

## Does Social Media Make Unhappy? A Research on the Effect of Social Media Platforms Usage on Happiness in Demographic Crack

*Sosyal Medya Mutsuz Ediyor Mu? Sosyal Medya Platformları Kullanım Süresinin Mutluluk Üzerindeki Etkisinin Demografik Kırılmada İncelenmesine Yönelik Bir Araştırma*

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### ABSTRACT

The new technologies brought by the digital age are changing how individuals and societies communicate, learn, work and manage. Digital tools and platforms that have developed thanks to technology have made people's lives easier while affecting their emotions, thoughts, and behaviors. Thanks to digital tools, communication has become independent of time and space, and distances have become closer. People who had to be isolated due to the coronavirus epidemic have increased their use of digital technology to communicate with their loved ones, get information, work, learn, socialize, and have fun. According to the results of TÜİK's "Household Information Technologies (IT) Usage Survey, 2021", the internet usage rate in 2021 is 82.6%, and the rate of those who use the internet regularly is 80.5%. On the other hand, according to the results of the World Happiness Report by Gallup, Turkey ranks 112th in the World Happiness Ranking. While Turkey's happiness level has shown a decreasing momentum since 2016, social media usage rates are increasing. In line with these data, the research aims to determine the effect of social media platform use on happiness. Descriptive research, one of the quantitative research types, was used in the research design with the experimental research method. Within the scope of the research, an online questionnaire was applied to 170 white-collar employees, who were reached by convenience sampling method. According to the research results, happiness is similar according to the duration of use of social media platforms.

### ÖZET

Teknolojinin sayesinde gelişen dijital araç ve platformlar insanların hayatlarını kolaylaştırırken duyu, düşünce ve davranışlarını da etkilemiştir. Dijital araçlar sayesinde iletişim zaman ve mekândan bağımsız hale gelerek uzaklar yakınlaştırmıştır. Dijital çağın getirdiği yeni teknolojiler bireylerin ve toplumların iletişim kurma, öğrenme, çalışma ve yönetme şeklini değiştirmektedir. Koronavirüs salgını nedeniyle izole olmak zorunda kalan insanlar sevdikleri kişilerle iletişim kurma, bilgi alma, çalışma, öğrenme, sosyalleşme ve eğlenme amacıyla dijital teknoloji kullanımını artırmışlardır. TÜİK «Hanehalkı Bilişim Teknolojileri (BT) Kullanım Araştırması, 2021» sonuçlarına göre 2021 yılı internet kullanım oranı %82,6 ve interneti düzenli kullananların oranı ise %80,5'tir. Buna karşın Gallup tarafından yapılan Dünya mutluluk raporu sonuçlarına göre ise Türkiye Dünya mutluluk sıralamasında 112. sıradadır. Türkiye'de mutluluk seviyesi 2016 yılından itibaren azalan bir ivme gösterirken sosyal medya kullanım oranları artmaktadır. Bu veriler doğrultusunda araştırmanın amacı sosyal medya platformu kullanımının mutluluk üzerindeki etkisini belirlemektir. Keşifsel araştırma yöntemiyle dizayn edilen çalışmada nicel araştırma türlerinden betimsel kullanılmıştır. Araştırma kapsamında kolayda örnekleme yöntemiyle ulaşılan 170 beyaz yakalı çalışana online olarak anket uygulanmıştır. Araştırma sonucuna göre mutluluk sosyal medya platformlarının kullanım süresine göre anlamlı farklılık göstermemektedir.

### Keywords:

Happiness,

Use of Social Media  
Platforms,

Social Media and  
Happiness,

### Anahtar Kelimeler:

Mutluluk,

Sosyal Medya  
Platformları Kullanımı,

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

In the last half-century, psychology researchers have significantly improved in treating negative emotions and mental illness. Excessive focus on diseases and negative psychological factors has not only helped people to improve symptoms but has been beneficial in alleviating the positive psychological factors. The positive psychology approach has emerged with the need to focus on people's positive emotions and well-being. Positive psychology is broadly divided into three interrelated areas: positive emotions, positive characters, and positive institutions. The lifestyles corresponding to these areas are pleasant, busy, and meaningful life (Seligman et al., 2005).

The criteria necessary to reach a good life is a subject for which all people seek answers. Happiness plays an influential role in providing a good life (Catapano et al., 2022:1). The increasing use of social media programs is due to people's pursuit of happiness. According to the results of the "World Happiness Survey 2022" conducted by Gallup company in support of this view, Turkey's happiness rate is decreasing every year.

Since social media is a more accessible without restrictions, people can express their unconscious emotions more quickly and become happier at the same time, these free shares can sometimes make other people unhappy. Similarly, a person who sees the posts of happy people in a miserable period may become unhappy by being jealous of them or start to feel happy by being affected by their happiness. Based on these examples, it can be said that the contact established with social media tools plays an active role in the happiness and unhappiness of the person (Warr, 2020:27-28).

In general, social media and smartphone use have been associated with adverse effects on mental development, psychological-mental and physical health, happiness, and mood due to social isolation (Rosen et al., 2022:2). On the other hand, the ability to social media and social communication platforms to maintain social support has become the main driving force of social media use. In light of the research in the related literature, it is seen that there needs to be a consensus on the relationship between the use of social media platforms and happiness. In line with these data, the research aims to determine the effect of social media platform use on happiness.

In order to examine the effect of using social media platforms on happiness in the demographic breakdown, answers to the following research questions will be found;

- Does the duration of social media platforms usage have a significant effect on happiness?
- Does the duration of social media platforms usage differ according to demographic variables?

In order to find an answer to the research question, first of all, the conceptual framework consisting of happiness, social media use, and social media and happiness will be explained using the relevant literature. Then the research method, findings, and results will be evaluated by comparing them with the relevant literature and presented with suggestions for future research.

## 2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

### 2.1. Happiness

The criteria necessary to reach a good life is a subject for which all people seek answers. Happiness plays an influential role in providing a good life (Catapano et al., 2022:1). The subjective nature of happiness that changes from person to person and its dynamic feature over time make it challenging to define and measure it.

In order to ensure happiness and determine the variables that affect it, it must first be defined and understood (Hançerlioğlu, 1973:291). Happiness is when a person's positive emotion is higher than negative (Diener, 2000). Happiness as a positive inner experience is one of the indicators of mental health arising from the cognitive and emotional evaluations people make in their own lives (Singh and Jha, 2008:40). Happiness is not a state of emotion to be achieved by positioning it as a goal, happiness is a habit. It states that the person should focus on the positive in his feelings, thoughts, and attitudes (Köroğlu, 2019:90). People are happy not when they chase happiness but when they do not think about happiness when they live in the moment. Happiness is not the momentary joy or enthusiasm of the person; it is the long-term experience of many positive emotions, such as satisfaction and well-being (Moss, 2017:15). Happiness has become an increasingly important priority worldwide (Lambert et al., 2021:535).

## 2.2. Usage of Social Media

Empirical studies on the effects of social media users have also witnessed a surprising increase in the past years (Valkenburg et al., 2022:58). The reason for this is the rapid increase in people's interest in social media tools. Global research firm Statista's "*What is Happening on the Internet in a Minute*" results in an estimated average of 695,000 stories shared in 1 minute, 69 million messages sent on Facebook and Whatsapp, 9132 connections made on LinkedIn, 5,000 downloads on Tiktok, and five hundred hours of content are uploaded in Youtube.

According to the data of the "Digital Turkey 2022 Report" prepared annually by the cooperation of Hootsuite and We Are Social, the analyzes on the use of the internet and social media programs in Turkey are listed below;

- Social media usage rate: 80.8% (68.90 million).
- Increase in the number of social media users from 2021 to 2022: 14.8%.
- Daily time spent using social media programs: 2 hours 59 minutes.
- The applications with the most active users are respectively: Whatsapp, Instagram, Facebook.
- The most downloaded applications are respectively: E-Pulse, TikTok, Getir.
- The most time-consuming applications are: TikTok, Azar, Livu.
- Social media usage rate and order;
  - Whatsapp 93.2%
  - Instagram 92.5%
  - Facebook 78.1%
  - Twitter 69.6%
  - Facebook Messenger 54.3%
  - Telegram 53.7%
  - TikTok 47.6%
  - Pinterest 40.7%
  - Snapchat 37.2%
  - LinkedIn 28.2%
  - Skype 26.2%
  - Message 20.4%
  - Discord 20.1%
  - Tumblr 13.3%
  - Reddit 11.1%
- Monthly usage time (hours) and number of users of social media programs;
  - Number of Instagram users: 52.15 million and monthly usage 20.2 hours
  - Number of Youtube users: 57.40 million and monthly usage 18.5 hours
  - Number of Tiktok users: 26.56 million and monthly usage 18.8 hours
  - Number of Facebook users: 34.40 million and monthly usage 12.6 hours
  - Number of Twitter users: 16.10 million
  - Number of LinkedIn users: 12 million

The main reasons for using social media are to stay in touch with family and friends, fill their free time, read news and stories and find funny or entertaining content, respectively for global internet users aged 16-64, (Datareportal, 2021). The reasons why people use social media programs are to know, to be seen, to be noticed, to learn, to share, to socialize, to be loved, not to be alone, to feel alone, not to be alone, and to seek novelty (Price, 2021). Social media platforms have replaced the time spent watching television and surfing the internet. The fact that people provide their needs, such as getting news and information through social media platforms, also increases their use (Hall and Liu, 2022:3).

### 2.3. Social Media and Happiness

The increasing use of social media programs is due to people's pursuit of happiness. According to the results of the "World Happiness Survey 2022" conducted by Gallup company in support of this view, Turkey's happiness rate is decreasing every year. In Figure 1, Turkey's ranking among 140 countries in the world happiness list between the years 2016-2022 is given;

**Figure 1.** Turkey Happiness Ranking by Years



Source: Prepared by the Authors Based on Gallup Happiness Report Data.

The desire of people to feel as unique as a snowflake is met with the luxury of choosing and personalizing the home screen, ring tone, and order of the pages on their phones. When people see the person they love, they release dopamine, one of the happiness hormones. The dopamine hormone is also triggered by innovation, and social media programs make people happy by releasing dopamine with their constantly renewed screen and information.

The way to make people obsessively check their phones is to be afraid of missing something (*like an important e-mail, a message from a loved one, or a like*) other than making sure that there are always good and new things waiting for them on social media (Verma, 2021). People use social media programs lovingly because they provide intermittent pleasure and unexpected, exciting pleasures, similar to slot machines (Price, 2021). In a sense, social media programs are like slot machines in people's pockets. Every person who moves his finger to navigate the Instagram main page to see which photo will appear in front of him plays with a slot machine and the usage time increases as he plays.

People learn by establishing cause-and-effect relationships. For every action taken, a response is received. For example, when a misbehaving child receives a warning from his family, he receives a response against his action. These "*reinforcement*" responses in psychology are also professionally hidden in social media programs. When people click on a page, a new one opens, and then a new one opens again (Dağıtmaç and Ekmen, 2019). The digital world and social media programs can be likened to the Trojan horse in Çanakkale, it may seem harmless from the outside, but it is full of dangers and opportunities (Price, 2021).

One of the criteria affecting happiness is contact with other people. People feel happier when they establish sufficient and good relations with the people around them. While the social interaction that the person establishes with his/her environment makes him/her feel less lonely, it also facilitates solving his/her problems (Warr, 2020:25). The worldwide coronavirus epidemic is, in a sense, an epidemic of loneliness, as it isolates people from other people. While loneliness makes people unhappy (Hepper et al., 2021), usage rates have increased with the pandemic, as social media tools alleviate loneliness with the friendships and shares they provide (Zhou, 2022:803). With the effect of the uncertainty and anxiety created by the virus epidemic, the social environment that will support and relieve people has been social media. The feeling of loneliness created by social isolation has been alleviated by social media (Gervais, 2020:123). Social media tools are mentally and physically beneficial as an appropriate emotional resource to maintain or increase social support in times of forced isolation and uncertainty (Rosen et al., 2022:17). Preferring the use of social media platforms to face-to-face communication after the coronavirus period decreases happiness and increases depression and anxiety (Brailovskaia et al., 2021; Verma, 2021).

The fact that the society in which people live is an individualist or collectivist culture also affects the sharing of emotions and their perspective on happiness. Social media platforms provide a more accessible and comfortable environment for people to express themselves since in face-to-face communication in collectivist cultures, it is avoided to express emotions and happiness. The happiness of the person who can express himself more freely on social media platforms is also positively affected (Yu, 2020:67).

While communication with social media tools makes the person happy, on the other hand, it creates unhappiness with comparisons with others in matters such as financial situations, opportunities, physical appearance, and success. The person may feel unhappy by seeing someone who is more successful or more beautiful than himself and comparing them with himself (Warr, 2020:75). Contrary to this view, some studies argue that when a person shares a photo of himself, his family or friends, his positive feelings and happiness increase, and that people who like or comment on these shares provide more happiness because interpersonal interaction and communication are sustainable (Yu, 2020). Happiness increases as friends on social media platforms increase (Kenny, 2012).

Character traits also affect the use of social media platforms. Using social media platforms does not affect face-to-face interaction and happiness; suppose a person has a social and extroverted character. In that case, the person can continue to interact at the same rate both face-to-face and on social media platforms (Hall and Liu, 2022:4). In addition to the studies advocating that the internet and social media programs can reduce happiness by keeping people away from face-to-face relationships (Kraut et al., 1998; Emmons and McCullough, 2003), asocial, dislike of face-to-face communication (Yu and Chou, 2015) and shy and anxious individuals (Young et al., 2020), some studies argue that they use social media tools more and that their happiness decreases further by being more isolated from the society in this way.

Other studies on social media and happiness (Elison et al., 2007; Steinfield et al., 2008; Moorhead, 2013; Przybylski and Weinstein, 2017; Hsu et al., 2018; Balcı and Demir, 2018) have shown that when used with appropriate guidance and dose. The use of social media has a positive effect on happiness due to its significant positive effects, such as increased interaction with others and improved social and emotional support.

The relationship between happiness may vary based on social media platforms. While Instagram, Facebook, and Tiktok, which are platforms where more fun and positive shares are made and watched, positively affect people's enjoyment and happiness, twitter, where political posts and sharing and criticism about the agenda increase stress and depression, while reducing happiness (Brailovskaia and Margraf, 2018:1). The effect of the social media platform on happiness may vary depending on the function used. Using the messaging feature of social media platforms increases communication and supports people to feel better and happier (Wenninger et al., 2014:12).

Active and passive use of social media has been classified according to the duration and type of use of social media platforms. Active social media use (ASMU) means sending or broadcasting private messages. In contrast, passive social media use (PSMU) means monitoring other users' online lives without interacting or communicating with them directly, browsing or viewing other users' profiles. Active social media use positively affects happiness through the support and positive feedback it provides to individuals. In contrast, passive social media use decreases happiness because it causes interpersonal social comparison and jealousy (Valkenburg et al., 2022:532).

Problematic internet use is an addictive behavior that includes excessive or poorly controlled preoccupations, impulses, or behaviors that cause psychological and mental distress due to computer use and internet access (Ceyhan et al., 2007). Problematic internet use negatively affects people's happiness, psychological well-being, and life satisfaction (Young et al., 2020). In light of the research in the related literature, it is seen that there needs to be a consensus on the relationship between the use of social media platforms and happiness.

### **3. METHODOLOGY OF THE RESEARCH**

#### **3.1. Model and Data Collection Tool**

The descriptive model, which is one of the quantitative research types, was used in the research designed with the experimental research method. Within the scope of the research, an online questionnaire was applied to 170 white-collar employees, who were reached by convenience sampling method. A three-part questionnaire was used as a data collection tool in the research. In the first part of the data collection tool, there is a demographic information form consisting of gender, marital status, and number of children, age, and education level, position in the institution, total working time, and monthly total household income of the social media users participating in the research.

There is a social media user information form, which consists of the information that he/she looks at the phone once, the daily time spent by the social media users participating in the research on social media, the most frequently used social media platform, the situation of checking their phone within half an hour after waking up, the situation of waking up in the middle of the night for no reason and checking their phone for no reason in the second part of the data collection tool.

The "*Oxford Happiness Scale*", which was developed by Hills and Argyle (2002) and adapted to Turkish by Tayfun and Sapmaz (2012), was used in the third part of the data collection tool. The scale consists of 28 items in a five-point Likert type (1: strongly disagree, 5: strongly agree) and a single dimension. The high score obtained by reverse coding of 11 items (m1, m5, m9, m12, m13, m18, m22, m23, m26, m27, m28) in the scale indicates a high level of happiness.

#### **3.2. Analysis of Data**

The SPSS 21.0 package program was used to analyze the data. In the comparison of the scale scores according to gender, marital status, checking the phone within half an hour after waking up, waking up in the middle of the night for no reason, and checking the phone, from two independent samples t-test, The ANOVA test was used to compare the number of children, age, education level, position in the institution, total working time, monthly total household income, daily time spent on social media, and how many times a day he looked at the phone for no reason. A one-factor two-way ANOVA test was used to determine the effect of daily time spent on social media on happiness and its relationship with demographic variables that have a significant relationship with happiness. When a significant difference was observed in the ANOVA test, the LSD post hoc test was used to determine the difference between which groups.

## 4. FINDINGS OF THE RESEARCH

### 4.1. Demographic Findings

Table 1 shows the distribution of the participants according to their demographic characteristics.

**Table 1.** Distribution of the Participants by Demographic Characteristics

Demographic Variable	Groups	n	%
Gender	Female	79	46,7
	Male	90	53,3
Marital status	Married	83	49,1
	Single	86	50,9
Number of children	None	105	62,1
	1 child	30	17,8
	2 children and more	34	20,1
Age groups	Generation Z (after 2000)	46	27,2
	Generation Y (1980-1999)	60	35,5
	Generation X and before (before 1980)	63	37,3
Education status	High school and equivalent	12	7,1
	Associate degree	17	10,1
	Undergraduate degree	88	52,1
	Postgraduate degree	52	30,8
Position	Employee	105	62,1
	Manager	64	37,9
Seniority	Less than 1 year	52	30,8
	1-5 year	20	11,8
	6-10 year	26	15,4
	11 years and above	71	42,0
Monthly Total Households Income	15,000 TL and below	25	14,8
	15.001-25.000 TL	55	32,5
	25.001-35.000 TL	26	15,4
	35.001 TL and above	63	37,3

Of the 169 social media users participating in the research, 46.7% are women, and 53.3% are men. 49.1% of the participants are married, and 50.9% are single. 62.1% of the participants do not have children, 17.8% have one child, and 20.1% have two or more children. 27.2% of the participants are in the Z generation, 35.5% are in the Y generation, and 37.3% are in the X generation or previous age generations. 7.1% of the participants graduated from high school or its equivalent, 10.1% had an associate degree, 52.1% had an undergraduate degree, and 30.8% had postgraduate education. 62.1% of the participants are in an employee position in their institution, and 37.9% are in a managerial position. The total working period of 30.8% of the participants is less than one year, 11.8% 1-5 years, 15.4% 6-10 years, and 42% 11 years or more. 14.8% of the participants have a monthly total household income of 15.000TL or less, 32.5% between 15.001-25.000TL, 15.4% between 25.001-35.000TL, and 37.3% of them between 35.001TL and above.

## 4.2. Findings on Social Media Use

Table 2 shows the distribution according to the social media usage status of the participants.

**Table 2.** Distribution of Participants by Social Media Usage Status

Demographic Variable	Groups	n	%
Daily time on social media	Less than 1 hour	29	17,2
	1-2 hours	45	26,6
	2-3 hours	32	18,9
	3-4 hours	35	20,7
	4 hours or more	28	16,6
Most frequently used social media platform	Instagram	77	45,6
	Twitter	24	14,2
	Tiktok	23	13,6
	Facebook	16	9,5
	Whatsapp	15	8,9
	Other	14	8,3
Checking phone within half an hour of waking up	No	20	11,8
	Yes	149	88,2
Waking up in the middle of the night for no reason and checking the phone	No	90	53,3
	Yes	79	46,7
The number of looking at the phone (daily)while there is no reason	1-10 times	54	32,0
	11-20 times	69	40,8
	21-30 times	15	8,9
	31 or more times	31	18,3

26.6% of the participants spend 1-2 hours a day on social media, 45.6% use the Instagram platform most frequently, 88.2% check their phone within half an hour after waking up, 46.7% si wakes up in the middle of the night for no reason and checks his phone. 40.8% of the participants pick up the phone 11-20 times a day for no reason and look at it.

## 5. DESCRIPTIVE FINDINGS

Table 3 includes descriptive statistics of the happiness scale score.

**Table 3.** Descriptive Statistics of Happiness Scale Score

Scale	N	Min.	Max.	$\bar{X}$	SS	Skewness	Kurtosis
HAPPINESS	169	1,93	4,82	3,54	0,56	-0,59	0,23

The happiness scale score was determined as  $3.54 \pm 0.56$  according to Table 3. It was determined that the scale score showed a normal distribution. Considering the lowest (1) and highest (5) scores that can be obtained from the scale, it can be said that the happiness level of the social media users participating in the research is at the "moderate" level.

### 5.1. Findings of the Comparison of Happiness Score by Demographic Variables and Social Media Usage Habits

Table 4 shows the results of the independent two-sample t-test and ANOVA test for comparing scale scores according to demographic variables.



**Table 4.** Comparison of Scale Scores According to Demographic Variables

Demographic Variable	Groups	n	$\bar{X}$	SS	t / F	p	Significant Difference
Gender	Female	79	3,60	0,51	1,22	0,225	
	Male	90	3,50	0,60			
Marital status	Married	83	3,67	0,58	2,77	<b>0,007</b>	
	Single	86	3,43	0,52			
Number of children	None	105	3,45	0,54	4,33	<b>0,015</b>	<b>C&gt;A</b>
	1 child	30	3,68	0,51			
	2 children and more	34	3,72	0,63			
Age groups	Generation Z (after 2000)	46	3,48	0,49	2,97	0,054	
	Generation Y (1980-1999)	60	3,46	0,61			
	Generation X and before (before 1980)	63	3,68	0,54			
Education status	High school and equivalent	12	3,68	0,46	0,47	0,706	
	Associate degree	17	3,63	0,33			
	Bachelor degree	88	3,51	0,62			
	Graduate	52	3,55	0,56			
Position	Employee	105	3,51	0,55	-1,02	0,308	
	Manager	64	3,60	0,59			
Seniority	Less than 1 year	52	3,53	0,41	1,69	0,172	
	1-5 year	20	3,37	0,71			
	6-10 year	26	3,44	0,60			
	11 years and above	71	3,65	0,59			
Monthly Total Households Income	15,000 TL and below	25	3,62	0,43	1,02	0,387	
	15.001-25.000 TL	55	3,48	0,60			
	25.001-35.000 TL	26	3,45	0,56			
	35.001 TL and above	63	3,62	0,58			

It was determined that the happiness scores of the participants did not differ significantly according to gender, age group, educational status, position in the institution, total working time, and monthly total household income ( $p>0.05$ ) according to Table 4. It was determined that happiness scores differed significantly according to marital status ( $t=2.77$ ;  $p<0.05$ ) and the number of children ( $F=4.33$ ;  $p<0.05$ ). The happiness score of married participants is significantly higher than that of single participants. The happiness score of the participants who have two or more children is significantly higher than the score of the participants who do not have children according to Table 4. Table 5 shows the results of the two independent samples t-test and ANOVA test for comparing the scale score according to social media usage habits.

**Table 5.** Comparison of Scale Scores According to Social Media Usage Habits

Demographic Variable	Groups	n	$\bar{X}$	SS	t / F	p	Significant Difference
Daily time on social media	Less than 1 hour	29	3,63	0,64	0,54	0,705	
	1-2 hours	45	3,60	0,52			
	2-3 hours	32	3,50	0,60			
	3-4 hours	35	3,46	0,55			
	4 hours or more	28	3,52	0,53			
Most frequently used social media platform	Instagram	77	3,59	0,57	0,30	0,914	
	Twitter	24	3,52	0,67			
	Tiktok	23	3,54	0,48			
	Facebook	16	3,57	0,52			
	Whatsapp	15	3,45	0,69			
	Other	14	3,44	0,44			
Checking phone within half an hour of waking up	No	20	3,70	0,63	1,30	0,194	
	Yes	149	3,53	0,55			
Waking up in the middle of the night for no reason and checking the phone	No	90	3,59	0,53	1,15	0,253	
	Yes	79	3,49	0,60			
The number of looking at the phone (daily)while there is no reason	1-10 times	54	3,70	0,51	2,28	0,080	
	11-20 times	69	3,45	0,63			
	21-30 times	15	3,60	0,44			
	31 or more times	31	3,47	0,51			

It was determined that the happiness scores did not differ significantly according to the social media usage habits of the participants ( $p>0.05$ ) according to Table 5.

## 5.2. Findings of the Comparison of Happiness Scores According to the Time Spent on Social Media by Demographic Variables

It has been determined that the happiness scores change only according to marital status and the number of children among the demographic variables but not according to social media usage habits. In addition, in order to determine the typical effect of the variable of "daily time spent on social media" and the marital status and number of children, which is the subject of the research, on happiness, and to determine the differentiation status of the relationship between happiness and the social media usage habits in question, according to the marital status and the number of children. The results of the ANOVA test were examined, and the findings obtained with the variables of marital status and time spent on social media are given in Table 6, Table 7, Table 8, and Table 9.

**Table 6.** Common Scores of Happiness Scores According to Marital Status and Daily Time Spent on Social Media

Marital status	Time Spent on Social Media	n	$\bar{X}$	SS
Married	Less than 1 hour	20	3,66	0,74
	1-2 hours	32	3,65	0,51
	2-3 hours	16	3,81	0,49
	3-4 hours	11	3,55	0,58
	4 hours or more	4	3,54	0,78
Single	Less than 1 hour	9	3,56	0,35
	1-2 hours	13	3,49	0,56
	2-3 hours	16	3,19	0,56
	3-4 hours	24	3,42	0,54
	4 hours or more	24	3,52	0,50

It has been determined that happiness scores differ between married and single social media users according to the time spent on social media (Table 6). The two-way ANOVA test results regarding the significance of the obtained score differences and the common effect of marital status and time spent on social media on happiness are given in Table 7.

**Table 7.** The Joint Effect of Marital Status and Time Spent on Social Media on Happiness

Source	Squares total	sd	Squares average	F	p	Partial $\eta^2$	Observed Strength
Verified model	4,182	9	0,465	1,501	0,152	0,078	0,697
Stable	1531,122	1	1531,122	4946,771	0,000	0,969	1,000
Marital status (MS)	1,309	1	1,309	4,228	<b>0,041</b>	0,026	0,533
Daily Time on Social Media (SMGS)	0,303	4	0,076	0,245	0,912	0,006	0,103
MD x SMGS	1,573	4	0,393	1,270	0,284	0,031	0,391
Fault	49,214	159	0,310				
Total	2178,251	169					
Confirmed total	53,396	168					
Levene's F=1,29; Levene's p=0,247; $R^2=0,078$ ; $\Delta R^2=0,026$							

It was determined that the typical effect of marital status and daily time spent in social media variables on happiness was not significant ( $F=1.27$ ;  $p>0.05$ ) according to Table 7, in other words, there was no interaction between marital status and daily time on social media. It was determined that only 3% of the change in happiness could be explained by the combined effect of marital status and time spent on social media ( $\Delta R^2=0.026$ ). It was determined that the happiness scores did not differ significantly according to the time spent on social media ( $p>0.05$ ), but showed a significant difference according to marital status ( $F=4.23$ ;  $p<0.05$ ). When the partial eta-square is examined, it has been determined that the effect of marital status on happiness

(partial  $\eta^2=0.026$ ) is approximately four times higher than the effect of daily time on social media (partial  $\eta^2=0.006$ ).

Although it has been determined that the effect of the time spent on social media on happiness differs according to marital status, the results of the LSD post hoc test regarding the average pore scores and the marginal average graph were examined in order to determine in which pores the difference was.

**Table 8.** Multiple Comparison Results of the Rated Happiness Scores According to the Time Spent on Social Media

Marital status	$\bar{X}$	Average Difference	SH	p
Married	3,64	0,21	0,10	<b>0,041</b>
Single	3,43			

According to the results of the multiple comparison test (Bonferroni) adjusted for the time spent on social media in Table 8, the happiness score of the married participants was found to be significantly higher than the happiness score of the single participants ( $p<0.05$ ).

**Table 9.** LSD Test Results for Pore Average Scores

Time Spent on Social Media	Marital status	$\bar{X}$	Average Difference	SH	p
2-3 hours	Married	3,81	0,62	0,20	<b>0,002</b>
	Single	3,19			

According to Table 9, the happiness score of married participants who spend 2-3 hours a day on social media ( $3.81\pm0.49$ ) is significantly higher than that of single participants who spend 2-3 hours a day on social media ( $3.19\pm0.56$ ) found to be higher.

The findings obtained with the number of children and time spent on social media are given in Table 10, Table 11, Table 12, and Table 13.

**Table 10.** Common Scores of Happiness Scores According to The Number of Children And Daily Time Spent on Social Media

Number of children	Time Spent on Social Media	n	$\bar{X}$	SS
None	Less than 1 hour	13	3,73	0,54
	1-2 hours	20	3,46	0,52
	2-3 hours	22	3,30	0,56
	3-4 hours	26	3,41	0,52
	4 hours or more	24	3,47	0,54
1 child	Less than 1 hour	6	3,76	0,67
	1-2 hours	9	3,79	0,56
	2-3 hours	6	3,77	0,35
	3-4 hours	7	3,45	0,50
	4 hours or more	2	3,57	0,15
2 children and more	Less than 1 hour	10	3,42	0,75
	1-2 hours	16	3,69	0,48
	2-3 hours	4	4,19	0,58
	3-4 hours	2	4,21	0,86
	4 hours or more	2	4,11	0,30

According to the time spent on social media, it was determined that the happiness scores differ among social media users who do not have children, who have one child, and who have two or more children (Table 10). The results of the two-way ANOVA test regarding the significance of the obtained score differences and the common effect of the number of children and the time spent on social media variables on happiness are given in Table 11.

**Table 11.** The Joint Effect of the Number of Children and the Time Spent on Social Media on Happiness

Source	Squares total	sd	Squares average	F	p	Partial $\eta^2$	Observed Strength
Verified model	7,367	14	0,526	1,761	0,049	0,138	0,898
Stable	1111,756	1	1111,756	3719,667	0,000	0,960	1,000
Number of children (NC)	3,348	2	1,674	5,601	<b>0,004</b>	0,068	0,852
Daily Time on Social Media (SMGS)	0,213	4	0,053	0,178	0,950	0,005	0,087
ÇS x SMGS	4,520	8	0,565	1,890	0,065	0,089	0,779
Fault	46,028	154	0,299				
Total	2178,251	169					
Confirmed total	53,396	168					
Levene's F=0,561; Levene's p=0,892; R <sup>2</sup> =0,138; $\Delta R^2=0,060$							

According to Table 11, it has been determined that the typical effect of the variables of daily time spent on social media on happiness is not significant ( $F=1.89$ ;  $p>0.05$ ), in other words, there is no interaction between the number of children and daily time on social media. It was determined that only 9% of the change in happiness could be explained ( $\Delta R^2=0.089$ ) with the combined effect of the variables of the number of children and the time spent on social media. It was determined that the happiness scores did not differ significantly according to the time spent on social media ( $p>0.05$ ), but showed a significant difference according to the number of children ( $F=5.60$ ;  $p<0.05$ ). When the partial eta-square is examined, it has been determined that the effect of the number of children on happiness (partial  $\eta^2=0.068$ ) is approximately 14 times higher than the effect of daily time on social media (partial  $\eta^2=0.005$ ).

Although it has been determined that the effect of the time spent on social media on happiness differs according to the number of children, the results of the LSD post hoc test regarding the average pore scores and the marginal average graph were examined in order to determine in which pores the difference was.

**Table 12.** Multiple Comparison Results of Happiness Scores Adjusted for Time Spent on Social Media by Number of Children

Number of children	$\bar{X}$	Average Difference	SH	p
None	3,47	-0,19	0,13	0,390
1 child	3,67			
None	3,47	-0,45	0,14	<b>0,005</b>
2 children and more	3,92			
1 child	3,67	-0,26	0,17	0,413
2 children and more	3,92			

It was determined that the happiness score of the participants with two or more children was significantly higher than the happiness score of the participants who did not have children ( $p<0.05$ ) according to the results of the multiple comparison test (Bonferroni) adjusted for the time spent on social media in Table 12.

**Table 13.** LSD Test Results for Pore Average Scores

Time Spent on Social Media	Number of children	$\bar{X}$	Average Difference	SH	p
2-3 hours	None	3,30	-0,88	0,30	<b>0,003</b>
	2 children and more	4,19			
3-4 hours	None	3,41	-0,80	0,40	<b>0,046</b>
	2 children and more	4,21			

The happiness score of participants with 2-3 children who spend 2-3 hours on social media ( $4.19\pm0.58$ ) is compared to the score of participants who do not have children who spend 2-3 hours a day on social media ( $3.30\pm0.56$ ) was found to be higher according to Table 13.

The happiness score of participants with 2-3 children who spend 3-4 hours a day on social media ( $4.21\pm0.86$ ) was found to be significantly higher than the score of participants who do not have children who spend 3-4 hours a day on social media ( $3.41\pm0.52$ ).

## 6. CONCLUSION

According to the study's results to determine the effect of social media platform usage time on happiness, the happiness of the people participating in the research does not differ significantly according to the duration of social media platform usage. When the findings obtained in the study according to demographic variables are compared with the related literature;

- The daily time spent by the participants on social media platforms is between 1-2 hours. According to the "Digital Turkey 2022" report organized by Hootsuite and We Are Social, this time is 2 hours and 59 minutes, which does not support our research result.
- The most frequently used social media platform by the participants is Twitter, Tiktok, Facebook, and Whatsapp, respectively, after Instagram. In addition to the studies supporting the research result (Young et al., 2020), according to the "Digital Turkey 2022" report, Whatsapp, Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter are in the rankings and do not support our research results.
- Among the demographic variables, the participants' happiness scores only change according to marital status and the number of children, but not according to their social media usage habits. The happiness score of married participants who spend 2-3 hours a day on social media is significantly higher than that of single participants who spend 2-3 hours a day on social media.
- There is no interaction between the number of children and the daily time spent on social media. The happiness score of the participants who have two or more children is significantly higher than that of those who do not have children.
- Participants with 2-3 children who spend 2-3 hours a day on social media have a significantly higher happiness score than participants who do not have children who spend 2-3 hours a day on social media. Participants with 2-3 children who spend 3-4 hours a day on social media have a significantly higher happiness score than participants who do not have children who spend 3-4 hours a day on social media.

While the result is compared to the relevant field, only one research (Aramatzi et al., 2016) supports the research result, while the field needs to be reached in the literature. Studies advocate that social media platforms positively affect the happiness of people when used in the dose (Elison et al., 2007; Steinfield et al., 2008; Moorhead, 2013; Przybylski and Weinstein, 2017; Rosen et al., 2022:17; Hsu et al., 2018; Balcı and Demir, 2018), the research argues that happiness increases as the use of social media platforms increases (Lin and Lu, 2011), some studies argue that social media make people asocial, isolates them from society, and makes them unhappy (Kraut et al., 1998; Emmons and McCullough, 2003). In addition, some researchers advocate that the contact established with social media tools plays an active role in the happiness and unhappiness of the person, but without specifying the direction of the effect (Warr, 2020:27-28).

The most important limitation of the research is that it is limited to the scale used, the questions asked, and the participants. Since there is limited research on the relationship between social media platforms and happiness, the findings will shed light on future research.

In future research, the use of social media platforms during stressful or uncertain times can be analyzed. It can be evaluated how social media changes during periods of increased unhappiness and anxiety, whether people live alone or have family members or friends around them also affect the social contact they need. Since people living alone may be more inclined to meet their social contact needs on social media platforms, studies that include this criterion also support reaching more generalizable results. By analyzing the relationship with happiness according to the social media platform that people use, the reasons for using social media platforms, sharing preferences and types (photo, message, liking, etc.), the increasing social media platform durations, and their connections with happiness can be analyzed more comprehensively.

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