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Research Article / Araştırma Makalesi

About the 63rd issue

The ConnectIST team is pleased to present the 63rd issue of the Istanbul University Journal of Communication Sciences containing six original research articles. Before introducing the studies, I would like to thank our issue editors Dr. Candan Elmer from the University of Central Lancashire and Dr. Paul Elmer from the University of Westminster for their collaboration. With our guest editors, we set the theme as "Digital Futures: A human-centered Digitization and Communication" to open a discussion on various significant emerging topics and compare practices in different communities. With the advice of our guest editors, we held a virtual conference with the abstract senders. The feedbacks from the virtual conference were so positive that we decided to hold virtual conferences in our next thematic issues.

In this issue: Tuğçe Ayçin examines the changes in Turkish journalism practice through in-depth interviews with the SEO managers of news sites in "Journalism's Transformation through Digitalization in Turkey: Applying Search Engine Optimization to Journalism." In the article "The impact of user-generated content in the fashion industry: A Case Study of SHEIN and Pretty Little Thing", Chloe Carr conducted in-depth interviews to discover the impact of user-generated content on the information search stage of the consumer decision-making process. The findings underlie the positive influence of reviews with photos on the information search stage of the young consumers. *In "Examining the Relationship between Consumer Innovativeness and Trust in Chatbot Applications: A study on Turkish Banking Sector", Sevda Deneçli and her friends examined the approaches of consumers to chatbot applications of banks and reached significant findings.*

Based on the data collected from questionnaires and in-depth interviews with the academics, Betül Önay Doğan and her friends compare the privacy concerns of academics in "Why don't we share? Social Networks and Privacy Concerns, a Comparative Analysis of Academics of Communication Field in Turkey and Malaysia." The findings revealed that privacy awareness and self-censorship levels were comparable in both countries. Nathalie Nicola analyses the impact of social media fatigue on social media advertising to find the reasons for reactance and advertising avoidance through in-depth interviews with young adults in "Losing Control: The Effects of Social Media Fatigue, Privacy Concerns and Psychological Reactance on Social Media Advertising.

Finally, in "From social inequalities to digital inequalities: The usage of new media by the poor in Eskişehir, Turkey" Tuba Sütlüoğlu and Emre Gökalp focused on the problem of digital inequalities, examined how the possession of new media and the ability to use them were affected by age, gender, and socio-economic status in a sample of poor individuals living in Eskişehir. The findings revealed that new media plays an important role in breaking down the barriers built by low educational levels and economic constraints.

Before bringing this introduction to a close, let me remind you that it is through your most-valued support and participation that our journal is able to continue publishing academic studies in the field of Communications Sciences. We look forward to coming before you once again with our 64th issue.

Prof. Dr. Ayşen AKKOR GÜL

Editor in Chief

Editorial

When we were approached to edit a special issue for Connectist we were very excited by the opportunity such a collaboration offers. We saw this as an opportunity to explore and develop emerging ideas in communication field. After long discussion we all decided to focus on Digital Futures: A Human Centred Digitalization and Communication.

In addition to the usual publishing process, we invited potential contributors to participate in the boutique conference linked to this special issue. This conference was a great opportunity to network with other researchers, explore different perspectives, to open discussions on various emerging topics, compare practices in different communities and develop research networks.

The conference offered a vibrant, relaxed and productive environment where ideas could be refined. Some of the research projects were not complete; we shared our ideas on field research, and we exchanged ideas. It was such an exciting learning experience for all of us both as organisers and as contributors. The conference introduced a new stage in the production of this special issue.

After a thorough selection process from the submitted research papers, our editorial team decided to publish six papers that offer a good cross section of ideas. We tried to especially encourage young researchers and we are delighted to include some outputs from Masters and PhD studies. It is important for us to support young researchers to publish solo, to develop the future of the field.

We worked extensively with the researchers, and we would like to thank every single one for their patience and hard work.

We also witnessed how much effort and hard work the Connectist team put in for every single issue. Their contribution to the field is immerse. Under the leadership of Aysen Gul, Yesim Akmaner, Damla Akar, Fatih Ozkoyuncu, Rabia Zamur Tuncer, Onur Karahan fulfil their commitments to the journal in addition to their busy professional lives and their own research. As editors we recognise their contribution, and we hope that it is valued widely. It was our privilege to work with them and it a professional experience that we will look back on with warmth.

Last, but not least, we would like to thank Ahmet Kadri Kursun for his kind support during the boutique online conference, and all the reviewers for their insight and hard work.

Paul Elmer (University of Westminster) and Candan Celik Elmer (University of Central Lancashire)

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Research Article

Journalism's transformation through digitalization in Turkey: Applying search engine optimization to journalism*

Türkiye'de gazeteciliğin dijitalleşme yoluyla dönüşümü: Arama motoru optimizasyonunun gazeteciliğe uygulanması

Tuğçe AYÇİN[1]

*This article was based on the master's thesis titled "A New Type of Journalism in the Digital Age: SEO Journalism" conducted under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Aslı Yapar Gönenç at the Department of Journalism, and submitted to the Institute of Social Sciences, Istanbul University.

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Abstract

The development of web technologies has had significant effects on journalism, and journalism practices on the Internet reveal an algorithm-based structure. In this context, search engines, Google in particular, have become one of the most important tools enabling the news to go from the producer to consumer. A contemporary style of journalism has emerged in which the news published on the web is optimized for Google, and this type of journalism can be expressed as search engine optimization (SEO) journalism. While SEO journalism on one hand embodies important practices that shape journalism in the digital age, it has been the subject of important discussions on the other. These discussions focus on how producing news by focusing on algorithms contradicts the professional principles of journalism. This study aims to examine the structure of journalism as shaped by search engine algorithms. The study takes within its scope and consideration the frequency with which news sites in Turkey are visited. The article conducts qualitative research by determining an appropriate sample from among the most visited news sites and examines the problems with SEO journalism based on the findings obtained from in-depth interviews with the SEO managers of these news sites.

Keywords: Digital media, journalism, search engines, Google, SEO

Öz

Web teknolojilerinin gelişmesi gazetecilik üzerinde önemli etkiler yaratmış ve gazetecilik faaliyetlerinin internet ortamında gerçekleştirilmesi algoritma tabanlı bir yapıyı ortaya çıkarmıştır. Başta Google olmak üzere arama motorları haberlerin üreticiden tüketiciye ulaşmasını sağlayan en önemli araçlardan biri haline gelmiştir. Günümüzde web üzerinde yayınlanan haberlerin Google için optimize edildiği güncel bir habercilik türü sürdürülmektedir ve bu habercilik türü arama motoru optimizasyonu (SEO) haberciliği olarak ifade edilebilir. SEO haberciliği bir yandan dijital çağda gazeteciliği şekillendiren önemli uygulamaları bünyesinde barındırırken, diğer yandan da önemli tartışmaların konusu olmaktadır. Bu tartışmalar, algoritmaları göz önünde bulundurarak haber üretmenin, gazeteciliğin meslek ilkeleriyle çelişmesi üzerine odaklanmaktadır. Bu çalışma, gazeteciliğin arama motoru algoritmaları tarafından şekillendirilen yapısını incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Çalışma kapsamında, Türkiye'deki haber siteleri, ziyaret edilme sıklıklarına göre ele alınmaktadır. En çok ziyaret edilen haber sitelerinden uygun bir örneklem belirlenerek nitel bir araştırma yapılmakta ve bu haber sitelerinin SEO yöneticileriyle gerçekleştirilen derinlemesine görüşmelerden elde edilen bulgular ışığında SEO haberciliğinin sorunları incelenmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Dijital medya, gazetecilik, arama motorları, Google, SEO

Introduction

The development of new technologies affects lived experience, in this age as in every period of history. With the cycle of change, and reflection upon that change, occurring more quickly than ever before, talking about practices arising from the digital age has become possible. The transmission of data and technological developments in the field of computers have become dominant factors in all communication infrastructures through digitalization (Dijk, 2018, pp. 78–79), with media being one of the areas where digitalization has had the most intense impact, and the need for the media to reshape itself has emerged in accordance accordingly has emerged with the daily renovations, changes, and transformations in communication technologies. One of the influential areas of this transforming structure in the media has been journalism practices. New structures have emerged in the production and consumption stages of the news. Chayko (2018, p. 189) stated journalism and news transmission to have clearly changed through the Internet and digital technologies and journalists and news organizations these days to operate with a 24/7 news flow. With mobile devices, personalized news applications, and social media channels having become tools where news can be followed instantly, the phenomenon of journalism has also become integrated with information technologies, and concepts such as big data, artificial intelligence, robot journalism, and data journalism have entered the journalism literature. One of the most important developments to have affected journalism is search engines, in particular Google.

Google performs functions far beyond being a search engine with both its usage rate and market share and has had significant effects on journalism. Influencing many sectors with its digital marketing tools, products, services, and revenue models, Google holds the largest market share of 92% of the world's search engines. Google is also the leader in Turkey, with a market share of 80.89% and a usage rate of 85% (Statcounter Globalstats, 2022).

SEO journalism and its features

Google's influence on journalism has manifested through SEO practices. This new type of journalism has arrived at an extremely important point regarding how news sites reach their readers. SEO journalism involves various stages, from the selection of news topics, the editing of news texts, and the structure of news sites to the monitoring of published news, and refers to a journalism practice under the dominance of Google.

Much conducted research has revealed the features of SEO journalism, its primary applications, the technical stages of SEO implementation, its differences from traditional journalism, and SEO practices as a profession (Deniz & Korap Özel, 2018; Doğan, 2021; Giomelakis & Veglis, 2015, 2016; Giomelakis et al., 2019; Bulut, 2019; Ledfor, 2009; Dick, 2011; Lopezosa et al., 2019; Güzel & Özmen, 2018; Saran, 2021).

SEO is defined as "the process of making a website appear at the top of the results list given by a search engine" (Oxford Learners Dictionaries, 2022). According to Doğan (2021, pp. 128–129), implementing SEO involves certain stages. This process starts with the job search before moving on to the stages of competitor analysis, keyword analysis, link building, search engine strategy, technical planning, and monitoring and analysis. SEO applications are seen to be conducted as the output of a detailed process.

Ledford (2009) explained SEO as the sum of strategies to improve a website's presence and visibility in search engine pages. Korap Özel and Deniz (2018, p. 164) stated the differences between SEO journalism and traditional journalism to be the subject of the news, news factors, business practices, news sources, news writing, and journalism purposes. Another study from (Deniz & Korap Özel, 2018, p. 84) underlined the possibilities the new media environment has brought to reveal many structural differences from traditional journalism as follows:

> Digital journalism has many aspects that are structurally different from traditional journalism due to the possibilities offered by the new media environment. Speed, competition, changes in the factors affecting the news production process, and the differing working conditions of the journalist are some of these changes.

> There have also been changes in the basic aims of journalism. In traditional journalism, first of all, informing the public and having a high circulation of the newspaper are the main objectives. In digital newspapers, getting clicked and getting more advertisements is more important than other purposes.

Giomelakis and Veglis (2015, p.23) shed light on the primary applications of SEO journalism in the world. When looking at the historical process related to the use of SEO in the field of journalism, important developments are seen to have occurred after 2008 in particular. According to Giomelakis and Veglis (2015, p. 23), many online news organizations after 2008 started including SEO experts among their staff in order to carry out SEO applications, with Daily Mail appointing an SEO manager and The Guardian creating the company's SEO team in 2008, as well as the BBC employing an SEO specialist journalist for the first time in 2009. In addition, company training started being emphasized as well as different experiments starting with regard to news writing. The LA Times received the first feedback out of all of these attempts, seeing a significant increase in user traffic after hiring an SEO chief in 2011. Other news organizations also experienced similar developments.

One of the studies on the place of SEO in the news media was carried out by Giomelakis and Veglis (2016, p. 390), who examined 30 websites in the Greek media and concluded SEO to have gained an important place in newsrooms. Accordingly, a new journalism process had also emerged in which the number of clicks on a news article came to the forefront. Their research claimed the presence of search engines would continue to be a reason for the use of SEO in the field of journalism, and for this reason, journalists and media organizations need to develop their own news sites and attach importance to web technologies. The results of Giomelakis et al.'s (2019, p. 11) study on four news organizations in the Greek media concluded search traffic measurement tools and Google analysis services to be in use by all news organizations. Dick's (2011, p. 462) study on three news organizations in England understood their SEO practices to directly affect the workflow in the news centers.

Bulut (2019, p. 129) approached SEO journalism in the context of news sites in Turkey and drew attention to the fact that Turkish news media are faced with two serious situations. According to Bulut, news sites on one hand need to compete with rival sites by acting according to optimization principles and commercial concerns while ignoring journalistic values, but on the other hand, they also need to protect the values that should be given to both the news and journalists.

Certain advantages and disadvantages have emerged with the increased application of SEO in journalism. Duman (2018, p. 277) listed SEO's advantages under headings such as longevity of news, original and up-to-date content, easier access to content, and higher ranking of news in search results. Lopezosa et al. (2019) drew attention to the enrichment of news sites and the rapid spread of information through SEO, and also stated SEO to be a process for helping web editors produce quality content and feel creative.

Repetitiveness, creating spam, long and irrelevant titles, and wasted time have been conveyed as some of the disadvantages of SEO journalism (Duman, 2018, p. 277), while Güzel and Özmen (2018, p. 225) also criticized journalism according to Google as follows:

> Having a presence in the digital world is synonymous with being at the top of Google search results. In this environment, SEO journalism has become widespread as a basic journalism practice and a new line of business. This situation is interesting. SEO activities carried out to generate more clicks and traffic have led to the basic elements of journalism being ignored. The obligation to write news according to SEO rules and the attractiveness of the provided traffic provided (i.e., the wishes and demands of the user/reader/customer) have largely taken the Internet media in Turkey captive and put click-bait journalism at the center of the business. Events that did not enter the pages of newspapers or news bulletins 20 years ago have begun making headlines on websites. This has spread to all media and caused a serious decline in the quality of both journalistic responsibilities and news content.

Emphasizing how global technology companies generate revenue through the news media, Saran (2021, p. 610) stated journalism to have turned into an act of producing content compatible with algorithms and making sense of users' reactions to this content.

SEO practices are basically carried out as a practice that aims to have users reach the news in the shortest way; while this points to the rules observed in traditional journalism such as originality and speed on one hand, on the other reasons have also been discussed such as creating a media environment where Google is a monopoly and contradicting the ethical principles of journalism. Although several studies have been conducted on SEO journalism, the constantly changing nature of algorithms might make existing findings obsolete. For this reason, updating the findings with recent research is vital for discovering how the changing algorithms have affected recent SEO journalism practices.

Aim and Methodology

The study aims to examine through various dimensions how the news articles on websites are harmonized with algorithms so as to become prominent in search engines, particularly with Google. Due to the frequent updating of algorithms, SEO journalism is constantly being structured with new features, and the study will attempt to understood this in line with the SEO journalists' experiences.

The current study has obtained data using the in-depth semi-structured face-to-face interview technique. The interviews were held between April 28-May 17, 2021. Interviews involve controlled and purposeful verbal communication between the researcher and the people who are the subjects of the research (Cohen & Manion, 1994, p. 271). These interviews with the SEO managers of news sites attempted to have them convey the most up-to-date developments regarding the structuring of SEO journalism, which were then analyzed through the experiences of the professionals currently applying this practice.

The universe of the study consists of the websites that carry out journalism activities on the Internet, that concentrate on the phenomenon of news, and that perform SEO applications in Turkey. Among these news sites, the study has selected the four most visited news sites as the sample of the research and held interviews with their SEO representatives. The selected news sites were determined as the most visited according to data from Alexa.com (accessed April 14, 2021), with these news sites being ranked according to the frequency of visits. In this context, the researcher interviewed SEO managers such as the SEO editor at Ensonhaber.com, the SEO coordinator at Hurriyet.com.tr, the SEO Team Leader at Milliyet.com.tr, and the Chief Digital Officer (CDO) at Sozcu.com.tr. The researcher encoded the names of the interviewed SEO managers as P1, P2, P3, and P4, respectively. The goal of SEO is to make news sites more visible from search engines and to attract more visitors to a site. Therefore, meeting with the SEO managers of the most visited news sites makes up this the significant contribution of this study.

By focusing on understanding how SEO practices play a role in journalism, the questions of this research have been formed as follows:

RQ1: How does SEO change the way readers engage with the news?

RQ2. How does SEO change journalistic practices?

RQ3. What are SEO-practicing journalists' perspectives toward journalism ethics?

Findings

This section of the study contains the findings that have been obtained from the in-depth interviews.

SEO journalism as shaped by reader behaviors

This study questions what SEO journalism means and what kind of structure it has. The point the participants emphasized is that SEO is actually a type of journalism based on reader behavior, and they conveyed the following opinions in this regard:

> SEO journalism has taken its place in news practices in recent years and seems will be applied for many years; it is also referred to as Google Journalism. What turns SEO content into news is the readers. SEO journalism is a question-and-answer flow between the public and the journalist, which has benefits both ways. (P1/Ensonhaber.com)

Stating how SEO journalism is also called Google Journalism, P1 emphasized how content becomes newsworthy based on the readers.

> Along with digitalization and the increase in online experiences, different search methods have emerged in search engines. You look for a subject one way on the Internet, I look for it a different way, and we also look for different topics. There is already a trend system that Google has set up to regulate this, as well as other tools like this. This is what distinguishes SEO journalism, the point of distinction being that readers search in different ways. (P2/Hurriyet.com.tr)

P2 emphasized the readers' side of news and stated the distinction regarding SEO journalism to have formed by the way readers search for the news.

> SEO tries to get websites to rank in better positions using relevant keywords. All the processes done to move a website to the top of search engines fall under the

> umbrella of SEO. SEO journalism means producing content by identifying trending topics. In order to do this, one needs to use trends to predict what readers are and will search for. An SEO journalist should think like a reader and create content with empathy. In this way, content is produced according to the readers' desires. (P3/Milliyet.com.tr)

Accordingly, P3 stated SEO journalism to have the feature of empathizing with readers, where the reader influences the trends, and thus the trends also affect the news.

> If the subject is internet journalism, I am in favor of the widespread use of SEO-compatible journalism as the correct definition. SEO changes the original structure of the news and can restrict editorial freedom. (P4/Sozcu.com.tr)

Meanwhile, P4 stated SEO practices to have aspects that restrict editorial freedom. SEO is understood to be formatted according to the way readers search. Accordingly, readers affect trends, and trends affect the news. Readers' behaviors are monitored by news sites, who then take a corresponding position. Concepts such as algorithms, big data, and artificial intelligence are also understood to be very important in SEO journalism.

The element of keywords in the distinction between SEO and traditional journalism

This study examines the differences between SEO journalism and traditional journalism. Here are some views on how SEO practices such as keyword usage transform news texts:

> While writing SEO news, a keyword is determined, and this word is repeated frequently so as to be noticed by the search engine. In this respect, SEO news texts are not considered quality content in the context of journalistic practices because the aim is to find out what the reader is looking for, to answer the question, and to increase the number of visitors while doing this. Therefore, it is more of a commercial consideration. (P1/Ensonhaber.com)

Saying that SEO news are evaluated as low-quality content, P1 draws attention to the economic dimension of SEO journalism and the importance of increasing the number of visitors.

> Maybe the difference between traditional journalism and SEO journalism starts here. When doing SEO journalism, you try to write your news within the framework of keywords. This was also abused a lot in the early days of SEO. In traditional journalism, you can write a very striking headline without using keywords at all. But nowadays, that doesn't matter to Google's algorithms. (P2/Hurriyet.com.tr)

Emphasizing the structure of SEO journalism as created within the framework of keywords, P2 states here that keywords are an important distinction between traditional journalism and SEO journalism.

> Traditional news is less detailed and simpler than SEO news. Because keywords are the priority in SEO news, the content can be much more detailed. If this situation goes unchecked, readers may not read it. (P3/Milliyet.com.tr)

Stating how SEO journalism has become more detailed with the keyword element, P3 drew attention to the danger of the situation going unchecked.

> Keywords have an important place in Google's algorithms in terms of reaching more people according to readers' search preferences. This also has the effect of weakening the originality of news and the language used. Focusing only on keywords and ignoring words that enrich the language but are not sought after by the reader cause the news language to become corrupted, repetitive, and disidentified. (P4/Sozcu.com.tr)

According to P4, the more that news texts are prepared within the framework of similar keywords, the more the news loses its originality and meaning and becomes identical.

The opinions of the participants on this subject were focused on how the element of keywords negatively affects news texts. SEO journalism differs from traditional journalism through its set up, structure, and especially keyword element. Not applying the techniques used to adapt to algorithms in a measured way is understood from the conveyed opinions to cause news to go unchecked, resulting inevitably in negative impacts on journalism.

Content pool formed by SEO's effect on news sites

Another striking point on the news sites that carry out SEO practices is the change in news content. With this change, content other than what is usually defined as news has also started to occur alongside current news flows, and new developments related to any person, event, or situation on the agenda are also turned into news content. In addition, certain topics that are expected to be searched for at certain times or that are always searched for constitute the most important traffic flows of news sites. The participants commented on this issue as follows:

> Besides agenda tracking, SEO also cares about the type of content known as evergreen content, which refers to content that readers always read, with content such as which teas are good for colds or how can we protect ourselves from mosquitoes being examples of evergreen content. (P1/Ensonhaber.com)

Drawing attention to the type of evergreen content based on reader curiosity, P1 says that these contents always occupy a certain volume of searches and remain useful for a long time.

> In fact, the same concern is always present at the root of the work. We reflect things that way in the news because that's how people search. The diversity of content on news sites is all related to this. (P2/ Hurriyet.com.tr)

P2 emphasizes here how the content pool on news sites is also determined by the way people search.

> Keeping up with the conditions and innovations is a requirement and touching on different issues besides the current news flow is necessary in Internet journalism especially. Like everything else, our society consumes news quickly. This type of content has to be on almost every website in order to compete with other sites and remain current. However, content that is too intense can disturb readers. Despite this, determining who the audience is and including what they want on the site is important. (P3/Milliyet.com.tr)

Drawing attention to the necessities of the era and the importance of competition, P3 states again that the readers are the ones who determine the content pool.

> These contents in the style of "who is" and "what is" can be used not as news but as elements that deepen the news. However, because this type of content is frequently repeated and updated, news sites have turned into archived garbage. (P4/ Sozcu.com.tr)

P4 emphasizes here that attention should be paid to the distinction between the news itself and the elements that deepen the news.

The participants' comments show the content pool of news sites to be shaped in line with readers' curiosity. Using non-news content too much is also understood to harm the phenomenon of journalism. However, this type of content also feeds SEO journalism as a requirement of the age of digital media. As a result, the SEO phenomenon can be said to have a say in what kind of content will occur on news sites.

Google's algorithms or reader expectations?

Some criteria exist that should be observed when creating news texts that are suitable for SEO, one of which is to prepare news text that appeals to Google by focusing on algorithms. Another one is to write news text that is remarkable and satisfying while also containing news elements in a way that will meet readers' expectations. The scope of this study questions how the balance between these elements is ensured or whether any priority is being observed while writing SEO-oriented news. The participants' views in this regard can be conveyed as follows:

> Complying with Google's algorithms while responding to reader expectations is the foundation of SEO journalism. However, there are two options here. The first is to communicate content readers have already expressed curiosity about using the logic of what it is, what details it has, and how it causes wonder. The second is to make the content interesting. (P1/Ensonhaber.com)

P1 emphasizes the importance of satisfying readers' curiosity and says this should be done according to Google's algorithms.

> In fact, the balance is always based on text the reader can understand and where they can immediately find the answer to a question they are looking for. Sometimes while editing news text, however, we have to use certain words more frequently.

> We are in such a rush that we can sometimes exceed certain rules regarding certain content or news. (P2/Hurriyet.com.tr)

According to P2, who states that, even though readers' expectations should be given priority, the competition among news sites does not always allow this.

> In fact, both should be given equal importance. It would be wrong to give priority to one and ignore the other, because if you do not act in accordance with Google algorithms while trying to reach the audience, you may not be able to reach the audience. Therefore, content should be produced in accordance with readers' expectations of the reader while also paying attention to Google's algorithms. (P3/Milliyet.com.tr)

Drawing attention to the element of balance, P3 emphasizes here that neither side can be ignored.

> Although there are places where the two intersect, the economic order created by Google algorithms has led to the trivialization and corruption of journalistic principles in Turkey as well as in the world. (P4/Sozcu.com.tr)

P4 states algorithms to determine competition and economic priorities. One understands from the answers that have been given that readers' expectations should be met in accordance with Google because acting only accordance with readers is not possible in a competitive environment. By not taking the algorithms into account, news articles do not reach the reader, and if news texts do not satisfy readers, the algorithms do not make the news visible.

The relationship with readers and Google's tools

Another prominent issue in SEO journalism is the relationship with readers. SEO journalism is a type of journalism that develops through practices involving things such as what readers do, what they search for, and how they search. Therefore, how the relationship with readers is determined is also important in news production. The research also questions within its scope how readership is targeted, how reader habits are determined, and what tools are used in this regard, with the following opinions being conveyed in relation to this:

> The first rule in making SEO news involves readership analysis. Noticing the topics of interest, determining the target audience, and responding accordingly are important. Real benefits are achieved once these three steps are applied. (P1/Ensonhaber.com)

P1 explains the analysis process in three steps and is understood to draw a framework in which both the news site and readers will benefit.

> In fact, the best SEO content is that which the reader doesn't notice at all as such. Capturing the perfect text that will not disturb readers or make any difference while reading is very important for the relationship with readers. While doing this is difficult, this is how Google's algorithms proceed. (P2/Hurriyet.com.tr)

Emphasizing how algorithms are moving toward a structure results in readers not feeling the SEO effect, P2 actually draws attention to Google's ever-differentiating dynamic structure.

The participants' opinions toward Google's tools and products are as follows:

> Google Trends shows the search volume for any word entered with regard to a certain time period. In other words, it provides data on things such as how many searches were made, how the search was made, and from which regions. Google Ads reflects all users' actions on the Internet. In this way, one can understand what readers wants and conduct research accordingly. Google Search Console detects problems, errors, and statistics on a site and signals when a problem occurs. One monitor instant response regarding your site using Google Analytics, letting one access information about reading statistics regarding a piece of news. (P2/Hurriyet.com.tr)

P2 emphasizes here the different features of each of Google's tools and says that news sites can benefit in many ways from these.

> Tools like Google Trends and Google Analytics are like magic wands within easy reach. Thanks to these tools, one can get information about readership and view the read rates and search volumes. Using these tools allows one to produce much more effective SEO content. Monitoring these tools frequently is useful for producing

> the right content and seeing how much interest different content draws. These tools contain the answers to many questions such as which topic was researched during the day and which news was read more. (P3/Milliyet.com.tr)

One understands from what P3 has stated that the way to attract more visitors to a website is to use the data obtained from Google's tools.

> Google's tools contribute to improving content better and learning many statistics about content. In this respect, they show the effect of not only SEO journalism, but also the journalism that should be. (P4/Sozcu.com.tr)

P4 emphasizes how Google's tools contribute to improving news content, and P4's statements reveal how many Google products and tools have had a serious impact on the supply-demand cycle between news sites and readers. People can learn much data related to the searches made on Google and behaviors performed on news sites using Google tools. Google is understood not only to determine the rules of the game but to also offer the conditions to ensure that the game is played in the most correct way.

Is Google a tool or a purpose?

The process currently exists where news sites have to act according to Google's rules in order to be visible and easily seen by readers. The research also questions within its scope how this situation Google has created can be evaluated in the context of a media monopoly. The participants' views on this issue can be conveyed as follows:

Showing the news on the first page of a search result is very important in online journalism. In fact, being on Google is not enough anymore for many institutions and organizations: Being on the first page is necessary. As such, journalism practices are also affected, of course. Online mainstream media holds the lead in terms of both economic power and influence. If you observe Google's rules, you will always be the winner. Institutions that are able to allocate a budget for the information that will provide this do not even allow others an opportunity. How many users are redirected to Google and how many to other websites? In fact, the answer to this question includes the answer to the process of media monopolization. The struggle in SEO journalism is understandable given who has the monopoly of the first pages. (P1/Ensonhaber.com)

One may deduce from P1's statements that a system is present that is maintained under the monopoly of economic power in digital media, just as in traditional media.

> This is actually very problematic. There is one search engine, and one set of search traffic comes from it. It's a hard truth to accept, but unfortunately you have to stay within Google's framework right now, because there is no alternative. And many people used it. (P2/ Hurriyet.com.tr)

Underlining the lack of an alternative to Google, P2 supports the idea that the system Google has created is a media monopoly.

> Such a situation inevitably arises. Every site that wants to rank higher in Google searches and increase its organic traffic starts doing similar things. Readers can consider this situation to be a monopoly. In fact, following Google's rules should not be the main goal of news sites. Google should be used as assistive tool. In this way, news sites can provide content diversity and differentiate themselves from other sites. (P3/Milliyet.com.tr)

According to P3, news sites that want to be authentic should use Google as an assistive tool, not as a goal.

> Google contributes to advertising and providing access to news sites. However, Google obviously is also creating a media monopoly with its algorithms and nurturing an order that kills journalistic ethics. A Google algorithm that rewards identical news sites and content causes this industry to remain below the desired level. (P4/Sozcu.com.tr)

P4 is saying here how Google is a monopoly through its structure that rewards a system that destroys journalistic ethics and principles.

The participants' responses converge with regard to Google's current status having created a media monopoly. One understands from the conveyed opinions that Google has become a reality in the digital age in which we live, a reality that surpasses big media companies in terms of monopolizing the media. The definition of search engine remains extremely superficial for Google, and one can state Google to be an oppressive factor for news organizations regarding the new media environment.

Editors who know the Google language in news centers

Another factor that formed from the structuring created by SEO journalism is the employment of SEO editors in news centers. SEO practices that need to be carried out require a number of different skills apart from traditional journalistic ones. For this reason, SEO editors who can handle the technical side of the business work in newsrooms' SEO units. The research also questions the issue of how the structuring and functioning of newsrooms have changed and transformed in this process. The answers the participants give to this question are as follows:

> An SEO editor is actually a concept that started being heard in the last decade, during which news centers opened up room for them. The recruitment process for SEO editors was also seen as an admissions process. A new field has emerged in journalism practices that had not been done or seen before. But as Plato stated, "Necessity is the mother of invention." (P1/Ensonhaber.com)

P1 is understood to have said that having each new developed product meet certain needs also creates the need for those who develop and implement that product.

> I don't think there has been a transformation in newsrooms. The SEO editorial was added to the news team. Units arise from the needs of each period, and SEO is like that. There was a need, and a team was found to meet that need. This summarizes the situation. A team was formed that added visitors to the news site and monitored the entire agenda within the framework of Google. (P2/Hurriyet.com.tr)

Emphasizing the need just like P1 had, P2 states how a role change had occurred rather than a transformation in the media.

> Needs are changing. No one wants to be left behind when contesting with competitors. For this reason, both SEO editors have been employed in news centers as well as SEO training being given to existing editors. All this has been done to keep up with the times, but it has also caused the language of the news to change. The proliferation of SEO editors has been able to cause traditional journalism and journalistic language to fall by the wayside. (P3/Milliyet.com.tr)

Based on P3's statements, one can conclude that having SEO knowledge has become important as a criterion for employing journalists.

> In terms of SEO-compatible journalism, editors must exist who know the Google language. However, SEO editors' function has in fact deviated from its purpose. Having fewer reporters and more SEO editors is not in the public's interest. (P4/Sozcu.com.tr)

The conveyed opinions reveal the form of employment in news organizations to have been structured in line with the needs. No great historical experience exists with regard to SEO, and as a new practice, SEO has also brought new meaning to job descriptions. The new needs in news organizations are understood to have arisen as a result of the competitive environment, and those who do not meet these needs will be left behind.

New competencies expected from journalists and academic opportunities

The study has stated within its scope how journalists and SEO editors are expected to have and develop certain new competencies and discussed these in the context of the business strategies required by SEO practices. The study has also questioned what kind of duties have fallen upon the communications faculties that train the journalists who are expected to acquire these competencies. The participants' opinions on this subject can be listed as follows:

> Journalists should be people who can take action as soon as the action begins. Foresight and empathy are two of the most important features to have in an SEO editor. An SEO editor should be able to evaluate all the questions that may be asked about the news and should be able to give an answer by putting themself in the shoes of the reader. Communications faculties are the basis for raising good journalists in theory and in practice. For this reason, faculties should attach importance to SEO journalism and add it to education as soon as possible by strengthening its theoretical foundations. (P1/Ensonhaber.com)

Pointing out how journalists should have a dynamic structure, P1 emphasizes the importance of being able to think like a reader.

> Like regular editors, SEO editors often call and get opinions from authorized sources. They turn what they see around them into news. Although SEO editors are thought to constantly be looking at Google Trends, this is not the case. Actually, there is a lot of hard work involved. For example, one of the most important reflexes to have as an SEO editor is speed, because the things that are being searched for on the Internet are searched for within a certain period of time. In other words, that subject will stop being searched for after a while, or maybe it will be searched for again in a year. In short, SEO editorship is not an easy field in media organizations. Of course, I wish schools had this kind of education. But Google is not a system that stays the same all the time. Algorithms can change as often as every six months. What we're talking about right now may not mean anything next year. Digitalism has a very different flow. How can schools give SEO training? How can something be done on an academic scale? Believe me, I can't even imagine how. But something like this can be done: At the very least, people can be trained who are able to write neat texts, produce content using the different meanings of words without disturbing the integrity of meaning, and write news. These people can be provided with technical knowledge. It would be great if schools had such a department that constantly updated its academics. (P2/ Hurriyet.com.tr)

P2 states that, although SEO editors' work may seem easy, they actually have a way of working that requires much effort. They interpret the constant change in algorithms and trends as the biggest challenge to the job.

> Journalists who will do SEO work should be fast. They should be able to notice instant developments and turn them into news. This requires close monitoring. Producing content by following many different sources and having a good command of various subjects also helps. They need to have a good command of tools such as Google Analytics and Google Trends. Each additional piece of information that is learned not only in terms of content but also about the software side helps them stand out in terms of SEO studies and journalism. In this respect, students should be provided with the opportunity to practice much more while being taught this job. (P3/ Milliyet.com.tr)

By drawing attention to the software dimension of web pages, P3 is understood to be saying that having software knowledge is a feature that makes an SEO editor stand out.

> It's important for journalists to take the pulse of the public, and one way to do that is by looking at search trends. The academy should always attach importance to producing news, making it accessible to large masses, and enlightening the public, and SEO needs to be seen as part of the business, not as a goal. (P4/Sozcu.com.tr)

P4 is understood to be focused on the contributions using web tools offers in terms of social benefit.

According to the participants' responses, the characteristics that a journalist should have in the new journalism environment are as follows: speed, foresight, empathy, strict agenda tracking, mastery of different topics, ability to use Google's tools, and software knowledge, with being fast appearing to be particularly important.

Another issue the research queries involves what kinds of duties have befallen communications faculties in the new journalism environment. Most participants stated that communication faculties should work on SEO journalism, emphasizing how communications faculties should reinforce theory and create opportunities for students to practice. Having communications faculties also include SEO as a type of journalism in journalism education was also stated as being beneficial, but no clear proposals were made on how this could be done practically.

SEO journalism and ethics

One of the most discussed aspects of SEO journalism is the relationship applied methods have with journalism ethics. SEO practices have been criticized for some of their features, such as news texts being constructed around keywords, the news being created with the concern of being clicked rather than in accordance with the professional principles of journalism, and information that is sought not being presented in the text (click-bait).

The research has also questioned within its scope the kinds of problems SEO journalism creates and can create in terms of journalism ethics. The participants have made the following comments on the subject:

> Discussing any SEO code of ethics is similar to a discussion about politics or religion. Both sides feel strongly. Most search engine optimization practitioners

> understand the code of ethics, but not all practitioners use SEO safely. SEO is very prone to abuse in terms of implementation and operation, and having SEO experts carry out their work in good faith is important. Certain problems can be encountered from the perspective of journalism ethics. According to journalistic principles, accurate information is conveyed to the reader in a short, unbiased, and concise manner. With regard to SEO, the purpose and path that are followed serve to benefit different elements, and everything is shaped by Google's rules. (P1/Ensonhaber.com)

P1 emphasizes that, although journalists know the rules of ethics, they may not follow the rules because the algorithm does not fully allow this.

> SEO practices in journalism have been implemented very poorly during certain periods. Google's algorithm at that time also enabled this a lot. That's why things that we can't even call content have been used in various negative ways using attention-grabbing headlines without having any actual information or by not giving the information until the last page. We are currently thinking about and working on how we can do better. Journalism is a very sacred business, and the prestige of journalism in society is very different. We are talking about an industry that has no day, night, or holiday. It's the same with digital media. That's why there were people who abused this job, as in every profession. It occurs much less now because the measures Google has taken in this regard are working. Those who abused it have ruined themselves in the industry because they can no longer make a profit or provide as much benefit as before. People's reactions and the comments they made on the subject on social media have helped to improve this. Is it perfect where it is now? No, it still has its shortcomings. But it's much better now. This job also has its difficult parts: Some things happen very instantaneously, and editors can also notice their mistakes. For example, once a screenshot of a piece of news is taken and shared on social media, it is irreversible. Even if that error is fixed after 30 seconds, it doesn't matter. Looking at it from such angles, I think that SEO editors are unfortunately treated a little unfairly. People forget they are humans who have a very difficult job and instead treat them like robots. In fact, every mistake that occurs is not very long term. Despite this, however, SEO has a bad image. (P2/Hurriyet.com.tr)

Making a comparison between the past and the present in their evaluations, P2 states that SEO practices are no longer as abused as they had been and that despite this, negative perceptions about SEO still persist.

> The relationship between SEO and ethics is a very controversial topic. The practice of SEO has been abused more and more as the field expands and competitors increase. In fact, Google intervenes in such cases. In extreme cases, penalties and bans may occur. Of course, these are situations that do not comply with journalistic ethics. But SEO has an undeniable place in today's journalism. For this reason, not overwhelming readers and presenting them with the subjects they seek in a concise manner have become necessary. SEO can do its work by avoiding unnecessary information and word pollution. In the age of technology, nothing is more natural than for a news site to try to get their content to the top of a major search engine like Google. Boundaries need to be clearly drawn, and producing content inconsistent with journalistic ethics may result in losing users. In this sense, all news sites should review their content. (P3/Milliyet.com.tr)

P3 draws attention to the sanctions Goggle has imposed regarding the abuse of algorithms and, just like P2, draws attention to the fact that broadcasting that does not comply with journalism ethics will result in the loss of readership.

> Underlining that I do not find the concept of SEO journalism to be correct, I would like to state that significant damage has been done to the ethics, character, and reputation of journalism. In this sense, I agree with the criticisms and embrace their justifications. (P4/Sozcu.com.tr)

Meanwhile, P4 states how SEO practices have damaged the reputation of journalism, emphasizing the presence of SEO in journalism to be unethical.

The opinions conveyed by the participants emphasize the aspects of SEO practices that conflict with journalistic ethics. Most of the explanations emphasize SEO as an area that is very open to abuse. One can understand from the conveyed opinions that SEO journalism is not fully compatible with journalism ethics and that SEO's story is seen to be written in connection with algorithms. As algorithms change and transform and Google's rules are renovated, the way SEO is applied and perceived will also change. Conducting SEO journalism by considering journalism ethics is very difficult, especially in today's conditions. The participants also conveyed the difficulty of simultaneously adapting to both professional principles and algorithms, and at the very least, minimizing these contradictions and being very meticulous are necessary in this regard.

Discussion and Conclusion

The developments in the last quarter of the 20th century created structural changes in the media, during which Internet and web technologies were updated rapidly and the use of computer tools gained importance in many fields and sectors. The phenomenon of digitalization has opened the doors to a new era in which media products have been diversified by processing elements such as texts, sounds, and images together and presenting them to users through various platforms. A cyclical process can be mentioned in which reader habits have changed through the digital tools that are used today, with needs reproducing themselves with each new habit. The models put forward in regard to meeting these needs continue to be developed within the framework of capitalist production relations.

Previous studies on the implementation of SEO practices in the field of journalism have arrived at results regarding the structure that has been shaped by Google's older algorithms (Korap Özel and Deniz, 2018; Duman, 2018; Lopezosa et al., 2019; Giomelakis et al., 2019; Deniz & Korap Özel, 2018; Güzel & Özmen, 2018). However, as stated in the previous parts of the current study, Google's algorithms are not fixed and are constantly updated. Therefore, new studies in the field are also needed. This study has been carried out within the context of Turkey and, by aiming to meet this need, presents some current results about SEO journalism's current application and effects.

As a result of the study, SEO journalism is seen to have become a journalistic practice shaped by reader behaviors. The most important criteria in this regard involve thinking like readers, acting by predicting what readers will search for, and being able to use measurement tools to analyze these things.

Just as Korap Özel and Deniz (2018, p. 164) revealed in their study, the current study has also shown some differences to exist between SEO journalism and traditional journalism. This study has shown one of the most important differences between them to be the use of keywords and understands that keywords should be used in a controlled manner in news texts, as the uncontrolled use of keywords distracts readers from the news and negatively affects journalism.

News sites that implement SEO are seen to also include non-news content. Although this type of content is part of SEO strategies, having them appear in front of other actual news contents damages the phenomenon of journalism. This study has shown how Google has currently developed a new understanding regarding issues such as repetitive content and spam content, which Duman (2018, p. 277) had shown to be some of the disadvantages of SEO journalism. According to this result, because Google penalizes news sites that abuse algorithms, misleading content is unable to be produced to the same extent as it had before.

SEO journalism is an area that needs to be addressed both in terms of Google's algorithms as well as readers' expectations. The competitive environment and commercial concerns of news sites may cause the balance between these two elements to deteriorate and the goal of adapting to algorithms to gain importance. For this reason, importance is had in being compatible with algorithms as well as in producing texts that are as creative and original as possible. Thus, the attempt should be made to achieve this balance. This research result also supports the emphasis on quality content and creativity as put forth by Lopezosa et al. (2019) regarding SEO journalism.

Because Google renovates its algorithms, the SEO strategies of news sites also get renewed. Having a media environment where Google is such a focal point allows one to consider this to be a serious pressure factor and a form of media monopoly for news sites. As Saran (2021, p. 610) has also stated, global technology companies namely are seen to earn some serious income from the news media.

SEO editors these days have become a facet of newsrooms' employment processes. Therefore, journalists should have such competencies as the ability to acquire software knowledge and use Google's tools, in addition to their current skills. This result coincides with the need for journalists to attach importance to web technologies, as put forth by Giomelakis et al. (2019, p. 11). Journalists are also expected to have features such as speed, foresight, strict agenda-following, and a higher potential than in the traditional period.

Faculties of Communication have duties in the new journalism environment that includes SEO journalism, but the constant change of algorithms has been an obstacle to creating a basic curriculum. Despite this, Faculties of Communication should provide opportunities for students to practice SEO and implement practices that will provide gains and support them technically.

SEO journalism has aspects that conflict with journalism ethics due to being an area that has been open to abuse, and the study's findings in this regard are in line with the problems revealed in previous studies regarding SEO journalism (Deniz & Korap Özel, 2018, p. 84; Duman, 2018, p. 277; Güzel & Özmen, 2018, p. 225). The significant things that appear in SEO journalism are not the professional principles or ethical rules of journalism, but having more clicks, more advertising, and greater revenue.

As stated in the research, digital media, Google's algorithms, and reader habits are all constantly changing and being refreshed. For this reason, detailed studies should continue being conducted that examine SEO's effects on journalism. In addition, studies have shown gaps to exist regarding the academic aspects of SEO journalism. Universities, especially Faculties of Communication need to fill these gaps by conducting in-depth studies on SEO journalism.

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Araştırma Makalesi / Research Article

The impact of user-generated content in the fashion industry: A case study of *SHEIN* and *PrettyLittleThing*

Kullanıcı tarafından oluşturulan içeriğin moda endüstrisindeki etkisi: SHEIN ve PrettyLittleThing üzerine bir vaka çalışması

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Abstract

The rise of online shopping has encouraged online retailers to discover new ways to ensure consumers have a positive experience when searching for information within the competitive landscape. User-generated content (UGC) can be conveyed in a variety of formats and contexts, such as reviews, photos, forum posts, testimonials, and much more (Fader & Winer, 2012). The purpose of this research is to investigate and compare *SHEIN*, which hosts the functionality to post UGC in the form of reviews with photos, and *PrettyLittleThing*, which does not allow the functionality for UGC in any form. Very limited literature explores UGC in the fashion clothing industry amongst the young, upcoming generations. To address this, a sample of 12 females aged 18 to 26-years-old participated in semi in-depth interviews to discover the impact of user-generated content on the information search stage of the consumer decision-making process. This research adds to the current UGC body of knowledge in the form of photos with reviews in the fashion industry via a case study context. The findings emphasize the positive influence UGC (in the form of reviews with photos) has on the information search stage of the consumer decision-making process.

Keywords: User-generated content, reviews with photos, consumer decision-making process, information search, online shopping

Öz

Çevrimiçi alışverişin yükselişi, çevrimiçi markaları, tüketicilerin rekabet ortamında bilgi ararken olumlu bir deneyim yaşamalarını sağlamanın yeni yollarını keşfetmeye özendirmektedir. Kullanıcıların yarattığı içerikler (KYİ), tüketici yorumları, forum gönderileri, kullanıcı fotoğrafları gibi farklı biçimlerde ve bağlamlarda karşımıza çıkmaktadır (Fader & Winer, 2012). Bu araştırmanın amacı, kullanıcıların yarattığı içeriklerden biri olan fotoğraflı yorum kullanımını alışveriş sayfalarında kullanan *SHEIN* ile bu hizmeti tüketicilere sunmayan *PrettyLittleThing*'i araştırmak ve karşılaştırmaktır. Moda giyim endüstrisinde genç ve gelecek nesiller arasında kullanıcıların yarattığı içerikler üzerine yapılan arastırmalar sınırlıdır. Bu çalışmada yaşları 18 ila 26 arasında değişen 12 kadın tüketiciyle, kullanıcı tarafından yaratılan içeriğin, tüketicinin karar verme sürecindeki aşamalarından biri olan, bilgi arama üzerindeki etkisini araştırmak amacıyla derinlemesine görüşmeler gerçekleştirilmiştir. Bu araştırma, moda endüstrisinde kullanıcılar tarafından geliştirilen icerik örneklerinden biri olan fotoğraflı yorumlar literatürüne vaka çalışması ile katkıda bulunmaktadır. Bulgular, markaların sayfalarında yer alan fotoğraflı yorumların tüketici karar verme sürecinin bilgi arama aşaması üzerindeki olumlu etkisini ortaya koymaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kullanıcı tarafından oluşturulan içerik, fotoğraflı değerlendirmeler, tüketici karar verme süreci, bilgi arama, çevrimiçi alışveriş

Introduction

User-generated content (UGC) is presented in many different techniques, versions, and structures, including: blog posts, reviews, photos, testimonials, and social media posts (Fader & Winer, 2012). An overarching definition of UGC is a broad medium allowing users the freedom to share reviews, preferences, and opinions in a virtual community, typically based on their own experiences and posted onto websites and social media platforms (Muller & Christandl, 2019). Furthermore, it is essential to emphasize that UGC is "brand-related content created by users" (Colicev et al., 2019). The scope of UGC definitions is wide, as UGC is a research area that is continuing to evolve (Bucko et al., 2018). Minimal literature explores UGC in the context of reviews with photos (Zinko et al., 2020). The hospitality industry paves the research as this industry has implemented UGC for a long period of time, most commonly in the format of reviews and more recently the introduction of photos to support the reviews, therefore providing the fundamental basics for this study.

The present case study research aims to examine two online fashion clothing retailers, *SHEIN* and *PrettyLittleThing*, that have many similarities in terms of the target market, price, size of product portfolio, and information search elements. However, the outstanding difference in their information sources available to consumers is that *SHEIN* provides the functionality for users to post and view UGC in the form of reviews with photos, whereas *PrettyLittleThing* does not. Furthermore, exploring other websites that are similar and comparable to *SHEIN* and *PrettyLittleThing* demonstrates this functionality is rarely available.

The consumer decision-making process is a five-stage framework that outlines the general thoughts and actions that consumers undertake when making a purchasing decision (Karunakaran, 2008). This research investigates the information search stage of the process. The information search stage occurs when a consumer is not clear about the exact purchase they would like to make to satisfy their needs. Consumers may use a range of sources to complete this. However, the information search is usually unique to the consumer (Sherlekar et al., 2010).

Online shopping

Young adults aged between 18 and 26 years-old tailor where and how they shop based on what they are purchasing due to the ease of accessibility to information (Mintel, 2019). Young-adult consumers are pertinent to target for research, as this age is when they begin to enter the economically active stage of their lives, therefore their purchasing power becomes paramount for organizations to monitor (Mintel, 2019).

Online social shopping is a form of online social interaction where customers communicate their product knowledge, thoughts, and opinions in online communities (Cheung et al., 2015). Li & Ku (2018) suggest consumers recognize the advantages of consuming information provided by those on social networks mostly irrelevant to which customer has posted it; whether it is a friend, family member, acquaintance, or stranger, the difference in influence is minor in an online social community. Posts within a social community are viewed as more sincere and trustworthy compared to information provided by an online shopping organization, thus more influential on the consumer decision-making process. As a result of social shopping, consumers believe they are making better-informed purchasing decisions (Li & Ku, 2018).

User-generated content

Consumers are no longer the sole complacent recipients of information from marketers. Upgraded communication channels have introduced the interactivity between consumers and organizations, typically on e-commerce sites and social media platforms to influence one another's decision-making process. Many of these interactions take place in the form of user-generated content (Fader & Winer, 2012).

The publishing of information online is shifting from the previous publisher-centric model, driven by organizations, towards a user-centric environment (Sethna et al., 2017). Daugherty et al. (2008) express user-generated content (UGC) as content published by users on an online platform. Colicev et al. (2019) further refine this definition and state UGC is “brand-related content created by users.” UGC is more prominent than ever, becoming omnipresent across online platforms due to the growth of internet accessibility and online shopping. Although UGC is not a new marketing strategy and has been utilized in various ways by organizations due to its wide scope, UGC is embarking on new beginnings as increasing numbers of organizations are encouraging users to post their opinions and experiences (Agarwal, 2020).

The use of smartphones has enhanced UGC’s ubiquitous characteristics and volume, further portraying its prominence in today’s marketing landscape (Melumad et al., 2019). Previously, consumers may have approached family and friends as their first point of contact in terms of recommendations during their decision-making process. However, Social Media Week (2020) reported that 90% of consumers trust UGC published by users they do not know to influence their purchasing decision whilst considering it a trustworthy indicator of quality. Furthermore, this UGC contributes to an increased speed of purchasing decisions due to the accessibility of influential content generated by others online (Flanagin & Metzger, 2013).

User-generated content is brand-related (Colicev et al., 2019) and is referred to as a marketing strategy throughout literature. Furthermore, UGC is frequently regarded as a benefit to consumers, often cited as “providing value” to the consumer’s decision-making process (Sethna et al., 2017; Momeni et al., 2015). Three elements were explored in the literature published by Bahtar & Muda (2016) in conjunction with the impact of UGC towards online purchasing in regards to the perceived credibility, perceived risk and, perceived usefulness of the UGC.

Perceived credibility

Perceived credibility relates to inferences customers subconsciously create in regards to the trustworthiness of content generated by others (Vries, 2019). Customers that have had prior experiences with a product are viewed as highly influential and are proven to provide more credible content through the eyes of a potential consumer than the content provided by the organization. This is due to the consumer’s perspective of reliability and relatability. The experience economy is an example of an industry that UGC plays a prominent role. Before booking a hotel, many consumers will consult the reviews and images posted by previous customers and make their own initial judgments based upon this (Mendes-Filho et al., 2018).

Perceived usefulness

The perceived usefulness refers to the value of the content and whether this content can influence a consumer to progress into a further stage in the consumer decision-making process (Hair & Ozcan, 2018). UGC is recognized as "user-friendly" (Barbosa dos Santos, 2021; Kiran & Srivastava, 2020) as opposed to content published by an organization. Increasing numbers of consumers are aware that content published online can be manipulated, for example via photo editing software (Campbell et al., 2021). However, a study conducted by Nightingale et al. (2017) demonstrated that large numbers of the public have a poor ability to identify manipulated imagery. Low-cost, high-quality editing software is a major contributor to the high volumes of manipulated imagery posted online. Perceived usefulness assesses the value of UGC and the impact on the attitudes and behavior of a consumer, thus the influence on one's decision-making process (Bahtar & Muda, 2016).

Perceived risk

On the contrary, some consumers will naturally assess the risk associated with relying on UGC to inform their decision-making. Unless a consumer has prior knowledge of a product and previous experiences to prevent them from making a poor decision, the consumer is embarking on a risk by consuming UGC. Perceived risk is concerned with a degree of uncertainty relating to the outcome of a purchasing decision. On balance, many consumers portray seeking UGC as a method to reduce the impact of risk by understanding and consuming other consumers' opinions (Bahtar & Muda, 2016).

Organizations using UGC to influence professional marketing materials

UGC in the truest form has not been created or manipulated by an organization (Wyrwoll, 2014). However, over time, some organizations have sourced content created by their consumers that has been posted online and leveraged this to use in their campaigns. For example, luxury fashion retailer Burberry utilized social media to develop a user-led UGC campaign when the brand was struggling to reach younger consumers. Burberry identified the rising trend of "street style photography" and encouraged users to share photos of themselves wearing their classic Burberry trench coat with the hashtag #artofthetrench (see figure 1). Burberry selected a range of images of customers wearing the coat to post on their website (see figure 2). Through this, Burberry had an element of control and was able to monitor the content, whilst the UGC still provided authenticity. The campaign was one of the first of its kind and was a contributor to the following year e-commerce sales rising by 50 percent (Business Today, 2021).

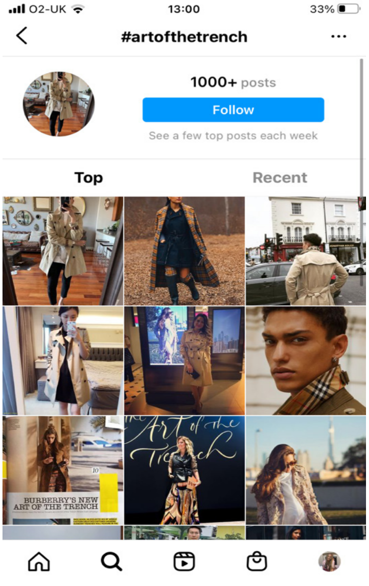

Figure 1: Recent images using #artofthetrench are flooded with users wearing the classic Burberry trench coat (Instagram, 2021)

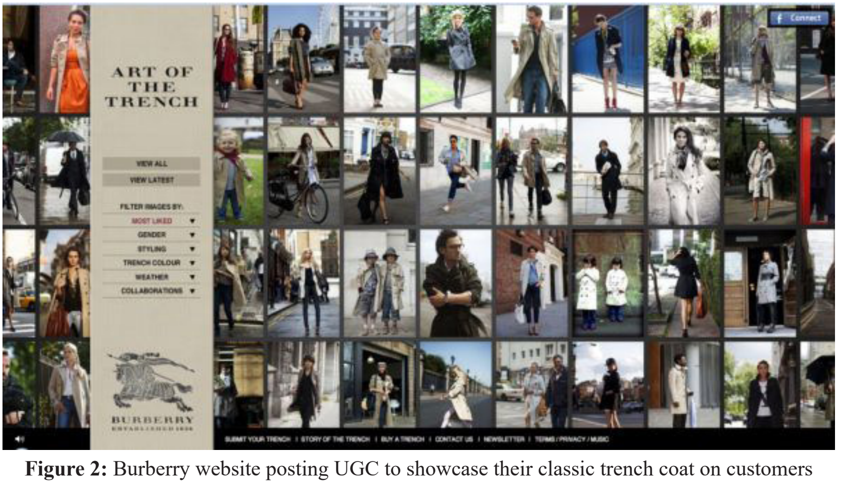

Figure 2: Burberry website posting UGC to showcase their classic trench coat on customers (Business Today, 2021)

Authors contend whether UGC remains as UGC if adaptations have been made by an organization that move it away from the original which was posted by the consumer online. Common platforms that allow users to publish UGC, such as TripAdvisor, allow organizations to highlight reviews. These are often positive reviews left by satisfied customers. Research by Yi et al. (2019) discovered that organizations must be strategic when highlighting these reviews as consumers can be skeptical of any influence an organization has placed on any form of UGC. Although a highlighted positive review may be the first review the potential consumer reads, this heightened attention does not correlate to enhanced consumption (Yi et al., 2019).

UGC posting motivations

The trend in consumers posting UGC online is growing. As a result of platforms continuing to introduce this feature, encouraging users to post content themselves to aid consumer's decision-making and add to their marketing strategies. However, not all users are comfortable volunteering a post about their experience. Nevertheless, some users will frequently contribute to a UGC functionality without thinking twice. Therefore, understanding the motivations behind users generating content is important to recognize before establishing a campaign that aims to repurpose UGC. On the whole, only a small minority will publish UGC, whilst the remainder of consumers "lurk" amongst the UGC, taking time to read and allowing the UGC to inform their decisions. However, these "lurkers" will still choose to not contribute to the UGC environment (McWilliam, 2000). Frequent research has been conducted into the impact that online communities have on the consumer decision-making process. Experiments have typically found that negative opinions posted online have the most influence on the opinions of others (Schlosser, 2005).

Halliday (2016) explored what motivates young adults to generate and consume content, focusing on a sample of students aged between 20 and 25. He determined that each individual embarks on their own journey and the generation of content is related to one's self-identity. Crowston & Fagnot (2018) further support this by revealing contributors to content are motivated by the perception that a platform needs their contribution because they have the prior experiences to share their judgments and opinions. Furthermore, contributors are influenced by personal motives rather than social factors.

Hedonic and utilitarian use of UGC

Sethna et al. (2017) discovered that reading and responding to UGC contributes to the enhancement of the hedonic online shopping experience. Users often find reading reviews enjoyable due to their element of practicality when making decisions. However, the design of the website and the format the UGC is visually displayed in is a major contributing factor to whether or not reading reviews is seen as enjoyable. Moreover, the utilitarian use of UGC was found to be more important to brands due to its higher influence, increasing the likelihood of contributing to purchase intention as opposed to the hedonic use of UGC. Consequently, UGC should be incorporated onto websites to aid the convenience of facilitating interaction amongst users.

On the whole, the literature portrays UGC as a positive tool from a consumers' perspective. However, from a brand's perspective, enabling the functionality for consumers to publish UGC on a branded webpage can be a risk. Some UGC can be a great benefit to an organization, as users are persuaded by and trust UGC's authenticity. Moreover unique content free of charge is being provided with little effort or resources from the organization (Goh et al., 2013). On the other hand, to pursue all UGC's benefits, organizations accept the risk that some content may not be in favor of their brand and even detrimental to it in some cases. If an organization has control over their webpages, they can monitor the UGC published, they must be careful to not eliminate all negativity, as this can lead to the dismantlement of users' trust, and potentially even canceling out the positive reviews if users become aware of the dishonesty of the organization (Bakri et al., 2020).

Consumer decision-making process: Information search

The consumer decision-making process is a five-step process that establishes the fundamental route consumers take when making a purchase: (stage 1) need recognition, (stage 2) information search, (stage 3) evaluation of alternatives, (stage 4) purchase, and (stage 5) post-purchase behavior (Lamb et al., 2017). The consumer decision-making process's structure can be applied to a variation of purchase contexts, although not all purchasing journeys will rigorously follow this exact framework (Vázquez et al., 2014).

This study investigates stage two of the consumer decision-making process: information search. During the information search, the consumer is conducting their own research to gain an understanding of the product they are intending to purchase. Each consumer will use their individual approach, although convenience is an influencing factor to depend on where or how a consumer will conduct their information search (Gbadamosi et al., 2013). Information search can be quick if the consumer has previously had a positive experience or their needs have been satisfied because they are likely to repurchase and follow the same methods of decision making they had previously. However, if a past experience was negative or a consumer is about to embark on a new purchasing journey, the information search will be more complex (Qazzafi, 2019). Kotler (2017) explains consumers can obtain and retain information from various sources, such as: personal sources, commercial sources, public sources, and experimental sources. UGC would typically be categorized as a "public source." Kotler (2017) specifies a public source as mass media, social media, online searches, consumer rating organization, and peer reviews.

Online shopping information search process

In recent years, the incorporation of UGC onto websites has provided consumers with a voice of influence to assist other consumers' information search by providing the functionality for consumers who have tried a product to share their experiences (Hazari et al., 2017). Kasuma et al. (2020) investigated the main factors that "influence customers intention for online shopping" discovering security, website features, and convenience as the main factors that influence the decision-making process when shopping online. Therefore, organizations that would like to adopt the functionality to allow users to post UGC must consider these factors on their website so the UGC can serve its purpose of aiding consumer's information search stage of the consumer decision-making process (Cheong & Morrison, 2008).

Aim and Methodology

The epistemological approach of this research is interpretative social science. This individual case study aims to decipher the differences between online fashion retailers that offer customers the functionality to post UGC in the form of photos alongside their reviews in comparison to a website that does not have any form of UGC. The exploration of two specific cases generates context and understanding to contribute to research which can be further broadened in the future. In this study, the case study research method nature is supported by qualitative research method.

Aim

This study will be guided by the following primary research question and sub-research questions:

> What impact does user-generated content on the online fashion clothing retailer *SHEIN* have on the information search stage of the consumer decision-making process in comparison to the online fashion clothing retailer *PrettyLittleThing* that does not host user-generated content amongst young female consumers aged 18-26-year-old?

Sub-research questions:

> How does user-generated content have an impact on the information search stage of the consumer decision-making model for online fashion clothing retailer *SHEIN*?
> What is the impact on the information search stage of the consumer decision-making process when online fashion clothing retailer *PrettyLittleThing* does not host the functionality to display user-generated content?

To achieve valid and reliable results in conjunction with this research question, a sample of twelve 18-\ to 26-year-old females were interviewed to explore the impact of user-generated content on the information search stage of the consumer decision-making process. From the photo posting perspective, the current research suggests that visual content is significantly more stimulating than text alone (Vazquez et al. 2021). Additionally, reviews are found to contribute to the hedonic online shopping experience because consumers find pleasure in this rather than only looking at the reviews for informative purposes which would contribute to a utilitarian need (Sethna et al, 2017).

Method

The data collection method for this study is semi-structured in-depth interviews. This is supported by a case study task prior to the in-depth interviews for participants. The task aims to provide guidance, context, and efficiency to the interviewing process.

Non-probability convenience sampling is the sampling method of this study. This research study focuses on females aged 18 to 26. The directly-selected participants have previously shopped on online fashion clothing retailers to ensure familiarity and past experiences can be divulged during the interview. Furthermore, the majority of participants have previously shopped at both *PrettyLittleThing* and *SHEIN*. If they had not, it was ensured they have heard of both websites previously.

The target population of this study is females aged 18 to 26 years old. This specific age group can be justified as the adult population of Generation Z (McKinsey & Company, 2018). However, because the entirety of Generation Z is not being explored during this study, this age group has been referred to as "young consumers." This age group has been selected because through reviewing the literature surrounding online shopping and the incorporation of UGC, this is a relatively new concept in the online clothing fashion industry landscape. The implementation of UGC on online clothing retailers has begun to break through, therefore exploring young adult consumers is a prominent age group because this age group is likely to pave the way for future trends. The sample size consists of twelve participants.

The case study nature of the research has been achieved through the task that all participants must complete before their semi-structured in-depth interview. All participants explored both websites for 15 minutes, choosing an outfit or item of clothing of their choice. Such freedom allowed the participant to select an item closest to what they would typically purchase, which enhanced authenticity within their experience and findings of the research.

Each interview had a duration of at least 30 minutes to ensure a comprehensive discussion was initiated and the findings were rich in detail. The interviewees were asked about their typical shopping habits and then questions followed relating to the task. During the task section of the interview, participants were encouraged to relate this to their previous experiences, if possible. This enabled a broad insight into their perspectives and opinions surrounding the usefulness of UGC during their information search.

The participants were then asked a series of questions (see appendix two) based upon the research question of this study to explore their motivations and information search. The participants were prompted to refer to both the task and previous experiences during the interview. The visual elements of each participants' information search were heavily focused on to meet the aims of this study.

The interviews were conducted via video call. This is due to the recent Covid-19 pandemic. Despite this, video call is convenient due to the participants' being in their own, chosen comfortable environment. Body language could still be observed over the video call (Archibald et al., 2019), which was likely to lead to an enriched discussion. The in-depth interviews have been transcribed and analyzed by thematic analysis. A selection of transcriptions and analysis can be found in appendix four.

Findings

SHEIN and *PrettyLittleThing* have been selected as the online fashion clothing retailers to base this study on because they have similarities in terms of their target demographics, product portfolio size, and pricing, therefore comparative in nature. *SHEIN* and *PrettyLittleThing* both have a very similar target market of young women and teens.

Both brands' mission statements have clear similarities. *SHEIN*'s mission statement reads, "offering on-trend styles from around the globe while rapidly bringing these styles that won't break the bank to both young women and teens" (*SHEIN*, 2021b). *PrettyLittleThing* states, "we believe style should be accessible to all, whatever your budget, as we deliver products inspired from the catwalk." Concerning the information search, there are also major similarities. Therefore, to gain reliable and clear results to contribute efficiently to the outcome of this study, both websites have been comprehensively explored by the author.

The clothing items on both websites have a selection of photos of the clothing being worn by a model from different angles (see figures 3 and 4). The model's measurements are shown allowing the customer to compare themselves to the model and make their decisions based upon this. Both websites also offer a description. *PrettyLittleThing*'s description uses persuasive writing techniques, specifically adjectives, to portray the product. In contrast, *SHEIN*'s product description is concise in descriptive language and conveys a large amount of information in a list format. Both fashion clothing websites also state the obvious information, such as the price and size guide. However, the websites do have differences in terms of influencing their consumers' information search.

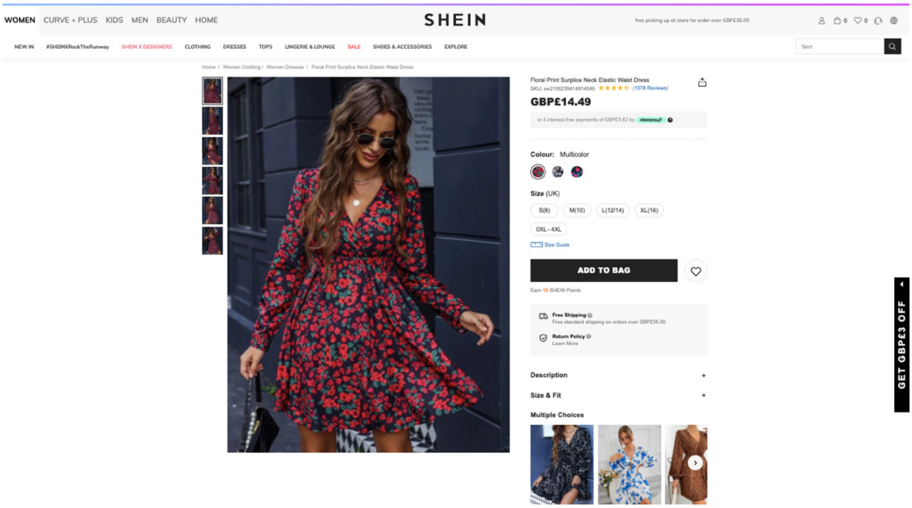

Figure 3: SHEIN website displaying various sources of information (SHEIN, 2021c)

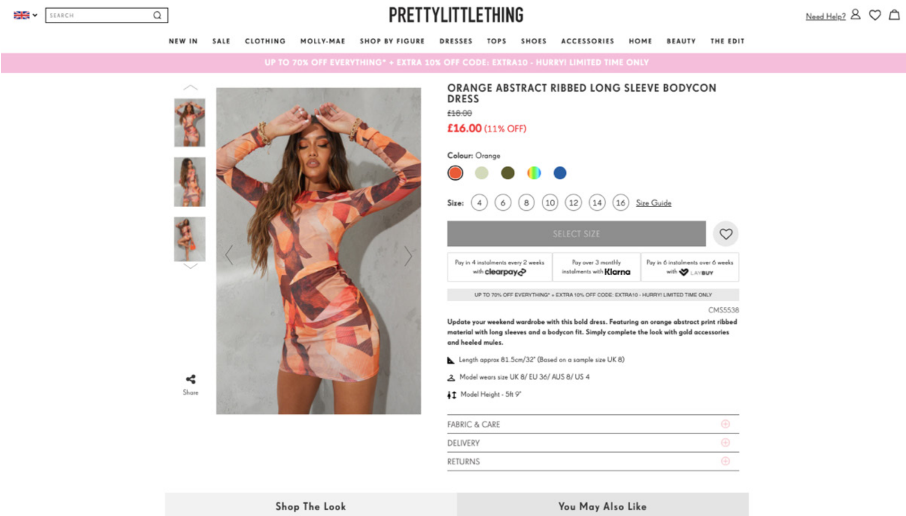

Figure 4: PrettyLittleThing website displaying various sources of information (PrettyLittleThing, 2021c)

While *SHEIN* has the functionality to leave a review with a photo under every item, *PrettyLittleThing* does not. On *SHEIN*, in addition to the review with the photo, customers can leave a rating and complete a poll "Did the item fit well?" (figure five). These are all information sources influenced by customers.

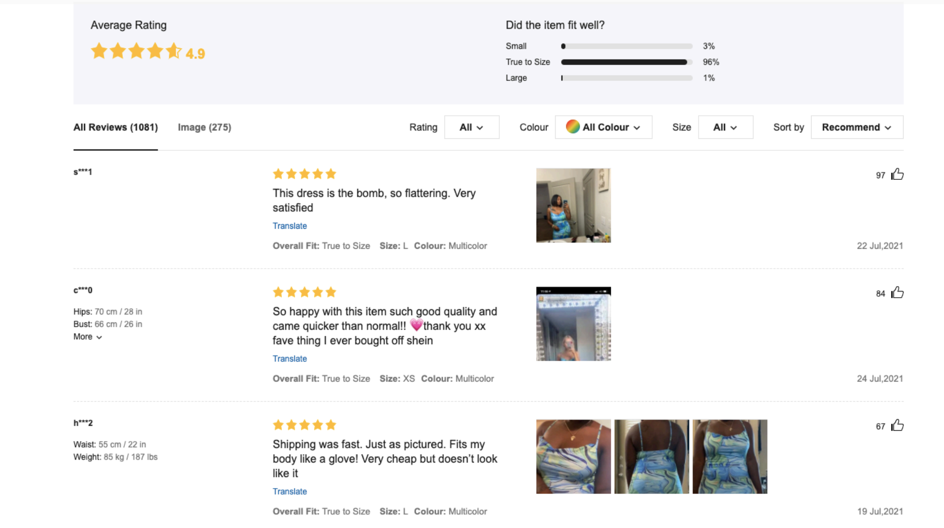

Figure 5: User-generated content on the SHEIN website (SHEIN, 2021c)

The review with photo section allows customers to write a text review and post multiple photos of the item. The functionality is also present to detail their waist, weight, height, bust, and hip measurements along with the size of the item they chose from the website and the overall fit. Consumers can filter the reviews to view customers that have purchased an item of a certain size. The reviews with photos section are user friendly as consumers can choose to browse the text reviews, where some have additional photos, or click through a gallery of the images posted by customers, where the reviews are displayed along the side (figure six). These features depend on the customer preference in terms of whether they believe seeing the photos or the text reviews are the most important asset. On *SHEIN*, customers are encouraged to post a review once they have purchased a product and in return, they can earn points which corresponds to discounts (*SHEIN*, 2021a).

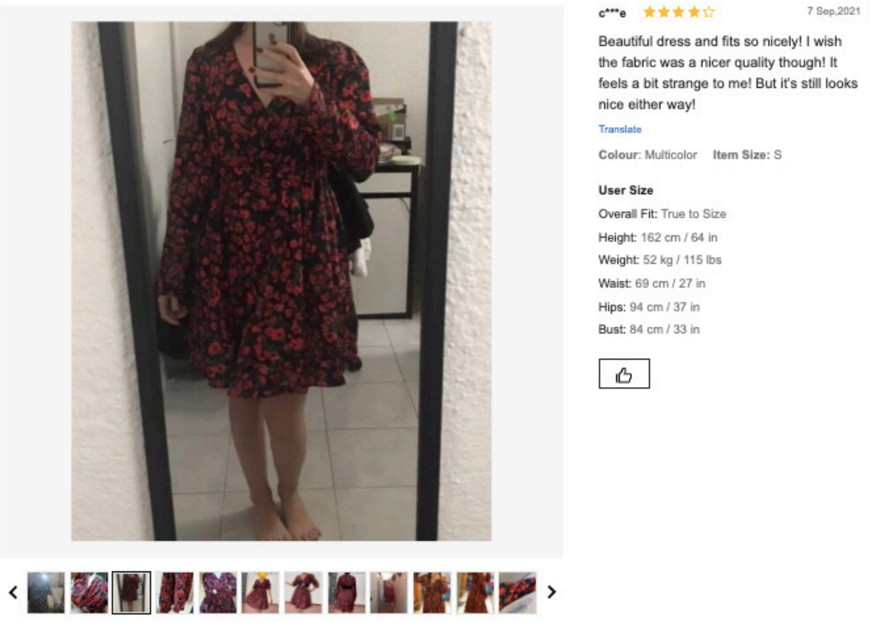

Figure 6: SHEIN website, gallery of images posted by customers with reviews displayed alongside (SHEIN, 2021c)

General online fashion clothing habits and information search

Each participant revealed an individual online fashion clothing shopping experience and method of searching for information. Yet, significant similarities were present throughout. Two-thirds (66.7%) of participants purchase their fashion clothing online. Findings by Mintel (2019) contradict this by explaining that young consumers are multi-channel shoppers, as "sixty-seven percent of young adults shop both online and in-store." By contrast, only the remaining one-third of the participants in this study described their shopping habits as online and in-store. In the words of one such participant: "I would either go into a shop and see what it's like on the models and get inspiration from there… or if not just go online and have a browse on what's new in or what's trending" (Female A, 22). Further research into the reasoning for this contrast in findings could be the large shift to online shopping because of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic (Youn et al., 2021). Large amounts of research have explored the shift in consumption habits due to the pandemic's significance on a global scale. Considering all participants shop online for fashion clothing, this allows previous experiences to influence responses, which provides further depth and accuracy to the research.

Participants referred to the sources of information available on fashion clothing websites they believe are important and what they would usually explore prior to making a purchase. A variety of information sources were mentioned by participants. The most frequently recurring important information sources when exploring a fashion clothing website were the following: reviews (seven participants), photos (seven participants), size guide (six participants), description (six participants), price (five participants), model statistics (four participants), material (three participants), influencers (two participants), and returns policy (two participants).

These results are a catalyst to the exploration relating to the research question of this study. Identifying that reviews and photos are explored and important to consumers when making a fashion clothing purchasing decision online sets the basis of the findings for this study. Although it must be highlighted that photos in this instance are a very general component and may not correspond to photos posted by consumers, these comments could refer to images of the model or images posted by the organization of the clothing. Consequently, it is subjective.

Amongst research participants, the general consensus of participants communicated that they would explore multiple or external sources to find out information about fashion clothing. Nine participants (75%) would explore other sources outside a website when making a fashion clothing purchase. Eight of these participants would use social media as an external source of information.

> I'd see something on social media on someone that's a similar build to me and then I'd go and look for it on the clothing website to purchase myself (Female B, 22),

> I'd sometimes look on Depop and stuff to see if other have the item and then see what it actually looks like on, like not on the model (Female F, 22).

These participant responses immediately reflect the preference for viewing the clothing item on other consumers through user-generated content as a stage in the participant's information search. Influencers were again mentioned as a persuasive tool to lead participants to a particular clothing website, "I'd go on a lot of influencers. I'd go on a page on Instagram and it tells you what influencers wear and it tells you where they got it from" (Female C, 19). Another participant had similar views, saying she'd visit "social media websites such as Instagram, where influencers obviously are and link products that they have bought, so I'd be swayed on the things they are displaying there or a lot of the time I'd watch fashion hauls on YouTube" (Female L, 23).

This method of discovering information through influencers in some circumstances can be the very start of the consumer decision-making process at the problem recognition stage. The problem recognition stage is when a buyer becomes aware of an item they would like to buy (Dibb et al., 2012). In this research, the influencer wearing/displaying an outfit may trigger the problem recognition for the research participants. One participant explained they would specifically seek out reviews from external sources, "for example, if I was on the Nike website, I'd always go on ASOS or another website to try and read more reviews about the clothing product" (Female G, 22). The results show that the age group being investigated are unlikely to make an online fashion clothing purchase impulsively with no forethought and their information search process has depth to aid their understanding.

***SHEIN* information search process**

Each participant encountered a different information search process during the completion of the task. Overall, the information elements explored by the participants in order of commonalities on *SHEIN*, were: Reviews with photos (12 participants), photos of the model (three participants), description (three participants), size guide (three participants), ratings (two participants), trends button (one participant), style gallery (one participant), and sale (one participant).

To compare this list to the information sources available on *PrettyLittleThing*. *PrettyLittleThing* does not offer any user-generated content including reviews with photos and ratings by consumers.

These findings immediately prove the power of visual content. This agrees with the research into the fashion industry by Vazquez et al. (2021) that consumers are clearly stimulated by visual experiences. Overall, the top two information elements explored by all participants derive from content posted by others which is formally known as user-generated content. To expand this finding further, the two user-generated pieces of content, reviews with photos and ratings, also correspond to the theory of online social shopping. Consumers understand the advantages of information posted by others to communicate their product knowledge and believe they are making better-informed purchasing decisions as a result of this (Li & Ku, 2018).

On the contrary, it is important to mention some of the brand reputation perspectives the participants shared, generally relating to their previous experiences of shopping with *SHEIN*. Such responses include: "I know the quality can be a bit iffy sometimes" (Female A, 22), "At one time there was a lot of people saying that *SHEIN* was there to scam you, like it's all rubbish clothing" (Female C, 19), and "On *SHEIN*, I do look at reviews because it's a bit of an odd brand I think, so people are a bit worried about how it might actually turn up" (Female I, 22). From these findings, it is clear that *SHEIN* may have a slightly negative reputation regarding trust in their clothing quality. When *SHEIN* is searched on Google, one of the most frequently asked questions in the "people also ask" section is "Is *SHEIN* a safe site to buy from?" This infers others also may have this perspective on the brand. "The reputation that *SHEIN* maybe has as a cheaper website and there's pop ups wherever you look and the stuff with it being an international company maybe makes me feel like that… I wouldn't buy at all if it wasn't for the reviews with photos, but the reviews do tempt me and I have bought previously because of the reviews" (Female E, 22). *SHEIN* are likely to be aware of this, therefore providing the functionality to enable social shopping theory through UGC is *SHEIN*'s mechanism to improve brand reputation.

PrettyLittleThing **information search process**

The most popular sources of information in order of commonalities on *PrettyLittleThing* were: photos of the model (eight participants), description (seven participants), use of filters (seven participants), catwalk video (six participants), model measurements (five participants), fabric and care (four participants), returns (three participants), influencers (two participants), size guide (two participants), price (one participant), and sale (one participant).

To compare this list to the information sources available on *SHEIN*. *SHEIN* does not offer a catwalk video.

Again, the most popular information source related to imagery. Therefore, the answers support the findings by (Kim et al., 2009) that suggest product presentation on a model is significantly more effective due to enhanced positive cognitive and emotional reactions than a product with no context that is in a flat display. Although the description was the second most popular source of information on *PrettyLittleThing*, it received mixed reviews. Some participants found it helpful as it is one of the primary sources of information on *PrettyLittleThing*. However, some participants recognized the description to be too descriptive and does not add much information content that can aid decision-making;

> They talk about what you'd style it with or like the feeling you might get when wearing it, it's all very creative rather than factual… but that information just isn't as important to me (Female I, 22).

> I read the description but wouldn't say I got a lot from it (Female J, 22),

This demonstrates the text does not always provide added value to some consumers' information search and they would prefer the content to be direct to the point. To compare this to *SHEIN*'s succinct description section, participants much preferred *SHEIN*'s description section;

> The description section is bullet pointed so rather than being a long bit of text describing that its great, it kind of says specific points about whatever it is you are purchasing rather than describing it in fairy language (Female J, 22),

> I would feel a lot more confident based on the description about the product available on *SHEIN* just because of the amount of information they give you and it is easy to read (Female G, 22).

The model statistics were mentioned by five participants. "I also like to look at the size that the model is wearing and the height of that model, so a lot of the time when I would buy from *PrettyLittleThing*, I would look at the height of the model and the size they were wearing to match it up with the size that I would need" (Female L, 23). *SHEIN* also displays the measurements of the model that is on the forefront of the webpage. However, these are overshadowed by the photos posted by the customers as the website has the functionality for customers to post their measurements alongside their photos.

> They've also got like little things that you can fill in like overall fit and then like the person's height and weight and the bust and their like measurements which is so helpful if you wanted to like compare your measurements to the garments that they've bought, you could literally guarantee a fit even just from the text (Female G, 22).

This comparison agrees with the previous finding that the reviews with photos are the most influential and preferred information source between both websites.

> This relates directly to the conscious and sometimes subconscious comparison of physical appearance experienced by young females when presented with images of others (Marengo et al., 2018). The connotations surrounding the model statistics were generally negative and projected feelings of uncertainty surrounding the models chosen to wear the products on the website. "You get a little bit of information on what size the model is wearing, but realistically no one is like the model, so you don't know if it's going to look like that" (Female J, 22).

The negative inference surrounding the model photos continued into whether the content posted of the models by *PrettyLittleThing* was authentic. "They could literally say anything like about the product and you don't know what's gone into making the garment look how it does on the model. Like, they could have one of the crocodile clips at the back to make it look fitted to their body" (Female G, 22). Digitally literate individuals can have easy access to editing software to manipulate images to their desire, editing a photo is an extremely common concept due to the growth of posting imagery online (Nightingale et al., 2017). Therefore, assuming manipulation is common and suspected.

User-generated content on *SHEIN* versus no user-generated content on *PrettyLittleThing*

All participants recognized that *SHEIN* offers the functionality to post reviews with photos and *PrettyLittleThing* does not offer this functionality.

Firstly, participants were asked specifically about the text reviews. On average participants would read six text reviews before making a purchasing decision. This number was different across the board as some participants revealed they would not read the text or read very little of it: "My eye was probably more drawn to the picture reviews, and I probably skimmed over the text reviews" (Female E, 22). Whereas, one participant exclaimed she read "maybe approximately 20, like 15 to 20 reviews" (Female G, 22). The consensus regarding text reviews was that: "They provide context to the photos" (Female H, 25). Moreover, it is apparent that some text reviews are very unhelpful. Participants recognized that *SHEIN* does not have a filtering system. "A lot of the time, the reviews are just song lyrics or in a foreign language, so no, I don't usually read the writing" (Female I, 22). This is likely to be because of the incentive in the form of points which can be exchanged for discounts on products on their website. Some participants associated the lack of text review quality with this incentive: "I know there is an incentive for posting a review, like to gain points to get money off, so I think some people do just write random things" (Female A, 22).

Secondly, participants were asked how many photos posted by consumers they looked at during their task. The majority of participants expressed that they had looked through all the photos that had been posted by consumers. "I think I went through like the whole image gallery of photos that were left by customers" (Female G, 22). Most participants also detailed that it was less time-consuming to look through the photos, "More photos definitely, they're just quicker aren't they?" (Female C, 19). It was also identified by the participants that there is little perceived risk associated with utilizing the reviews with photos during the information search: "People have not really got a reason to lie, so there's no there's no benefit of them lying" (Female K, 24). Moreover, from the previous findings, the participants are aware of the risks of photo manipulation. Most participants seem switched-on regarding this.

In reference to the text reviews and photo reviews together, the participants explained the benefits to their information search of this functionality offered by *SHEIN*.

> Gives you more of a visual representative of what I'm looking for and also reading what other people have said about the item can sway decisions when choosing to buy it or not (Female A, 22).

> It's really helpful to be able to see a photo then people's true thoughts because something you maybe can't quite identify by just looking at a photo (Female D, 26).

All participants expressed the positive influence the reviews with photos had on their information search. Participants revealed that they are more likely to read a review if it is supported by a photo on *SHEIN* because it is very helpful.

> I'd just look at the photo but if I was like probably more unsure then probably the reviews (Female F, 22)
> I think the incorporation of a photo with a text review significantly helps to see the fit of the clothing (Female D, 26)

This demonstrated the requirement for photos and reviews to be posted together to provide an element of context in terms of the customer's thoughts and opinions of the garment in addition to the visual photo. The text review in addition to the photo increases the reliability of this information, which has a significant positive influence on the decision-making process.

Consistency was explored by participants in relation to the photos and is a factor taken into consideration, "The fact that there's quite a lot of continuity between the first two photos and then the third photo" (Female E, 22). This demonstrates the depth participants explore when investigating the reviews with photos and the perceived credibility this content possesses. Furthermore, the incorporation of a photo alongside a review revealed participants often skimmed the text when they are posted together. However, they would look in detail at the photo and use the text as an additional source of information if they require it: "I'd just look at the photo, but if I was like probably more unsure, then probably the reviews as well, but I tend to just go more off the photos and see what it's like there" (Female F, 22). This supports the participants' responses that exclaimed they would only look through the gallery of images as a primary source of information if they believed the images provided a sufficient insight into the clothing to make a purchasing decision. These findings agree with the theory of social shopping that consumers believe they make more well-informed decisions as a result of information provided by communities online (Li & Ku, 2018). In addition to this, the research by Vazquez et al. (2021) is certainly further confirmed that consumers are stimulated by visual experiences and this has a positive impact on purchasing intention.

The comparison of physical appearance by the participant was prominent throughout. Ten out of twelve participants admitted they would compare their own physical appearance to an image posted by another consumer. "The customer reviews are definitely a massive plus where I can see photos of people that look kind of like me" (Female D, 26). "I like to see that everyone's different and to see it on different people and body shapes, then from there I can work out what's similar to me" (Female I, 22). Participants also found it to be reassuring, "...one of them, yes, I think she had quite a similar physique to me, which was reassuring" (Female E, 22). This coincides with research conducted by Tiggemann & Anderberg (2020) into females aged 18 to 30 and their perceptions of natural Instagram images versus edited images. The natural images promoted less body dissatisfaction. The images on *SHEIN* posted by consumers are primarily natural images. This appeals to and satisfies consumers. Comparing physical appearance to gain more insight into fashion clothing aids consumers' decision making by receiving recommendations from others of a similar size in the form of reviews and photos. To compare these findings to *PrettyLittleThing*, similarly, utilizing model measurements as a method of information search was frequent amongst participants, further confirming the comparison of physical appearance is frequent amongst 18 to 26-year-old females. However, participants may benefit from the authenticity of comparing themselves to previous consumers rather than the models, as the issues of lack of authenticity and potential image manipulation were raised by participants: "...but not everyone's like a model, unfortunately" (Female K, 24).

PrettyLittleThing does not have a source of user-generated content on their website. Despite this, on the whole, the majority of participants would return their custom to the website. In comparison to *SHEIN*, *PrettyLittleThing* received significantly fewer comments in terms of inconsistency and reputation, making it clear *PrettyLittleThing* has a stable brand reputation amongst respondents.

> I'd still be tempted to buy from *PrettyLittleThing* just because of the reputation that *SHEIN* maybe has as a cheaper website and there's pop ups wherever you look and the stuff with it being an international company maybe makes me feel like that (Female E, 22).

> [On] *PrettyLittleThing*, there's just a little bit of information just under it, and if I wanted to see it on an influencer, I'd have to go on Instagram. But on *PrettyLittleThing*, I just hope for the best (Female C, 19)

Due to *PrettyLittleThing*'s strong brand reputation, participants do not need the UGC to be the deciding factor to whether they make a purchase or not. Previous experiences and positive perceptions of the brand are enough prior information to make a purchasing decision. Additionally, participants have navigated their own method of discovering information on this particular website, such as through influencers. Despite this, when participants were asked to compare both information search experiences between the brands, the majority of participants spoke highly of *SHEIN*'s functionality to read reviews with photos. This lead to participants suggesting that *PrettyLittleThing* should incorporate this functionality to further aid the information search.

> Definitely to have some sort of reviews on the page as they don't have any at all. Something like *SHEIN* with the photos and reviews would be great (Female D, 26).

Although it is evident that the user-generated content on *SHEIN* is the most influential and helpful information source, participants were still able to conduct a sufficient information search using different forms of information on the *PrettyLittleThing* website. One element that stood out is their "quick returns policy": "I will still buy from there though and return it if I don't like it" (Female C, 19). Clearly, a high rate of customer returns is ineffective for a fashion clothing brand. Despite this, the comparison was inevitable with *SHEIN* and the UGC functionality they offer, "but reviews on *PrettyLittleThing* would be good to save me time and money" (Female C, 19). After considering UGC in-depth during the interviews, some participants did respond that they would "feel a lot less confident" (Female G, 22), shopping on *PrettyLittleThing* after digesting that "there's no reviews, all you can really see is that what size the model is and how tall she is, but yeah, like, there's absolutely no review, so possibly a bigger chance of sending it back because you don't know exactly what you are buying, and it's just photos taken by like a photographer versus someone real with their phone" (Female K, 24).

User-generated content – hedonic needs

The user-generated content also satisfied the hedonic needs of the consumer journey in comparison to only exploring the basic information for practical reasons which would be utilitarian. This finding agrees with Sethna et al. (2017) findings into UGC in the form of reviews and the hedonic viewpoint of consumers. When each participant was asked, "On which website did you find the information search most enjoyable?" Eleven out of twelve participants responded with *SHEIN*. The rationale from the participants substantially communicated this was because of the "reviews with photos." Consequently, there is more information available: "...*SHEIN* because there is just more information available" (Female A, 22); "...*SHEIN* because of all the reviews and photos making things more reliable and relatable" (Female D, 26). Each individual consumer has a motivation to shop online. Consumers are found to engage in online shopping activities for pleasure (Bhatia, 2019). Hence, satisfying hedonic needs is extremely important.

Discussion and Conclusion

This research is one of the first within the UGC fashion industry field (Vazquez et al., 2021). Overall, user-generated content significantly aids the information search for consumers and is favored. It was found the age group of the study (18 to 26) have a conscious desire to compare themselves to others' physical appearance to aid the utilitarian need of correct sizing to avoid wasting time by returning an item (Apeagyei, 2008). The comparison of physical appearance was prominent throughout the case study research. Brands such as *PrettyLittleThing* should be aware that consumers are skeptical of manipulated imagery and authentic visuals are preferred and significantly influence the information search stage of the consumer decision-making process.

Agreeing with Li & Ku (2018), consumers place their trust in others when it is posted in a social community, irrelevant to who has posted the content. Participants found the reviews with photos to be credible and the most influential factor out of all information sources available to aid their decision-making process.

Furthermore, brands should also acknowledge that consumers prefer to explore authentic user-generated photos that are supported by text to provide context relating to the thoughts and feelings of the consumer wearing the garment. Moreover, organizations should also be aware that any information source that has a target audience of 18 to 26-year-olds should be short in length to suit the attention spans of the upcoming generations (Forbes, 2017), as participants generally focus their attention on the visuals and skim the text. However, the text is required to progress the information search of the decision-making process.

Following on from this, the UGC in the form of reviews with photos satisfied the hedonic needs during the information search, as many find this to be a more enjoyable experience than only reading basic information about the product to discover more, which is a utilitarian need. This finding is in line with the findings of Sethna et al. (2017) that reading and responding to UGC contributes to the enhancement of the hedonic online shopping experience. Many brands in the fashion industry can take this into consideration as on the whole: consumers seek online shopping experiences to find pleasure (Bhatia, 2019).

It is vital for organizations to note that if a brand does not have a positive reputation, it can be difficult for the UGC element to succeed. However, *SHEIN* is an example of a brand that is utilizing UGC to enhance its reputation. *PrettyLittleThing* currently has a positive brand reputation, therefore the impact of UGC may not be as significant. Moreover, it is recommended that reviews with photos would be extremely beneficial to brands such as *PrettyLittleThing* to enhance the consumers' information search process by gaining influence from consumers not associated with the brand to convey the element of authenticity. The basic understandings within this research can inform and persuade organizations that UGC in the form of reviews with photos are extremely influential particularly amongst 18 to 26 year-old females.

The method of case study research has its limitations. The exploration of only two brands within the case study nature is a limitation (Tight, 2017). To ensure the results are increasingly generalizable, more than two contrasting fashion brands could be investigated in terms of UGC to ensure the results are increasingly applicable across the industry.

Furthermore, only females were investigated. To explore this topic on a broader scale and gain further accurate results into UGC in a wider context, more than one gender should be examined.

This research is confined to the fashion industry. Although the findings are extremely relevant within this industry, these may not be generalizable to another industry, such as technology. The nature of the fashion industry has been taken into high consideration, including the comparison of physical appearance and social acceptance. Additionally, the decision-making process evidently differs per industry.

Although the interviews were in-depth, therefore rich in information, the sample size only consisted of twelve participants. Moreover, as this is one of the first research studies on this subject, this information is very informative and sets the research field up for future studies. Increasing the sample size by conducting a follow-up quantitative study to increase the numbers of participants could be beneficial in the future to add to this field of research, providing a broader spectrum of findings and ideas.

Follow-up research can be conducted to tackle and limit any limitations associated with this study. In the future, a broader approach away from case study research should be implemented to gain a wider outlook on UGC within the fashion industry. Likewise, the sample could be expanded to include more diversity in a variety of contexts, such as age, gender and, ethnicity. To contrast, yet support the qualitative findings in this research, a quantitative study could be conducted to achieve a larger sample size.

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Araştırma Makalesi / Research Article

Examining the relationship between consumer innovativeness and trust in chatbot applications: A study on Turkish banking sector

Tüketici yenilikçiliği ve chatbot uygulamalarına güven arasındaki ilişkinin incelenmesi: Türk bankacılık sektörü üzerine bir araştırma

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Abstract

Life has transformed rapidly with technology taking on a dominant position in our time. The developments in the field of the internet and the point that web technology has reached has created radical changes in the way of life of today's individuals. Businesses also benefit from the opportunities that technology had provided them in how they reach their consumers. Businesses are using these technologies more and more every day to reach consumers who are constantly open to interaction thanks to technological tools. This is especially true in the service sector and e-commerce sites, where the effects of the digital transformation in banking are seen more clearly. Banks have started to use artificial intelligence-based robots in the customer relations process. In the present study, the general development of artificial intelligence-based chatbots was examined and their use in the rapidly digitalizing banking field was discussed. In this context, the approaches of innovative consumers to chatbot applications of banks were evaluated. The research was carried out on 407 people who were reached by convenience sampling method, using a questionnaire as a data collection method. However, since 13 people stated that they do not use internet or mobile banking, the analyzes were carried out on the answers of 394 participants. A correlation analysis was conducted to reveal whether the innovativeness level of consumers is related to their trust in chatbot applications. The research results show that there is no significant relationship between the "competence dimension" ($r=0.06$; $p<0,01$) and "benevolence dimension" ($r=0.06$; $p<0,01$) of consumer trust towards chatbot applications and consumer innovativeness; however, study revealed that there is a significant relationship between the "integrity dimension" ($r=0.17$; $p<0,01$) of trust and consumer innovativeness.

Keywords: Artificial intelligence, chatbot, digitalization, innovative consumer, consumer cxperience

Öz

Teknolojinin çağımızda başat bir konuma gelmesiyle birlikte yaşam hızlı bir biçimde dönüşmüştür. Özellikle internet alanındaki gelişmeler, web teknolojisinin geldiği nokta günümüz bireylerin yaşayış biçiminde köklü değişiklikler yaratmıştır. İşletmeler de tüketicilerine ulaşırken teknolojinin söz konusu olanaklarından yararlanmaktadır. İşletmeler, teknolojik araçlar sayesinde, sürekli etkileşime açık tüketicilere ulaşmak için hergeçen gün bu teknolojilere daha fazla başvurmaktadır. Özellikle de hizmet sektöründe; e-ticaret sitelerinde, bankacılık alanında dijital dönüşümün etkileri daha net bir biçimde görülmektedir. Bankalar yapay zekâ temelli bu robotları günümüzde müşteri ilişkileri sürecinde kullanmaya başlamıştır. Çalışmada, yapay zekâ temelli sohbet robotlarının genel olarak gelişimi irdelenerek, hızla dijitalleşen bankacılık alanında kullanımı ele alınmıştır. Bu bağlamda çalışmada yenilikçi tüketicilerin bankaların sohbet robotu uygulamalarına yaklaşımları değerlendirilmiştir. Araştırma, veri toplama yöntemi olarak anket kullanılarak kolayda örnekleme yöntemiyle ulaşılmış 407 kişi üzerinde gerçekleştirilmiştir. Ancak 13 kişi internet ya da mobil bankacılık kullanmadığını belirttiğinden analizler 394 katılımcının cevapları üzerinden gerçekleştirilmiştir. Tüketicilerin yenilikçilik seviyelerinin Chatbot uygulamalarına duydukları güven ile ilişkili olup olmadığını ortaya koymak amacıyla korelasyon analizi gerçekleştirilmiştir. Araştırma sonuçları chatbot uygulamalarına yönelik tüketici güveninin 'yetkinlik boyutu' ($r=0.06$; $p<0{,}01$) ve 'yardım boyutu' ($r=0.06$; $p<0{,}01$)ile tüketici yenilikçiliği ile arasında anlamlı bir ilişki olmadığını; ancak güvenin 'doğruluk boyutu' ($r=0.17$; $p<0{,}01$) ile tüketici yenilikçiliği arasında anlamlı bir ilişki olduğunu ortaya koymuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Yapay zekâ, chatbot, dijitalleşme, yenilikçi tüketici, tüketici deneyimi

Introduction

The world has always been a place of constant transformation, from steam technology to mass production, and automation based on electricity and analog computing to today's digital technologies. Among the characteristic features of the social transformation of the 21st century is the change of lifestyle and of almost all fields of work on the axis of digitalization. With digitalization, the formulation of a continuous communication network between people, the development of new business areas, and the ability to do business on a global scale, have led to the expansion of the borders of people's lives to establish a stronger and closer bond between people and commercial enterprises.

In the process that started with the industrial revolution, as technology began to play a dominant role in people's lives, the focus of people's expectations regarding technology has turned into a more active role for machines in many areas where human labor is needed. With the rapid advancement of technological developments day by day, the innovations that are included in life and all these successive revolutionary milestones have brought about a new digital world order and the transforming digital individual who adapts to this order.

Businesses and brands that benefit from the new opportunities created by digitalization within the economy, science, and social life have discovered new ways to communicate and constantly interact with their existing customers and consumers in general, in line with the various advantages offered by the process. As a result of all these, in the digital age, commercial enterprises and brands have entered into a much closer communication compared to previous periods. Social media platforms, various messaging applications, and similar communication channels that have emerged in parallel with the developments in technology, especially the developments in the field of artificial intelligence (AI), offer new opportunities for businesses to communicate with consumers every day. In today's world, where the effects of the digitalization process are felt more and more in the global economy that features an intense competition, businesses and brands have started to apply more and more artificial intelligence technology. In this way, businesses that compete with each other in order to offer a better experience to their customers and maintain their interaction can direct their workflows more quickly, flexibly, and efficiently with the opportunities offered by artificial intelligence.

One of these opportunities applied by businesses today is chatbots, which have applications in a wide variety of fields from health to e-commerce, finance/banking, and especially in the service sector. Chatbots, which users use to receive services for various purposes such as communicating with a person through digital messaging, can improve the experiences of customers/consumers through the solutions they offer. Especially today, with the effect of technological innovations, the increase in the expectations of consumers from businesses and brands has led to the prominence of such applications based on artificial intelligence and dialogue.

In this context, the expectations of innovative consumers, who are open to innovations and constantly follow innovations, are in constant real-time connection with people and companies through social networks and have a positive attitude towards online purchasing, are important for businesses. When the literature on chatbot applications used in the field of banking is examined, it is seen that there are different studies dealing with consumers' evaluations (Mogaji et al., 2021), consumer satisfaction (Eren, 2021), and consumer confidence (Lappeman et al., 2022) for chatbots.

The importance of this study is to consider consumer trust in artificial intelligence-based chatbot applications, which have emerged due to technological developments and innovations in the field of banking, in the context of consumer innovation. In accordance with this, the aim of this study is to reveal whether the consumers (bank customers) innovativeness is related to their trust in Chatbot applications. In order to reveal the relationship between consumer innovativeness and consumers' trust to artificial intelligence-based Chatbot applications, a quantitative research method will be used.

An overview of the evolution of chatbot technology

The concept of chatbot was originally used more in a more limited fashion as a computer program that imitated human language with a text-based dialog system. When searching for the origin of the term, it can be seen that the concept emerged from the combination of the words "Chat" and "Robot" (Zumstein & Hundertmark, 2017, p. 98). Chatbots are programs that support interaction between users and machines through natural language processing techniques (Pérez-Soler et al., 2021, p. 94). Chatbots are generally designed to imitate ingenious communication processes that develop on a textual or verbal basis. The main purpose of chatbots that simulate the human communication process is to communicate with users by chatting (Dahiya, 2017, p. 158).

Artificial intelligence-based chatbots, which are used by businesses to guide the decision processes of consumers, offer various conveniences to businesses in reaching their goals and personalizing their communication processes (Lappeman et. al. 2022, p. 3). Chatbots are defined by different names, such as: smart chatbots, interactive agents, digital assistants, or artificial speech entities (Adamopoulou & Moussiades, 2020, p. 373).

Chatbots, a combination of technology, artificial intelligence and business process designs, (Singh, Ramasubramanian & Shivam, 2019, p. 9) enable users to obtain the information they request using natural speech language instead of complex menus and graphical user interfaces (GUIs). When communicating with chatbots, natural language processes help users submit questions as if they were communicating with a real person. (Zumstein & Hundertmark, 2017, p. 98). Chatbots, which can learn continuously, can be developed and adapted to user needs. Because of these features, chatbots are perceived by users as highly personal, intelligent, useful, and responsive and can offer them highly personalized experiences (Joshi, 2021, p. 197). Developments in the field of artificial intelligence also allow chatbots to be constantly renewed.

Artificial intelligence (AI) is the process of developing intelligent computer software and systems to imitate humans by examining how humans think and learn, as well as their mental abilities to solve a problem (Donepudi, 2017, p. 84). There are two main concepts related to artificial intelligence. The former concept is machine learning, which focuses solving real-world problems with neural networks designed by taking some of the basic ideas of artificial intelligence and performing operations by following the entered commands. The other concept is deep learning, which focuses on a subset of machine learning goals and techniques to solve any problem that requires human or artificial thinking by learning (Bilgici Oğuz, 2019, p. 132).

Artificial intelligence, which forms the core brain of chatbots, enables them to communicate more effectively. It also allows them to make decisions during conversations (Singh, Ramasubramanian & Shivam, 2019, p. 9). When searching into the historical development of artificial intelligence-based or dialogue-based chatbots, it can be said that this idea is based on the question "Can machines think?" asked by Alan Turing in his article written in 1950 (Turing, 1950, p. 433). The Turing Test, which was developed based on this question, is essentially based on a tactic game in which an observer tries to guess the gender of two players, one male and the other female, whose voice or appearance is camouflaged. Turing suggested replacing one of the humans with a machine in the pretend game. Thus, if the observer in the game cannot distinguish which of the two players is machine and which is human, this situation can be considered as strong evidence that the machine can think (Standford, 2022).

The purpose of the test, in simple terms, is to reveal whether a machine can imitate human intelligence. Being successful in the test depends on a machine making people believe that it is a human being (Shridhar, 2017). This study, which was effective in transforming the interest in artificial intelligence into scientific research and popularizing the idea of chatbot, was followed by other studies and developments related to the subject.

ELIZA, developed by Joseph Weizenbaum in 1966, is a program that enables natural language conversation with a computer (Weizenbaum, 1966, p. 36). Considered the first chatbot, "ELIZA" was designed as a psychologist whose aim was to create human dialogues. However, the fact that natural language processing and machine learning technologies were not yet sufficiently developed at that time caused the program to respond to its users with a limited capacity only by word matching (Barış, 2020, p. 35).

Despite her limited speaking ability, ELIZA inspired people to start developing other chatbots at a time when people were not used to interacting with computers (Adamopoulou & Moussiades, 2020, p. 374).

Chatbots continue to evolve with their social and technological features. Scientists working in this field have continued their studies and produced more areas of use for chatbots. Under the studies carried out in the field since the late 1990s and early 2000s, there has been an aim to design chatbots that have speaking capacities closer to human beings (Neff & Nagy, 2016, p. 4919).

Based on the work of Alan Turing, the "Turing Test" was developed in the 1990s and has an annual structure that offers up a prize to the winner (Barış, 2020, p. 35). The Loebner Prize competition, which is based on the criteria of the Turing Test, determines the best performing chatbots each year (Shridhar, 2017). There are several chatbots that have been successful in this competition in the 1990s and 2000s.

ALICE is an Artificial Linguistic Internet Computer Entity first implemented by Richard Wallace in 1995 (Shawar & Atwell, 2005, p. 7). ALICE, the chatbot developed in 1995, won the Loebner Award based on Turing Test criteria in 2000, 2001, and 2004. The chatbot in question was the first computer to earn the "Most humane computer" ranking (Adamopoulou & Moussiades, 2020, p. 374). As studies in the field were continuing, chatbots that get closer to human speaking capacity have continued to be developed. These include the chatbots Albert One and Elbot (Neff & Nagy, 2016, p. 4919).

In the Turing Test, some predictions were made about the percentage of success of robots. It was predicted that by the year 2000, machines could convince 30% of the jury members. However, this result took much longer than expected. There are allegations that a chatbot named Eugene Goostman passed the test in 2014, convincing 33% of the relevant judges that he was a human. However, in the past, different competitions were held with similar results. When evaluated in general, it is seen that the results of such activities are a controversial issue for various reasons (Standford, 2022). According to some estimates, chatbots are likely to pass the Turing Test by the end of 2029 (Shridhar, 2017).

These developments in the field of chatbots in the 2000s were followed by virtual personal assistants, such as Apple Siri, Microsoft Cortana, Amazon Alexa, Google Assistant, and IBM Watson (Adamopoulou & Moussiades, 2020, p. 374). Chatbots with different features, such as Siri and Cortana, can establish close relationships with users with their machine learning technologies. In the future, these technologies are predicted to take the form of virtual agents or physical entities that can establish close relationships with people (Przegalinska et al. 2019, p. 787).

Usage areas of chatbot technology

In our age, with the technological developments in artificial intelligence and machine learning, the interest in chatbots and the use of these tools have intensified. The increase in the use of mobile internet technology and messaging platforms has also been effective in the acceptance of chatbots by users (Barış, 2020, p. 36). Today's technological possibilities allow the exchange of messages between chatbots and customers via mobile phones or the web, enabling the transmission of information in real time (Singh, Ramasubramanian & Shivam, 2019, p. 9).

In recent years, developments related to technological innovations, such as artificial intelligence and natural language processing, have also increased the popularity of chatbots among businesses. Chatbots are an intermediate layer between users and customer service managers that find solutions to problems based on their own intelligence. In this way, it is possible to view chatbots, also known as chat agents, as software programs that help users find appropriate answers to their concerns through a website or app (Joshi, 2021, p. 197).

Chatbots include complex and goal-oriented behavior patterns (Kerly, Hall & Bull, 2006, p. 178). In this context, the use of chatbots in the field of customer service has positive effects in terms of productivity. The economic benefit of chatbots, which enables the employers in the institutions to benefit from the workforce more efficiently, is also significant for the institutions (Cui et al., 2017, p. 97).

Also, with the further development of artificial intelligence and machine learning in the future, users may reach the point where they cannot realize whether they are talking to a chatbot or a real representative (Adamopoulou & Moussiades, 2020, pp. 380-381).

In today's technological world, it is aimed to keep human interference at a minimum level when using technological tools. In this context, chatbots are able to service multiple users more effectively than humans. In addition to reaching large users, they can also be effective in gathering information from users. Due to all these features, it can be seen that chatbots will provide significant financial savings in the operation of the customer service process (Adamopoulou & Moussiades, 2020, pp. 380-381). Chatbots, which reduce the cost of customer service, create a significant monetary value for companies with these features.

Besides all these financial contributions, these programs also add great value to the customer experience. Today, the customer-oriented approach is seen as a distinguishing feature for businesses. In this context, chatbots that contribute to customer experience are widely used as a useful tool in many sectors by helping to increase brand presence (Singh, Ramasubramanian & Shivam, 2019, pp. 9-10).

On the other hand, the development of chatbots over time and the fact that users share their data voluntarily may cause some concerns for users. While users have a more interactive communication with chatbots, the nature of these programs also require that users share their personal information with the chatbot when seeking suggestions. Companies that use chatbots collect data from their users, who are probably unaware of the situation. In this context, chatbots can also raise privacy concerns that users may have when interacting with digital technologies (Ischen et al., 2020, p. 34). On the other hand, consumers sometimes enter into a negative mood by interacting with chatbots or human-like machine interfaces and stated that they find such artificial intelligence-based service tools frightening and disturbing (Langer & König, 2018, p. 3).

Under current trends in service markets and with increasing competent technology chatbots will be used more. A chatbot has many functions such as collecting data, chatting, providing basic product information, etc. (İşeri, Aydın & Tutuk, 2021, p.359). Chatbots not only play the role of service intermediaries, but also provide companies with new marketing opportunities. For example, user interaction and social media behavior on digital platforms such as Facebook can be tailored to recommend content, products, or services based on user needs (Singh, Ramasubramanian & Shivam, 2019, p. 14).

Chatbots, which serve a number of purposes such as customer service, social/emotional support, information, and entertainment, are seen as an alternative to traditional customer service. For customers, conversations with these chatbots can be more natural and productive than interacting with a mobile app, where they can receive answers to questions and suggestions on what to buy, as well as place orders directly. Chatbots, which can also serve as virtual assistants, can be preferred over other help tools, such as phone calls or online searches, due to their convenience (Barış, 2020, p. 37).

Today, the ability of experts in the field of marketing to meet the needs of consumers for online products and services through adequate and appropriate mechanisms is also increasing as the result of the ever-developing artificial intelligence technology. In this context, chatbots can be used in marketing strategies implemented through websites, social media, and online platforms as they suggest a way to understand a certain content or reality. Unlike their past practices, chatbots available today are more sociable, friendly, and genuine, and may even have a personality that can efficiently guide a particular buyer through the later stages of transactions, which can help save the buyer's time and cognitive effort (Gonçalves et al., 2022, p. 182). Due to all these features, the chatbot market is growing exponentially across the world, and it is seen that many sectors have started to benefit from chatbots.

In a global context, the market size of chatbots will increase from US $2.9 billion in 2020 to US$10.5 billion by 2026. This sector is expected to grow rapidly in the coming years due to the adoption of solutions provided by chatbots to companies. The most important factor contributing to the growth of the chatbot market is the emergence of technologies such as artificial intelligence and the cloud. In addition, changing customer demands provide businesses a competitive advantage by accelerating the adoption of chatbots (Markets Insider, 2022). It can be said that, behind these developments, innovation demands of both young and innovative consumers is effective on the prominence of the concept of speed in services.

The use of chatbots is expected to become more widespread in the future, as Generation Y and Z are more familiar with the mobile communication process and prefer messaging while communicating (Machkour & Abriane, 2020, p. 500). In this context, businesses have started to use chatbots to bring customer satisfaction and participation to the fore in their business models. Businesses can interact with their customers through chatbots similar to what they experience with real individuals (Chung et al., 2020, p. 588). In particular, businesses that turn to chatbots in order to respond to the expectations of customers who follow innovations more closely and adapt quickly, generally come to the fore with their innovative products.

The basis for success in new products is to identify the potential first buyers to buy the new product in the product market. This is because innovative customers play a very important role in the success of new products. Individuals with an innovative approach decide to adopt innovation independently from other individuals in the social system. People with this innovative attitude are generally described as brave and agile (Bass, 1969, p. 216). Therefore, innovative consumers are not price sensitive, have knowledge of new products, and tend to frequently use new products on the market. Innovative consumers are thought to have a unique consumption style when compared to their non-innovative counterparts (Xie, 2008, p. 235). When generations Y and Z are evaluated in general, it can be said that they follow technological innovations closely, can adapt to these innovations, and display innovative consumer attitudes and behaviors.

Chatbots are used by businesses to improve the quality of customer service. Some of the reasons for the implementation of chatbots in order to increase the efficiency of customer service include: chatbots are easy to access, they can be customized, and they provide a competent customer experience (Rajaobelina et al., 2021, p. 2339). With this interaction and the data they obtain from customers, businesses can improve their ability to understand the purpose of users and save time (Chung et al., 2020, p. 588). Considering all the above information, chatbots which serve various sectors are becoming increasingly widespread and developing alongside artificial intelligence and natural language processing processes. The increasing speed at which life moves which have driven customer expectations to receive faster service has increased the interest in chatbots. In this context, the dominance of an uninterrupted service approach and the rapid return to customers, especially in the banking sector, has increased the use of chatbots in this sector.

In terms of using of chatbots in the financial field, companies aim to increase the interaction between consumers and technology without involving service providers in the communication process (Mogaji & Nguyen, 2021, p. 7). Such a chatbot service exists in the financial sector, which provides personalized, secure, fast, and easy access. Erica, the chatbot used by Bank of America for the first time in May 2017 can be given as an example. (Hwang & Kim, 2021, pp. 2-3).

In the article titled “The 5 Hottest Technologies in Banking for 2022” in Forbes (Shevlin, 2022), it is seen that one out of every four financial institutions plans to invest in chatbots. Currently, only 18% of banks have invested into the technology. While it took some time to reach this point, the industry is currently realizing that chatbots (or, more broadly, speech-based artificial intelligence) are becoming a competitive necessity. In this context, banks need chatbots not only for general sales and service tools, but also for the execution of critical business processes (such as opening an account). In addition, chatbots are also effective in the processes of obtaining customer data, and it is seen that bank customers rely more on the advice given by artificial intelligence about their bank accounts and financial investments. This is because such applications have no personal interest in in the private information of bank customers, unlike a human could (Lui & Lamb, 2018, p. 271).

Aim And Methodology

Changes in technology have brought innovations in the service sector as well. In particular, banks serve their customers by adapting to new technologies more quickly. Today, banks communicate with their customers through artificial intelligence-based chatbots. The aim of this study is to reveal whether the innovativeness of consumers (bank customers) is related to their trust in Chatboxt applications.

Aim

In this study, which aims to reveal whether the innovativeness level of consumers is related to their trust in chatbot applications, the following hypotheses have been developed in line with the studies (Brill, Munoz & Miller, 2019; Plotkina, Dinsmore & Racat, 2021; Xiao & Benbasat, 2002) on consumer trust and consumer innovativeness towards chatbots.

> **H1:** The consumers' innovativeness level is positively related with the competency dimension of their trust in the Chatbot application.
> **H2:** The consumers' innovativeness level is positively related with the benevolence dimension of their trust in the Chatbot application.
> **H3:** The consumers' innovativeness level is positively related with to the integrity dimension of their trust in the Chatbot application.

In addition, it has been discussed in the literature whether the innovativeness of consumers or consumer approaches to technological developments, internet, and mobile environments differ according to age (Kasilingam, 2020; Kolodinsly, 2004;

Persaud & Azhar, 2012; Lappeman et al., 2022), gender (Kasilingam, 2020; Kim et al.; Persaud & Azhar, 2012), education (Kolodinsly, 2004; Persaud & Azhar, 2012), and income (Kolodinsly, 2004). Since chatbots are a new application that has emerged as a result of technological development and are being used by businesses, the following hypotheses have been developed within the scope of the study regarding regarding whether consumer trust towards chatbots and customer innovativeness level differs according to demographic characteristics.

> **H4:** The competency dimension of consumers' trust in the chatbot application differs according to: (a) gender, (b) age, (c) education, and (d) income.
> **H5:** The benevolence dimension of consumers' trust in the chatbot application differs according to: (a) gender, (b) age, (c) education, and (d) income.
> **H6:** The integrity dimension of consumers' trust in the chatbot application differs according to: (a) gender, (b) age, (c) education, and (d) income.
> **H7:** The consumers' innovativeness level differs according to: (a) gender, (b) age, (c) education, and (d) income.

Participants

The universe of the research consists of customers living in Turkey and receiving service from banks in Turkey. In this direction, the sample of the research consists of people who live in Turkey, use the chatbot applications of banks in the country, and receive service from these banks. The research has thus been built upon the convenience sampling method.

In the present study, a question was included in the survey that helps to filter whether the participants used Internet banking or mobile banking services. If so, they were asked which bank's internet banking or mobile banking service they use most frequently. The answers of the participants who do not use internet banking or mobile banking services were excluded from the scope of the research and were not included in the analysis. The fact that all banks included in the research part of the study have chatbot applications in all their internet and mobile banking applications and these applications provide services including basic banking services such as foreign exchange transactions credit card information, stocks, money transfer etc. For this reason, it is predicted that the participants who use the internet and mobile banking services of these banks know or use chatbot applications.

Considering the sufficient number of samples that should be included in the research, a sample formula was determined to be 384 participants, with a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error (Davis, 1997, p. 182). Since there is a possibility for those who fill out the survey to not use internet banking or mobile banking services and for participants to fill out the survey incorrectly or incompletely, there was an aim to reach a minimum of 402 participants, which is five percent more than the optimal sample size. In order to collect data during the research process, a questionnaire was applied to 407 people who were easily reached through online sampling. However, since 13 people stated that they do not use internet banking or mobile banking services, the surveys completed by these participants were not included in the analysis, and the analyzes were carried out by taking into account the answers of 394 participants. Women make up 62% of the participants, while 32% are between the ages of 18-25, 58% are undergraduate/associate degree students, and 40% are people with a monthly income of 9,000 Turkish Lira or more (Table 1).

Table 1: Demographic Data

Demographic Variables		**Frequency**	**Percent**
Gender	Man	149	38
	Woman	245	62
Age	18 – 25	126	32
	26-33	98	25
	34-41	103	26
	42-49	43	11
	50-over	24	6
Education	Primary education	2	1
	High school	19	5
	Undergraduate/Associate Degree	229	58
	Graduate	144	36
Income	Less than 3,000TL	83	21
	3,001-5,999TL	73	18
	6,000-8,999TL	81	21
	9,000TL and above	157	40

Data collection tool

In order to collect data for the research, an online survey was conducted. The questionnaire form consisted of four parts. In the first part of the questionnaire, there are two questions about whether consumers benefit from internet banking or mobile banking services, and if so, which bank they use this service from. In the research conducted on the trust of innovative consumers in chatbot applications, there are various variables that can affect the concept of trust. The fact that the frequency of use is not included in the study can be considered as a limitation of the research.

In the second part of the questionnaire, a scale developed by Xiao & Benbasat (2002) and adapted by Brill, Munoz & Miller (2019) was used to evaluate consumers' trust in the chatbot application. When the literature is examined, it is seen that there are studies that deal with the concept of trust related to the concept of trust in different fields and applications such as trust in e-commerce sites (McKnight, Choudhury & Kacmar, 2002); trust in digital assistants (Brill, Munoz & Miller, 2019); perceived trust in online purchasing decision (Kim, Xu & Gupta; 2012); trust in management (Mayer & Davis, 1999) and effects of trust in virtual communities (Ridings, Grefen & Arinze, 2002). As a result, the scale developed by Xiao & Benbasat (2002) and adapted by Brill, Munoz & Miller (2019) was used since it is one of the scale in recent studies and it is related to digital assistants among the trust related scales. The scale consists of three dimensions: competence, benevolence, and integrity. The scale includes a total of 13 statements arranged on a 5-point Likert scale. There are five statements under the competency dimension in the scale (sample statements: "The chatbot of the bank where I use Internet Banking or mobile banking most frequently has the expertise to understand my needs and preferences."; "The chatbot of the bank where I use Internet Banking or mobile banking most frequently is the one I am interested in and is competent about questions and topics."). While the benevolence in the scale consists of a total of 4 expressions (sample statements: "The chatbot of the bank that I use Internet Banking or mobile banking most frequently helps me to learn more about the subject I am questioning."; "I use Internet Banking or mobile banking the most. My favorite bank's chatbot wants to understand my needs and preferences."); "The integrity dimension includes a total of 4 statements (sample statements: "The chatbot of the bank I use Internet Banking or mobile banking most often gives honest answers."; "The chatbot of the bank I use Internet Banking or mobile banking most frequently gives correct information. I believe."). A high score from the scale indicates that the participant has made a positive assessment in the relevant dimension, while a low score indicates the opposite.

In the third part of the questionnaire, questions were asked to measure the participants' innovativeness level. In the study, the scale adapted by Plotkina, Dinsmore & Racat (2021) was used by making use of an Agarwal & Prasad (1998) study to evaluate whether the participants were innovative or not. The scale consists of a single dimension. The scale includes a total of five statements arranged on a 5-point Likert scale (5: strongly agree to 1: strongly disagree) (sample statements: "Among my colleagues, I am often the first to discover new information technologies.", "I like to try new information technologies."). Accordingly, the high score obtained from the scale indicates that the person is the unit that is open to innovations, while the low score indicates the opposite situation.

In the fourth section, which is the last part of the questionnaire, questions about the demographic information of the participants, such as age, gender, education, and income, were included.

Process

In the research, factor analysis was performed to determine the structural validity of the scales used to measure the trust of the participants towards the chatbot application and whether they were innovative or not. Cronbach's Alpha analysis was carried out to determine the reliability.

The factor analysis performed for the consumers' trust scale confirms that the scale consists of three dimensions (KMO=0.93 Bartlett's Test $p<0.01$). The Cronbach's Alpha values calculated for the scale (ranging between 0.84 and 0.91) show that the scale has internal consistency ($\alpha>0.60$). In addition to this, as a result of the factor analysis performed for the innovativeness scale, it was confirmed that the scale consisted of one dimension (KMO=0.80 Bartlett's Test $p<0.01$). Since the Cronbach's Alpha value calculated for the scale is 0.79, it shows that the scale has internal consistency.

Since the data set should show a normal distribution in order to perform parametric tests, it was tested whether the data showed a normal distribution. For this normality test, the skewness and kurtosis values were examined. The fact that the skewness-kurtosis value is in the range of +3, -3 indicates that the data is normally distributed

(Kline, 2011, pp. 60-62). In this context, it was determined that the skewness values of the observed variables of the research model tested in the study were between -0.378 and -0.473, and the kurtosis values were between -0.22 and 0.99, which ensures the normality feature of the data. For this reason, the analyzes carried out within the scope of the research were carried out with parametric tests.

A correlation analysis was also carried out in the research to test the hypotheses developed to determine whether the trust of the participants in chatbot applications is related to their innovativeness. In addition, two-category variables were tested with the z-test, which is used to determine the difference between the means of two separate groups, in order to determine whether the trust they have in chatbot applications and the innovativeness of the participants in the research differ according to demographic characteristics. However, since the number of data analyzed was more than 30, the z test was used instead of the t test (Bowen & Starr, 1994, p. 372). A one-way ANOVA analysis was performed for variables with more than two categories. If there was a significant difference in the one-way ANOVA analysis, the Tukey HSD test (Büyüköztürk, 2006, p. 48), one of the post hoc tests, was used to determine between which categories this difference occurred.

Findings

In the research, the answers of the participants who use Internet banking or mobile banking to this question as a result of asking which bank they use Internet banking or mobile banking most frequently (the participants were asked to mark only one bank name) are given below (Table 2).

Table 2: Banks where users perform Internet banking or mobile banking transactions most frequently

Bank Name	Frequency	Bank Name	Frequency
Garanti Bankası	62	İşbankası	82
Halkbank	11	Ziraat Bankası	62
Akbank	27	Denizbank	7
Ing Bank	2	Yapı Kredi	45
QNB Finansbank	37	Fibabank	3
Vakıfbank	32	Diğer	24

According to the data obtained in the research regarding the trust of the participants in the chatbot application (Table 3), the trust of the participants towards the chatbot application is close to positive in the dimension of competence (Competence dimension O= 3.20); benevolence is also close to positive (help/helpfulness dimension O = 3.22). Therefore, it can be seen that the participants evaluate these applications near the positive indicactor in the dimension of integrity (Integrity dimension O = 3.38).

On the other hand, when the innovativeness of the participants in the research was evaluated, it was determined that the participants in the research were close to positive (O=3.69) in terms of innovativeness. In other words, they were people who were interested in innovations and adopted innovations quickly.

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation Values Obtained from Scales and Correlation Analysis Results

	O	SS	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
(1) Consumer innovation	3.69	0.71	1			
(2) Competence	3.20	0.82	0.06	1		
(3) Benevolence	3.22	0.80	0.06	0.77**	1	
(4) Integrity	3.38	0.73	0.17**	0.64**	0.62**	1

**p<0.01

A correlation analysis was carried out to examine the relationship between the trust of the participants towards chatbot applications and the innovativeness of the participants. According to the results of the correlation analysis (Table 3), it was seen that there is no relationship between the competency and benevolence dimensions of the scale used to measure the trust of the participants towards the chatbot application and the innovativeness of the consumers (H1 rejected and H2 rejected). In other words, as a result of the evaluations of the participants regarding the chatbot application of the bank where they use internet banking or mobile banking, there is no relationship between the competency dimension of the trust in the chatbot application (whether the chatbot understands the preferences of the person and offers services according to these preferences), such as finding experts and finding competence in the chatbot, and the level of innovativeness of the participant. Similarly, there is no relationship between the benevolence dimension, which includes the evaluations that the chatbot application provides services in accordance with the preferences and interests of the person, and the level of innovativeness of the participant.

On the other hand, the integrity dimension of their trust towards chatbot applications is positively related to consumers being innovative at a low level (r < 0.40) (H3 supported).

Accordingly, as the innovativeness level of the participants increases positively, the level of integrity dimension of their trust towards chatbot applications also increases positively. When the participants hear something new about information technology, they are willing to try it, they are the first to discover innovations in information technologies, they like to try innovations in information technologies, and they love mobile technologies In other words, as the level of being innovative increases, the participants use internet banking or mobile banking more. Regarding the bank's evaluations of the chatbot application, it has been said that chatbots provide information and suggestions in an impartial way, give honest answers, give accurate information, and give unbiased information. This is because they are not affiliated with a particular company. These values also increase positively along the level of innovativeness.

It was also analyzed whether the trust of the participants towards chatbot applications and the innovativeness of the participants differed according to gender. Since the gender variable has two categories, the difference between the categories was examined using the z test.

According to the z-test analysis results (Table 4), it was found that the competency dimension, which is one of the dimensions of their trust in chatbot applications, differs significantly according to gender. In contrast, the benevolence and integrity dimensions do not show a significant difference according to gender. Women tended to find the chatbot application more competent when compared to men (H4 a supported; H5 a and H6 a rejected). On the other hand, it is seen that the innovativeness of the participants shows a significant difference according to gender (H7 a supported). It is seen that men were more likely to be more innovative people than women.

Table 4: Gender differences in participants' trust in chatbot applications and being innovative

Demographic Variables		**N**	**O**	**SS**	**Z**	**P**
Competence	Man	149	3.06	0.88	2.70	*0.01
	Woman	245	3.29	0.78		
Benevolence	Man	149	3.13	0.80	1.64	0.10
	Woman	245	3.27	0.80		
Integrity	Man	149	3.32	0.78	1.18	0.24
	Woman	245	3.41	0.70		
Consumer innovation	Man	149	3.81	0.73	2.67-	*0.01
	Woman	245	3.61	0.68		

**P<0.01 *P<0.05

It was also analyzed whether the trust of the participants towards chatbot applications and the innovativeness of the participants differ according to age, education level, and income. Since age, education level, and income variables have more than two categories, the differences between these categories were tested with one-way ANOVA analysis. According to the results of the one-way ANOVA analysis (Table 5) carried out on whether the participants' trust in chatbot applications and whether their innovativeness differ according to age, the benevolence and integrity dimensions of the participants' trust towards chatbot applications were determined by the age variable. In this regard, there was no significant difference (H4 b supported; H5 b and H6 b rejected). On the other hand, it was revealed that the competence dimension of the participants' trust towards chatbot applications and the innovativeness of the participants showed a significant difference according to age (H7 b supported). According to this, people between the ages of 18-25 and 26-33 evaluated the chatbot applications of banks more expertly and competently than people aged 34 and over. The results align with these age groups being more innovative people in general.

Table 5: Differences in the participants' trust in chatbot applications and their innovativeness by age

Demographic Variables-Age		**O**	**SS**	**F**	**P**
Competence	18-25	3.32	0.72	2.89	0.02*
	26-33	3.31	0.87		
	34-41	3.00	0.89		
	42-49	3.15	0.79		
	50-over	3.12	0.77		
Benevolence	18-25	3.32	0.76	2.41	0.05
	26-33	3.27	0.87		
	34-41	3.01	0.83		
	42-49	3.22	0.72		
	50-over	3.23	0.64		
Integrity	18-25	3.49	0.74	2.22	0.07
	26-33	3.41	0.84		
	34-41	3.22	0.70		
	42-49	3.31	0.51		
	50-over	3.45	0.73		
Consumer innovation	18-25	3.74	0.67	3.12	0.02*
	26-33	3.85	0.68		
	34-41	3.55	0.79		
	42-49	3.56	0.63		
	50-over	3.55	0.61		

$^{**}P<0.01$ $^{*}P<0.05$

According to the results of the one-way ANOVA analysis (Table 6) conducted on whether participants' trust in chatbot applications and whether participants' innovativeness differ according to their education level, it was determined that all three dimensions, namely competence, benevolence, and integrity, are not significantly different according to education level (H4 c, H5 c and H6 c rejected). Likewise, it was seen that the evaluations of the participants on whether they are innovative or not do not show a significant difference according to the level of education (H7 c rejected).

Table 6: Differences between participants' trust in chatbot applications and being innovative according to education

Demographic Variables-Education		O	SS	F	P
Competence	Primary education	2.70	0.42	1.33	0.26
	High school	3.15	0.66		
	Undergraduate/Associate Degree	3.27	0.78		
	Graduate	3.11	0.90		
Benevolence	Primary education	2.12	1.24	2.51	0.06
	High school	3.04	0.71		
	Undergraduate/Associate Degree	3.28	0.78		
	Graduate	3.14	0.84		
Integrity	Primary education	3.75	1.77	0.29	0.83
	High school	3.34	0.68		
	Undergraduate/Associate Degree	3.39	0.71		
	Graduate	3.35	0.75		
Consumer innovation	Primary education	3.74	0.99	2.57	0.05
	High school	3.50	0.57		
	Undergraduate/Associate Degree	3.27	0.68		
	Graduate	3.75	0.75		

**P<0.01 *P<0.05

According to the results of the one-way ANOVA analysis (Table 7) conducted on whether the participants' trust towards Chatbot applications and whether their innovativeness differ according to their income level, it was seen that the three dimensions of competence, benevolence, and integrity, which are among the dimensions of trust of the participants towards chatbot applications, and the evaluations of the participants on whether they are innovative or not, are not significantly different according to education level (H4 d, H5 d, H6 d, and H7 d rejected) .

Table 7: Differences in participants' trust in chatbot applications and their innovativeness by income level

Demographic Variables-Income Level		O	SS	F	P
Competence	less than 3,000TL	3.29	0.73	0.03	0.10
	3,001-5,999TL	3.24	0.71		
	6,000-8,999TL	3.31	0.84		
	9,000TL and above	3.08	0.90		
Benevolence	less than 3,000TL	3.33	0.75	1.42	0.24
	3,001-5,999TL	3.21	0.72		
	6,000-8,999TL	3.29	0.86		
	9,000TL and above	3.12	0.83		
Integrity	less than 3,000TL	3.34	0.80	1.30	0.27
	3,001-5,999TL	3.53	0.62		
	6,000-8,999TL	3.34	0.80		
	9,000TL and above	3.34	0.70		
Consumer innovation	less than 3,000TL	3.63	0.73	0.52	0.67
	3,001-5,999TL	3.68	0.61		
	6,000-8,999TL	3.65	0.77		
	9,000TL and above	3.74	0.71		

**P<0.01 *P<0.05

Discussion and Conclusion

Technological developments have influenced all areas of life of individuals in our age. Innovations in the field of communication have especially increased the impact of technological tools on people's daily routines. Today, when the concept of time and space has changed, people are more open to interaction with technology. With the innovations of the internet, there have been great changes to the routines of both private individuals and producers of digital technologies. It is crucial also for banking services to quickly adapt to technological innovations in the digitalized finance sector. When the developments in the field of artificial intelligence are added to the opportunities provided by technology, the dynamics of social and economic life have also changed. Artificial intelligence has influenced all sectors in the economic field. The banking sector has also been affected by the technological developments of the field of artificial intelligence. Today, banks that adopt an artificial intelligence-based service approach serve their customers through chatbots. It can be said that banks with an innovative approach that easily adapts to the digital world primarily attract the attention of their customers because they can benefit from such new technologies. The understanding of digital banking and the use of artificial intelligence-based chatbots in banking services have transformed the customer relations process. The use of artificial intelligence in the field of banking provides certain advantages to banks in terms of both collecting data and maintaining a more competent service understanding. In this context it is important for banks to make chatbots part of their data management strategy, not just their sales and service strategy.

Within the scope of the study, the historical development of artificial intelligence-based chatbots was discussed and their use in the banking sector was examined. In the study, the way chatbots are evaluated, especially by consumers who are open to innovations, was examined through a survey.

Based on all these, this study attempted to reveal whether the innovativeness of consumers is related to their trust in chatbot applications. According to the results, it has been seen that there is no relationship between the competency and benevolence dimensions of the participants' trust in the chatbot application and the innovativeness of the consumers. On the other hand, it was seen that the integrity dimension of the trust of the participants towards the chatbot applications is positively related to the innovativeness of the consumers at a low level. Therefore, as the innovativeness of the participant's increases positively, the level of trust towards chatbot applications increases in the correctness/integrity dimension positively. In this situation, as the level of innovativeness of the participants increases (which is related to the fact that they are the first to discover innovations related to information technologies, are willing to try these innovations, and are interested in mobile technologies), their evaluations of the chatbot application of the bank they use the mobile banking services of increase in a positive way. In other words, as the level of innovativeness of the participants increases, their evaluations that the chatbot application of the bank they receive service from also increases positively, meaning that the application is providing information and suggestions in an impartial way, giving honest answers, giving accurate information, and giving unbiased information because it is not affiliated with a particular company.

After the analyses carried out to determine whether the trust of the participants in chatbot applications and the innovativeness of the participants differ according to demographic characteristics, it was seen that men are more open to innovations than women in general. That said, regarding the competence dimension of the confidence in chatbot applications, it was seen that women evaluate the chatbot application as more competent than men. In terms of age, it was seen that people between the ages of 18-25 and 26-33 evaluate the chatbot applications of banks as having more expertise and being more competent in their field compared to people aged 34 and over. In addition, people between the ages of 18-25 and 26-33 are more open to innovation than people aged 34 and over. When evaluated in this context, it can be stated that younger participants are more open to innovation than older participants, and they think that chatbot applications are experts and have the necessary competence to understand their own needs and desires.

When all these results are evaluated in general, and when examining the participants' level of being open to innovation increasing along with the trust relationship towards chatbot applications, it is possible to understand the evaluations of the participants that these applications provide correct, impartial, and honest answers increase in a positive way. However, there is no relationship between the increase in the level of being open to innovation and the evaluations of chatbot applications as being competent and helpful. In addition, it was seen that the age factor is an effective variable in evaluating the consumer perception of chatbots.

In this context, further studies can be carried out on the adaptation processes and how older consumers who are less innovative can adapt to such technologies as chatbot applications of banking services. Understanding the approaches of the consumers in the older group, who have a more limited interaction with technological innovations, towards rapidly changing technological applications can also be examined in the context of countries where the population is getting older.

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Araştırma Makalesi / Research Article

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

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

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Abstract

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

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

Öz

Sosyal Ağ Siteleri (SNS'ler), kullanıcıların içerik paylaşmasına izin verir ancak kullanıcılar bazen çeşitli nedenlerle kasıtlı olarak paylaşımlarını sınırlandırabilir. Bu araştırma, Türkiye ve Malezya'daki iletişim alanındaki akademisyenlerin sosyal ağlardaki paylaşımları ile ilgili endişelere odaklanmaktadır. Karma yöntem yaklaşımı benimsenerek, nicel verilerin anket yoluyla toplanmasının ardından katılımcılarla derinlemesine görüşmeler yapılmıştır. Elde edilen bulgular değerlendirilerek nitel ve nicel veriler arasındaki ilişki tartışılmıştır. Gizlilik bilinci ve otosansür puanları her iki ülkede de benzerdir. Malezyalı akademisyenlerin mahremiyet kaygısı puanları Türkiye'den yanıt verenlere göre daha yüksektir ve kaygıları takipçilere odaklanmaktadır. Türkiye'den yanıt verenlerin endişeleri, paylaşılan bilgilerin üçüncü şahıslar tarafından nasıl kullanıldığı konusunda daha yüksektir. Akademik kimlik her iki ülkede de sosyal medya paylaşımlarında kısıtlayıcıdır. Ayrıca Malezyalı katılımcılar dini alanda düzenleme yapılmasını önermişlerdir. Söz konusu bulgular, iki ülkenin sosyal medya kaygılarında önemli farklılıklar olduğu vurgusunu ortaya koymaktadır.

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

Introduction

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

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

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

Concerns about SNSs and cultural differences

The passive use of social media (passive use refers to looking at content from others (Pagani, Hofacker & Goldsmith, 2011), resulting from the concerns about how it is used, is one of the topics being discussed in the modern world (Li et al., 2022; Mak et al., 2022; Stevic et al., 2021). Limiting user sharing on social media, which is indeed intended to be a public space, can be considered as a barrier to the freedom of expression, necessitating the identification of the users' concerns. Most of the research about social media concerns has been associated with privacy (Bright & Lim, 2021; Cain & Imre, 2021,). Considering the huge amounts of personal information shared and stored online, it is very common for users to feel uncomfortable about what they share (posts and stories). While studies on the impact of privacy concerns on social media use generally focused on institutions, companies and governments (Bauman and Lyon, 2013; Lyon, 2013; Zuboff, 2021) across the world are not the only ones to monitor the users. While there are studies researching corporate and government concerns, few studies have concentrated on social peers to examine the relationship between such a concern and the use of social media in a comprehensive way (Jozani et al., 2020). The present study contributes to the field by addressing both institutional and peer concern from an intercultural perspective. Privacy on social media is a problem associated with the manageability of information (Margulis, 2003). Therefore, how personal information is managed and whether its manageability results in the limitation of sharing are among the questions in need of an answer. In comparison to privacy, information management remains under researched. According to Lambillotte et al. (2022), when the system becomes personalized, the perception of control decreases and leads to privacy concerns. Therefore, it can be stated that the sharings decrease on the platforms where the perceived control concern increases. To solve the manageability of information problem, studies have focused on the design for user-centered privacy choices (Feng et al., 2021). However, there are a limited number of studies in the literature about the information management methods which reduce the security concerns of users on SNSs and how these methods affect their concerns.

Self-censorship and surveillance on Social Network Sites

A precaution of concern about sharing on SNSs is self-censorship. Self-censorship on SNSs is defined as "a behavior that causes people to avoid or modify self-disclosures because of fear of negative social consequences" (Warner & Wang, 2019, p. 376). Two reasons of self-censorship could be stated as surveillance from either governments or companies as well as interpersonal surveillance. With a broader perspective, the surveillance of companies and governments are the collection of data from citizens or consumers for classification purposes. Thus, the conditions of the country where the users live can pose limitations on their sharing (Parks et. al., 2017; Stoycheff, 2016). Interpersonal surveillance, on the other hand, relates to users watching each other. There are different terms related to interpersonal surveillance, such as interpersonal electronic surveillance (Tokunaga, 2011), lateral surveillance (Andrejevic, 2004), social surveillance (Marwick, 2012), mobile surveillance (Ngcongo, 2016), and participatory surveillance (Albrechtslund, 2008). In brief, some users limit their sharing due to potential criticism from others.

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

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

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

Concern about SNSs in Turkey and Malaysia

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

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

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

Aim and Methodology

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

Aim

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

The research questions addressed in this study are as follows:

Quantitative research hypotheses

H1. There is no significant difference in the level of self-censorship between Turkey and Malaysia.

H2. There is no significant difference in the level of privacy concern between Turkey and Malaysia.

H3. There is no significant difference in the level of privacy awareness between Turkey and Malaysia.

H4. There is no significant difference in the level of perceived vulnerabilities between Turkey and Malaysia.

H5. There is no significant difference in the level of information management between Turkey and Malaysia.

H6. There is no significant difference in the level of concerns about followers between Turkey and Malaysia.

Qualitative research questions

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

Mixed method question

How do the qualitative data explain the quantitative results?

Methodology

Research Design

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

Sampling

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

Quantitative sampling

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

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

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

Qualitative sampling

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

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

Data collection tool

Warner & Wang (2019)'s measurement scale was used to collect the quantitative data. In addition, seven items were added to the scale based on the "concern about followers" items in the article of Marder et al. (2016). The scale was adapted into Turkish for the participants from Turkey, whereas an English version of the scale was used for participants from Malaysia. For the pretest, the scale was shared with ten academics in the field of communication, their comments subsequently being evaluated. The questions were revised based on suggestions. The questionnaire was distributed through the Survey Monkey online platform after the revision of the questions based on the suggestions by the academics.

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

Procedure

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

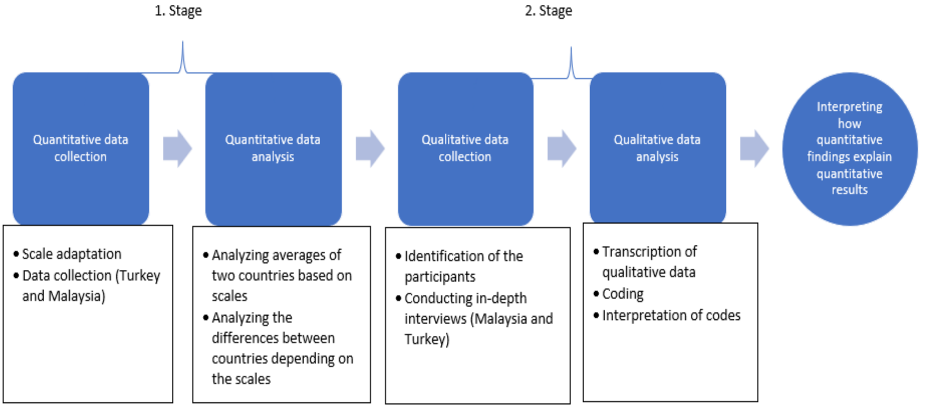

Figure 1: Research design

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

Findings

Quantitative Analysis

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

Table 1: Respondents' profile

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

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

Table 2: Reliability test results

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

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

Table 3: T-test results

Factor	Sig.	Mean Diff (Turkey -Malaysia)	H_0
Self-censorship (H1)	0.243	0.46	Accepted
Privacy Concern (H2)	0.001	-2.411	Rejected
Privacy Awareness (H3)	0.368	-0.307	Accepted
Perceived Vulnerabilities (H4)	0.035	0.901	Rejected
Information Management (H5)	0	6.758	Rejected
Concerns about Followers (H6)	0	-10.475	Rejected

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

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

Table 4: Logistic regression analysis variables

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

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

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

Table 5: Classification table

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

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

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

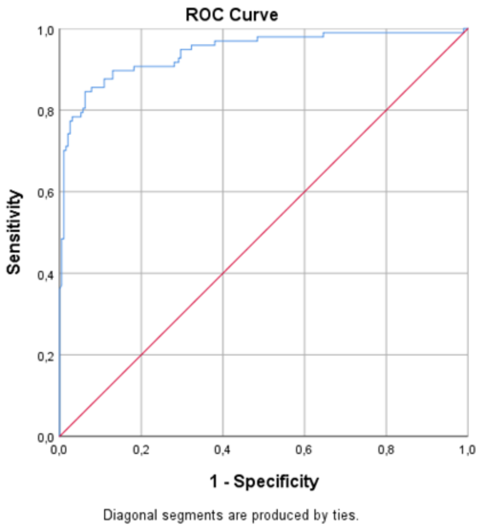

Figure 3: ROC curve

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

Qualitative analysis

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

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

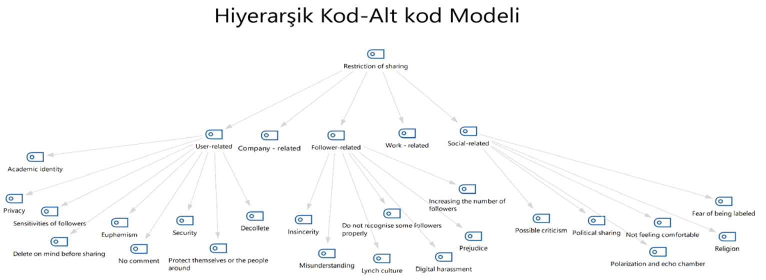

Figure 4: Hierarchical code-subcodes model

Problems Experienced in SNSs

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

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

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

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

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

Security concern

The security concerns of users on SNSs were gathered under two groups, as micro- and macro-concerns. After reminding the participants that our digital footprints can be followed on the vertical plane, and observed by peer groups such as family, friends, and colleagues on the horizontal plane, the participants were asked which group they might be concerned about.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Limitation of sharing

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

Unshared

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Deleted

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

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

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

"I delete it if I find the message is biased or maybe can cause any further hatred." (M3)

- In the category of deleted posts, there was the "just hide" code in the expressions of only Malaysian participants. Since they want to keep their posts as an archive, they prefer to make them invisible instead of deleting them. The "changed relationship" code, expressed only in Turkey, emphasizes the deletion of posts as a result of changes in interpersonal relations.

Restriction of Sharing

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

One of the clearest expressions about sincerity is given below;

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

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

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

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

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

Two different approaches were found for privacy.

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

While there is an effort to share the private life without violating the privacy, it has also been stated that personal information is shared as limited as possible because companies follow our digital footprints.
Malaysian participants mostly used the expressions connected with "academic identity" and "sensitivities of followers" codes.

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

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

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

Regulation

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Anonymity

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Social Media Practices and Recommendations

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Discussion and Conclusion

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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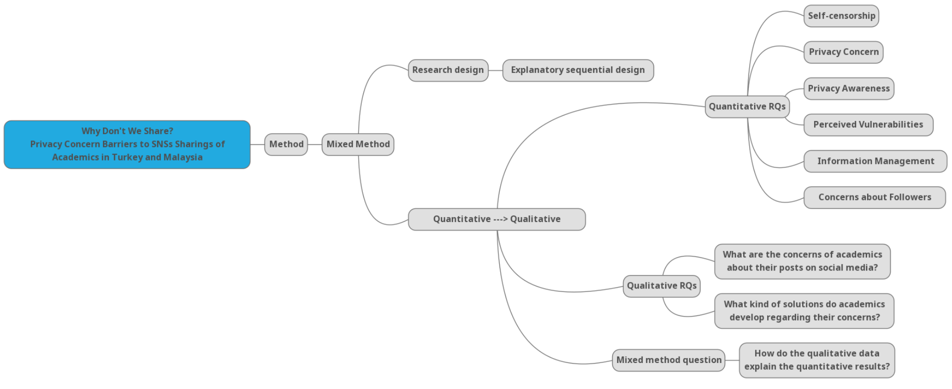
Appendices

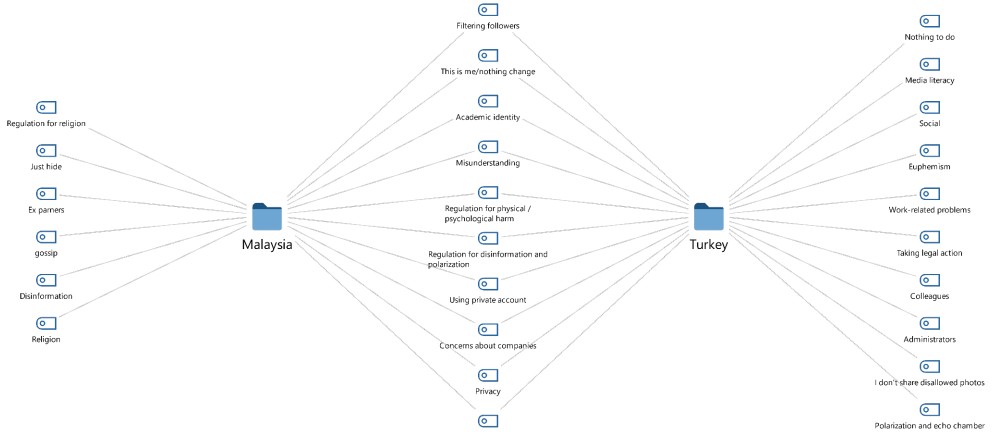
Appendix 1: Participants of in-depth interviews

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

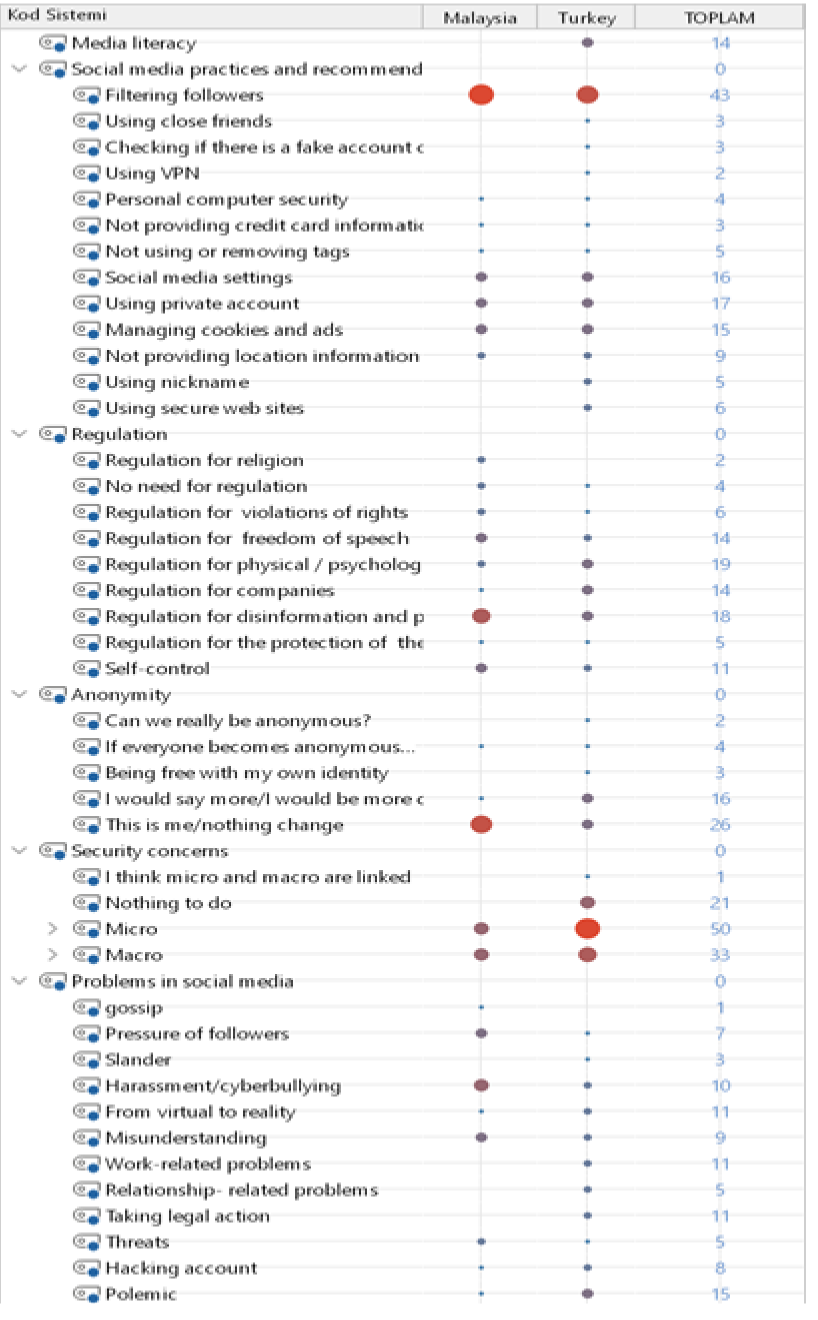
Appendix 2: Research Mindmap



Appendix 3: Two-Cases model



Appendix 4: Code matrix browser




Limitation of sharings 0
Unshared 0
I don't post anything on Twitter 11
I don't share anything academic 4
I don't share anything personal 31
Social 13
Deleted 0
Just hide 2
Disinformation 1
Misunderstanding 5
Outdated 11
Changed relationships 3
Feeling unnecessary 4
Precaution 4
Restriction of sharing 0
Company - related 9
Social-related 0
Religion 1
Polarization and echo cham 7
Possible criticism 8
Fear of being labeled 5
Not feeling comfortable 8
Political sharing 11
Follower-related 0
Lynch culture 9
Misunderstanding 23
Insincerity 14
Increasing the number of fo 2
Prejudice 2
Do not recognise some follo 6
Digital harassment 4
User-related 0
Sensitivities of followers 13
Security 6
Privacy 17
No comment 9
Delete on mind before sharii 13
Euphemism 12
Protect themselves or the pe 5
Academic identity 26
Decollete 5
Work - related 7
Shared content 0
Social 11
Academic 0
University -related 7
Academic publications 11
Personal 0
Personal opinion 3
Hobby 5
Private life 15
Humor 4
Nature 5
Family 5
Purchased items 1
Interesting stuff 7
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Araştırma Makalesi / Research Article

Losing control: The effects of social media fatigue, privacy concerns and psychological reactance on social media advertising*

Kontrolü kaybetmek: Sosyal medya yorgunluğunun, gizlilik endişelerinin ve psikolojik tepkinin sosyal medya reklamcılığına etkileri

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Abstract

The past decade has seen rising concerns about data privacy on social media platforms (SMP). Recent research (Huo, Liu & Min, 2021; Dodoo & Wen, 2020; Youn & Kim, 2019b), has suggested a growing interest in social media fatigue (SMF), whose novelty makes it challenging to understand the underlying issues faced by users of SMP. The present study analyses the impact of SMF on social media advertising (SMA) to discover reasons for reactance and advertising avoidance. This qualitative study consisted of twelve in-depth interviews with young adults aged between 23 and 31 years. The results indicate high levels of SMF, which mainly stemmed from information overload and being overwhelmed. This caused users to feel negatively after using SMP. Ad avoidance is caused by significant privacy concerns when encountering personalized ads, such as suspicion as to how data is used, the feeling of being watched and listened to, as well as annoyance at the irrelevance and repetitiveness of SMA. Furthermore, participants indicated a lack of control over their privacy online and that they felt bombarded by too many ads.

Keywords: Social media fatigue, social media advertising, advertising avoidance, social media advertising reactance, privacy

Öz

Son on yılda sosyal medya platformlarındaki (SMP) veri gizliliği konusunda endişelerin arttığı görülmektedir. Son araştırmalar (Huo, Liu & Min, 2021; Dodoo & Wen, 2020; Youn & Kim, 2019b) sosyal medya platformlarını kullananların karşılaştığı temel problemleri anlamayı zorlaştıran sosyal medya yorgunluğuna (SMY) artan bir ilginin olduğunu göstermiştir. Bu çalışma, tepki ve reklamdan kaçınma nedenlerini ortaya koymak adına SMY'nin sosyal medya reklamcılığı (SMR) üzerindeki etkisini analiz etmektedir. Bu çalışmada, nitel araştırma yöntemi kullanilarak, yaşları 23-31 yaşları arasında değişen genç yetişkinlerle on iki derinlemesine görüşme yapılmıştır. Sonuçlar, sosyal medyada maruz kalınan aşırı bilgi yüklemesinden ve bunalmaktan kaynaklanan yüksek SMY düzeylerini kanıtlamaktadır. Reklamdan kaçınmanın temel nedeni, kişiselleştirilmiş reklamlarla karşılaşıldığında verilerin nasıl kullanıldığına dair kuşku, başkaları tarafından izleniyor ve dinleniyormuş hissi ve SMR'nın alakasızlığı ve üst üste tekrarlanmasından duyulan rahatsızlık gibi önemli gizlilik kaygılarından kaynaklanmaktadır. Ayrıca, katılımcılar çevrimiçi gizlilikleri üzerinde kontrol sahibi olmadıklarını ve çok fazla reklam bombardımanına tutulduklarını hissettiklerini belirtmişlerdir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sosyal medya yorgunluğu, sosyal medya reklamcılığı, reklamdan kaçınma, sosyal medya reklam tepkisi, gizlilik

Introduction

Consumers are using SMP daily to share, engage, and consume content, which has caused brands and advertisers to benefit from the possibilities to reach new audiences and target specific demographics (Ashley & Tuten, 2015). Yet, recent years have shown that the availability of these platforms to billions of people worldwide has caused an excessive amount of content, which includes advertisements from different brands and companies. Users initially enjoyed this diversity and found it interesting, before privacy concerns caused by data leaks. This concern forced the users to question how their data is gathered and used (Swinhoe, 2021). These concerns and the excessive amount of information on SMP have caused SMF and the consumers reassessment of their attitudes toward these platforms (Dhir et al., 2018).

The emergence of this recent phenomenon has prompted scholars to examine its triggers and effects in prior research, to find the antecedents of SMF as: information overload (e.g. Whelan, Najmul Islam & Brooks, 2020; Ramadan, 2017; Dai, Ali & Wang, 2020), privacy concerns (e.g. Bright, Lim & Logan, 2021, Baek & Morimoto, 2012, Youn & Kim, 2019b), and fear of missing out (e.g. Dhir et al., 2018; Tandon et al., 2021; Bright & Logan, 2018). In addition, the results of SMF have been identified as advertising avoidance (e.g., Dai, Ali & Wang, 2020; Youn & Kim, 2019a & 2019b; Dodoo & Wen, 2020), psychological reactance (e.g., Baek & Morimoto, 2012; Youn & Kim, 2019a & 2019b; Reynolds-Tylus, Bigsby & Quick, 2020), and changes in media use (e.g. Bright, Lim & Logan, 2021; Ravindran, Chua & Goh, 2014; van der Goot et al., 2018). This has caused contradictory behaviors and attitudes among social media users, as they become more distrustful about data mining yet cannot stop using SMP and search engines because of their practicality.

Huo, Liu and Min (2021) have developed the first social media advertising reactance model of its kind based on previous literature. This model encompasses the structural factors of social media advertising, the reactance towards social media ads, and finally, the users' responses, categorized into cognitive, emotional, and behavioral responses, of which SMF is a cognitive response. Scholars have called for research on unexplored aspects and causes of SMF. This study explores previously found aspects of SMF while taking a qualitative approach to learn the underlying motivations and attitudes. The findings indicate that while privacy concerns play a minor role in SMF, a significant concern deals with the attitudes towards social media advertising. Furthermore, an unexplored link has been found between the behavioral response of blocking, hiding, or reporting ads and the subsequent reactance, avoidance, and fatigue. The current study thus contributes to a better understanding of social media fatigue and its antecedents as well as the reactance and ad avoidance of SMP users.

The importance of understanding the impact of SMF on social media advertising is manifold. With social media users becoming more aware of how their data is used, they tend to ignore ads as a reactance mechanism. The various techniques employed by social media users were analyzed in this study and have shown only to cause further fatigue, as users feel that they have lost all control and can only protect themselves by actively ignoring ads through actions such as looking away, muting the ad, scrolling faster, or even discontinuing usage. Previous studies (e.g., Kim, 2015) have found a difference in attitudes present if users perceive an ad as relevant and valuable, which is also confirmed by the present study. This signifies then that social media advertising must change in order to not lose control over the persuasion potential of this marketing tool.

This study takes a qualitative approach with 12 in-depth interviews and identify the impact of SMF on SMP users. It does so through exploring the attitudes of SMP users towards social media and SMA, the underlying causes for their SMF and SMA reactance.

The social media landscape

Social media allows users to create and exchange content, called user-generated content (UGC) (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010) and is critical for the online communications of every business sector. SMP allow brands to interact with different audiences and target them individually (Ashley & Tuten, 2015; Humphrey, Laverie & Rinaldo, 2015) to drive engagement and build brand relationships (Voorveld et al., 2018).

Social media platforms

SMP remain relatively novel. The major player in this space, Facebook, only dates back to 2004, making it the oldest SMP of the globally popular apps. YouTube is not far behind, launched in 2005. Instagram, in this case, is the youngest platform of the global leaders, launched in 2010 and quickly growing into a top competitor, with over one billion active monthly users in 2021. Other widespread SMP include TikTok, Snapchat, and Twitter.

Despite the steadily rising number of users on SMP, the usage of SMP began to stagnate in 2017 (Statista, 2020). The average time spent daily on SMP soared from 90 to 134 minutes from 2012 to 2017 but has since only risen to 145 minutes in 2019 and 2020. This stagnation can then be seen a result of SMP users experiencing fatigue due to overly extensive usage of SMP (Bright & Logan, 2018).

Social media fatigue

In the context of SMP, a widely used definition of fatigue is provided by Techopedia (2011), stating that SMF leads users to pull back from SMP because they feel overwhelmed, are bored, and/or concerned about their online privacy. Other scholars (e.g., Dai, Ali & Wang, 2020; Whelan, et al., 2020; Dhir et al., 2018) have based their research on the definition provided by Ravindran, Chua & Goh (2014, p. 2317):

> Social network fatigue may be defined as a subjective, multidimensional user experience comprising feelings such as tiredness, annoyance, anger, disappointment, guardedness, loss of interest, or reduced need/motivation associated with various aspects of social network use and interactions.

Based on these definitions, it can be assumed that SMF is experienced when SMP users feel overwhelmed by SMP interactions, are bored, exhausted, tired, or angry, due to such issues as privacy concerns or an overload of communication, technology, and/or information. Here, it is essential to note that this general definition does not consider the various factors influencing SMF and its severity, such as user- and social media-related factors (Dai, Ali & Wang, 2020).

SMF and information overload

Information overload has been an issue for many years. On SMP, users face different expressions of this phenomenon, such as connection, social, and system feature overload (Whelan, Najmul Islam & Brooks, 2020). Bright & Logan (2018) have conducted a study concerning SMF and the user's attitudes towards SMP advertising, finding that the immense amount of information available is overwhelming for SMP users and causes them to experience SMF, which was confirmed by Whelan, Najmul Islam & Brooks (2020), who furthermore established that boredom, as well as communication overload, were additional causes for SMF, especially when users turn to SMP to escape boredom. Comparably, Dai, Ali & Wang (2020) further revealed that this causes fatigue, frustration, and dissatisfaction, leading consumers to intentionally avoid information on SMP.

SMF and privacy concerns

Bright, Lim, and Logan (2021) found that privacy concerns are another cause for experiencing SMF. Privacy concerns are prevalent in the 21st Century, as consumers are becoming more aware of how their data is gathered and used, especially when considering the many recent data leaks and breaches that have affected millions of users worldwide (Swinhoe, 2021) (e.g., Facebook Cambridge Analytica 2018 (Browne, 2018), including the Facebook data leak of 2021 (Holmes, 2021).

These findings confirm that information overload and privacy concerns are the primary triggers for SMF and cause frustration and dissatisfaction, possibly leading to information and advertising avoidance as a defense mechanism.

Social media advertising

Online advertising is the principal medium used by commercial entities for their marketing communications (Statista, 2021b). Recent SMA trends show that marketers rely heavily on the persuasiveness of native ads. SMA differs from traditional advertising because it is an interactive and collaborative form of communication. With SMP being sites for online social networking at their cores, consumers have the ability to contribute to the online image of a brand as much as the brand itself.

Native advertising: Platform, information format and quality

SMA is based on the interaction between users and advertisers. Its success then depends on SMP users engaging with the ad, through liking, sharing, or commenting. Native advertising imitates the look and feel of non-sponsored content on a platform (Youn & Kim, 2019b), making it generally non-intrusive, but it can also be covert, manipulative, and misleading (Kim, 2015). The information format and quality are the main influences on how a user perceives the information. With SMA, the social value becomes a central factor. Social value can be defined as "the degree to which users perceive a closeness with an advertisement and easily exchange information about it with acquaintances" (Huo, Liu & Min, 2021, p. 829). This perception, however, is wholly dependent on the users' experiences; if the ad appears too personalized, the user can react negatively and avoid the ad, but if it is perceived as relevant, it becomes non-intrusive and has a positive influence (Kim, 2015; Baek & Morimoto, 2012).

With native advertising, aspects of a specific platform which influence the user need to be considered. Kim (2015) found that on the video platform YouTube, skippable ads and non-skippable ads had a similar impact on reactance towards the ad; both pre- and mid-roll ads showed high ad avoidance and negative attitudes if they were not perceived as relevant. Youn and Kim (2019b) found that on Facebook, native advertising is often perceived as more intrusive because its covert nature forces users to look at it. Even so, personalized native ads are still considered positive for the most part, if they are perceived as informative, entertaining, and/or feature a special offer (Youn & Kim, 2019b).

Advertising avoidance

Advertising avoidance was explored in 1997 by Speck and Elliott (1997) in relation to traditional media, who defined ad avoidance as "all actions by media users that differentially reduce their exposure to ad content" (p.61), which then included switching TV or radio channels, leaving the room to avoid seeing ads, and flipping through pages of print publications. Their findings concluded that demographic variables, media-related variables, and communication problems were other predictors of ad avoidance. Similarly, Rojas-Méndez, Davies and Madran (2009) also found that demographic variables had the most influence on behavioral avoidance, while attitudinal variables impacted mechanical avoidance.

Intrusiveness, invasiveness and goal impediment

Ad avoidance is dependent on the individuals' situations (both demographic and attitudinal) and personality. Several studies have dived further into this and have examined the impact of psychological reactance (Baek & Morimoto, 2012), personality traits (Dodoo & Wen, 2020), as well as psychological ownership (Niu, Wang & Liu, 2021). Baek and Morimoto (2012) found that privacy concerns and ad irritation are causes for ad avoidance and ad skepticism. Comparably, Niu, Wang, and Liu (2021) found that advertising irritation depends on attention and space invasiveness and is the leading cause for ad avoidance. Finally, Dodoo and Wen (2020) found that ad intrusiveness and privacy concerns are causes for ad avoidance, especially when the consumer has high levels of conscientiousness and/or neuroticism.

Ads as disruptions, or interruptions, are often discussed as the cause for consumers reacting negatively or showing resistance as psychological reactance and, as a defense mechanism, start to avoid the ad by doing something else or actively ignoring it (Edwards, Li & Lee, 2013; Speck & Elliott, 1997; Niu, Wang & Liu, 2021). To illustrate this, Cho and Cheon (2004) have established an ad avoidance model, based on cognition, affect, and behavior, which shows that ad avoidance derives from ad clutter, which can lead to ad irritation, prior negative experiences, such as dissatisfaction, lack of utility or incentive, and finally, the most significant antecedent, perceived goal impediment, such as through distractions or disruptions.

The negative attitudes developed by consumers due to ad clutter, intrusiveness, and invasiveness then motivate marketers to create more persuasive ads, which can end up in consumers feeling bombarded with ads, wanting to ignore them even more. This can bring about such statements as, "People hate advertising," from Joanna Coles, former CCO of Hearst Magazines, or Marc Pritchard, CBO at P&G, saying that ads are too often irrelevant, "just silly, ridiculous, or stupid" (Hsu, 2019).

These findings apply to all ads that are perceived as intrusive and invasive by being perceived as too personalized, excessive, raising privacy concerns, taking up space on personalized feeds, and representing an obstacle.

Privacy and control

The occurrence of ad avoidance is further underlined by the use of ad-blocking software (ABS). As consumers are overwhelmed with the information available online and find themselves lost in ad clutter which impedes their goals, ABS become a way for them to regain their freedom and control. In 2021, 42.7% of internet users worldwide have opted for ABS, while 22.3% use it because there are too many ads which they find annoying and irrelevant (Cooper, 2021; Dean, 2021). This systematic avoidance of ads can cause additional ad irritation, especially on SMP, where ABS doesn't work, resulting in further SMF.

In addition to ABS, many users have turned to a Virtual Private Network (VPN) to regain control against unwanted ads and unauthorized data sharing.

The need for data privacy and control becomes apparent when considering that 43% of internet users feel they have no control over their data and 33% fear they cannot control how companies collect their data (McAfee, 2018). Thus, over 31% of internet users rely on their VPN to keep them safe online. This has not gone unnoticed by tech companies; in 2021, Apple rolled out a software update for its flagship iPhone which disallows Apps from tracking actions and therefore prohibits personalized, or targeted, ads, a decision that caused a lot of unease for marketers but was seen as a step in the right direction for transparency in data collection.

Psychological reactance

In 1966, Jack W. Brehm introduced the psychological reactance theory (PRT), a concept about freedom, control, and reactance, mainly investigating how individuals react towards restricted autonomy (Brehm & Brehm, 1981; Lessne & Vekatesan, 1989; Youn & Kim, 2019a). While the PRT has been chiefly researched in the field of health communication (e.g., Gardner & Leshner, 2015; Dillard & Shen, 2007; Slavin & Earleywine, 2019; Kim et al., 2021), recent studies have found that it can be applied to online ads more generally (e.g., Youn & Kim, 2019a; Edwards, Li & Lee, 2002; Baek & Morimoto, 2012; Youn & Kim, 2019b; Wojdynski & Evans, 2019; Huang, 2019).

Dillard and Shen (2005) have found that PRT can be applied to measure negative perceptions experienced by consumers when presented with commercial messages, such as their articulations "of hostile and aggressive feelings" (p.146). These feelings present themselves as the reasons why consumers seek to restore their freedom of choice by avoiding ads, which characterize the threat to their freedom. This avoidance as a result of reactance was defined by Baek and Morimoto (2012) as "the affective and motivational sides of resistance to persuasion" (p.61), wherein ads then exhibit forced exposure, against which consumers use their defense mechanism to avoid them and not be interrupted (Edwards, Li & Lee, 2013).

Irritation and annoyance

PRT can prove that forcing consumers to see ads has inevitably negatively affected their attitudes and is positively related to ad avoidance, as consumers become irritated and defensive. Yet, Edwards, Li, and Lee (2013) have also established that not all forced exposure is bad, meaning that the level of reactance, here irritation and avoidance, depends wholly on the ad's level of intrusiveness and relevance. The topic of ad intrusiveness and relevance ties in with ads that appear to be too personalized, which can trigger reactance as consumers are suspicious of their privacy and data being shared and feel invaded, often even observed, by advertisers and/or third parties (Baek & Morimoto, 2012), which results in them feeling annoyed and irritated by the presented information.

Social media advertising reactance

Huo, Liu and Min (2021) have recently developed a social media advertising reactance model (SMARM) (figure 1), which reflects the relationship between PRT, and ad avoidance reasons discussed previously, namely "intrusiveness, invasiveness, goal impediment, irritation, and annoyance" (p. 828).

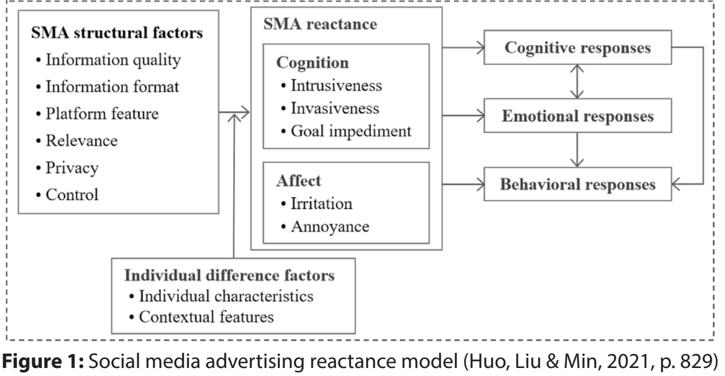

Figure 1: Social media advertising reactance model (Huo, Liu & Min, 2021, p. 829)

This model provides an excellent overview of the antecedents of SMP users resisting persuasion and experiencing reactance while being in accordance with previous studies' findings. It is also in accordance with the present study's research regarding the cognitive, behavioral, and affective responses to SMA, in addition to the structural factors listed (e.g. Baek & Morimoto, 2012; Dodoo & Wen, 2020; Niu, Wang & Liu, 2021; Kelly, Kerr & Drennan, 2013). The model also supports SMF as a cognitive response, or consequence for platforms, to SMAR.

The SMAR consequences listed are divided into three responses: (1) cognitive, (2) emotional, and (3) behavioral. The first can be further divided into: cognitive avoidance, ad scepticism, and SMF. The second relates to affective avoidance. The third indicates behavioral avoidance, lack of memory, and discontinued usage (Huo, Liu & Min, 2021, p. 834). All three responses are a consequence of PRT, which is a consequence of SMF, and therefore, SMARM represents a coherent synopsis of their relationship, about which research remains in its early stages.

Aim and Methodology

Aim

This study aims to analyze the phenomenon of Social Media Fatigue (SMF) and its impact on SMA. The objectives are to confirm previous findings of this topic and possibly find new antecedents of SMF to finally contribute to the overall understanding of this novel experience, of which research is still ongoing and in its early stages.

The research question of this study is then: "What is the impact of SMF on SMP users?", which can only be answered by first asking three sub-questions:

RQ1: What are the SMP users' attitudes towards SM and SMA?

RQ2: Why are SMP users experiencing SMF?

RQ3: How are SMP users experiencing SMA reactance?

Methodology

SMF and SMAR are relatively under-researched topics, with new studies continuously emerging (e.g., Zhang et al., 2021; Huo, Liu & Min, 2021; Bright, Lim & Logan, 2021), making the present study exploratory. Exploratory research aims to provide insight into fundamental issues to support future research (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011). To uncover these ideas and insights, this study took a qualitative approach with in-depth interviews.

For the epistemological approach, interpretivism was chosen due to it being the most useful for this study, as it aims to understand the impact of media texts, such as SMA messages, on media audiences, in this case, SMP users, wherein the understanding of these factors should explain the levels of SMF experienced.

Through convenience sampling, 12 participants were chosen for this study, which should be ideal, as 12 is a good sample for students' theses and dissertations (Baker & Edwards, 2012), and the minimum sample for qualitative studies (Fugard & Potts, 2015; Vasileiou et al., 2018). Participants were chosen through a non-probability method of sampling and based on their usage of SMP, age (ranging from 23 to 31), and gender (six female and six male). Participants were either friends or were recruited through friends. This makes the sample not representative of the entire population and therefore, the findings cannot be generalized for other samples.

Table 1: Demographic variables of participants

Variables		**n**	**%**
Gender	Female	6	50
	Male	6	50
Age	23 - 26	7	58.3
	27 - 31	5	41.7

The interview questions which guided the interviews were adapted from previous, peer-reviewed studies to increase this study's reliability and validity levels. In addition, the chosen questions stemmed from quantitative studies and were adjusted to eliminate ambiguity and any leading language. The adapted interview questions, in order of their sources, are presented in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Adapted interview questions

Question	Source (adapted from)
How do you feel about ads on social media? What do you do when you see SMA? Do you click on SMA? Why? Why not? How do you deal with personalized ads? Do you use ABS? Do you hide ads from your SM feed? Why? Did you unfollow brands on SM? Why? Why not? What actions do you do to avoid targeted ads? How do you deal with cookies? Do you want sponsored ads on your SM feed? Why? Why not? How do you feel about your privacy on SM? For example, when you see personalized SM ads? Do you feel you can protect your privacy on SMP? Did you change your privacy settings?	Dodoo & Wen, 2020
How do you feel towards personalized ads? Do you think you receive irrelevant ads/of no interest for you personally? Do you think companies share your information without your permission or knowledge? How do you feel about this?	Baek & Morimoto, 2012
How do you feel after using SM for a while? What do you do about the excessive amount of information on SM?	Whelan, Najmul Islam & Brooks, 2020
Do you feel that your SM usage can be monitored easily by companies for commercial reasons?	Kang, Zhang & Yoo, 2020
How do you feel when you realize that SM has taken up too much of your time?	Zhang et al., 2021

These interview questions were then put in a logical order and were complemented with general questions about SMP usage and SMA.

In qualitative research, physical artifacts, such as words from interview transcripts, are analyzed as data to find underlying concepts and move towards generalization and categorize the data into broader trends and themes (Neuman, 2014). The interviews of this study were recorded as Memos on an iPhone (which was the least intrusive), before being transcribed into single interviews and finally coded. They were then analyzed thematically based on previous literature and findings (SMAR, SMF and PRT). Each interview lasted between 30 to 60 minutes and had accompanying hand-written notes, which were taken during the interview, which was then transcribed quickly after.

Qualitative research has many different approaches, which makes it more diverse than quantitative research. There is no agreed upon way to assess its quality, as it "will rely largely on subjective judgment" (Dixon-Woods et al., 2004, p. 223). Chesebro and Borisoff (2007) and Kumar (2011) have developed a few criteria to help assess the quality during and after the research; these include, but are not limited to, the factors affecting the gathering of the data, the setting, and the nature of interaction. Careful attention was paid to these factors for the present study.

Ethical considerations can emerge due to qualitative researchers engaging with their subjects directly, which can often lead to subjects revealing personal details about their lives. To overcome these issues, participants were first asked for informal consent to participate in the study and then, prior to the interview itself, were presented with an Interview Consent Form.

Findings

This study has considered different theories relating to SMF, Ad Avoidance, and PRT and has found that the leading causes for SMF are information overload and privacy concerns. The reasons for Ad Avoidance were described as the covert nature of native advertising as well as the platform's information and format quality and control over privacy. Finally, PRT was described as "the affective and motivational sides of resistance to persuasion" (Baek & Morimoto, 2012, p. 61) and resulted in SMP users feeling irritated and annoyed. These three concepts correlate to explain why and how SMP users are suffering from SMF and its result.

The main research question was: "What is the impact of SMF on SMP users?" The findings indicate that SMP users suffer from SMF and, as a result, react negatively towards SMA, trying to ignore it whenever possible unless it proves relevant and valuable to them. Although the results aligned with previous studies, not all the theories were fully supported. The impact of privacy concerns on SMF and the effect of control over privacy on ad avoidance proved to be only partially supported, as not enough participants have reflected on these.

The results are summarized in Table 3 to provide an overview of the theories and their related results.

Table 3: Findings and results

Theory	Authors	Findings (n=12)	Supported
SMF + Information Overload	Whelan, Najmul Islam & Brooks, 2020; Bright & Logan, 2018; Dai, Ali & Wang, 2020	- waste of time (10), for entertainment when bored (10), stay in touch, see what others are doing (7). - bombarded by ads (8) - feel bad (6), stressed (5), exhausted (3), irritated (3), guilty (2) - annoyed and overwhelmed by information (12)	Yes
SMF + Privacy Concerns	Bright, Lim & Logan, 2021	- feel watched and listened to (5) - no privacy online, no control (12)	Partly
Ad Avoidance: Native Advertising	Kim, 2015; Huo, Liu & Min, 2021; Baek & Morimoto, 2012	- YouTube ads are most annoying because irrelevant & repetitive - had bought from an ad because of its relevance (5) - feeling rage towards native ads because of covert nature (2)	Yes
Ad Avoidance: Intrusiveness, Invasiveness, Goal Impediment	Baek & Morimoto, 2012; Niu, Wang & Liu, 2021; Dodoo & Wen, 2020; Edwards, Li & Lee, 2013; Cho & Cheon, 2004	- SMA is annoying (9), scary and creepy (6), irrelevant (8), repetitive (4). - hate ads (3), bombarded by ads (8) - focus only on 'skip ad'-button (4) - scroll faster when ad in newsfeed (5), scroll away normally (12) - look away (10), do something else (4), switch the video (4)	Yes
Ad Avoidance: Privacy + Control	Cooper, 2021; Dean, 2021	- use ABS (5)	Partly
PRT: Irritation + Annoyance	Brehm & Brehm, 1981; Lessne & Vekatesan, 1989; Youn & Kim, 2019a; Dillard & Shen, 2005; Baek & Morimoto, 2012; Edwards, Li & Lee, 2013	- have unfollowed a brand/person before (10) - have blocked/reported an ad before (7) - feel watched & listened to (5) - no privacy online, no control (12) - focus only on 'skip ad'-button (4) - scroll faster when ad in newsfeed (5), scroll away normally (12) - look away (10), do something else (4), switch the video (4)	Yes

Attitudes towards social media and SMA

Social Media: Scroll, Dislike, Distract, Repeat.

SMP are part of the participants' daily routines, which have turned into a chronic process that they often do not even realize they are doing. This is especially evident when participants describe that they do not enjoy the content they see most of the time, which creates an endless cycle of feeling bored, starting to scroll, seeing ads or irrelevant content, feeling bad about themselves for wasting time, and closing the SMP until they feel bored again.

Instagram has become popular for its visual appeal and ease of use, being described as having the "brain candy" effect. Although Instagram is a popular social media platform, many participants only occasionally post stories and rarely post overall. This is also reflected in their YouTube usage, where all subjects watch videos but do not engage in any way.

Although Facebook is the most-used platform worldwide, not all participants use it. Despite mentioning that it is full of irrelevant content, they have not discontinued usage because of specific uses, such as university groups, events, and the Facebook Marketplace. In addition, participants confirmed that their Facebook usage has significantly decreased because of other SMP.

Social media usage hours vary among all participants, ranging between one to six hours per day, with the most common timeframes being one to two and two to four hours. When asked about their emotional state after these timeframes, the responses were predominantly negative: bad, wasted time, stressed, exhausted, and irritated. Alternatively, the positive mentions were: feeling the same as before, inspired, and motivated. These responses were always given with the remark that the feelings depend on the type of content they have consumed. Comments included:

> A little like exhausted […,] sometimes I regret it because I think I could have done other things […] sometimes it's really negative…then you feel kind of sombre… but sometimes it's good when you're informing yourself. (Maria, 23)

> if I use social media to compare myself to others, then I feel miserable […], but if you use it like I often do for skating, for inspiration […] then you feel motivated […], but I also feel like when I watch videos for hours and hours for example then I'm just exhausted and drained, I'm tired and […] I'm also somehow irritated. (Mick, 28)

The evidence shows that participants have an overall negative attitude towards their SMP overdose usage. There were indications of participants feeling addicted to scrolling.

Social media advertising: Between relevance and surveillance

All participants stated that they avoid ads. The reasons for this were all in accordance with Kim (2015) and Baek and Morimoto (2012), who found that native ads can cause avoidance because of their covert nature, which changes with the perception of the ad, ads that are too personalized cause an adverse reaction and therefore avoidance, and, finally, that YouTube ads caused high avoidance and negative attitudes when perceived as irrelevant.

Participants reported an overall deeply adverse attitude to SMA, expressing this with such words as: annoying, scary and creepy, irrelevant, and repetitive. Three participants have clearly stated that they hate ads. Participants have noted that they feel bombarded by ads, that there are just too many for them, which causes frustration and irritation:

> Annoying…especially on YouTube […] I understand it, and not everything can be free but…you don't have to exaggerate…especially when it's super stupid ads that are…like repetitive […] or when you google something like any product, and you receive those ads immediately everywhere that's stupid as well…(Emilio, 28)

While some participants stated they feel watched and listened to, which causes negative attitudes, they also react negatively when they believe the SMA algorithm has failed them. The fact that participants almost feel trapped between irrelevant ads and feeling monitored expresses their trouble assessing the value of different ads throughout the day. Mick (28) described his experience of SMA as walking into a shopping mall and immediately being pressured to spend money:

> It's like I walk into a mall every single day or into a shop and I look at where I can spend my money, […] nowadays I feel like everyone tries to snatch your money out of your pockets…and that's how it is with social media and where it is really frustrating (Mick, 28)

Others, however, described the value that SMA sometimes has for them. For example, participants mentioned that they had bought something from an ad because of its relevance. Thus, even though they have stated that they do not like SMA, they change their attitude when perceiving an ad as relevant and valuable. Elisa (24) commented: "I'm happy when they're relevant…but they're annoying me when they don't match […] I think they are cool, but I feel like they're not accurate."

This demonstrates that SMA can positively influence SMP users if the ad walks the very fine line between relevance and being too personalized.

Why are SMP users experiencing SMF?

Information overload: It's all muffled

It can be supposed that all participants suffer from SMF mainly due to information overload and proneness to boredom. This is supported with Bright and Logan's (2018) findings that the immense amount of information is overwhelming to SMP users and causes fatigue. It furthermore proves that boredom, information, and communication overload are other reasons for SMF, as found by Whelan, Najmul Islam, and Brooks (2020).

When asked about information available on SMP, all participants showed signs of information overload. This inability to process stems from SMP providing too much information, which makes participants feel like they wasted their time, bad, stressed, exhausted, irritated, and guilty.

> If I have a day like where I'm just on the couch, and I scroll the whole time, then at some point, I feel like I've scrolled, read and watched so much that I get a headache and then it's just too much. (Carlos, 23)

Some participants have explained how they felt so overwhelmed at one point that they had to delete the apps:

> Tired, more stressed, and I already had…uhm where I reached the point that I just turned everything off, so I deleted everything from my phone uhm like Apps and for a long…I really didn't use it for a long time. (Aurora, 23)

Participants further explained how information on SMP often feels repetitive and irrelevant, which makes them feel annoyed and overwhelmed. The amount of information was described by Mick (28) as: "Absolutely crazy. It's like you're spending your day in a room where there are 2,000 people permanently talking to you and you have to filter who you're listening to, and it drives you nuts."

Privacy concerns: Big brother is watching you

Bright, Lim, and Logan (2021) found that privacy concerns are another cause for SMF. Some participants have mentioned they feel watched and listened to, but this was mainly a result of PRT as it was mentioned only in tandem with SMA. The cause for this could be that, in a way, participants differentiate between SMA and SMP, in the sense of them, for example, enjoying platforms such as Instagram and YouTube for their content, but reporting ad avoidance and annoyance for ads. Participants have shown significant privacy concerns with ads, but not directly related to platforms. Therefore, the findings are consistent with Dodoo and Wen's (2020) findings that ad intrusiveness and privacy concerns are additional causes for avoidance.

All participants have specified that they feel like they either do not have any privacy online or are not in control of their privacy and data, as they believe their data is sold and their privacy is invaded. Some participants have shown awareness of giving their permission through terms of use and conditions, which they have all accepted at some point, without reading through them. Participants put part of blame on themselves for allowing their data to be mined and part of the blame on SMP because of items which were hidden in the extended versions of the terms they agreed to. The fact that participants feel this way yet have not stopped using SMP and search engines shows that, even though they have strong privacy concerns, they feel like they cannot control their privacy and data anymore, so they no longer trouble themselves with it. Another prominent issue participants described was their feeling of being listened to:

> I feel like if I talk to you and we talk about stuff like a food bowl for cats or dogs, after 5 minutes, because of voice recognition, we'll have an ad about that in our feeds […] these algorithms are active to monitor us and when somewhere someone says specific words or something then that goes into a central and then they listen to that. (Mick, 28)

These attitudes can be generally described as Brutus (29) had mentioned: "I…do have a begrudging acceptance of uh of the system how it is uh because I know that it's pay to play, so you pay with your data for the service you're using." This evidence shows that participants feel there is no escape for them; on the one hand, they cannot turn away from social media even though it exhausts them, and on the other hand, they feel even more fatigued because their privacy is invaded, and they cannot do or look at anything online without being watched and listened to.

How are SMP users experiencing SMAR?

Advertising avoidance: Don't let the ad win!

Participants described "hostile and aggressive feelings" (Dillard & Shen, 2005, p. 146) upon seeing an ad, especially on YouTube, where they feel they are victims of forced ad exposure, making them resort to drastic measures to avoid them. All participants have noted that they scroll away when they see ads on their newsfeeds, except if they seem interesting. This is in accordance with Niu, Wang, and Liu (2021), who have found that advertising irritation depends on attention and space invasiveness and causes ad avoidance. Some participants have indicated that they scroll a little faster, as Elisa (24) described: "I look to see if it is relevant for me or if I'm currently in the mood for it […] if I like it, I click on it…uh but if not, then I just scroll away really fast."

All participants have shared the same opinion about YouTube ads being the most annoying and irrelevant. Furthermore, when asked about their actions upon seeing a YouTube ad, it became clear that they are willing to do almost anything to avoid these ads. Birillo (25) stated:

> A trick that I sometimes do that doesn't do anything though, is I close the video immediately, and then I restart it…then if there's another ad, I restart it again, which is quite stupid because if you look at it like if you restart your video three times, you'll spend more time with that than if you'd just watch the ad…I just don't want to watch it.

This shows that participants would rather spend time doing specific actions which annoy them than just wait for a few seconds until they can skip the ad. Mick (28) has found another way to avoid YouTube ads on his TV; he ignores them by starting to scroll on Instagram, until he sees an ad on there, which is when he turns back to YouTube to see if the ad on there is done.

This evidences that participants are using mechanisms to ignore ads by either looking away, by doing something else, or even wholly switching the video, really anything "just so that the ad doesn't win," in the words of Emilio (28).

Psychological reactance: Don't waste my time

Psychological reactance revealed itself in all the participants; they feel watched and listened to and therefore think SMA is scary and creepy. These findings are entirely in accordance with Baek and Morimoto's (2012) conclusions that ads that are too personalized can trigger reactance and make SMP users suspicious. Furthermore, participants have repeated several times that they think personalized ads are uncanny and that they are constantly being observed, listened to, and analyzed.

Psychological reactance was observed as a coping mechanism and revealed participants' emotions when they think their freedom is limited through ad exposure. For example, Gizmo (31) has noted that he feels "rage" towards native ads because they look like posts. This indicates the nature of reactance-related emotions, as participants feel ads disturb their newsfeeds and willingness to consume organic content on SMP. Additionally, participants had tried to block or report an ad before, which then proved to be of no use and made them give up. The reasons for these actions were mainly named as ad repetitiveness and irrelevance. Interestingly, the participants who attempted to block or report an ad before all mentioned how this action did either nothing for them or caused other irrelevant ads: "It's like you can block an ad 20 times block it, but there will always be something else." (Shinomura, 31) "I clicked no, and then it said this ad would not appear anymore and then it's good for 10 seconds, and then there's the next one that I don't care about that's why I stopped doing this because it doesn't do anything and it wastes my time" (Carlos, 23)

This evidence shows that even though these actions should feel helpful to participants, they do not bother with them as they believe it wastes their time as there is an endless rotation of ads that are all irrelevant to them.

The effect of control over privacy and avoiding ads, such as through ABS and VPN, was only partly supported. This is because only five participants have stated that they use such software, where one of them uses it unintentionally because someone else had installed it. Thus, although five out of twelve participants comprise around 42%, which was the percentage of internet users using ABS found by Cooper (2021) and Dean (2021), this does not reflect an accurate representation of this sample. This is because the seven other participants stated they were unaware of such software or thought it to be useless since it does not work on SMP. Therefore, it can be suggested that privacy and control have a relatively minute impact on the ad avoidance observed in these participants.

Discussion and Conclusion

The results suggested significant indications of SMF, high ad avoidance, and negative psychological reactance. Moreover, this study analyzed to what degree the subjects' coping mechanisms were effective and found that the various techniques participants have described caused further reactance in the sense of them being annoyed, irritated, and even feeling hate towards SMA. The SMAR model provided by Huo, Liu, and Min (2021) bases itself on previous literature findings; therefore, this model should be accurate in SMAR representation. By evaluating with this SMARM in mind, this study can mostly confirm this model and advance the understanding of this phenomenon.

The impact that SMF has on SMP users is then twofold; first, it causes them to regard ads as their enemy, causing their reactance, and second, it exhausts them as they become unable to process the information available but cannot stop using it because of the addictive nature of SMP.

Most participants showed ambivalence towards personalized ads. On the one hand, they felt monitored by their phones and SMP interactions, as well as their Google searches. On the other hand, they noted that there were ads relevant to them, and some had even bought products advertised on them. Yet, participants have also stated that these relevant ads have become sporadic. Participants have found that personalized ads are scary, as they feel they invade their privacy, yet they are also sure that they, in fact, have no privacy left. When asked if they wanted ads on their feeds or not, all participants except for one have stated that if they had the option, they would turn off ads because their negative attitudes outweigh their rare positive experiences, and they want to regain control of what, when, and where to buy something.

This study is unique in the way that an important theme emerged concerning SMAR. Most of the participants have described how they tried to block, hide, or report an ad before, but without results, which frustrated them, so they stopped doing it. This endless rotation of irrelevant or intrusive ads was not discussed in previous studies; though Youn and Kim (2019) had mentioned the possibility of this behavioral avoidance, they did not analyze them to the point of this causing further reactance, as their participants had positive responses. This study argues that these actions play a significant role in SMP users' reactance, SMF, and ad avoidance because participants approached these actions with the hopes of regaining their freedom yet found themselves in a never-ending loop of irrelevance and intrusiveness. This shows the limits that SMP users are subject to and how there is no real way for them to avoid SMA entirely. Future research should investigate the motivations and attitudes behind this behavioral avoidance, as it alleges that users can regain their freedom, yet after a short amount of time, presents them with an ad that is either more irrelevant or so personalized that it causes further privacy concerns.

These findings are of practical value and offer implications for understanding SMP users' fatigue, reactance, and ad avoidance; therefore, it could be of use for marketers and platform operators.

For marketers, it needs to be considered that SMP users feel bombarded by irrelevant ads. Therefore, reducing their reactance means reducing the volume of ads. Suggestions include promoting only relevant assets or features and engaging with the community that already engages with the brand, e.g., organic content and comments. For platform operators, it would be helpful to be more transparent about how data is used, as transparency is the best challenger for privacy concerns. It would possibly be beneficial for new users to have more straightforward terms and conditions and for existing users to be allowed to re-read and possibly re-accept these terms. This should give SMP users the feeling of regaining control. A good example was provided by Apple, with their transparent privacy updates and settings.

While this study presents important insights about the relationship between SMF and SMAR, it has its limitations. First, this study cannot be generalized and is highly specific, using a sample of young adults. This feature was revealed in the many mentions of only using Facebook for university, such as for study and course groups. Second, this study could not ask about SMF and PRT directly due to its qualitative nature to avoid any leading questions. Therefore, though all results were self-reported by the subjects, the impact of SMF and PRT could only be investigated if the subject revealed any emotions linked to these theories. Lastly, the participants were asked about their general judgments of SMA on video platforms and on SMP feeds, but in reality, there are many different variations of ads on each SMP which would present further complications to consider when taking a quantitative approach.

Future research should investigate other specific samples, such as other age groups, to receive a good understanding of how SMAR varies at different stages of someone's life. A more extended observational period of specific subjects would also provide detail beyond primary accounts. Moreover, it would be good to conduct more qualitative studies in this field, as Huo, Liu, and Min (2020) found that the quantitative method dominates in the publications to date. Finally, the approach to the "block, hide, or report an ad" options should be further investigated to check for relevance in SMAR.

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Research Article

From social to digital inequalities: The use of new media by the poor in Eskişehir, Turkey

Toplumsal eşitsizliklerden dijital eşitsizliklere: Eskişehir, Türkiye'deki yoksulların yeni medya kullanımı

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Abstract

This study focuses on the problem of digital inequalities and examines how having new media and the ability to use it are affected by age, gender, and socio-economic status over a sample of individuals living in Eskişehir where high levels of social deprivation can be found. This mixed-design study, based its data 415 questionnaires and 39 semi-structured interviews and was conducted in Eskişehir's Emek, Gündoğdu, and Sevinç neighborhoods, where most residents experience poverty. Quantitative methods are highly important in terms of revealing the accessibility and ownership aspects of the issue in studies on digital inequality. The study will attempt to use qualitative data to complete the general framework drawn by the quantitative data and present how social inequalities are reflect in online attitudes within the sample of the poor. Thus, the study aims to contribute to the literature on digital inequalities both in terms of methodology and sample. The results of the study show that second-level and third-level digital inequalities are both feed by inequalities in offline life and also feed them. New media play an important role in overcoming the walls built by low educational levels and economic constraints. On the other hand, socio-economic status affects thoughts about digital media, the skills and practices of using them, and the quality of the benefits gained by using them. This sample includes people who abandoned education at a very early age, and in this sample, marriage at a young age is common and poverty prevails, with an evident relationship existing between digital inequalities and social origin.

Keywords: Digital inequalities, new media, socio-economic status, poverty, Turkey

Öz

Dijital eşitsizlikler sorununa odaklanılan bu çalışmada, yeni medyaya sahip olma durumunun ve onları kullanma becerilerinin yaş, toplumsal cinsiyet ve sosyo-ekonomik statüden nasıl etkilendiği Eskişehir'de yaşayan yoksul bireyler örneğinde incelenmiştir. 415 anket ve 39 yarı-yapılandırılmış görüşmeye dayanan karma desenli bu araştırma, insanların çoğunluğunun yoksulluk yaşadığı Emek, Gündoğdu ve Sevinç mahallelerinde gerçekleştirilmiştir. Nicel yöntem, dijital eşitsizliğe ilişkin araştırmalarda, sorunun erişim ve sahiplik boyutunun ortaya konulabilmesi açısından oldukça önemlidir. Bu çalışmada, nitel veriler ile nicel verilerin çizdiği genel çerçeve tamamlanmaya ve toplumsal eşitsizliklerin çevrimiçi davranışlara nasıl yansıdığı yoksullar örnekleminde ortaya konulmaya çalışılmıştır. Dolayısıyla, Türkiye'deki dijital eşitsizlikler alanyazınına hem yöntemsel açıdan hem de örneklem alanı itibarıyla katkı sağlanması amaçlanmıştır. Araştırma sonuçları, ikinci düzey ve üçüncü düzey dijital eşitsizliklerin hem çevrimdışı yaşamdaki eşitsizliklerden beslendiğini hem de onları beslediğini göstermektedir. Yeni medya, düşük eğitim düzeyi ve ekonomik kısıtlılıkların ördüğü duvarların aşılabilmesi noktasında önemli bir işlev görmektedir. Buna karşın sosyo-ekonomik statü, yeni medyaya yönelik düşünceleri; onları kullanma becerileri ve pratiklerini; onları kullanmakla kazanılan faydaların niteliğini etkilemektedir. Eğitim hayatının çok erken yaşta terk edildiği, genç yaşta evliliğin yaygın olduğu ve yoksulluğun hâkim olduğu bu örneklemde, dijital eşitsizliklerin toplumsal kökenle ilişkisi net bir şekilde kendini göstermektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Dijital eşitsizlikler, yeni medya, sosyo-ekonomik statü, yoksulluk, Türkiye

Introduction

Which lives do digital technologies affect, and to what extent? The question, 'how digital inequalities are affected by and affect traditional forms of inequality such as gender, age, class, and education,' which was shaped by following the former inclusive question, is the main starting point of this research. The research aims to reveal both where the poor are positioned in terms of access divide, their status of having new media, their practices regarding these media, and the tangible benefits they obtain using the media. The study discusses how the first-level, second-level, and third-level digital inequalities appear in a sample of the poor in Eskişehir, Turkey.

While statistical data indicate that the population with access to the internet is constantly increasing (Internet World Stats, 2021), many studies show that economic criteria are no longer the only determinants of possessing media tools (Jackson et al., 2003; Ergur et al., 2009; Tondeur et al., 2010; Ergül et al., 2012; Bal, 2015; Wong et al., 2015). It is evident that the new media tools and environments, which penetrate every field of daily life, provide the opportunity to be involved in interaction processes at the global level by ensuring that social conditions such as old age, gender, lack of education, poverty and disability, which restrict the individual, are overcome at a certain level (Ergur et al., 2009). On the other hand, age, gender, education and class-based forms of inequality substantially change how and for what purposes new media is used. Digital inequality is a multidimensional problem that emerges in different ways according to geography, cultural and political structures and produces different consequences.

van Dijk (2006) notes that the problem deceptively seems to be almost solved for observers who look at the issue in terms of public policy, especially because more and more people access computers and the internet in rich and developed countries. Furthermore, even if the divide based on access to tools seems to be closing in developed countries, inequalities based on usage and digital skills are increasing. Internet usage is associated with several variables such as age, educational status, household income, and whether the place of residence is rural or urban (Negreiro, 2015; Perrin & Atske, 2021; Vogels, 2021). In this respect, the concept of digital inequalities that we refer to in our study has a multidimensional meaning content that covers the processes of two-way interaction between the possession of new media, practices of using them and the tangible benefits obtained by using them and the traditional forms of inequality, such as gender, age, class, and education.

This study with mixed method also aims to contribute the literature of digital inequalities in terms of its sample which enables to see how digital inequalities consolidate in the intersection of gender, age, class, and education. As will be mentioned in the following section, there is a significant transformation in digital inequality studies from 1990s to present. The in-depth conception provided by qualitative method makes it possible to portray the second and the third level components of digital inequalities in more details. How much the poor access to the new media, how they use it, and tangible gains they acquire from it enables to assess the issue as a whole with the mixed method.

First-, second-, and third-level digital inequalities

In the first period when the digital divide that was included in the literature in 1999 was discussed, in other words, the "first-level digital divide", the gap between those who physically accessed information and communication technologies, especially the internet, and those who could not was indicated. As of the 2000s, when internet usage became increasingly common, the concept of digital divide, which only refers to the distinction between accessibility and inaccessibility, has started to be replaced by the concept of digital inequalities, which provides a more appropriate scope to explain the multidimensionality of the problem, in the literature. This subject was discussed by different researchers under the headings of "From the 'Digital Divide' to 'Digital Inequality'", "From Unequal Access to Differentiated Use" and "Reconceptualizing Digital Social Inequality" (DiMaggio & Hargittai, 2001; Jung et al., 2001; Hargittai, 2002; Jackson et al., 2003; DiMaggio et al., 2004; Selwyn, 2004; Halford & Savage, 2010). There are various reasons for the studies evaluating the problem through the distinction between accessibility and inaccessibility to be considered inadequate over time. Some of them are as follows: They evoke the delusion that inequality can be easily overcome (Selwyn, 2004), do not show differences in usage skills (Hargittai, 2002), and lead to technological deterministic evaluations that disregard the social consequences of usage and the social context in which technology develops (Jung et al., 2001). The 'digital divide' approach is inadequate not only because it proposes a technological solution to the problem of digital inequality with cultural, ecological, and economic dimensions and presents the internet and possession of a personal computer as a "magical" formula to overcome inequalities (Narin, 2021, p. 100), but because it assumes that social segments on the disadvantaged side of the gap are homogeneous (Arun & Elmas, 2020) and those who have equal access to technology benefit equally from the opportunities it offers (Özsoy, 2020). However, there are studies reporting that access to information and communication technologies functions as an additional mechanism that contributes to the reduction of poverty in rural areas of India and Mexico (Jensen, 2007; Tiwari, 2008; García-Mora & Mora-Rivera, 2021). In their research conducted in the Mexican countryside, García-Mora and Mora-Rivera (2021) revealed that the level of poverty was lower in households with internet access compared to households without internet access. However, the authors emphasize that access to all communication technologies, especially the internet, should be considered a basic human right that 'helps' to exercise fundamental rights such as education, health, and freedom of expression. Internet access alone is not a mechanism to reduce poverty; it is a way of preventing the existing social inequalities from deepening in the long run. Therefore, García-Mora and Mora-Rivera (2021) recommend the promotion of public policies that both improve internet access and enhance digital literacy skills. Briefly, the digital divide approach cannot solve skill inequalities and problems related to the quality of tangible gains obtained through usage. Moreover, in developed countries, the relative closure of the divide in access to technology has brought about the need for focusing on usage skills and differences (van Dijk, 2006; Negreiro, 2015; Perrin & Atske, 2021; Vogels, 2021). As of the 2000s, it was highlighted that the questions 'Who has access to them?' and 'Who uses them?' were insufficient, and it was also important to view digital skills that differed among individuals who had access to the digital world, and the differences here were mentioned by Hargittai (2002) as a "second-level digital divide".

According to the "second-level digital divide" (Hargittai, 2002), digital skills differ among individuals with access to digital tools. "Third-level digital inequality" (van Deursen & Helsper, 2015), on the other hand, is related to the results of technology use and the tangible benefits obtained from it. Pierre Bourdieu's concept of "habitus" and the types of capital associated with habitus have become an important source of reference for research on second- and third-level digital divide. Habitus is the internalization and embodiment of "basic social life conditions in a way to turn into predispositions" (Swartz, 2015, p. 49). As Bourdieu says,

> Habitus are generative principles of distinct and distinctive practices – what the worker eats, and especially the way he eats it, the sport he practices and the way he practices it, his political opinions and the way he expresses them are systematically different from the industrial owner's corresponding activities. But habitus are also classificatory schemes, principles of classification, principles of vision and division, different tastes. They make dsitinctions between what is good and what is bad, between what is right and what is wrong, between what is distinguished and what is vulgar, and so forth, but the distinctions are not identical. Thus, for instance, the same behavior or even the same good can appear distinguished to one person, pretentious to someone else, and cheap or showy to yet another (Bourdieu, 1998, p.8).

Bourdieu (1997) distinguishes between three forms of capital (associated with the concept of habitus) that can determine the social position of people. The first is economic capital, which refers to financial resources; the second is social capital, which refers to social ties; the third is cultural capital, which refers to talents, tastes, and preferences related to fine arts. In his work titled "Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste" (1984), Bourdieu mentions the connection of culture with social class as follows:

> Similarly, listening to the most 'highbrow' radio stations, France-Musique and France-Culture, and to musical or cultural broadcasts, owning a record-player, listening ro records (without specifying the type, which minimizes the differences), visiting art galleries, and knowledge of painting--features which are strongly correlated with one another--obey the same logic and, being strongly linked to educational capital, set the various classes and class fractions in a clear hierarchy (with a reverse distribution for listening to variety programmes). In the case of activities like the visual arts, or playing a musical instrument, which presupposes a cultural capital generally acquired outside the educational system and (relatively)

> independent of the level of academic certification, the correlation with social class, which is again strong, is established through social trjectory (which explains the special position of the new petite bourgeoisie) (Bourdieu, 1984, p.14).

Furthermore, Bourdieu (1977, pp. 179-183) mentions the type of symbolic capital. Symbolic capital both depends on the possession of these types of capital – in other words, it can exist under different types - and can increase or decrease according to the way it is used. For example, symbolic capital, such as prestige or fame acquired by being attached to a family or a name, can be easily converted into economic capital and regarded as the most valuable form of accumulation in some societies. In his study titled "Reconsidering Political and Popular Understandings of the Digital Divide" (2004), Neil Selwyn states that differences in the skills of using new media may be related to the different types of capital suggested by Bourdieu. In this context, Bourdieu develops a new typology using the types of capital: (1) Economic capital required to access and purchase new media tools; (2) Cultural capital required to use them; (3) Social capital covering technological contact and support networks. In the conclusion section of his study, Selwyn (2004, p. 357) underlines that imagining an online world in which inequalities in the offline world are not reflected is an indicator of technological naivety. Ragnedda (2018) referred directly to Bourdieu's concept set with the concept of "digital capital" and approached the digital capital weakness in a way covering all three levels of digital inequalities. Ragnedda also refers to Weber's (1998) emphasis on "life chances" and states that digital capital is a "bridge capital" that provides the interaction between online and offline life opportunities. According to Ragnedda's (2018) concept of digital capital, the benefit obtained by using the internet depends on the interaction of individuals' existing capital and digital capital. While some users can convert their online activity into tangible benefits such as a higher-paying job over time, such a result cannot be mentioned for other users. Calderón Gómez (2020), in his research focusing on the third-level digital divide, emphasizes that although a more nuanced view of Bourdieu's model of capital is needed in today's society where traditional social bonds have been eroded, the concept of capital is still useful for understanding the reproduction of inequalities. Research results of Calderón Gómez (2020) indicate that young people with higher economic and cultural capital and more diverse social networks are advantageous in benefiting from opportunities in the digital world.

Aim and Methodology

The aim of this study is to contribute to the literature on digital inequalities both in terms of methodology and sample.

Aim

The literature on the subject indicates that the forms of offline social inequality resulting from gender, age, class, and education level affect digital inequalities, and digital inequalities also reinforce offline social inequalities (Hargittai & Walejko, 2008; Witte & Mannon, 2010; Ragnedda & Muschert, 2015; van Deursen & van Dijk, 2015; van Deursen & Helsper, 2015). This study, which examines the said cycle of inequality in the sample of poor individuals in Eskişehir, is a part of wider research that addresses the usage practices of the poor, including traditional media. However, this article focuses only on the following research questions.

R1: What is the level of computer, mobile phone, and internet access of the poor?

R2: Is internet usage associated with gender, age, educational status, and parents' educational status?

R3: How do gender, age, and education levels affect online practices?

R4: What tangible contributions do the interactions of the poor with the new media make to their lives?

Method

In this study, the mixed research method, using the research techniques of qualitative and quantitative methods together, was adopted. In the study, the explanatory sequential design was adopted. The quantitative stage was followed by the qualitative stage. Moreover, for this study, both types of data have equal methodological input and equal importance in terms of their contribution to the research analysis.

The sample of this study consists of the poor living in Eskişehir. The sample was determined by the purposive sample selection technique, one of the non-probability sampling techniques. Emek, Gündoğdu, and Sevinç neighborhoods in Odunpazarı district of Eskişehir, which were thought to reflect the average characteristics of the low income and status group in the best way, were selected via the purposive sampling technique. The names of these neighborhoods were given by the district municipality authorities. A second sub-sampling was performed in the sample selection, and only individuals with a monthly household income of 4,500.00 TL (USD 916.74) or less from three neighborhoods were included in the study. In this study, poverty was discussed within the scope of an approach suitable for Bourdieu's conceptualization of economic, cultural, and social capital.

The study findings are based on 415 questionnaires and 39 face-to-face interviews held between July and November 2018. The questionnaires were applied in Emek and Gündoğdu neighborhoods. Before the questionnaires were applied, the neighborhood mukhtars were informed about the field study and asked for the names of the streets where the poor households resided extensively. In line with the information obtained, the quantitative stage of the study was completed with 228 women and 187 men aged between 14 and 80 years. The questionnaire consists of a total of 42 questions, including multiple-choice, open-ended, and Likert-type questions. In the scope of this article, only the questions about demographic information, possession of a computer, home internet subscription, possession of a smartphone, tools used to access the internet, and internet usage were included.

Sevinç neighborhood was included in the study during semi-structured interviews. The interviews held in Sevinç village proceeded with the snowball technique after a few households were indicated by the village mukhtar. Semi-structured interviews were held with a total of 39 people, including 22 women and 17 men. The ages of the interviewees ranged between 16 and 72 years. The interview questions were designed for the purpose of obtaining detailed information about the demographic characteristics and cultural capital of the interviewees, their practices and skills in using new media, and some questions emerged in the flow of the interviews. The interviews took about 40-45 minutes on average.

The data obtained from 415 questionnaires were analyzed with the SPSS software. The deciphered qualitative data of semi-structured face-to-face interviews were coded and classified by combining similar samples. Codes were grouped under broader themes. Qualitative and quantitative data were interpreted together in compliance with the mixed research design.

The demographic characteristics of the individuals who participated in the survey and semi-structured interviews are as follows. Of the participants surveyed, 54.9% were female, and 45.1% were male. Their ages ranged between 14 and 80 years, 61% were married, and 33% were single. The monthly average income was 2,366.06 TL.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of the Individuals Participating in the Survey

	Participants
Gender	**n=415**
Female	54.9
%Male	45.1
TOTAL	100
Mean age	**n=414**
Arithmetic mean (X)	36.73
Lowest-highest value	14-80
Standard deviation (SD)	16.041 (mode=17)
Marital status	**n=415**
Married	61
% Single	33
Spouse deceased	4.3
Divorced from spouse	1.7
TOTAL	100
Average monthly household income TL	**n=415**
Arithmetic mean (X)	2366.06
Lowest-highest value	0-4500
Standard deviation (SD)	893.172 (mode=1604)

Of the participants, 6.8% were unemployed, 9.7% were retired, and 19.1% were students or preparing for university. Of them, 26.4% were included in the workforce, and 38% were housewives. While the total proportion of women stating that they contributed to the income of the house (employed+retired) was only 8.8%, the proportion of men in the same groups was 69.7%. More than half of the participants (58.8%) who were not students or preparing for university received secondary school education or below. While 17.1% of the participants were high school/vocational high school or technical high school graduates, 4.9% were higher school or university graduates.

Concerning parents' education levels, it is seen that primary school graduates constitute the highest proportion. While the proportion of those whose mothers are primary school graduates is 48.8%, the proportion of those whose fathers are primary school graduates is 53%. The total proportion of those whose mothers graduated from secondary school and below is 89.3%, whereas the proportion of those whose fathers graduated from secondary school and below is 84.7%. Those whose parents graduated from high school and above constitute 10.6% (2.1% mothers and 8.5% fathers) of the participants.

Table 2: Demographic Characteristics of the Individuals Participating in the Interviews

Gender	Age	Marital status	Education	Occupation	Neighborhood
Female	16	Single	High school student	Student	Emek
Male	16	Single	High school student	Student	Gündoğdu
Female	33	Married	Primary school graduate	Housewife	Sevinç
Male	39	Married	Primary school graduate	Construction worker	Sevinç
Male	35	Married	Primary school graduate	Unemployed	Sevinç
Female	32	Married	Secondary school graduate	Housewife	Emek
Female	35	Married	Primary school graduate	Housewife	Emek
Male	17	Single	High school student	Student	Gündoğdu
Female	46	Married	Primary school graduate	Charwoman	Gündoğdu
Male	17	Single	High school student	Student	Emek
Female	60	Married	Literate without a diploma	Housewife	Gündoğdu
Male	25	Married	Secondary school graduate	Artisan	Gündoğdu
Female	25	Married	Secondary school graduate	Housewife	Emek
Male	19	Single	College student	Student	Gündoğdu
Male	41	Single	Secondary school graduate	Retired	Emek
Female	15	Single	High school student	Student	Gündoğdu
Male	44	Married	High school graduate	Retired	Gündoğdu
Male	40	Married	Primary school graduate	Factory worker	Gündoğdu
Female	28	Married	Secondary school graduate	Housewife	Gündoğdu
Female	15	Single	High school student	Student	Emek
Male	49	Married	Primary school graduate	Construction worker	Gündoğdu
Male	26	Married	Secondary school graduate	Factory worker	Emek
Female	32	Married	Illiterate	Housewife	Sevinç
Female	40	Married	Illiterate	Housewife	Sevinç
Female	26	Married	Primary school graduate	Housewife	Emek
Female	36	Married	Primary school graduate	Housewife	Emek
Female	38	Married	Primary school graduate	Housewife	Gündoğdu
Female	34	Married	Primary school graduate	Housewife	Gündoğdu
Male	17	Single	High school student	Student	Emek
Male	17	Single	High school student	Student	Emek
Female	28	Married	Literate without a diploma	Housewife	Sevinç
Male	- *	Married	Primary school graduate	Construction worker	Sevinç
Female	39	Married	Illiterate	Housewife	Sevinç
Male	17	Single	Secondary school graduate	Industrial worker	Emek
Female	51	Separated from the spouse	Primary school graduate	Charwoman	Emek
Female	- *	Married	Primary school graduate	Housewife	Sevinç
Female	39	Married	Illiterate	Housewife	Sevinç
Female	39	Married	High school graduate	Housewife	Sevinç
Male	72	Married	Primary school graduate	Retired	Sevinç

* Age information not provided.

Of the interviewees aged between 16 and 72 years, 22 were female, and 17 were male. One of them stated that she lived separately from her spouse, although they were married. Eleven interviewees were single, and 27 interviewees were married. Four were illiterate, and 2 were literate without a diploma. Fifteen interviewees were primary school graduates, 7 were secondary school graduates, and 2 were high school graduates. Three women were students, and 17 were housewives. Two of them expressed that they cleaned houses for a living. Six of the male participants were students, 6 were workers (plasterer, dozer operator, welder, etc.), and 3 were retired. One of them stated that he was unemployed. Fourteen participants earned the minimum wage (1,603.12 TL) and less (1 with a green card) as their monthly income, 10 earned between 2,000-2,500 TL, and 9 earned 2,600 TL and more. The remaining 6 individuals stated that they did not have a net monthly income.

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Findings

In this section, the findings obtained in the study are presented under three main headings: (1) Poor Lives but Connected Lives, (2) Internet Usage, (3) The Relationship Between Digital Inequalities and Social Origin.

Poor lives but connected lives

Under this heading, findings on why the poor consider new media access and possession and use of new media important are discussed:

Computers, mobile phones, and internet access

About 2/3 of the poor households in the sample did not have desktop computers, laptops, and tablet computers. The proportion of households with desktop computers was 34.2%, the proportion of households with laptops was 28.3%, and the proportion of households with tablet computers was 29.1%. Of the sample, 50.5% had an internet subscription at home. More than half (75.2%) of the sample covering all age groups possessed smartphones.

The study results revealed that the smartphone (55.8%) was the most used device to access the internet. The smartphone was followed by desktop computer (17.7%), laptop computer (14.9%), and tablet computer (11.6%), respectively. Both quantitative and qualitative findings showed that the practice of accessing the internet from home changed. The widespread use of smartphones and the availability of internet access tariffs offered by every phone operator reduced the need for home internet. Indeed, the participants' statements indicate that the need for desktop computers has decreased after the use of smartphones. A 39-year-old mother living in Sevinç village stated that they canceled the home internet they had used for four years since children could access the internet for study purposes through mobile data:

> We have a computer at home .... I bought it on installment. Because he has a cell phone now, the computer is not used. (male, age 39)

> When the tablet computer was bought, they [children] left it [desktop computer]. (female, age 46)

> Participant (female, age 15): There is a computer but it is not actively used at present.

> Interviewer: What do you use when you study?

> Participant: I, the phone...

In poor households in Eskişehir, smartphones have become the primary means of internet access. Desktop computers are either not used or little used. On the other hand, possession of a desktop computer and internet access in poor households in Eskişehir are also associated with the presence of children and young people of school age, and this association is discussed under the next heading.

Computer and internet access in households with school-age children

The findings support the literature suggesting that access to new media is high in households with children of school age (Hoffman et al., 2000; Ofcom, 2021). The study by Hoffman et al. (Hoffman et al., 2000) also highlighted that the level of access and use of new media was particularly high in households with children under the age of seventeen. In the study, parents mostly showed their children as the reason for possessing a computer and internet access from home. In poor households, the desire to meet the needs of children prevailed regardless of their socio-economic conditions. There is also an effort to protect children against external dangers behind this desire:

> I have not gotten the internet connected for almost three or four years, but I do not know what kind of games he [my son] plays in internet cafes. Therefore, we have decided to get the internet connected to the computer at home. At least, he will be in front of our eyes. (female, age 32)

> I already bought it [laptop] only for the children to play with it. (male, age 35)

Although parents show the existence of children as the reason for new media tools in the household, it can be mentioned that the internet is used by all family members and rather for 'personal' purposes. Similar findings were encountered in the study examining the media usage practices of the urban poor in Eskişehir (Ergül et al., 2012). The reasons why smartphones and the internet are considered important and indispensable by poor household members are discussed under the following heading.

New media's rank among necessities

The possession of new media is important for the poor, regardless of the current circumstances (Banerjee & Duflo, 2011; Ergül et al., 2012; Wong et al., 2015). What the poor people interviewed in this study stated about access to digital technologies reminds us of Banerjee and Duflo's (2011) article titled "More Than One Billion People Are Hungry in the World". In this article, the authors emphasize that there may be more significant things in the lives of the poor than food. The reason why they had such thoughts is what they observed in the Moroccan countryside. Poor families have communication tools such as television and mobile phones. There is a similar case in the sample of the poor in Eskişehir, and it is evident that new media tools such as smartphones are considered vital:

> I had a niece. We held her wedding. She got married. She tells her husband, 'You will buy me a brand-new cell phone!' 'I will have a computer and internet at home!' Why? 'Without them, there is no life!' …. They used to say to me, 'You will buy white goods, a sofa set, a car, a house!' Now, she says, 'I will have a mobile phone, a computer, and internet at home!' I mean, this is the reality. (male, age 39)

> It is indeed important in this era! It is important in this era since everything, I do not know, even our breathing now depends on a cell phone …. However, when you have a smartphone, you learn everything from it. I mean, everything. The only thing we cannot do with it is that we cannot eat or drink. Other than that, we do everything with it …. When there is no connection, it is all like New Era and Ancient Era. (male, age 35)

> I care more about the phone than eating or drinking because my family is not here. (female, age 40)

> If you were the head of a house or the woman of the house and if your child asked for something, would you go and get it or not? Whether or not I have it [money], I buy it. (male, age 40)

These findings create an optimistic impression regarding internet access at first glance, but the problem of access to new media continues to exist, as quantitative findings indicate. It was observed that the internet was used jointly in different poor households with kinship ties in Sevinç village. The cost of internet bills and the insufficiency of internet infrastructure services are also stated as access-related problems.

> Currently, we do not have it [internet]. Bills are quite heavy. (female, age 35)

> Bills [internet] are really heavy. We do not have kids who will go to high school. (female, age 32)

Accordingly, the problem of access is still a part of the digital inequality issue for some people living in the poor neighborhoods of Eskişehir. The differences in usage influenced by socio-demographic factors such as gender, age, and education level are discussed under the following headings.

Internet usage

The table (Table 3) showing whether internet usage is significantly correlated with some selected variables is presented below:

Table 3: Correlation of the Ability to Use the Internet with the Selected Variables: Chi-Square Test Results

	Ability to use the internet			
	n	x^2	sd	p
Gender	415	1.605	1	.205
Age	414	180.698	4	**.000**
Education	410	99.519	4	**.000**
Mother's education	365	62.422	2	**.000**
Father's education	371	90.531	2	**.000**
Significant for: α: .05.				

Despite a significant correlation between internet usage and age ($x^2_{(4)}$ =180.698 p.000<.05), education level ($x^2_{(4)}$ =99.519 p.000<.05), mother's education level ($x^2_{(2)}$ = 62.422 p.000<.05), and father's education level ($x^2_{(2)}$ = 90.531 p.000<.05), there is no correlation according to gender ($x^2_{(1)}$ =1.605, p.205>.05).

Of the sample, 75.7% can use the internet. Although there is no significant difference between the ability to use the internet and gender, the proportion of men (78.6%) who know how to use the internet is higher than that of women (73.2%). As the age increases, the proportion of those who know how to use the internet decreases, and as the education level increases, the proportion also increases. As the education levels of parents increase, the rate of knowing how to use the internet is seen to increase. The rate of knowing how to use the internet is higher in individuals whose parents are secondary school graduates or have higher education levels.

The relationship between digital inequalities and social origin

Demographic factors such as class, gender, age, and education level play a significant role in the emergence of digital inequalities (Hoffman et al., 2000; Zillien & Hargittai, 2009; van Deursen et al., 2017; Özsoy et al., 2020). When these variables come together, the individual may experience more inequality than the forms of inequality produced by each variable alone. The concept of "intersectionality," which Collins and Bilge (2016*)* used with a more political content by following Kimberlé Crenshaw's studies, seems functional for the phenomenon we are trying to emphasize under this heading. When these types of inequality come together intersectionally, the individual may experience more inequality than the forms of inequality produced by each variable alone. For example, according to the authors, race, class, gender, age, disability or ability, ethnicity, nationality, and religion are mutually constructed or intersecting systems of power (Collins & Bilge, 2016, p. 27).

In line with this literature information, the quantitative findings of the study showed that demographic factors were decisive on the state of knowing how to use the internet. Especially concerning the age factor, the studies conducted both in Turkey and different regions of the world show that the rates of using a computer and the internet decrease as the age increases (van Deursen & van Dijk, 2015; Küçük & Koçak, 2019; TURKSTAT, 2021). On the other hand, digital inequalities are a more complex problem that involves horizontal inequalities such as gender and education (Kim et al., 2016; Arun & Elmas, 2020; Binark et al., 2021). Age groups are categories that not only have biological characteristics but are also sociologically constructed (Arun & Elmas, 2020). The same also applies to gender categories. Socio-demographic variables such as gender, age, education, and income holistically determine the class-related position of the individual in society. Indeed, it has been elucidated that women who are illiterate or only literate in Turkey are not interested in sophisticated tastes and relevant cultural activities, and low cultural capital has turned into a preventive function for this social segment (Arun, 2014). Our study revealed that married women with low educational capital set a symbolic distance between them and social and cultural activities, which can be explained by Bourdieu's concept of "habitus". Habitus, which is decisive on the judgments about what is "reasonable" or what is "unreasonable" for people's current positions in the social world (Swartz, 2015, p. 148), enables evaluating dreams and expectations according to the probabilities of success that may be valid for people belonging to the same group or class. This is not a conscious but a practical evaluation, and this practical evaluation functions with a structure consisting of experiences, daily events, and ethical rules such as "such things do not suit us," as Bourdieu states (Bourdieu, 1977, as cited in Swartz, 2015, p. 151):

> Now, I have kids. There is no life, but my husband and I take the kids to a picnic (female, age 28)

> Of course, we do not have such a social life! We commute between home and school... <Talking about taking the children to school>. A housewife... <She laughs together with the neighbor>. More precisely, my husband did not let me go anywhere when the children were young, I did not learn any place. Just this year, I could learn how to get to and from the hospital by tram. But with my son. (female, age 36)

> I wish I were that lucky! <She laughs>. Where did that come from?! <She laughs>. I wish! <She laughs>. Only in this house, with those till the evening. <She shows the children and continues laughing.> We keep fighting... (female, age 32)

The qualitative findings of our study indicated that digital inequalities were also fed by class, gender, and educational capital. Cultural capital equipment acquired through education affects not only computer and internet usage practices but also the level of need for and thoughts about these tools. The need for computer and internet access itself arises as "the result of learning, the product of a certain habitus" (Ergur et al., 2009, pp. 100-101). The responses of some young participants indicate this. Selwyn (2004) points to the weakness of cultural capital, which is included in Bourdieu's typology developed using the types of capital and involves formal technology education:

> We used it [computer] for lessons at school. There was nothing else. (male, age 26)
>
> My husband taught me, that is how I learned it .... When I put the kids to sleep, I open a lullaby for them. (female, age 25)
>
> We are primary school graduates; we do not understand such things. (female, age 36)
>
> However, poor young people who continue their education have a direct and close relationship with the new media:
>
> I can do whatever I want with the phone! I install navigation on my phone, and suddenly it becomes a trip computer. Or I install a music app, it becomes a music player. Or when I open a news site, it becomes a television for me. (male, age 17)

The elements of abandoning education early, poverty, getting married at a young age, and having at least one child are a threshold that draws the boundaries of youth. These elements deprive the individual of the practice and excitement of life, which involves a minimum level of dynamism, participation in cultural and social activities, and stepping out of the socialization environment the individual lives in. The same elements also draw the boundaries of the relationship with the new media. The findings of the study conducted by Cotten et al. (2014) with secondary school students also reveal that the socio-economic status (SES) levels of schools determine students' computer usage. According to the study, the age of starting to use a computer regularly differs in line with the SES level. Therefore, as the studies in Turkey indicate, it is not biological characteristics such as gender and age alone that determine the relationship of the individual with communication technologies but class-related positions as a whole (Arun & Elmas, 2020; Özsoy et al., 2020; Binark et al. 2021). The inverse relationship between age and knowing how to use technology, indicated by quantitative data, does not match the qualitative findings under any circumstances.

The relationship between the purpose of internet usage and social origin

In their study titled "Internet Inequality from a Cultural Perspective," Witte and Mannon (2010, p. 114) report that high-income and well-educated Americans perform multidirectional online activities compared to poorer individuals with lower education levels, and those 'specific' online activities can be seen as a part of an elitist lifestyle from which the poor and the uneducated are excluded:

> Today's well-off, well-educated consumer looking for a new dishwasher doesn't just go to a couple of stores and pick the best model he or she sees. Rather, he or she "Googles" a product type, compares several models by features and prices, opens another browser tab and checks his or her available credit balance online, and orders the product online …. Thus, online activities leave different footprints on the lives of Americans and these footprints may vary with class position and social status. (Witte & Minnon, 2010, pp. 99-100)

The common emphasis of this and similar research is that the existing social inequalities are reflected in the online environment regarding access and usage skills, and the possible benefits of the online environment cause new offline inequalities. Our study demonstrated that the purposes of the poor to use the internet did not differ. The online activities carried out 'frequently' and 'always' are listed as 'listening to music' (44.5%), 'using e-school', 'e-appointment/e-government applications' (37.7%), 'following the news' (36.6%), 'watching movies-series' (26.3%), 'using internet banking' (20.1%), 'writing complaints or comments about purchased products and services' (11.4%), and 'shopping' (9%). In this case, the internet is mostly used for 'listening to music' (44.5%), 'using e-school', 'e-appointment/e-government applications' (37.7%), and 'following the news' (36.6%). The answer 'never' is mostly given for 'shopping' (60.2%), 'using internet banking' (67.4%), and 'writing complaints or comments about purchased products and services on the internet' (72.8%). Online behaviors can be perceived as clues about users' offline experiences, in other words, who they really are. In this context, mobile banking transactions are a practice that not only requires a better level of digital skills but also includes contact with offline social life. Therefore, the online practices of married men, who are the main income provider of the household, are more diverse and more connected to social interaction processes. The benefits they obtain using new media are again limited to the framework drawn by their class-related positions:

> I drive a cab in my spare time. Finding maps and looking for addresses is easy there. I use it for that. And I also follow current news and stock market data. (male, age 41)

> If it [internet] did not exist, for example, I did not know about my past, which I now see on e-government …. But now, you can even see an execution directly [on the internet]. You can directly see the tax debt. You can see everything …. I can do anything. Whether it is about banking or the needs of my kids. (male, age 35)

> It [internet] facilitates our work. He [my husband] is looking for a job. He has already found two-three job opportunities on the internet before. (female, age 40)

According to Ragnedda's (2018) concept of digital capital, individuals turn their existing capital into online activities. In our study, using e-government applications or maps is an important example of the relationship between online practices and digital capital. These practices can be associated with men's participation in the workforce as the main income providers of the household and their connection with the social world outside the home. It was observed that many female users within the study area were not even aware of the existence of these practices. Being involved in the workforce, being involved in educational life, and being visible in the public sphere affect online practices. Poor housewives' online practices that are not multidirectional are mostly related to home life, which is their private space. Internet usage to look for handicraft samples and recipes stands out as an example of such online practices:

> If I am curious about a handicraft sample or a recipe, I check it there. It helps me. I used to go to a neighbor and ask her before. (female, age 56, housewife, questionnaire 240)

> For example, I can research anything that comes to my mind there [on the internet]. I do a lot of research, especially on recipes or, I do not know, religious matters. Because there is a lot we do not know. It is quite helpful for my daughter's studies. It really keeps my son busy. When I have work to do, it keeps him busy. <She laughs> …. If you say social media, I am not addicted, but I like research. (female, age 35)

> I mean, positively, you know, I have had a lot of friends …. We have groups. For example, I saw my primary school friends here again. (female, age 51)

When Witte and Minnon's (2010) approaches in the Weberian perspective, which addresses certain online practices as upper-class practices, are considered, it cannot be expressed that poor women have 'sophisticated' online practices. On the other hand, it would be wrong to claim that these practices make no tangible contribution to women's lives. A different study on the urban poor in Eskişehir evaluated the internet as a kind of 'window' or 'back door' enabling poor housewives to step into the public space (Ergül et al., 2012). Looking for handicraft samples on the internet or socializing in WhatsApp groups is highly valued by women, and new media tools and environments take them out of their limited social circles. On the other hand, the benefits they obtain using new media are limited to the boundaries drawn by their class-related positions, as is the case with men. Hence, the tangible benefits of technology usage should be evaluated in relation to the individual's class-related position.

Discussion and Conclusion

The results of this study, which attempted to reveal the problem of digital inequalities in the sample of poor individuals living in Eskişehir, Turkey, show that the poor attach importance to accessing new media, but access problems still exist and are deepened in their usage practices. The findings obtained in this study were evaluated under three headings addressing (1) access, (2) usage, and (3) social origins of usage.

We thought that it would be appropriate to discuss similarities and differences between ethnographic media research conducted with a similar group in the same city and the results of our research before proceeding with this evaluation (Ergül et al., 2012). The said research, whose field study was completed in 2008-2010, shares many common results with our research. The most important result is the emphasis laid on the lack of analyses that do not address the basic needs of the poor in detail and do not discuss the relationship of the individual with the media in daily life and within the scope of the requirements of the age. This lack emerged most strikingly in the results given under the heading 'New Media's Rank Among Necessities' in our study. As in the past, new media tools continue to protect their vital importance, which keeps increasing, for the (poor) individual. Another point to concentrate on is that the proportions of households possessing computers (57%) and modems (47%) were considerably high in a similar sample in past years. This supports our afore-mentioned inference emphasizing the importance of new media in the poor's world, on the one hand, and forming a basis for discussion for our study findings that reveal the relationship between usage differences and social origin, on the other hand. In the study mentioned, it was reported that diversified internet usage practices that would eliminate information poverty were not observed in poor households because online time was only and mostly spent on social networks, chatting and music download websites. On the other hand, the internet also offered different opportunities for the poor by allowing them to struggle with poverty, e.g., to look for a job, and be involved in new forms of socialization. The presence of non-diverse online practices is also an important finding of our research. In their study titled "The Cultural Consumption Practices of Older Homemakers in the Field of Television," Arun et al. (2017) stated that the owners of a voluminous capital tended toward more exclusive cultural products such as culture and art, discussion, documentary and news programs, and the same segments consumed the products of the groups who were hierarchically at a lower level. Omnivorousness, in other words, the combined consumption of programs corresponding to elite, popular and ordinary tastes is the monopoly of more voluminous cultural capital owners. However, those in the more ordinary and popular group of liking do not have such a consumption pattern. The authors express that the higher ones move downward at times, and thus the consumption parents are diversified, while the consumption patterns of the lower ones are more monotonous due to their class-related positions (pp. 395-397). This result indicates that a similar trend may apply to the consumption of online environments. Therefore, we suggest a comparison between different classes for future research.

Our study results support the literature suggesting that demographic factors such as gender, age, and education level play a significant role in the emergence of digital inequalities. The findings show, as Arun & Elmas (2020) emphasized in their recent research, that possession of new media and skills to use them is a class-related issue directly associated with a social origin. According to the results, cultural capital equipment acquired through education affects computer and internet usage practices, the level of need for and thoughts about these tools. The need for computer and internet access emerges as "the result of learning" (Ergur et al., 2009, pp. 100-101). While poor young people who continue their education lives have a direct and close relationship with new media tools and environments, the case is different for individuals who abandoned their education lives and got married at a young age. Education life includes poor young people in global interaction processes. Gender, economic limitation, and low education level determine the nature of the relationship with new media. Moreover, our research supports the literature suggesting that offline social inequalities and online inequalities feed each other. The online practices of married men, the main income providers of the household, are more diverse than married women. However, the difference cannot be evaluated only by gender. Digital inequalities are experienced in the 'intersectionality' of different inequalities, as emphasized by Collins & Bilge (2016). The use of applications such as mobile banking and e-government is associated with the contact of men with offline social life. Non-diverse online practices of poor housewives are mostly related to home life, which is their private space. The involvement of poor women and men in online interaction processes through the internet is important, but the benefits of using new media are limited to the framework drawn by their class-related positions.

As a result, it is important to support the reductionist approaches that precisely draw the boundaries of the divide with qualitative research that clearly reveals the usage differences in terms of revealing the different dimensions of digital inequalities. Our study also revealed that digital inequalities experienced by individuals in the middle/middle-upper income and status group and digital inequalities experienced by individuals in the low income and status group should be discussed via comparative studies. Thus, it will be possible to make clearer identifications on the interaction between horizontal inequalities such as gender, age, geographical location, profession and class and digital inequalities.

Endnotes

1. In a qualitative study conducted with 18 educated and urban social network users in Turkey on the problems arising from using personal data in social media, a current component of digital inequality, Gökaliler and Saatcioglu (2020, pp. 154-161) report that 55.5% of the participants approve the privacy policies without reading them and feel uncomfortable while sharing their information since they think malicious third parties can reach their stored personal data. Therefore, all participants exercise self-control when it comes to sharing their personal information.

2. For the different articles based on Bourdieu's theory, see North et al., 2008; Zillien & Hargittai, 2009; Gencel Bek & Aygün, 2014.

3. Bourdieu makes use of Weber's concepts of "class" and "status group" and re-conceptualizes the relationship between these two in his own social class analysis (Swartz, 2015). For Bourdieu, social classes are also defined according to their relations with culture (Jourdain & Naulin, 2016).

4. Ragnedda et al. (2020) developed a Digital Capital Index to measure digital capital in their study titled "Measuring Digital Capital: An Imperical Investigation". Also, for a study conducted with 1075 participants across the country to reveal the media repertoires and digital capital levels of the elderly population aged 65 and over in Turkey, see Binark et al., 2021.

5. In addition to social inequalities, the different phenomena existing in social reality continue to exist in 'new' forms in online environments, where they can find space for expression. The results of the quantitative study conducted by Yıldırım and Yazgan (2022) with 411 university students elucidate that aggression tendencies are 're-produced' in the digital environment.

6. The indicative USD exchange selling rate published by the Central Bank of the Republic of Turkey on 31.07.2018 was taken as a basis (Central Bank of the Republic of Turkey, 2018).

7. The fact that the mukhtar does not only correspond to an administrative position in areas where the traditional neighborhood culture is maintained but also meets the position of a reliable and elected community leader has been important for the trust relationship established between the researcher and the participants.

8. The status of Sevinç neighborhood officially changed from a village to a neighborhood with Metropolitan Law No. 6360. However, it actually maintains its 'village' identity. To separate it from Emek and Gündoğdu neighborhoods included in the study field, Sevinç neighborhood will be mentioned as 'Sevinç village' from this point onward.

9. The net minimum wage in 2018, when the field study was conducted, was 1,603.12 TL. The monthly household income of 83.4% of the participants is 3,210 TL or less. Of this rate, 32.3% is comprised of those with a monthly household income of minimum wage and below. The monthly household income of the remaining 16.6% is between 3,210 TL-4,500 TL.

10. The total rate of those involved in workforce is 26.4%. More than half of this rate corresponds to workers, with 19.9%.

11. Some examples are as follows:
I am not getting it because I am not working currently. (male, age 35)
Our monthly household income is uncertain because none of the family members work continuously. (male, age 19)
Well, we do not have anything regular …. For about two months, God knows, my husband has not been working. (female, age 40)

12. Since the responses given to this question were analyzed as 'multiple response categories', the percentages reflect the distribution of responses, not questionnaires.

13. Considering overall Turkey in the Turkish Statistical Institute (TURKSTAT) research, it is seen that the rate of households with internet access over mobile broadband was 79.4% in 2018 and 88.5% in 2021 (TURKSTAT, 2018; 2021).

14. For an example of research showing that the diversity of consumed cultural products and consumption channels largely depends on the cultural capital of the individual and is a result of the unequal distribution of not only economic capital but also cultural capital, see. Arun, 2014. The symbolic distance set by the female participants with low educational capital in our study between themselves and social and cultural activities is also discussed above.

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DERGİNİN TANIMI

1992 yılından bu yana yayın hayatına devam eden Connectist: Istanbul University Journal of Communication Sciences, hakemli, açık erişimli, Temmuz ve Aralık ayları olmak üzere yılda iki kere yayımlanan uluslararası, bilimsel bir e-dergidir.
Dergiye gönderilen bilimsel çalışmaların dili Türkçe ya da İngilizce olmalıdır.

AMAÇ VE KAPSAM

Connectist, akademik araştırmacılar, iletişim profesyonelleri ve iletişim politikası belirleyicilerine yönelik bilimsel bilginin paylaşıldığı, Asya'dan Avrupa'ya açılan küresel bir platform oluşturmayı amaçlamaktadır. Bu doğrultuda iletişimin geleneksel çalışma alanlarının yanı sıra sosyal ve beşeri bilimlerin tartışmalarını kapsayan teorik ve ampirik çalışmalara, ayrıca uzman değerlendirmelerine yer vermektedir. Connectist, iletişim alanına odaklanan diğer disiplinlerden çalışmalara da açıktır.
Derginin hedef kitlesini; akademisyenler, araştırmacılar, profesyoneller, öğrenciler ve ilgili mesleki, akademik kurum ve kuruluşlar oluşturur.

EDİTORYAL POLİTİKALAR VE HAKEM SÜRECİ

Yayın Politikası
Dergi, yayın etiği ile ilgili en yüksek standartlara uymaktadır. Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE), Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ), Open Access Scholarly Publishers Association (OASPA) ve World Association of Medical Editors (WAME) tarafından yayınlanan etik yayıncılık ilkelerini benimsemektedir; Principles of Transparency and Best Practice in Scholarly Publishing başlığı altında ifade edilen ilkeler için aşağıdaki linki ziyaret edebilirsiniz:
https://publicationethics.org/resources/guidelines-new/principles-transparency-and-best-practice-scholarly-publishing

Gönderilen çalışmalar derginin amaç ve kapsamına uygun olmalıdır. Özgün, daha önce yayımlanmamış veya aynı anda başka bir dergide değerlendirme sürecinde olmayan, her bir yazar tarafından içeriği ve gönderimi onaylanmış yazılar, değerlendirmeye kabul edilmektedir.

Yayımlanmak üzere dergiye gönderilen çalışmalarda; yazarlardan herhangi birinin ismi, tüm yazarların yazılı izni olmadan çalışma künyesinden silinemez, yeni bir isim künyeye eklenemez ve yazar sırası değiştirilemez.

İntihal, duplikasyon, sahte yazarlık/inkâr edilen yazarlık, araştırma/veri fabrikasyonu, makale dilimleme, dilimleyerek yayın, telif hakları ihlali ve çıkar çatışmasının gizlenmesi, etik dışı davranışlar olarak kabul edilir. Kabul edilen etik standartlara uygun olmayan tüm çalışmalar yayından çıkarılır. Yayın sürecinden sonra tespit edilen kuraldışı ve/veya etik dışı çalışmaların yayını aynı şekilde durdurulur.

İntihal Kontrolü

Ön kontrolden geçirilen çalışmalar, iThenticate yazılımı kullanılarak intihal için taranır. İntihal/kendi kendine intihal tespit edilirse yazarlar bilgilendirilir. Editörler, gerekli olması halinde, değerlendirme ya da üretim sürecinin çeşitli aşamalarında çalışmayı intihal kontrolüne tabi tutabilirler. Yüksek benzerlik oranları, bir çalışmanın kabul edilmeden önce ve hatta kabul edildikten sonra reddedilmesine neden olabilir. Çalışmanın yayımlanması için türüne bağlı olarak, benzerlik oranının %15'ten az olması zorunludur.

Çift Kör Hakemlik Süreci

İntihal kontrolünden sonra, uygun olan çalışmalar baş editör tarafından özgünlük, yöntem, işlenen konunun önemi ve dergi kapsamıyla uyumluluğu açısından değerlendirilir. Baş editör, biçimsel esaslara uygun olan çalışmaları, yurtiçinden ve /veya yurtdışından en az iki hakemin değerlendirmesine sunarak, adil bir şekilde çift taraflı kör hakemlikten geçmesini sağlar. Baş editör, hakemlerin gerek gördüğü değişiklikler yazar(lar) tarafından yapıldıktan sonra çalışmaların yayımlanmasına onay verir.

Dergiye yayınlanmak üzere gönderilen makalelerin içeriği derginin amaç ve kapsamı ile uyumlu olmalıdır. Dergi, orijinal araştırma niteliğindeki yazıları yayınlamaya öncelik vermektedir

Açık Erişim İlkesi

Açık erişimli bir dergi olan Connectist'in içeriği, okura ya da okurun dâhil olduğu kuruma ücretsiz olarak sunulur. Okurlar, ticari amaç haricinde, yayıncıdan ya da yazardan izin almadan çalışmaların tam metnini okuyabilir, indirebilir, kopyalayabilir, arayabilir ve link sağlayabilir. Bu ilke, BOAI açık erişim tanımıyla uyumludur.

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İşlemleme Ücreti

Derginin tüm giderleri İstanbul Üniversitesi tarafından karşılanmaktadır. Dergide çalışmaların yayımlanması ve yayın süreçlerinin yürütülmesi ücrete tabi değildir. Dergiye gönderilen ya da yayın için kabul edilen çalışmalar için işlemleme ücreti veya gönderim ücreti alınmaz.

Telif Hakkında

Yazarlar dergide yayınlanan çalışmalarının telif hakkına sahiptir ve çalışmaları Creative Commons Atıf-GayrıTicari 4.0 Uluslararası (CC BY-NC 4.0) olarak lisanslıdır. CC BY-NC 4.0 lisansı, eserin ticari kullanım dışında her boyut ve formatta paylaşılmasına, kopyalanmasına, çoğaltılmasına ve orijinal esere uygun şekilde atıfta bulunmak kaydıyla yeniden düzenleme, dönüştürme ve eserin üzerine inşa etme dâhil adapte edilmesine izin verir.

Yayın Etiği Beyanı

Connectist: Istanbul University Journal of Communication Sciences, yayın etiğinde en yüksek standartlara bağlıdır ve Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE), Directory of Open Access Journals

(DOAJ), Open Access Scholarly Publishers Association (OASPA) ve World Association of Medical Editors (WAME) tarafından yayınlanan etik yayıncılık ilkelerini benimser; Principles of Transparency and Best Practice in Scholarly Publishing başlığı altında ifade edilen ilkeler için adres: https://publicationethics.org/resources/guidelines-new/principles-transparency-and-best-practice-scholarly-publishing
Gönderilen tüm makaleler orijinal, yayınlanmamış ve başka bir dergide değerlendirme sürecinde olmamalıdır. Her bir makale editörlerden biri ve en az iki hakem tarafından çift kör değerlendirmeden geçirilir. İntihal, duplikasyon, sahte yazarlık/inkar edilen yazarlık, araştrma/veri fabrikasyonu, makale dilimleme, dilimleyerek yayın, telif hakları ihlali ve çıkar çatışmasının gizlenmesi, etik dışı davranışlar olarak kabul edilir.

Kabul edilen etik standartlara uygun olmayan tüm makaleler yayından çıkarılır. Buna yayından sonra tespit edilen olası kuraldışı, uygunsuzluklar içeren makaleler de dahildir.

Araştırma Etiği
Dergi araştırma etiğinde en yüksek standartları gözetir ve aşağıda tanımlanan uluslararası araştırma etiği ilkelerini benimser. Makalelerin etik kurallara uygunluğu yazarların sorumluluğundadır.

- Araştırmanın tasarlanması, tasarımın gözden geçirilmesi ve araştırmanın yürütülmesinde, bütünlük, kalite ve şeffaflık ilkeleri sağlanmalıdır.
- Araştırma ekibi ve katılımcılar, araştırmanın amacı, yöntemleri ve öngörülen olası kullanımları; araştırmaya katılımın gerektirdikleri ve varsa riskleri hakkında tam olarak bilgilendirilmelidir.
- Araştırma katılımcılarının sağladığı bilgilerin gizliliği ve yanıt verenlerin gizliliği sağlanmalıdır. Araştırma katılımcıların özerkliğini ve saygınlığını koruyacak şekilde tasarlanmalıdır.
- Araştırma katılımcıları gönüllü olarak araştırmada yer almalı, herhangi bir zorlama altında olmamalıdırlar.
- Katılımcıların zarar görmesinden kaçınılmalıdır. Araştırma, katılımcıları riske sokmayacak şekilde planlanmalıdır.
- Araştırma bağımsızlığıyla ilgili açık ve net olunmalı; çıkar çatışması varsa belirtilmelidir.
- Deneysel çalışmalarda, araştırmaya katılmaya karar veren katılımcıların yazılı bilgilendirilmiş onayı alınmalıdır. Çocukların ve vesayet altındakilerin veya tasdiklenmiş akıl hastalığı bulunanların yasal vasisinin onayı alınmalıdır.
- Çalışma herhangi bir kurum ya da kuruluşta gerçekleştirilecekse bu kurum ya da kuruluştan çalışma yapılacağına dair onay alınmalıdır.
- İnsan öğesi bulunan çalışmalarda, “yöntem” bölümünde katılımcılardan “bilgilendirilmiş onam” alındığının ve çalışmanın yapıldığı kurumdan etik kurul onayı alındığı belirtilmesi gerekir.

Yazarların Sorumluluğu
Makalelerin bilimsel ve etik kurallara uygunluğu yazarların sorumluluğundadır. Yazar makalenin orijinal olduğu, daha önce başka bir yerde yayınlanmadığı ve başka bir yerde, başka bir dilde

yayınlanmak üzere değerlendirmede olmadığı konusunda teminat sağlamalıdır. Uygulamadaki telif kanunları ve anlaşmaları gözetilmelidir. Telife bağlı materyaller (örneğin tablolar, şekiller veya büyük alıntılar) gerekli izin ve teşekkürle kullanılmalıdır. Başka yazarların, katkıda bulunanların çalışmaları ya da yararlanılan kaynaklar uygun biçimde kullanılmalı ve referanslarda belirtilmelidir.

Gönderilen makalede tüm yazarların akademik ve bilimsel olarak doğrudan katkısı olmalıdır, bu bağlamda "yazar" yayınlanan bir araştırmanın kavramsallaştırılmasına ve dizaynına, verilerin elde edilmesine, analizine ya da yorumlanmasına belirgin katkı yapan, yazının yazılması ya da bunun içerik açısından eleştirel biçimde gözden geçirilmesinde görev yapan birisi olarak görülür. Yazar olabilmenin diğer koşulları ise, makaledeki çalışmayı planlamak veya icra etmek ve / veya revize etmektir. Fon sağlanması, veri toplanması ya da araştırma grubunun genel süpervizyonu tek başına yazarlık hakkı kazandırmaz. Yazar olarak gösterilen tüm bireyler sayılan tüm ölçütleri karşılamalıdır ve yukarıdaki ölçütleri karşılayan her birey yazar olarak gösterilebilir. Yazarların isim sıralaması ortak verilen bir karar olmalıdır. Tüm yazarlar yazar sıralamasını Telif Hakkı Anlaşması Formu'nda imzalı olarak belirtmek zorundadırlar.

Yazarlık için yeterli ölçütleri karşılamayan ancak çalışmaya katkısı olan tüm bireyler "teşekkür / bilgiler" kısmında sıralanmalıdır. Bunlara örnek olarak ise sadece teknik destek sağlayan, yazıma yardımcı olan ya da sadece genel bir destek sağlayan, finansal ve materyal desteği sunan kişiler verilebilir.

Bütün yazarlar, araştırmanın sonuçlarını ya da bilimsel değerlendirmeyi etkileyebilme potansiyeli olan finansal ilişkiler, çıkar çatışması ve çıkar rekabetini beyan etmelidirler. Bir yazar kendi yayınlanmış yazısında belirgin bir hata ya da yanlışlık tespit ederse, bu yanlışlıklara ilişkin düzeltme ya da geri çekme için editör ile hemen temasa geçme ve işbirliği yapma sorumluluğunu taşır.

Editör ve Hakem Sorumlulukları

Baş editör, makaleleri, yazarların etnik kökeninden, cinsiyetinden, cinsel yöneliminden, uyruğundan, dini inancından ve siyasi felsefesinden bağımsız olarak değerlendirir. Yayına gönderilen makalelerin adil bir şekilde çift taraflı kör hakem değerlendirmesinden geçmelerini sağlar. Gönderilen makalelere ilişkin tüm bilginin, makale yayınlanana kadar gizli kalacağını garanti eder. Baş editör içerik ve yayının toplam kalitesinden sorumludur. Gereğinde hata sayfası yayınlamalı ya da düzeltme yapmalıdır.

Baş editör; yazarlar, editörler ve hakemler arasında çıkar çatışmasına izin vermez. Hakem atama konusunda tam yetkiye sahiptir ve Dergide yayınlanacak makalelerle ilgili nihai kararı vermekle yükümlüdür.

Hakemlerin araştırmayla ilgili, yazarlarla ve/veya araştırmanın finansal destekçileriyle çıkar çatışmaları olmamalıdır. Değerlendirmelerinin sonucunda tarafsız bir yargıya varmalıdırlar. Gönderilmiş yazılara ilişkin tüm bilginin gizli tutulmasını sağlamalı ve yazar tarafında herhangi bir telif hakkı ihlali ve intihal fark ederlerse editöre raporlamalıdırlar. Hakem, makale konusu hakkında kendini vasıflı hissetmiyor ya da zamanında geri dönüş sağlaması mümkün görünmüyorsa, editöre bu durumu bildirmeli ve hakem sürecine kendisini dahil etmemesini istemelidir.

Değerlendirme sürecinde editör hakemlere gözden geçirme için gönderilen makalelerin, yazarların özel mülkü olduğunu ve bunun imtiyazlı bir iletişim olduğunu açıkça belirtir. Hakemler ve yayın kurulu üyeleri başka kişilerle makaleleri tartışamazlar. Hakemlerin kimliğinin gizli kalmasına özen gösterilmelidir. Bazı durumlarda editörün kararıyla, ilgili hakemlerin makaleye ait yorumları aynı makaleyi yorumlayan diğer hakemlere gönderilerek hakemlerin bu süreçte aydınlatılması sağlanabilir.

Hakem Süreci

Daha önce yayınlanmamış ya da yayınlanmak üzere başka bir dergide halen değerlendirmede olmayan ve her bir yazar tarafından onaylanan makaleler değerlendirilmek üzere kabul edilir. Gönderilen ve ön kontrolü geçen makaleler iThenticate yazılımı kullanılarak intihal için taranır. İntihal kontrolünden sonra, uygun olan makaleler baş editör tarafından orijinallik, metodoloji, işlenen konunun önemi ve dergi kapsamı ile uyumluluğu açısından değerlendirilir.

Baş Editör, makaleleri, yazarların etnik kökeninden, cinsiyetinden, uyruğundan, dini inancından ve siyasi felsefesinden bağımsız olarak değerlendirir. Yayına gönderilen makalelerin adil bir şekilde çift taraflı kör hakem değerlendirmesinden geçmelerini sağlar.

Seçilen makaleler en az iki ulusal/uluslararası hakeme değerlendirmeye gönderilir. Hakem tarafından söz konusu makale için verilen düzeltmeler yazar tarafından tamamlanır ve farklı bir şekilde renklendirilerek teslim edilir. Yayın kararı, hakemlerin talepleri doğrultusunda yazarların gerçekleştirdiği düzenlemelerin ve hakem sürecinin sonrasında baş editör tarafından verilir.

Baş editör; yazarlar, editörler ve hakemler arasında çıkar çatışmasına izin vermez. Hakem atama konusunda tam yetkiye sahiptir ve dergide yayınlanacak makalelerle ilgili nihai kararı vermekle yükümlüdür.

Hakemlerin değerlendirmeleri objektif olmalıdır. Hakem süreci sırasında hakemlerin aşağıdaki hususları dikkate alarak değerlendirmelerini yapmaları beklenir.

- Makale yeni ve önemli bir bilgi içeriyor mu?
- Öz, makalenin içeriğini net ve düzgün bir şekilde tanımlıyor mu?
- Yöntem bütünlüklü ve anlaşılır şekilde tanımlanmış mı?
- Yapılan yorum ve varılan sonuçlar bulgularla kanıtlanıyor mu?
- Alandaki diğer çalışmalara yeterli referans verilmiş mi?
- Dil kalitesi yeterli mi?

Hakemler, gönderilen makalelere ilişkin tüm bilginin, makale yayınlanana kadar gizli kalmasını sağlamalı ve yazar tarafında herhangi bir telif hakkı ihlali ve intihal fark ederlerse editöre raporlamalıdırlar.

Hakem, makale konusu hakkında kendini vasıflı hissetmiyor ya da zamanında geri dönüş sağlaması mümkün görünmüyorsa, editöre bu durumu bildirmeli ve hakem sürecine kendisini dahil etmemesini istemelidir.

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YAZILARIN HAZIRLANMASI VE GÖNDERİMİ

- Derginin yayın dili Türkçe ve İngilizce'dir.
- Gönderilen yazılarla ilgili tüm yazışmalar, aksi belirtilmedikçe, ilk yazarla yapılacaktır. Makale gönderimi çevrim içi olarak https://iupress.istanbul.edu.tr/tr/journal/connectist/home üzerinden yapılmalıdır. Gönderilen çalışmalar, çalışma türünü belirten ve çalışmayla ilgili bilgileri içeren (bkz: Son Kontrol Listesi) bir mektup; yazının elektronik formunu içeren Microsoft Word 2003 ve üzerindeki sürümler ile yazılmış elektronik dosya ve tüm yazarların imzaladığı "Telif Hakkı Anlaşması Formu" eklenerek gönderilmelidir.
- Her yazarın aynı yıl içinde (özel sayılar hariç) sadece 1 (bir) çalışması yayımlanır.
- Derginin bir sayısında yayımlanmak üzere kabul edilmiş ancak henüz ait olduğu sayı oluşmamış olan makaleler, "Erken Görünüm" olarak yayımlanır.
- Dergimize yayımlanmak üzere gönderilen her çalışmanın tüm sorumluluğu, ilgili çalışmanın yazar(lar)ına aittir.
- Dergimizin yazım kurallarına uygun olarak hazırlanmamış olan çalışmalar, hakem değerlendirmesine gerek duyulmaksızın doğrudan reddedilmektedir.
- Çalışmalar, A4 boyutundaki kağıdın bir yüzüne, üst, alt, sağ ve sol taraftan 2,5 cm. boşluk bırakılarak, 12 punto Times New Roman harf karakterleriyle ve 1,5 satır aralık ölçüsü ile hazırlanmalıdır.
- Çalışmaların türleri; "araştırma makaleleri" (6500 – 8500 sözcük), "derleme makaleler" (6500 – 8500 sözcük) ve "değerlendirme yazıları" (2000-4000 sözcük) şeklindedir.
- Giriş bölümünden önce, çalışmanın kapsamını, amacını, önemini, kullanılan yöntemi ve ulaşılan sonuçları içeren 180-200 kelimelik Türkçe ve İngilizce "öz" ile 600-800 kelime uzunluğunda İngilizce "genişletilmiş öz" yer almalıdır. Çalışmanın İngilizce başlığı İngilizce özün üzerinde yer almalıdır. Türkçe özün altında çalışmanın içeriğini temsil eden 5 (beş) Türkçe anahtar kelime, İngilizce özün altında çalışmanın içeriğini temsil eden 5 (beş) Türkçe anahtar kelime yer almalıdır. İngilizce genişletilmiş öz sadece Türkçe makaleler için zorunludur.
- Çalışmaların başlıca şu unsurları içermesi gerekmektedir: Başlık, Türkçe öz ve anahtar kelimeler; İngilizce başlık, İngilizce öz ve anahtar kelimeler; İngilizce genişletilmiş öz, ana metin bölümleri, son notlar ve kaynaklar.
- Çalışmalarda yer alan tablo ve şekillere metnin içerisinde yer verilmelidir. Tablo ve şekil sayıları sınırlı tutulmalıdır. Örneğin; yazarlar az sayıdaki bulgu ve bilgileri tablo olarak değil, metin içinde düzyazı şeklinde vermelidirler.

- Çalışmalarda yazar(lar)ın vurguları tek tırnak ile belirtilmeli; sadece kitap, film, gazete isimleri italik yazılmalıdır. 40 kelimeyi aşan alıntılar içerden, tek aralık ve tırnaksız bir biçimde verilmelidir.
- Dergi Yazı Kurulu ve hakem raporları doğrultusunda yazarlardan, metin üzerinde bazı düzeltmeler yapmaları istenebilir.
- Dergiye gönderilen çalışmalar yayımlansın veya yayımlanmasın geri gönderilmez.
- Dergimizde yayımlanacak çalışma türlerinin bölümlerinin aşağıdaki akışa uygun olacak şekilde hazırlanması gerekmektedir.

1. ARAŞTIRMA MAKALELERİ

GİRİŞ

-Araştırmanın sorunsalı yabancı ve yerli alanyazına göndermeler yapılarak tanımlanmalıdır. Alt başlıklara geçilmeden önceki son paragrafta çalışmanın önemi, diğer çalışmalardan farkı yani özgünlüğü, amacı ve yöntemi belirtilerek sınırları çizilmelidir.

Konu ile ilgili alt başlık/ başlıklar

AMAÇ VE YÖNTEM

- Amaç ve yönteme geçiş cümlesi veya cümleleri

Amaç

Çalışmanın genel amacı verildikten sonra; çalışmanın araştırma soruları maddeler halinde belirtilmeli ve/veya hipotez/hipotezleri yazılmalıdır.

Yöntem

Nicel/nitel araştırmaların içereceği aşağıdaki unsurlar, başlık halinde verilmese bile içerik olarak bu bölümde mutlaka yer almalıdır:

• Araştırma Modeli
• Evren, Örneklem / Denekler / Katılımcılar
• Veri Toplama Aracı
• İşlem

Çalışmalarda kullanılan ölçek, anket, mülakat çeşitleri vb. belirtilmeli, özellikle istatistiksel analiz/ analizler içeren çalışmalarda geçerlik ve güvenirlik katsayıları verilmelidir.

BULGULAR

TARTIŞMA VE SONUÇ

Bu bölümde ilk olarak çalışmanın amacı hatırlatılarak bulguları kısaca özetlenmeli ve alanyazına göndermeler yapılarak tartışılmalıdır.

Daha sonra araştırmacının çalışmasının bulguları ile ilişkilendirilebilecek özgün sonuç niteliğindeki kanaatlerine yer verilmelidir.

Çalışmayı nihayetlendirirken sonraki araştırmalar için araştırma önerileri sunularak alana katkı sağlanmalıdır.

SON NOTLAR

KAYNAKLAR

2. DERLEME MAKALELER

GİRİŞ

Araştırmanın sorunsalı yabancı ve yerli alanyazına göndermeler yapılarak tanımlanmalıdır. Altbaşlıklara geçilmeden önceki son paragrafta çalışmanın önemi, diğer çalışmalardan farkı yani özgünlüğü, amacı ve yöntemi belirtilerek sınırları çizilmelidir.

Konu ile ilgili altbaşlık/ başlıklar

TARTIŞMA VE SONUÇ

Çalışmanın amacı belirtilerek tartışılan fikir, kavram vs. özetlenmeli ve alanyazına göndermeler yapılarak tartışılmalıdır.

Daha sonra araştırmacı yaptığı taramalar sonucunda oluşturduğu özgün sonuç niteliğindeki kanaatlerine yer verilmelidir.

Çalışmayı nihayetlendirirken sonraki araştırmalar için araştırma önerileri sunularak alana katkı sağlanmalıdır.

SON NOTLAR

KAYNAKLAR

3. DEĞERLENDİRME YAZILARI

Değerlendirme yazıları kapsamında iletişim alanını ilgilendiren herhangi bir konunun, görsel / işitsel / yazılı bir metnin, etkinliğin veya olgunun eleştirel bir değerlendirmesi sunulur. Bu yazılar, özgün araştırma makalelerinden farklı olarak alan araştırması içermeksizin kitap eleştirisi, film eleştirisi, diğer görsel / işitsel / yazılı ürünler veya düzenlenen etkinliklerin eleştirel değerlendirmelerini içerir. Çalışmaların özgünlüğünü konunun uzmanı olan yazarların yeni ve farklı bakış açılarıyla alana sunduğu katkılar oluşturur.

Değerlendirme yazıları için yazarların uyması gereken bir başlık sistemi bulunmamaktadır. Yazarlar, konunun özüne uygun bir başlık sistemi benimseyebilirler.

Kaynaklar

Yazar(lar)dan çalışmalarında birincil kaynaklara atıf yapmaları beklenmektedir.

Erken Görünüm olarak yayımlanan makalelere atıflar “sayısı hazırlık sürecindeki yayın” şeklinde verilmelidir.

Kaynakların doğruluğundan yazar(lar) sorumludur. Tüm kaynaklar metinde belirtilmeli ve alfabetik olarak sıralanmalıdır.

Referans Stili ve Formatı

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https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/references/examples/

Kaynaklar, aşağıdaki örneklerde belirtildiği gibi gösterilmelidir.

Metin İçinde Kaynak Gösterme

Kaynaklar metinde parantez içinde yazarların soyadı ve yayın tarihi yazılarak belirtilmelidir. Birden fazla kaynak gösterilecekse kaynaklar arasında (;) işareti kullanılmalıdır. Kaynaklar alfabetik olarak sıralanmalıdır.

Kaynaklar metinde parantez içinde yazarların soyadı, yayın tarihi ve sayfa numarası ya da aralığı yazılarak belirtilmelidir. Birden fazla kaynak gösterilecekse kaynaklar arasında (;) işareti kullanılmalıdır. Kaynaklar alfabetik olarak sıralanmalıdır.

Örnekler:

Tek yazarlı kaynak:

(Akyolcu, 2007)

Akyolcu (2007)

İki yazarlı kaynak:

(Tekinalp & Uzun, 2009, p. 127)

Tekinalp ve Uzun (2009), gündem belirlemenin, iletişim araçlarındaki gündemin toplum üzerindeki etkileriyle ilgili olduğunu belirtmiştir (p. 127).

Üç ve daha çok yazarlı kaynak:

(Çavdar et al., 2003)

Kısaltması bulunan kaynak gösterimi:

İlk Atıf: (Dünya Sağlık Örgütü [DSÖ], 2020)

Sonraki Atıflar: (DSÖ, 2020)

İlk Atıf: Dünya Sağlık Örgütü (DSÖ, 2020)

Sonraki Atıflar: DSÖ (2020)

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Aynı yazar ve tarihli iki farklı çalışmaya yer verildiğinde kaynaklar a, b şeklinde gösterilmelidir:

(Timisi, 2020a) (Timisi, 2020b)

Aynı soyadlı isimden farklı yazarların kaynak gösteriminde, yayın yılı farklı olsa da metnin içindeki alıntılarda yazarların adının baş harfleri de yazılır.

(G. Büyükbaykal et al., 2019; C. Büyükbaykal, 2016)

Aynı yayının yazarlarının soyadı aynı ise, adlarının ilk harflerine yer vermeye gerek yoktur.

(Okay & Okay, 2021)

Doğrudan atıf

Doğrudan atıf yapılırken cümle(ler) tırnak içine alınır ve metin içi alıntılarda sayfa numarası da belirtilir.

Yıldırım ve Şimşek'e göre (2016), "İçerik analizinde temelde yapılan işlem birbirine benzeyen verileri belirli kavramlar ve temalar çerçevesinde bir araya getirmek ve bunları okuyucunun anlayabileceği bir biçimde düzenleyerek yorumlamaktır" (p. 242).

Birden fazla kaynak parantez içinde gösterilirken alfabetik olarak sıralanmalıdır.

(Akyolcu, 2007; Sayıner & Demirci, 2007, p. 72)

Kaynaklar bölümünde kaynak gösterme

Kullanılan tüm kaynaklar metnin sonunda ayrı bir bölüm halinde yazar soyadlarına göre alfabetik olarak numaralandırılmadan verilmelidir.

Her bir yayın türüne göre kaynağın nasıl gösterileceğinin örnekleri aşağıda sunulmuştur.

Kitap

a) Tek yazarlı kitap

Karasar, N. (1995). *Araştırmalarda Rapor Hazırlama* (8th ed.). 3A Eğitim Danışmanlık Ltd.

b) Çeviri kitap

Geraghty, C. (1996). *Kadınlar ve pembe dizi*. (N. Nirven, Trans.) AFA Yayınları.

c) Çok yazarlı kitap

Tonta, Y., Bitirim, Y., & Sever, H. (2002). *Türkçe arama motorlarında performans değerlendirme* (1st ed.). Total Bilişim.

ç) Editörlü kitap

Ören, T., Üney, T., & Çölkesen, R. (Ed.). (2006). *Türkiye bilişim ansiklopedisi* (6st ed.). Papatya Yayıncılık.

d) Kitap içerisinde bölüm

Morva, O. (2016). Ben, kendim ve dijital benliğim: Dijital iletişim çağında benlik kavramsallaştırması üzerine. N. Timisi (Ed.), *Dijital kavramlar, olanaklar, deneyimler* (pp. 41-60). Kalkedon Yayıncılık.

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Schmeder, G. (2015). İşbölümü dinamiğinde kopmalar ve kesintiler. C. Vercellone (Ed.) ve D. Kundakçı (Trans.). *Bilişsel kapitalizm*. (1st ed., 61-75). Otonom Yayıncılık.

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Gül Ünlü, D. (2018). Kitap incelemesi [Şeffaflık toplumu: Şeffaf toplumun eleştirisi üzerine bir okuma]. Galatasaray Üniversitesi İletişim Dergisi, 28, 279-290. http://iletisimdergisi.gsu.edu.tr/tr/pub/issue/37677/436058

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Makale

a) Makale

Çağlayan, S. (2021). Covid-19 pandemisi sürecine ilişkin bir retorik analiz: T. C. Sağlık Bakanı Dr. Fahrettin Koca'nın basın açıklamaları. *Connectist: Istanbul University Journal of Communication Science*s, 60, 27-62. https://doi.org/10.26650/CONNECTIST2021-801246

b) Yediden fazla yazarlı makale

Lal, H., Cunningham, A. L., Godeaux, O., Chlibek, R., Diez-Domingo, J., Hwang, S.-J., ... Heineman, T. C. (2015). Efficacy of an adjuvanted herpes zoster subunit vaccine in older adults. *New England Journal of Medicine*, 372, 2087–2096. http://dx.doi.org/10.1056/NEJMoa1501184

c) DOI'si olmayan online edinilmiş makale

Sidani, S. (2003). Enhancing the evaluation of nursing care effectiveness. *Canadian Journal of Nursing Research, 35*(3), 26–38. Retrieved from http://cjnr.mcgill.ca

ç) Popüler dergi makalesi

Gürer, Z., Gürer, M. (2021, May-June). Fantastik diziler. *Episode*, 26, 9-12. https://episodedergi.com/fantastik-diziler/

Tez, Bildiri

a) Tezler

Karahan, O. (2019). *Şiddet ve postmodernizm bağlamında Martin Scorsese sineması* [Yayımlanmamış yüksek lisans tezi]. İstanbul Üniversitesi. https://tez.yok.gov.tr/UlusalTezMerkezi/tezSorguSonucYeni.jsp

Türk, E. (2016). G*SM markalarının sosyal medya kullanımlarının halkla ilişkilerin çift yönlü simetrik modeline göre twitter üzerinden analizi* [Yayımlanmamış doktora tezi]. İstanbul Üniversitesi. https://tez.yok.gov.tr/UlusalTezMerkezi/tezSorguSonucYeni.jsp

b) Sempozyum katkısı

Serdar, M. (2019, Aralık, 19-20). Covid-19 pandemisinde medya: Hipergerçeklik ve dezenformasyon. M. Binark (Oturum Başkanı), *Pandemi döneminde enformasyon arayışı ve infodemi* [Sempozyum]. Üsküdar Üniversitesi İletişim Fakültesi 8. Uluslararası İletişim Günleri, İstanbul, Türkiye.

Diğer Kaynaklar

a) Gazete yazısı

Browne, R. (2010, March 21). *This brainless patient is no dummy. Sydney Morning Herald, 45*. https://www.smh.com.au/technology/this-brainless-patient-is-no-dummy-20100320-qn7n.html

b) İnternet sayfası kaynakları

Bordwell, D. (2013, June 18). David Koepp: Making the world movie-sized. http://www.davidbordwell.net/blog/page/27/ adresinden 15 Eylül 2020 tarihinde alınmıştır.

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ç) Sözlük

Mutlu, E. (2012). *İletişim sözlüğü* (1st ed.). Sofos Yayınları.

d) Podcast

Tufan, F. (2021, June 7). Prof. Dr. Burcu Kaya Erdem ile Jacques Derrida'yı okumak (Bölüm 7) [sesli podcast bölümü]. *İletişim podcast* içinde. https://open.spotify.com/episode/5sz5nRZUCIE4RIKoCw8N7w?si=RJWap-AeSs2ro6IDGUcGRg&dl_branch=1&nd=1

e) Video/Film

Gökalp, S. (2016). *Sosyal medya* [Video]. Youtube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TIayzRpy1X8

Ceylan, N. B. (Yönetmen). (2011). *Bir zamanlar Anadolu'd*a [Film]. Tiglon.

f) Televizyon dizisi

Çatay, K. (Yapımcı). (2018). *Şahsiyet* [Televizyon Dizisi]. Ay Yapım.

g) Sosyal medya

Nişancı, İ. [@ilkayNS]. (2022, 25 Ocak). Sadece sosyal bilimler için geçerli olduğunu düşünmekle beraber çok önemli bir noktada ayrım var: Makale ya da bilimsel araştırma yapmanın bilim insanını verdiği dersler konusunda eğittiği bir gerçek. Bu da üniversitenin asıl öznesi öğrenciye dönük bir faydadır [Tweet]. Twitter. https://twitter.com/ilkayNS/status/1485866565337853956

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- The studies -according to their categories- should be prepared in line with the following flow:

1. RESEARCH ARTICLES

INTRODUCTION

-The problem of the research should be defined by making references to the relevant literature. In the last paragraph before moving on to the sub-headings, the importance of the study, its difference from other studies, namely its originality, the purpose and method of the study should be specified and its boundaries should be drawn.

Subheading(s) related to the topic

AIM AND METHODOLOGY

Introductory remarks for the aim and methodology

Aim

After the major aim of the study is indicated, research (sub)questions and/or hypothesis/hypotheses should be formulated.

Method

The following elements should be given in this section as content, even if they are not given as a title.

• Research Model
• Universe, Sample / Subjects/ Participants
• Data Collection Tool
• Operation

The types of scale, questionnaire, interviews etc. should be clarified, and especially the research including statistical analyses should have reliability and viability coefficients.

FINDINGS

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

After restating the aim of the study in short, findings should be summed up very briefly and discussed with reference to the relevant literature.

Then the original opinions related to the research findings should be stated by the author as concluding remarks.

Before finalizing the study some suggestions should be formulated for future research to contribute to the relevant field.

ENDNOTES

REFERENCES

2. REVIEW ARTICLESINTRODUCTION The problem of the research should be defined by making references to the relevant literature. In the last paragraph before moving on to the sub-headings, the importance of the study, its difference from other studies, namely its originality, the purpose and method of the study should be specified and its boundaries should be drawn.

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DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

After restating the aim of the study in short, findings should be summed up very briefly and discussed with reference to the relevant literature.

Then the original opinions related to the research findings should be stated by the author as concluding remarks.

Before finalizing the study some suggestions should be formulated for future research to contribute to the relevant field.

ENDOTES

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3. SHORT NOTES

Within the scope of short notes, a critical evaluation of any subject, audio-visual/written text, an event or phenomenon that concerns the field of communication is presented. Unlike original research articles, short notes do not include field research but may include book criticism, film criticism, or evaluation of other audio/visual/written products or critical evaluations of organized events. Originality of the short notes is expected to be created via new and different perspectives of the experts and veteran scholars.

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Samples:

Citation with one author;

(Carpentier, 2011)

Carpentier (2011)

Citation with two authors;

(Deleuze & Guattari, p. 1992)

Deleuze and Guattari (1992) aim to explain schizophrenia in a positive manner (p. 45).

Citation with three or more authors;

(Curran et al., 2009)

Citation with abbreviation:

First Citation: (World Health Organisation [WHO], 2020)

Next Citations: (WHO, 2020)

First Citation: World Health Organisation (WHO, 2020)

Next Citations: WHO (2020)

To avoid ambiguity in in-text citations

If the same author published more than one study in the same year: (Fiske, 2010a) (Fiske, 2010b)

If the first authors of multiple references share the same surname but have different initials, include the first authors' initials in all in-text citations, even if the year of publication differs.

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Direct quotations

When citing directly, sentence(s) are enclosed in quotation marks and page numbers are also indicated in in-text quotations.

According to Luhmann (1982), "Subjectivity is an abstract term invented by philosophers which does not refer to human beings. The real subject of social action is the social system" (p. 324).

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(Mulvey, 2012; Ryan & Kellner, 2012, p. 152).

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All the citations done in the text should be listed in the References section in alphabetical order of author surname without numbering. Below given examples should be considered in citing the references.

Book

a) Citation with one author;

Berger, A. A. (2017). *Media analysis techniques*. Sage Publications.

Kamien R., & Kamien A. (2014). *Music: An appreciation*. McGraw-Hill Education.

b) Translated book

Foucault, M. (1977). *Discipline and punishment: The birth of the prison*. (A. Sheridan, Trans.). Vintage Books.

c) Book with Multiple Authors

Bordwell, D. & Thompson, K. (2010). *Film Art: An Introduction*. McGraw-Hill.

ç) Edited book

Miller, T., & Stam, R. (Eds.). (2004). *A companion to film theory* (Vol. 18). John Wiley & Sons.

d) Chapter in an Edited Book

Jenkins, H. (2004). The work of theory in the age of digital transformation. T. Miller & R. Stam (Eds.), *A Companion to Film Theory* (pp. 234-261). Blackwell.

e) Chapter in the translation book

Schmeder, G. (2015). İşbölümü dinamiğinde kopmalar ve kesintiler. C. Vercellone (Ed.) ve D. Kundakçı (Trans.). *Bilişsel kapitalizm*. (1st ed., 61-75). Otonom Yayıncılık.

Piaget, J. (1988). Extracts from Piaget's theory (G. Gellerier & J. Langer, Trans.). In K. Richardson & S. Sheldon (Eds.) *Cognitive development to adolescence: A reader* (pp. 3-18). Hillsdale, NJ:Erlbaum. (Reprinted from Manual of child psychology, pp. 703-732, by P.H. Myssen, Ed., 1970. Wiley)

f) Book Review

Gül Ünlü, D. (2018). Kitap incelemesi [Şeffaflık toplumu: Şeffaf toplumun eleştirisi üzerine bir okuma]. Galatasaray Üniversitesi İletişim Dergisi, 28, 279-290. http://iletisimdergisi.gsu.edu.tr/tr/pub/issue/37677/436058

Seo, S. (2016). [Review of the book *Journalism and Human Rights: How Demographics Drive Media* Coverage by John C. Pollock]. Journal of Communication, 66 (6), E-15-E-17. https://academic.oup.com/joc/article-abstract/66/6/E15/4082402?redirectedFrom=fulltext

g) Book with Organization as Author

American Psychological Association. (2009). Crediting sources: Citing references in text. Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (6th ed., p. 177).

Article

a) Article

Seyidov, I. (2020). On conceptual and methodological deficiencies of data journalism-related studies in Turkey. *Connectist: Istanbul University Journal of Communication Sciences*, 58, 273-289. https://doi.org/10.26650/CONNECTIST2020-0070

b) Online article without DOI

Grist, L. (2007). Masculinity, violence, resistance: A new psychoanalytic reading of Raging Bull. *Atlantis*, 29(1), 11-27. Retrieved from https://go.gale.com/

c) Popular magazine article

Salmon, C. (2016, Oct). Ken Loach is right: British film and TV has become too cosy and conservative. *Little White Lies*. https://lwlies.com/articles/ken-loach-fake-nostalgia-tv-period-dramas/

Thesis, Symposium

a) Thesis

Kendrick, J. (2005). *Screen violence and the new Hollywood* [Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation]. Indiana University. https://www.proquest.com/openview/433bbaa0b9973dad53d0aa735d1f941a/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=18750&diss=y

b) Symposium contribution

Gündüz, U. & Pembecioğlu N. (2021, October, 26-27). Covid-19. H. Adıyaman (Chairs), *The health agenda of media in the lights of information ethics and the Covid-19 sentiment analysis of garlic news* [Symposium]. 18. International Communication in the Millennium Symposium, Erzurum, Turkey.

Other Sources

a) Newspaper Article

Lee, E. (2019, February 1). Digital Media: What Went Wrong. *The New York Times*. https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/01/business/media/buzzfeed-digital-media-wrong.html

b) İnternet sayfası kaynakları

Bordwell, D. (2013, June 18). David Koepp: Making the world movie-sized. http://www.davidbordwell.net/blog/page/27/ adresinden 15 Eylül 2020 tarihinde alınmıştır.

c) Official publications and press release

Turkish Statistical Institute (2022). Foreign Trade Statistics (Publication number: 45536). https://data.tuik.gov.tr/Bulten/Index?p=Foreign-Trade-Statistics-January-2022-45536&dil=2

The White House, Office of the Press Secretary. (2010, August 4). Administration officials continue travel across the country holding "Recovery Summer" events [Press release]. https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/realitycheck/the-press-office/administration-officials-continue-travel-across-country-holding-recovery-summer-eve

ç) Dictionary

Oxford University Press. (n.d.). *Communication*. In Oxford English Dictionary. Oxford University Press. Retrieved January 1, 2022, from https://www.lexico.com/definition/communication

d) Podcast

West, S. (2020, December). On Media pt. 1- Manufacturing Consent (Episode 148) [Audio podcast]. In Philosophize this!. https://open.spotify.com/episode/04YIh1REL6KOxlnaJWlvfh?si=86782f42 0d744114

e) Video/Film

Zizek, S. (2008). *Violence* [Video]. Youtube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_x0eyNkNpL0
Scorsese, M. (Director). (1976). *Taxi Driver* [Film]. Columbia Pictures.

f) TV series

Chase, D. (Producer). (1999-2007). The Sopranos [TV Series]. HBO.

g) Social Media

Manovich, L. [@manovich]. In the late 1990s South Korea became the leader in Internet connections, and they launched one of the first social networks Cyworld. Next, they used YouTube to create k-pop global popularity. Can they repeat their success in metaverse? [Tweet]. Twitter. https://twitter.com/manovich/status/1462405978356207626
[Tweet] for Twitter, [Twitter profile] etc., [Facebook status] for Facebook, [Timeline] etc., [Picture] for Instagram, [Highlight] can be used.

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