



## AN EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION INTO THE DETERMINANTS OF VARIOUS SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES USED BY GENERATION Y CONSUMERS

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### Abstract

Social networking sites (SNSs) often propose new marketing channels; generation Y (Gen Y) has an impact on marketing channels today and will continue to do so in the future. Therefore, the authors' main purpose in this paper is to detect SNS use patterns and to propose new ones that Gen Y commonly uses in Turkey; SNSs include Facebook, Foursquare, Instagram, LinkedIn, and Twitter. To determine SNS use patterns, we adopt a two-step approach that examines uses and gratifications. First, they conduct in-depth interviews with 75 participants, producing 82 items. Then, they test these items on a sample of 740 Gen Y users. This test categorizes Gen Y's favored SNSs into 13 types. Four of these types are remarkable: "discovery and diary," "career-related," "firms and brands," and "coordination"; these new types are the main original contributions of this study.

**Keywords:** Generation Y, Uses and Gratifications, Social Networking Sites

## Y KUŞAĞI TÜKETİCİLER TARAFINDAN KULLANILAN ÇEŞİTLİ SOSYAL AĞ SİTELERİNİN (SAS) BELİRLEYİCİLERİNE YÖNELİK AMPİRİK BİR İNCELEME

### Öz

Sosyal Ağ Siteleri (SAS) yeni pazarlama kanalları sunmaktadır, Y kuşağı da günümüzde pazarlama kanallarında etkili olmaktadır ve gelecekte bu etki artacaktır. Bu yüzden, yazarların bu çalışmadaki

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temel amacı, Türkiye’de Y kuşağının genellikle kullandığı; Facebook, Foursquare, LinkedIn ve Twitter’ı kapsayan SAS’lerinin kullanım biçimlerini belirlemek ve bunlara yenilerini önermektir. SAS kullanım biçimlerini belirlemek için kullanımlar ve doyumlar yaklaşımında önerilen iki aşamalı bir yöntem izlenmiştir. Öncelikle 75 katılımcıyla derinlemesine görüşmeler yapılmış ve 82 ifade üretilmiştir. Sonrasında bu ifadeler 740 Y nesli kullanıcılarından oluşan bir örnekleme incelenmiştir. 13 farklı Y nesli kullanım ortaya çıkmıştır. Bunlardan dördü dikkat çekicidir ve bu çalışmanın özgün katkısıdır: “Keşif ve kayıt defteri”, “kariyer bağlantılı”, “firmalar ve markalar” ve “koordinasyon”.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Y Nesli, Kullanımlar ve Doyumlar, Sosyal Ağ Siteleri

## I. INTRODUCTION

Social networking sites (SNSs) are some of the most rapidly developing applications on the Internet, and their use is especially widespread among young people [1]. Hughes et al. [2] define SNS as “virtual collections of user profiles which can be shared with others.” SNSs provide spaces for users to upload content (such as photos or music), to send messages, and to make connections with other users [3]. The use of SNSs has affected people’s daily lives and has attracted companies’ attention by creating opportunities for both e-businesses and traditional companies [4]. The results of Michaelidou et al. [5] indicate that organizations use SNSs to achieve brand objectives and specifically to attract new customers.

On the customers’ side, social media provides a platform for customers to share evaluations about their product usages, so it facilitates word-of-mouth communication [6]. Gen Y consumers’ social media use attracts the interest of researchers and managers because it may contain clues about their future behavior [7].

In the last two decades, SNSs have attracted special attention from researchers. As a social media type, SNSs provide users with valuable features at no or minimal cost [8] and create value for their users [9]. The core characteristics of SNSs are personal profiles, friends, and the ability to traverse friend lists [10]. Facebook and Twitter are among the most well-known SNSs, but there is remarkable competition in this market [11]; even though these sites all facilitate online social interaction, they do not all offer the same services or have the same focus [2]. Thus, people use different SNSs together for different purposes, and they position these services in their minds differently. Thus, a deeper investigation of which SNSs are most often used together is needed to explore the types of SNSs; however, previous research has been limited to just some individual SNSs; for instance, Leung [12] analyzes ICQ, Joinson [3] focuses on Facebook, and Qiu et al. [13] examines Twitter. By asking respondents about their use of various SNSs, this study’s authors attempt to fill this gap in the literature.

The young generation uses these sites more often than older generations, so this study focuses on the young population in Turkey to reveal new trends in SNS use patterns. Recently, the growth in Turkish youths’ SNS use has become significant. A Turkish government

organization, the Turkish Statistical Institute (TÜİK), recently published research on its website (<http://www.turkstat.gov.tr/>) about Turkish people's Internet use. According to this report, the total Internet penetration in Turkey has increased from 17.6% in 2005 to 53.8% in 2014. Moreover, the data emphasize the increase in young people's presence on the Internet. The number of people using the Internet in the age group of 16–24 years old has dramatically increased from 27.8% to 73% in the last ten years. Similarly, the penetration in the age group of 25–34 years old increased from 16.7% to 67.1% in the same period. Based on these figures, 78.8% of people using the Internet indicate that they participate in SNSs [14].

## II. RESEARCH BACKGROUND

Nowadays, social media has become an important part of individuals' daily lives. Alexa [15], a web information company, listed Facebook second, Twitter ninth, Instagram 23rd, and LinkedIn 37th among the top websites in Turkey in August 2014. These SNSs and numerous others have transformed the Internet from a platform for information into a platform for influence [16]. Moreover, these SNSs expand virtual interactions from online to real daily life. For instance, Foursquare rewards users for "checking in" to real places at any location worldwide and for leaving their comments about these places for others to read [17]. As another example, Best Buy, a U.S. electronics retailer, dictated that qualified candidates applying for senior management job positions must have at least 200 Twitter followers [18].

Although it is clear that social media is powerful, many executives are unable to develop strategies due to their lack of understanding regarding what social media is and the various forms it can take [19];[17]. Kietzmann et al. [17] suggest analyzing seven building blocks—identity, conversations, sharing, presence, relationships, reputation, and groups—to understand how social media activities vary by function. Kaplan and Haenlein [19] propose a classification of social media applications according to their "social presence and media richness" and their "self-presentation and self-disclosure," as presented in Table 1. Accordingly, SNSs enable the sharing of pictures, videos, and other forms of media in addition to text-based communication (on the social presence and media richness dimensions). Furthermore, SNSs allow for greater self-disclosure than content communities do [19]. In addition, from a business perspective, companies use SNSs more than other types of social sites [20].

From a macro perspective, Ku et al. [21] emphasize that each computer-mediated communication (CMC) technology satisfies users' needs in a way that another CMC technology cannot completely fulfill. By considering SNS, instant messaging, and e-mail as CMC technologies, Ku et al. [21] investigates the motives that drive people's choices regarding CMC technology use.

On the other hand, in the SNS framework, two main types of utility motivate users to post content on social media: intrinsic utility and image-related utility [22]. Intrinsic utility

assumes that users receive direct utility from posting content [23], and image-related utility relates to users who are motivated by other people’s perceptions [24]; [22].

To sum up, it’s possible to say that individuals use SNSs for different purposes and that a variety of SNS users should be analyzed to investigate the determinants of SNS use. Though research has been conducted on users’ motives based on uses and gratifications (U&G) theory, these studies are limited to a few SNSs and a small number of dimensions. Accordingly, in this paper, we investigate the users of five SNSs and attempt to reveal new dimensions for using SNSs.

**Table 1.** Classification of Social Media on The Social Presence/Media Richness and Self-Presentation/Self-Disclosure Axes

		Social Presence / Media Richness		
		Low	Medium	High
Self-Presentation / Self-Disclosure	High	Blogs	Social Networking Sites (e.g., Facebook)	Virtual Social Worlds (e.g., Second Life)
	Low	Collaborative Projects (e.g., Wikipedia)	Content Communities (e.g., YouTube)	Virtual Game Worlds (e.g., World of Warcraft)

**Source:** Kaplan, A., & Haenlein, M. (2010). Users of the World, Unite! The Challenges and Opportunities of Social Media. *Business Horizons*, 53, 59-68: p.62.

### II.1. Theory of Uses and Gratifications

In this study, we clarify the selection and use of SNSs. By adopting the U&G theory [25], we investigate how and why people use SNSs to satisfy their needs. The U&G approach is one of the most appropriate for studying users’ psychological and behavioral tendencies in mediated communication [25]. U&G theory, which integrates media, sociology, and social psychology, suggests that individuals are aware of their social and psychological needs and that they seek particular gratifications for media use to fulfill these needs [25]. Many studies have adopted U&G theory to explain users’ motives indifferent CMC technologies. For instance, Park et al. [26] reveals four primary needs for participating in groups within Facebook: socializing, entertainment, self-status seeking, and information. Ku et al. [21] extracts five factors: relationship maintenance, information seeking, amusement, style, and sociability. Whiting and Williams [27] identify ten gratifications for using social media: social interaction, information seeking, passing time, entertainment, relaxation, communicatory utility, convenience utility, expression of opinion, information sharing, and surveillance of others. Table 2 summarizes the dimensions of CMC use in the literature.

## II.2. Generation Y as Social Network Users in Turkey

Generations do not have exact start and end points. Brosdahl and Carpenter [28] categorize the living generations as the Silent Generation (born from 1925 to 1942), the Baby Boomers (1943 to 1960), Generation X (1961 to 1981), and the Millennial Generation or Generation Y (1982 to 2000). In parallel with this division, Bolton et al. [7] classify them as the Silent Generation (born from 1925 to 1945), the Baby Boomers (1946 to 1960), Generation X (1961 to 1981), and the Millennial Generation or Generation Y (after 1981). Since there are differences between countries based on their culture, economic development, sociodemographic structure, etc., generations may differ according to different cultures. Kim et al. [29] examined how SNS use of Gen Y is shaped by cultural differences among college students in the US and Korea. They reveal that even the major motives are similar; the weights placed on these motives are different.

Given these premises, this study focuses on the Gen Y consumers in Turkey. In order to define these consumers, Yüksekbilgili [30] conducted a study in Istanbul, using people born after 1980 as Generation Y. In their study in Istanbul, Yalçın et al. [31] collected data from people born between 1977 and 1994 referred to as Generation Y. Based on this definition, İlban and Kaşlı [32] determined this generation as people born between 1977 and 1994 and it's stated that this group represents 15 millions of people in Turkey. In another study conducted in Turkey, Keleş [33] indicated that the Generation Y consists of people born between 1980 and 1999. The basic characteristic of the members of this generation is their high exposure to technology for entertainment and for interaction with others, which both affect their social media use [7].

**Table 2.** Dimensions of Computer-Mediated Communication Use

Author(s)	Subject	Dimensions
Leung [12]	Instrumental Motives for ICQ use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Relaxation</li> <li>➤ Entertainment</li> <li>➤ Fashion</li> </ul>
	Intrinsic Motives for ICQ use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Inclusion</li> <li>➤ Affection</li> <li>➤ Sociability</li> <li>➤ Escape</li> </ul>
Trammell et al. [35]	Motivations of Polish Bloggers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Self-Expression</li> <li>➤ Entertainment</li> <li>➤ Social Interaction</li> <li>➤ Passing Time</li> <li>➤ Information</li> <li>➤ Professional Advancement</li> </ul>

Joinson [3]	Uses and Gratifications of Facebook use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Social Connection</li> <li>➤ Shared Identities</li> <li>➤ Content</li> <li>➤ Social Investigation</li> <li>➤ Social Network Surfing</li> <li>➤ Status Updating</li> </ul>
Lo and Leung [36]	Gratifications Obtained from Instant Messaging and E-mail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Peer Pressure/Entertainment</li> <li>➤ Relationship Maintenance</li> <li>➤ Free Expression</li> <li>➤ Sociability</li> </ul>
Park et al. [26]	Reasons for Participating in Facebook Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Socializing</li> <li>➤ Entertainment</li> <li>➤ Self-Status Seeking</li> <li>➤ Information Seeking</li> </ul>
Bonds-Raacke and Raacke [37]	Uses and Gratifications for Users of Friend Networking Sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Information</li> <li>➤ Friendship</li> <li>➤ Connection</li> </ul>
Quan-Haase and Young [38]	Gratifications Obtained from Facebook Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Passing Time</li> <li>➤ Affection</li> <li>➤ Fashion</li> <li>➤ Sharing Problems</li> <li>➤ Sociability</li> <li>➤ Social Information</li> </ul>
Kim et al. [29]	Social Network Site Use Motivation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Friendship</li> <li>➤ Convenience</li> <li>➤ Social Support</li> <li>➤ Information</li> <li>➤ Entertainment</li> </ul>
Qiu et al. [13]	Big Five Personality Traits on Twitter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Extraversion</li> <li>➤ Agreeableness</li> <li>➤ Openness</li> <li>➤ Neuroticism</li> </ul>
Xu et al. [4]	Social Network Site Gratifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Affection</li> <li>➤ Coordination</li> <li>➤ Disclosure</li> <li>➤ Entertainment</li> <li>➤ Escape</li> <li>➤ Immediate Access</li> <li>➤ Relaxation</li> <li>➤ Stylishness</li> </ul>
Leung [39]	Motives in Content Generation Using Social Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Social Affection</li> <li>➤ Venting Negative Feelings</li> <li>➤ Recognition</li> <li>➤ Cognitive Needs</li> </ul>
Spiliotopoulos and Oakley [40]	Motives for Facebook Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Social Connection</li> <li>➤ Shared Identities</li> <li>➤ Photographs</li> <li>➤ Content</li> <li>➤ Social Investigation</li> <li>➤ Social Network Surfing</li> <li>➤ News Feeds</li> </ul>

**Source:** Created by the authors based on the relevant literature survey.

SNS use is prevalent among young people [1]. Ahn [10] states that youth spend an important amount of time in their daily lives using SNSs, so parents and educators have concerns about the effects such use has on their children and students in terms of privacy, safety, psychological well-being, social development, and academic performance. Subrahmanyam et al. [34] found support for the connectedness of young people's offline and online lives. Their results indicate that emerging adults use online communication for offline issues and to connect with people in their offline lives. However, this connectedness does not mean that these two lives are identical. Offline issues are adapted to the online context, which has both opportunities and limitations.

In terms of SNS use, Nadkarni and Hofmann [41] propose that Facebook use is motivated by two basic social needs: belonging and self-presentation. Garcia et al. [42] report that adolescents who use social networks intensively do so to obtain content that can be shared with friends in their networks, such as by downloading music files and videos or by sharing photos.

Recently, SNS use by young Turks has become significant, as Turkey is an emerging market. According to the "Youth and Social Media" report prepared by the IPSOS project team for the Turkish Republic Ministry of Youth and Sport [43], Internet use in Turkey is increasing every year. Among people over 15 in Turkey, 43% use the Internet. However, among people aged between 15 and 29, this figure is 72%. Moreover, 91% of youth (aged between 14 and 24) who use the Internet also actively use social media. Among individuals aged between 15 and 29, 89% use Facebook and 45% use Twitter.

### III. RESEARCH DESIGN

Because the U&G approach requires an initial pool of items to serve as the potential gratifications, we conducted two exploratory studies as a first step. This method is useful to reveal information about SNS use, as the aim of exploratory research is to deepen understanding of consumer motivations, attitudes, and behavior [44]. This study adapts two types of research: a literature review and in-depth interviews. We conducted in-depth interviews of 75 people (15 for each SNS). The basic questions directed to the interviewees were as follows:

- "For what purposes do you use the SNS?"
- "What kinds of value does the SNS provide to you?"
- "Which features of the SNS do you use, and why?"
- "What is your frequency of using the SNS?"
- "In which environments do you use the SNS?"

Then, we prepared a questionnaire with the items collected from the literature review and the in-depth interviews. We gave the questionnaire to 50 new respondents, 10 for each SNS. The aim was to determine whether the items were comprehensible. In addition, we asked the respondents if they would add more items to the questionnaire. As a result of this first step, we obtained a list of 82 items to measure the participants' use of SNSs. Then, we prepared the questionnaire to be used in the field.

The questionnaire is composed of three parts. The first part includes questions about the participants' general SNS usage habits, such as how many days in a week they use SNSs, how many friends/followers they have in their network, and how they distribute these contacts (in terms of closeness) using percentages. The second part consists of 82 items retrieved from the literature and the exploratory study; the responses use a 5-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." Finally, the third part's questions are about the participants' demographic characteristics.

The study's sample consists of Gen Y SNS users from Istanbul. According to the sample-size formula developed by Cochran [45], for a 95% confidence level and  $\pm 4\%$  precision, we need 600 people:

$$n = \frac{1.96^2 \times 0.5 \times 0.5}{0.04^2} = 600 \text{ people}$$

The participants were Gen Y users of five common SNSs in Turkey (Facebook, Four-square, Instagram, LinkedIn, and Twitter).<sup>1</sup> We used the convenience and snowball sampling techniques due to time and budget constraints. We conducted the questionnaires face to face.

When considering the purpose of comparing SNSs, we collected 740 usable questionnaires from the participants, who lived indifferent locations in Istanbul. We chose this city because of its convenience and its capacity, as more than 2 million young people live there according to TÜİK. We asked the respondents if they usually use a specific SNS in their daily lives. If they did, we had them complete the questionnaire according to their usage of that specific SNS. To compare the results for the users of all five SNSs, we tried to distribute the users of these sites in equal numbers.

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<sup>1</sup> Although YouTube ranks fourth in Alexa's list of top sites in Turkey, it is excluded from this study because the government had banned it during the research period.

## IV. RESEARCH FINDINGS

### IV.1. Respondents' Characteristics

Out of 740 social media users, 54.1% were females and 45.9% were males. Most of the respondents (64.6%) were between 19 and 24, 24.1% were between 25 and 30, 9.2% 31 and older, and 2.2% were aged 18 or younger. With regard to their work status, 48.4% were students, 41.8% were working full time, 1.1% were students who were also working, and 8.7% were neither working nor in school.

We asked respondents how many days in a week on average they used the SNSs. We found that they used Facebook for an average of 5.85 days per week (d/w). The results for the other sites are 5.30 d/w for Twitter, 5.18 d/w for Instagram, 4.20 d/w for Foursquare, and 2.63 d/w for LinkedIn.

### IV.2. Participants' SNS Characteristics

Participants responded to the questionnaire with regard to only one SNS (18% for Facebook, 19.7% for Foursquare, 20.9% for Instagram, 20.7% for LinkedIn, and 20.7% for Twitter). With regard to network size, Facebook users had an average of 431 friends/followers, Foursquare users had 245, Instagram users had 147, LinkedIn users had 484, and Twitter users had 1039. Each network is composed of friends/followers of different proximity levels. Thus, we asked the respondents to divide their networks into four proximity levels and to indicate the fraction of their networks in each level (using percentages): (1) closest, (2) close, (3) far, and (4) farthest. Table 3 shows the mean values for each social site's "closest" level percentage in the total network.

In this measure, Foursquare has the highest mean, and Foursquare users also had highest proportion of close friends/followers in their network. To analyze whether this difference is statistically significant, we compared the data for the SNSs using a one-way ANOVA. As our basic assumption was that the homogeneity of the variances is not provided (Levene statistic = 4.618; Significance = .001), we used the Welch Test to compare the groups. The results indicated that there is a significant difference between the groups at the  $p=.01$  level:  $F_{(Welch)} = 10.277$ ; Sig.=.00. To determine which groups caused this difference, we adopted a post hoc Games-Howell technique because the sample sizes and variances were not equal. The results indicated that the differences of means between Facebook and Foursquare, Facebook and Instagram, Facebook and Twitter, Foursquare and Instagram, and Foursquare and LinkedIn were significant at the  $p = .05$  level.

The result provides evidence that respondents had different purposes when using the different SNSs. In other terms, different social media outlets lead to different types of social media use.

**Table 3.** The Mean Percentage of People In Their Networks That Respondents Consider to be At The Closest Level

	N	$\bar{x}$	s
Facebook	132	32.49	21.99
Foursquare	146	49.16	25.18
Instagram	155	40.48	20.92
LinkedIn	153	36.00	22.81
Twitter	152	42.79	25.14
<b>Total</b>	<b>738</b>	<b>40.32</b>	<b>23.89</b>

### IV.3. Revealing the Dimensions of SNS Use

Respondents were asked to evaluate their SNSs according to 82 items using a Likert scale. To analyze the results, we conducted an exploratory factor analysis with varimax rotation to reveal the reasons for respondents' uses.

The KMO measure of sampling adequacy is 0.938, and the result of Bartlett's test of sphericity is significant at the 0.99 level. Malhotra [46] indicates that a KMO value between 0.5 and 1 indicates an adequate factor analysis. As a result, the total variance explained is 71.737% with 14 factors. A solution of 60% of the total variance can be considered satisfactory [47]. All the factor loadings are higher than 0.4, so we did not exclude any of the items from the analysis. Table 4 indicates the factors and their items with factor loadings.

**Table 4.** Factor Results for Determinants of SNS Usage

Factors and Items	Factor Loadings
<b>F1. Social Interaction</b>	
1.1. I use SNS to contact my friends from far away.	.783
1.2. I use SNS to find my old friends.	.750
1.3. I use SNS for messaging.	.735
1.4. I use SNS to chat.	.718
1.5. I use SNS to keep in touch with my family and friends.	.698
1.6. I use SNS because it reminds me of the birthdates of my family and friends.	.690
1.7. I can stay in touch with my family and friends on SNS.	.681

1.8. I can show that I value my family and friends through SNS.	.550
1.9. I feel close to my family and friends on SNS.	.517
1.10. I use SNS to help people to reach me easily.	.483
<b>F2. Discovery and Diary</b>	
2.1. I benefit from information I find on SNS when I make a plan.	.743
2.2. I use SNS to find new places.	.711
2.3. I use SNS to learn new things.	.680
2.4. I use SNS to get advice.	.670
2.5. I use SNS to make an archive for myself.	.631
2.6. I find interesting information on SNS.	.616
2.7. I use SNS to remember what I've done before.	.600
2.8. I'm informed about products and services on SNS.	.595
2.9. I use SNS like a diary.	.565
2.10. I use SNS to decide the places where I will go.	.563
2.11. I follow different lifestyles on SNS.	.498
2.12. I learn new things on SNS.	.472
<b>F3. Current Information</b>	
3.1. I use SNS to follow world news.	.849
3.2. I follow the agenda on SNS.	.844
3.3. I use SNS to receive current news.	.842
3.4. I use SNS for humor.	.645
3.5. I follow the subjects of my special areas of interest on SNS.	.629
3.6. I do research on SNS.	.581
3.7. I use SNS to receive event news.	.503
3.8. I follow others' opinions on SNS.	.497
3.9. I follow celebrities on SNS.	.476
<b>F4. Career-Related</b>	
4.1. I use SNS for professional advancement.	.881
4.2. I use SNS to build a professional environment.	.877
4.3. I share my résumé on SNS.	.854
4.4. SNS helps my professional future.	.828
4.5. I use SNS to see which people observe my profile.	.671
4.6. SNS offers me new opportunities.	.421

<b>F5. Passing Time</b>	
5.1. SNS helps me rest.	.802
5.2. SNS relaxes me.	.796
5.3. Spending time on SNS is amusing.	.782
5.4. I use SNS to have fun.	.764
5.5. SNS provides me with ways to spend time.	.719
5.6. I share my photos on SNS.	.424
<b>F6. Networking</b>	
6.1. SNS allows me to support my friends.	.770
6.2. SNS provides my friends with support from me.	.756
6.3. I use SNS to get support.	.697
6.4. I use SNS to help people get to know me better.	.631
6.5. I use SNS to earn respect.	.601
6.6. SNS provides status.	.562
6.7. I use SNS to reach the masses.	.554
6.8. I use SNS to reflect my personality.	.485
<b>F7. Firms and Brands</b>	
7.1. I follow the criticisms of firms/brands on SNS.	.793
7.2. I complain about firms/brands on SNS.	.785
7.3. I use SNS to receive fast replies from firms/brands.	.742
7.4. I follow firms/brands on SNS.	.730
<b>F8. Stylishness and Social Connection</b>	
8.1. I use SNS because it is popular.	.674
8.2. I use SNS to avoid being seen as old-fashioned.	.668
8.3. SNS is showy.	.647
8.4. I use SNS to stand with others.	.511
8.5. I use SNS to meet new people.	.451
<b>F9. Surveillance</b>	
9.1. I use SNS to follow my close friends.	.682
9.2. I inspect the friends of my friends on SNS.	.673
9.3. I inspect my friends' profile information on SNS.	.670

9.4. I follow other users' instant comments on SNS.	.514
9.5. I use SNS to follow the friends whom I can't meet with often.	.492
<b>F10. Coordination</b>	
10.1. I provide information about my organizations on SNS.	.813
10.2. I use SNS to create organizations.	.806
10.3. I organize events on SNS.	.789
<b>F11. Escape</b>	
11.1. I forget school, work, and other things through SNS.	.633
11.2. I'm branching out from my family and friends through SNS.	.620
11.3. I'm branching out from my normal routine through SNS.	.529
11.4. I use SNS when I have no people to talk with.	.497
<b>F12. Entertainment</b>	
12.1. I play games on SNS.	.670
12.2. I listen to music on SNS.	.614
12.3. I watch videos on SNS.	.520
<b>F13. Self-Expression</b>	
13.1. I write personal information about myself on SNS.	.628
13.2. I share information about my special areas of interest on SNS.	.511
13.3. I share my views and opinions on SNS.	.481
13.4. I share my problems on SNS.	.478
13.5. I share my experiences on SNS.	.455
<b>F14. Convenience</b>	
14.1. SNS is useful.	.640
14.2. Everyone around me uses SNS.	.622

We followed this factor analysis by testing the reliability of the factors. The reliability indicates the degree of consistency between multiple measurements. Cronbach's alpha is widely used to assess the reliability of a scale; a value of 0.70 is generally agreed upon as a lower limit for reliability, but this may decrease to 0.60 in exploratory research [47]. The results presented in the Table 5 indicate that 13 factors out of the 14 measured can be considered to be reliable because they have Cronbach's alpha values higher than 0.70. Only the last factor, convenience, which consists of two items, has a lower value.

**Table 5.** Reliability Analysis

Factors	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items
<i>F1. Social Interaction</i>	0.916	10
<i>F2. Discovery and Diary</i>	0.915	12
<i>F3. Current Information</i>	0.889	9
<i>F4. Career-Related</i>	0.909	6
<i>F5. Pastime</i>	0.900	6
<i>F6. Networking</i>	0.908	8
<i>F7. Firms and Brands</i>	0.892	4
<i>F8. Stylishness and Social Connection</i>	0.867	5
<i>F9. Surveillance</i>	0.812	5
<i>F10. Coordination</i>	0.932	3
<i>F11. Escape</i>	0.793	4
<i>F12. Entertainment</i>	0.787	3
<i>F13. Self-Expression</i>	0.795	5
<i>F14. Convenience</i>	0.581	2

Content validity is used to assess whether a scale includes the items needed to measure its conceptual definition. For this type of validity, experts are asked to assess the validity of a scale [48];[49]. Thus, the experts review the literature in detail when determining the items. Then, the factors are correlated to assess the discriminant validity, which refers to the degree to which two conceptually similar concepts are distinct. Low correlations indicate that the scale is sufficiently different from another, similar concept [47]. A high correlation may also indicate a multicollinearity problem. The last factor, “convenience,” is excluded from the correlation analysis due to its low reliability measure. The Pearson correlation coefficients for the 13 remaining factors are shown in the Table 6. All the values are lower than 0.7, which is an indicator of discriminant validity.

**Table 6.** Correlation Matrix between Factors

	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	F6	F7	F8	F9	F10	F11	F12	F13
F1													
F2	.420**												
F3	.430**	.256**											
F4	.274**	.078*	.175**										
F5	.384**	.603**	.291**	-.127**									
F6	.568**	.384**	.378**	.558**	.295**								
F7	.330**	.411**	.429**	.412**	.170**	.401**							
F8	.497**	.429**	.156**	.495**	.302**	.617**	.399**						
F9	.488**	.552**	.255**	.030	.590**	.360**	.143**	.267**					
F10	.579**	.396**	.420**	.199**	.329**	.422**	.358**	.332**	.356**				
F11	.509**	.508**	.238**	.187**	.537**	.412**	.314**	.551**	.466**	.401**			
F12	.556**	.248**	.491**	.145**	.266**	.308**	.252**	.196**	.275**	.479**	.398**		
F13	.529**	.461**	.628**	.279**	.427**	.539**	.390**	.370**	.410**	.449**	.400**	.446**	

\*\*significant at the 0.01 level

We discuss the names of the factors and their literature base below.

#### **IV.3.1. Social Interaction**

The literature review of pioneering Facebook studies demonstrates that one of the main motivations for SNS use is to socialize with other people. A factor in Smock et al.'s [50] Facebook motivation scale, "social interaction" is characterized by communication with friends and family. Similarly, Trammel et al. [35] define this factor as a motivation "included keeping in touch and maintaining relationships with others, including acquaintances, family, and friends, and addressing or reaching out to readers." Park et al. [26] label it as "socializing," but Joinson [3] prefers to call the term "social connection."

Our findings indicate that the first factor comprises contacting, messaging, chatting, and staying in touch with family and friends. The main purpose of these actions is to feel close to family and to be reached easily. In parallel with previous literature, we decided to name this factor "social interaction."

#### **IV.3.2. Discovery and Diary**

Our results reveal that people use SNSs (especially Foursquare) to discover new places, activities, and lifestyles. This dimension in our study is similar to information-related

dimensions in previous studies, such as “information seeking” in Park et al. [26], “information” in Bonds-Raacke and Raacke [37], and “seeking information” in Kim et al. [29]. However, according to our results, the users do not only gather new information; they also take notes about these new interesting things, using the SNSs like a diary. Thus, we labeled this factor “discovery and diary book.”

#### **IV.3.3. Current Information**

Stafford and Stafford [51] indicate that news and unique factors act as extrinsic motivations for the use of commercial websites. Our results reveal that people follow world news, agendas, event updates, opinions, and celebrities on SNSs. Thus, we called this factor “current information.”

#### **IV.3.4. Career-Related**

One of the most common uses of SNS, especially with the development of LinkedIn, is for professional purposes. Trammell et al. [35] indicate that professional advancement refers to promoting oneself so as to advance or augment one’s career. Similarly, SNSs can be used for professional advancement, to share résumés, and to gain new opportunities. Thus, we labeled this factor as the “career-related” dimension.

#### **IV.3.5. Passing Time**

According to our results, people use SNSs to rest, relax, pass time, have fun, and share photos. In parallel with these results, dimensions used in previous studies include “relaxation” [12];[4] and “passing time” [35]. Thus, we have named this factor “passing time.”

#### **IV.3.6. Networking**

Our research findings contribute to the literature by introducing a new dimension: “networking.” In this dimension, people use SNSs to create networks and support them. They aim to use these networks to reflect their personalities, earn respect, and reach the masses. This dimension includes the use of social media to create groups for protests and social events.

#### **IV.3.7. Firms and Brands**

Another point of view discovered in this research that deserves more emphasis is the “firms and brands” dimension. People pay attention to the criticism of firms/brands on SNSs. Sometimes, they actively complain and seek out fast replies; at other times, they only follow others’ complaints. In the literature, there is evidence of SNSs’ importance as marketing tools, specifically for electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM). Mangold and Faulds [52]

present social media as a new hybrid element in the promotion mix because “it enables companies to talk to their customers, while in a nontraditional sense it enables customers to talk directly to one another.”

#### **IV.3.8. Stylishness and Social Connection**

Xu et al. [4] and Ku et al. [21] include “stylishness” or hedonic gratification as a type of SNS usage. Another reason for Gen Y to use SNSs is that these sites are popular, showy, and not old-fashioned. As part of this dimension, people use SNSs to meet new people and to stand together. Thus, we entitled this dimension “stylishness and social connection.” As this is a new category of gratification, it requires further examination.

#### **IV.3.9. Surveillance**

SNSs have become a tool for interpersonal surveillance [53]. People follow their friends, inspect the friends of their friends, and examine others people’s profile information on SNSs. We designated this factor as “surveillance.”

#### **IV.3.10. Coordination**

People use SNSs to organize social activities, make arrangements, and disperse information [4]. We have named this factor, which includes making events, organizing them, and providing information about them, “coordination,” as indicated by Xu et al. [4].

#### **IV.3.11. Escape**

“Escape” is defined by Xu et al. [4] as turning to a SNS to get away from current pressures. Thus, we used the same name for this dimension in our findings.

#### **IV.3.12. Entertainment**

As Whiting and Williams [27] state, “entertainment” is using social media to provide entertainment and enjoyment. In our study, this includes playing games, listening to music, and watching videos.

#### **IV.3.13. Self-Expression**

“Self-expression” refers to informing others about oneself by providing personal information and communicating feelings or thoughts [35]. Sharing information about special areas of interest, describing personal problems, or providing views and opinions are considered part of the “self-expression” dimension.

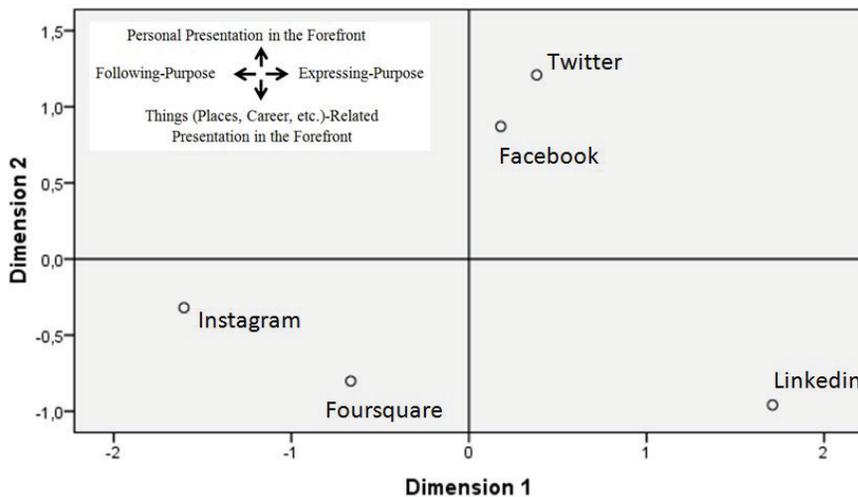
#### IV.4. Perceptual Map of SNSs Based on Their Types of Use

In the first stage, we determined that people use different types of networks with different SNSs, probably because of different types of social media use. Then, we investigated the determinants of social media use. If the statement in the first stage is true, then users should perceive SNSs differently based on their uses. Thus, we used multidimensional scaling on the 13 social media use factors to visualize the location of the five SNSs.

To determine the model's goodness of fit, we used the stress measure and the R<sup>2</sup> measure. A stress measure close to zero indicates that the configuration distances are adequate relative to the original distances [54], and an R<sup>2</sup> measure of 0.60 or better is considered acceptable [47]. Our results indicate an acceptable model: the stress measure is 0.088, and the R<sup>2</sup> measure is 0.944. Table 7 lists these coordinates. Figure 1 is a perceptual map of the social media sites; they are well-distinguished according to their types of use.

**Table 7.** Coordinates of SNSs for Multidimensional Scaling

<i>Social Media</i>	<i>Dimension 1</i>	<i>Dimension 2</i>
Facebook	.1790	.8708
Foursquare	-.6656	-.8014
Instagram	-1.6043	-.3200
LinkedIn	1.7093	-.9585
Twitter	.3816	1.2091



**Figure 1.** Perceptual Map of SNSs According to Types of Use

Different SNSs appeal to different uses. Table 8 shows which SNSs have the highest scores for the different factors. This table can be interpreted together with Figure 1, which shows the positioning of the SNSs.

Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn form a group on the right side of Figure 1. These three SNSs have higher means in terms of “current information,” “coordination,” “entertainment,” and “self-expression.” Thus, these SNSs are mainly used to express opinions and inform people about organizations. On the left side, Instagram and Foursquare have higher means for “discovery and diary,” “passing time,” and “surveillance.” These two SNSs are generally used to follow people or obtain information.

The top part of the figure consists of Twitter and Facebook, which have higher means for “social interaction,” “current information,” “coordination,” “entertainment,” and “self-expression.” This indicates that Twitter and Facebook are mainly used for personal presentation. People share information, organize events, and express themselves on these sites; in short, they socially interact. Instagram, Foursquare, and LinkedIn form the group on the bottom of the figure. LinkedIn has the highest average for the “career-related” dimension. People share their résumés and follow professional opportunities on this site; in other words, they try to build their professional careers. Foursquare and Instagram have the highest means for “discovery and diary,” which means that people use them to investigate new places, lifestyles, and so on. To summarize, these three SNSs emphasize things rather than people.

**Table 8.** Means and Standard Deviations of Factors for Different SNSs

	Facebook		Foursquare		Instagram		LinkedIn		Twitter	
	$\bar{x}$	<i>s</i>	$\bar{x}$	<i>s</i>	$\bar{x}$	<i>s</i>	$\bar{x}$	<i>s</i>	$\bar{x}$	<i>s</i>
F1	3.20	.82	2.72	.63	1.95	.55	2.30	.73	2.66	1.06
F2	2.61	.79	3.65	.58	3.09	.75	2.44	.75	3.05	.82
F3	3.08	.76	2.29	.61	2.45	.60	2.65	.80	3.95	.60
F4	2.21	.82	2.23	.64	1.67	.55	3.68	.92	2.31	.95
F5	3.21	.80	3.68	.66	3.99	.86	2.66	.77	3.60	.89
F6	2.45	.89	2.60	.84	2.17	.75	2.88	.73	2.86	1.06
F7	2.19	.99	2.61	.95	1.87	.81	2.46	.91	2.80	1.17
F8	2.07	.91	3.19	.82	1.99	.61	2.72	.84	2.60	1.01
F9	3.40	.84	3.44	.61	3.52	.90	2.86	.74	3.30	.99
F10	2.65	1.11	2.24	.77	1.96	.77	2.02	.96	2.48	1.15
F11	2.33	.89	2.69	.74	2.38	.78	2.10	.90	2.48	1.04
F12	2.76	.99	1.54	.61	1.77	.51	1.90	1.05	2.47	1.18
F13	2.97	.88	2.74	.60	2.59	.78	2.73	.71	3.47	.98
F14	3.48	.85	3.75	.71	3.33	.74	2.94	.85	3.60	.81

## V. CONCLUSION

With developing technology, SNSs have become a subject of investigation for numerous researchers. In particular, the reasons for using these sites have become interesting topics. However, these studies are limited to certain SNSs. This study tries to expand knowledge by considering different SNSs and by attempting to position these SNSs in consumers' minds.

As Gen Y is increasingly using SNSs and these sites are attracting more interest in the literature, social media use becomes important in analyzing that generation's behavior. In previous studies, researchers have analyzed the U&G of different CMC methods, but the differences between SNSs still need to be explored. This study reveals 13 factors in Gen Y's SNS usage and differentiates SNSs according to these dimensions. Among the factors revealed, four factors particularly represent the characteristics of Gen Y. First, the factor "discovery diary" comes from Gen Y's openness to change. Second, members of this generation search for career advancement and work/life balance, resulting in "career-related" uses of SNSs. Third, these young people value others' opinions on social media and use their feedback about the brands or products they use to feel important [55]; this is part of the factor "firms and brands." Lastly, young people organize groups through social media, such as during the recent Arab Spring. We refer to these actions as "coordination" in this study.

Different SNSs provide different services to customers, so individuals position SNSs differently in their minds. That's why we used multidimensional scaling to reveal how Gen Y users perceive these sites. According to this perceptual map, it's clear that Twitter and Facebook are closer to each other than to the other sites; these two SNSs are used for personal presentation and self-expression. Individuals on these sites, for example, express their opinions and publish their photos. In addition, Instagram and Foursquare are also closer to each other than to the other sites; they are where people share information related to their private lives. LinkedIn seems to be in a different position in the consumers' minds. It's used for professional purposes. People mostly share professional details such as their backgrounds.

Academics can apply SNS use dimensions to see how they relate to other psychological constructs, such as the personalities of SNS users. On the practitioners' side, these dimensions provide important marketing-strategy cues. Especially considering the positioning of SNSs, the "firms and brands" dimension should be investigated in relation to eWOM strategies. Gen Y considers different aspects of SNSs, so firms and brands should design and communicate accordingly. This may also help marketers to choose the right SNS for their social media marketing and to reach different types of SNS users.

Although this study has yielded some preliminary findings, it has also several limitations. As this study focuses only on the most common SNSs, niche sites should also be researched. On the methodological side, because this study uses nonrandom sampling techniques, generalization of its findings should be approached with caution.

Our results indicate that all the SNSs except LinkedIn have higher scores for “passing time” and “surveillance,” which indicates that consumers spend more time on these SNSs than on LinkedIn. Thus, the social and psychological consequences of such Internet habits should be researched. The results of differentiating SNSs also indicate that there is an unexplored, differentiated quadrant for newcomers to the sector: following personal presentations. In addition, different SNSs are most commonly used in different cultures, so other cultures should be analyzed using these dimensions. The changes in SNS users’ behaviors over time should also be analyzed in future studies.

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