PERCEIVED INFORMATION AND DISINFORMATION OF GENERATION Z IN THE CONTEXT OF THE CHANGING CONSUMER SOCIETY: A RESEARCH ON NEWS CONSUMPTION BEHAVIOR ON SOCIAL MEDIA

DEĞİŞEN TÜKETİM TOPLUMU BAĞLAMINDA Z KUŞAĞININ ENFORMASYON VE DEZENFORMASYON ALGISI: SOSYAL MEDYA HABER TÜKETİM DAVRANIŞINA YÖNELİK BİR ARAŞTIRMA

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Abstract

This study aims to reveal the effects of disinformation and perceived trust of individuals classified as Generation Z in social media news on their motivation for news consumption. To that end, this study employs quantitative research methods to test hypotheses. The sample is determined as Generation Z aged 18 and older residing in various cities across Türkiye. Using a survey to collect data, this study gathered a total of 337 surveys from 06/15/2024 to 06/25/2024 through online and face-to-face communication. The findings show that Gen Z individuals' perception of misinformation on social media is high for fake news and low in terms of challenge competence, and that they need verification to trust news on social media and trust their personal environment. This study concludes that the motivational elements for news consumption that most affected the perceived disinformation and trust of social media among Gen Z are the dimension "technical facilities and convenience" and "rich and optional content".

Keywords: Generation Z, Information and Disinformation, Social Media Trust Perception, Social Media News Consumption Motivation.

Öz

Bu araştırmada, Z kuşağı olarak sınıflandırılan bireylerin sosyal medya haberlerine yönelik dezenformasyon ve güven algılarının haber tüketim motivasyonlarına etkisinin ortaya koyulması amaçlanmıştır. Tezin amacına ulaşılması için nicel araştırma yöntemlerine başvurulmuş olup, ilişkisel tarama modeli kullanılarak hipotezler test edilmiştir. Araştırmanın örneklemi Türkiye'nin farklı şehirlerinde yaşayan 18 yaş üstü Z kuşağı bireyleri olarak belirlenmiştir. Çalışma kapsamında veri toplamak için anket tekniği kullanılmıştır. 15.06.2024 – 25.06.2024 tarihleri arasında çevrimiçi ve yüz yüze temas tekniğiyle toplam 337 adet anket toplanmıştır. Elde edilen bulgular; Z kuşağı bireylerinin sosyal medyada dezenformasyon algılarının sahte haber bağlamında yüksek, mücadele yeterliliği konusunda düşük olduğunu, bireylerin sosyal medyadaki haberlere güvenebilmeleri için teyit etme ihtiyacı duydukları ve bireysel çevresine güvendiklerini göstermektedir. Z kuşağı bireylerinin dezenformasyon algılarının ve sosyal medya güven algılarının en fazla etkilediği haber tüketim motivasyon unsurları, "teknik olanak ve kolaylık" boyutu ile "zengin ve isteğe bağlı içerik" olmuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Z Kuşağı, Enformasyon ve Dezenformasyon, Sosyal Medya Güven Algısı, Sosyal Medya Haber Tüketim Motivasyonu.

INTRODUCTION

People have needs that must be fulfilled throughout their lives. Different characteristics (such as personality, education) shape their varying human needs. And people can engage in different consumption activities to meet the same needs (Torlak, 2016, p. 15). Consumption refers to exploiting, spending or using an object (Bauman, 1999, p. 39). Beyond being an individual activity like object production, consumption may be considered as a completely social action (Baudrillard, 2015, p. 91). As a result of the developing product range and industrialization, the act of consumption created a cultural structure in societies (Baudrillard, 2015, p. 70; Helvacı, 2022, p. 47). This emerging consumer society is exposed to an unlimited flow of information and news through platforms such as social media, which are integral to the internet (Aşlakçı, 2022, p. 89) and this new social formation is called "the Information Society" (Castells, 2005, p. 17). Today, in this information society, news organizations, in an effort to keep up with the age, are joining in popular social media platforms (Öztürk, 2020, p. 106-109). Simply defined as a set of edited and interpreted data, information causes a heavy traffic especially in news reports on social media platforms (Soğukdere and Öztunç, 2020, p. 63; Tokcan, 2015, p. 20-23). This traffic leads to the spread of disinformation in the information shared. That is to say, it causes a misleading presentation of information in the news reports intentionally or unintentionally (Cooke, 2017, p. 213-214). Disinformation refers to the deliberate act intended to mislead the masses and spread false information (Toktay, 2019, p. 38). Today's children and youth, called Generation Z, were brought into a world of this nature (Yücekök, 2019, p. 4).

This study intends to identify the effect of disinformation and trust perceptions of individuals of Generation Z towards news reports on social media on their motivation for news consumption. Given that the news consumption behaviors of Generation Z on social media have been understudied with a focus on their perceptions towards information and disinformation in the Turkish literature, this study will hopefully provide a novel understanding of this subject. Understanding of the perceptions of Gen Z, who grew up surrounded by online applications and social media, towards disinformation on social media and their trust in social media as well as their motivations for news consumption on social media is of both national and international significance. In today's world, many countries are establishing public organizations to challenge disinformation, incorporating Internet-related and social media literacy courses into their national curricula. For this reason, the findings of this study will yield useful insights into the sample of Gen Z for social media channels, professionals and organizations that produce news reports on social media, as well as public institutions.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Consumption, Consumer Culture and Consumer Society

Consumption has emerged alongside the existence of humankind and dates back to the times of hunting and gathering (Topaloğlu and Güngör, 2016, p. 284). Consumption is initially defined as "destruction, expenditure, waste, accumulation" (Featherstone, 2013, p. 51; Trentmann, 2016, p. 320). The concept of consumption, corresponding to different and broader meanings over time, developed as a result of people turning to a cultural approach that encompasses various elements (lifestyles, social status, economic approaches, an so on) just to meet their needs (Halis, 2012, p. 151). Starting with the existence of humanity and carrying on throughout history, consumption a necessity for human beings to survive (Solak, 2020, p. 19). This concept shapes the ways people define who they are and who they want to be (Bocock, 2009, p. 10). It has moved beyond its true definitions along with society and now connotates privilege, prestige, position, identity formation, and so on (Aytaç, 2006, p. 30). Consumer culture is a concept used to indicate the consumption habits, traditions and forms experienced by all societies (İlter, 2019, p. 462; Orçan, 2004, p. 17). Consumer culture first emerged in England in the 18th century by the middle classes and in the 19th century by the working class (when leisure time and mass entertainment developed) (Featherstone, 2013, p. 197). The phenomenon of consumption encountered in the late 20th century, especially in Western-style capitalism, with the continuous increase in consumption during the period of capitalism, points to the emergence of a consumer culture that is based on whims rather than needs (Yanıklar, 2006, p. 26). Today, the production order ensures that individuals can live happily through consumption within the consumer culture that sells the product by giving individuals the freedom to choose (Baudrilard, 2015, p. 197).

The grounds of the consumer society were laid by changes such as the increase in production in the 18th century and the transition to the Fordist standard mass production in the 19th century, developments in transportation and communication, the emergence of advertising, migration from rural areas to urban cities and the resulting increase in the urban population (Orçan, 2014, p. 20-22). The Internet, a means of influencing, directing and manipulating the consumer society, is one of the primary sources; that is, the needs of individuals are today shaped by the media (Tükel, 2014, p. 2). In a consumer society, novel means of consumption tend to change the dynamics of social relations (Ritzer, 2011, p. 225). Individuals in a consumer society create identities, are classified and positioned through what they consume. They help establish social bonds by forming group ties as well as material needs such as clothing style and food preferences (Dağtaş, 2009, p. 64). The media promotes consumption by fueling the illusion of happiness or attractiveness based on consumption, which is essential for the process of adaptation of individuals to the society (Silier, 2011, p. 171). The main goal of the consumer society is to increase the functionality of the consumer and to link all needs to psychological factors, to create a consumption order that is inclusive of all, aligns with the direction of production and growing urban populations (Baudrillard, 2015, p. 225).

Information and Disinformation in the Consumer Society
The verb "inform" is mostly used in the sense of communicating (reporting, recounting or telling) and comes from the Latin word "informare", which corresponds to shaping (forming) an idea (Zins, 2007, p. 481 cited from Capurro and Hjøerland, 2003). The concept of information is broadly defined as the process of conveying enlightening information about a situation or event from a source to a recipient (İnceoğlu, 1985, p. 55). Information is an abstract concept and a broad term used to describe an event or process (Cansever, 2016, p. 45). The information age refers to the modern era (the 1970s), when information became widely and rapidly accessible thanks to computer technologies (Castells, 2005, p. 26).

The role of information in the consumer society is gaining more and more significance every day. With the widespread use of the Internet and digital communication, access to information is today much more easier and faster (Kırık, 2017, p. 230). This affects our consumption habits and social dynamics as well. A consumer turns to the Internet when they need to get information about a product, so this influences consumer decisions (Özcan, 2010, p. 32). In marketing and advertising strategies, companies leverage digital channels besides traditional media to reach consumers (Ryan, 2016, p. 1660; Zengi et al., 2023, p. 6). Social media, blogs, and online advertisements, which allow marketing and advertising strategies to evolve in a more customized and effective way than traditional approaches (Beşinci et al., 2024, p. 60), help companies reach out their target audience directly (Çubukcu, 2010, p. 40). Yet, the increase of information in the consumer society brings about information pollution and trust issues (Bozkurt, 2014, p. 32-37). The dissemination of false or misleading information may disrupt the clarity of decision making process for consumers (Farte and Obadă, 2018, p. 29).

The concept of disinformation emerged in the Western World during the World War II and is defined in the English Webster Dictionary as "false news deliberately and covertly spread in order to influence public opinion or obscure the truth" (Bennett, 1981, p. 56). The word disinformation is of Russian origin and refers to the act of deliberately misleading the masses by conveying false information (Toktay, 2019, p. 38). The motivation behind disinformation is to deceive; on the other hand, false information, although it is not true, is presented only because the communicator simply does not know the facts completely (Turan, 2015, p. 113). Disinformation seeks not only to convince, but also to arouse suspicion (Pomerantsev and Weiss, 2014, p. 28), maliciously presents false information, and provides distorted, inconsistent or incomplete information (Arıkan, 2011, p. 19). That is, disinformation is entirely aimed at spreading falsehoods (Tumber and Waisbord, 2021, p. 13). There are a number of factors underlying the concept of disinformation in the consumer society; these factors significantly affect the spread of disinformation and its effects. Fake news, manipulative content, and skeptical approaches affect the society, as they can easily spread on social media and other digital platforms (Topçu and Çaycı, 2022, p. 169). Disinformation is most prevalent in consumer products and services. Advertising and marketing strategies can often present unreal or exaggerated information so that

products look attractive to the target audience (Ceylon, 2008, p. 37). The spread of disinformation can lead to information pollution and a crisis of trust, making it difficult for people to find reliable sources of information and accurate information. This can further result in a general lack of trust and healthy communication in society (Girgin, 2003, p. 170; Yüksel, 2014, p. 132). Fighting against disinformation in the consumer society entails media literacy and developed critical thinking skills, as well as being a conscious consumer (Devrim, 2023, p. 276-278). Moreover, there is a need to render algorithms and platforms more effective in order to prevent the spread of misleading content on social media and other platforms (Soydan, 2023, p. 211).

Social Media and Trust
The word "media" is derived from the plural form of the word "medium", meaning tool or environment in Latin, and refers to the information, emotion and thought transfer environments provided by mass media in communication literature (Kılıç, 2019, p. 230). Social media are online platforms where people interact with each other by sharing information, thoughts and experiences (Safko and Brake, 2009, p. 6). Modern communication environments offer online access, providing users with more advanced facilities than preceding communication technologies. The social dimension of such communication environments is characterized by the sharing of content created by users, its rapid adoption and the use of social media (Gündüz, 2017, p. 86). On social media, users interact with each other and communicate through instant messaging (Correa et al., 2010, p. 247-248). Social media allows users not only to communicate, but also obtain information, make calls, and even play games. Meeting various needs on a single platform, social media reduces the need for different media as well (Khazar, 2011, p. 153).

Given the rapid dissemination of false information on social media, it is critical that social media users assess the information they find and determine what to do with that information (Flanigan et al., 2010, p. 29; Yıldızgörür, 2018, p. 81;). Trust includes credibility in the media in general, and especially in journalism (Vural, 2010, p. 22). It can be difficult for many people to reach out reliable information, particularly in the social media environment (Rieh and Hilligoss, 2008, p. 49). People's faster and easier access to a wide and diverse range of information sources raises concerns about the reliability of information and its sources (Rieh and Danielson, 2007, p. 307). It is reported that social media users may trust more in the information shared by people with similar characteristics or experiences to themselves (Hu and Sundar, 2009, p. 109). In other words, people trust and get along better with those similar to them in terms of worldview, lifestyle, and race (Ruef et al., 2003, p. 196). Trust in social media encompasses the overall trust in its tools, the types of messages and information disseminated via these tools, and the resources that create and disseminate these contents (Yıldızgörür, 2018, p. 61). Accordingly, false information is becoming more widespread and accessible in the era of new communication technologies, urging the need to increase awareness towards this and to ensure the reliability of the information environment on social media (Çömlekçi and Başol, 2019, p. 58). Most studies consider social media as an unreliable source of information; yet, for many, social media is one of the primary sources for accessing information or indirectly obtaining information (Yıldızgörür, 2018, p. 51).

News Consumption and Generation Z
The word news is formed by the initials of the words north, east, west and south in English. The concept of news is thus defined as coming from all directions (Büyükafşar, 2019, p. 38; Aslan, 2003, p. 14). News is the latest and most interesting piece of information about events take place at some point in real life, people, or entities (Büyükafşar, 2019, p. 38). From different perspectives, the concept of news is described as genuine, up-to-date, revealing, engaging or prioritized content (Girgin, 2003, p. 96), what is remarkable and intriguing that day (Postman and Powers, 1996, p. 20), completely up-to-date information (Arslan Yeğen, 2004, p. 68), narrative or summary of events (Tokgöz, 1981, p. 51), a record of the conditions of society (Postman and Powers, 1996, p. 28), and information-providing or entertaining content (Tokgöz, 1981, p. 110).

News consumption involves the process of understanding, analyzing and consuming useful information in daily life in the context of time/space by relating to social and public events. A number of different reasons may underlie this process (Bennet, 2000, p. 355). The offline lifestyle that emerged with the rise

of the Internet has caused dramatic changes in news consumption as well as in other areas (Çelik and Aydınlıoğlu, 2023, p. 57; Mitchelstein and Boczkowski,, 2010, p. 1086). Today, digital media platforms such as websites, the Internet and social networks greatly transformed how people consume news (İlik, 2023, p. 26). Social networks, with Facebook and X being the most notable, considerably promote individuals' news consumption and interactive news sharing (Karaaslan, 2018, p. 244). Social media platforms are among the key tools that allow both journalists and individuals to access the news in the fastest way possible (Armstrong and Gao, 2010, p. 219). The constant flow of news on social media platforms makes news consumption a primary source of random consumption (Çelik and Aydınlıoğlu, 2023, p. 58; Karaaslan, 2018, p. 249).

Generation refers to a group of individuals with specific birth years and common experiences, whose ideas, importance, beliefs and attitudes both influence and are influenced by various factors (Chen, 2010, p. 132; Kupperschmidt, 2000, p. 67; Taş, Demirdöğmez and Küçükoğlu, 2017, p. 1035). Generation is used to define the subgroups that make up the society (Demirel, 2021, p. 1798) and identified by age (Rogler, 2002, p. 1015). Generations are commonly classified as follows: Silent Generation (1922-1945), Baby Boomers (1946- 1964), Generation X (1965- 1979), Generation Y (1980-1999), and Generation Z (since 2000) (Strauss and Howe, 1991, p. 198; Holton and Fraser, 2015, p. 3; Keengwe and Agamba, 2014, p. 274; Reisenwitz and Iyer, 2009, p. 92). Generation Z is also known as the App Generation due to the fact that they are born and raised with digital technology (Beyaz, 2020, p. 56; Gardner and Davis, 2013, p. 6). Gen Z is anyone born from 2000 up to the present day (Birinci, 2020, p. 27). Gen Z constitutes 17% of the total population of Türkiye (İlik, 2023, p. 57). Gen Z, individuals of our time, are described as technology-savvy (Dabija and Lung, 2019:1) and social media is their most preferred means of socialization (Köktener and Algül, 2020, p. 424; Levickaite, 2010, p. 176). In the digital age, young people access news through digital devices and platforms to be informed about daily events (Preethy Rose, 2023, p. 123). Gen Z keeps up with the news thanks to mobile news consumption, leverage various news sources and engage in activities such as sharing content from news sites, especially via social media (Karaaslan, 2018, p. 246). Gen Z prefers media tools where they can communicate their ideas and share comments while watching the news (Desai and Lele, 2017, p. 806). The reliability of the news is of importance for Gen Z while following the news. For them, official statements and news from impartial sources are decisive. They resort to many sources such as television, social media platforms, newspaper websites to grasp the coherence of a news story. This indicates that readers take on an active role rather than a passive one (İlik, 2023, p. 98).

Motivation for News Consumption

It is also of utmost significance and motivation for individuals to gain personal awareness about the reliability of news and information on social media and to challenge manipulations through awareness-raising (Çömlekçi and Başol, 2019, p. 58). When it comes to motivation for news consumption, individuals attach great importance to the source of the information they find on the media and assess the news and information accordingly (Güngör, 2011, p. 218). A user's social media usage, news tracking and motivation for news sharing are known to be key in understanding user behavior (Kılıç and İspir, 2020, p. 268). It is reported that users need different motivations for consuming social media for news activities, such as being visible in sharing, having knowledge, and so forth (Holton et al., 2014, p. 36). All these imply that the motivations of individuals for news consumption are multi-dimensional. Motivation for news consumption, as widely reported in the literature, has been addressed under the themes of technical facilities and convenience, entertainment and relaxation, rich and optional content, active participation, and reliability (Ateşgöz and Kılıç, 2022, p.152-153).

Literature Review on the Relationship among Perceived Disinformation on Social Media, Perceived Trust, and Motivation for News Consumption

Various researchers to date have focused on the relationship between the perceived disinformation on social media, perceived trust, and motivation for news consumption. The relevant literature in Turkish

includes contributions from Çömlekçi and Başol, 2019; Beştaş and Kırık, 2019; Akyüz, Gülnar and Kazaz, 2021; Ateşgöz and Kılıç, 2022; Ata, 2023. In their study with a sample of 313 students from the Faculty of Communication at Selçuk University, Akyüz, Gülnar and Kazaz (2021) determined their level of trust in social media and social media platforms, their verification behaviors against disinformation, and their views on challengeing false information. The researchers reported that the structure of social media increases fake news, that political polarization is an important reason for believing fake news, that journalism is steadily losing credibility due to user-derived journalism, and that the participants feel their connection to reality is weakening. They also noted that users who find platforms, legislative and judicial institutions inadequate in challengeing against fake news often feel the need to verify news on social media, but their awareness of verification methods seems low. Ata (2023) investigated the motivations for and satisfaction of Gen Z with consuming social media for news activities with a sample of 406 people classified as Gen Z. The researcher found out that Gen Z is, respectively moderately and highly satisfied and motivated to consume social media for news activities on YouTube and Instagram. On another finding, the researcher stated that social media and journalism/news reporting allow different areas of new media to be used together.

The non-Turkish literature offers a notable study by Todorova (2021) with a sample of Bulgarian participants of Generation X, Y, and Z. The researcher examined the perceptions of three different generations, X, Y and Z, on the spread of intentional disinformation in the Bulgarian media. The findings identified disinformation and sensationalism as one of the most significant problems. Another remarkable finding was that all three generations commonly reported a lack of trust. Furusten (2023) performed a study with 26 Swedish participants in Gen Z to probe into the relationship between their trust in news media and news media usage. The researcher suggested a clear discrepancy between their news media usage and their trust.

METHOD
Research Model
This study draws on relational screening method, which is one of the screening methods. Figure 1 presents the symbolic representation of the research model.
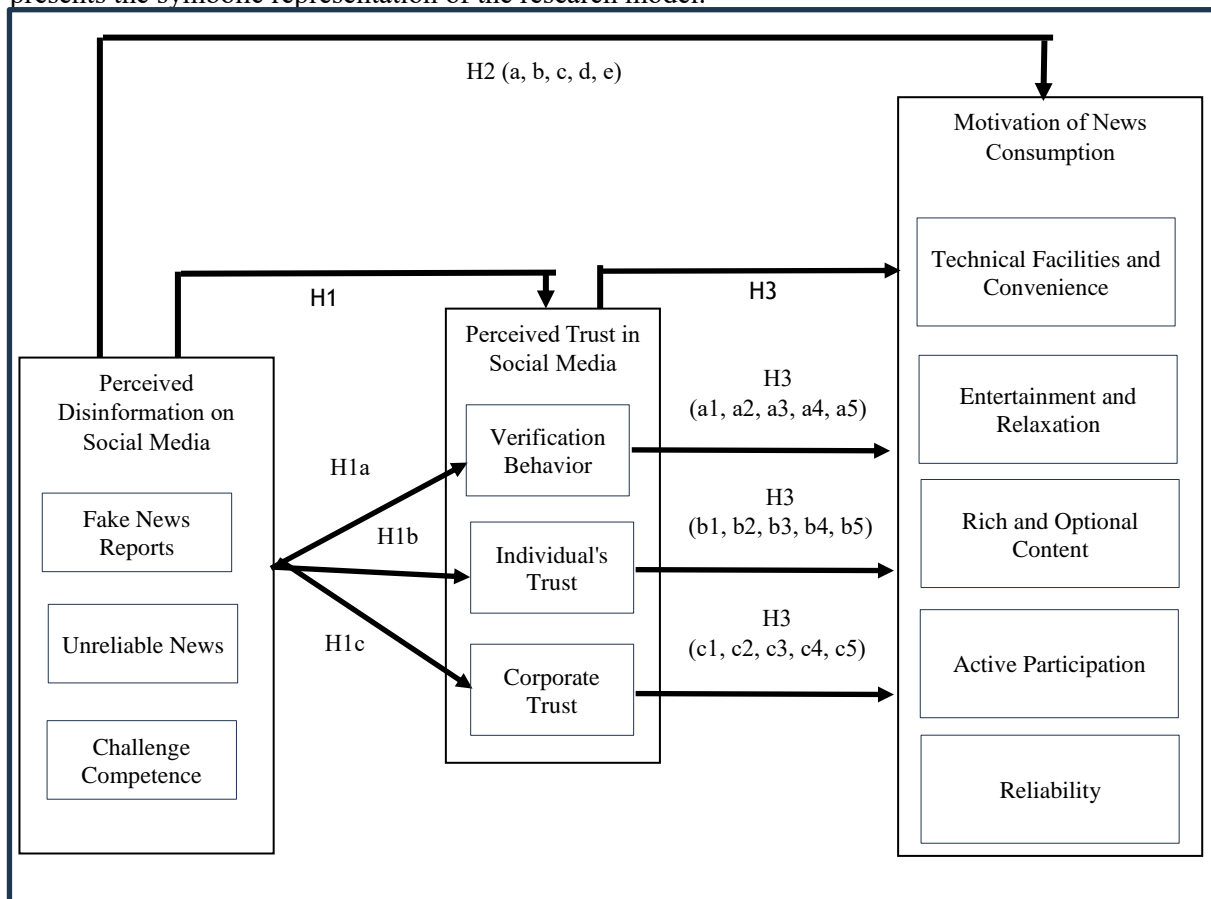
Figure 1. Symbolic representation of the hypotheses

Data Collection Tool
To collect data, this study used a two-part survey. The first part consists of 52 items while the second part includes 14 items (questions on demographics and psychographics) and measures 3 sub-variables. The first sub-variable is perceived disinformation on social media and derived from the 15-item scale by Akyüz, Gülnar and Kazaz (2021). The second sub-variable is perceived trust in social media and derived from the 10-item scale by Çömlekçi and Başol (2019), who drew on prior research in the literature to create this scale. The third sub-variable is motivation for news consumption and obtained from the 27-item scale by Ateşgöz and Kılıç (2022). All items are presented to the participants using a 5-point Likert-type scale (1: Strongly Disagree 5: Strongly Agree).

Research Sample and Data Collection Process
The universe of study is all Gen Z in Türkiye. The sample consists of 384 individuals, determined with a 5% significance level and a 4% sampling error through the unlimited universe sampling formula (Ural and Kılıç, 2006, p. 47; Balcı, 2009, p. 102). Based on the formula by the G*Power 3.1 version for sample power calculation, for the effect size of 0.15, the power of effect of 0.80 and the margin of error of 0.05, a sample size of 68 would be sufficient, but this figure usually needs to be multiplied by 3 (Bido, Silva and Ringle, 2014). Accordingly, a minimum of 204 surveys will suffice. The sample is determined as a minimum of 204 individuals classified as Generation Z aged 18 and older residing in various cities across Türkiye. The data collection process took place from June 15th, 2024 to June 25th, 2024 through an online survey through Google Forms as well as face-to-face meeting, and the number of the valid surveys is 337, following the removal of incomplete and incorrectly filled responses.

Data Analysis Methods
This study conducted missing value analysis, normal distribution analysis, reliability analysis, explanatory factor analysis, descriptive analysis and multiple regression analysis.

Assumptions and Limitations
The assumptions of this research are that there is disinformation on social media, and that the participants understood the items directed at them in the survey conducted by online and face-to-face interview methods and used at least one of the social media channels. The primary limitation is that the sample consists only of Gen Z living in Türkiye. The secondary limitation is that the data collection was carried out convenience sampling method, which is one of the sampling methods that is not based on probability.

Reliability and Validity Analyses
The reliability range of the Alpha coefficient is usually accepted to be between 0.60 and 0.79, and the ideal value should reach 0.80 or greater (Şencan, 2005, p. 168-170 cited from George and Mallery, 2003). Multiple R^2 coefficients above 0,300 are considered good (Alpar, 2010, p. 391). This study also examined whether the correlation values between classes have a negative direction (Kalaycı, 2010, p. 412), whether the scales can be combined through Tukey's Test of Additivity (p>0,05), and whether Hotelling's T2 statistics, which shows that the items are homogeneous and derive from multiple normal distributions, are significant or not (p<0,001) (Özdamar, 2011, p. 615-617). Based on the above-mentioned criteria, this study conducted a reliability analysis for each scale individually. Each scale was tested against reliability; the scale on motivation for and satisfaction with news consumption (27 dimensions) was found highly reliable with a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.927. The scale on perceived disinformation (15 dimensions) also was found highly reliable with a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.804. Likewise, the scale on perceived trust in social media (10 dimensions) had a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.814, implying high reliability.
Explanatory factor analysis (EFA) represents a statistical assessment method that intends to identify the factor dimensions in a significant way by combining a large number of interrelated variables (Çokluk, Şekercioğlu and Büyüköztürk, 2010, p. 178). Prior to the factor analysis, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin

(KMO) value of the data set of above 1.00 is considered marvelous, between 0.80 and 0.89 is meritorious, and between 0.70 and 0.79 is middling (Aksu, Eser, and Güzeller, 2017, p. 9). According to the results of the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity, another adequacy test, the significance of the scale is at (p≤,000). Thus, the dimensions of the scales motivation for and satisfaction with news consumption, perceived disinformation and perceived trust in social media in this study were added to the factor analysis separately. The explanatory factor analysis yielded the same five-dimensional structure for the scale motivation for and satisfaction with news consumption with the same related items under each dimension as in previous studies. These five dimensions are "technical facilities and convenience", "entertainment and relaxation", "rich and optional content", "active participation", and "reliability" that seek to explain "motivation for and satisfaction with news consumption" through a total of 27 items. The findings from the explanatory factor analysis on Table 3.5 show that the dimension with the highest explanatory power is "technical facilities and convenience" by 20.020% . The item that most contributed to this dimension in terms of load value is MNC1, that is, "I can access news quickly on social media platforms.". Its KMO value of ,905 is within the desired range. Table 1 shows the findings of the analyses.

Table 1. EFA Findings on Motivation for News Consumption (MNC)

	Factor Loadings	Communalities	Eigenvalues	Explained Variance	x̄	Alpha
1. Technical Facilities and Convenience			**5,405**	**20,020**	**4,04**	**,921**
MNC1- I can access news quickly on social media platforms.	,898	,860			4,14	
MNC2-I can access news easily on social media platforms.	,891	,862			4,16	
MNC3-I can catch news affordably on social media platforms.	,800	,675			3,99	
MNC4-I can be instantly informed about what is happening on social media platforms.	,825	,815			4,06	
MNC5-I can easily access news from the past on social media platforms.	,720	,665			3,99	
MNC6-I can copy and save the news reports on social media platforms.	,586	,545			3,88	
2. Entertainment and Relaxation			**3,938**	**14,585**	**3,71**	**,904**
MNC7- News related to entertainment and relaxation turn into an experience for me.	,368	,704			3,82	
MNC8- News related to entertainment and relaxation make me feel comfortable.	,843	,802			3,76	
MNC9- News related to entertainment and relaxation relieve my stress.	,840	,804			3,68	
MNC10- News related to entertainment and relaxation are exciting.	,779	,701			3,49	
MNC11- News related to entertainment and relaxation are entertaining.	,751	,708			3,78	

3. Rich and Optional Content			**3,781**	**14,004**	**3,97**	**,892**
MNC12- I can set my own news preferences on social media platforms.	,370	,585			3,92	
MNC13- I can follow news on social media platforms without any time or place limitations.	,434	,564			4,03	
MNC14- I can follow news about my interests on social media platforms.	,496	,762			4,03	
MNC15- I can be informed about different opinions on social media platforms.	,525	,765			4,06	
MNC16- I like to be presented with other news related to the news content I've previously read on social media platforms.	,683	,646			3,82	
MNC17- I can find new news channels more effortlessly on social media platforms.	,431	,604			3,95	
4. Active Participation			**3,030**	**11,221**	**3,31**	**,887**
MNC18- I can make comments on social media platforms to direct people.	,791	,681			3,52	
MNC19- I can share on social media platforms to overcome problems.	,889	,822			3,30	
MNC20- I can post on social media platforms to influence other people.	,837	,750			3,27	
MNC21- I can contribute to news content on social media platforms.	,839	,740			3,07	
MNC22- I can criticize news content on social media platforms.	,693	,623			3,54	
MNC23- I feel that I am more active on social media platforms.	,525	,456			3,43	
5. Reliability			**2,471**	**9,152**	**3,23**	**,762**
MNC24- I feel less exposed to manipulation of news on social media platforms.	,746	,597			3,05	
MNC25- I can catch news reliably on social media platforms.	,789	,689			3,15	
MNC26- I feel less exposed to censorship of news on social media platforms.	,730	,614			3,32	
MNC27- I can verify the accuracy of the news on social media platforms.	,661	,589			3,40	
Factor extraction method: Basic components analysis; Rotation method: Varimax The Sampling Adequacy of the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin: ,905 (90,5%) Chi-Square for Bartlett's the sphericity Test: 6100,052, p<0.000 Total variance explained: 68,982						

No item from the 15-item scale on perceived disinformation on social media was removed for explanatory factor analysis. The analysis yielded a three-dimensional structure. The first dimension of this three-dimensional structure is "perception of fake news"; the second one is "perception of challenge competence", and the third is "perception of unreliable news". The findings from the explanatory factor analysis on Table 3.6 show that the dimension with the highest explanatory power is "fake news" by 32.088%. Its KMO value of ,843 is within the desired range. Table 2 presents the findings of the analyses.

Table 2. EFA Findings of Perceived Disinformation (PD)

	Factor Loadings	Communalities	Eigenvalue	Explained Variance	x̄	Alpha
1. Perception of Fake News			**4,813**	**32,088**	**4,00**	**,901**
PD28- Fake news increases the polarization in society.	,776	,617			4,17	,887
PD29- People can be easily mislead by false/fake news generated on the Internet and social media.	,818	,684			4,16	,884
PD30- News sources have become even more diversified thanks to the Internet and social media.	,823	,680			4,09	,883
PD31- The fact that non-professional users can report news on the Internet and social media heightens the issue of reliability.	,739	,562			4,04	,890
P32- False/fake news have weakened people's connection with the facts.	,768	,622			3,98	,886
PD33- The Internet and social media allow for the production of false/fake news.	,757	,615			3,93	,887
PD34- The Internet and social media have expanded the area of freedom to obtain information.	,767	,608			3,86	,889
PD36- There are legal shortcomings in the battle against fake news.	,617	,524			3,74	,897
2. Perception of Unreliable News			**2,627**	**17,513**	**3,26**	**,634**
PD35- Confidence in journalism is waning due to the Internet and social media.	,553	,365			3,47	,736
PD37- The Internet and social media news are deceptive.	,846	,724			3,17	,447
PD38- I find the Internet and social media unreliable for news.	,817	,707			3,14	,439
3. Challenge Competence			**1,967**	**13,114**	**2,84**	**,803**

PD39- Judicial institutions are fighting against false/fake news.	,825	,714			3,04	
PD40- Public institutions (presidency, relevant ministries, etc.) are fighting against false/fake news.	,851	,731			3,00	
PD41- The Internet and social media platforms are sufficiently challengeing false/fake news.	,852	,731			2,82	
PD42- Media literacy education in Türkiye is of sufficient quality.	,620	,523			2,50	
Factor extraction method: Basic components analysis; Rotation method: Varimax The Sampling Adequacy of Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin: ,843 (84,3%) Chi-Square for the Bartlett's sphericity Test: 2199,121 p<0.000 Total variance explained: 62,716						

The explanatory factory analysis on perceived trust in social media yielded a three-dimensional structure with "verification behavior", "corporate trust", "individual's trust", which was proven to be valid and reliable in the previous studies. The findings from the explanatory factor analysis on Table 3.7 indicate that the dimension with the highest explanatory power is "perception of corporate trust" by 31.565%. Its KMO value of ,787 is within the desired range. Table 3 presents the findings of the analyses in detail.

Table 3. EFA findings of perceived trust in social media (PTSM)

	Factor Loadings	Communalities	Eigenvalues	Explained Variance	x̄	Alpha
1. Perception of Corporate Trust			**3,156**	**31,565**	**3,16**	**,792**
PTSM43- I trust the social media posts shared by newspapers distributed in print.	,788	,660			3,06	
PTSM44- I trust the social media posts shared by online newspapers.	,848	,751			3,06	
PTSM45- I trust the social media posts shared by well-known journalists.	,790	,669			3,34	
2. Individual's Trust			**2,370**	**23,702**	**2,88**	**,689**
PTSM46- I trust the posts shared by the channels where users create content.	,494	,547			2,91	
PTSM47- I trust the social media posts shared by social media influencers.	,854	,780			2,57	
PTSM48-I trust the social media posts shared by my friends/acquaintances.	,796	,701			3,15	
3. Verification Behavior			**1,691**	**16,906**	**3,68**	**,902**
PTSM49- I do research on the accuracy/reliability of the news I find on social media.	,841	,723			3,69	

PTSM50- I verify a news report I find on social media from different sources on social media.	,891	,808			3,69	
PTSM51- I verify a news report I find on social media from other online sources than social media.	,913	,853			3,71	
PTSM52- I verify a news report I find on social media from sources other than the Internet.	,843	,726			3,62	

Factor extraction method: Basic components analysis; Rotation method: Varimax
The Sampling Adequacy of Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin: ,787 (78,7%)
Chi-Square for the Bartlett's sphericity Test: 1500,967 p<0.000
The total variance explained: 72,172

FINDINGS

Findings on the Demographics of the Participants

Table 4. presents the descriptive statistics of the participants, providing information on their gender, age, and educational backgrounds. A total of 312 people participated in this study. 58.7% of them are women, whilst 40.7% are men. As for their age, the majority of the participants are 21 and 22 years old, respectively, by 17.9% and 17.6%. And, most of them, that is 90.1.% of the participants, had a bachelor's degree. The descriptive statistical analysis also revealed that the participants were residing in Adana (11.5%), Ankara (10.9%), Hatay (6.7%), İstanbul (5.4%), and Mersin (4.5%) across Türkiye.

Table 4. includes findings on the psycho-demographic characteristics of the participants. Also, the results on the awareness of the participants about the news and events taking place in Türkiye, indicated that 42% of them were aware of such news and events. They were asked about whether they consider the Turkish news media to be ethical, and 87.8% of them did not find it ethical. As for the shortcomings of the Turkish news media, 72.4% of the participants mentioned about disinformation, whereas 40.1% reported sensationalism. When asked how serious of a problem disinformation (i.e. the spread of false information) is, 26.9% found it extremely serious, while 35.6% considered it not serious at all. To learn more about their perceptions of disinformation (i.e. the spread of false information), the participants were also asked about whether they are concerned about disinformation; 31.7% were somewhat concerned, and 27.6% were extremely concerned . Further, it was found that 54.8% of the participants avoid keeping up with news from a certain social media outlet and 36.9% reported that the reason for this was their lack of trust. The participants were also asked the following question: "Do you consider the Turkish news media to be ethical?" 69.6% of them responded affirmatively. When asked "Do you refrain from keeping up with news from certain social media outlets?", 69.6% responded affirmatively. Similarly, 69.6% answered yes to the question "Have you encountered false/fake news on the Internet or social media in the last week?" 64.7% answered no to the question "Do you know how to verify a suspicious image/photo/video shared on the Internet or social media?" The participants were lastly asked the following question: "Do you know any fact-checking platforms that investigate suspicious information on the Internet or social media?", and 57.4% answered no. Table 4 includes the relevant statistics.

Table 4. Findings on the psycho-demographics of the participants (n=312)

Do you consider the Turkish news media ethical?	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	34	10,9
No	274	87,8
The shortcomings of the Turkish news media		

Sensationalism	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	125	40,1
No	178	57,1
Stereotyping	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**
Yes	101	32,4
No	202	64,7
Disinformation	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**
Yes	226	72,4
No	77	24,7
Verification	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**
Yes	67	21,5
No	236	75,6
Racism	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**
Yes	80	25,6
No	223	71,5
Poor choice or irrelevance of news stories	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**
Yes	82	26,3
No	221	70,8
Problems with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**
Yes	67	21,5
No	235	75,3
How serious of a problem do you think disinformation (i.e. the spread of false information) is?	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**
Extremely serious	84	26,9
Very serious	35	11,2
Somewhat serious	25	8
Not too serious	48	15,4
Not serious at all	111	35,6
Are you concerned about disinformation (i.e. the spread of false information)?	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**
I'm not concerned at all	25	8
I'm not concerned	29	9,3
I'm somewhat concerned	99	31,7
I'm very concerned	64	20,5

I'm extremely concerned	86	27,6
Have you encountered fake news on the Internet or social media in the last week?	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**
Yes	217	81,8
No	85	18,2

Findings of Regression Analysis

The first hypothesis, that is Hypothesis 1a, was tested, and it was found that the independent variables, fake news, unreliable news, and challenge competence, explained the dependent variable, verification behavior, by 29.7% (R^2=.297). The impact of the dimensions was analyzed separately, and the dimension fake news had the greatest effect (β=0,548; p<0,05). The dimension challenge competence had also a significant effect (β=0,164; p<0,05). That is to say, as people perceive the news on social media as fake and the challenge competence as low, their tendency to exhibit verification behavior to trust the news increases. The independent variable of unreliable news had no significant effect on the dependent variable of verification behavior (p>0,05). Table 5 presents the relevant descriptive statistics.

Table 5. Testing the hypotheses on the effect of perceived disinformation on verification behavior (H1a)

Model	Non-Standardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	P
	Beta	**Std. Error**	**Beta**		
(Constant)	,687	,296		2,321	,021
Fake News	,646	,059	,548	10,907	,000
Unreliable News	-,030	,062	-,025	-,486	,627
Challenge Competence	,177	,053	,164	3,333	,001
Dependent Variable: Verification Behavior					
R: 0,551; R^2: 0,303; Adjusted R^2: 0,297; F for the model: 44,710; p=0,000; s.d.: 3 Durbin-Watson: 1,862					

H1b was tested, and it was found that the independent variables, fake news, unreliable news, and challenge competence, explained the dependent variable, individual's trust, by 21.8% (R^2=.218). The effect of the dimensions was analyzed separately, and the dimension challenge competence had the greatest effect (β=0,395, p<0.05). The dimension unreliable news had a significant effect too (β=0,194; p<0,05). That is to say, as people perceive the news on social media as unreliable and the challenge competence as low, their tendency to exhibit individuals' trust to trust the news increases. The independent variable of fake news had no significant effect on the dependent variable of individual's trust (p>0,05). Table 6 offers the relevant descriptive statistics.

Table 6. Testing the hypotheses on the effect of perceived disinformation individuals' trust (H1b)

Model	Non-Standardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	P
	Beta	**Std. Error**	**Beta**		
(Constant)	1,157	,282		4,104	,000
Fake News	-,016	,056	-,015	-,282	,778
Unreliable News	,211	,059	,194	3,597	,000
Challenge Competence	,386	,051	,395	7,622	,000

Dependent Variable: Individual's Trust
R: 0,475; R^2: 0,226; Adjusted R^2: 0,218; F for the model: 29,975; p=0,000; s.d.: 3 Durbin-Watson: 1,917

H1c was tested, and it was found that the independent variables, fake news, unreliable news, and challenge competence, explained the dependent variable, corporate trust (R^2=.211). The impact of the dimensions was examined separately, and challenge competence had the greatest effect (β =0.446). The perception of fake news had a significant effect too (β=0,111; p<0,05). That is to say, as people perceive the news on social media as fake and the challenge competence as low, their tendency to exhibit corporate trust to trust the news increases. The independent variable of unreliable news had no significant effect on the dependent variable of corporate trust (p>0,05). Table 7 includes the relevant descriptive statistics.

Table 7. Testing the hypotheses on the effect of the perceived disinformation on corporate trust (H1c)

Model	Non-Standardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	P
	Beta	**Std. Error**	**Beta**		
(Constant)	1.243	,288		4,318	,000
Fake News	,120	,058	,111	2,083	,038
Unreliable News	,054	,060	,049	,900	,369
Challenge Competence	,443	,052	,446	8,563	,000
Dependent Variable: Corporate Trust					
R: 0,467; R^2: 0,218; Adjusted R^2: 0,211; F for the model: 28,665; p=0,000; s.d.: 3 Durbin-Watson: 2,084					

H2a was tested, and it was found that the independent variables, fake news, unreliable news, and challenge competence, explained the dependent variable, the motivation of entertainment and relaxation by 16.8% (R^2=.168). The effect of the dimensions was examined separately, and the dimension fake news had the greatest effect (β=0, 389; p<0,05). The dimension challenge competence had also a significant effect (β=0,248; p<0,05). This implies that as people perceive the news on social media as fake and the challenge competence as low, the motivation of entertainment and relaxation for news consumption increases. The independent variable of unreliable news had no significant effect on the dependent variable of the motivation of entertainment and relaxation (p>0,05). Table 8 demonstrates the relevant statistics.

Table 8. Testing the hypotheses on the effect of perceived disinformation on entertainment and relaxation (H2a)

Model	Non-Standardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	P
	Beta	**Std. Error**	**Beta**		
(Constant)	1,603	,300		5,335	,000
Fake News	,429	,060	,389	7,132	,000
Unreliable News	-,098	,063	-,088	-1,572	,117
Challenge Competence	,249	,054	,247	4,618	,000
Dependent Variable: Entertainment and Relaxation					
R: 0,420; R^2: 0,176; Adjusted R^2: 0,168; F for the model: 21,959; p=0,000; s.d.: 3 Durbin-Watson: 1,929					

Later on, H2b was tested, and it was determined that the independent variables, fake news, unreliable news, and challenge competence, explained the dependent variable, the motivation of technical facilities and convenience by 41.7% (R^2=.417). The impact of the dimensions was calculated separately, and the dimension fake news had the greatest effect (β=0, 676; p<0,05). The perception of unreliable news had a significant effect too (β=-0,112; p<0,05). This means that as people perceive the news on social media as fake and unreliable, the motivation of technical facilities and convenience for news consumption increases. The independent variable of challenge competence had no significant effect on the dependent variable of the motivation of technical facilities and convenience (p>0,05). Table 9 presents the relevant statistics.

Table 9. Testing the hypotheses on the effect of perceived disinformation on technical facilities and convenience (H2b)

Model	Non-Standardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	P
	B	**Std. Error**	**Beta**		
(Constant)	1,188	,261		4,550	,000
Fake News	,774	,052	,676	14,797	,000
Unreliable News	-,119	,054	-,102	-2,193	,029
Challenge Competence	,049	,047	,047	1,046	,296
Dependent Variable: Technical Facilities and Convenience					
R: 0,650; R^2: 0,423; Adjusted R^2: 0,417; F for the model: 75,284; p=0,000; s.d.: 3 Durbin-Watson: 2,114					

Subsequently, H2c was tested, and it was determined that the independent variables, fake news, unreliable news, and challenge competence, explained the dependent variable, the motivation of rich and optional content by 47.4% (R^2=.474). The impact of the dimensions was assessed individually, and it was determined that all independent variables had a statistically significant effect and the dimension fake news had the greatest effect (β=0, 722; p<0,05). In other words, as people perceive the news on social media as fake and unreliable and consider challenge competence insufficient, the motivation of rich and optional content for news consumption increases. Table 10 offers the relevant statistics.

Table 10. Testing the hypotheses on the effect of perceived disinformation on rich and optional content (H2c)

Model	Non-Standardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	P
	Beta	**Std. Error**	**Beta**		
(Constant)	1,214	,215		5,638	,000
Fake News	,717	,043	,722	16,623	,000
Unreliable News	-,130	,045	-,129	-2.906	,004
Challenge Competence	,110	,039	,121	2,842	,005
Dependent Variables: Rich and Optional Content					
R: 0,692; R^2: 0,479; Adjusted R^2: 0,474; F for the model: 94,258; p=0.000; s.d.: 3 Durbin-Watson: 2,141					

Later on, H2d was tested, and it was revealed that the independent variables, fake news, unreliable news, and challenge competence, explained the dependent variable, the motivation of active participation by 8.7% (R^2=0.087). The effect of the dimensions was evaluated separately, and the dimension challenge

competence had the greatest effect (β=0, 240; p<0,05). The perception of fake news had a significant effect too (β=0,237; p<0,05). This means that as people perceive the news on social media as fake and unreliable and consider challenge competence insufficient, the motivation of active participation in news sources increases, that is, they become more open to expressing their opinions. The independent variable of unreliable news had no significant effect on the dependent variable of the motivation of entertainment and relaxation (p>0,05). Table 11 presents the relevant descriptive statistics.

Table 11. Testing the hypotheses on the effect of perceived disinformation on active participation (H2d)

Model	Non-Standardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	P
	Beta	**Std. Error**	**Beta**		
(Constant)	1,556	,353		4,410	,000
Fake News	,293	,071	,237	4,144	,000
Unreliable News	-,057	,073	-.045	-,771	,441
Challenge Competence	,271	,063	,240	4,279	,000
Dependent Variable: Active Participation					
R: 0,310; R^2: 0,096; Adjusted R^2: 0,087; F for the model: 10,891; p=0,000; s.d.: 3 Durbin-Watson: 2,020					

H2e was tested, and it was found that the independent variables, fake news, unreliable news, and challenge competence, explained the dependent variable, the motivation of reliability by 16.6% (R^2=0.166). The effect of the dimensions was assessed individually, and it was determined that all independent variables had a statistically significant effect, but the dimension challenge competence had the greatest effect (β=0, 394; p<0,05). That is to say, as people perceive the news on social media as fake and unreliable and find challenge competence low, the motivation of questioning the reliability of news sources increases. Table 12 presents the relevant statistics.

Table 12. Testing the hypotheses on the effect of perceived disinformation on reliability (H2e)

Model	Non-Standardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	P
	Beta	**Std. Error**	**Beta**		
(Constant)	1,563	,298		5,241	,000
Fake News	,259	,060	,237	4,341	,000
Unreliable News	-,149	,062	-,134	-2,407	,017
Challenge Competence	,394	,054	,394	7,357	,000
Dependent Variable: Reliability					
R: 0,417; R^2: 0,174; Adjusted R^2: 0,166; F for the model: 21,640; p=0,000; s.d.: 3 Durbin-Watson: 2,057					

H3a was tested, and it was concluded that the independent variables, verification behavior, individual's trust, and corporate trust, explained the dependent variable, the motivation of technical facilities and convenience by 17.2% (R^2=0.172). The impact of the dimensions was analyzed separately, and the only dimension that had a significant effect was verification behavior (β=0,435, p<0,05). The independent variables individual's trust and corporate trust did not have a significant effect on the dependent variable, that is, the motivation of technical facilities and convenience (p>0,05). This implies that the verification behavior exhibited by individuals in order to trust the news increases their motivation of technical facilities and convenience through the news source. Table 13 presents the relevant descriptive statistics.

Table 13. Testing the hypotheses on the effect of perceived trust on technical facilities and convenience (H3a)

Model	Non-Standardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	P
	Beta	**Std. Error**	**Beta**		
(Constant)	2,710	,242		11,182	,000
Verification	,422	,052	,435	8,166	,000
Individual's Trust	-,020	,064	-,019	-,314	,754
Corporate Trust	-,053	,064	-,050	-,835	,404
Dependent Variable: Technical Facilities and Convenience					
R: 0,424; R^2: 0,180; Adjusted R^2: 0,172; F for the model: 22,518; p=0,000; s.d.: 3 Durbin-Watson: 2,010					

Later on, H3b was tested, and it was determined that the independent variables, verification behavior, individual's trust, and corporate trust, explained the dependent variable, the motivation of entertainment and relaxation by 10.1% (R^2=0.101). The impact of the dimensions was analyzed separately, and the dimension verification behavior had the greatest effect (β=0,277, p<0,05). The variable individual's trust (β=0,129, p<0,05) had a significant effect too; yet, the independent variable corporate trust did not have any significant effect (p>0,05). This means that the verification behavior exhibited by individuals and the reliance on individual's trust in order to trust the news, increase their motivation of entertainment and relaxation through the news source. Table 14 includes the relevant descriptive statistics.

Table 14. Testing the hypotheses on the effect of perceived trust on entertainment and relaxation (H3b)

Model	Non-Standardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	P
	Beta	**Std. Error**	**Beta**		
(Constant)	2,335	,243		9,604	,000
Verification	,259	,052	,277	4,989	,000
Individual's Trust	,133	,064	,129	2,070	,039
Corporate Trust	,013	,064	,012	,196	,845
Dependent Variable: Entertainment and Relaxation					
R: 0,331; R^2: 0,110; Adjusted R^2: 0,101; F for the model: 12,625; p=0,000; s.d.: 3 Durbin-Watson: 1,922					

H3c was tested, and it was found that the independent variables, verification behavior, individual's trust, and corporate trust, explained the dependent variable, the motivation of rich and optional content by 25.9% (R^2=0.259). The impact of the dimensions was analyzed individually, and the only dimension that had a significant effect was verification behavior (β=0,525, p<0,05). The independent variables individual's trust and corporate trust did not have a significant effect on the dependent variable, that is, the motivation of rich and optional content (p>0,05). To put in another way, the verification behavior exhibited by individuals in order to trust the news increase their motivation of rich and optional content through the news source. Table 15 presents the relevant descriptive statistics.

Table 15. Testing the hypotheses on the effect of perceived trust on rich and optional content (H3c)

Model	Non-Standardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	P
	B	**Std. Error**	**Beta**		
(Constant)	2,467	,199		12,412	,000

Verification	,441	,042	,525	10,404	,000
Individual's Trust	,006	,052	,006	,109	,913
Corporate Trust	-,043	,052	-,047	-,823	,411
Dependent Variables: Rich and Optional Content					
R: 0,516; R^2: 0,266; Adjusted R^2: 0,259; F for the model: 37,292; p=0,000; s.d.: 3 Durbin-Watson: 1,794					

H3d was tested, and it was determined that the independent variables, verification behavior, individual's trust, and corporate trust, explained the dependent variable, the motivation of active participation by 5.4% (R^2=0.054). The effect of the dimensions was investigated separately, and the dimension individual's trust had the only significant effect (β=0,140, p<0,05). The independent variables verification behavior and corporate trust did not have a significant effect on the dependent variable, that is, the motivation of active participation (p>0,05). That is, the reliance of individual's trust by individuals to trust the news increases their motivation of active participation in the news source. Table 16 offers the relevant statistics.

Table 16. Testing the hypotheses on the effect of perceived trust on active participation (H3d)

Model	Non-Standardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	P
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	2,128	,280		7,614	,000
Verification	,085	,060	,082	1,433	,153
Individual's Trust	,163	,074	,140	2,206	,028
Corporate Trust	,128	,074	,112	1,737	,083
Dependent Variable: Active Participation					
R: 0,251; R^2: 0,063; Adjusted R^2: 0,054; F for the model: 6,928; p=0,000; s.d.: 3 Durbin-Watson: 2,024					

H3e was tested, and it was found that the independent variables, verification behavior, individual's trust, and corporate trust, explained the dependent variable, the motivation of reliability by 6% (R^2=0.060). The impact of the dimensions was examined separately, and the dimension verification behavior had the most significant effect (β=0,145 p<0,05). The variable individual's trust (β=0,131, p<0,05) had a significant effect too; yet, the independent variable corporate trust did not have any significant effect (p>0,05). This means that the verification behavior exhibited by individuals and the reliance on individual's trust in order to trust the news, increase their motivation to trust the news source. Table 17 shows the relevant descriptive statistics.

Table 17. Testing the hypotheses on the effect of perceived trust on reliability (H3e)

Model	Non-Standardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	P
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	2,084	,246		8,455	,000
Verification	,135	,053	,145	2,558	,011
Individual's Trust	,135	,065	,131	2,071	,039
Corporate Trust	,085	,065	,085	1,313	,190
Dependent Variable: Reliability					

R: 0,263; R^2: 0.,69; Adjusted R^2: 0,060; F for the model: 7,654; p=0,000; s.d.:3 Durbin-Watson: 2,064

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The findings of this study point out that perceived disinformation on social media is positively and significantly correlated with both perceived trust in social media and motivation for news consumption under various dimensions. This study further concludes that as an individual's perceived disinformation on social media increases, their perceived trust in social media decreases, and their need for verification behavior, individual's trust, and corporate trust increases too. One of the remarkable findings is that perceived disinformation on social media significantly affects the dimensions of news consumption (technical facilities and convenience, entertainment and relaxation, rich and optional content, active participation, reliability). As motivations for news consumption increase, perceived disinformation on social media decreases. It seems that previous studies in the literature have not investigated the hypotheses as thoroughly as this study achieves. For this reason, this study offers novel insights into the relevant literature. Based on the results of the scale on perceived disinformation, most participants agreed that false/fake news amplify the polarization in society. However, the item that the digital network and social networking platforms do not adequately challenge false/fake news, received the least support from the participants. These findings align with the findings reported by Akyüz, Gülnar and Kazaz (2021). It is also remarkable that the participants in this study avoid following news from certain social media outlets, and prior research similarly reported that those who watch new media news exhibit selective news consumption habits (Lee et al., 2016; p. 7; Lee et al., 2017; 258).

This study distinctively differs from other studies on the relationship between perceived disinformation on social media, perceived trust, and motivation for news consumption, mentioned in the overview of the relevant literature. These studies have concentrated solely on one of these three themes. Among them, Ateşgöz (2022) and Ata (2023) studied only motivation for and satisfaction with news consumption; Beştaş and Kırık (2019), Akyüz, Gülnar and Kazaz (2021), Todorova (2021) focused on perceived disinformation on social media, and Çömlekçi and Başol (2019) and Furusten (2023) investigated the themes related to perceived trust in social media. This thesis study focuses on the relationship between these three themes (motivation for and satisfaction with news consumption on social media, perceived disinformation on social media, and perceived trust in social media) and examines their relationships.

This study provides implications not only for the academic literature but also for practitioners in the field. It is notable that perceived disinformation on social media in written and visual terms significantly affects news consumption and motivation for and satisfaction with news consumption. News channels need to produce news in a way that reduces perceived disinformation, and ensuring that the news are verifiable will help boost the motivation for and satisfaction with news consumption.

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