent self-presentative images, too, in descriptions of themselves as competitive and destructive in the narratives of gameplay. The frequent use of gaming jargon on the gamers part reflected the fact that they used a language which was inaccessible to third parties. In other words, players did not communicate their experiences entirely, to people who did not speak their language, and pointed out some parts of their experiences as un conveyable. The fact that they agreed on addictive nature of online gaming but did not consider themselves as addicted to the online games demonstrates another aspect of their powerful self-presentations. Lastly, online gamers were reactive to the others whom they see as superior to them, to restrictions and to laws imposed on them. Consequently, they were uncertain about how to take position in relation to the researcher since they might not be able to decide about hierarchical status of her in the interviews.

Having explored their experiences, it can be said that online gamers tend to take on imaginary positions when relating to other speaking-subjects, which may create redundant frustration for them. It seems that they escape from castration of speech, namely the Law, and prefer to repeat these frustrating patterns of ego-to-ego imaginary relationships in the virtual stages of online games, in which they experience a painful enjoyment. In a psychotherapeutic setting, psychoanalysts and psychotherapists

should work on the issues related to castration, by establishing and taking a stance as a third, who intervenes in all-pervasive imaginary of the subjects. Also, practitioners should listen to the players without understanding too much, in order to enable a place for them to speak more of their fantasies, which have been manifested in repetitive playing of online games until then.

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APPENDICES

A. APPROVAL OF THE METU HUMAN SUBJECTS ETHICS COMMITTEE

UYGULAMALI ETİK ARAŞTIRMA MERKEZİ
APPLIED ETHICS RESEARCH CENTER



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16 MART 2020

Konu: Değerlendirme Sonucu

Gönderen: ODTÜ İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu (İAEK)

İlgi: İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu Başvurusu

Sayın Tülin GENÇÖZ

Danışmanlığını yaptığınız Ece ÖZCAN'ın "Yetişkinlerin Aşırı Düzeyde Çevrimiçi Oyun Oynama Deneyimlerinin Araştırılması" başlıklı araştırması İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu tarafından uygun görülmüş ve 115 ODTU 2020 protokol numarası ile onaylanmıştır.

Saygılarımızla bilgilerinize sunarız.

Prof.Dr. Mine MISIRLISOY

Başkan

Prof. Dr. Tolga CAN

Üye

Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Ali Emre TURGUT

Üye

Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Müge GÜNDÜZ

Üye

Doç.Dr. Pınar KAYGAN

Üye

Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Şerife SEVINÇ

Üye

Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Süreyya Özcan KABASAKAL

Üye

B. INFORMED CONSENT FORM

ARAŞTIRMAYA GÖNÜLLÜ KATILIM FORMU

Bu araştırma, ODTÜ Klinik Psikoloji Yüksek Lisans Programı öğrencisi Ece Özcan tarafından ODTÜ öğretim elemanlarından Prof. Dr. Tülin Gençöz danışmanlığında yüksek lisans tezi kapsamında yürütülmektedir. Bu form sizi araştırma koşulları hakkında bilgilendirmek için hazırlanmıştır. Araştırmanın amacı, aşırı düzeyde çevrimiçi oyun oynayan yetişkinlerin yaşadıkları deneyimleri anlamak için bilgi toplamaktır. Araştırmaya katılmayı kabul ederseniz, araştırmacının sizinle yapacağı bir görüşmeye katılmanız beklenmektedir. Yaklaşık olarak 60-120 dakika sürmesi beklenen bu görüşmede sizin çevrimiçi oyun oynamaya dair öznel deneyiminizi anlamaya yönelik açık uçlu sorular sorulacaktır. Görüşmeler ses kaydına alınıp daha sonra analiz edilmek üzere deşifre edilecektir. Araştırmaya katılımınız tamamen gönüllülük temelinde olmalıdır. Kimliğiniz ve demografik bilgileriniz gizli tutulacak, veri analizi sadece araştırmacı tarafından yürütülecektir. Sağladığınız veriler gönüllü katılım formlarında toplanan kimlik bilgileri ile eşleştirilmeyecektir. Elde edilecek bilgiler bilimsel yayınlarda kullanılacaktır. Çalışma, genel olarak kişisel rahatsızlık verecek sorular içermemektedir. Ancak, katılım sırasında sorulardan ya da herhangi başka bir nedenden ötürü kendinizi rahatsız hissederseniz görüşmeyi yarıda bırakıp çıkmakta serbestsiniz. Böyle bir durumda çalışmayı uygulayan kişiye, çalışmadan çıkmak istediğinizi söylemeniz yeterli olacaktır. Bu çalışmaya katıldığınız için şimdiden teşekkür ederiz. Çalışma hakkında daha fazla bilgi almak için ilgili araştırmacı Ece Özcan (E-posta: ece.ozcan@metu.edu.tr) ile iletişim kurabilirsiniz.

Yukarıdaki bilgileri okudum ve bu çalışmaya tamamen gönüllü olarak katılıyorum.

(Formu doldurup imzaladıktan sonra uygulayıcıya geri veriniz).

İsim Soyad

Tarih

İmza

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C. INFORMATIVE FORM

ARAŐTIRMA SONRASI BİLGİLENDİRME FORMU

Bu alıŐma gnll katılım formunda belirtildiĐi zere Orta DoĐu Teknik niversitesi Psikoloji Blm Klinik Psikoloji Yksek Lisans Programı Đrencisi Ece zcan tarafından Prof. Dr. Tlin Genz danıŐmanlıĐında yksek lisans tezi kapsamında yrtlmektedir. KatıldıĐınız araŐtırmanın amacı, aŐırı dzeyde evrimii oyun oynayan yetiŐkin erkek bireylerin deneyimlerini ve oyun oynamayı algılama ve anlamlandırma srelerini anlamaya alıŐmaktır. Literatre gre bireylerin oyun oynamayla ilgili deneyimleri farklılaŐmaktadır. Bu bilgi doĐrultusunda, katılımcılardan znel deneyimlerinin aıĐa ıkması beklentisiyle grŐmelere katılmaları istenmiŐtir. Katılımcıların mlakat sırasında konuŐulan konular hakkında diĐer katılımcılara ya da olası katılımcılara bilgi vermemesi gerekmektedir.

alıŐmanın 2020 yılının Haziran ayında sonulanması ngrlmektedir. Elde edilen bilgiler sadece bilimsel araŐtırmalarda ve yazılarda kullanılacaktır. alıŐmanın sonularını Đrenmek veya bu araŐtırma hakkında daha fazla bilgi almak iin ece.ozcan@metu.edu.tr e-posta adresine sorularınızı yneltebilirsiniz.

alıŐmaya olan katkılarınızdan dolayı tekrar teŐekkr ederiz.

D. SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

YARI YAPILANDIRILMIŞ MÜLAKAT SORULARI

1. Çevrimiçi oyun oynamaya nasıl başladınız?
2. En çok zaman ayırdığınız çevrimiçi oyundan bahsedebilir misiniz?
3. Bu oyunu oynarken en çok keyif aldığımız anlar neler?
4. Sizi bu oyunu oynamaya motive eden şey nedir?
5. Bu oyundaki temel hedefiniz nedir?
6. Bu oyunu oynamadığınızda neler yaşıyorsunuz?
7. Genel olarak oyun oynamadığınızda neler yaşıyorsunuz?
8. Boş zamanlarınızda oyun dışında neler yapıyorsunuz?
9. Kendinizden bahsedebilir misiniz?
10. Kendinizi başkasına tanıtmanız gerektiğinde genelde nelerden bahsedersiniz?
11. Aileniz hakkında bilgi verir misiniz?
12. Ailede kuralları kuralları kim koyar?
13. Genel olarak kurallarla sizin ilişkiniz nasıldır?
14. Birinin size kural koyması sizin için nasıl bir deneyim?
15. Bir kurala uymadığınızda bunu nasıl deneyimlersiniz?
16. Eklemek istediğiniz bir şey var mı?

E. TURKISH SUMMARY / TÜRKÇE ÖZET

1. GİRİŞ

1.1. Arka plan ve kavramsallaştırma

Literatürde, çevrimiçi oyunlara fazla ilgi gösteren kişilerin durumu, video oyunu bağımlılığının bir alt türü, ayrı bir tanı olarak internet bağımlılığı ve ‘aşırı çevrimiçi oyun oynama’ gibi çeşitli ifadelerle adlandırılmıştır (Rosenberg et al., 2014). Kişilerin, dürtü kontrol problemleri olan kişilerle benzer semptomlar ve nöral aktiviteler gösterdikleri öne sürülmüş (Heng, 2017) ve DSM-5 tanı ölçütleri el kitabında ‘internet oyun oynama bozukluğu’ için bağımlılıkla ilişkilendirilen semptomlardan oluşan tanı kriterleri önerilmiştir (Griffiths, 2005). Özellikle çok oyunculu çevrimiçi rol yapma oyunlarının video oyunu bağımlılığı ile ilişkili olduğu bildirilmiştir (Karfedelt-Winther, 2014). Öte yandan aşırı düzeyde oyun oynamanın bir bağımlılık olup olmadığı konusundaki tartışma sürmektedir.

Aşırı düzeyde internet kullanımı altta yatan diğer patolojik durumlara işaret edebilir (Davis, 2001) ve araştırmalar aşırı düzeyde çevrimiçi oyun oynama için de paralel bulgular göstermektedir. Saldırgeanlık ve narsisistik kişilik özellikleri (Kim et al., 2008), obsesif-kompulsif bozukluklar ve dikkat eksikliği bozuklukları (Reddy, 2008), disosiyatif durumlar (Guglielmucci et al., 2019) ve depresif belirtilerin (Rosenberg et al., 2014) aşırı düzeyde çevrimiçi oyun oynama ile ilişkili olduğu bulunmuştur. Diğer psikopatolojiler ile aşırı çevrimiçi oyun oynama arasında bildirilen bir nedensellik bulunmamıştır, ilişkinin yönü üzerinde mutabakat sağlanmamıştır ve bu durumu bir davranış bağımlılığı olarak adlandırmak kısıtlayıcı olabilir (Billieux et al., 2015). Bu tezde, aşırı düzeyde çevrimiçi oyun oynama mefhumuna salt bir davranış sorunu olarak değil, karmaşık ve öznel bir olgu olarak bakmanın gerekli olduğu düşünülmüştür.

Bu olguyu ve ilgili deneyimleri derinlemesine keşfetmek için nitel arařtırmalar faydalı olabilir. Mevcut sonuçlar, çevrimiçi oyun oynamanın günlük yaşamla bütünleřtiđini, disosiyatif ve zaman alıcı olduđunu, olumsuz zihinsel durumları hafifletmeye yardımcı olduđunu göstermektedir (Hussain & Griffiths, 2009). Ayrıca, online oyunların ciddi ölçüde bađımlılık yapıcı olduđu ve oyuncular tarafından ikircikli bir tutumla algılandığı bulunmuřtur (Chappell, Eatough, Davies ve Griffiths, 2006).

Literatürde çevrimiçi oyun oynamaya dair nitel çalışmalarına olan gereksinimi göz önüne alarak bu alanda bir nitel çalışma yapmaya karar verdim. Benimsediđim yönelim olarak psikanalitik teori, aşırı düzeyde çevrimiçi oyun oynamaya dair anlayışımı şekillendirdi.

Freud (1920) oyun için, çocuđun, annenin yokluđunu ve varlığını sembolize etme çabası olduđunu söyler ve kayıp ve kaygı duyguları üzerinde ustalařma şansı verdiđi için zevkli olduđunu söyler. Kaygıdaki fazlalığın tekrarlayan, zorlayıcı ve imkânsız oyunlarla sonuçlandığı belirtilmektedir (Winnicott, 1975). Psikanalitik literatürde oyun oynamak, gerçek nesnelere dair bir fanteziyle iliřkili olduđundan, mastürbasyona ve mastürbasyonla ilgili fiziksel duyumlarla bađlantılı görölmektedir (Freud, 1920; Winnicott, 1971). Kiřiler, hangi oyunu oynayacaklarını yani hangi fantaziyi canlandıracaklarını kendileri seçtikleri için, fantezileri ile bađlantılı gerçek nesnelere ve bu nesnelere olan iliřkileri hakkında ‘bilinmeyen’ bir bilgiye sahip olabilirler.

Fransız psikanalist Jacques Lacan oyun kavramıyla ilgili ayrıca çalışmamıřtır ancak öznenin oluşumuyla ilgili öne sürdüđu psikanalitik kavramlar aşırı düzeyde oyun oynama deneyimini arařtırırken faydalı olabilir (Rehak, 2003). Öznenin, genellikle annesinin (yani ilk Başka’nın) gözünden gördüđu imgesiyle özdeřleşerek kendi özüne yabancılařtığı, agresyon, rekabet ve zafer hislerinin çatışmasıyla karakterize ayna evresi, İmgesel olarak adlandırılan ve öznenin kurulduđu düzlemlerden biridir (Lacan, 1977a). Oyuncuların, elektronik aletlerin ekranlarından yansıyan karakterlerle kurdukları özdeřimi anlamak için ayna evresi önemli bir noktadır. Özneyi kuran bir diđer düzlem Semboliktir. Bebeđin,

taleplerini iletmek için Başka'nın dilini kullanmayı kabul ederek dilin yasasına dahil olmasıyla devam eden yabancılaşma sürecinde (Fink, 1997), annede eksik olduğu düşünülen nesneye yani fallusa sahip olan babanın, bebek ile anne arasındaki ikili ilişkiye bir üçüncü olarak müdahalesi vardır ve tüm bunlar Sembolik düzlemde gerçekleşir. Dil, Yasa ve babasal işlev özne için Başka'dır ve özneyi eksik bırakarak sürekli olarak kastre eder (Lacan, 1956-1957). Oyuncuların söylemlerini incelemek aşırı düzeyde oyun oynamayla ilgili deneyimlerine dair ipucu verebilir. Lacan'ın Gerçek dediği düzlem, İmgesel ve Sembolik ile gergin bir ilişki içindedir ve acı veren zevkin (*jouissance*) kökeni oradadır. *Jouissance*, tekrarlamayı ve haz ilkesinin ötesinde bir zevki barındırır (Lacan, 2014). Çevrimiçi oyun oynamanın aşırı düzeydeki doğasını anlamak için bu kavramlar önemlidir.

1.2. Problem Tanımı

Gerçek dünyadaki kastrasyonun getirdiği endişeden kaçma isteği aşırı düzeyde çevrimiçi oyun oynamak için önemli ve ortak bir neden olabilir. Yasa ya da Başka, öznenin fantezi nesnesiyle olan ilişkisindeki 'bütünlükten' aldığı tatminden bir miktar vazgeçmesi biçiminde özneyi kastre eder (Fink, 1997). Öznenin, nesnesiyle ilişkili konumu, Başka tarafından süregelen bir şekilde kastre edilme süreçleri ve deneyimleri hakkında fikir verebilir. Çevrimiçi oyun oynayan her bir kişi öznel bir deneyime sahiptir ve öznel deneyimlerdeki farklılıklar kişilerin arzularıyla olan ilişkilerinin farklılaşmasından doğar (Lacan, 2017). Çevrimiçi oyunları aşırı düzeyde oynayan yetişkinlerin arzularıyla nasıl bir ilişki içinde oldukları, oyun oynama deneyimlerini anlamak için önemli olabilir.

1.3. Araştırma Soruları

Bu çalışmanın temel amacı yetişkinlik döneminde aşırı düzeyde çevrimiçi oyun oynamanın öznel olarak nasıl deneyimlendiğini araştırmaktır. Ayrıca, bireylerin Başka'yla ilişkilerinde nasıl konumlandıkları ve bu konumlanmanın başta oyun olmak üzere ilişkilendikleri şeylerden aldıkları zevki (*jouissance*) nasıl düzenlediği araştırılacaktır.

1.4. Veri Toplama Planı

Bu çalışmanın yöntemi olarak bir nitel araştırma yöntemi olan yorumlayıcı fenomenolojik analiz (YFA) seçilmiştir. YFA, araştırma amacım ile sorularına uygun (Smith & Osborn, 2007) ve psikanalitik yaklaşımım ile uyumlu bir yöntemdir. Katılımcıların amaçlı ve kolayda örnekleme yöntemiyle seçilmesi, yöntemle uyumlu dahil edilme kriterleri belirlenmesi planlanmıştır.

2. LİTERATÜR TARAMASI

2.1. Oyun Oynama Alanındaki Nitel Çalışmalar

Yorumlayıcı fenomenolojik analiz yöntemi kullanılan bir çalışmada kişilerin oyun oynamanın etkilerine dair ikircikli düşünceleri olduğu ve alkol ve kumar bağımlılığına benzer bir bağımlılık temasının baskın olduğu bulunmuştur (Chappell et al., 2006). Ayrıca, aşırı düzeyde çevrimiçi oyun oynamanın kişilerin sosyal ilişkileri üzerinde etkileri olduğu ve oyuncuların çevrimiçi oyunları olumsuz zihinsel hâlleri rahatlatmak için kullandıkları sonucuna ulaşılmıştır (Hussain & Griffiths, 2009). Zevk arayışı, sanal arkadaşlıklar, kaçış veya disosiyasyon ihtiyacı, kontrol ve çatışma gibi temalar da bildirilmiştir (Beranuy, Carbonell & Griffiths, 2012).

2.2. Psikanalitik Teoriye bir Bakış

Literatürde, psikanalitik yaklaşımın aşırı düzeyde video oyunu oynamanın açık veya örtük rollerini keşfetmekte faydalı olduğu ve elde edilen anlayışı bireylerin tedavisinde kullanmak açısından önemli bir katkı sağladığı bildirilmiştir (Janiri et al., 2019). Benzer bir durum çevrimiçi oyun oynayan kişiler için de geçerli olabilir.

Aşırı düzeyde oyun oynayan bireylerin, gerçek dünyada karşılaşılabilecekleri sürprizlere açık olmadıkları öne sürülmüş (Essig, 2012), oyunlarda sürpriz faktörünün azaltılmış olduğu (Janiri et al., 2019) ve tekrar tekrar başlanabileceği için hiçbir şeyin risk edilmeyişinin cazibesi (Jansz, 2005) vurgulanmıştır.

Oyunlar bilinçdışı materyalin, yansıtma ve içe-yansıtma gibi içte ve dışta olan şeyleri tersine konumlandıran ego savunmalarının ortaya çıktığı (Jansz, 2005; Weisel, 2015) ve Ödipal gerilimi ve bunun getirdiği saldırganlığı kanalize edecek şekilde çalışan (Kestenbaum & Weinstein, 1985) ortamlardır. Ayrıca kişiler, oyundaki avatarlarıyla kendi imgeleriyle özdeşleştikleri şekilde özdeşim kurarlar (Rehak, 2003).

2.2.1. Erken Dönem Psikanalitik Yazılarda Oyunun Kavramsallaştırılması

Sigmund Freud (1920), oyunun, kişinin yaşadığı olumsuz deneyimlerin temsiline izin verdiğini ve böylece hayatın diğer alanlarında duygusal olarak biriken bir gerilimi boşaltmayı sağladığını iddia eder. Torununun oynadığı oyunları gözlemleyerek bazı sonuçlar çıkarır. Uzak bir yere bir parça yün attığı ve onu geri aldığı oyunundan, annenin yokluğunu ve varlığını simgeleştirmeye dair bir çaba olduğunu çıkarsamış ve çocuğun annesinden ayrıldığında yaşadığı kaygıyla, ayrılığı sembolize ederek başa çıkmak için böyle bir oyun kurduğu sonucuna varmıştır (Freud, 1920). Bu simgeleştirme ile çocuk, ayrılık sahnesini o kadar kaygı uyandırıcı olmayan ve aktif olarak etkileyebileceği bir deneyim olarak yaşar ve ayrılıp yeniden bir araya gelmeyi tekrar tekrar sembolize ettiğinde, annesinden ayrıldığında yaşadığı tedirginlik azalır (Hollowchak, 2011).

Klein (1930) çocukluktaki oyunların egonun gelişiminde önemli bir role sahip olduğunu söyler çünkü oyun, iç gerçeklikle dış gerçekliği ilişkilendirir. Oyun, çocukluk çağındaki cinsel, yıkıcı ve otoerotik fantezileri boşaltma işleviyle tekrarlayan mastürbatif bir davranış olarak görülür (Klein, 1929; Winnicott, 1971). Ayrıca, fantezi kurmak ve oyun oynamak mastürbatiftir (Winnicott, 1971) ve öznenin hem aktör hem izleyici olması açısından benzemektedirler (Harari, 2001) ancak fantezi kuranın yetişkin, oyun oynayanın çocuk olması açısından ayrışır (Dion, 2012).

2.2.2. Bağımlılık ve Tekrarlama Üzerine

Freud, çocukların konuşmayı öğrendikleri sırada kelimelerin ve seslerin tekrarından, aşinalığından ve sabitliğinden zevk aldıklarını gözlemlemiştir (Freud, 1905). Daha sonra, bastırılmış materyali bilinçte anılar olarak hatırlamak yerine tekrar tekrar ve bilinçsizce eyleme dökmeye atıfta bulunmak için tekrarlama zorlantısı terimini ortaya koymuştur (Freud, 1914a). Bilinçdışı eyleme dökme örüntüleri olarak tekrarlama zorlantısını, hasta ve analist arasındaki aktarım kapsamında ayrıntılı olarak ele alır (Freud, 1914a). Tekrarlama zorlantısı haz ilkesinden önce işlemeye başlar ve egonun bir savunması olmaktan ziyade bastırılmış bilinçdışında temellenir (Freud, 1919). Buna ek olarak, tekrarlama zorlantısı, organizmaların, ilk hâlleri olan inorganik hâle dönme eğilimi olarak tanımlanan ölüm dürtüsüyle de ilişkilendirilir (Freud, 1920). Tekrarlama ve yıkımla karakterize edilen ölüm dürtüsü, aslında kendini yok etmeyi amaçlayan ilkel bir dürtüdür ve kişinin kendisinden başka herhangi bir hedefe yönelik yıkıcı eylemleri, temelde bu dürtü için ikincil bir savunmadır (Freud, 1933).

Oyun, gerçeklikteki kaygı yaratan deneyimlerle bağlantılıdır ve ilgili rahatsız edici duyguların yoğunluğunu azaltır. Bu açıdan bir zevk arayışı ve acıdan kaçınma sonucu ortaya çıkar. Oynamanın bir özelliği olan dürtüsel tekrar ile birey, başlangıçtaki, daha güvenli bir duruma geri dönmeyi hedefler (Barnett & Storm, 1981).

Tekrar ve bağımlılığın koşulsuz bir ilişkisi vardır çünkü bağımlılık, belirli bir nesneye yönelik belirli bir eylemin tekrarlanmasını gerektirir. Bağımlılığın, narsisizm ve depresyonla ilişkili olduğu öne sürülmüştür (Loose, 2000). Ayrıca, bağımlılık ve mastürbasyonun ortak özellikleri olduğu belirtilmiş ve mastürbasyonun, bir bireyin yaşadığı ilk bağımlılık olduğu ve yalnızca diğer bağımlılık yapan nesnelere ikame edilecek potansiyel bir alan yarattığı ifade edilmiştir (Freud, 1954).

2.2.3. Narsisizm

Freud'a göre, bir kişide oto-erotik içgüdüler her zaman mevcut olmasına rağmen, ego ve egonun narsisistik eğilimleri yaşamın başlangıcından itibaren mevcut değildir. Freud (1914b) narsisizmi egonun kaçınılmaz bir hali olarak açıklar ve narsisizmin oluşması için ego gelişiminin gerekli olduğunu çünkü narsisizmin üzerine inşa edilecek bir birliğe ihtiyaç duyduğunu söyler. Birincil narsisizm her insanda kendini gösterir ve normaldir. Her insan yaşamının başında iki tür cinsel nesneye sahiptir ve bu nesnelere kendisi ve ona bakım veren kişidir (Freud, 1914b). Kişinin sevgi nesnesi olarak kendisini seçmesi narsisistik nesne seçimine işaret eder. Narsisistik libidoya bağlı olan ve gelişimin daha önceki dönemlerinde olgunlaşmamış ego tarafından deneyimlenen öz-sevgi, bireyin ideal-egosunu doğurur (Freud, 1914b). Bu ideal-ego, egonun mükemmel bir imgesi ve erken çocukluk çağı narsisizminde hissedilen üstünlük hâlinin bir uzantısıdır ve bir zamanlar kişi için muazzam bir tatmin sağlamıştır (Freud, 1914b). Kişiler hayatları boyunca bu ideal-egoyu gerçekleştirmek için çabalarlar.

2.3. Lacanyen Perspektif

Jacques Lacan, Freud'un ortaya koyduğu psikanalizi yeniden okuyarak ve felsefe, dilbilim, matematik gibi diğer pek çok alandan etkilenecek kendi kuramsal yönelimini oluşturmuştur. Lacanyen psikanalizdeki kavramları ve öznenin oluşumuyla ilgili düşünceleri kavramak, yetişkinlikte aşırı çevrimiçi oyun oynama sorununu ele almak için faydalı olacaktır. Bu tezde, Lacan'ın önerdiği özneyi oluşturan üç kurucu düzlem (1988a) çerçevesinde aşırı çevrimiçi oyun oynama konusu detaylandırılmaya çalışılacaktır.

2.3.1. İmgesel

Anne ve çocuk arasındaki ikili ilişkiye babanın müdahalesiyle Ödipal kompleksin çözülmesinden önce zaten oluşmuş olan İmgesel düzlem, psişik gelişimin Ödipal öncesi aşamalarının gerçekleştiği yerdir. İmgesel düzlemin belirleyicisi, öznenin esasen yabancılaşma yoluyla oluştuğu ayna evresidir ve yabancılaşma, egonun aynadaki yansıması ile özdeşleşmesinden kaynaklanır (Evans, 2003). Ego, bir bebek kendi imgesini aynadan yansıyan ve bütünlüğe sahip bir beden olarak

tanındığında ve bu tanıma sonucu, libidosunun beden imgesiyle arasındaki ilişkiye bağlanmasıyla oluşur (Lacan, 1953). Egonun beden imgesiyle arasındaki ilişki narsisistik, rekabetçi ve agresiftir (Lacan, 1977b). Aynadaki imge, öznenin ebeveyninin bakışı aracılığıyla kavranan bir imgedir ve aynanın yansıtma işlevini gören aslında ebeveynin bakışıdır (Lacan, 1977a). Ayna imgesiyle kurulan özdeşim gelecekteki tüm ilişkilerin temelini oluşturur (Lacan, 1988b). Özellikle akran ilişkileri egolar arasındaki aksta işleyen imgesel ilişkilerdir.

2.3.2. Sembolik

Sembolik düzlem bir toplumda konuşulan dilin yasalarını, babasal işlevi ve babanın-adları suretinde her türlü yasayı, otoriteyi, gücü ve bilgiyi simgeleyen gösterenleri kapsar. Çocuk, annesinden talepte bulunmak için konuşulan dilin yasalarına tabi olmak zorundadır (Lacan, 1977b). Ayrıca Yasa, baba tarafından anne ile çocuk arasındaki ilişkiye edilen müdahalede kendini gösterir ve çocuğu sembolik olarak imgesel bir fallustan mahrum yani eksik bırakarak kastrasyona sebep olur (Lacan, 1956-1957). Babanın bu gücü, sahip olduğu düşünülen sembolik fallustan kaynaklanmaktadır. Kastrasyon, kaygıyı azaltan bir işleve sahiptir (Lacan, 1956-1957).

2.3.3. Gerçek

Kaygı ve *jouissance*'ın kökeni Gerçek düzlemdir (Miller, 2011). Kaygı ve fallik *jouissance* deneyimleri Sembolik ve İmgesel düzlemler tarafından etkilenir ve bu düzlemleri Gerçek düzlem üzerinden etkilerler. Kaygı, 'eksiğin eksikliği' sonucu oluşur (Lacan, 2014). Buna paralel olarak kaygı, öznenin arzulamasını sağlayan ve göstereni olmayan bir nesnenin yerini belirli bir nesnenin almasıyla ortaya çıkar (Evans, 2003). Bu nesnenin etrafında oluşan tekrarlama eylemi arzulamanın yerini alır ve belli bir acı ve zevk açığa çıkarır. Bu acı veren zevk yani *jouissance*, tekrarlamayı gerektirir (Lacan, 2007) ve iki kavram bağımlılıkla bağlantılıdır çünkü bağımlı özne Başka'nın kastrasyonunu reddederek arzulayamaz hâle gelmiştir. Ayrıca, ölüm dürtüsü bu süreçlerde işlemektedir ve öznenin, haz ilkesinden önce deneyimlenmiş olan bir zevke benzeyen bir zevk almasına yol açar (Lacan, 2007).

3. METODOLOJİ

3.1. Nitel Araştırma ve Yorumlayıcı Fenomenolojik Analiz

Nitel araştırma, bireylerin kendi gerçekliklerinin bağlamı göz önünde bulundurularak yaşamdaki deneyimlerini, bakış açılarını ve öznel atıflarını keşfetmek ve ilgili mevcut veya yeni ortaya çıkan kavramlardan elde edilen görüye dayanarak sosyal ve düşünsel süreçleri açıklamak için kullanılır (Yin, 2016). Nitel yöntemlerde araştırmacının amacı, sonuçlar için güvenilir bir temel oluşturmak için kendi olası önyargılarını ve varsayımlarını kendisine ve başkalarına açık bir şekilde açıklamaktır (Patton, 1990).

Yorumlayıcı Fenomenolojik Analiz (YFA), Smith (1996) tarafından önerilen, veri olarak tercihen katılımcıların araştırmacı tarafından özgürce konuşmaya teşvik edildiği yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmelerin kullanıldığı ve bireylerin anlatılarındaki benzerlik ve farklılıkların kapsamlı bir analizini amaçlayan nitel bir yöntemdir. Bu özellikleri açısından psikolojik araştırmalar için oldukça uygun olduğu öne sürülmektedir (Howitt, 2016).

3.2. Aşırı Düzeyde Oyun Oynama Deneyimini Çalışmak İçin Nitel Bir Yöntem Seçme Sebepleri

Vanheule (2002), nitel araştırma yöntemlerinin, verilerdeki öznel gerçeklikleri ayırt etme ve bir teoriyi geliştirme amacı taşıması özelliklerinden ötürü psikanalitik çalışmalar için daha uygun olduğunu öne sürmektedir. Psikanalitik bir yaklaşımla nitel araştırma yapmak, konuşmadaki bilinçdışı materyalin işaretlerini yorumlayıcı bir şekilde deşifre eden ve teoriye katkıda bulunmayı amaçlayan bilimsel bir teşebbüs oluşturur (Vanheule, 2002). Ayrıca, yorumlayıcı fenomenolojik analiz (YFA), Lacanyen psikanalizin uygulama ve teorisi ile tutarlı olarak, araştırmacıların katılımcıların deneyimleri hakkında özgürce ve ayrıntılı olarak konuşmalarını teşvik etmelerini içerir (Howitt, 2016).

3.3. Katılımcılar ve Örnekleme Yöntemi

Bu çalışmada, yorumlayıcı fenomenolojik analiz (YFA) yönergelerine uygun olarak amaçlı ve kolayda örnekleme yöntemleri kullanılmıştır (Smith & Osborn, 2007). Dört dahil edilme kriteri belirlenmiştir. Bunlardan ilki, katılımcıların çevrimiçi oyun oynama davranışlarının aşırı düzeyde olduğuna dair kendi beyanlarıdır. Çevrimiçi oyunların en sıkı takipçilerinin 19 yaşından büyük erkek bireyler olduğuna dair bulgular bildirilmiştir (Chappell et al., 2006). Buna dayanarak ikinci dahil edilme kriteri erkek cinsiyetinde olmak ve üçüncü dahil edilme kriteri 20 ila 30 yaşları arasında olmak şeklinde belirlenmiştir. Son olarak potansiyel katılımcıların medeni durumunun bekâr olması kriteri getirilmiştir zira bekârlık da çevrimiçi oyuncuların en yaygın betimsel karakteristiklerden biridir (Snodgrass et al., 2019). Bu kriterleri karşılayan kişiler katılımcı olarak çalışmaya dahil edilmiştir. Bunun sonucunda, online oyunları aşırı düzeyde oynadığını söyleyen, yaşları 20 ila 27 arasında değişen, medeni durumları bekâr olan sekiz erkek katılımcıyla görüşülmüştür. Sekiz katılımcıdan oluşan bu örneklem büyüklüğü, derinlemesine yorumlayıcı bir veri analizi yapılmasını mümkün kıldığı için YFA yönergelerine uygundur (Smith & Osborn, 2007).

3.4. Prosedür

Bu araştırma için etik onay Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi (ODTÜ) Etik Kurulu'ndan alınmıştır. Araştırma süreci devam ederken Koronavirüs COVID-19 salgını patlak verdiği için, yüz yüze görüşmeler yerine çevrimiçi yarı-yapılandırılmış görüşmeler yapılmıştır. Görüşmelerin başında, katılımcılar çalışmanın niteliği hakkında bilgilendirilmiş, bilgilendirilmiş onam formları e-posta aracılığıyla gönderilmiş ve onaylar elektronik ortamda alınmıştır. Özgürce konuşmaları ve rahatsız hissedersen görüşmeyi istedikleri zaman sonlandırabilecekleri söylenmiştir. Görüşmelerde, katılımcıların çevrimiçi oyun alışkanlıkları ve deneyimleri hakkında bilgi edinmeyi amaçlayan açık uçlu sorular sorulmuştur (bkz. EK. D). Katılımcılara oyunlardaki karakter ve rol seçimlerine dair sorular ve çevrimiçi oyunlardaki motivasyonları sorulmuştur. Ardından genel ve aile içi kurallar ve otoriteye ilişkin algı ve tutumları sorulmuştur. Görüşmeler

ortalama olarak yaklaşık bir buçuk saat sürmüştür. Gizliliği sağlamak için katılımcı isimleri rumuzlarla değiştirilmiştir. Tüm veriler altı haftalık bir sürede toplanmıştır.

3.5. Veri Analizi

Ses kaydına alınan yarı-yapılandırılmış çevrimiçi görüşmeleri daha sonra deşifre ettim. Veri toplama süreci devam ederken, görüşmelerde meydana gelen önemli olayları ve katılımcıların en ilgi çekici bulduğum açıklamalarını not aldım. Veri analizi için yorumlayıcı fenomenolojik analiz (YFA) kılavuzundaki talimatları izledim. Öncelikle, katılımcıların deneyimlerini ifade ederken yaptıkları kelime tercihlerine ve aktarmayı amaçladıkları anlamlara göre belirledim ve sınıflandırdım. Sonra bunları kendi bakış açımdan yorumlamaya çalıştım. Bu yolu izleyerek deşifre edilip yazıya dökülmüş metinleri satır satır kodladım. Ayrıca okuma, kodlama ve yeniden okuma sürecinde, bende hangi anlamların, duyguların ve deneyimlerin uyandığına dair notlar aldım. Bu notları, örneğin bir katılımcının konuşmasının belirli bir bölümü için bir koda karar verirken kullandım. İlk vakanın deşifresini okuduktan ve kodlar ile ortaya çıkan temalarını yazdıktan sonra, sonraki görüşmelerde diğer katılımcılara sorulabilecek bazı ek sorular belirledim. İlk vaka bitince aynı prosedürü uygulamak için ikinci vakaya geçtim. Tüm görüşmeler yapıldıktan sonra ortaya çıkan temaları alt temalar halinde düzenledim ve daha sonra bu alt temalar bir araya gelerek ve birbirlerinden ayrılarak ilgili üst temaları oluşturdu. Veri analizi sürecinde, danışmanlarımla çoğunlukla temaların kararı ve organizasyonu ile ilgili tartışmaları içeren toplantılar gerçekleştirdik.

3.6. Çalışmanın Güvenilirliği

Nitel bir çalışmada araştırmacının daha aktif bir rolü vardır ve çalışma süresince araştırmacının kendi öznelliğinin farkında olması çok önemlidir (Larkin, Watts ve Clifton, 2006). Nitel yöntem, araştırmanın temelini güçlendireceği, düşünümsellik (refleksivite) sağlayacağı ve katkıları zenginleştireceği için araştırmacının kendi öznelliği konusunda şeffaf olmasını teşvik eder. Paralel olarak, bu araştırma konusunda çalışmayı kendi deneyimlerimden yola çıkarak seçtim. Araştırmacı olarak ben (Özcan), ergenlik dönemimde çevrimiçi oyunları aşırı düzeyde

oyunuyordum. Veri toplama ve veri analizi süreçlerinde, katılımcılarla özdeşim kurduğum ya da onlara fazla mesafeli durduğum noktalar oldu. Bu noktaların farkında olarak ve not ederek ilerledim. Ayrıca, verilerin analiz edilmesi sürecinde, danışmanlarımla verileri tartışmak, deşifreleri incelemek ve ortaya çıkan temalar hakkında fikir alışverişinde bulunmak için düzenli toplantılar yaptık. Dolayısıyla bu araştırmada, kavramın daha kapsamlı anlaşılması amacıyla veri analizinde ve teorik kavramsallaştırmalarda farklı bakış açıları kullanılmasını öneren üçgenleme stratejisi (Patton, 1990) kullanılmıştır.

4. BULGULAR

Bu çalışmada bulunan üst temalar *çevrimiçi oyun oynamaya dair kaçınan nitelikteki motivasyonlar, çevrimiçi oyun ortamlarında kazanma ve tatmin olma hırsı, çevrimiçi oyunları oynarken yaşanan yoğun duygular, oyunun oynanabilirliğiyle ilgili anlatılarda yansıtılan tümgüçlü benlik-sunumları ve üstün görülen bir başkasına göre tepkisel konumlanmadır.*

4.1. Çevrimiçi Oyun Oynamaya Dair Kaçınan Nitelikteki Motivasyonlar

Bu üst tema, katılımcıların çevrimiçi oyun oynamakla ilgili motivasyonlarını içermektedir. İlgili alt temalar *gerçek dünyadan uzaklaşma ve başka bir dünyada harekete geçme ihtiyacı, gerçek hayattan arkadaşlarla sanal dünyada birliktelik arayışı ve sorumluluğun olmadığı zamanlarda aşırı düzeyde meşgul olmadır.*

4.1.1. Gerçek Dünyadan Uzaklaşma ve Başka Bir Dünyada Harekete Geçme İhtiyacı

Katılımcıların ifade ettikleri ortak motivasyonlardan biri bu dünyadan uzaklaşma istekleridir. Onlara göre bu istek onları alternatif bir mekâna, gerçek dünyada var olmayan farklı özellikler sunan çevrimiçi dünyaya katılmaya itmektedir. Kutay, bu dünyadan uzaklaşıp olağandışı olayları görebildiği farklı bir atmosfere gitmek

istediğini belirtir. Uzaklaşma isteğinin sebebini insanlığa yönelik negatif tutumuna atıfta bulunarak açıklar:

K (Kutay): Bu oyunları oynuyor olmamın sebebi birazcık buradan uzaklaşmak. Bu dünyadan uzaklaşmak için yapıyorsun çünkü orası fantastik bir dünya ve karakterler böyle insan filan değil, değişik değişik ırklar. Böyle garip garip şeyler yaşıyor, ilginç hikayeleri var hepsinin. İşte bu yüzden zaten seviyorsun ... Bu dünyadan biraz uzaklaşıp farklı bir atmosfere girmeye çalışıyorsun sonuçta.

A (Araştırmacı): Bu dünyadan bu kadar uzaklaşmak istemek niye?

K: Yani çok sıkıcı ve iğrenç geliyor yani insan, insana dair herhangi bir şey.

Burak çevrimiçi oyun ortamını gerçek hayattaki risklerle karşılaşmayacağı, uzak bir yer olarak tarif etmiştir:

Güncel hayattaki tehlikelerden uzak, daha güvenli bir dünya olarak düşünebilirim. Veya hani orda hani atıyorum 7 yaşındayım 35 yaşında biriyle konuşuyorum ama o benim 7 yaşında olduğumu bilmiyor.

4.1.2. Gerçek Hayattan Arkadaşlarla Sanal Dünyada Birliktelik Arayışı

Celil, bir yetişkin olarak neden hala çevrimiçi oyunlar oynadığını açıklarken oyun alanı dışından tanıdığı arkadaşlarıyla bağlantıda olmayı temel sebep olarak gösterir:

Büyüdükten sonraki oyun oynamamızdaki amaç şeydi, yani genelde, muhabbet eğlenceli. Çünkü gülüyoruz. Dört beş kişi mesela, oyunumuzu oynuyoruz mesela, sonra dışarı çıkıyoruz. Dışarda görüşüyoruz aynı, oyundan sonra mesela oyunun kritiğini yapıyorsun. Başka muhabbetler. Ya yemeğe gidiyorsun, çay içmeye gidiyorsun. Yani belli bi' 'community', topluluk oluşturuyorsun.

Burak, çevrimiçi oyunlara başladığı andan itibaren aynı grupla oynadığını söylemiştir. Ona göre çevrimiçi oyunlar, okuldan arkadaşlarıyla birlikte olabilmeyin yoludur:

Bu oyunu oynamaya başlamıştık, yine aynı arkadaş grubumla. Bu oyunda da bayağı zaman geçirdiğimizi hatırlıyorum o zamanlar. Yani aslında birlikte oynamak bizi itiyordu o oyunu oynamaya. Çünkü hani

okulda birlikteydik ama sonra hani okulun dıřında da birlikte olmak istiyorduk.

4.1.3. Sorumluluęun Olmadığı Zamanlarda Ařırı Düzeyde Meřgul Olma

Katılımcıların oyun oynama düzeylerinin ařırılıęa yükseldięi durumlar için bildirdikleri bir başka ortak neden de boş zamanla ilgilidir. ‘Boř’ derken çoęunlukla sorumluluklardan muaf olmayı, özellikle de kendilerini sorumluluktan muaf tuttıkları zamanları ifade etmektedirler.

Katılımcıların çoęu, salgın sürecindeki karantina günlerinde daha çok çevrimiçi oyun oynamaya başladıklarını anlatırken giderek sorumluluklarının azaldığından, kalan sorumlulukları da kendilerinin bıraktığından ve sosyalleřmek için oyunlara yöneldiklerinden bahsetmişlerdir.

4.2. Çevrimiçi Oyun Ortamlarında Kazanma ve Tatmin Olma Hırısı

Oyuncular, çevrimiçi oyunlarda kazanmak ve tatmin olmak için güçlü bir istekleri olduğunu tekrar tekrar belirtmişlerdir. Bu üst temanın içerdiği alt temalar *oyunda ilerlemek için hayattaki dięer şeyleri feda etmek, art arda yenilgiler sonucu oyuna olan ilgiyi kaybetmek, bedensel tatmin duyumlarıyla kıyaslanabilir biçimde tatmin olmaktır.*

4.2.1. Oyunda İlerlemek İçin Hayattaki Dięer Şeyleri Feda Etmek

Erdem, keyif aldığı ve daha çok yapmak istedięi dięer faaliyetlerden örnekler vermiştir. Ancak, çevrimiçi oyun oynamanın bunu başarmasına engel olduğu sonucuna varmıştır. Boř zamanlarında çevrimiçi oyun oynama eğilimi nedeniyle, gerçekte elde etmek istedięi şeylere ulaşamadığını dile getirir:

İşte evde piyano ve ukelele var, kendim almıştım öğrenirim diye. Onları çalmaya başlamıştım ... Sonra oyuna başlayınca onların hepsini sildim mesela. Bu da beni biraz şey yaptı yani düşündürdü hani. Başka istediğim şeyleri yapmamı bi’ noktada engelliyor aslında.

4.2.2. Art Arda Yenilgiler Sonucu Oyuna Olan İlgiyi Kaybetmek

Katılımcılar genellikle çevrimiçi oyunlarda art arda yenilgiler yaşadıklarında oyuna karşı olan ilgilerini kaybettiklerini ve bir süreliğine oyun oynamayı bıraktıklarını ifade etmişlerdir. Yaşadıkları bu ilgi kaybının süresi her bireye göre değişim göstermektedir. Ancak bir süre sonra oyun oynamaya tekrar başlamaları noktasında benzer ifadeler kullanmışlardır. Örneğin, Murat peş peşe yenildiğinde öfkelenildiğini ve kısa süreliğine ilgi kaybı yaşadığını aktarmıştır:

Üst üste beş kere yenilirim ondan sonra aynı gün içinde falan bir sonrakine hayatta girmem mesela. Böyle kısa vadeli soğumalar da var çünkü hani gerçekten delirtiyor beni. Hemen gidip dışarda koşuyorum falan böyle kendi kafamı dağıtmak için falan. Ama eğer üst üste 5 kere yenildiğim de taş çatlasa ayda bir kere falan oluyordur o yüzden ayda bir kere böyle mini soğumalar da oluyor, öyle.

4.2.3. Bedensel Tatmin Duyumlarıyla Kıyaslanabilir Biçimde Tatmin Olmak

Katılımcılar, çevrimiçi oyun oynamaktan aldıkları tatmini, sigara veya alkol gibi bağımlılık yapıcı maddelere atıfta bulunarak veya çevrimiçi oyun ile cinsel ilişki arasında bir benzetme kurarak dile getirmişlerdir. Çevrimiçi oyun oynama alışkanlığının yarattığı tatmini ve tatminsizliği hem sigara ya da alkol kullanma alışkanlığındaki hem de cinsel ilişkideki tatmine ve tatminsizliğe benzetmişlerdir.

4.3. Çevrimiçi Oyunları Oynarken Yaşanan Yoğun Duygular

Katılımcılar sıklıkla hem çevrimiçi oyun bölümleri esnasında yaşadıkları hem de genel olarak çevrimiçi oyunlar hakkında hissettikleri yoğun duyguları bildirmişlerdir. Duygusal deneyimleri çok çeşitli olmayıp daha ziyade belli iki duygu yoğunluğu ve fazlalığı belirten sıfatlar ve zarflarla tasvir etmişlerdir. Bu temanın alt temaları temalar *agresyon ve horgörü ve zevktir*.

4.3.1. Agresyon ve Hor Görme

Katılımcılar tarafından çok sık dile getirilen en belirgin duygular öfke, sinir bozulması, içerleme ve hor görmedir. Hor görme dışındaki duygular saldırganlıkla

içiçe geçmiş olduğundan agresyon altında toplanmıştır. Hor görme ise küçümşenen bir başka kişiyi içinde barındıran bir duygusal deneyimdir.

Burak çevrimiçi oyunları gerçek hayatta yaşadığı olumsuz deneyimlerden kaynaklanan engellenmişlik hislerini küfür ve hakaret etmek suretiyle boşaltabildiği bir yer olarak görmektedir. Hakaretlerin bazıları (“kolsuz” gibi) önemli organların eksikliğiyle ilgilidir. Kutay ise oyunda hata yapıldığında olması gereken ideal bir iletişim şeklini tasvir ederken oyuncuların birbirlerine karşı olan küçümseyici tavrını tarif etmiştir:

Sürekli bir kişi yanlış yaptığı zaman işte “Dostum o hareketi yanlış yaptın, onu öyle değil de şöyle yapsan kazanma ihtimalimiz artar” demiyor kimse ... Direkt “Onu öyle yapıyorsun çünkü sen eziksin deniyor (gülüyor). Evet bunu biz de yapıyoruz. Ben mesela bunu en çok eleştiren adamım ama oyun içinde o kadar hırslı bi’ hale geliyorsun ve o kadar sinirleniyorsun ki.

4.3.2. Zevk

Onur çevrimiçi oyun oynarken anlık zevk almanın dışında herhangi hiçbir amacı olmadığını ifade etmiştir:

Aslında temel hedefim yok. Yani profesyonel anlamda bir düşüncem yok. Anın tadını çıkarmaya çalışıyorum, zevk almaya çalışıyorum. Hani arkadaşlarla beraber oynadıkça, sürekli D... üzerinden de muhabbet ede ede oyun oynuyoruz. Zevk alıyoruz.

Erdem için çevrimiçi oyunlardan aldığı zevkin kaynağı, arkadaşlarıyla birlikte üstüne düşen görevlerini yapıyor olmasıdır. Bunu anlatırken oyuna onlarla ‘beraber girmek’ten bahsetmiştir:

Tek başıma değil de zaten hani arkadaşlarımızla beraber oynuyoruz. Zaten en çok zevk aldığım şey o onlarla beraber girip, herkesin üstüne düşen görevi yapıp- işte atıyorum ‘battleground’ girmişiz ... Herkesin üstüne düşen bir görev var. Herkes bunu yerine getirip yaptığı zaman, bu arkadaşlarımızla yapmış olduğunuz için, bunu yani beraberce yapmış olduğunuz için, bu çok haz veriyor.

4.4. Oyunun Oynanabilirliğiyle İlgili Anlatılarda Yansıtılan Tümgüçlü Benlik-Sunumları

Oynamayı tercih ettikleri çevrimiçi oyunların mekaniğini, yapısını ve oynadıkları karakterlerin rollerini içeren anlatılarda öne çıkan örüntüler, katılımcıların kendi benlik-sunumlarıyla ilgili anahtar göstergelerdir. Bu üst tema, tümgüçlülük temelinde ortaklaşan benlik-sunumlarından oluşmaktadır. Alt temalar *başkalarından üstün hissetmek için kazanma hırsı: rekabetçilik, öldürerek başarıya ulaşma arzusu: yıkıcılık, kendilerine ait bir dil kullanımı* ve “*Bu bir bağımlılık hâline geliyor ama ben bağımlı değilim*”dir.

4.4.1. Başkalarından Üstün Hissetmek İçin Kazanma Hırsı: Rekabetçilik

Bu alt temaya katılımcıların kendilerini ve oynadıkları oyunu rekabetçi olarak tarif ettikleri ve üstünlük kurmayla ilgili anlatıları dahil edilmiştir. Konuşma esnasında rekabetçilik temasına genelde zevk ve mutluluk gibi olumlu duygular eşlik etmiştir. Çevrimiçi oyunlardan alınan keyfin, gerçekten var olan kişilere üstünlük kurabilmekten kaynaklandığı katılımcılarca dile getirilmiştir.

4.4.2. Öldürerek Başarıya Ulaşma Arzusu: Yıkıcılık

Oynadıkları çevrimiçi oyunun hikayesini ve oyun esnasında yaptıkları eylemleri tarif ederken katılımcıların temelde öldürme eylemi olmak üzere çeşitli yıkıcı eylemler aracılığıyla başarıya ulaştıklarına dair ortak bir anlatımda buldukları gözlemlenmiştir. Yıkıcı eylemlerin yöneltildiği hedefler ‘ana’ kelimesiyle tarif edilmiştir. Oyunlarda takım arkadaşları ve karşı takımdakiler de şiddetin yöneltildiği birimlerdir.

4.4.3. Kendilerine Ait bir Dil Kullanımı

Görüşmeler esnasında tüm katılımcılar oyun jargonundan kelimeler kullanmışlardır. Örneğin Erdem, oyundaki karakterini tarif ederken kullandığı kelimelerin Türkçe tercümesinin doğru olmayabileceğini, hiçbir şekilde tam olarak demek istediği şeyi anlatamayacağını ifade etmiştir. Diğer katılımcılar ise bazen

bu kelimeleri arařtırmacıya açıklama ihtiyaçı hissetmiř ve o sırada kelimeleri tercüme ettiklerini vurgulamıřlardır.

4.4.4. "Bu bir bağımlılık hâline geliyor ama ben bağımlı deęilim"

Bağımlılık kavramı katılımcıların çevrimiçi oyunlarla ilgili söylemlerinde sıkça ortaya çıkmıřtır. Çoęu zaman bağımlılık konusunda ilgili kendilerinin bağımlı olmadığına dair açıklama yapma ihtiyaçı duymuřlardır. Burak, bağımlı olmadığını iki gün boyunca oyun oynamadığı gerçeğini kanıt göstererek açıklamıřtır. Celil ise çevrimiçi oyunların bağımlılık yapıcı niteliğini başka oyuncular üzerinden anlatmıřtır:

Oyun bağımlılık yapabilir, oyun demek seni bilgisayarın başına bağlaması demek ve evin içinde bir odada demek, ya bundan dolayı bağımlılık yařarsa- Çok üst seviyeleri var dediğim gibi, deliler var. Yani kafayı yemiřler bunlar. Arkadařlık ilişkileri etkileniyor, sosyal hayatı vesairesi her şeyi, okul hayatı etkilenebiliyor.

4.5. Üstün Görülen Bir Başkasına Göre Tepkisel Konumlanma

Katılımcılar, kendilerinden üstün olarak gördükleri bir başka bireye ya da birime dair düşüncelerini ve tutumlarını anlatırken bahsedilen ilişkideki üstün algılanan başkasını değersizleştirme ve/ya nötrale etme çabasında olarak tepkisel bir tarzda konumlandıklarına dair bilgiler vermiřlerdir. Alt temalar *otorite figürlerinin göz ardı edilesi olarak algılanması, kısıtlamalara ve yasaya karşı meydan okuyan tutumlar* ve *arařtırmacı ile konuşurken kararsız konumlanmadır*.

4.5.1. Otorite Figürlerinin Göz Ardı Edilesi Olarak Algılanması

Katılımcılar, ailelerinde kuralların olmayıřından, kurallarla ilişkilerinin yok sayılabilecek kadar gevřek oluřundan bahsettikten sonra, genelde ev ortamındaki otorite figürü olan ebeveynlerini göz ardı eden tutumlarından bahsetmiřlerdir. Anne ve baba, otorite figürü olarak ve birebir ilişkilerde birbirlerinden farksız iki birim olarak katılımcıların söylemlerinde yer bulmuřtur.

4.5.2. Kısıtlamalara ve Yasaya Karşı Meydan Okuyan Tutumlar

Otoriteyi, etkisiz hale getirmeleri gereken bir şey olarak algılamalarıyla paralel olarak, katılımcılar belirli kurallara uymaları gereken koşullarda tepkisel ve meydan okuyan bir tutum ile davranacaklarını bildirmişlerdir.

4.5.3. Araştırmacı ile Konuşurken Kararsız Konumlanma

Katılımcıların, araştırmacının hiyerarşik olarak bulunduğu konum hakkında yaşadıkları kararsızlık, görüşmeler esnasında araştırmacıya hitap etmek için ‘sen’ ve ‘siz’ kelime seçenekleri arasında kalmalarıyla karakterize olan devamlı bir ikilemde kendini göstermiştir. Ayrıca görüşme çerçevesinin sınırlarını sıkça test eden katılımcılar, çevrimiçi ortamda yapılan görüşmelerde sigara içme talebinde bulunmuşlar ve kimi zaman herhangi bir talepte bulunmadan sigara içmeye başlamışlardır. Örneğin Celil, araştırmacının da sigara içip içmediğini sormuştur. Bunun yanısıra araştırmacı için varsaydıkları özellikler olarak yabancı dil bilmek, oyun jargonunu bilmek gibi konularda ya da mesleği üzerinden önce bir üstün konum vermişler ancak daha sonra araştırmacıyı bu konumdan çıkartma teşebbüslerinde bulunmuşlardır. Görüşmeler esnasında küfürlü kelimeleri rahatça kullanmaları da bir başka sınır denemesine işaret etmiştir.

5. TARTIŞMA

Aşırı düzeyde çevrimiçi oyun oynayan yetişkin erkeklerle yapılan bu araştırmanın sonucunda, katılımcıların kaçınan motivasyonlara sahip oldukları, çevrimiçi oyunlarda kazanmak ve tatmin olmak hırsına sahip oldukları, saldırganlık, aşağılama ve zevk gibi yoğun duygusal deneyimler yaşadıkları, oynadıkları oyunun mekaniği, yapısı ve hikayesine dair anlatılarında tümgüçlü benlik-sunumları sergiledikleri ve kendilerinden üstün olarak gördükleri başka birimlere ve kişilere karşı tepkisel olarak konumlandıkları bulunmuştur.

Katılımcılar aşırı düzeyde çevrimiçi oyun oynamaya yönelik motivasyonları hakkında konuştuklarında evde olmaktan ve evden çıkamamaktan bahsetmişlerdir.

Freud'un evi anne rahmi olarak tanımlamasıyla (1919) paralel olarak, evde olmak sembolik açıdan annede olmak veya anneye birlikte olmayı çağrıştırmaktadır. Lacan için anne, bir insanın karşılaştığı ilk büyük Başka'dır (1956-1957). Evden ayrılamamak, bu ilk Başka'dan ayrışamamaya işaret etmektedir.

Arkadaşlardan ayrılma ile ilgili endişeli duygular katılımcılar tarafından vurgulanmıştır. Başkalarıyla oynama motivasyonu, birliktelikten alınan zevk olarak belirtilmiştir. Bu, genel olarak insanlardan hoşlanmadıklarını ifade etmelerine karşın başkalarına bağımlı oldukları bir faaliyet aradıkları için çelişkili görünmektedir. Arkadaşlık, birbirine göre başka olan iki ego arasında, yani iki ayna imgesi arasında, imgesel ekseninde gerçekleşen imgesel bir ilişkidir. İmgesel ilişkinin narsisistik ve agresif doğası, katılımcıların bu konudaki söylemlerinde de kendini göstermektedir.

Kaçınan motivasyonlar üst temasında bahsedildiği üzere, oyuncular, oyun alanını onlara istedikleri her şeyi yapmaları için sınırsız fırsatlar sunan bir alan olarak algılamaktadırlar. Ek olarak, bireylerin aşırı düzeyde oyun oynamaları, gerçek hayatta bir şey yapmak zorunda olmadıklarında büyük ölçüde artmaktadır. Bu dönemlerdeki zorunluluk eksikliği ve oyunların sunduğu belirli kurallar ve yükümlülükler düşünüldüğünde, kişilerin oyun oynayarak imgesel de olsa bir yasa çerçevesi talep ettikleri düşünülebilir. Bu açıdan, öznenin Yasa'yı çağırıldığı inkâr mekanizmasına benzer bir işleyiş gözlemlenmektedir (Fink, 1997). Aşırı düzeyde çevrimiçi oyun oynamaya yönelik kaçınan motivasyonlar üst teması, ayrışmaya direnme ve dışarıdan gelen kısıtlamaların (ör: sorumluluklar ya da zamanın akıp gidişi) müdahalesine, yani kastrasyona maruz kalmaksızın bir birliğin parçası olma çabası ile ilgilidir.

Çevrimiçi oyun alanlarında kazanma ve tatmin olma hırsı üst temasında, katılımcıların oyun oynayarak gerçek hayatlarındaki önemli şeylerden fedakârlık ettikleri, art arda yenildiklerinde hayal kırıklığı yaşadıkları ve kazanarak elde ettikleri bir tür bedensel tatmini içeren yoğun deneyimleri anlatılmıştır. Ayrıca, oyunlarda kazanılan zafer ve yenilgileri anlatmak için katılımcılar, "yenmek", "yenilmek" kelimelerini seçmişlerdir. Beslenmek anlamına gelen "yemek"

kelimesiyle ses benzerliđi bulunan bu kelimeler oraliteye gönderme yapmaktadır (Harari, 2001; Evans, 2003) ve psişik gelişimin Ödipal öncesi aşamasında bir fiksasyon bulunduđuna işaret etmektedir (Loose, 2000). Oyuncular, kazanma yoluyla bedensel zevkler yaşadıklarını dile getirdiklerinde, oyun oynamaktan elde ettikleri fallik *jouissance*'tan bahsetmektedirler.

Çevrimiçi oyunlarda kazanma ve tatmin olma hırsı üst teması, katılımcıların benlik-sunumları ile ilgili üst temayla birçok ortak noktaya sahiptir. Benlik-sunumlarını benlik-imgeleri olarak, bu imgeleri de ayna evresiyle ilişkili olarak ele aldığımızda, Başka'nın bakış açısından benlik imgesiyle ilk kez karşılaşılmasıyla egonun oluştuđu gelişim aşamasında yani ayna evresinde bir fiksasyon olduğu sonucuna varılabilir. Bir katılımcının görüşme esnasında yaptığı "kayıp kaybetmek" şeklindeki dil sürçmesi, bu fiksasyonu açıklamak için özellikle önemlidir. Sapkın yapıda Lacan (2014) öznelerin eksiğin eksikliğinden dolayı kaygı yaşadıklarını belirtmektedir. Diğer bir deyişle, kendilerinin ve Başka'nın birbirlerini tamamladıklarına ve birbirlerinde hiçbir eksiklik bırakmadıklarına dair imgesel algıya hâlâ tutunmaktadırlar. Aşırı düzeyde çevrimiçi oyun oynayan kişiler, kazanmak için oynadıklarını ve kazanma dürtülerini tatmin ettiklerini iddia etmişlerdir, ancak kaybetmek kaçınılmazsa kaybetmek için de oynuyor olabilecekleri düşünülmüştür. Görünüşe göre oyun oynayama eylemine sıkça başvurup, kaçınılmaz olarak kaybetmek suretiyle kendilerinde bir eksiklik yaratma çabasında da olabilirler. Ancak kısmen yaratılan bu eksiklik sembolik bir eksiklik değil, oyun anlatımları ile oyun alanlarında doldurulabilecek ve yeniden yaratılabilecek hayali bir eksiklik. Bu eksiklik oyuncularda kastrasyona değil, engellenmeye (i.e., früstrasyon) neden olur (Lacan, 1956-1957).

Ayrıca katılımcılar, oyun deneyiminde saldırganlık, hor görme ve zevk duyguları yaşadıklarını bildirmişlerdir. Saldırganlık ve zevk, narsisizm ile ilişkilidir (Lacan, 1977b). Bir diğer önemli nokta da bu duyguların fiziksel olması ve Gerçek düzlemde yer alan bedene içkin duyuumsal deneyimler olmasıdır. Deđer verdikleri kişilerden ayrılmadan oyun oynayabilmek oyunculara zevk vermektedir, ancak bazen bu kişilere karşı agresifleşmektedirler. Çevrimiçi oyun oynarken yaşanan yoğun duygular teması, kişilerin benlik-sunumlarıyla bağlantılıdır çünkü

oyuncuların bildirdiği saldırganlık, hor görme ve zevk duyguları, algılanan tümgüçlülüklerinin yan ürünleridir ve bu duygular, onların her şeye kadir benlik-imgelerinin kurulmasına ve sürdürülebilirliğine hizmet etmektedir.

Görüşmelerde, bu benlik-sunumları, katılımcılar tarafından oynamayı seçtikleri çevrimiçi oyunların mekaniği, hikayeleri ve yapısından bahsettikleri anlatılarda yer bulmaktadır. Oyuncuların benlik-sunumları imgelere dayanır ve bu imgelerin kökleri ayna evresinde bulunur (Lacan, 1977a). Özne bu evrede, ideal egosunu oluşturan 'birincil özdeşleşme' yoluyla ayna imgesiyle (Lacan, 1977b) rakip olarak yapılır (Evans, 2003). Dolayısıyla bağlam, benlik-sunumu veya imgesiyle ilgili olduğunda, bireylerin ideal egosu ile de ilgili olmaktadır. Ayrıca tüm bu kavramlar İngesel düzlemde yer alır (Lacan, 1988a). Oyunlarda seçilen karakterler, oyuncuların ideal-egolarının onlar için tasvir ettiği imgeye ulaşmak için çalışıyor olabilirler.

Saldırganlık ve erotizm barındıran imgesel ilişki, öznenin narsisizminin temelini oluşturur ve tüm özdeşimler bunun üzerine inşa edilir (Lacan, 1977b). Bununla ilgili olarak ve katılımcıların tümgüçlü benlik-sunumlarının alt temalarında da belirtildiği gibi, tümgüçlü imgenin kapsadığı diğer özellikler, rekabet aracılığıyla başkasına üstünlüğü kanıtlama ihtiyacı ve öldürme arzusu biçimindeki yıkıcılıktır. Ayrıca, üçüncü bir tarafla iletişim kurma zahmetine girmemek için kendi dillerini kullanmayı seçerek kendilerine ayrıcalıklı değilse bile ayrı bir konum vermektedirler.

Çevrimiçi oyunlar oynarken yaşanan yoğun duygular üst temasını daha detaylı tartışmak için *jouissance* kavramından bahsedilmelidir. Katılımcıların sıkıntı yaşamasına neden olan fakat aşırı düzeye ulaşana kadar tekrar ettikleri oyun oynama eylemi, acı verici zevk olarak tercüme edilen, dürtü tatmini ve Freud'un tanımladığı ölüm dürtüsünün yıkıcı bileşeni ile bağlantılı olan *jouissance* kavramıyla paraleldir (Vincent, 2020). *Jouissance*, yıkıcı haz şeklinde kendini gösterebilir (Vincent, 2020). Lacan için, bu dürtüsel zevk en yüklü halini çocukluktaki mastürbasyonda gösterir (1956-1957). Bu açıdan, aşırı düzeyde

çevrimiçi oyun oynama eyleminin tekrar eden mastürbatif bir yönü olduğu çıkarımı yapılabilir.

Katılımcıların otorite, yasa, kurallar ve kısıtlamalar konusundaki söylemlerine ve görüşmelerdeki konumlanmalarına bakıldığında, kendilerini otoritenin üstünde gördükleri, yani kendilerini otorite olarak gördükleri sonucuna varılmıştır. Oyuncuların bu eğilimi, genellikle kendilerinden üstün olarak gördükleri varlıklara karşı tepkisel bir tutum gösterme şeklinde yansır. Her öznenin klinik yapısına bağlı olarak, bu eğilim, Başka'nın 'ölü' (ing. *dead*) veya 'baba' (ing. *dad*) olarak görüldüğü obsesif bir yapıdan (Fink, 1997; Hook, 2015) veya inkâr mekanizmasının kastrasyona karşı temel savunma olarak işlediği sapkın bir yapıdan kaynaklanıyor olabilir (Fink, 1997).

Katılımcılar, Başka'nın bakışı olmadığında, herhangi bir kuralı çiğnemekte tereddüt etmediklerini ve gerekirse bunu örtbas etmeye çalışacaklarını bildirmişlerdir. Aslında bu, Başka'nın bakışını kendilerine çevirmek için aktif bir girişim olabilir. Bununla bağlantılı olarak katılımcıların Başka'nın *jouissance* nesnesi oldukları bir konumda buldukları söylenebilir (Fink, 1997). Ebeveynin talepleri doğrultusunda ebeveynin evinde ebeveynin hayatlarına bağlı olarak yaşayan katılımcıların, aralarındaki göbek bağıni koparabilmek için Başka'nın "Hayır!"ını çağırıyor olabilecekleri düşünülmüştür. Oyun alanlarında öznelere herhangi bir kısıtlama getirebilecek tek otorite, kurallarını benimseyebilecekleri ya da bir çıkış düğmesine tıklayarak kolayca sona erdirebilecekleri oyunun kendisidir (Aardse, 2014).

Bu araştırma için tanımadıkları bir başkayla yani araştırmacıyla etkileşimde buldukları görüşmeler sırasında katılımcıların bocaladıkları gözlemlenmiştir. Bir yandan, görüşmelerin resmi bir karşılaşma olarak ilerlediğinin farkında olan katılımcılar, öte yandan, bu ortamın sınırlarını ya da araştırmacı ile kendi aralarındaki sınırları, eyleme geçmek (örn: sigara içmek) ya da konuşmak (örn: kişisel sorular sormak) biçiminde test etmeye çalışmışlardır. Kişilerin, karşılaşmanın gerçekleştiği ortam ne olursa olsun, tanımadıkları diğer kişilerle narsisistik bir ayna ilişkisi sürdürme eğiliminde oldukları düşünülmüştür.

Kaygı, bu çalışmanın üst temalarını değerlendirmek için incelenmesi ve üzerinde düşünülmesi gereken bir kavramdır. Katılımcıların kaçış stratejisi olarak kullandıkları çevrimiçi oyunlarla gerçek dünyada onlar için kaygı yaratan bir şeyden kaçtıkları ve kendi ifadelerine göre bunda başarılı olamadıkları, çünkü oyun yoluyla da kaygı yaşadıkları görülmüştür. Freud'un kaygıyı anneden ayrışma sonucu yaşanan bir şey olarak tanımlamasının aksine, Lacan (1956-1957) kaygının aslında parçalanma ile ve her yeri kaplayan anneden (Evans, 2003) ayrışamama tehdidiyle karşılaşıldığında yaşanan bir şey olduğunu söylemiştir. Annenin bu imgesi, İmgesel düzlemde yer alır ve annenin imgesel fallusa sahip olduğu fanteziden kaynaklanır (Evans, 2003). Çevrimiçi oyunları aşırı düzeyde oynayan katılımcılar, Ödipal öncesi dönemdeki anne-çocuk ilişkisinde annenin arzu nesnesi olan imgesel fallus ile özdeşim kuruyor olabilirler (Lacan, 1988b). Katılımcıların, ev ortamlarında babanın otoritesinin eksikliğine yaptıkları vurgu, annenin söyleminde babanın yokluğuna işaret etmektedir ve oyuncuların gerçek dünyada yaşadığı kaygı ile ilgili olabilir. Oyuncunun bir nesne olarak oyuna olan bağlılığı, ilk sevgi nesnesine, yani anneye (Freud, 1914b) olan bağlılığına benzetilirse, oyun oynarken sık sık yaşanan ıstırap deneyimleri anlam kazanmaktadır. Baba, kastrasyon aracılığıyla bu ikili ilişkiye müdahale edememektedir.

Katılımcıların takım arkadaşları ile, bir anlamda kardeşleri ile iş birliği yaparak oyunlarda yok etmeye çalıştıkları şeyi anlatırken kullandıkları, “anne” kelimesine atıfta bulunan “ana hedef” gibi kelimeler, yıkıcı eylemler şeklinde kendini gösteren saldırganlıklarının yönlendiği hedef hakkında ipucu vermektedir. Bu hedef, kendilerinde parçalanma kaygısı yaratan annedir. Oyuncular yok etmeye çalıştıkları nesneye ulaşmaya da çalışmaktadırlar. Özetle, yıkıcı benlik-sunumlarının kökeni esasında anneleriyle olan ilişkilerinde olabilir.

Fallik nesnelere sahip olma çabası ve kaygıdan bahsedildikten sonra, katılımcıların oyun boyunca bu kadar doyumsuz bir şekilde deneyimledikleri ve bağımlı hale geldikleri şeyin fallik *jouissance* olduğundan söz edilmelidir. Lacan (1974-1975) kaygının bedende var olduğunu ve kaygının, kastre olmuş özne tarafından

gösterenler yoluyla elde edilen fallik *jouissance* ile bedenin dolup taşmasından kaynaklandığını savunur (Dimitriadis, 2017; Vincent, 2020). *Jouissance* ve ölüm dürtüsü, haz ilkesiyle çelişmektedir çünkü haz ilkesi, organizmanın gerçek dünyada hayatta kalabilmesi için yaşadığı gerilimi asgari miktara düşürmeyi amaçlamaktadır (Vincent, 2020); haz ilkesi, aşırı dozdaki *jouissance*'ı kısıtlayabilir ancak bazen *jouissance*, haz ilkesini devre dışı bırakabilir (Lacan, 2007). Bu nedenle, oyuncuların haz ilkesinin aracılığı olmadan, *jouissance* deneyimlemek temelinde eyleme geçtikleri düşünülmüştür.

Katılımcıların oyuna dair söylemleri ölüm ilgili kelimelerle doludur. Obsesif öznenin Başka'yla fantazmatik ilişkisini oluşturan “Yaşıyor muyum yoksa ölü müyüm?” (Fink, 1997) temel sorusu, oyuncuların belki de böylesi bir sorudan kaynaklanan kaygıyı, ölümden ustalık kazanma ve ilgili kaygıyı azaltma amacıyla tekrar tekrar ölümler ve oyunlardaki ölme döngüsünde kalarak deneyimledikleri oyunlarda kendini gösteriyor olabilir.

Lacan, ölüm dürtüsünü her dürtü temelinde konumlandığı için tekrarlayan oyun davranışının dürtüsel yanı sıra ölüm dürtüsü açısından değerlendirilmelidir. Lacan'a göre her dürtü ölüm dürtüsüdür ve “aşırı nitelikte, tekrarlayan ve nihayetinde yıkıcıdır” (Lacan, 1977b'den aktaran Evans, 2003). Freud'a (1926) göre, biri ölümden korkuyorsa, bu kastrasyondan korktuğu anlamına gelir. Öyleyse, çevrimiçi oyuncular ölümlerini imgesel de olsa yinelemektedirler ve onu bir kez daha savuşturmak için kastrasyonu çağdırmaktadırlar.

Aşırı düzeyde online oyun oynamak, talepten (imgesel fallus olmaktan) arzuya (fallusa sahip olma teşebbüsüne) geçmek için yoğun bir girişimdir. Bununla birlikte, oyuncular oral dürtü ile skopik dürtü arasında sıkışmışlardır çünkü bu imgesel çabaları, Başka'nın Sembolik düzleminde gerçekleşmez ve dürtü devresindeki değişim için gerekli olan aktif konuma geçememişlerdir (Lacan, 1998; Harari, 2001; Evans, 2003).

Talep arzuyu içerdiğinden (Lacan, 1956-1957), analitik çalışmada konuşması istenen özne regrese olarak (Evans, 2003) kendi talebini üretir ve içinde arzuyu

barındıran talebini ifade etme şansı bulur. Analitik çalışmada, öznelere, aşırı düzeyde oyun oynamak biçiminde tekrarlayarak eyleme geçirdikleri şeyleri anımsamaları (Freud, 1914a) ve taleplerini Başka'ya ifade etmeleri amaçlanmalıdır. Özne bastırılanı hatırlayamadığında, bu tekrarlayan eylemlerde, yani eyleme geçme olarak kendini gösterir (Freud, 1914a). Psikanalitik tedavinin amacı hastanın hatırlamasını sağlamaktır. Ancak bu hatırlama aynı zamanda söz yoluyla Başka'ya duyurmaktır. Tekrarlayan eylemi sona erdirecek olan şey Başka'nın duyması olacaktır (Evans, 2003). Analitik çalışmada Başka'nın konumunda, analist durmaktadır (Lacan, 1956-1957). Analitik çalışma, üçgen bir ilişki gerektirir (Lacan, 1988a). Lacan'ın ayna ilişkisi dediği ilişki sürdürülürse, analist ile analizan arasında, tıpkı oyuncuların çevrimiçi oyun deneyimlerinde küçük başkalarla paylaştığı ve onlara atfettikleri saldırganlık gibi, saldırganlıkla karakterize 'ölümüne bir mücadele' başlayacaktır (Evans, 2003).

Narsisizm ve saldırganlık, aşırı düzeyde çevrimiçi oyun oynayan kişilerin bazı temel özellikleri olarak bulunmuştur. Bu kişilerin olası narsisistik kırılma, psikanalitik ortamda ele alınmalı ve ortaya bir monologdan ziyade bir diyalogun ortaya çıkması için dikkatle çalışılmalıdır (Herzog, 2004). Bu tür özellikler sergileyen bireylerle çalışırken, analist, saldırganlığı olabildiğince erken bir zamanda yeniden canlandırmak için öznedeki engellenmişlik duyguları uyandırmalıdır (i.e., fröstrüsyon), çünkü bu, aktarımın temeli ve psikanalitik çalışmanın omurgası olacaktır ancak büyük olasılıkla olumsuz bir aktarım oluşacaktır (Lacan, 1977b).

Çevrimiçi oyunları aşırı düzeyde oynayan yetişkinlerin deneyimlerini, yorumlayıcı fenomenolojik analiz ile nitel olarak çalıştığım bu tez, aynı zamanda Türkçe konuşan oyuncularla yapılan ve Lacanyen yaklaşımlı ilk çalışmadır. Araştırmanın çıkarımları, çevrimiçi oyuncuların ilişki kalıpları için teorik zemin ve içgörüler ile bu kişilerle klinikte çalışma konusunda pratik önerileri içerir. Kişilerin ağırlıklı olarak imgesel aksta ilişkilenebilmesinin dikkate alınması, analitik çalışmanın kastrasyonla ilgili meselelere odaklanması ve öznelere Yasa'ya karşı tepkisel konumlanması sonucu analistin kendi direncinin uyandığı noktalara duyarlı olması bu önerilerden bazılarıdır. Bu çalışmanın bazı sınırları bulunmaktadır. Her

katılımcıyla bir görüşme yapılmış olması, araştırmacı ve katılımcı arasında güvenli bir ilişkinin henüz oluşmaması ihtimalini bulundurduğundan bir sınır olarak görülebilir ve ileri çalışmalarda katılımcılarla birden fazla görüşme yapılması faydalı olabilir. Çevrimiçi oyunları aşırı düzeyde oynayan kadınların deneyimleri bu araştırmada ele alınmamıştır ve kadınlarla yapılacak takip eden bir çalışma konuyla ilgili farklı anlayışlar kazandırabilir.

6. SONUÇ

Gerçek dünyadan kaçış, bireylerin çevrimiçi oyunları aşırı düzeyde oynamayı tercih etmelerinde önemli bir motivasyon kaynağı olarak bulunmuştur. Oyuncular, agresyon ve zevk duygularını yoğun bir şekilde yaşadıkları çevrimiçi oyun alanında kazanmak ve tatmin olmak içinde olduklarını ifade etmişlerdir. Oynadıkları oyunların mekaniğini anlatırken çizdikleri tümgüçlü benlik imgelerinde kazanma hırsı öne çıkan bir özelliktir. Oyuncuların benlik-sunumlarındaki tümgüçlülük, sahiplendikleri yıkıcılık, oyunculara has bir iletişim dili kullanımı ve bağımlılık yapıcı olduğunu düşündükleri oyuna kendilerinin bağımlı olmadıklarını ifade etmelerinde kendini göstermiştir. Son olarak, katılımcılar kendilerinden üstün gördükleri bir başkasıyla olan ilişkide tepkisel olarak konumlanmakta ve üstün olan tarafı etkisizleştirmeye çalışmaktadırlar.

Bu bulgular ışığında aşırı düzeyde çevrimiçi oyun oynayan yetişkin erkeklerin diğer öznelerle ilişkilerinde imgesel pozisyonlar alma eğiliminde oldukları düşünülmüştür. Yasa'nın kastrasyonundan kaçtıkları, engellenmişlik hissi yaratan imgesel ego ilişkilerini çevrimiçi sanal oyun ortamlarında tekrarladıkları ve bundan acı veren bir zevk (*jouissance*) türettikleri sonucuna ulaşılmıştır. Analitik çalışmada terapistin ya da analistin, kastrasyonla ilgili meseleler üstünde çalışması ve bir üçüncü kişi konumundan özneyi dinlemesi önerilmiştir. Bu şekilde öznelerin çevrimiçi oyunlar aracılığıyla bilinçdışı olarak tekrarladıkları fantezilerini, dile dökebilecekleri bir alan açılacağı düşünülmüştür.

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TEZİN ADI / TITLE OF THE THESIS (İngilizce / English): Adults' Lived Experiences of Excessive Online Game Playing

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