

A STUDY OF INDIVIDUAL INTERNET DEPENDENCY AS AN EXTENSION OF SOCIAL SUPPORT

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ABSTRACT

This current study aims to define and describe the relationship between individuals' Internet dependency and social support as they function in one specific information environment. How the immigrants' acculturation attitude affects their Internet dependency was also examined. A sample of 158 East-Asian and 160 American college students completed a survey measuring (a) Internet dependency, (b) social support, and (c) acculturation attitude (only for the East-Asians).

No correlation was found between social support and Internet dependency across the samples. The dependency typologies the East-Asians developed the most often were social understanding and solitary play. The interaction of acculturation attitude and social support was not found, but acculturation attitude was positively correlated with Internet dependency. Finally, this present research suggests that the index assessing media dependency should be revised in order to measure individuals' real usages and usage amount of a medium instead of their perception of a medium.