Serbest Zamanda Sosyal Medya Kullanımının Mutluluk Üzerindeki Etkisi Konusunda Kültürlerarası Bir Araştırma[1]

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Öz

Serbest zamanların eğlenceli bir biçimde geçirilmesi, bireylere mutluluk getiren çok önemli faktörlerden biridir. Daha iyi bir yaşam elde edebilmek adına çalışmak durumunda olduğumuz zorunlu zamanların dışında kalan serbest zamanlarda kişiler eğlenmeye ve dinlenmeye çalışırlar. Yapılan birçok araştırmaya göre, odak noktası gençler olduğunda serbest zamanlarda keyifli vakit geçirmek için yapılan birincil aktivitenin, sosyal medyada gezinmek olduğu görülmektedir. Ancak, gençler genellikle psikolojileri ve iyilik hallerini olumsuz etkileyen, bağımlılık düzeyinde sosyal medya kullanımlarıyla anılmaktadırlar. Bu çalışma ise, konuya diğer taraftan yaklaşarak, üniversite çağındaki gençlerin sosyal medya kullanımları ile mutluluk düzeyleri arasında doğrudan bir ilişki olup olmadığını tespit etmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Bu sebeple, mutluluk kavramını merkeze alarak, özellikle gençleri nelerin mutlu ettiğini ve mutluluk düzeylerine etki etmesi muhtemelen bir serbest zaman etkinliği olarak sosyal medya kullanımları incelenmiştir. Türkiye ve Pakistan'daki 387 üniversite öğrencisi tarafından doldurulan Sosyal Medya Kullanım Ölçeği ve Oxford Mutluluk Ölçeği'nden elde edilen sonuçlar doğrultusunda, gençlerin sosyal medya kullanımları ile mutluluk düzeyleri arasında doğrudan bir ilişki olmadığı bulunmuştur. Bu bulguların muhtemel açıklamaları, makale içerisinde tartışılacaktır.

An Exploratory Cross-Cultural Study on Social Media Use in Leisure Time and Its Impact on Happiness

Abstract

Enjoying one's leisure time is one of the significant factors that provides happiness to people. Apart from the obligatory times that we need to work to gain a better life, we try to enjoy and relax in our leisure times. As many studies demonstrate, the primary activity that young people do to enjoy their leisure times today is to navigate in social media platforms. However, young people are mostly mentioned with addictive social media usage which damages their psychology and well-being. This study, on the other hand, aims to measure whether there is a direct relationship with the social media usage of college youth and their happiness levels. For this reason, we took the concept of happiness at the center, specifically focusing on what makes today's youth happy, and their social media use as a leisure activity which may have impact on their happiness levels. As a result of applying surveys that include Social Media Use Integration Scale and Oxford Happiness Questionnaire on 387 college-aged students in total from Turkey and Pakistan, we found that there is no direct relationship between social media use and happiness levels of youth. Possible explanations of these findings will be discussed throughout the article.

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Introduction

Today's college-aged youth are considered to be in the group of "Generation Y", who are also called as "digital natives" (Prensky, 2001) that are born into information technologies and affected by it in how they live and work (Bennett et al., 2008). They also rely on technology to socialize with others, to entertain themselves, and to even regulate their emotions (Bolton et al., 2013). As Leung & Lee (2005) emphasize; "*Communications media are so fundamental to society that new media forms have the capacity to reshape our work, leisure, lifestyle, social relationships, national and cultural groups and identities in ways that are difficult but important to predict*" (p. 163). Recently, especially smartphones are the most irrevocable and fundamental technology for the daily lives of the youth. Many researches found that smartphones now have an essential place in the lives of college youth, so much that almost all samples of smartphone addiction studies around the world are comprised of young people (Haug et al. 2015; Lin et al., 2015; Wu et al., 2013). Smartphones mean more than just communication now (Lepp, 2014a p. 381), and the important point to consider here is that, as most of the researches reveal (Blackwell et al., 2017; Cabral, 2011; Lee & Cho, 2011), what youth seem to do with their smartphones mostly is using social media applications.

Social media use is the top priority of members of the Generation Y, who are the college youth of now, and that they feel satisfied only when they can use it more (Cabral, 2011, p. 11). Such a dependency is seen risky by many, so that negative impacts of social media use or addiction on the mental and physical health of young people have been studied by many researchers (Hawi & Samaha, 2016; Kırık et al., 2015; Kuss & Griffiths, 2011; Sriwilai & Charoensukmongkol, 2015). However, there are not much studies that look at the situation from the other side. In this study, we conducted our research on determining whether there are any correlations between social media usage habits and happiness levels of college-aged youth in two different countries: Turkey and Pakistan.

1. Theoretical Frame

Oxford Dictionaries define "*happiness*" as "*the state of being happy*", and the word "*happy*", as "*feeling or showing pleasure or contentment*". The words of "*subjective well-being, life satisfactio*n" and "*happiness*" are also used in place of each other throughout the research literature (Diener, 1994; Lyubomirsky et al., 2005).

Modern society is a society of well-being for reasons like increased vacation times, increased life expectancy etc., thus today happiness means enjoying life to the maximum (Martin et al., 2010, p. 618). Studies (Lu, 2005, p. 108) claim that happinness is not something existing independently from a person's life to reach for, but it is directly related with that person's own life, interactions, experiences, and etc. Lyubomirsky, Sheldon & Schkade (2005) claim that happiness is a state of being where positive feelings are more than negative feelings. They developed a theoretical model of happiness in which they claim that one's happiness consists of three factors. The first factor is the *reference value*, meaning one's genetically determined aspects that cannot be changed by an outside attempt. The second factor is *circumstances*, which is about the overall present situation of the person in their life, referring to their income, health, work status and etc. Authors give 60% in total of one's happiness to these two factors, whereas they give a whole 40% to the third factor, which is *deliberate activities*. This factor refers to activities that an individual do with their own will, to entertain themselves, which equals to leisure activities. Authors claim that people can increase their level of happiness through this factor (p. 28). Similarly, Peterson, Park and Seligman (2005) developed a scale in which they claim that there are three orientations to achieve happiness, one of which is *pleasur*e seeking. As studies reveal, enjoying one's leisure time brings them personal well-being and happiness with it (Argyle, 1987). Also, one's evaluation of their leisure activities are accepted to be a determinant of their quality of life (Leung & Lee, 2005, p. 163).

Argyle & Martin (1991) define "*leisure*" as "*what people do in their free time, because they want to, for its own sake, for fun, entertainment, or for goals of their own choosing, but not for material gain*" (p. 90). Leisure activities are accepted to be major sources of happiness, and because they are done voluntarily, they are expected to be enjoyable and entertaining for the people (Hills & Argyle, 1998, p. 523). The purpose of entertainment is to provide relaxing and enjoyable ways to escape from the stresses of the daily life (Kaya & Argan, 2015, p. 27). And for college-aged young people, most entertainment and therefore leisure activities include communicating with friends.

Social and relational factors have high impact on the life satisfaction of youth (Proctor et al., 2009, p. 604). Studies (Martin et al., 2010, p. 622) found that among university students, pleasure is the orientation to happiness, in which 'going out with friends' is the most predominant leisure activity. Being social and communicating with people significantly affect people's subjective well-being and the state of happiness (Öztürk & Mutlu, 2010, p. 1773). As such studies point at being social and communicating with people in terms of providing subjective well-being to young people, then today's popular activity of using social media arises as a significant social and communication tool for youth, because it is widely accepted today that youth mostly use social media for social communication.

Indeed, social media use is a leisure activity for today's college-aged youth (Lepp et al., 2013; Park et al., 2009, p. 731) and there are many studies that prove this claim. For example, Margaryan et al. (2011, p. 434) found that university students use digital technologies for leisure. Moreover, Cheung et al. (2011) found that college-aged youth use *Facebook* for socializing and entertainment, which are related to leisure time activities. Furthermore, Hussain (2012, p. 644) found that university students use *Facebook*, mostly for entertainment and interaction purposes. Also, Dunne et al. (2010) found that young people use social networking sites for entertainment, escapism and the alleviation of boredom, which are also leisure-related purposes.

As seen above, many studies (Junco & Cole-Avent, 2008) found that college-aged youth spend most of their time with media use in their leisure times. College students of today have many options to do in their leisure time, and most of them include media use (Panek, 2014, p. 562). From an opposite perspective, Panek (2014) correlate media use with '*guilty pleasures*' that offer immediate pleasures in leisure times, and states that when someone has many leisure media opportunities in all places at all times as mobile communication technologies provide, users low in self-control have difficulties in resisting them. College students who have low self-control levels spend more of their leisure times by using media, especially by viewing online media and using social network sites, and they feel guilty about that (pp. 563-570). Many studies (Abel et al., 2016; Chiu, 2014; Choi et al., 2012; Samaha & Hawi, 2016) claim that college-aged students use social media habitually and addictively. Accordingly, researchers (Lepp, 2014a, p. 386) find that those who use their cell phones more tend to depend on their cell phones for leisure more.

In contrast, Hills and Argyle (1998) found that although it is known to be a passive activity, watching TV is a leisure activity that fosters social relationships, most probably via parasocial interactions with the TV characters (p. 533). Similarly, Lepp (2014a) admits that leisure time with cell phones is a sedentary leisure activity like watching television. However, it is also "*an easy, accessible, passive, low skill, low concentration leisure activity ideal for relaxation*". According to Lepp, today's cell phone transforms the intimidating public space into comfortable private space, thereby young people can connect to supportive, yet distant friends (p. 382). Social networking sites in today's cell phones enable communicating with a wide range of contacts, besides letting users do many activities like e-mailing, sending messages, creating their own websites, keeping diaries and sharing photos, music files and videos (Livingstone, 2008p. 394). Cell phones, like leisure, enhance feelings of belonging, connectedness, social identity, and personal identity for young people (Lepp 2014a, p. 383). In sum, '*the social element*' is a very important source of leisure satisfaction (Hills & Argyle, 1998, p. 534).

Social companionship, which is a measure of social support, means spending time with other people in leisure times (cited in Leung & Lee, 2005, p. 164; Sherborne & Stewart, 1991). Relatedly, for some, use of the Internet provides social capital (Coleman, 1988) to college students by letting communication with their peers and loved ones, which is a strong predictor of psychological well-being (Bargh & McKenna, 2004, p. 586; Helliwell & Putnam, 2004, p. 1444). Valenzuela, Park & Kee (2009) review the literature and define social capital as "*the resources available to people through their social interactions*" (pp. 877-893). It is an issue widely discussed whether the Internet decreases or increases social capital. Some researchers (Nie, 2001, p. 431) blame the Internet with reducing face-to-face interactions, whereas some (Kavanagh & Patterson, 2001; Wellman, Haase, Witte, & Hampton, 2001, p. 3) argue that the Internet actually helps and strengthens interpersonal communication. Studies (Shah, Schmierbach, Hawkins, Espino, & Donavan, 2002; Valenzuela, Park & Kee, 2009) claim that when new media technologies are used to obtain information or build communities, they increase social capital. Accordingly, Valenzuela, Park & Kee (2009) suggest that since people with a large and diverse network of contacts have more social capital, by using social network sites such as *Facebook* or *Instagram*, young

people aim to maintain and increase their social networks, thereby increasing their well-being and happiness. In this context, researchers found that although partially, *Facebook* use provides social capital to its college-aged users. According to them, social network sites like *Facebook* provide identity construction, peer acceptance, leisure entertainment, and social interaction for youth (pp. 877-893). Similarly, Ellison et al. (2007) found that *Facebook* use provides an important amount of social capital and well-being to college students (pp. 1161-1163). However, when new media use time replaces the time that should be spent on face-to-face interactions, social capital decreases (Resnick, 2002, p. 21; Wellman, Haase, Witte, & Hampton, 2001). Therefore, "the purpose" of using these technologies matter more than the technologies themselves.

From another perspective, *'Social comparison theory'* (Festinger, 1954) suggests that people validate their own worth by comparing themselves with others. In a news article, Miller (2012) claims that in using social media, young people make social comparisons and this leads them to unhappiness. According to the study of Çağır & Gürgan (2010), the problematic Internet use of college students is positively correlated with loneliness, and negatively correlated with wellness. Also, Abel, Buff and Burr (2016) explain "*the fear of missing out*" in relation to the fact that people are social animals who want to know what others in their group are doing. They suggest that his is an "*uneasy and sometimes all-consuming*" feeling, pushing one obsessively to check if others are doing something better than them (p. 33). Since social groups can easily be followed on virtual realms today, this feeling drives people to spend most of their times in social media platforms. In another study, Pempek et al. (2009) found that *Facebook* is an integrated part of the daily lives of the college students in U.S. For students, the most important affordance of *Facebook* is that it allows peer-to-peer communication with their already existing friends, with old friends, and sometimes with new friends. This study also found that, contrary to the social comparison theory related idea that social media makes young users unhappy, posting photos was a major activity for college students, which validates the point that social media platforms have a significant role in the development of youth identity. A final important finding from this study is that, college-aged users declared that they spend more time at looking at others' photos and observing profiles than posting their own pp. 236-237). An important point here is that, the feedback youth get from peers to their posts has a significant impact on their self-esteem, which is directly related to their overall well-being (Valkenburg, Peter, & Schouten, 2006, p. 589; Pempek et al., 2009, p. 229).

On the other hand, Pempek et al. (2009, p. 228) interprets '*The Model of Self-Disclosure*' by Buhrmester and Prager (1995) in terms of social media usage. By mentioning exemplary studies (Stern, 2004, p. 238; Valkenburg, Schouten, Peter, 2005), they claim that via disclosure on social media platforms, young people both develop their identity through feedbacks they get from their peers, and they also develop their relationships with others. It is an undeniable fact that today, cell phones have the biggest social influence on college campuses (Lepp, 2014b, p. 219). For college students, cell phone itself represent a symbolic community (Wei and Lo, 2006, p. 68). Youth use social media for social needs (Wang et al., 2012, pp. 1837-1838). College students use social networking sites to stay in touch with their friends, to make new friends, and to let others know about themselves (Lenhart & Madden, 2007). Bian and Leung (2015, p. 74) accept that using smartphones for fun seeking may reduce anxiety and the feeling of being lost for college students. More importantly, Öztürk & Mutlu (2010, p. 1774), researchers from Turkey, found that even college students with social anxiety can improve their communication skills through social media, and therefore reach a state of well being and happiness.

As seen above, there are many studies explaining the positive side and what youth gain from the use of social media, and that is why it is significant to analyze the role of social media in determining the happiness levels of college-aged youth, and to see if there are any differences between the youth of different countries.

2. Turkish Youth vs. Pakistani Youth

Turkey is a collectivist society that focuses on more interdependence than independence and autonomy, less on personal identity, more on solidarity with one's extended family and social environment. Health, income, employment, and being married are positive determinants of happiness for the people in Turkey (Selim, 2008, p. 559). On the other hand, as Shams and Khadow (2018, p. 18) state, "*Pakistan is typically characterized by high population growth rate, poverty, income inequality, and low literacy rate particularly among females*". As a result of their very recent research, they found that in Pakistan (2018,

pp. 22-23), being male, living in a richer area, being married, educated, employed, and being healthy are determinants of happiness, similar to Turkey. Moreover, Atay (2012, p. 16) found that in Turkey, people who are at a younger age, who are female, married, religious, who have higher income and educational levels and who live in cities are happier people. She also found that (Atay, 2012, p. 11) Turkish people generally report higher happiness levels than people in Eastern Europe. Similarly, Jabeen and Khan (2016, p. 192) found that Pakistan is mostly happier than its neighbouring countries (e.g. India, China, Bangladesh). In contrast to Shams and Khadow (2018), they found that females are happier than males, and unmarried people are happier than married people.

Doğan et al. (2013, p. 39) state that psychological well-being is about one gaining self-acceptance among others and the ability to maintain those relationships. As a result of their research on the happiness levels of Turkish college-aged students, they conclude that one's pshychological well-being, which is clearly about social relationships, directly affects their happiness. Since social media platforms are mainly the place of social relations, it can be said that social media use can affect Turkish young people's happiness levels. Relatedly, according to the findings of the recent researches, half of the population (51%) are social media users ("Digital in 2018 in Western Asia", 2018), and young people spend more than two hours a day using social media ("Next Generation Turkey Research", 2017) in Turkey. Furthermore, Özata et al. (2014, p. 34) found that college-aged youth in Turkey use social media mostly for the purposes of seeking information and communication. Again, according to recent researches, the most used social media platforms in Turkey are *Youtube*, *Facebook*, *Whatsapp* and *Instagram* ("Digital in 2018 in Western Asia", 2018). More importantly, beside many researchers (Balakrishnan & Raj, 2012; Lepp, 2014a; Lepp, 2014b; White & Mills, 2012), Kaya and Argan (2015, p. 22) also acknowledge that mobile phones are mostly used for leisure/social purposes also by college students in Turkey. In their study (2015, p. 29) they found that according to the perception of college students, mobile phones provide relaxation, more enjoyable solitary times, and more meaningful leisure activities to young people. Therefore, we hypothesize that;

H1: *There will be a positive relation between Turkish participants' social media use and happiness level.*

On the other hand, Kamran (2010, p. 32) found that mobile phones are so excessively used by the Pakistani youth, so much that most of it can be called as "problematic". Jan et al. (2017) explain social media becoming an integral part of individual's lives in countries like Pakistan. Social media sites such as *Facebook* enjoy much popularity among people of Pakistan especially among the youth and teenagers. Users use the sites to engage in personal, professional and even romantic relationships. As much the site allows people to interact with other users, it also allows people to pass on judgements through comments and reactions to posts. People tend to make comparisons with other users online, all of which lead to self-judgement that in fact has proven to be related to lower self-esteem. Users engage in either an 'upward' or 'downward' comparison, where the former includes comparison with someone holding superior attributes and the latter is vice versa. Upward personality comparisons might include if not be limited to '*social status, social roles, popularity, beauty, wealth accumulation and other social functions*.' Such comparisons lead to assumptions about lives of other users which leads to depression and lowering of self-esteem. Moreover, Azher et.al. (2014) identify the relationship between the Internet addiction and anxiety among university students of the city of Sargodha, Pakistan. There was found to be a direct relationship, students were found to be addicted to the Internet in their day-to day life which has led to anxiety. In sum, sttudies suggest that the level of addiction found in Pakistani students is problematic and could get severe. For the reason that Pakistani college youth would feel negative feelings without the social media, we hypothesize that;

H2: *There will be a positive relation between Pakistani participants' social media use and happiness level.*

3. Method

In this study, we conducted an online survey with 49 items in Lahor, Pakistan and in Istanbul, Turkey, on 387 college studes in total. Our survey includes demographic questions (e.g. gender, education level), pre-questions about social media usage (e.g. "*How long have you been owning a social media account?*", or "*Which device do you usually use to connect to social media?*"), plus the *Social Media Use Integration*

Scale developed by Jenkins-Guarnieri, Wright, and Johnson (2013), and the *Oxford Happiness Questionnaire* developed by Hills and Argyle (2002).

With their "*Social Media Use Integration Scale*", Jenkins-Guarnieri et al. (2013, p. 48) aim to assess the integration of social media into participants' life, and the emotional connection to this integration via items such as "*I feel disconnected from friends when I have not logged into Facebook*", or "*Facebook plays an important role in my social relations*". Although Jenkins-Guarnieri et al. focused on the specific platform of *Facebook* while developing their scale, they proposed that this scale could be used for measuring other platforms of social media as well. In our study, we transformed the scale into a measure of general social media use.

We applied purposive sampling method to select young people who are currently having a college education (e.g. undergraduate or associate degree) and who have at least one active social media account. First, we measured the reliability of the scales we used. Then, we revealed the demographic characteristics of our participants, and their social media usage habits. After that, we measured the degree of happiness and social media usage levels of each countries. And finally, we looked the relation between the social media usage and happiness in both countries.

4. Results

To be able to determine the reliability of the scales, Cronbach's Alpha coefficients are calculated and shown in Table 1. The table reveals that the scales are high in reliability.

Countries	Scales	N of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Pakistan	Social Media	10	0.84
	Happiness	29	0.85
Turkey	Social Media	10	0.83
	Happiness	29	0.86
General	Social Media	10	0.88
	Happiness	29	0.86

Table 1: Reliability Analysis

In analyzing the data and obtaining the results of the current research; frequencies, the distribution of percentages, average and standard deviancy are calculated. Moreover, regarding the demographic characteristics, comparison analyses are applied. As a result of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov Tests, it is seen that the data sources have a normal distribition. Thus, Independent Samples T-Test has been used in comparisons. Results obtained are evaluated in 95% reliability interval and 5% expresiveness level.

Variables		Pakistan		Turkey		General	
		Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Gender	Female	109	52.4	119	66.5	228	58.9
	Male	99	47.6	60	33.5	159	41.1
	Total	*208*	*100.0*	*179*	*100.0*	*387*	*100.0*
Education Level	Associate Degree	63	30.3	111	62.0	174	45.0
	Undergraduate	145	69.7	68	38.0	213	55.0
	Total	*208*	*100.0*	*179*	*100.0*	*387*	*100.0*
	Less Than 1 Year	5	2.4	4	2.2	9	2.3
	1-2 Years	6	2.9	8	4.5	14	3.6

Time of Having a Social Media Account	2-3 Years	19	9.1	26	14.5	45	11.6
	4 Years and More	178	85.6	141	78.8	319	82.4
	Total	*208*	*100.0*	*179*	*100.0*	*387*	*100.0*
Average Time Daily Spent on Social Media Sites	5-10 Mins	7	3.4	8	4.5	15	3.9
	11-30 Mins	21	10.1	22	12.3	43	11.1
	31-60 Mins	43	20.7	39	21.8	82	21.2
	61-120 Mins	62	29.8	58	32.4	120	31.0
	121 Mins and More	75	36.1	52	29.1	127	32.8
	Total	*208*	*100.0*	*179*	*100.0*	*387*	*100.0*
Platforms Most Used to Connect to Social Media Sites	Home	65	31.3	22	12.3	87	22.5
	Mobile Internet	44	21.2	95	53.1	139	35.9
	Anywhere with Wifi	99	47.6	62	34.6	161	41.6
	Total	*208*	*100.0*	*179*	*100.0*	*387*	*100.0*
Devices Most Used to Connect to Social Media Sites	Mobile Devices	185	88.9	174	97.2	359	92.8
	Desktop Computer	3	1.4	1	.6	4	1.0
	Laptop	20	9.6	4	2.2	24	6.2
	Total	*208*	*100.0*	*179*	*100.0*	*387*	*100.0*

Table 2: Demographic and Descriptive Information

As Table 2 demonstrates, 58.9% of general participants are female, whereas 41.1% are male. As for the education level, 45% of the participants are currently studying for an Associate Degree, whereas 55% of the participants are currently studying at the undergraduate level. 82.4% of the general participants have a social media account for 4 years or more, and specifically, participants from Pakistan has a higher number in this regard. Most of the participants in general (32.8%) declared that they spend 121 minutes or more daily on social media sites, again, with higher numbers from Pakistani participants. Most of the Pakistani participants (47.6%) use "Anywhere with Wifi" to connect to social media sites, whereas most of the Turkish participants (53.1%) use their Mobile Internet. Finally, results show that 92.8 of the participants from both countries mostly use their Mobile Devices to connect to social media sites, and this situation is the same in both countries.

Country	Variables	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
Pakistan	**Social Media**	208	4.15	0.92	-0.51	-0.09
	Happiness	208	4.15	0.61	-0.02	0.18
Turkey	**Social Media**	179	3.03	0.84	0.30	0.36
	Happiness	179	3.82	0.66	-0.14	0.15
General	**Social Media**	387	3.63	1.05	-0.03	-0.67

Happiness	387	4.00	0.65	-0.13	0.21

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics

According to the results shown by the Table 3, it is seen that college students in Pakistan declare higher happiness levels and higher social media usage than Turkish college students.

Variables	Countries	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	*t-value*	*p-value*
Social Media	**Pakistan**	208	4.15	0.92	12.32	**0.00**
	Turkey	179	3.03	0.84		
Happiness	**Pakistan**	208	4.15	0.61	5.19	**0.00**
	Turkey	179	3.82	0.66		

Table 4: Comparisons by Country

Table 4 reveals the comparisons of countries in terms of social media usage and happiness levels. According to the results obtained from the analyses, we found that social media usage and happiness levels do not show any statistical differences (p<0,05) in terms of countries. When we compared the relations between social media usage and happiness levels of college students, we found no statistically meaningful relations both in Pakistan (p=0.61) and in Turkey (p=0.94).

Discussion

Spending time on social media is a very common activity for today's youth in almost every part of the world. Through their smartphones, today's youth use social media platforms actively and quite frequently. No doubt that they are using these platforms happily, however it was not known that if their use provides a general state of happiness to youth, or not. In this study, we aimed to see if there is any direct relation between the state of happiness and social media use of youth in Turkey and Pakistan. We found that Pakistani youth use social media more frequently than Turkish youth, however we have not found that social media use in leisure times lead to happiness for the youth of both countries as we hypothesized. The following are some possible reasons that we can think of related to our findings.

First of all, keeping aside the fun social media use provides one, declaring to be 'happy' may be a deeper situation for people living in both Turkey and Pakistan, because both countries have Islamic and collectivist cultures. As mentioned before, interdependence and solidarity with one's family and friends overall, and other conditions such as health, having enough income, and etc. may be enough for our participants to declare being thankful for what they have and 'happy'. Accordingly, Turkish Statistical Institute's 2017 survey ("Life Satisfaction Research", 2017) found that more than half (58%) of the Turkish population declare that they are happy.

Secondly, although our participants may not be very religious (we have no specific information regarding this), they are socialized in cultures which carry marks of religion. Deriving from their research on Turkish college students, Francis et al. (2017, p. 1343) suggest that religious people are happier people. This explanation can be used for both of the countries we made our research in, since Islam is the common religion in both Turkey and Pakistan, and it inevitably has its mark in most traditions, as well as the daily lives of their people. After all, Islam is a religion which tells its believers to be happy and thankful about what they have.

Thirdly, the happiness or joy that using social media brings one can be temporary. According to a study (Schwarz & Strack, 1991, p. 35), similar to social media use for leisure, those who watch more TV in

their leisure times reported more leisure time satisfaction. However, Csikszentmihalyi & Wong (1991, pp. 205, 208) claim that passive activities like watching TV or listening to the music are not activities that can bring/determine happiness, but they can only provide temporary relaxation. As it was also mentioned in Panek's (2014, pp. 563-564) study which correlates media use with '*guilty pleasures*', media use in leisure times offers immediate pleasures.

Accordingly, in the Pakistani social culture, the use of social media is seen as a time passing activity, which does not correlate to actual measureable happiness but rather a belief that the time being spent on social media sites and activities are pleasureable. In reality, the true gauge of happiness or other emotions are measureable only in direct contact with people. Leung & Lee (2005, p. 175) also found that using the Internet for sociability and the perception of the qualiy of life are inversely linked, and their explanation to this finding is the same. They claim that the social relationships formed online are less substantial and less sustaining and superficial than actual social ties that are formed with physical proximity.

There is however an increased usage of social media sites in both Turkey and Pakistan which allows young people to connect without the social nuances of convention and society as a whole. The new generation of people are able to connect online and share their view and beliefs in a more secure manner via social media than was previously possible. This way when these youth finally do meet in real, they have already been able to discuss many issues that would perhaps not be possible unless it was for the social media platform. Overall the extended usage of social media has enabled the next generation of youth, especially the millenials, to express their opinions and beliefs in a more open way than was previously possible. While it may not be the actual measureable happiness, there is an underlying feeling of satisfaction that the social media generation is able to derive from the abilty of being able to air their views and beliefs to not only a wider audience, but in many cases a more understanding audience.

An example is that whereas in a restaurant, we may suffer a bad meal and be quiet about it, but on coming home we are able to vent our disappointment about the experience and food on social media platforms and share it with others. This ability to be able to speak out without being confrontational would in many cases lead to satisfaction and feel socially elevated. The happiness derived from such actions would be perceived happiness or satisfaction, rather than actual happiness. Another example of perceived vs actual happiness is when we share our experiences on social media. Families whose loved ones may be in other countries are able to share the experience of memories via images and videos on social media sites. However, the actual happiness would be derived from being with their loved ones in reality. Namely, social media platforms enable us to highlight parts of our lives but the actual experience of participating in those highlights would lead to increased happiness.

To summarize our results and arguments in possible explanations, it would not be wrong to claim that findings of this study could be a critic to studies (Lepp 2014a, Bargh & McKenna, 2004; Helliwell & Putnam, 2004, Valenzuela, Park & Kee, 2009, Ellison et al., 2007, Öztürk & Mutlu, 2010) which attribute high power to social media's impact some of the young people. For sure, cultural differences may reveal different results, but maybe social media use provides the concrete feeling of happiness seemingly to only those who use it addictively.

Conclusion

The use of social media especially by young people is being researched and analyzed all over the world and there are different perspectives explaining the nature and possible results of this use. This study tried to answer the question about whether social media use in leisure times may provide happiness to college-aged young people, or not. We found that for the youth of both Turkey and Pakistan, there are no significant correlations among social media use and happiness levels.

Limitations and Further Studies

Our study has limitations in a few ways. First, we have not measured any other conditions in lives of our participants such as their income levels, health situation, religious beliefs, and etc. Secondly, we wanted to add a Western country in our study to see if there are any differences in results depending on the individualistic culture existing in the West, however we could not reach enough participants for our research.

We believe that a qualitative study including in depth interviews could reveal more detailed explanations about this specific subject.

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