A Proposal For Ethics Training In Internet Cafes

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Abstract: - With the peak use of computer and Internet technologies, Internet cafes have started to be founded in order to meet the needs of people who don’t have a computer and/or Internet connectivity. Although Internet cafes are founded for good purposes like accessing the information easily, communicating with the others, etc..., sometimes some users, intentionally or unintentionally, use the facilities of Internet unethically in Internet cafes.

In this paper, firstly current situation of the Internet cafes has been unfolded then the term of computer ethics and Internet ethics, appeared along with the rapid dissemination of computer and Internet technologies, has been described. The purpose of this study is to offer a proposal to cope with this non-ethical use of Internet and the Internet cafes.

Key-Words: -Internet, Internet Cafes, Ethics, Computer Ethics, Internet Ethics, Appropriate Use, Privacy And Information Security, Copyright/Intellectual Property, Information Technologies Teacher

1 Introduction
Formed by the aggregation of Internet and Network terms, Internet can be described as an electronic communication network which provides the computers all around the world to get connected with each other. Through this huge network, individuals can easily and promptly access any kind of information produced in anywhere in the world and computerized to the Web. In addition to the facility of information retrieval, Internet provides intercommunication opportunities with e-mail services, chat (conversation) groups, discussion groups, etc…; entertainment and relaxation environment with playing games, listening to music, watching films, etc…; establishing official dealings with banking transactions, exam applications, etc…. [1]. With these properties, Internet has grown up and spread from the first time it was founded.

In Turkey, Internet has firstly started to be used in military services then universities and business life because of the ecenomical and technical issues [2]. In that period of time, due to the high prices of computers and Internet connections, people could not be able to access Internet from their houses. So, in order to meet the ones’ (who do not have a computer and/or Internet connection in their houses) needs, Internet cafes were founded.

2 An Overview of Internet Cafes
Internet cafes can be described as the places where individuals can feast while taking advantage of Internet facilities. According to the 30th of December dated and 23922 numbered Official Gazette, Internet cafes are „the public workplaces which are available for playing games and following the international publications by means of the Internet connections and in which light food and nonalcholics are served.“ [3]

The culture of Internet cafes first introduced in Turkey with Cyber Cafe founded in
Istanbul in 1995 synchronically with the world [4]. Serving facilities like retrieving easily and quickly the information Internet cafe users need, communicating others via e-mail services and chatting, online shopping; playing games, downloading music files and/or films, sorting the banking transactions out, surfing the Web, etc... Internet cafes boomed in the metropolitans of Turkey and then the culture of Internet cafes spread to Turkey-wide. Since 1995, there have been founded approximately 15.000 Internet cafes all around the Turkey.

When examining the profile of Internet cafe users, although Internet cafes serve clients with all kinds of socio-economic backgrounds, it can be stated that most users belong to the low socio-economic backgrounds. [5]

Baran & Kuloğlu (2001), conducted a study named “Kadınlar Internette Kimliklerini Gizliyor (Women Hide Their IDs in Internet”) with 245 Internet cafe users selected from varied Internet cafes in Ankara and maintained that 20% of Internet cafe users are female while 80% are male. Furthermore, they indicated that users visit the Internet cafes in order to:

- Use E-mail services and read (81.2%),
- chat (62.4%),
- play games (50.6%)
- gather information and do research (43.3%)
- visit pornographic sites (14.3%)
- gambling (10.2%)
- surf the web for other reasons (8.6%). [6]

Conducted with 3 volunteer Internet cafe managers and 5 volunteer Internet cafe users selected from 81 cities in Turkey, the study named as “Ülkemizde Internet Kafelerin Ortam ve Kullanıcı Profili: Bilgi Toplumu Açısından Değerlendirmе (The Environment and the Profile of Internet Cafes in Our Country: An assessment in terms of Information Society)” indicated that 37.8% of Internet users are in the age range of 21 – 25; 37.8% of Internet users are in the age range of 16 – 20 and 15.7% of Internet users are in the age range of 26 – 30. [7]

In a study named as “Technology Acess Points in Turkey: A Study on Internet Cafes and Their Roles in Society” conducted by İnal, Akyol & Erden (2008), the data was collected from 71 different Internet cafes in 71 different districts of Ankara. It’s found that 310 females and 1162 males between 7 – 45 age range benefit from Internet cafes. According to the data collected from 232 volunteer males (19.35 average of age) and 98 volunteer females (18.78 average of age), Internet cafe users’ purposes of visiting Internet cafes are:

- playing games (41.21%)
- chatting (37.57%)
- gathering information (26.36%)
- doing homework (15.75%)
- online shopping (2.42%). [8]

Regarding the research results mentioned above, we can say the ones below for the profile of Internet cafe users.

- Internet cafes serve clients with all with all kinds of socio-economic backgrounds, but individuals coming from low socio-economic backgrounds visit Internet cafes because of economic or technical problems they have much more than the ones coming from high socio-economic backgrounds.
- The Internet cafe users’ average of age changes between 7 – 45. But the age group using the Internet cafes most is 16 – 20.
- Males take advantage of Internet cafes in comparison to females.
- Users visit Internet cafes mostly for playing games and chatting. But, also the number of the users visiting Internet cafes to gather information and make research can not be ignored. Besides, there are some users with less percentage who use Internet cafes for nonethical behaviors like visiting pornographic sites, downloading music and/or film etc...

3 Ethical Challenges in Internet Cafes

Along with the rapid dissemination of the computer and Internet technologies to every field of life, there appeared some ethical challenges regarding the use of these technologies. And these context-spesific ethical challenges caused the terms of computer ethics and Internet ethics to be came into being. Before explaining these terms, let’s discuss the term of ethics.

When examining previous literature, so many different definitions for ethics can be found. According to Cevizci (2003) ethics is „a philosophical field seeking what is good and right and what is bad and wrong, investigating what should be the real purpose of the humanity, examining which elements a moral way of living should include“. Kuzu (2007) described ethics as a „discipline which investigates whether a human behavior is good or bad, true or wrong and considers itself as a science of moral action.“.

In order to decide on if individuals behave appropriate to the codes of conduct in the computer
environment, one must use “computer ethics”, since term of computer ethics is came up specially for computer field. Moor (1985) described computer ethics as “a dynamic and complicated study field that includes realities, conceptualizations, policies and values connected with the ever changing and developing computer technologies.”[9] When talking about computers, it’s impossible to foresee that the computer technologies will cause ethical challenges.

As you all know, nowadays, people prefer to do whatever they need in their everyday life more easily and quickly via computers. For example; a student applies for KPSS (the exam which can change a student’s lifetime), pays the cost of the exam and makes his/her preferences via computer and Internet Technologies. In this process since the process steps are all done in Internet, Internet ethics should be taken into account. With the rapid development of Internet, the term of Internet ethics seeking the users’ behaviors in Internet is ensued. [10] The term of Internet ethics can be thought as an special extention of computer ethics, but the main difference between them is that Internet ethics is dealing with the behaviors performed in Internet.

The ethical challenges occured with the peak use of Internet can be classified into four different topics. These are appropriate use; privacy and information security, copyrights/intellectual property. [11]

- **Appropriate use:** Sometimes people use the facilities of Internet services for different an inappropriate purposes. For example; using the e-mail for spamming, unauthorized shopping, gambling, etc...[12]

- **Privacy and information security:** Computers give users an opportunity to store huge information including their personal info and special files. But in fact, computers are not so secured. The ones who are well-qualified in computer technologies can easily access the information due to the system gap of the softwares.

- **Copyrights/intellectual property:** According to Ghazali (2003), intellectual property is eveything that produced by human mind.[13] This thing can be a poetry, a drawing, a book, a speech, an e-mail, a software, a CD, etc...[14] After the computer and Internet technologies, everything a human brain think start to transfer into computers and publish in Internet. Although these facilities is good for sharing the information all over the world, since the duplication and distribution of the information is easy in the digital media, some people can get and use the information as if they are all from his/her intellectual property.

### 4 A Proposal For Ethics Training in Internet Cafes

As we all know, Turkish higher education system started graduating information technologies teachers in 2002 from the departments of „Computer Education and Instructional Technology (CEIT)” at faculties of education. [13] In the department of CEIT, students take courses dealing with both computer and education in their undergraduate education process. Thus, alumni of CEIT all have knowledge, ability and experience about both computer and education fields.

In order to cope with the non-ethical use of Internet in Internet cafes, it might be proposed that an information technologies teacher graduated from department of CEIT can be tasked as a mentor for the users in Internet cafes. The information technologies teacher may be charged with these duties mentioned below;

- **Dealing with the users who need help:** Some users may have troubles in using the Internet technically or some may have troubles in finding the appropriate information in Internet. The information Technologies teacher can easily help the ones who have technical problems or retrieval problems.

- **Tracking the users’ behaviors in Internet:** Some users may use Internet unethically. On such an occasion, the information technologies teacher can intervene in the situation and lead them to the right path.

- **Conducting a seminar in every month:** The information Technologies teacher can prepare a content dealing with ethics, computer ethics and Internet ethics in order to attract the users’ attention and raise their awareness. And in the light of the data collected via tracking the users’ behaviors in Internet, a seminar can be set up in every month.

- **Draw a list including the codes of conduct and display on the computer screen:** The information technologies teacher can make a list including the codes of conduct and transfer it to the computer environment. The list can be
shown on the first screen of the computer when a user opens the computer and try to access the Internet. But at this juncture, the thing that should be taken into consideration is that the user should not be able to skip the list without reading the whole of it. In order to solve this problem, every list item can be shown on the screen one by one and the user should not be allowed to skip the list item until he/she responses.

References: