

# INTRODUCTION

In the 21st century, the increasing number and variety of smartphones result in easy access for people with different income levels. They are becoming widespread day by day (Kaysi et al., 2021). The purpose behind using smartphones can vary from one individual to another. However, features such as surfing on the net, playing games, sending messages, and social media may be the important ones compared to other countless benefits.

It wouldn't be wrong to say that smartphones are seen as common among young people more than others (Ozkan and Solmaz, 2015). In today's world, digital and social media have become prominent in everyday life, especially for university students who rely on these platforms for communication, information, and entertainment (Ayas and Berkhoff, 2024). University students are exposed to smartphones in many areas, including work, education, and shopping (Karaahmetoglu and Arabacı, 2024). They meet many of their needs from education to social life, entertainment to communication through smartphones and digital platforms. From this perspective, smartphones are fundamental and beneficial objects of this period.

The disadvantages of smartphone usage are far more than the advantages of smartphone usage. Overuse of smartphones is associated with stress, anxiety, and negative emotions (Alotaibi et al., 2022). In addition, sleep deprivation, lack of social interaction and concentration, physical health problems, and academic outcomes are common among university students. For instance, sleep deprivation weakens the ability of the part of the brain that handles reasoning, known as the prefrontal cortex (Aramugam et al., 2020). The other example is phubbing behavior which is concentrating on the phone instead of talking to the person directly in a social setting (Nazir, 2017). To cope with these side effects of excessive use of smartphones, a new term has been found "digital detox".

Digital detox can be described practically as the periods of time where smartphone users are not engaging with the device (Coyne and Woodruff, 2023). During this period, the person aims to reduce the negative effects of technology use, increase focus and attention, or give more time to focus on personal needs (Karapinar, 2024). From this perspective, “digital detox” is not only the time limit a person set to his/her smartphone usage, it is also the conscious usage of technology. To eliminate the negative effects of technology use the term “digital detox” should gain an important role in university students’ lives. The studies highlight the significant advantages of digital detoxes in enhancing mental health, cognitive abilities, and overall well-being in a highly interconnected society (Deshbhratar, 2017).

Developers who publish applications to the application market have taken a step and developed many digital detoxing apps to fill the gap. The most known examples are “Flipd”, “Forest”, “Moment”, “Offscreen”, and “Opal”. With these applications, people are mainly able to put their phone's flight-mode in a specific time, set daily or weekly screen time limits, and close the notifications. These features and applications are useful strategies and methods in the means of limiting technology overuse of individuals and making them more conscious about their technology use.

The university students of this period has grown up with technology. Their excessive exposure to technology use makes them more vulnerable to suffering from the negative effects of technology overuse. This study aims to investigate digital detox awareness and its penetration and also, conduct market research for an app aimed at university students.

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