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EVALUATION OF SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE OF UNIVERSITIES IN TURKEY: A QUALITATIVE APPLICATION FOR TWITTER POSTS

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Abstract

Social media platforms can be described as the most important communication tools of the digital age. Using social media comes to forefront as a new norm in terms of increasing the institutional reputation and globalization of universities. Thanks to social media, universities catch an opportunity of communicating with current and new students, as well as to develop new projects, collaborations and other scientific research with individuals or institutions in many parts of the world. While many posts with different content are shared in the social media accounts of universities with thousands of followers, only the content that is deemed valuable by other social media accounts can create interaction. For this reason, the increase in content that is not considered valuable by the followers can reduce the effectiveness of the social media account. In this direction, within the scope of this research, it is intended to examine Twitter accounts of universities with content analysis method and to compare the posts made between universities. Based on this purpose, the findings obtained by examining the Twitter accounts of the ten universities with the highest globalization score in Turkey between April and September 2021 were examined on the basis of a systematic categorization and the findings were evaluated. According to the research findings, it has been concluded that the focus of posts on social media accounts of universities in Turkey consists of promotion and information activities. It has been observed that posts about academic activities were limited. It is predicted that universities' differentiation and enrichment of the content of their posts will increase the effectiveness of their social media accounts, and it is recommended to universities to include more scientific studies in the posts.

Keywords: *Social Media, Universities, Twitter, Social Media Usage, Content Analysis*

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TÜRKİYE'DEKİ ÜNİVERSİTELERİN SOSYAL MEDYA KULLANIMLARININ DEĞERLENDİRİLMESİ: TWITTER PAYLAŞIMLARINA YÖNELİK NİTEL BİR UYGULAMA

Öz

Sosyal medya platformları, dijital çağın en önemli iletişim araçları olarak görülmektedir. Üniversitelerin kurumsal itibarının yükselmesi ve küreselleşmesi açısından sosyal medyanın kullanılması yeni bir norm olarak ön plana çıkmaktadır. Sosyal medya sayesinde üniversiteler, mevcut ve yeni öğrencilerle iletişim kurmanın yanı sıra dünyanın pek çok farklı bölgesindeki bireyler veya kurumlarla yeni projeler, işbirlikleri ve diğer bilimsel araştırmalar geliştirebilme fırsatını elde etmektedir. Üniversitelerin binlerce takipçiye sahip sosyal medya hesaplarında farklı içeriklere sahip pek çok paylaşım yapılmakla birlikte, yalnızca diğer sosyal medya hesapları tarafından değerli görülen içerikler etkileşim yaratabilmektedir. Bu nedenle, takipçiler tarafından değerli görülmeyen içeriklerin artması sosyal medya hesabının etkinliğini düşürebilmektedir. Bu doğrultuda, çalışma kapsamında üniversitelerin Twitter hesaplarının içerik analizi yöntemiyle incelenerek yapılan paylaşımların üniversiteler arası kıyaslanması amaçlanmıştır. Bu amaçtan yola çıkarak, Türkiye'de en yüksek küreselleşme skoruna sahip on üniversitenin Nisan – Eylül 2021 tarihleri arasında Twitter hesaplarından yaptığı paylaşımlar sistematik bir kategorizasyon temel alınarak incelenmiş ve elde edilen bulgular değerlendirilmiştir. Araştırma bulgularına göre, Türkiye'deki üniversitelerin sosyal medya hesaplarındaki paylaşımlarının odağının tanıtım ve bilgilendirme faaliyetlerinden oluştuğu sonucuna ulaşılmıştır. Akademik faaliyetlerle ilgili paylaşımların ise sınırlı sayıda olduğu görülmüştür. Üniversitelerin; paylaşımlarının içeriklerini farklılaştırmalarının ve zenginleştirmelerinin sosyal medya hesabının etkinliğini arttıracakları öngörülmekte olup yapılan paylaşımlarda bilimsel çalışmalara daha fazla yer verilmesi önerilmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sosyal Medya, Üniversite, Twitter, Sosyal Medya Kullanımı, İçerik Analizi

INTRODUCTION

Since the beginning of the 21st century, with the technological developments and the rapid integration of the internet into the lives of individuals, communication has almost evolved and individuals all over the world have started to move away from traditional approach in connecting with each other. Increase in number of mobile communication devices and disappearance of time and place constraints in communication via the internet are seen as the main reasons for this evolution.

With the increase in mobile communication tools, another new concept that is included in the lives of individuals is social networking sites. Social networking sites; which enable individuals to receive education, to share their developments, to express their opinions about a phenomenon such as a social event, someone else's sharing, a product or service they have experienced, to experience shopping, and many more (Batool, Ahmed, Mahmood, & Saeed, 2021), are not only for individuals to communicate but also allows them to see their whole lives from a different perspective.

A social network is “a model which consists of nodes and arcs, where nodes represents individuals and organizations that are in relationship and arcs represents the source of that relationship such as friendship, knowledge, social status, professional life etc.” (Mata & Quesada, 2014, p. 59). Although individual pages come to mind first when social networking sites are mentioned, increasingly institutions also use social networking sites as “a way to reach their target markets, establish real-time dialogue with their consumers, build trust and motivate them” (Tirkkonen & Luoma-aho, 2011).

Social media, which contains nearly all previous communication tools, enables businesses to create and publish a content totally unique to themselves, to reduce dependency on journalists and television broadcasters, to get a chance to have an active interaction with target audiences, receive direct and fast reactions from target audiences, reduce financial costs associated with printing promotion materials, produce video and audio videos and broadcast them in the desired length and in the desired style, to broadcast specific for target audiences, to publish content without time restrictions (Çerçi, Canöz, & Canöz, 2020, p. 184). Considering today's conditions, universities, which are institutions that should be pioneers in following technological developments due to the fact that they target young people, should also use social media tools effectively to benefit from these opportunities.

When the existing literature is examined, it is seen that especially the studies of universities on the use of social media deal with 3 basic issues: how social media affects academic performance, the usefulness of social media as an academic tool, the use of social media as a communication and social tool to improve stakeholder engagement. However, studies dealing with the content of the posts made by universities on social media and the reflection of these three basic areas on the posts are thought to be quite limited. In this direction, this study will bring a different perspective to the literature by contributing to the determination of which content the universities in Turkey use social media.

This study, which is based on the view that young people increasingly see social networking sites as a means of expressing themselves and connecting, and that universities are increasingly understanding the importance of social networking sites in reaching their target markets, is aimed to investigate Twitter accounts of universities, which is a social networking site, by content analysis method and to compare the posts among universities. A systematic way will be followed to achieve this aim, and first of all, social media and marketing and usage of these two by universities will be conceptually examined and theoretical foundations will be established. In the following, the content analysis will be detailed. With presentation of results of study, it is aimed to be a useful resource for those who do research on usage of social media, both in theory and practice.

SOCIAL MEDIA AND MARKETING

Nowadays, the increasing popularity and usability of social media have become remarkable issues for many researchers. Besides, the rise in social media tools that affect the way people and institutions communicate, collaborate, find and share information draws attention. How individuals and institutions used and how they can use social media, which is a technology that has penetrated many people's lives, is also the focus of new research initiatives (Donelan, 2016, pp. 706–708).

Social media is “a general term that encompasses a wide variety of online platforms and applications that allow users to communicate, collaborate, interact and share data”. Therefore, it “encompasses easily accessible web tools that individuals can use to talk about, participate, create content, give advice and benefit from information, as well as react online to what is happening around them” (Grosbeck & Holotescu, 2011, p. 148). From a more basic perspective, social media means “a group of internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0 and allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content” (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010, p. 61). Ellison et al. (2007, p. 1143) also defines social media as “a set of internet-based services where individuals can connect with other people in a way that they fit into a system in a publicly or semi-open publicly surrounded by certain rules, create their own connection lists and monitor the shares made by their connections”. Carr and Hayes (2015, p. 50), by expanding the definition a bit further, expressed social media as “internet-based channels that allow users to opportunistically interact and selectively self-present, either in real-time or asynchronously, with both broad and narrow audiences who derive value from user-generated content and the perception of interaction with others.” Applications, such as Instagram and Flickr (online photo-sharing site), Wikipedia (information, reference), Facebook and Myspace (social network), Twitter (microblog), Delicious (marking, tagging), Telegram, YouTube, and World of Warcraft (online game), come to the fore as common social media examples (Ajina, 2019, p. 1514; Drury, 2008; Kotler & Armstrong, 2018, pp. 520–521).

Social media, which is seen as one of the main reasons for the change in the form of communication between individuals, has also led a new communication process development between businesses and consumers. Tired of being talked to, consumers want businesses to listen, engage and respond appropriately (Kietzmann, Hermkens, McCarthy, & Silvestre, 2011, p. 250). For this reason, one of the areas where social media caused the most change has been marketing. Although traditional marketing activities have changed and developed with the developing technology, it has brought a new transformation in application of social media marketing activities. Actually, development of new media channels caused density of media marketing applications to increase from 17% to 70% by the 2000s (Tuten, 2008, p. 19).

Social media is “a channel that attracts consumers' attention, influences their ideas, attitudes, and purchasing decisions by providing information informs them, and allows them to communicate and evaluate post-purchase from a marketing perspective” (Mangold & Faulds, 2009, pp. 358–359). Social media, which provides access to large audiences at low cost to individual users and institutions, allows simultaneous archiving, consumption, and sharing of user experiences and information. This situation, by eliminating the dimensions of time and space, allows for increasing interaction between users (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2010, p. 313). In addition, institutions that carry out activities to highlight their differences and strengths in social media compared to their competitors can increase their brand awareness thanks to this way. In this direction, they aim to reach the target audience by getting support from opinion leaders and to increase their reputation by enabling their consumers to interact (Brown, 2008, p. 63; Mills, 2012, p. 165). Thanks to the products approved by the opinion leaders, both the attention of the consumers is drawn and the message and the product remain in the memories for longer periods (O’Mahony & Meenaghan, 1997, p. 16; Ohanian, 1991, p. 48).

Another important reason why social media has come to the fore in terms of marketing is that consumers can share their positive thoughts and experiences, as well as convey their negative comments (Çalışkan & Mencik, 2015, p. 258). (Yavuz & Haseki, 2012, p. 127). Also, consumers can share own opinions about products and services and share their experiences with each other (Sabuncuoğlu & Gülay, 2014, p. 3). Today, many consumers examine user comments on social media before purchasing a product or service. Similarly, they share their views about the product or service with other social media users. For this reason, the rapid spread of ideas and opinions in social media has made it a necessity for institutions to follow consumers' experiences and expectations more closely and to continue their activities in this direction. Thanks to the mutual communication advantage provided by social media, the involvement of consumers in the process of presenting products according to the wishes and needs of consumers, and developing and testing the product allow organizations to have some control over social media (Constantinides, 2014, p. 42).

Social media also offers consumers the opportunity to benefit from special discounts and take advantage of special offers (Clark & Melancon, 2013, p. 135). The ease of reaching the target audience through social media tools allows businesses to offer campaigns through these platforms. It may also be possible for potential customers to test the products and services of the business in line with these campaigns and to share their positive experiences with other social media users. The fact that social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn have a high number of active users on a global scale today makes politics, sports, art, health, etc. for many areas, it becomes the channel where communication with the society is used most intensively (Demirtaş, 2022, p. 103).

In summary, social media, in terms of marketing activities, has some basic advantages as well as bringing disadvantages to the fore. Low cost, direct access to the target audience, the realization of a friendly environment between businesses and consumers, providing the opportunity to measure and evaluate, rapid feedback to users' sharing, and access to fast and up-to-date information are seen as the main advantages (Eröz & Doğdubay, 2012, p. 136; Gilbert & Karahalios, 2009, p. 2; Vural & Bat, 2010, p. 3372). On the other hand, the main disadvantages that come to the fore are the rapid spread of posts in social media and difficulty of control, alienation of users from real social environments, the negative effects of negative criticism on the reputation and quality of brands, and the uncontrolled spread of fabricated news or false information and news (Vural & Bat, 2010, p. 3372).

SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE OF UNIVERSITIES

With social media platforms, societies started to define the ways of communication and collaboration different than past. They accepted a new web-based perspective with new technologies and also used this new opening in higher education sector, which provides a huge amount of knowledge through technology (Wankel, 2009, p. 253). Social media platforms offer the academic community an easy alternative to traditional teaching approaches. Thence, social media platforms emerge as a novel communication and cooperation instrument in higher education institutions (Roblyer, McDaniel, Webb, Herman, & Witty, 2010, p. 134). Promotion, sharing corporate news and events, announcing social responsibility campaigns, creating and transferring information for effective orientation programs that will motivate new students are the main purposes for universities to use social media (Çakaröz, 2018, p. 817).

Social media is becoming more significant every passing day when it is concerned to stakeholder participation. According to a study conducted by Hootsuite (2019), 98 percent of higher education institutions are using social media when content sharing considered. In addition, it has been concluded that social media is an important tool in students' university preferences. This situation has gained such importance that 41% of university officials attribute the university preferences of students to the activities of universities on social media. These findings, on the other hand, reveal how effective social media platforms are when considered as a brand awareness tool.

According to another study by Statista (2019), Facebook was chosen as the most popular social media platform used for marketing purposes by educational institutions worldwide in 2019. In addition, 93% of the educational institutions participating in the research use the site for marketing purposes. Instagram (83%), Twitter (68%) and YouTube (55%) stood out as other popular channels. More than 50% of educational institutions stated that they started using these platforms in the last 12 months before the survey. The increasing importance of social media and the different opportunities presented by social media tools have caused educational institutions to use different social media platforms too.

Studies on social media and higher education literature are defined under three main headings (Saraite-Sariene, del Mar Gálvez-Rodríguez, Haro-de-Rosario, & Caba-Perez, 2019, p. 1153). The first major study topic is how social media use affects academic performance (Chawada et al., 2010; Liu & Tsai, 2012). Second, in relation to academic engagement, it covers studies on the usefulness of social media as an academic tool and expectations from social media (Benson & Morgan, 2018; Dabbagh & Reo, 2011; Selwyn, 2012). The third area of study focuses on the use of social media as a communication and social tool to improve stakeholder engagement (Constantinides & Zinck Stagno, 2011; de Aguilera Moyano, Batlle, Fernández, & others, 2010; Easa, 2019; Sutherland, Davis, Terton, & Visser, 2018).

In general, there is a view in the literature that IT extinguishes all time and space obstacles on higher education and that social media systems, especially, are an apparent mechanism by which higher education can expand its geographical reach in the face of financial complications (Manlow, 2010, p. 47; Siemens & Matheos, 2010, p. 8). Also, beyond specific learning and teaching practices, the literature indicates a number of uses for social media by universities, including “marketing, student recruitment, alumni connection, student support services, library services, student counseling, and general communication with the wider community” (Palmer, 2013, p. 342). The use of social media in university education, with adding a collaborative dimension to teaching, improves interaction and communication between everyone involved in the teaching-learning processes, and increases student experience by encouraging participation (Mostafa, 2015, p. 144). Therefore, at a time when universities are facing increasing competition to attract and retain the best students, social media is seen as a more suitable way of interaction between the corporations and its components, including current students, student candidates, parents, alumni, and community members (Peruta & Shields, 2017, p. 131, 2018, p. 179; Voss & Kumar, 2013, p. 157).

Social media is widely used in the current educational context and has a significant impact on academic communication (Al-Daihani, Al-Qallaf, & AlSaheeb, 2018, p. 412). In this direction, more and more universities realize the benefits of using technology as a teaching tool and integrate technological approaches into the teaching process to complement traditional teaching approaches (Moghavvemi, Sulaiman, Jaafar, & Kasem, 2018, p. 38). Thanks to the sharing and content related to research and teaching opportunities, communication among academicians and between academicians and students is increasing.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Twitter and Instagram can be listed as two major social media platforms which universities are using extensively in recent years. Many posts with different contents are made on the social media accounts of universities which have thousands of followers. Content that is considered valuable by other social media accounts can create interaction. On the other hand, the increase in content that is

not considered valuable by the followers may reduce the effectiveness of the social media account. In this direction, within the scope of the study, it is aimed to examine the Twitter accounts of the universities with the content analysis method and to compare the posts made between universities. Due to time constraints, universities in the top 10 in Turkey in the "2022 Best Global Universities" ranking (U.S. News & World Report, 2021) were included in the sample of the research. The posts of these universities on their Twitter accounts between April and September 2021 were examined and the findings were evaluated.

Table 1: Best Global Universities in Turkey

Ranking (Turkey)	Ranking (World)	Name of The University	Twitter Account Name	Account Opening Date	Global Score
1	197	Boğaziçi University	UniBogazici	06.2011	62,6
2	453	Middle East Technical University	odtulugenclik	09.2013	52,2
3	486	İstanbul Technical University	itu1773	07.2010	50,7
4	511	Hacettepe University	Hacettepe1967	04.2010	49,9
5	557	İzmir Institute of Technology	iyteedutr	05.2011	48,6
6	614	Bilkent University	BilkentUniv	11.2009	47,2
7	648	Ankara University	AnkaraUni	04.2011	46,2
8	714	İstanbul University	istanbuledutr	03.2010	44,1
9	733	Koç University	kocuniversity	01.2012	43,4
10	847	Çukurova University	cuhabermerkezi	12.2012	40,4

Reference: U.S. News & World Report, 2021

Universities in the top 10 in Turkey according to the globalization score calculated on the basis of the criteria as “global research reputation, regional research reputation, publications, books, conferences, normalized citation impact, total citations, number of publications that are among the 10% most cited, percentage of total publications that are among the 10% most cited, international collaboration – relative to the country, international collaboration, number of highly cited papers that are among the top 1% most cited in their respective field and percentage of total publications that are among the top 1% most highly cited papers” and their global rankings are shown in Table 1. In addition, the Twitter account names of universities and the opening dates of these accounts are also included in the table. Boğaziçi University, which has the highest globalization score of 62.6, opened its Twitter account in 2011. Bilkent University (İhsan Doğramacı Bilkent University), which first opened a Twitter account, has a globalization score of 47.2.

FINDINGS AND EVALUATION OF THE RESEARCH

The Twitter accounts of the universities included in the study were examined and the posts were evaluated by content analysis method. First of all, the descriptive information about the Twitter accounts of the universities and the number of posts were examined which can be seen at Table 2. In the examination, it is seen that the university with the highest number of followers is Ankara

University. On the other hand, the university that shared the most in the 6-month period was Istanbul University.

Only 3 universities have accounts in a foreign language. The fact that all universities have an account in a foreign language is seen as an important step to be taken in line with the goal of globalization. In terms of developing global communication and collaborations and increasing the recognition of the university on a global scale, having an account sharing in a foreign language is seen as an advantageous factor.

Table 2: Descriptive Information About Universities Twitter Accounts

Ranking (Turkey)	Name of The University	Number of Accounts Followed*	Number of Following Accounts*	Number of Tweets Posted (6 Months)	Number of Tweets (Average Daily)	Account in Foreign Language
1	Boğaziçi University	77	129.013	225	1,23	unibogazici_en
2	Middle East Technical University	4	165.883	153	0,84	---
3	Istanbul Technical University	187	80.967	628	3,43	itu1773en
4	Hacettepe University	7	7.692	90	0,49	---
5	İzmir Institute of Technology	39	10.152	624	3,41	---
6	Bilkent University	25	79.798	29	0,16	---
7	Ankara University	43	282.304	271	1,48	AnkaraUni_en
8	İstanbul University	62	117.173	1320	7,21	---
9	Koç University	41	43.268	63	0,34	---
10	Çukurova University	2	7.080	302	1,65	---

Reference: Author's own elaboration

The Twitter accounts of the 10 universities included were examined and categorical distribution of their posts is summarized in Table 3. In the first stage of categorization, it is aimed to categorize the posts according to stakeholders who can be listed as “governing entities, administration, employees, clientele, students, suppliers, competitors, donors, communities, government regulators, non-governmental regulators, foundations, financial intermediaries, joint venture partners (Jongbloed, Enders, & Salerno, 2008, p. 309)”. However, while the categorization process was in progress, it was realized that the stakeholder-only approach would limit the study. Based on the view that there are many different topics such as information and promotions, special day celebrations, scientific events, scientific research, apart from the shares about the stakeholders, the categorization was expanded and finalized by the authors of the study.

During the examination of university accounts, categories were created considering the themes of the posts. In this part of the study, comparisons between universities will be made by explaining the scope of each category. Contrary to expectations, although Bilkent University and Koç University are foundation universities, they stand out as the accounts that post the least. It is possible to list the categories and the evaluations made for each category as follows.

- Posts Related to Promotion and Information: Posts made under this category include posts on topics such as campus life, departments and faculties, scholarship opportunities, dormitories, library, transportation, cafeteria, graduate and internship programs, student clubs, and part-time work opportunities. Of the 3,705 posts examined, 1,571 are under this category and have a share percentage of 42.4%. Among 1,571 posts, Istanbul University is in the first place with 988 posts, and Bilkent University is in last place with just 4.
- Posts Related to Ceremonies, Celebrations and Commemorations of Special Days and Persons: Official and religious holidays, commemorations of special days such as mother's day, teachers' day, academic year openings and ceremonies stand out as the themes of the posts in this category. In this category, which constitutes 8.02% (297) of the total posts, the account that posted the most belongs to İzmir Institute of Technology.

Table 3: Categorical Evaluation of Posts in Terms of Content

Post Category	UnitBogazici	odmugencelik	itu1773	Hacettepe1967	iyteedutr	BilkentUniv	AnkaraUni	istanbuludutr	kocuniversity	cuhabermerkezi	TOTAL	Percentage (%)
Promotion and Information	7	13	288	33	115	4	57	988	31	35	1571	42,40
Ceremonies, Celebrations and Commemorations of Special Days and Persons	9	24	23	23	59	9	43	51	1	55	297	8,02
Organized Scientific Events	3	10	30	3	99	2	23	73	2	34	279	7,53
Collaborations and Projects	14	17	44	3	106	1	23	31	4	18	261	7,04
Visits Made and Visitors Accepted	0	3	1	1	92	0	56	1	0	73	227	6,13
Graduation Ceremonies	1	1	30	3	15	8	20	13	4	60	155	4,18
Academic Achievements and Awards	12	14	25	3	46	2	3	26	12	10	153	4,13
Conservations and Interviews	12	4	66	15	21	0	11	9	6	0	144	3,89
News and Developments about Alumni	70	30	9	0	2	0	0	4	2	0	117	3,16
Scientific Research and Activities	0	6	13	0	9	0	3	68	0	4	103	2,78
News in the Media	13	10	16	0	39	0	5	2	0	0	85	2,29
Donation and Aid Campaigns	45	2	2	1	1	1	2	0	0	4	58	1,57
Evaluations on The Issues on The Agenda	5	2	21	1	0	1	6	9	1	3	49	1,32
Participation in Fairs, Festivals, and Exhibitions	0	0	14	1	17	0	9	3	0	5	49	1,32
Pandemic Conditions and Arrangements	22	6	5	1	1	1	4	1	0	0	41	1,11
Greeting and Thank You Messages	0	0	11	0	1	0	1	27	0	0	40	1,08
Culture, Art and Sports Events	6	5	3	1	0	0	3	9	0	0	27	0,73
Condolence Messages	1	0	13	1	1	0	2	5	0	0	23	0,62
Education and Training Activities	1	4	14	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	20	0,54
Appointments and Promotions	4	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	0,16
TOTAL	225	153	628	90	624	29	271	1320	63	302	3705	100,00

Reference: Author's own elaboration

- Posts Related to Organized Scientific Events: Scientific events such as congresses, seminars, symposiums, workshops, competitions, courses, panels and conferences organized by universities are the posts that make up this category. A total of 279 (7.53%) posts were made under this category, and İzmir Institute of Technology ranks first with 99 posts. Posts about organized scientific events has an important place in the globalization process of universities. In this direction, considering that the universities covered in the study are among the top 10 universities in Turkey in the "2022 Best Global Universities" ranking, it is thought that the post percentage of 7.53 is quite low. University with highest number of posts in this category is İzmir Institute of Technology with 99 posts, while Bilkent and Koç Universities have the least shares with 2 posts each.

- Posts Related to Collaborations and Projects: Collaborations, agreements and projects carried out by universities with internal and external stakeholders constitute the content of this category. This category, which stands out with 261 (7.04%) posts, not only contributes to the development of internal and external communication, but also paves the way for new academic studies with successful results. For this reason, more posts of universities in this category will help in line with the goal of globalization. İzmir Institute of Technology became the university that shared the most in this category with 106 posts. Bilkent University, on the other hand, ranks last in the category with only 1 post.
- Posts Related to Visits Made and Visitors Accepted: Under this category, visitors accepted to various units of the relevant institution from inside and outside the institution and visits made to other units or institutions representing the institution were examined. It is seen that the posts in this category are the 5th category with 227 posts and 6.13% among all categories. Considering the importance of in-house visits and accepted visitors in the development of corporate culture, inter-institutional visits and accepted visitors within the scope of developing cooperation and laying the foundations of new projects, especially in terms of the best global universities, the fact that this category is at the top shows that institutions are also aware of the importance of this category. While it is seen that İzmir Institute of Technology ranks first in this category with 92 posts, it has been determined that Boğaziçi University, Bilkent University, and Koç University did not make any posts in this category.
- Posts Related to Graduation Ceremonies: This category, which is seen to be in the sixth place with 4.18 percent and 155 posts, generally includes the date and time announcements made before the graduation ceremony and video and picture sharing from the graduation ceremonies. Considering that the data collected within the scope of the research includes the posts made on the Twitter accounts of given universities between April and September 2021, it was inevitable that the number of posts in this category would be quite high in percentage, since these dates coincided with the graduation ceremony dates. In this category, Çukurova University has the highest share with 60 posts, while Boğaziçi University and Middle East Technical University are in the last place with one post each.
- Posts Related to Academic Achievements and Awards: While this category constitutes 4.13% (155) of the total posts, the achievements and awards of the institution, staff and students constitute the content of this category. However, considering that the primary goals of universities in general are to produce and disseminate academic knowledge, it is thought that the number of posts under this category has a share in increasing the corporate reputation. İzmir Institute of Technology has the highest share with 46 posts, and Bilkent University has the lowest share with 2 posts.

- Posts Related to Conservations and Interviews: Under this heading, there are interviews and discussions with experts in the field, both inside and outside the institution. Posts under this category is very important in terms of dissemination of information. The posts under this category, which make up 3.89% of the total posts, can also be beneficial, especially in the development of collaborations outside the institution. Conservations and interviews are also an indication that universities are social and cultural development institutions besides their academic qualifications. While it is observed that Istanbul Bilgi University is the universities with the most posts in this category, with 66 posts, Bilkent University and Çukurova University do not have any posts in this category.
- Posts Related to News and Developments about Alumni: With 85 posts and 2.29 percent, the ninth place among all categories is news and developments about alumni. Posts about graduates' news and developments generally include the academic achievements of graduates and their achievements in business life. It can be thought that the success achieved by the graduates somehow reflects the quality of the university's education. Accordingly, it is thought the posts in this category are very important in terms of both announcing the success of the university and attracting successful potential students to the university. While the university that shared the most news and developments about its alumni was Boğaziçi University with 70 posts, Hacettepe University, Bilkent University, Ankara University, and Çukurova University did not share any posts in this category.
- Posts Related to Scientific Research and Activities: This category, which is in the tenth place, constitutes 2.78 percent of all posts with 103 posts. Under this category, there are scientific researches and activities that the university or academicians working at the university have carried out or are currently conducting, and Istanbul University ranks first with 68 posts in this category. Boğaziçi University, Hacettepe University, Bilkent University, and Koç University do not have any posts in this category.
- Posts Related to the News in the Media: The posts made under this category include the posts in the media about the university such as the social responsibility project carried out by the university and remarkable academic practices. A total of 85 posts are classified under this category and they correspond to 2.29 percent of the total posts. In this category, İzmir Institute of Technology has the highest number of shares with 39 posts. Hacettepe University, Bilkent University, Koç University, and Çukurova University did not post in this category.
- Other Post Categories: Posts about donation and aid campaigns, evaluations on the issues on the agenda, participation in fairs, festivals, and exhibitions, pandemic conditions and arrangements, greeting and thank you messages, culture, art and sports events, condolence messages, education and training activities, and appointments and promotions seen as post categories below 2%

among the posts made by universities. Among all posts, these 9 categories have a total of 8.45 percent. Universities that share the most and the least share for each category differ as in other categories.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

With the developing technology, individuals, societies, businesses, universities and even governments act according to the requirements of the digital age. In this age, where communication is getting easier, establishing and developing new relationships also has become easier. This change offers new opportunities to institutions, such as universities, which are seen as knowledge repository, as well as individuals. By improving communication with individuals or institutions in many different parts of the world, universities can turn to new projects, collaborations or scientific research that may benefit in the future. In this way, universities, which have the opportunity to increase their corporate reputation on a global scale, turn to tools that can express and promote themselves. The most important tools that the digital age has offered at this stage have been social media platforms.

Social media, which has become a part of daily life in the digital age, has a very high importance in terms of increasing the institutional reputation and globalization of universities. With the increase in the recognition of universities on a global scale, it will be possible to develop new collaborations and academic research in the future. In this direction, the increase in the sharing of the criteria, such as “global research reputation, regional research reputation, publications, books, conferences, normalized citation impact, total citations, number of publications that are among the 10% most cited, percentage of total publications that are among the 10% most cited, international collaboration – relative to country, international collaboration, number of highly cited papers that are among the top 1% most cited in their respective field and percentage of total publications that are among the top 1% most highly cited papers”, that come fore in globalization process will also increase effectiveness of universities in the use of social media. For this reason, sharing about academic activities should be brought to the fore even more.

According to the research findings, it is seen that universities in Turkey do not emphasize these criteria enough. On the contrary, it has been concluded that focus of posts of universities on their social media accounts is directed to promotion and information activities. It will be more accurate for universities to support promotional and information activities with posts that will highlight their academic and scientific studies, in order to be among the global universities of the future.

When the results of the research are examined, another striking point is the posts about the stakeholders, which are thought to have an important relationship with the success of universities. As can be seen from the categorization results,

universities basically share information about themselves. Many universities do not use social media effectively to reflect their relations with their stakeholders. However, considering that the relations of universities with their existing stakeholders will shape their relations with their potential stakeholders, it is thought that they should be more active in this field.

The increasing usage of social media should be viewed as a big opportunity for universities. It is recommended that universities give more space to scientific studies in the posts made on social media accounts. In addition, the differentiation and enrichment of the content of the posts will also increase effectiveness of the social media account. In addition, realization of more international cultural events and the promotion of these events to the world will also help increase the global reputation of universities, which can be considered as businesses. In this direction, it is thought that universities should create a new account that posts in a foreign language.

Today, when social media can be seen as one of the main tools of communication technology, this study evaluates the effectiveness of universities in this process. In this direction, it is anticipated that the study will lead to future studies in this field.

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