

Why don't we share? Social networks and privacy concerns, a comparative analysis of academics of communication field in Türkiye and Malaysia

Neden paylaşıyoruz? Sosyal ağlar ve gizlilik endişeleri, Türkiye ve Malezya'daki iletişim akademisyenlerinin karşılaştırmalı bir analizi

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Abstract

While Social Network Sites (SNSs) allow users to share content, some users may sometimes deliberately limit what they share for various reasons. The present research focuses the concerns about what academics share on SNSs in the field of communication in Turkey and Malaysia. Adopting a mixed-method approach, the collection of quantitative data through questionnaires was followed by in-depth interviews with the participants. The findings obtained from both data collection tools were evaluated and the relation between the qualitative and quantitative data was discussed. The results showed that privacy awareness and self-censorship scores were similar in both countries. The privacy concern scores of Malaysian academics were higher than the respondents from Turkey, their concerns focusing on the followers. The concerns of respondents from Turkey about the use of shared information by third parties were higher than their Malaysian counterparts. Academic identity was found as a restrictive factor for social media sharing in both countries. In addition, regulation in the religious field was recommended by the respondents of Malaysia. The findings overall emphasized the significant differences between these two contexts.

Keywords: Social networking sites (SNSs), self-censorship, privacy concern, sharing, mixed method

Öz

Sosyal Ağ Siteleri (SNS'ler), kullanıcıların içerik paylaşmasına izin verir ancak kullanıcılar bazen çeşitli nedenlerle kasıtlı olarak paylaşımlarını sınırlandırabilir. Bu araştırma, Türkiye ve Malezya'daki iletişim alanındaki akademisyenlerin sosyal ağlardaki paylaşımları ile ilgili endişelere odaklanmaktadır. Karma yöntem yaklaşımı benimsenerek, nicel verilerin anket yoluyla toplanmasının ardından katılımcılarla derinlemesine görüşmeler yapılmıştır. Elde edilen bulgular değerlendirilerek

nitel ve nicel veriler arasındaki ilişki tartışılmıştır. Gizlilik bilinci ve otosansür puanları her iki ülkede de benzerdir. Malezyalı akademisyenlerin mahremiyet kaygısı puanları Türkiye'den yanıt verenlere göre daha yüksektir ve kaygıları takipçilere odaklanmaktadır. Türkiye'den yanıt verenlerin endişeleri, paylaşılan bilgilerin üçüncü şahıslar tarafından nasıl kullanıldığı konusunda daha yüksektir. Akademik

kimlik her iki ülkede de sosyal medya paylaşımlarında kısıtlayıcıdır. Ayrıca Malezyalı katılımcılar dini alanda düzenleme yapılmasını önermişlerdir. Söz konusu bulgular, iki ülkenin sosyal medya kaygılarında önemli farklılıklar olduğu vurgusunu ortaya koymaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sosyal ağ siteleri, otosansür, mahremiyet endişesi, paylaşım, karma yöntem

Introduction

Thousands of posts are shared on Social Network Sites (SNSs) every minute (Data never sleeps 10.0, 2022). On the other side, users' concerns about the misuse of their personal data are increasing (We are social, 2022). It is estimated that the users may leave public platforms and choose more private ones (such as Signal, Whatsapp) due to such ongoing debates as gathering data, privacy concern, and disinformation on SNSs (Kesvani, 2021). Additionally, it should also be considered that users feel pressure from their followers, which may be another factor that limits sharing.

The aim of this research is to find out the users' reasons for limiting their sharing on SNSs and self-censorship practices. It adopts the explanatory sequential design, among the types of mixed methods designs. The data was collected in two different phases. In the quantitative phase, users' opinions about self-censorship, privacy concern, privacy awareness, online information management, perceived vulnerabilities, concerns about follower's level were tested. In the qualitative phase, the problems and solutions of participants on SNSs were focused. The qualitative phase was conducted as a follow up to further explain the quantitative results.

In literature review, it was found that there is a limited number of research focusing on self-censorship on SNSs in Turkey and Malaysia. In addition, it was observed that the research comparing the limitation of sharing on SNSs in these two countries is scarce. Thus, the present study is significant with its findings regarding the differences between countries.

Concerns about SNSs and cultural differences

The passive use of social media (passive use refers to looking at content from others (Pagani, Hofacker & Goldsmith, 2011), resulting from the concerns about how it is used,

is one of the topics being discussed in the modern world (Li et al., 2022; Mak et al., 2022; Stevic et al., 2021). Limiting user sharing on social media, which is indeed intended to be a public space, can be considered as a barrier to the freedom of expression, necessitating the identification of the users' concerns. Most of the research about social media concerns has been associated with privacy (Bright & Lim, 2021; Cain & Imre, 2021,). Considering the huge amounts of personal information shared and stored online, it is very common for users to feel uncomfortable about what they share (posts and stories). While studies on the impact of privacy concerns on social media use generally focused on institutions, companies and governments (Bauman and Lyon, 2013; Lyon, 2013; Zuboff, 2021) across the world are not the only ones to monitor the users. While there are studies researching corporate and government concerns, few studies have concentrated on social peers to examine the relationship between such a concern and the use of social media in a comprehensive way (Jozani et al., 2020). The present study contributes to the field by addressing both institutional and peer concern from an intercultural perspective. Privacy on social media is a problem associated with the manageability of information (Margulis, 2003). Therefore, how personal information is managed and whether its manageability results in the limitation of sharing are among the questions in need of an answer. In comparison to privacy, information management remains under researched. According to Lambillotte et al. (2022), when the system becomes personalized, the perception of control decreases and leads to privacy concerns. Therefore, it can be stated that the sharings decrease on the platforms where the perceived control concern increases. To solve the manageability of information problem, studies have focused on the design for user-centered privacy choices (Feng et al., 2021). However, there are a limited number of studies in the literature about the information management methods which reduce the security concerns of users on SNSs and how these methods affect their concerns.

Self-censorship and surveillance on Social Network Sites

A precaution of concern about sharing on SNSs is self-censorship. Self-censorship on SNSs is defined as "a behavior that causes people to avoid or modify self-disclosures because of fear of negative social consequences" (Warner & Wang, 2019, p. 376). Two reasons of self-censorship could be stated as surveillance from either governments or companies as well as interpersonal surveillance. With a broader perspective, the surveillance of companies and governments are the collection of data from citizens or consumers for classification purposes. Thus, the conditions of the country where the users live can pose

limitations on their sharing (Parks et. al., 2017; Stoycheff, 2016). Interpersonal surveillance, on the other hand, relates to users watching each other. There are different terms related to interpersonal surveillance, such as interpersonal electronic surveillance (Tokunaga, 2011), lateral surveillance (Andrejevic, 2004), social surveillance (Marwick, 2012), mobile surveillance (Ngcongong, 2016), and participatory surveillance (Albrechtslund, 2008). In brief, some users limit their sharing due to potential criticism from others.

There are different studies on the reasons behind abstaining from sharing on social media. The reasons for not sharing were clarified under the spiral of silence theory (Gearhart & Zhang, 2015; Noelle-Neumann, 1974). One reason for limited sharing relates to political posts (Kwon et. al., 2015). Personality traits can also be effective in limiting sharing (Bäck et. al, 2019; Chen, 2018). Other reason of not sharing on SNSs is the problem of conflicting social spheres. It refers to the fact that communications are simultaneously visible to multiple audiences within a social network, as commonly occurs on SNSs (Marder et. al., 2012). It can be related with interpersonal surveillance as the users may choose to limit what they share because of their followers (Das & Kramer, 2013; Marder et. al., 2016; Marwick & Boyd, 2011; McLaughlin & Vitak, 2012; Sleeper et. al., 2013). Another reason of limiting posts is cyberbullying (Gearhart & Zhang, 2014; Van Royen et. al., 2017). Users may also limit their sharing due to the privacy concerns (Hargittai & Marwick, 2016).

Existing studies have pointed out different reasons for self-censorship (Kutlu, 2019; Yılmaz et. al., 2017; Yılmaz & Soylu, 2015; Tosunay & Çolak, 2016; Erdoğan, 2020). In Malaysia, to the best knowledge of the researchers, no research study has been conducted on the self-censorship applied by users on social media. In addition, the review of studies concentrating on the academics' practices indicated that social media for academics is a place for both gathering information and posting information. However, academics fear that their activities on social media are monitored (Aktas et. al., 2019). Some studies show that academics are targeted from members of their own field about what they share (Cain et. al., 2019; Carter Olson & LaPoe, 2018; Doerfler et. al., 2021; Teixeira da Silva, 2021; Väliverronen & Saikkonen, 2021). Furthermore, academics sharing posts online could present a potential hindrance in getting a scholarship (Tanczer et. al., 2020) and some academic institutions can criticize academics' posts on SNSs (Cox, 2020).

In the related literature, culture has been frequently discussed within the context of the relationship between technology use and user concern (Abokhodair & Hodges,

2019; Chai, 2020; Lowry et al., 2011; Zhong et al., 2022). Most of studies focusing on the difference between the two cultures based on the concern of social media use have compared the USA and the Far East countries (Bellman et al., 2004; Wang et al., 2011; Zhong et al., 2022). The studies indicated that culture is an important factor in determining social media concerns. However, culture is shaped by different demographic determinants (Abokhodair & Hodges, 2019; Zhong et al., 2022). A study on the ethical concerns experienced by Arabs and non-Arabs while sharing online has revealed that the fabric of Arab and Muslim culture in general is different and that it can be alarmingly undermined by unexpected and unwarranted disclosures (Mutambik et al., 2022). As evidenced by Mutambik et al. (2022), it is necessary to address different cultures in studies related to the concerns experienced in the use of social media.

Concern about SNSs in Turkey and Malaysia

The concerns experienced by the users are growing along with the use of social media. According to Wearesocial's Global 2022, 33.2% of the population is concerned about the misuse of their personal data. According to the same research, these numbers are 27.1% for Turkey and 36.3% for Malaysia (We are social, 2022). This raises two important questions: Why are users so concerned and what are the reasons for the difference between countries? Social media as a socialization agent, which promotes the creation of different communication environments and shapes different human perceptions in different societies (Zhong et al., 2022). Thus, it can become an area where we are influenced as users and sometimes concerned all the group of users we communicate with (Jozani et al., 2020). As such, concerns may sometimes lead to passive use of social media.

The review of related literature in Turkey and Malaysia shows that the number of studies about privacy concern and self-censorship in both contexts is limited. The review of social media use in Malaysia have pointed out that privacy concerns are quite high (Huang et al., 2020; Suki et al., 2002; Turner & Amirnuddin, 2018), but the reasons are not been comprehensively questioned. Another study in Malaysia discovered that social networking sites users' perception of the negative consequences of threats affects their information privacy concerns. According to this research, users use privacy measures on social networking sites (Mohamed & Ahmad, 2012). Abdulahi, Samadi and Gharleghi (2014) remarked that participants were unaware of the privacy policies of these platform and did not know how their personal data could be shared.

Studies applied in Turkey have shown that although social media users feel uncomfortable about sharing their personal data, they continue to share it by taking some precautions (Gökalliler & Saatçioğlu, 2020). Privacy concerns in the context of online shopping were discussed, and it was found that fear of reputation and financial loss affected personal information sharing (Avçılar et al., 2021). Another study about online shopping showed that the fear of online identity theft increases online privacy anxiety, which has a negative impact on online purchasing behavior (Akdeniz & Dursun, 2021).

Aim and Methodology

The present research focuses on the concerns about sharing content and security problems on SNSs. Explanatory sequential design among the mixed method designs was employed in the study (please see Appendix 2).

Aim

The present study focuses on the reasons behind limiting content sharings on SNSs and aims to observe whether geographical and cultural differences have a role in the perception of privacy concerns and the solutions.

The research questions addressed in this study are as follows:

Quantitative research hypotheses

- H1.** There is no significant difference in the level of self-censorship between Turkey and Malaysia.
- H2.** There is no significant difference in the level of privacy concern between Turkey and Malaysia.
- H3.** There is no significant difference in the level of privacy awareness between Turkey and Malaysia.
- H4.** There is no significant difference in the level of perceived vulnerabilities between Turkey and Malaysia.
- H5.** There is no significant difference in the level of information management between Turkey and Malaysia.
- H6.** There is no significant difference in the level of concerns about followers between Turkey and Malaysia.

Qualitative research questions

1. What are the concerns of academics about their posts on social media?
2. What kind of solutions do academics develop regarding their concerns?

Mixed method question

How do the qualitative data explain the quantitative results?

Methodology

Research Design

The study employed mixed-method research design, a research process in which researchers combine quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis methods (Plano Clark & Ivankova, 2018, p. 56). Explanatory sequential design was adopted in the study started with quantitative research and qualitative being further used to explain the quantitative results (Creswell, 2021, p. 38). Depending on the purpose, deeper understanding is provided in the quantitative results.

Sampling

The participants of the study consist of academics in the field of communication in Turkey and Malaysia. The research is designed as a premise of research on understanding the barriers to sharing on social media in two countries. The field of communication is a faculty/department that deals with social media usage habits and concerns. For this reason, academics in the field of communication were assumed to have digital literacy and were chosen as the sample.

Quantitative sampling

Non-random sampling was used for the quantitative section of the study. Two different flows of procedures were followed to determine the sample for the administration of the questionnaire in the two countries. For the sampling of Turkish respondents, a database was created by collecting the email addresses of academics via YÖK Atlas by Python. The email addresses in the universities outside of Turkey (such as TRNC, Sarajevo, Kyrgyzstan) were extracted. The questionnaire prepared on Survey Monkey was sent to the 2,071 email addresses that constitutes the research population. The final sample generated from the online survey was 227 completed questionnaires.

Regarding Malaysia, samples of Malaysian academics were generated through the official database of Malaysian Association of Communication Educators (MACE), (www.macemalaysia.org). The association currently consists of 170 members. The questionnaire was developed using Survey Monkey and was shared on the official WhatsApp group of the association. The academics were invited to participate and to share the questionnaire link with their colleagues who are not members of the association, as well as their researchers and assistants. The final sample generated from the online survey was 101 completed questionnaires.

There is a sample difference between the two countries. Although there is a database that reaches the total number of communication academics in Turkey, it was not available in Malaysia. However, it can prove important to point out the population difference when considering these numbers. While the population of Malaysia was 33,359,217 at the time of this research, the population of Turkey was listed as 86,512,500 (Worldometer, 2022).

Qualitative sampling

Two criteria were determined for the participation in the in-depth interviews. In line with the criteria, the participants who answered the questionnaire and volunteered for the interview were invited for in-depth interviews. Maximum variation sampling was chosen for qualitative sampling.

In-depth interviews were conducted online with 26 participants from Turkey and nine participants from Malaysia via Zoom. Since the number of participants interviewed was not equal, the distribution of codes in the qualitative analysis was based on frequency. For each participant, a tree was donated to the Turkish Foundation for Combating Erosion, Reforestation, and the Protection of Natural Habitats (TEMA), with the "plant a tree" certificates being sent to the email addresses of the participants.

Data collection tool

Warner & Wang (2019)'s measurement scale was used to collect the quantitative data. In addition, seven items were added to the scale based on the "concern about followers" items in the article of Marder et al. (2016). The scale was adapted into Turkish for the

participants from Turkey, whereas an English version of the scale was used for participants from Malaysia. For the pretest, the scale was shared with ten academics in the field of communication, their comments subsequently being evaluated. The questions were revised based on suggestions. The questionnaire was distributed through the Survey Monkey online platform after the revision of the questions based on the suggestions by the academics.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the two groups of participants to collect the qualitative data. All interviews were audio recorded with the consent of the participants.

Procedure

The survey developed for the study was sent to the academics. Using MS Excel, the data obtained was cleaned, transformed, and made ready for analysis. Then, reliability analysis, t-Test, and logistic regression analyses were performed using the SPSS. As a result of the reliability analysis, the reliability values of all factors were above the limit value of 0.7.

The data were collected between June 28 and July 14, 2022, in Malaysia and between May 26 and June 23, 2022, in Turkey.

While 26 participants attended in-depth interviews in Turkey, only the data obtained from 25 interviews were analyzed. One participant was removed from the interview sample since they had no personnel SNSs account. The interviews were organized between June 17 and July 6, 2022, in Turkey and between August 10 and 23, 2022, in Malaysia.

The interviews were converted into texts via VoiceDoc. The transcriptions were checked by the researchers and edited. The interviews were then analyzed through thematic analysis using MAXQDA 2022.

There are different definitions for reliability in qualitative studies. According to Gibbs, qualitative reliability indicates that the researcher's approach is consistent across different researchers and among different projects. Gibbs suggested several qualitative reliability procedures (Creswell & Creswell, 2021, pp.201-202). Based on these suggestions, the procedures used to ensure the reliability of the research are as follows: the transcripts were checked to make sure that they do not contain mistakes made during transcription;

coders discussed codes and cross-checked for intercoder agreement; during the coding period, the coders held regular weekly meetings and compared their analyses; and the codings were checked to avoid any shift in the meaning of the codes.

After the analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data was completed, it was discussed how the qualitative data explained the quantitative data. The research design and the whole research process is given as a summary in Figure 1 and 2.

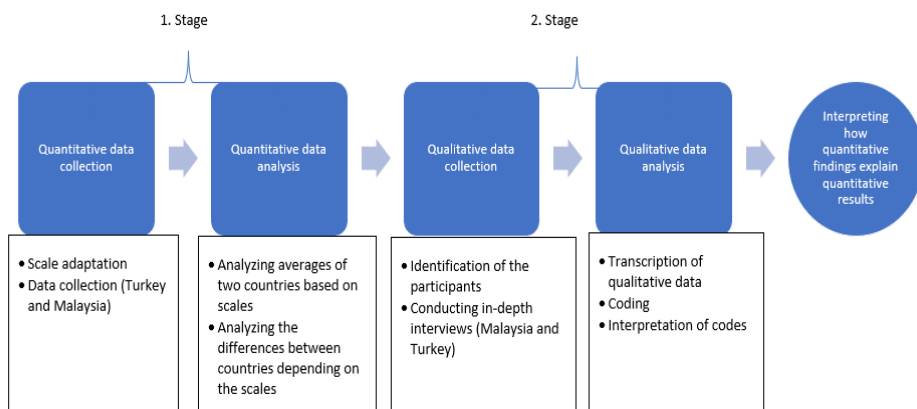


Figure 1: Research design

Ethics committee approval was received from the ethics committee of Istanbul Commerce University (No: E-65836846-044-245639 – Date: 11.04.2022).

Findings

Quantitative Analysis

The demographic data of the respondents (i.e., age, gender, and type of university) is given in Table 1.

Table 1: Respondents' profile

Country	f	Age	f	Gender	f	Type of university	f
Turkey	227	18-29	22	Female	123	State	152
		30-44	141	Male	103	Private	75
		45-59	57				
		60+	7				
Malaysia	101	18-29	24	Female	61	State	60
		30-44	52	Male	38	Private	41
		45-59	15				
		60+	9				
Null			1		3		0
Total	328		328		328		328

For the survey, consent of the participants was obtained prior to the detailed examination of their responses. If the respondent left even only one question blank, all responses given by the participants for the factor were left out. The reliability test for the six factors is presented in Table 2. The reliability test results showed that all factors were reliable with Cronbach's Alpha values higher than 0.70, as suggested in the literature.

Table 2: Reliability test results

Factor	Items	Valid	Excluded	Cronbach alpha
Self-censorship	4	326	2	0.799
Privacy Concern	6	296	32	0.934
Privacy awareness	4	327	1	0.764
Perceived Vulnerabilities	4	324	4	0.904
Information Management	4	326	2	0.907
Concerns about Followers	6	323	5	0.955

As the first step, it was evidenced that the sample showed a normal distribution and did not include any outliers. Then, the mean differences of the factors of the academics in two different countries were examined with the t-Test method. While interpreting the t-Test results, attention was paid to the homogeneous or heterogeneous distribution of variances as a result of the Levene Test, thus ensuring that all assumptions were valid. The results obtained regarding the hypothesis H_0 (There is no significant difference between the two countries in the mentioned factor mean) can be seen in Table 3. Though there was a difference between the sample sizes of the respondents of the two countries, the results of t-test were convenient since all assumptions were correct.

Table 3: T-test results

Factor	Sig.	Mean Diff (Turkey -Malaysia)	H ₀
Self-censorship (H1)	0.243	0.46	Accepted
Privacy Concern (H2)	0.001	-2.411	Rejected
Privacy Awareness (H3)	0.368	-0.307	Accepted
Perceived Vulnerabilities (H4)	0.035	0.901	Rejected
Information Management (H5)	0	6.758	Rejected
Concerns about Followers (H6)	0	-10.475	Rejected

As shown in Table 3, there was no significant difference between the averages of the two countries in terms of self-censorship and privacy awareness scales. The privacy concerns score of Malaysian academics is -2.411, with the concerns about followers score being -10,475, both higher than their Turkish counterparts. On the other hand, the perceived vulnerabilities and information management scores of Turkish academics are 0.901 and 6.758, respectively, both higher than their Malaysian counterparts.

After the t-Tests, logistic regression was performed over the factors in order to predict the country of the respondent. As a result of the tests carried out to determine whether the necessary assumptions were met for logistic regression, it was seen that the sample met all the assumptions and logistic regression was conducted. In logistic regression, the country of the participant was taken as the dependent variable, and the self-censorship, privacy concern, privacy awareness, perceived vulnerabilities, information management, and concerns about followers factors were taken as the independent variables. The model summary can be seen in Table 4.

Table 4: Logistic regression analysis variables

Factor	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Self-censorship	-0.251	0.082	9.469	1	0.002	0.778
Privacy Concern	0.014	0.043	0.105	1	0.746	1.014
Privacy Awareness	-0.104	0.102	1.048	1	0.306	0.901
Perceived Vulnerabilities	-0.082	0.072	1.301	1	0.254	0.921
Information Management	0.351	0.066	28.148	1	0	1.42
Concerns about Followers	0.223	0.044	25.252	1	0	1.25

There are two coefficients in Table 4 that attempt to explain the dependent variable. Explained variation in the dependent variable based on our model was 51.8% with respect to Cox Snell R Square and 71.9% with respect to Nagelkerke R Square. Nagelkerke

R^2 is a modification of Cox & Snell R^2 , the latter of which cannot achieve a value of 1. For this reason, it is preferable to report the Nagelkerke R^2 value as 71.9%. Variables in the equation are shown Table 4. Of the six predictor variables, only three were statistically significant: self-censorship, information management, and concerns about followers.

Table 5: Classification table

Country			Total	Total Percentage	Percentage Correct
Observed	Predicted				
	Turkey	Malaysia			
Turkey	184	8	192	66.4%	95.8%
Malaysia	21	76	97	33.6%	78.4%
		Overall	289	100%	90.0%

Table 5 presents the classification of the model with (out) independent variables. When independent variables are removed, it shows that 66.4% of cases overall could be correctly classified by simply assuming that all cases were classified as Turkey. However, with the independent variables added, the model correctly classifies 90.0% of cases overall (see the “Overall Percentage Correct” cell). That is, the addition of the independent variables improves the overall prediction of cases into their observed categories of the dependent variable. This particular measure is referred to as the percentage accuracy in classification (PAC).

Sensitivity, the percentage of cases with the observed characteristic correctly predicted by the model, is 95.8% for Turkey. Specificity, the percentage of cases with the observed characteristic correctly predicted by the model is 78.4% for Malaysia. The positive predictive value was the percentage of correctly predicted cases with the observed characteristic compared to the total number of cases predicted as having the characteristic. That is, of all cases predicted as coming from Turkey, 89.76% were correctly predicted. The negative predictive value is the percentage of correctly predicted cases without the observed characteristic compared to the total number of cases predicted as not having the characteristic. That is, of all cases predicted as coming from Malaysia, 90.48% were correctly predicted.

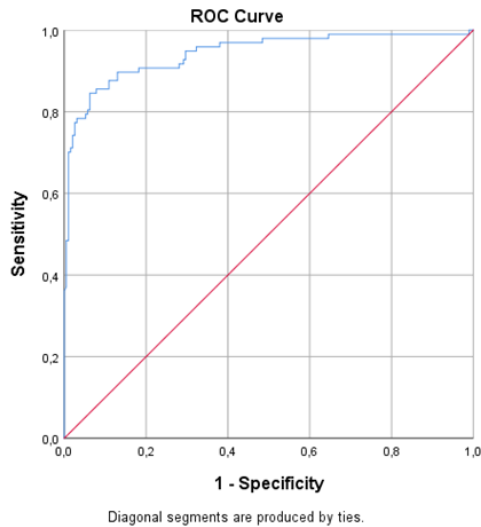


Figure 3: ROC curve

Finally, the ROC (receiver operating characteristic) curve is given below. The area under the ROC curve is 0.943, indicating that the logistic regression model was very good. Thus, the nationality of the respondent can be estimated from the scores of the factors almost accurately (Please see Figure 3).

Qualitative analysis

The analysis of the qualitative data revealed six separate categories in total. The gender, university, and position information of the participants are given in the Appendix 1.

Depending on the number of participants in each country, the distribution of codes was made as a percentage, and the general scheme of the qualitative research is shown in Figure 4.

Hiyerarşik Kod-Alt kod Modeli

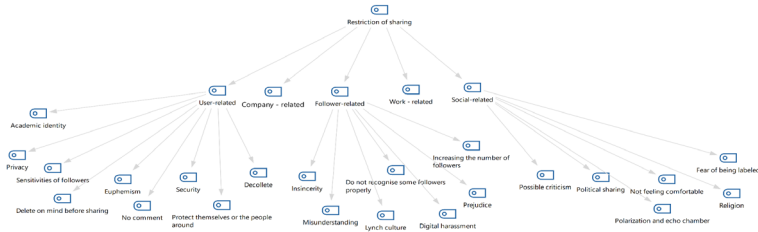


Figure 4: Hierarchical code-subcodes model

Problems Experienced in SNSs

The problems experienced in SNSs were examined under eleven categories. It was found that polemics, work-related problems, and taking legal action were the issues most strongly emphasized by the participants from Turkey.

The participants stated that the discussions were unnecessary or that they avoid any reason to squabble with their followers.

For work-related problems, the participants usually referred to problems with the institution or the administrators at the institution when sharing something on social media. Malaysian participants, on the other hand, emphasized their problems as “Harassment/cyberbullying,” “misunderstanding,” and “pressure of followers.”

The concerns of being misunderstood and the feeling of being pressured by followers were also frequently expressed by Malaysian participants in the in-depth interviews.

- The codes of “relationship-related problems,” “slander,” and “threats,” which mostly revealed individual relationships apart from a social issue, were not mentioned by the Malaysian participants. The other two un-referred codes are “work-related problems” and “taking legal actions.” The only title not coded in the answers of Turkish participants was “gossip.”

Security concern

The security concerns of users on SNSs were gathered under two groups, as micro- and macro-concerns. After reminding the participants that our digital footprints can be

followed on the vertical plane, and observed by peer groups such as family, friends, and colleagues on the horizontal plane, the participants were asked which group they might be concerned about.

In the micro-concerns group, participants from Turkey mostly used the expressions "students," "family," and "relatives".

The following examples can be given to the discomforts felt as a micro-concern.

I feel uncomfortable seeing the students because we are also trying to create an image for them. They should listen to me in my lessons, they should accept my word as an authority, you understand what I mean by authority, that authority should not be questioned. (T17)

The following examples can be given to the discomforts felt as macro-concerns:

I guess, I have concern about media companies more because they're more professional. Since we know this field, we can say that they are more professional than the government... Media companies are really constantly collecting your data and then presenting it to you as if it was your own preference." (T13)

While Malaysian participants stated that they were uncomfortable seeing the posts of their families and relatives, similar to the participants from Turkey, they were more concerned about companies as a macro-concern. Some examples about their concerns are below.

In my case, I like to share where I am going, what I eat. Sometimes I want to post but do not because I don't want my family and friends to know where I am going. Because when I post where I am going, they may want to meet me there. Sometimes I am with my husband and son and the place is very cool but I don't post it. I post it like a week or month later. (M6)

- The most common answer in Turkey was "nothing to do." Instead of expressing their concerns, the participants preferred to state that there was no solution to their anxieties.

Limitation of sharing

The answers given to the question related to the reasons for not sharing were coded under three categories. Each category is presented below with its own codes.

Unshared

According to the participants from Turkey, the prominent theme in the “unshared content” category was private life. Under the private life code, the emphasis on family and children were the prominent subcodes.

... my private life. I'm not someone who lives on social media all the time. I don't share that kind of stuff. So, if I went out with my friends and had fun, I do not share that photo. It's my privacy, it's nobody's business. (T10)

Among the answers related to the content not shared in the social sphere, the intensity was on political discourse. The reasons for not sharing political discourse include feeling uncomfortable, polemic, and fear of being misunderstood, the feeling of not being able to be nice to anyone, and the perception that SNSs are not the place to share political content.

In order not to have such a polemic or anything like that, let me be very clear in such situations, I stay silent. In other words, on issues that can set the agenda; from domestic violence, women's deaths to forest fires... I've been keeping quiet about any agenda item you can think of. (T20)

“Some students may be right-wing; some students may be left-wing. Now, if I share something about the right-wing content, I will disturb the left-wing, if I share with the left, I will tease the right-wing.” (T10)

Malaysian participants generally used the phrase “there is not much that I do not share.” Among the topics not shared, only private life and academic sharing were expressed.

“...Normally it's just... it's actually an Indian belief I am not sure whether you are aware of this. They say you shouldn't show people you know your photos because of evil eye.” (M9)

- In Turkey and Malaysia, apart from the “unshared content,” they emphasized the role of the platform as a reason not to share their content. In both countries, some participants stated that they did not share anything on Twitter.

Deleted

The responses obtained from the participants in Turkey revealed that they delete their sharing mostly due to the outdatedness. Outdated announcements, photos, or content shared years ago may be deleted.

When I see my post which I shared 5-6 years ago now, I feel, sometimes, uncomfortable. I feel it's a very ridiculous post to share. There are times when I see and delete, but I do not get access to the SNS specifically for deleting. Today, I looked at a few photos and I thought they should stay. But few weeks before, when I saw my photos, my thoughts and location that I shared 7-8 years ago, I deleted them. (T24)

According to the research results in Malaysia, misunderstanding comes to the fore.

- “I delete it if I find the message is biased or maybe can cause any further hatred.” (M3)
- In the category of deleted posts, there was the “just hide” code in the expressions of only Malaysian participants. Since they want to keep their posts as an archive, they prefer to make them invisible instead of deleting them. The “changed relationship” code, expressed only in Turkey, emphasizes the deletion of posts as a result of changes in interpersonal relations.

Restriction of Sharing

The code restriction of sharing was further divided into five sub-codes as: work, company, social, follower- and user-related.

In Turkey, **work-related** restrictions can be considered as self-limitations of the persons related to the institution. Malaysian participants did not express any work-related reason for the restriction of sharing.

“It’s like our corporate identity sticking to us. Representing the institution... I don’t represent it, actually it’s not even my own name, but I feel it as a pressure.” (T4)

The fact that **companies** collect our personal data and measure our viewing habits is a cause for concern.

“Sometimes whatever you are saying, not only typing, I believe it take can that information, so you have to be very very careful.”(M1)

In Turkey, it is observed that there is a close distribution among the codes in **social-related** restrictions. An example of why restrictions is made for social reasons are given below:

Actually, even if I share something very technical, I know it could be thinking in a different way. Many people have things they want to say, but they can’t. But yes, I mean, I block myself, because somebody may get it wrong, and very different arguments could be produced. I self-control. I prefer to stay out of these subjects. I say, “I don’t need a trouble. (T9)

The following example can be given to the statements of Malaysian participants related to social issues.

I guess I don’t really have that content that I want but I cannot share but if there was, it would probably be some sensitive comments about politics because Malaysia, we are going through General Elections soon, so it will be sensitive to post racial or political comments. (M5)

Based on the responses from Turkey, the reasons for limiting **follower-related** posts focus on the code of misunderstanding and insincerity. One of the expressions that best exemplify misunderstanding code is as follows:

I say so. To be silent, to keep some thoughts to yourself. Because there are very few people who understand your language, very few people who empathize with you. Our society is like a bomb ready to explode. In other words, they can turn your sentences over and over and understand your every word in a very different way. So, we have to be very careful about what we say and how we say it. (T2)

One of the clearest expressions about sincerity is given below;

To find that behavior unnatural. Losing the first feeling of that behavior is because it seems insincere. So, I don't like that social media culture. I already share with the people who I meet face to face, I don't want to share too much with the people other than that and sharing with lots of people bothers me. And here's the thing about showing yourself too much, showing everything you do... you show it to relatives, but when the social circle expands, don't show everything to everyone. (T1)

The frequency of the distribution in four codes related to the answers given by the Malaysian participants were found very close to each other. These codes were; "Do not recognize some followers properly," "insincerity," "lynch culture," and "misunderstanding."

"My friends did tell me that whenever you post about your happiness on Instagram, it makes other people uncomfortable to see you happy. Sometimes people get jealous or something like that." (M6)

According to participants from Turkey, for **user-related** restrictions, academic identity and privacy were the prominent codes. Academic identities were found to play an important role in determining followers and content. The reason for this can be explained through the following examples:

So, since you are an academic, you have an identity where you go and lecture to people of all different views, you need to pay a bit more attention. In fact, it is not a fear of something bad to happen to me, it is necessary to be careful not to damage that credibility in the eyes of people...(T14)

Two different approaches were found for privacy.

"I can say that I have tended to protect my own borders in the last few years on social media." (T9)

While there is an effort to share the private life without violating the privacy, it has also been stated that personal information is shared as limited as possible because companies follow our digital footprints.

Malaysian participants mostly used the expressions connected with "academic identity" and "sensitivities of followers" codes.

I do not share about my political opinion because sometimes I want to share but I do not want people to feel uncomfortable with my opinion. Sometimes I feel like my page is for me and I can post whatever I want, but at the end of the day, I do not share that kind of political opinion and any uncomfortable news. (M6)

“As a lecturer, we also have to be like a public figure, so you need to show everything is positive so you have to think not only twice, many times. More than twice.” (M1)

- When the code “restriction of sharing” was examined, it was observed that the participants from Malaysia and Turkey mostly expressed “user-related” subjects. In the “user-related” sub-code, “academic identity” was emphasized the most.

Regulation

The Turkish participants’ responses regarding regulation in SNSs were gathered around the following codes: physical or psychological harm, regulation for companies, disinformation and polarization, and a regulation that will not prevent freedom of expression.

The idea of regulation for the protection of children and teens from physical/psychological harm comes to the fore:

“I think that social media regulation should be made, because I have a child now, especially because of the negative content that children may be exposed to.” (T21)

Another point mentioned related to physical/psychological harm code was violence. It was emphasized that there should be a regulation over the publication of violent images.

Things that harm the body and mental health of a person or any living thing can be removed. Everyone or most of the people would agree on this subject anyway... for example, I just watched it yesterday. A man webcasts on Instagram and says he’s going to kill a woman and shares the date. He says, ‘I will kill you on that date.’ Anyway, this man’s account should be banned; the account should be closed, and he should be punished here. If the regulation will provide such a control, I am a bit prone to regulation. (T4)

One of the prominent themes in the interviews with the participants in Turkey was the regulation for companies. In these expressions, SNSs were mentioned in particularly:

Yes, especially, I think that the collection of data, the use of cookies, the long texts presented to us about the processing of personal data, such things, the way these companies store and process data of organizations, should be regulated because they get my data so easily from me. (T3)

From the Malaysian perspective, all the codes related to regulation were scattered close to each other. The only code used more intensely than the others was "Regulation for disinformation and polarization."

For me, it should have a limit. Yes, we are in a free country and we are currently on social media, we can talk about a lot of things. But again, based on the context. And we should have a limit which if we become too free, it will cause a lot of problems. Because if you talk about anything without any limit, no boundaries, you can talk bad about people, you can be a cyber bully without feeling guilty. So for me, it is good to have freedom of speech, but it should have a limit. (M8)

In the category of Regulation, the "regulation for religion" code was found in the answers of the participants from Malaysia but no related example emerged in Turkish participants' answers. An example for the code is given below.

"But sensitive issues like religious issues which can spark must have control over." (M3)

Anonymity

Participants from Turkey mostly used "This is me/nothing changed" and "I would say more/I would be more comfortable" code for anonymity. The codes showed two different sides of the anonymity view.

Participants believed that they could express their thoughts more easily when they are anonymous.

There would definitely be a difference, so I think I would have less self-control. Again, I would try not to be offensive, but it's my nature, I think I can speak more freely. If I know that this will not be a sanction on me, and if I will not insult, if I

will not harm personal rights, I can express my opinions to someone else, I can say it more easily, if there will be no sanction. (T7)

Besides, one participant drew attention and criticized a negative point in it:

I wouldn't have those who around me if I had remained completely anonymous. There is such a contradiction. So not much would change. It's also about your perspective, your perspective on these platforms. I already use IG that way. I don't think there would be much change because I shared my own life... (T3)

One of the concerns about remaining anonymous was that the target audience was unknown.

"It may be possible for me to remain completely anonymous, but I cannot have healthy relationships and sharing without knowing who I forward to my message." (T12)

Based on the answers of the Malaysian participants, it can be stated that the expressions with the "nothing change" code were common, as in the answers of the participants in Turkey.

Social Media Practices and Recommendations

The prominent practices and recommendations of the participants in Turkey and Malaysia are discussed together to draw a general framework.

"Filtering followers" was one of the leading methods of avoiding problems on SNSs for both groups of participants. Moreover, using SNSs settings and private accounts and managing cookies and advertisements were among the other frequently used practices. Participants were filtering who followed their accounts, or, in other words, who could see their posts. When they did not confirm followers' invitation on SNSs, the number of mutual friends was also expressed as one of reason for deleting. Sometimes, the fact that following requests came from students or colleagues was one of the reasons why the invitation was not confirmed.

We met you for the first time right now, and from my perspective I recognize you and I can add. If I know the name or surname, I say okay, I add such people. But

when adding, I also look at things like who else is mutual friends. There is a non-digital filter, a security filter, our minds. We are crosschecking. I guess that's what I'm doing. (T16)

The follower filter was considered as one of the measures for participants to use SNSs more comfortably:

If you have a private Instagram account. Well, if you are following your friends and family members, then it may be a little more comfortable for people to express themselves, but when there is a mass of people you do not know, they also feel the need to pay attention when it is public. (T8)

Having a private account was also reported as another security method. The "private account" code is closely related to the "followers filter" code mentioned above.

"But Instagram for now is private because when it is public, I get a lot of comments and DMs (direct messages) which disturb me emotionally, so I don't want such a thing to happen to me." (M8)

Although some participants stated that it was not sufficient (for safety), they preferred to use SNSs settings for a safe social media experience.

"I just took refuge in Instagram's supposed security policies." (T18)

Another security method for participants was to organize cookies and advertisements.

Participants also stated that they tried not to use tags as much as possible in their posts.

- Although it was not one of the aims of the in-depth interview, media literacy was often expressed as a solution suggested by the participants in Turkey.

Discussion and Conclusion

Considering the research findings, it was concluded that there were significant differences between the two countries. Results differed particularly in the context of concerns.

Based on the present and previous studies (Zhong et al., 2022, Wang et al., 2011, Bellman et al., 2004), it can be concluded that regulations and studies related to social media should be localized.

It is not possible to generalize the qualitative findings. At the same time, there are differences and similarities between Turkey and Malaysia based on the analysis of the data gathered through in-depth interviews (please see Appendix 3 for details). Some of them are presented below:

Similarities: 1. Participants from Malaysia and Turkey both share and refrain from sharing their private lives on SNSs most; 2. For the participants of the two countries, academic identity is a determining factor for restricting sharing on SNSs; 3. They suggest regulations for physical/psychological harm together with disinformation and polarization; 4. Concern about the companies is important for the participants in both countries; 5. For safe SNSs experiences, the participants pointed out the use of "social media settings," "filtering followers," and "using private accounts;" 6. Some of the participants in Malaysia and Turkey stated that they use Twitter but do not share anything on the platform.

Turner and Amirnuddin (2018) stated that Malaysian people avoid sharing their personal information that would harm them online, such as birthday, address, or salary. In this case, the personal shares expressed in the research were not specific information, but moments from the participants' daily lives. Research conducted in Turkey and Malaysia indicate that users are concerned about companies using their own information (Avcılar et al., 2021; Suki et al., 2002). This research provided evidence that support the previous findings. Cited studies, such as this research, have found that while users are trying to protect themselves through "social media settings," the most distinctive result for the research is the "follower filter." "Filtering followers" appeared to be the dominant response in both countries. Topbaş and Gazi (2016) remarked that as the time spent on SNSs and the number of followers increases, the importance given to privacy settings decreases. However, it was found in the present study that users have more privacy concerns as the number of followers increase. Gökaliler and Saatcioğlu (2020) pointed out that the participants mostly pay attention to the privacy of their private life on SNSs and benefit from the privacy settings, which is a finding supported by the current study.

Participants in both countries pointed out their academic identity. This finding is in line with the previous research (Cain et. al., 2019; Carter Olson & LaPoe, 2018; Doerfler et. al., 2021; Teixeira da Silva, 2021; Väliverronen & Saikkonen, 2021; Tanczer et. al., 2020). Differences do exist, including:

1. Regulation for (sharing about) religion was recommended in Malaysia, but not in Turkey.
2. Participants from Malaysia did not mention "taking legal action" as a problem on SNSs.
3. Participants in Turkey emphasized the importance of media literacy, but participants in Malaysia did not.

Considering the mixed method question, it is possible to explain the differences in quantitative research with qualitative findings as follows:

During the in-depth interviews, participants in Turkey underlined their concerns related to both lateral surveillance (including students, friends, colleagues, and family) and vertical surveillance. These concerns are also related to the limitation of sharings. Participants in Turkey remarked that they could have said more if they were anonymous. This finding can be evaluated related to perceived vulnerabilities. On the other hand, information management is about the user having control over publishing information. Participants in Turkey believed that they do not have control over their data.

The quantitative analysis showed that the Malaysian participants' scores for the privacy concern and concern about followers (spouse/boyfriend/girlfriend, close friends, colleagues, manager/administrator, relatives, and acquaintances) were high. In the qualitative analysis, the "harassment/cyberbullying," "misunderstanding," and "pressure of followers" codes were emphasized among the problems experienced on SNSs. In addition, "do not recognize some followers properly" "insincerity" "lynch culture" and "misunderstanding" codes were prominent about restriction of sharing. These results explain the concerns about followers. Although the participants in Malaysia had concerns about their followers, they reported that their posts would not change if they were anonymous. Furthermore, the participants in Malaysia – similar to the participants in Turkey- expressed their concerns about companies following them on SNSs. This result could be explained with privacy concern.

Based on the findings obtained in the present study, it could be suggested that future studies, in both countries, should focus on the sharings not posted on SNSs. Private life was found both the most shared and the most unshared category for both groups of participants. It is considered important to conduct research on how private life is perceived in different countries. Participants from both countries also stated that academic identity is a limiting factor for sharing. Thus, it is recommended to conduct research on the relationship between business life and sharing to understand the role of professional identity.

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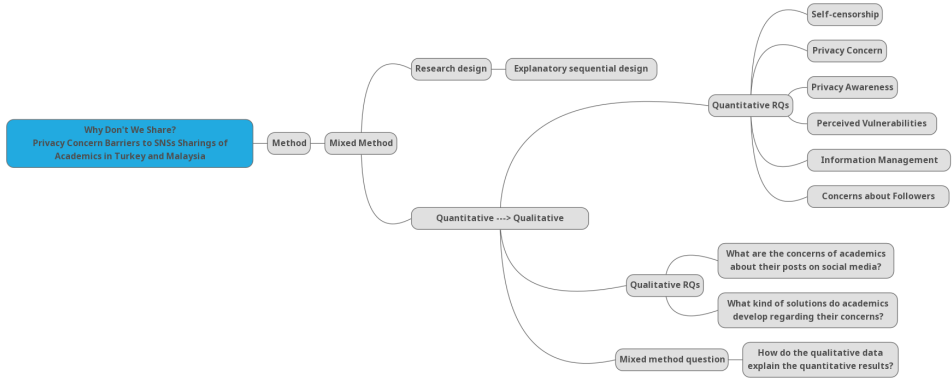
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Appendices

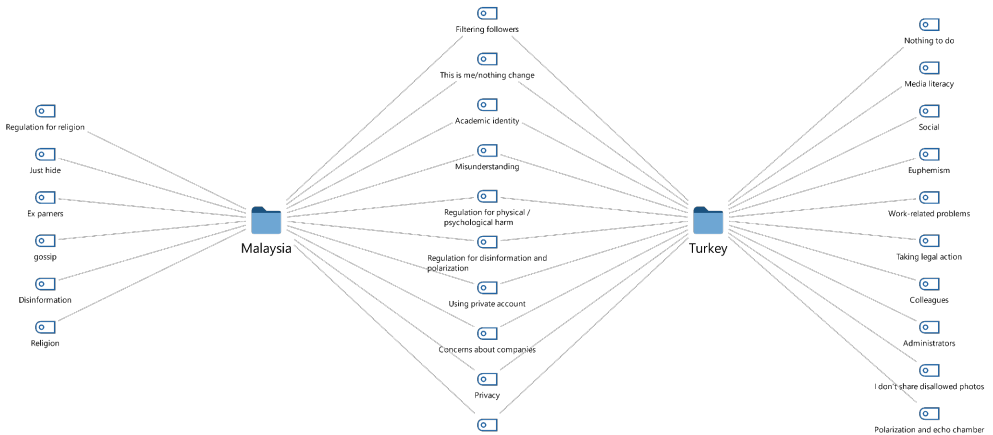
Appendix 1: Participants of in-depth interviews

	Position	Type of university	Gender
Participants in Turkey			
T1	Associate professor	State	Female
T2	Professor	State	Female
T3	Research assistant	Private	Male
T4	Research assistant	Private	Female
T5	Associate professor	Private	Female
T6	Assistant professor	State	Female
T7	Research assistant	Private	Female
T8	Research assistant	Private	Male
T9	Associate professor	Private	Female
T10	Associate professor	Private	Male
T11	Associate professor	State	Female
T12	Assistant professor	Private	Male
T13	Research assistant	State	Male
T14	Associate professor	State	Male
T15	Associate professor	Private	Female
T16	Assistant professor	Private	Female
T17	Assistant professor	State	Female
T18	Research assistant	Private	Male
T19	Research assistant	Private	Male
T20	Lecturer	State	Male
T21	Lecturer	State	Female
T22	Associate professor	State	Male
T23	Associate professor	State	Male
T24	Professor	Private	Male
T25	Assistant professor	State	Male
Participants in Malaysia			
M1	Senior Lecturer	State	Male
M2	Lecturer	Private	Female
M3	Senior Lecturer	Private	Male
M4	Lecturer	Private	Male
M5	Research assistant	State	Female
M6	Research assistant	State	Female
M7	Research assistant	State	Female
M8	Lecturer	Private	Female
M9	Lecturer	Private	Female

Appendix 2: Research Mindmap



Appendix 3: Two-Cases model



Appendix 4: Code matrix browser

Kod Sistemi	Malaysia	Turkey	TOPLAM
Media literacy			14
Social media practices and recommend			0
Filtering followers	●	●	43
Using close friends		●	3
Checking if there is a fake account c		●	3
Using VPN		●	2
Personal computer security	●		4
Not providing credit card informati	●	●	3
Not using or removing tags	●	●	5
Social media settings	●	●	16
Using private account	●	●	17
Managing cookies and ads	●	●	15
Not providing location information	●	●	9
Using nickname		●	5
Using secure web sites		●	6
Regulation			0
Regulation for religion	●		2
No need for regulation	●	●	4
Regulation for violations of rights	●	●	6
Regulation for freedom of speech	●	●	14
Regulation for physical / psycholog	●	●	19
Regulation for companies		●	14
Regulation for disinformation and p	●	●	18
Regulation for the protection of the	●	●	5
Self-control	●	●	11
Anonymity			0
Can we really be anonymous?		●	2
If everyone becomes anonymous...	●	●	4
Being free with my own identity		●	3
I would say more/I would be more c	●	●	16
This is me/nothing change	●	●	26
Security concerns			0
I think micro and macro are linked		●	1
Nothing to do		●	21
> Micro	●	●	50
> Macro	●	●	33
Problems in social media			0
gossip	●		1
Pressure of followers	●	●	7
Slander		●	3
Harassment/cyberbullying	●	●	10
From virtual to reality	●	●	11
Misunderstanding	●	●	9
Work-related problems		●	11
Relationship- related problems		●	5
Taking legal action		●	11
Threats	●	●	5
Hacking account	●	●	8
Polemic	●	●	15

