

Research Article

# Social Media Usage of Non-Governmental Organizations: Red Cross Societies of the G7 Countries and the Turkish Red Crescent\*

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## Abstract

Nowadays, with the emergence of internet concept and its continuous development, non-governmental organizations have started to use these channels to maintain their existence and to promote themselves. In this study, it is examined how non-governmental organizations in developed countries and Turkey use their Twitter accounts. Study covers a period of six months (from May 1 to October 31, 2019). The universe of this study consists of all Red Cross organizations in developed countries and Turkish Red Crescent. The sample of the study consists of Germany, Italy, France, USA, England, Japan and Canada, which are G7 countries and hold the majority of global wealth. In the scope of the study, G7 countries and Turkish Red Crescent will be compared. As a result of the review, it is reached that the Turkish Red Crescent ranks first in the number of posts on Twitter and uses visual icons like other Red Cross organizations the study. Moreover, similar to other institutions, Turkish Red Crescent does not go into time and day limitations in their posts. It can be said that all the NGOs under the study used this medium effectively; however, the biggest deficiency is that they are not successful in answering the comments for the posts.

**Keywords:** Public Relations, Non-Governmental Organizations, Social Media, Twitter, G7 Countries.

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Araştırma Makalesi

# Sivil Toplum Kuruluşlarının Sosyal Medya Kullanımı: G7 Ülkelerinin Kızıl Haçları ve Türk Kızılayı Örneği

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## Öz

Günümüzde internet kavramının ortaya çıkması ve sürekli gelişime uğraması ile birlikte sivil toplum kuruluşları da varlıklarını sürdürmek ve kendilerini tanıtmak için bu mecraları kullanmaya başlamışlardır. Bu çalışmada sivil toplum kuruluşlarının Twitter hesaplarını altı aylık bir süre içerisinde nasıl kullandıkları incelenmiştir. Çalışmada incelenen kurumlardan elde edilen veriler 1 Mayıs- 31 Ekim 2019 tarihlerini kapsamaktadır. Bu çalışmanın evrenini gelişmiş ülkelerin Kızıl Haç kuruluşları ve Türk Kızılayı oluşturmaktadır. Çalışmanın örneklemini ise küresel zenginliğin büyük bir çoğunluğun elinde tutan G7 ülkeleri olan Almanya, İtalya, Fransa, Amerika, İngiltere, Japonya ve Kanada oluşturmaktadır. Çalışmanın kapsamında G7 ülkeleri ile Türkiye'nin Türk Kızılayı karşılaştırılacaktır. İnceleme sonucunda Türk Kızılayı'nın Twitter'da paylaşım sayısı açısından ilk sırada geldiği, Paylaşımlarını yaparken diğer kurumlar gibi görsel yöntemler kullandığına ulaşılmıştır. Paylaşım yaparken diğer kurumlara benzer olarak zaman ve gün sınırlamasına gitmediği de ulaşılan sonuçlardan biridir. Ayrıca çalışmada yer alan tüm sivil toplum kuruluşlarının paylaşımlarına yapılan yorumlara cevap vermede yetersiz kaldıkları önemli bir eksiklik olarak görülmüştür.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Halkla İlişkiler, Sivil Toplum Kuruluşları, Sosyal Medya, Twitter, G7 Ülkeleri.

## Introduction

With globalization, great changes have been observed in social, political, economic and cultural fields. In this changing and developing world, internet and new technology played an important role to create new markets and communication environments. With the help of social media, institutions begin to reach their target audiences more easily and rapidly with no time and space constraints. The most important feature that social media gives to its users is interaction. Therefore social media become one of the most preferred channels by institutions today (Solmaz & Görkemli, 2012, p. 183).

Non-governmental organizations are institutions that operate independently from government in order to address social and political problems in society. Development of civil society organizations in Turkey started in the 1980's. Thanks to social media applications that enable two-way communication such as Facebook and Twitter, non-governmental organizations nowadays reach society and announce their activities and give various messages easily (Işık, 2002, p. 73).

The aim of this study is to reveal how non-governmental organizations use social media applications in terms of public relations. In the study, the shares of the organizations in their Twitter accounts are analyzed by content analysis method. This study includes data obtained in the six-month period between May 1 and October 31, 2019. The universe of the research is all Red Cross institutions in developed countries and Turkish Red Crescent. The sample of the study consists of G7 countries (namely Germany, Italy, France, United States of America, United Kingdom, Japan and Canada), which constitute almost 64% of global wealth and their Twitter messages will be examined and compared with Turkish Red Crescent. The selection of these institutions is due to the fact that the Turkish Red Crescent is one of the oldest non-governmental organizations in Turkey, and that there is too much of the institutions that are equivalent to the Turkish Red Crescent abroad as a comparison is made.

If the findings obtained in the study are to be explained in general, the Turkish Red Crescent stands out as the institution that uses the Twitter application the most among other institutions. In addition, the Turkish Red Crescent made the most shares within the period of examination. In addition to these, it was found that all institutions benefited greatly from visual content while creating their Twitter posts. Most of the institutions prefer working hours and weekdays while sharing. However, it has been found that they prefer to share messages outside of working hours. This shows that organizations are not limiting day and time when sharing and using Twitter. It has been observed that the Turkish Red Crescent's Twitter account received the most comments in the category of criticism, while the institution left these criticisms unanswered. Finally, considering the number of responses given to the comments received by the institutions, it can be said that they communicate with their users one-way and that the posts they make are only for information about themselves.

## 1. Non-Governmental Organizations and Public Relations

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are expressed as "voluntary organizations", "third sector organizations", "non-profit organizations" and "non-governmental organizations" in texts and articles in literature (Gonel, 1998, p. 1). It is defined as the foundation and union organizations that have requests and opinions similar to each other and that are formed out of the authority of the governments and administrations, with the volunteering of the people involved (Aydın, 1998, p. 68). In another definition, it is said

that non-governmental organization is an organization that is self-producing, voluntary, self-supporting, and has an autonomous structure from the state (A. Laurie Brand, as cited in Yıldırım M., 2003, p. 227). Most prominent peculiarities of non-governmental organizations are their non-profit and volunteering-based features. Besides, they have more flexible structure, independence from the state, a more participatory and pluralistic quality, more transparent bodies and the public interest oriented structure in general (Usta, 2006, p. 38). NGOs have a wide scope of target audiences such as suppliers, employees, supporters, participants of and the affected parties of the campaigns and activities, media institutions, political actors, local administrators, mass that provides financial support within the scope of philanthropy and other NGOs (Bozkurt, 2000, p. 28).

Since non-governmental organizations generally operate on a voluntary basis, they are dependent on individuals for resources. Therefore, the funding masses are essential for non-governmental organizations to maintain their assets. Since the vast majority of the employees of the organization work on a voluntary basis, volunteers play an important role for the organization to continue its activities. When there are no major social audiences supporting the organization's activities, the organization's activities will be suspended and will expire after a while. Therefore, it is very important to choose the right target groups that will support the activities of the institution in determining the target audience. With the experienced public relations staff and the right activities, the target audience selection will be made in the most correct way for the institutions.

Mass media is one of the most important tools to communicate with people today. The fact that civil society employees are communicating with the right media channels and the right media employees will take their institutions a step further, while providing their audience with information about their activities. In addition, political actors and local managers will provide a great opportunity for NGOs to announce themselves in accordance with their position. As with any institution, non-governmental organizations need substantial financial support to sustain their assets and activities. The audience, which provides financial support to organizations as part of the donation, is a key point in ensuring the continuity of these activities. It is a great benefit for organizations to have organizations in co-operation with other non-governmental organizations that can provide mutual support to their activities. Civil society organizations will never have a hard time getting their desired responses from society through experienced public relations employees and projects that have been presented to the right audience.

The aims of non-governmental organizations with public relations activities differ from institution to institution. But when a general definition is drawn, the goals they want to achieve can be listed as follows (Sülüş, 2009, p. 99-100).

1. Identification of internal and external stakeholder groups.
2. To raise awareness of the target audience towards the goals and activities of non-governmental organizations, and to provide positive attitude and support with continuous information flow.
3. Raising awareness and activating the public through democratic methods.
4. Increasing the number of members and volunteers.
5. To create a positive perception towards non-governmental organizations in the public and to maintain this perception.

6. To get the opinions of the target audience before and after the activities that non-governmental organizations will do and do for their purposes.
7. To realize a social problem related to local government mechanisms, which are among the important denominator groups of non-governmental organizations.
8. To carry out studies that will reflect the pressure group feature on the government in order to make decisions in favor of a social problem depending on the purpose of existence of non-governmental organizations.
9. To carry out studies to establish relations with other non-governmental organizations operating in the national and international arena.
10. To attract the attention of the press for the work of non-governmental organizations.
11. Improving internal communication and contributing to the formation of corporate culture.

In another study, the reasons for non-governmental organizations to make public relations projects are explained as follows (Boztepe, 2014, p. 162):

- Raising awareness.
- To create attitude change in people.
- Finding public support.
- To gain sympathy from members and target audience.
- Creating a positive image.
- Managing corporate reputation.

When non-governmental organizations manage their public relations activities successfully, their visibility will increase, then reaching financial resources become more easily. With these funds, they will be able to undertake more efficient projects and have the opportunity to benefit more from the general public. Therefore public relations have special importance for these institutions. However, institutions may not always be able to manage the public relations process well. Problems faced by non-governmental organizations in terms of public relations while presenting their activities are divided into two as internal problems and external problems (Biber, 2006, p. 41). Problems arising from the institutional structure can be listed as follows (Biber, 2006, p. 53-62):

- Uncertainty of institutional goals.
- Uncertainty of general administrative policies.
- Insufficiency of internal communication channels.
- Insufficient opportunities for managerial participation.
- Autonomy problem.

Civil society organizations have the goals and objectives they want to achieve in short periods of time (Biber, 2006, p. 53-54). Internal employees and stakeholders may have trouble recognizing and acting on these objectives in a similar way. From this point of view, volunteering can damage the motivation and desire of volunteer-based organizations in the challenges of common purposes. In-house public relations activities and volunteers' internal family needs to be provided and issues that can arise in the corporate culture must be corrected. Small problems that can occur in this way can be eliminated without growth. Moreover, disruptions and gaps in the allocation of duties and competencies have led to a number of problems. Public relations employees will have a great benefit to



volunteers and internal employees in the organization to organize training programs to eliminate administrative problems (Yeğen, Keyman, Tol, & Çalışkan, 2009, p. 53-54).

Civil society organizations are working together on a voluntary basis people with different personal characteristics. Organizations may not have a healthy communication with hierarchy, personality differences, etc. From this point of view, the public relations unit will positively impact the success of the internal communication process. It will also help replace vertical communication channels that may exist due to hierarchical structures with horizontal communication channels (Biber, 2006, p. 53-62; Yeğen, Keyman, Tol, & Çalışkan, 2009; Çalışkan, Cengiz, & Tol, 2005). In addition, non-governmental organizations need to communicate with other non-governmental organizations. Public relations employees will manage the communication process with other institutions in a positive way for the institutions (Yeğen, Keyman, Tol, & Çalışkan, 2009, p. 54).

Within non-governmental organizations, different stakeholder groups are held, including volunteers, members and employees. The requests and desires or recommendations of these groups must be considered by management. The emphasis on different ideas in non-governmental organizations is a problem that is addressed as part of public relations activities. Public relations officers are obliged to convey the opinions of the people working in the institution to the senior managers and to establish a bridge between the two groups (Biber, 2006, p. 53-62; Arslan, 2018, p. 8).

Another task expected from non-governmental organizations is to establish a pressure mechanism using social control mechanisms. The problem of compliance with ethical principles for activities such as corporate social responsibility and sponsorship in non-governmental organizations puts legitimacy within a problem. In order to avoid such a problem in non-governmental organizations, they will need public relations activities to transfer their activities to people who are doing in public interest and obtain public approval (Biber, 2006, p. 53-62).

The external problems that can arise in civil society organizations are listed as follows (Biber, 2006, p. 42-53):

- Negative perceptions for non-governmental organizations.
- Legal barriers to civil society organization.
- Lack of community interest in the work of civil society organizations.
- Media disinterest in the work of civil society organizations.

The fact that some NGOs engaged in unethical activities has led to a negative development of ideas and thoughts toward these institutions, as it has shaken society's trust and the concept of non-governmental organizations has not been established in a full definition framework (Silahtaroglu, 2004, p. 54). The concept of public relations comes into effect here. Through an effective public relations process, negative thoughts toward institutions can be changed significantly. This will lead to a more successful organization and greater awareness of its activities at home or abroad. The central state structure and recent political incidents have put in place a number of legal and cultural barriers to NGO. With the right communication techniques, these barriers can be eliminated (Biber, 2006, p. 42-53).

Non-governmental organizations carry out activities that concern the general public on education, health, environment, etc. However, these activities sometimes do not see

the interest that the community requires. Thanks to public relations, the activities of institutions will reach more people (Tarhan & Bakan, 2013, p. 30). Through the use of the right media methods and the power of social media engagement, organizations can address society as a whole. For non-governmental organizations, it is very important to reach and promote the wide range of activities they do. From this point of view, mass media is one of the most appropriate means for organizations to announce their activities. Civil society organizations may have difficulties in participating in the media due to limited resources (Deren Van Het Hof, 2014, p. 178). With public relations, organizations can overcome this problem by using their resources correctly in the media channels and announcing their activities at the right places to reach their target audience (Biber, 2006, p. 42-53; Yeğen, Keyman, Tol, & Çalışkan, 2009).

The number of studies conducted for the purposes of public relations use of non-governmental organizations in the literature is quite low. The literature has been scanned in order to determine the goals that non-governmental organizations want to achieve with public relations. Sülüş has reached out to the fact that non-governmental organizations primarily focus on external target audience in their public relations activities. The reasons why non-governmental organizations do not adequately care about public relations activities are that they are not aware that these activities are needed and that there is not enough financial and human power available (2009).

Anna Maria Elizabeth found that in his thesis study, the public relations efforts of NGOs were blocked because they were not public relations employees with sufficient knowledge. In addition, it was found that only one of the non-governmental organizations used the two-way symmetrical public relations model. (2001). Boztepe has determined the main objectives of public relations activities carried out by non-governmental organizations as establishing and maintaining positive relations with the target audience and funders. It has come to the conclusion that non-governmental organizations cannot fully utilize their websites for funding and that these pages need to be improved (2014).

In the next topic, studies in the literature on how non-governmental organizations use social media for public relations purposes will be examined.

## **2. Social Media Uses of Non-Governmental Organizations**

Establishing and maintaining mutual relations with their target groups are very important for both finding financial resources and reach volunteered manpower (Greenberg & MacAulay, 2009, p. 67). Thanks to the new communication technologies, the ability of NGOs to communicate with volunteers and the media has greatly increased. The new media has provided them with features such as presenting the contents and activities they planned to the community, mobilizing stakeholders and establishing meaningful positive relationships, increasing public trust and being more open in terms of accountability (Çetinkaya & Yetkin, 2017, p. 265).

Social media, which is a product of new communication technologies, has become a more preferred medium with its features such as interaction, freedom, speed, feedback feature and time-saving features, unlike traditional media. From this point of view, social media and internet technologies have been a very useful alternative environment for them that have difficulties to show themselves and take part in traditional media. They create profiles on social media and communicate with the media workers directly in order to prevent the media from being indifferent while announcing their activities

and introducing themselves. In addition, social media sites make the communication within the organization faster and more open to participation. Moreover, they can reach any audience to their target audience in a very short time with this new media (Onat, 2010, p. 107-108).

Karaoğlu (2016, p. 69-74), listed social media usage purposes of NGOs as providing information, building a community and mobilizing them. Non-governmental organizations use media to inform people with different needs about their activities. In addition, they can find volunteers through social network applications and announce their help to the general public. With social media usage it becomes easier to create a community. Non-governmental organizations share social media about donations and aids and try to enable others to talk about them and create a community. In this way, both donations and aids will attract more people's attention and the communities created will provide more donations. After providing information to audiences, it becomes easier to activate them.

There are previous studies on the use of social media by non-governmental organizations. In these studies, it is seen that they are trying to reach for what purposes they use social media and which public relations models they use while using social media. Waters and Jamal analyzed the Twitter accounts of 27 institutions they selected from the list of charity 200, based on four models of public relations. The main finding is that institutions base their posts on their Twitter accounts on a one-way communication process (Waters & Jamal, 2011). Onat, examined the Facebook and Twitter accounts of non-governmental organizations, and found that the efforts of institutions to be featured in traditional media were equal to those in social media. It was concluded that the institutions analyzed aimed to use the two-way symmetric public relations model in their social media accounts and partially achieved their goals (2010). Saatçioğlu, examining the use of social media by non-governmental organizations in terms of strategic communication, found that the institution has adopted a two-way communication (2017).

Lovejoy and Saxton examined the Twitter accounts of 100 leading non-governmental organizations in the United States and found that they use the accounts of the institutions for information purposes. They found that most of the institutions used Twitter accounts to provide information about themselves, to promote their institutions, and to mobilize against the problems in the society. (2012). Kanilmaz, met with 10 volunteers to study the public relations activities of the Turkish Foundation for Education volunteers (TEGV) and found that some of the volunteers think that social media practice should be given greater attention. Volunteers have been found to be a key point for bringing new volunteers to NGOs, and public relations activity has reached more people through volunteers. The key findings are that non-governmental organizations should pay attention to their accounts in social media practices to volunteer (2017). Çetinkaya and Yetkin studied Facebook and Instagram accounts by three environmentally-based NGOs with a high social media participation rate, and found that organizations used their social network accounts to become pressure groups (2017).

Smith, concluded that non-governmental organizations use social media applications to provide information, create action and community. The information function includes the institutions to announce the news about them to their target audience. The action function includes donations, fundraising and voluntary participation in activities. Community function covers behaviors aimed at establishing dialogue with people and building a community within a subject (Smith, 2018). Auger, found that non-



governmental organizations use social media applications to convince people in line with their own point of view by following a one-way communication process. It also found out that institutions use their Twitter accounts to express appreciation and appreciation (Auger, 2013). It was found that non-governmental organizations in China use social media applications to share information, create community and mobilize resources (Zhou & Pan, 2016; Gao, 2016; Fu & Zhang, 2019). Seo, Kim and Yang revealed in their studies that, non-governmental organizations use their social media motivation to create resources and support the image of the organization. In addition, they found that online public relations activities should be expanded to include more different types of media (2009).

### 3. Method

In this part of the study, Twitter accounts of the Red Cross societies in the G7 countries and the Turkish Red Crescent will be compared in terms of public relations activities. The selection of these institutions is due to the fact that the Turkish Red Crescent is one of the oldest non-governmental organizations in Turkey, and that there is too much of the institutions that are equivalent to the Turkish Red Crescent abroad as a comparison is made. The social media accounts of the institutions covered in the study have been analyzed. The analysis result has been achieved that all institutions are actively using Twitter accounts. Therefore, the study examined enterprises' Twitter accounts only. It was found that the Twitter accounts of the institutions examined in the study had a lot of followers and shared a lot of messages about themselves. The general views of the institutions and how actively they use Twitter are discussed in detail in the findings section. According to the findings of the study, it was seen that the institutions mostly shared their Twitter posts for informing people about their activities.

Non-governmental organizations' Twitter accounts are analyzed with content analysis method. The definition of content analysis is described as numerical analysis of written or verbal symbols and re-conversion of these numerics to verbal data (Şahin, 2010, p. 189). Looking at another definition, the most basic process in content analysis is to combine concepts that demonstrate the same characteristics with each other in a specific meaning, and to edit and interpret them in a way that readers understand (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013, p. 259).

The coding table was inspired by the work of, (Yeniçikti, 2016) study called "Instagram as a Public Relations Tool: A Research on 50 Companies Using Social Media" and (Demir, Tarhan, & Görkemli, 2019) study called "Public Relations and Social Media in Civil Society Organizations: Case of Turkish Red Crescent and LÖSEV". The distribution of the content shared by non-governmental organizations on their Twitter accounts will give information about the purposes of Twitter usage of the institutions. The content of the Twitter sharing categories and the content of the comments received by the institutions were coded in order to obtain an objective result. These coding charts are presented at the end of the study.

#### 3.1. Subject, Aim, Importance and Research Question of the Research

The subject of this study is to compare the social media accounts of the Red Cross organizations and the Turkish Red Crescent, one of the oldest NGOs of Turkey. For this purpose, the sharing contents of the organizations on their Twitter accounts will be examined and evaluated in the scope of public relations. The main aim is to find answers to the questions of how non-governmental organizations use Twitter in developed

countries and whether there are similarities and differences in the usage of this media in Turkey. With this study, the Red Cross Societies of the G7 countries, which constitute 64% of the global wealth, and the Turkish Red Crescent's Twitter accounts will be examined comparatively. The fact that the Turkish Red Crescent has not previously compared with the G7 countries Red Cross societies with their Twitter accounts, is a feature that increases the importance of the study.

It is possible to sort the questions to be assessed under the investigation as follows.

1. What are the general Twitter views of the institutions surveyed in the research?
2. What is the content distribution of messages that organizations surveyed in the research share on their Twitter accounts?
3. What is the type of visual content used by research surveyed institutions on Twitter posts?
4. What is the distribution of messages from surveyed institutions on Twitter accounts based on days and hours of work?
5. What is the content of comments that are posted to Twitter posts by organizations reviewed under the investigation?
6. What are the different aspects of the institutions examined under the research that are similar to and differ from the Turkish Red Crescent Twitter account?

### 3.2. Universe and Sample of the Study and Limitations

The universe of the research is the Red Cross societies of the developed countries and the Turkish Red Crescent. The sample of the study consists of Germany, Italy, France, America, England, Japan and Canada, which are known as G7 countries constituting the 64% of net global wealth. Due to Twitter being in an ever-changing structure, the oldest date shared by institutions was considered the beginning of the review. The data of the study covers six months between 01.05.2019 and 31.10.2019.

## 4. Findings

In this part of the study, the institutions will first be evaluated in terms of the types of posts, the content of the posts, the distribution of the posts by time and days, the comments on the posts and the responses of the organizations to the posts. Then, all institutions within the scope of the research will be compared with the Turkish Red Crescent.

### 4.1. General View of the Institutions' Twitter Accounts

In Table 1 below, the Twitter accounts of all institutions will be evaluated.

**Table 1.** General View of Institutions Twitter Accounts

Institutions	Tweets	Followers	Followings	Corporate Logo	Web Site Link	Lists
Turkey	24.500	832.000	224	√	√	-
Germany	8.067	103.000	1.480	√	√	1
France	19.300	351.000	5.252	√	√	38
Italy	9.379	85,900	731	√	√	3
United States	7.403	5.330.000	38.500	√	√	3
United Kingdom	30.500	246.000	3.671	√	√	11
Japan	1.033	36.700	29	√	√	-
Canada	14.900	155.000	20.500	√	√	12

In terms of the number of tweets shared, the British Red Cross takes the first place with 30.500 tweets and the Turkish Red Crescent with 24.500 tweets follows it. The least tweeted NGO was the Japanese Red Cross with 1.033 tweets. Considering the number of tweets, it can be said that British Red Cross and Turkish Red Crescent use the application effectively.

When followers are taken into consideration, American Red Cross comes first with 5.33 million people and Turkish Red Crescent follows it with 832.000. The institution with the lowest number of followers is determined as the Red Cross of Japan with 36.700. According to the people followed by the institutions, the American Red Cross made the most follow-ups with 38.500. The Canadian Red Cross follows it with 20.500 people. The institutions following the minimum number of people are the Japanese Red Cross with 29 people and the Turkish Red Crescent with the number of 224.

When the institutions' Twitter accounts are examined, it is seen that each institution shares their website links in the information section order to allow users to reach their websites. In addition, the logos of all institutions are used as profile pictures on their Twitter accounts. This is thought to provide great convenience for users to find institutions on Twitter.

Finally, the lists shared by the organizations in their profiles are examined. The French Red Cross shared 38 lists and The Canadian Red Cross shared 12 lists. Also it is found that Japanese Red Cross and the Turkish Red Crescent don't have any lists. This is considered as a deficiency for these two institutions.

#### **4.2. Post Contents of Institutions**

In this section, totally 3.011 posts are examined in terms of their contents. The coding charts of the sharing contents of the institutions is presented at the end of the study. In addition, the other category of the table focused on the institutions' share of a political group, their condemnation messages and one-sentence tweets, such as yes and no.

In the light of the codes, it was seen that the Turkish Red Crescent shared more messages and content than other institutions in six months. The Canadian Red Cross with 522 shares and the British Red Cross with 442 shares follows Turkish Red Crescent. During the six-month period, the Japanese Red Cross has the least number of shares (only 73). Interacting with followers play an important role in public relations activities of institutions. Social media is a good opportunity for NGOs in this respect since they have limited resources. From this point of view; in terms of the number of Twitter shares in the six-month period, it can be said that the Turkish Red Crescent uses this media more effectively when compared with the Red Cross organizations of other countries.

In Table 2 it is seen that the Turkish Red Crescent's highest share is about informing its activities (37,4 %). However, it has the least number of sharing in the category called "the others" and in the "receiving/giving rewards" category with the rates of 0.48%. The Turkish Red Crescent has no messages on job postings, information sharing about diseases, information sharing about products, blog posts, and survey categories in the research period.

The German Red Cross shares most of its activities in the "information category" with a percentage of 98, and it has the least share in the "survey category" (0.24%). The Italian Red Cross's shares are mostly in "activities category" (18.63%) and it has the least share

in the category called “tbt” (0.24%) for a period of six months. It was observed that the Italian Red Cross has no shares in the following categories: “information about diseases”, “survey”, “blog posts” and “the mobile application”.

When the contents of the French Red Cross’s Twitter posts were examined, it is found that the highest share is made in the “information category” (18.82%) and the least number of shares are in the following categories with 0,51%: “giving/receiving awards”, “sharing about the president” and “tbt”. In addition, it is seen that French Red Cross has no sharing under the “blood donation”, “condolence/good wishes”, “mobile application”, “blog posts”, “information about the product” and “survey” categories.

“Activity information posts” has the highest share among the other categories in the American Red Cross’s tweets (18.21%) whereas “education” and “blog” posts are the least ones with 0,33%. In the six months period, no shares under the following categories are seen: “giving/receiving awards”, “conferences/congresses/exhibitions”, “posts about the president”, “visits/interview” and “surveys”.

The British Red Cross has its most posts in the “information category” (21.72%) and least posts in the “visit/interview category” (0.23%) during the research period. It also has no sharing in the categories of “receiving/giving awards” and “sharing about the president”.

**Table 2a.** Twitter Posts Content of the Accounts Reviewed

Post Contents	Turkey		Germany		Italy		France	
Blood Donation	18	%2,85	3	%0,72	8	%1,89	-	%0,00
Information	50	%7,92	30	%7,25	28	%6,60	25	%12,82
Donation	33	%5,23	30	%7,25	3	%0,71	5	%2,56
Activity	70	%11,09	15	%3,62	79	%18,63	16	%8,21
Activity Information	236	%37,40	62	%14,98	49	%11,56	19	%9,74
Special Day Celebration	14	%2,22	11	%2,66	9	%2,12	6	%3,08
News Sharing	56	%8,87	33	%7,97	31	%7,31	5	%2,56
TBT	6	%0,95	3	%0,72	1	%0,24	1	%0,51
Condolences/Good Wishes	9	%1,43	3	%0,72	2	%0,47	-	%0,00
Conference/Exhibition	28	%4,44	26	%6,28	60	%14,15	19	%9,74
Sharing About President	45	%7,13	15	%3,62	23	%5,42	1	%0,51
First Aid	7	%1,11	19	%4,59	12	%2,83	16	%8,21
Corporate Shares	27	%4,28	56	%13,53	45	%10,61	19	%9,74
Visit / Interview	7	%1,11	12	%2,90	6	%1,42	2	%1,03
Receiving/Giving Rewards	3	%0,48	4	%0,97	2	%0,47	1	%0,51
Greeting/Thanks	5	%0,79	11	%2,66	5	%1,18	19	%9,74
Volunteer Shares	4	%0,63	13	%3,14	11	%2,59	9	%4,62
Mobile Application	5	%0,79	5	%1,21	-	%0,00	-	%0,00
Education	5	%0,79	15	%3,62	22	%5,19	10	%5,13
Job Advertisement	-	%0,00	14	%3,38	2	%0,47	3	%1,54
Disease Information	-	%0,00	7	%1,69	-	%0,00	7	%3,59
Product Information	-	%0,00	2	%0,48	11	%2,59	-	%0,00
Blog Posts	-	%0,00	12	%2,90	-	%0,00	-	%0,00
Survey	-	%0,00	1	%0,24	-	%0,00	-	%0,00
Other	3	%0,48	12	%2,90	15	%3,54	12	%6,15
Total	631	%100	414	%100	424	%100	195	%100

**Table 2b.** *Twitter Posts Content of the Accounts Reviewed*

Post Contents	United States		United Kingdom		Japan		Canada	
Blood Donation	44	%14,57	2	%0,45	4	%5,48	-	%0,00
Information	41	%13,58	96	%21,72	4	%5,48	94	%18,01
Donation	5	%1,66	53	%11,99	6	%8,22	9	%1,72
Activity	3	%0,99	33	%7,47	7	%9,59	28	%5,36
Activity Information	55	%18,21	27	%6,11	11	%15,07	82	%15,71
Special Day Celebration	20	%6,62	28	%6,33	1	%1,37	20	%3,83
News Sharing	9	%2,98	4	%0,90	1	%1,37	13	%2,49
TBT	12	%3,97	15	%3,39	1	%1,37	13	%2,49
Condolences/Good Wishes	2	%0,66	8	%1,81	-	%0,00	5	%0,96
Conference/Exhibition	-	%0,00	6	%1,36	4	%5,48	14	%2,68
Sharing About President	-	%0,00	-	%0,00	2	%2,74	4	%0,77
First Aid	30	%9,93	27	%6,11	9	%12,33	101	%19,35
Corporate Shares	3	%0,99	17	%3,85	8	%10,96	8	%1,53
Visit / Interview	-	%0,00	1	%0,23	-	%0,00	-	%0,00
Receiving/Giving Rewards	-	%0,00	-	%0,00	1	%1,37	2	%0,38
Greeting/Thanks	11	%3,64	32	%7,24	2	%2,74	14	%2,68
Volunteer Shares	37	%12,25	20	%4,52	3	%4,11	27	%5,17
Mobile Application	13	%4,30	12	%2,71	-	%0,00	22	%4,21
Education	1	%0,33	12	%2,71	-	%0,00	22	%4,21
Job Advertisement	2	%0,66	8	%1,81	-	%0,00	16	%3,07
Disease Information	4	%1,32	4	%0,90	2	%2,74	8	%1,53
Product Information	3	%0,99	4	%0,90	1	%1,37	8	%1,53
Blog Posts	1	%0,33	3	%0,68	-	%0,00	-	%0,00
Survey	-	%0,00	19	%4,30	3	%4,11	6	%1,15
Other	6	%1,99	11	%2,49	3	%4,11	6	%1,15
Total	302	%100	442	%100	73	%100	522	%100

When the contents of the Twitter posts of the Japanese Red Cross were analyzed, the “activity information” category has the highest share with 15.07% and “product information”, “receiving / giving awards”, “news sharing”, “special day celebration” and “tbt” categories have the lowest share (1,37%). It has no post about condolence/good wish, visit/interview, mobile application, training, blog posts and job advertisement within six months. Finally, Canadian Red Cross has the highest share in the “first aid” category (19.35%) and the lowest share in “awarding and giving awards” with a percentage of 0.38%. It has been found that the Canadian Red Cross has no posts in the “blood donation”, “blog posts” and “visit/interview” categories.

Table 2 also shows that the Turkish Red Crescent generally shares more in four different categories than other institutions and it is among the top four institutions in terms of the number of shares in most categories. It is seen that Turkish Red Crescent does not share on different topics and categories like other institutions. It is observed that G7 countries made sweepstakes for their own brand products on their Twitter accounts. In order to attract the attention of the followers and interact with them, the Turkish Red Crescent can also organize such sweepstakes. In this way, it may attract the attention of its followers, increase the level of interaction and get the chance to inform users about its products.



### 4.3. Analysis of Posts by Content Types

In Table 3 below, the content types that the NGOs prefer to use during six months is examined. While sharing, institutions can express themselves only in writing, and differently, they also use visual elements. This section is coded based on the type of content featured in the posts. Turkish Red Crescent's prefer to use photos in their content with a rate of 63.07%. It is seen that the Turkish Red Crescent uses mostly photos and videos while creating its shares. Only text messages have a rate of 3.01% among all shares. As shown in Table 3, it was found that the Turkish Red Crescent never included the gif category of the posts in the six-month period.

When the G7 countries' NGOs are analyzed it is seen that all of them mostly prefer photo contents in their messages. The percentages of the these type of messages are as follows: the German Red Cross 48.79%, the Italian Red Cross 49.76%, the French Red Cross 42.56%, the American Red Cross 69.54%, the British Red Cross 48.87%, the Japanese Red Cross 72.60%, the Canadian Red Cross 66.09%. Links take the second place after photos in the German and the Italian Red Crosses with the rates of 31,40% and 29,48% respectively. However, in the other red cross organizations' messages, videos took the second place after photos (Table 3).

**Table 3a.** Distribution of Posts Shared by Institutions in Twitter

Post Types	Turkey		Germany		Italy		France	
Photo	398	%63,07	202	%48,79	219	%49,76	83	%42,56
Video	171	%27,10	44	%10,63	81	%19,10	45	%23,08
Text	19	%3,01	34	%8,21	7	%1,65	20	%10,26
Link Sharing	43	%6,81	130	%31,40	125	%29,48	12	%6,15
GIF	-	%0,00	4	%0,97	-	%0,00	35	%17,95
Total	631	%100	414	%100	424	%100	195	%100

**Table 3b.** Distribution of Posts Shared by Institutions in Twitter

Post Types	United States		United Kingdom		Japan		Canada	
Photo	210	%69,54	216	%48,87	53	%72,60	345	%66,09
Video	59	%19,54	143	%32,35	14	%19,18	82	%15,71
Text	5	%1,66	49	%11,09	5	%6,85	33	%6,32
Link Sharing	19	%6,29	14	%3,17	1	%1,37	23	%4,41
GIF	9	%2,98	20	%4,52	-	%0,00	39	%7,47
Total	302	%100	442	%100	73	%100	522	%100

### 4.4. Posts by Day and Time

In the tables 4 and 5 below, the shares of the institutions is evaluated according to days and time during the six-month period. Weekly working hours of the institutions were researched and daily working hours were determined accordingly. The time settings of the Twitter application were changed according to the time zone used by the countries in order to get accurate information while examining the shares of the institutions.

When the shares of all institutions in Tables 4 and 5 are examined in terms of day and time, a similarity is observed between the Turkish Red Crescent and other institutions. Most of the messages are sent during weekdays in all organizations and in working hours in all organizations except for Canadian Red Cross. Canadian Red Cross does not make a difference in working hours while sharing messages.

**Table 4a.** Evaluation of Twitter Posts of the Institutions Reviewed by Day

Sharing Days	Turkey		Germany		Italy		France	
Weekdays	441	%69,89	343	%82,85	318	%75,00	163	%83,59
Weekend	190	%30,11	71	%17,15	106	%25,00	32	%16,41
Total	631	%100	414	%100	424	%100	195	%100

**Table 4b.** Evaluation of Twitter Posts of the Institutions Reviewed by Day

Sharing Days	United States		United Kingdom		Japan		Canada	
Weekdays	270	%89,40	366	%82,81	70	%95,89	425	%81,42
Weekend	32	%10,60	76	%17,19	3	%4,11	97	%18,58
Total	302	%100	442	%100	73	%100	522	%100

**Table 5a.** Evaluation of Twitter Posts of the Institutions Reviewed by Time

Sharing Hours	Turkey		Germany		Italy		France	
In Work	408	%64,66	332	%80,19	292	%68,87	161	%82,56
Out of office	223	%35,34	82	%19,81	132	%31,13	34	%17,44
Total	631	%100	414	%100	424	%100	195	%100

**Table 5b.** Evaluation of Twitter Posts of the Institutions Reviewed by Time

Sharing Hours	United States		United Kingdom		Japan		Canada	
In Work	202	%66,89	318	%71,95	71	%97,26	276	%52,87
Out of office	100	%33,11	124	%28,05	2	%2,74	246	%47,13
Total	302	%100	442	%100	73	%100	522	%100

#### 4.5. Analysis of Comments

In this section, how many comments have been received and the contents of these comments are examined for six months and the results are shown in the Table 6 below. The contents of the categories in this section are explained in the coding schedule at the end of the study. As additional information, the other category in the table includes hate speech, slang and abusive content, and deviant speech.

A total of 4238 comments are included in the study within the time period studied. The institution that receives the most comments is the American Red Cross. This is followed by the Japanese Red Cross and the Turkish Red Crescent. When Table 6 is examined, the institutions that received the least comments on their Twitter accounts during the six-month period are the Italian Red Cross, the French Red Cross and the German Red Cross, respectively.

In the Turkish Red Crescent's comments, criticism takes first place with a rate of 33.77% and this is followed by 'asking questions' with a rate of 12.47%. In the German Red Cross's comments, expressing ideas take the first place with 14.10% takes the first place and asking questions follow it with 13.46%. Comments aiming to give congratulations and good wishes have the highest rates with 17.39% and 8.70% respectively in Italian Red Cross Twitter account: and this organization receives the least comments in the complaint category with a rate of 1.09%.

When the content of the comments that came to the Twitter account of the French Red Cross within the six-month period is examined, the most comments were made to express an opinion with a percentage of 19.38% and ask questions with a percentage of 13.18%. In the American Red Cross's Twitter account category of asking questions comes first with a rate of 19.04% and it is followed by the criticism category with a percentage of 18.91%. The comments for the British Red Cross's Twitter account are mostly expressing

ideas (32.70%) and then congratulating (8.89%). According to the findings, it is seen that thanking category comes first with 21.11% in the Japanese Red Cross's comments; and expressing ideas category follows it with 20.46%. Finally, in the Canadian Red Cross's Twitter comments, it was observed that the thanking category takes the first place with a rate of 19.28% and it is followed by the category of expressing ideas with a rate of 18.07%.

**Table 6a.** Contents of Comments on Posts

Comment Contents	Turkey		Germany		Italy		France	
Link Sharing	32	%3,53	11	%7,05	4	%4,35	8	%6,20
Request/wishes	30	%3,31	3	%1,92	2	%2,17	6	%4,65
Celebration	9	%0,99	1	%0,64	4	%4,35	3	%2,33
Information	37	%4,08	12	%7,69	6	%6,52	11	%8,53
Tags	89	%9,82	19	%12,18	2	%2,17	9	%6,98
Good Wishes	73	%8,06	7	%4,49	8	%8,70	1	%0,78
Criticism	306	%33,77	16	%10,26	6	%6,52	9	%6,98
Complaint	11	%1,21	5	%3,21	1	%1,09	3	%2,33
Thanking	23	%2,54	17	%10,90	6	%6,52	9	%6,98
Greeting	41	%4,53	9	%5,77	16	%17,39	15	%11,63
Advice	17	%1,88	4	%2,56	2	%2,17	3	%2,33
Emoji	17	%1,88	2	%1,28	8	%8,70	3	%2,33
Expressing an Idea	86	%9,49	22	%14,10	16	%17,39	25	%19,38
Question	113	%12,47	21	%13,46	6	%6,52	17	%13,18
Other	22	%2,43	7	%4,49	5	%5,43	7	%5,43
Total	906	%100	156	%100	92	%100	129	%100

**Table 6b.** Contents of Comments on Posts

Comment Contents	United States		United Kingdom		Japan		Canada	
Link Sharing	85	%5,47	12	%3,81	17	%1,85	11	%6,63
Request/wishes	66	%4,24	6	%1,90	40	%4,35	8	%4,82
Celebration	51	%3,28	6	%1,90	13	%1,41	2	%1,20
Information	58	%3,73	7	%2,22	80	%8,71	14	%8,43
Tags	46	%2,96	27	%8,57	33	%3,59	5	%3,01
Good Wishes	60	%3,86	21	%6,67	5	%0,54	6	%3,61
Criticism	294	%18,91	20	%6,35	73	%7,94	2	%1,20
Complaint	47	%3,02	4	%1,27	-	%0,00	3	%1,81
Thanking	201	%12,93	38	%12,06	194	%21,11	32	%19,28
Greeting	131	%8,42	28	%8,89	107	%11,64	17	%10,24
Advice	40	%2,57	5	%1,59	48	%5,22	5	%3,01
Emoji	52	%3,34	18	%5,71	34	%3,70	15	%9,04
Expressing an Idea	68	%4,37	103	%32,70	188	%20,46	30	%18,07
Question	296	%19,04	13	%4,13	61	%6,64	13	%7,83
Other	60	%3,86	7	%2,22	26	%2,83	3	%1,81
Total	1555	%100	315	%100	919	%100	166	%100

#### 4.6. Valuation of the Responses to the Comments

In Table 7 below, the number of responses given by the institutions to their comments and their contents is examined. It can be said that all the NGOs under the study have a very low rate in responding comments. The numbers of responses are as follows: Turkish Red Crescent 5, the German Red Cross 4, the Italian Red Cross 1, the French Red Cross 9, the American Red Cross 9, the British Red Cross 17 and finally the Canadian Red Cross

12. The Japanese Red Cross did not respond to any of the comments, therefore it is not included in the Table 7.

**Table 7a.** The Number of Responses of the Institutions Reviewed to the Comments Received on their Twitter Accounts and the Contents of the Answers

Respond Contents	Turkey		Germany		Italy		France		United States		United Kingdom		Canada	
Information	5	%100	2	%50,00	1	%100	5	%55,56	6	%66,67	9	%52,94	7	%58,33
Appreciation	-	%0,00	1	%25,00	-	%0,00	3	%33,33	3	%33,33	4	%23,53	2	%16,67
Link Sharing	-	%0,00	1	%25,00	-	%0,00	-	%0,00	-	%0,00	-	%0,00	-	%0,00
Photo Sharing	-	%0,00	-	%0,00	-	%0,00	1	%11,11	-	%0,00	-	%0,00	-	%0,00
Confirmation	-	%0,00	-	%0,00	-	%0,00	-	%0,00	-	%0,00	1	%5,88	1	%8,33
Apologizing	-	%0,00	-	%0,00	-	%0,00	-	%0,00	-	%0,00	-	%0,00	1	%8,33
Expressing an Idea	-	%0,00	-	%0,00	-	%0,00	-	%0,00	-	%0,00	-	%0,00	1	%8,33
Good Wish	-	%0,00	-	%0,00	-	%0,00	-	%0,00	-	%0,00	3	%17,65	-	%0,00
Total	5	%100	4	%100	1	%100	9	%100	9	%100	17	%100	12	%100

All these numbers are found very low when compared to number of comments received. Since social media allows interactive communication, having comments shouldn't be enough for organizations, taking into account these comments and replying them should be in higher rates. In order to have reputation in the eyes of its followers and provide a more positive image, all the organizations should respond more to the comments received on their accounts.

### Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendations

Today, institutions and organizations adopt the practices and innovations brought by the new media, unlike traditional media. New media applications have provided institutions with features such as reaching their target audiences whenever they want, eliminating time and space limitations, and delivering their activities to the maximum number of people in a very short time. Thanks to these new media applications, non-governmental organizations, whose resources are limited, convey their voices and their activities to many more people at low cost in a short time.

As can be seen in the literature, non-governmental organizations mostly use social media applications for information, action and community building (Fu & Zhang, 2019; Gao, 2016; Lovejoy & Saxton, 2012; Smith, 2018; Waters & Jamal, 2011; Zhou & Pan, 2016). In addition to these, although there are studies in the literature that non-governmental organizations manage social media applications using one-way communication (Waters & Jamal, 2011; Inauen, Schoeneborn, & Scherer, 2011; Seo, Kim, & Yang, 2009; Nordström, 2012), it has been found that they also use them to establish two-way communication in other studies (Onat, 2010; Ihm, 2015; Saatçioğlu, 2017).

When compared with other institutions examined, the Turkish Red Crescent is the institution that has the highest number of posts in six months, which means that the organization is successful in using this media effectively.

Like the other organizations, Turkish Red Crescent use mostly visual content such as photos or videos and this can be interpreted that these colorful messages can catch more attention of the followers, so this may be helpful for the organization to be followed easily. It is seen that the Turkish Red Crescent also shares contents on weekends and outside the working hours, which shows that the institution uses Twitter account without time limit, and that is good to establish limitless contact with target groups. The Turkish Red Crescent has the highest number of comments after the Japan Red Cross, and this shows followers are active in communicating with the organization. Criticisms and 'asking questions' have the highest percentage when compared to the other types of comments. These can be interpreted as an opportunity to directly answer the question and solve the problem in the first hand. Unfortunately, like other organizations under the study, the Turkish Red Crescent is not successful in replying comments during the period of the study. It can be interpreted that communication via Twitter is performed by the organization mostly for informative purpose with one-way communication rather than interaction. However, informative, clear and honest answers to the comments can be very helpful to create a positive image. As two-way communication is adopted, a more healthy communication can be established with all audiences. It has been observed that the Turkish Red Crescent uses its social media account mostly to convey information to people, to collect donations and to create a community. In this respect, it has been found that it is similar to the studies examined in the literature (Fu & Zhang, 2019; Gao, 2016; Lovejoy & Saxton, 2012; Smith, 2018; Waters & Jamal, 2011; Zhou & Pan, 2016; Seo, Kim, & Yang, 2009).

The prominent conclusion for the Canadian Red Cross is that it shares its posts almost equally in both weekends and weekdays. This shows that the institution uses Twitter account without time limit. Unfortunately, the Canadian Red Cross followers mostly don't receive answers to their comments; this is also a problem for the organization for having a one-way communication like the Turkish Red Crescent.

Like other institutions, the British Red Cross has shares in its account regardless of the day and working hours. Again, like all the institutions under the study, interaction to the comments is found insufficient for this organization. The British Red Cross has the highest responding number when compared to other NGOs under study. It responded to 17 out of 315 (0.5% only) comments during the study period, and that is very far for an optimum rate. As seen in other NGOs in the study, the American Red Cross and the Italian Red Cross actively use their Twitter accounts 7/24 for their posts. The similar problem of 'not answering comments' exists in these organizations, too. One-way communication problem exists in this interactive medium and interaction with people is almost never established.

It was found that the French Red Cross mostly shares messages on its Twitter account during work hours and weekdays. Unlike other institutions, it was observed that this organization goes to a limitation in terms of day and time while sharing. Like other Red Cross organizations and the Turkish Red Crescent, the French Red Cross preferred one-way communication by replying comments adequately. Shares are made for informing people only and interaction with users are kept to a minimum.

The German Red Cross has no time and day restrictions like most of the institutions under the study. The German Red Cross responded to four comments that came to its account within six months. This shows that the institution has adopted a one-way



communication system like other institutions, and there are problems in mutual communication with its followers.

Finally, almost all of the posts that the Red Cross of Japan share on Twitter account is during working hours and on weekdays in the research period. This shows that the institution has day and time limitations while sharing similar to the French Red Cross and different from other institutions. The institution did not respond to any of the comments that came to its shares during the period it was examined. This shows that the institution adopts a one-way communication and sends messages to its followers for informational purposes only. The use of the one-way communication process by the institutions has revealed the same result as the studies in the literature (Waters & Jamal, 2011; Inauen, Schoeneborn, & Scherer, 2011; Seo, Kim, & Yang, 2009; Nordström, 2012). The findings obtained in the study do not match the findings of Onat, and Ihm in terms of using two-way communication (Onat, 2010; Ihm, 2015; Saatçioğlu, 2017).

Social media provides institutions easily updated, cheap, time and place limitless and interactive medium to communicate with their target groups effectively. This study investigated Twitter usages of Red Cross organizations in G7 countries (to represent developed countries) and Turkish Red Crescent. It is seen that all the NGOs under the study used this medium effectively; however, the biggest deficiency is that they are not successful in answering the comments for the posts. Criticisms and complaints made to institutions should be taken into consideration and these can be a great opportunity for them to understand the audiences and take preventive steps in order to have more positive image and maintain healthy and sustainable communication.

This study is limited only for six-months period and Twitter accounts only. Including other NGOs, extending the time period and adding other social media accounts like Facebook and Instagram, can bring this study forward. By extending the study this way, it can be possible to have more comprehensive conclusions and recommendations.

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## Appendices

### Appendix-1. Coding Guide of Content Post

Coding Guide	
Content of Shares	Explanation
Blood Donation	It includes activities and shares about blood donation.
Information	It covers the posts about current natural disasters.
Donation	It includes general donations and private donations for a specific region.
Activity	It includes the social activities of institutions.
Activity Information	It includes information about periodic or annual activities.
Special Day Celebration	It covers the posts about special days celebrated in the world.
News Sharing	It covers regional, local and international news about institutions.
TBT	It includes the activities of the institutions in the past years.
Condolences/Good Wishes	It covers the posts about famous people or statesmen who passed away.
Conference/Exhibition	It covers the sharing of institutions about seminars, workshops, fairs, conferences and congresses.
Sharing About President	It covers the posts made about the heads of institutions.
First Aid	It covers the sharing of institutions for first aid information.
Corporate Shares	It covers the annual report of the institutions, public announcements, partnerships with other institutions.
Visit / Interview	It covers the visits of institutions to other institutions or visits to institutions.
Receiving/Giving Rewards	It includes awards given to institutions or awards given by institutions to other people.
Greeting/Thanks	It includes congratulations and thank you messages sent to institutions.
Volunteer Shares	It includes the sharing about the benefits provided by the volunteers working for the institution.
Mobile Application	It covers the shares of institutions about the applications they have developed for phones.
Education	It includes trainings such as swimming, first aid and lifeguards provided by institutions to the public.
Job Advertisement	It covers the job postings that organizations make to find the workforce they need.
Disease Information	It covers informative sharing that institutions make about infectious or hereditary diseases.
Product Information	It covers the shares about the products that institutions sell for certain fees.
Blog Posts	It includes informative blogs written by the employees of the institution.
Survey	It covers the surveys shared by institutions to get people's opinion on a subject.
Other	It includes the political posts of the institutions, condemnation posts, one-sentence tweets, etc.

**Appendix-2. Coding Guide of Comment Contents**

<b>Coding Guide</b>	
<b>Comment Contents</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
Link Sharing	It covers the links left as news, social network or video under the shares of the institutions.
Request/wishes	It covers the comments made to ask for donations, money and aid from institutions.
Celebration	It covers the activities of the institutions, trainings and comments made to celebrate their special days.
Information	It covers the comments aimed at explaining the points that are not understood in the shares of the institutions.
Tags	It covers the comments of people who tag third parties to the posts of institutions.
Good Wishes	It covers the comments of people who convey their good wishes to the institutions for their activities.
Criticism	It covers the comments made about the mistakes seen in the activities of the institutions.
Complaint	It covers the comments made to indicate the problems arising on the website or the mobile application and the bad behavior of the volunteers.
Thanking	It includes comments made to thank for donations and activities.
Greeting	It covers the comments made by the institutions as they show an open approach in corporate information they make.
Advice	It includes the comments with advice on donations and activities given to institutions.
Emoji	It covers the comments posted as emoji to the shares of institutions.
Expressing an Idea	It covers the comments that people think about the activities of the institutions.
Question	It includes comments that include the questions people ask about the topics they are curious about.
Other	It includes comments that include hate speech, slang ideas, and meaningless words.



# Sivil Toplum Kuruluşlarının Sosyal Medya Kullanımı: G7 Ülkelerinin Kızıl Haçları ve Türk Kızılayı Örneği

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## Genişletilmiş Özet

Sosyal medya günümüzde kurumlar için vazgeçilmez bir reklam ve tanıtım aracı olmuş durumdadır. Sosyal medyanın asıl başlangıcı Web 1.0'ın yerini Web 2.0'ın alması ile olmuştur. Web 2.0 teknolojisi Web 1.0'dan farklı olarak kullanıcılarına aktiflik sağlamış ve yeni çevrimiçi ortamlar yaratmıştır (Aslan, 2011, s. 1-5). Sosyal medya artık günümüzde kişiler tarafından en çok kullanılan uygulamalardan biri haline gelmiştir. Kişiler internet üzerinden sosyal medya sayesinde birbirleri ile iletişim kurup etkileşime geçebilme özelliği kazanmıştır. Bu siteler, kullanıcılar tarafından hazırlanan içeriklerin başkalarına iletebildiği internet siteleri olarak tanımlanabilir (Yağmurlu, 2011, s. 7). Günümüzde sosyal medya çoklu kullanım gibi özellikleri içinde barındırması sebebiyle kişiler tarafından tercih edilmektedir ve bu mecra sayesinde ürünler ve faaliyetler hakkındaki görüşlerini paylaşıp tartışma ortamları yaratabilmektedirler (Okay & Okay, 2014, s. 607).

Konuya sivil toplum kuruluşları açısından bakılacak olduğunda, kurumlar genel olarak gönüllülük esasına dayalı faaliyet sürdürdüklerinden dolayı maddi ve manevi kaynaklar konusunda kişilere bağımlı bir yapıda bulunmaktadırlar. Bu sebepten dolayı da sivil toplum kuruluşlarının yaptıkları faaliyetleri ve kendileri hakkında çıkan haberleri daha kolay, hızlı bir şekilde paylaşmaları için sosyal medya uygulamalarını bilinçli ve doğru bir şekilde kullanmaları gerekmektedir. Bilinen bir gerçektir ki Türkiye'de sivil toplum kuruluşlarının faaliyetleri artmış olsa da kurumlar istenilen bir seviyeye ulaşmakta hala sıkıntı çekmektedir (Okay, 2008, s. 125). Kurumların bu sıkıntılarının büyük oranda giderilmesi için, alanında uzman halkla ilişkiler ve medya çalışanlarına ihtiyaç duymaktadırlar. Etkili halkla ilişkiler faaliyetleri sayesinde hedef kitlenin ve toplumun güvenini kazanan sivil toplum kuruluşları, saygınlığını arttırabilirler ve kişilerin sosyal faaliyetlere katılımını büyük ölçüde arttırabilmektedirler (Özdemir & Yamanoglu, 2010, s. 5).

Bu çalışmanın temel amacı sivil toplum kuruluşlarının Twitter uygulamasını halkla ilişkiler açısından nasıl kullandıklarını incelemektir. Çalışma kapsamında küresel zenginliğin %64'ünü elinde tutan G7 ülkelerinin Kızıl Haçları ve Türkiye Türk Kızılayı kurumları 01.05.2019 ve 31.10.2019 tarihleri arasında incelenmiştir. Elde edilen bulgular halkla ilişkiler bakış açısından ele alınmıştır. Çalışmada ilk olarak kurumların Twitter hesaplarının genel görünümüne ve attıkları tweet sayılarına bakılmıştır. Hesaplar incelendiğinde İngiltere Kızıl Haçı'ndan sonra Türk Kızılayı'nın Twitter hesabında en fazla paylaşım yapan ülkelerden biri olduğu görülmektedir. Twitter hesabında diğer kurumlar gibi web sitesi için bir link bulunmaktadır. Bu da kişilerin bilgi almak, bağış yapmak vb. durumlarda web sitesine kolayca ulaşmasını sağlamaktadır. Kurumun Twitter hesabının genel görünümünde oluşan tek eksik diğer kurumların aksine belirli konularda hiç listesinin olmamasıdır. Diğer kurumlar ile karşılaştırıldığında Türk Kızılayı altı aylık süre içinde en fazla paylaşımı yapan kurumdur. Bu da sosyal medya hesabını aktif bir şekilde kullandığını göstermektedir.

Kurumların paylaşımlarına zaman ve günler açısından bakıldığında genel olarak mesai saatleri içinde ve hafta içi günlerde paylaşımlar yaptıkları görülmüştür. Bunun yanı

sıra azımsanamayacak derecede hafta sonu ve mesai dışı paylaşımları olduğuna da rastlanmıştır. Bu da kurumların sosyal medya hesaplarından biri olan Twitter'ı hedef kitlesine ulaştırırken zaman ve gün gözetmeksizin 7/24 kullandığını göstermektedir. Kurumların hesaplarında yaptıkları paylaşımlara gelen yorumlar kısaca değerlendirilecek olursa Türk Kızılayı Japonya Kızıl Haçından sonra altı aylık sürede en fazla yorum alan kurum olmuştur. Bu ise kurumun hesabını takip eden kişilerin kurum ile iletişime geçmekte herhangi bir sorun yaşamadıklarını göstermektedir.

Son olarak kurumların paylaşımlarına gelen yorumlara verdikleri cevaplar incelenmiştir. Kurumlardan İngiltere Kızılhaçı altı aylık süre boyunca gelen yorumların 17 tanesine cevap vererek takipçileriyle en çok iletişime geçen kurum olarak ilk sırada yer almaktadır. Bunu ise 12 yorum ile Kanada Kızıl Haçı takip etmektedir. Türk Kızılayı gelen yorumların sadece 5 tanesine cevap vermiştir. Kurumların paylaşımlarında çok fazla yorum bulunmasına karşın yorumların çok azına cevap vermeyi tercih ettikleri görülmüştür. Bu ise takipçileri ile iletişim kurarken tek yönlü bir iletişim sisteminin benimsendiğini göstermektedir. İnternetin bu kadar geliştiği ve kullanıcılarının etkileşim konusunda herhangi bir sıkıntı yaşamadığı günümüzde tek yönlü bir iletişim sistemi benimsemenin kurumlar için doğru bir yaklaşım olmayacaktır. Çift yönlü bir iletişimde takipçiler yaptığı yorumlara kurum tarafından cevaplar geldiğinde kendini daha önemli hissedebilir ve kuruma aidiyet daha da güçlenebilir. Bu ise kurumlar için olumlu sonuçlar doğuracaktır.

Kurumların yorumlara verdikleri cevap içeriklerinde ise genel olarak bilgilendirme amacı güttükleri görülmüştür. Bu konuya halkla ilişkilerin dört modeli kapsamında bakıldığında, kurumların daha çok kamuoyu bilgilendirme modelini benimsediklerine ulaşılmıştır.

Sosyal medya uygulamaları kullanıcılarına daha etkin bir şekilde iletişim kurma özelliği, daha ucuz ulaşım, zaman ve mekandan bağımsızlık, herhangi bir sınırı olmayan bir ortam sunmaktadır. Çalışma kapsamında incelenen tüm sivil toplum kuruluşlarının sosyal medya uygulaması olan Twitter'ı etkin bir şekilde kullandıklarına ulaşılmıştır. Fakat inceleme sonucunda saptanan en büyük eksiklik kişilerin yorumlarına cevap verme konusunda başarısız olmalarıdır. Kurumlar kendilerine yapılan eleştirileri, istekleri ve önerileri değerlendirip göz önünde bulundurmamalarıdır. Bu eleştiriler ve önerilere verilen cevaplar kurumların takipçileri karşısında daha olumlu bir imaj elde etmelerine yardımcı olacaktır.

Örnekleme dahil olan sivil toplum kuruluşlarının Twitter hesaplarının sadece altı aylık bir süre için incelendiği bu çalışma, farklı sivil toplum kuruluşlarını dahil ederek, daha uzun sureyi kapsayan bir zaman diliminde araştırma yapılarak ve Twitter dışında diğer sosyal medya hesapları değerlendirilerek daha da ileriye götürülebilir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Halkla İlişkiler, Sivil Toplum Kuruluşları, Sosyal Medya, Twitter, G7 Ülkeleri.

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In this study, the rules stated in the "**Higher Education Institutions Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Directive**" were followed.