EXAMINATION OF THE SOCIAL MEDIA USERS' ATTITUDE CONCERNING SOCIAL MEDIA

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ABSTRACT

In this research, it is aimed to determine the social media usage characteristics of social media users and to examine their social media attitudes in terms of various variables. The population of the research, which was carried out as a descriptive study in the survey model, consists of social media users. The sample of the study is convenience sampling model as a non-probability sampling method. In this context, 462 users were reached through a page on Instagram. "Personal Information Form" prepared by the researcher and "Social Media Attitude Scale" consisting of 4 factors and 23 items were used as data collection tools. The data obtained from the study were analyzed with the SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) program. In the research, frequency and percentage distributions describing social media usage characteristics of social media users were created. Then, to understand whether the attitudes of social media users towards social media differ significantly in terms of different variables, independent samples "t-test" was conducted for bivariate groups. "One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)" was performed in groups with more than two variables. According to the findings, nearly half of the participants spend 3-4 hours a day on the Internet. Participants, they connect to the Internet mostly with their mobile phones, use the Internet mostly for access to social media, and spend most of their time on the social media platform Instagram. They use social media mostly for communication purposes. Although the attitudes of the participants towards social media were determined at a moderate level, significant differences were also found in terms of gender, age, and education level variables.

Keywords: Instagram, Social Media, Attitude.

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SOSYAL MEDYA KULLANICILARININ SOSYAL MEDYAYA İLİŞKİN TUTUMLARININ İNCELENMESİ

ÖZ

Bu araştırmada, sosyal medya kullanıcılarının sosyal medya kullanım özelliklerinin belirlenmesi ve sosyal medya tutumlarının çeşitli değişkenler açısından incelenmesi amaçlanmıştır. Tarama türünde betimsel bir çalışma olarak gerçekleştirilen araştırmanın evrenini sosyal medya kullanıcıları oluşturmaktadır. Araştırmanın örneklemi ise olasılığı bilinmeyen örnekleme yöntemlerinden kolaylıkla bulunabilen örnekleme yöntemi ile belirlenmiştir. Bu bağlamda Instagram adlı sosyal medya platformunda paylaşımlarda bulunan bir sayfa aracılığıyla 462 kullanıcıya ulaşılmıştır. Veri toplama aracı olarak, araştırmacı tarafından hazırlanan "Kişisel Bilgi formu" ve 4 faktör ve 23 maddeden oluşan "Sosyal Medya Tutum Ölçeği" kullanılmıştır. Çalışmadan elde edilen veriler SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) paket programı ile analiz edilmiştir. Araştırmada, sosyal medya kullanıcılarının sosyal medya kullanım özelliklerini betimleyici frekans ve yüzde dağılımları çıkarılmış, ardından sosyal medya kullanıcılarının sosyal medyaya ilişkin tutumlarının farklı değişkenler açısından anlamlı seviyede farklılaşıp farklılaşmadığını anlamak amacıyla iki değişkenli gruplar için bağımsız örneklemler "t-testi", iki değişkenden fazla gruplardaysa "Tek Yönlü Varyans Analizi (ANOVA)" yapılmıştır. Araştırmadan elde edilen bulgulara göre; katılımcıların yarısına yakını günde 3-4 saat aralığında internette vakit geçirmektedir. Katılımcılar; internete en çok cep telefonları ile bağlanmakta, interneti en çok sosyal medyaya erişim amacıyla kullanmakta, en çok Instagram sosyal medya platformunda vakit geçirmektedirler. Sosyal medyayı ise en çok iletişim kurma amacıyla kullanmaktadırlar. Katılımcıların sosyal medyaya ilişkin tutumları orta düzeyde tespit edilmiş olmakla birlikte cinsiyet, yaş ve eğitim seviyesi değişkenleri açısından da anlamlı farklılıklar bulunmuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Instagram, Sosyal Medya, Tutum.

1. INTRODUCTION

Man, as a social being, has always tried to interact with each other in the historical process of life and communication. In the processes, while interpersonal communication was provided through written communication tools and landline telephones at the beginning, thanks to the developing technology, the audio communication tool made a significant progress with the radio and subsequently with mass media such as television providing both auditory and visual communication. The possibilities offered by the developing communication technologies are increasing day by day, and they have also led to the emergence of new media tools. New media has reshaped communication by providing people with the opportunity to communicate in many ways, as well as giving people the privilege of giving news and being the news itself rather than receiving news (Canan, 2013). Incredibly rapid developments in computer and Internet technologies, especially in the 21st century, have provided unpredictable advances in communication tools.

The Internet, which has become an important part of daily life, has changed the way of communication between individuals. The Internet has enabled individuals exposed to mass media to shape their media tools according to their own wishes and needs and has transformed individuals from passive audience to active participants. With this transformation, the Internet has become a medium where all the information in the world is collected and shared from the same center, and users can produce content thanks to various applications and tools. Especially thanks to social media platforms, the Internet has become an effective communication tool by enabling communication and mutual interaction in many ways (Özdayı, 2010).

People communicate and interact with each other in digital environments through the social media tools, social networks, virtual games, and mobile applications. Social media: It is defined as an environment where users share their ideas, experiences, feelings, and thoughts, visual or auditory content with each other (Lai & Turban, 2008). With the help of platforms and forums created in social media, anyone can freely share their ideas and thoughts by writing, millions of people can easily communicate with each other, and people can play games and have fun on the platforms they are interested in (Aksak, 2017). Social media encourages people to communicate, interact, produce, consume, and share with each other quickly and easily, without time and place limits. In this context, the biggest difference of social media from traditional media is the existence of mutual communication and interaction. Users can give equal feedback to the shared posts and thus a two-way communication can be achieved.

Recently, social media has become an indispensable component of life for all age groups in almost every field and environment. According to the first quarter data of the "Global Digital" 2021 research conducted annually by We Are Social and Hootsuite (2021) on Internet, social media and mobile user statistics around the world, the number of Internet users worldwide increased by 3,96 percent at the end of April compared to January 2020 data, reaching 4,72 billion. The number of social media users increased by 533 million and reached 4.33 billion. This number shows that 55.1% of the world's population are social media users. When we look at the data on a Turkey basis, the number of Internet users in Turkey increased by 6% with 3.7 million and the number of current Internet users with 65.8 million constitutes 77.7% of Turkey's population. Active social media users in Turkey exceeded 60 million.

With the process that started with the increase in the use of social media, the society has become a content producer and consumer, and some needs that could not be satisfied with traditional media before were started to be met by the variety of content produced by these tools. It is seen that individuals who have memberships in different social media tools use social media for various reasons (Koçak & Yıldız 2020). These are usually; to communicate with family and

friends, to maintain this communication, to seek information, to access information, to share information, to meet new people and to introduce themselves to them, to share their personal life, to spend time, to meet their need for fun, to start a romantic relationship, to follow the posts of other accounts they follow, shopping, sharing visual, written or musical information through their own accounts, being recognized and following other individuals (Elmalı 2020; Koçak & Yıldız 2020; Uzun et al. 2019). Individuals can meet their needs, such as developing personal relationships, making new friends, and maintaining their relationships with their friends through social media, virtually for psychological satisfaction (Dirik, 2018).

Today, while most of the people become active users for a longer period of time due to the social interaction opportunity offered by social media, their real-life social interactions are negatively affected. Individuals exist in social media and can eliminate the expected social contact in real life by maintaining their relationships in the virtual environment. It can be considered as a kind of addiction when individuals spend more than necessary time on a subject, event, object, or tool, in a way that will affect their daily life, in a way and size that will have an impact on their relationships and communication (Aktan, 2018). Social media covers a significant part of the daily activities of users, thanks to its new and never-before-seen format, content, and communication infrastructure. In this respect, social media can be considered as a new addiction element. In other words, the services offered by social media to individuals and the technical infrastructure can cause addiction by causing problematic use of individuals. Among the negative factors of social media, long-term, uncontrolled, unconscious, and out of real purpose use can be mentioned. These negativities negatively affect the moral development, personal skills, and social development of the individual. As a result, it is possible to talk about individuals who have high levels of anxiety, behave aggressively, and have insufficient self-confidence (Yüksel & Yılmaz, 2016).

At the same time, the fact that individuals are on social media platforms for a long time causes them to disrupt their responsibilities and have sleep problems due to the lack of sleep patterns. In addition to these, it has been understood that students who spend time on social media platforms for a long time have problems in their classes and continuing school. In addition to these, individuals experience problems in their relations with the environment, psychological problems, anxiety, and communication problems (Gök, 2017).

Consistent and persistent beliefs and intuitions about a person, object or event are called attitudes. These beliefs and intuitions shape the behavior of the individual towards that person, object, or event. In other words, attitude is the possible reaction of an individual to a situation, case, or phenomenon (Argın 2013). This response can be positive, negative, or neutral. Individuals' attitudes towards social media also affect their use of social media. These usage characteristics determine which of the positive or negative situations in the literature on social media will be experienced by individuals. In this context, when the social media attitudes of individuals and their social media usage characteristics are examined; the attitudes of individuals towards social media were revealed in terms of various variables with various sample groups (Alican & Saban 2013; Argın 2013; Atalay 2014; Meltem 2020). In their study, Alican and Saban (2013) concluded that students' attitudes towards social media are partially positive, males have more positive attitudes towards social media than females, and there is no significant difference between the attitudes of middle school and high school students towards social media. Otrar and Argın (2016) concluded in their study that students' social media attitudes did not show a significant difference according to the gender variable, but a significant difference was observed according to the school type and grade level variables. Aküzüm and Saraçoğlu (2017) reported in their research on pre-service teachers that the dimension with the highest level of participation by the pre-service teachers was the dimension of "social isolation"

in which negative expressions about social media were included, and the dimension with the lowest level of participation was the dimension of "social competence". Kırnık et al. (2018) found that the variables of Internet connection, computer ownership, and Internet connection did not affect pre-service teachers' attitudes towards social media; it was found that the variables of gender, type of device used to connect to the Internet, membership of any social network, purpose of using the Internet and the duration of daily Internet use were found to be effective. As a result of the study conducted by Mollaoğlu et al. (2019) for associate degree students, it was determined that students spend most of their time on social media and the use of social media has become an important part of young people's daily life activities. In addition, it has been revealed that students use social media mostly for social sharing activities (photo-video sharing, chatting), very few students benefit from these networks to contribute to their education, and they have a positive attitude towards social media. Akyürek (2020) found that students' attitudes towards social media are moderate in his study. In addition, it was concluded that the students' perceptions of their level of attitude towards social media did not show a significant difference according to gender, school type and grade level. Kayacı (2021), in his study, concluded that the social media attitudes of high school students are partially positive, the attitudes of males towards social media are more positive in terms of gender, and there is no significant difference according to grade level.

When the national and international studies on social media usage characteristics and attitudes towards social media are examined; it has been noted that there are many studies in the literature, but there is no study directly on the social media usage characteristics and attitude levels of social media users. Considering the level of social media use in Turkey and all over the world, it is thought that important findings will emerge from the study in which there is such a sample difference. In addition, the sample of the study was not limited to individuals at a certain level of education. People from many educational levels, from secondary school to graduate education, participated in the study. In addition, the age range of the people participating in the study is quite wide. It is foreseen that these situations will give more comprehensive results in terms of revealing the attitude towards social media. In this context, answers were sought to the following research questions:

1) Social media users:
   o How long do they use the Internet daily?
   o What device do they use to connect to the Internet the most?
   o For what purpose do they use the Internet?
   o Which social networking platforms do they spend time on?
   o For what purpose do they use social networking platforms?
   o When they meet with their friends, what are their complaints frequency about dealing with the phone of their friends?
2) What are the attitudes of social media users towards social media?
3) Do social media users' attitudes towards social media differ according to demographic variables (gender, age, and education level)?

2. METHOD

2.1. Research Design

In this study, which was conducted to determine the attitudes of social media users towards social media, a quantitative research approach was adopted, and a descriptive survey model was used. Quantitative research, which enables the collection and analysis of quantitative data such as survey model, has purposes such as generalizing, making predictions, and explaining the causal relationship (Büyüköztürk et al., 2014). The event, individual or object that is the subject

of the research tries to define it in its own conditions and as it is. No effort is made to change or influence them in any way (Karasar, 2007).

2.2. Population and Sample

The population of the research consists of all social media users. However, since it is not possible to reach all social media users, the sample of the research was determined by the convenience sampling model as a non-probability sampling method. This sampling method is a sampling made on volunteers who are in the immediate vicinity and easy to reach, available at hand and willing to participate in the research. In this context, 564 participants were reached through an Instagram page with 55.000 followers. "Do you have an active student record?" The answers of 102 participants who answered "no" to the question were not taken into account. Therefore, the data of 462 participants were evaluated. The distribution of the participants according to demographic variables is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics About the Sample

Gender	N	%
Female	237	51.3
Male	225	48.7
Age		
Between 13-17	57	12.3
Between 18-22	213	46.1
Between 23-27	90	19.5
Between 28-32	69	14.9
33 and over	33	7.1
Education level		
Middle school	15	3.2
High school	132	28.6
Associate degree	105	22.7
Undergraduate	183	39.6
Graduate	27	5.8

According to the distributions shown in Table 1, 3.2% of the participants are at middle school, 28.6% at high school, 22.7% at associate degree, 39.6% at undergraduate level, and 5.8% at graduate level. It is seen that the density is between the ages of 18-22 with 46.1% in age ranges. 51.3% of the participants are female and 48.7% are male.

2.3. Data Collection Tools and Data Collection

"Personal Information Form" prepared by the researcher and "Social Media Attitude Scale (SMAS)" developed by Otrar and Argın (2015) were used as data collection tools. First, a draft form was created by scanning the literature by the researcher and presented to three experts working as academicians in the Department of Computer Education and Instructional Technologies. In line with expert opinions, some items were removed from the form and some items were corrected, and the form was finalized. Since the form can be accessed from the web browser within the Instagram application, care has been taken to keep the form short. In the form, there are nine questions to gather information about participants' gender, age, education level, duration of Internet use, purpose of Internet use, social networking platforms they spend most of their time on, for what purpose they use social networking platforms the most, what means they connect to the Internet most, complaints about their friends' dealing with the phone when meeting with their friends.

The Social Media Attitude Scale was developed by Otrar and Argın (2015) and aims to obtain information about individuals' social media attitudes. In this scale, there are a total of four

factors and 23 items: Social competence (6 items), need for sharing (8 items), communication with lecturers (3 items) and social isolation (6 items). It is designed as a 5-point Likert scale, which includes Strongly Agree (5), Agree (4), Undecided (3), Disagree (2), Strongly Disagree (1). Six items in the social isolation factor of the scale were negatively expressed and these items were analyzed by reverse coding. While the lowest score is 23 from the Social Media Attitude Scale, the highest possible score is 115. Factors explain 52.65% of the total variance. As a result of the reliability analysis of the scale, the Cronbach Alpha value was calculated as α=0.85. The test-retest correlation coefficient was significant (r=.83; p<.001).

A survey form called Social Media Attitude Evaluation was created by combining the Personal Information Form and the SMAS. The survey form was shared with the followers via the story feature of the Instagram application by an Instagram page and it was left to the initiative of the followers whether they participated in the survey or not. The survey form was kept on the page for four days so that the followers could access the survey.

2.4. Data Analysis

In the research, firstly, the frequency and percentage distributions describing the social media usage characteristics of social media users were determined. Then, to examine whether the social media attitudes of the participants differ in terms of different variables, first, the normality distributions of the data were examined. Accordingly, the skewness value of the obtained data was -.209 and the kurtosis value was .256. Since the values were between -1.5 and +1.5, it was accepted that the data showed a normal distribution (Tabachnick et al., 2007). Wherefore the data showed a normal distribution, parametric tests were used while analyzing the data. To understand whether the attitudes of social media users towards social media differ significantly in terms of different variables, independent samples "t-test" for bivariate groups and "One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)" for groups with more than two variables were conducted. In case of significant differentiation, "Hochberg's GT2" test was used when variances were homogeneous and "Tamhane's T2" test was used when they were not homogeneous (p<0.05). Significant differences between the means and whether the variances are homogeneously distributed are shown in the tables. The data were analyzed with the SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) program.

3. FINDINGS

3.1. Social Media Usage Features

In Table 2, the time spent by social media users on the Internet and the devices they use most to connect to the Internet are given.

Table 2. The Daily Internet Usage Time of the Participants and the Devices They Connect to the Internet the Most

Daily Internet usage time	N	%
3 to 4 hours	192	41.6
5 to 6 hours	144	31.2
7 hours and over	66	14.3
1 to 2 hours	57	12.3
Less than 1 hour	3	0.6
Device used to connect to the Internet		
Mobile phone	414	89.6
Computer	39	8.4
Tablet	9	1.9

According to Table 2, when the daily Internet usage times of social media users are examined, it is seen that 99.4% of the participants use the Internet for at least 1 hour every day. 41.6% of the participants stated that they spend 3-4 hours a day on the Internet. 31.2% of the participants spend 5-6 hours a day; 14.3% more than 7 hours; 12.3% of them spend 1-2 hours on the Internet. 89.6% of the participants connect to the Internet most intensively from their mobile phones, 8.4% from computers and 1.9% from tablets. Table 3 shows for what purpose the participants use the Internet.

Table 3. Distribution of the Purposes for Which the Participants Use the Internet

Internet usage purpose	N	%
Social media	417	28.3
Communication	237	16.1
Listen to music	225	15.2
Research / Education	216	14.6
Watching Movies / Videos	192	13
Shopping	105	7.1
Playing games	84	5.7

Looking at Table 3, the participants stated that they mostly use the Internet for access to social media (28.3%). This is followed by communication (16.1%), listen to music (15.2%) and research/education (14.6%). The playing games was the least Internet usage preference with 5.7%. The rate of Internet usage for shopping is 7.1%. Table 4 shows the distribution of which social media platforms the social media users prefer to use.

Table 4. Distribution of Which Social Media Platforms the Participants Use

Social media platforms	N	%
Instagram	414	40.1
Youtube	279	27
Twitter	165	16
Other	51	4.9
Snapchat	33	3.2
Pinterest	30	2.9
Twitch	24	2.3
Facebook	21	2
Linkedin	15	1.5

When Table 4 is examined, it is seen that social media users mostly use the social media platform named Instagram with 40.1%. It is followed by Youtube with 27%. Twitter (16%) ranks third. Platforms such as Netflix, Whatsapp, Tiktok and Discord are specified in the Other (4.9%) category. It is seen that LinkedIn (1.5%) and Facebook (2%) are the least used social media platforms. Table 5 shows the purposes for which the social media users use social media platforms.

Table 5. Distribution of the Purposes for Which the Participants Use Social Media Platforms

Social media usage purpose	N	%
Communicate	267	21.1
Research / Education	213	16.8
Maintaining social relationships	198	15.6
Watching what others are doing	183	14.5
Content, video, photo, etc. to share	165	13
Join interesting groups	105	8.3
Playing games	63	5
Making friends	60	4.7
Recognition by others	12	0.9

Looking at Table 5, it is seen that the participants use social media platforms mostly for communication (21.1%), research / education (16.8%) and maintaining social relations (15.6%), respectively. This is followed by the purposes of watching what others are doing (14.5%) and sharing content, videos, and photos (13%). It was determined that the least usage purpose of the participants was recognition by others (0.9%). In Table 6, the opinions of the friends of the social media users about the phone usage status of the users are given.

Table 6. Complaint Status of the Participants' Friends When They Are Interested in the Phone

Complaint status	N	%
Never	246	53.2
Rarely	165	35.7
Occasionally	36	7.8
Mostly	15	3.2

According to Table 6, 53.2% of the participants never received a reaction because they were interested in the phone when they were with their friends. 35.7% rarely, 7.8% occasionally, and 3.2% mostly, participants receive reactions from their friends because they are on the phone while with their friends.

3.2. Attitude Level Towards Social Media

In Table 7, the attitude levels of social media users towards social media based on sub-dimensions and total scores are given.

Table 7. Descriptive Statistics on the Level of Attitudes of the Participants Towards Social Media Based on Dimensions

	Dimensions	N	M	Std. Dev.	SE	Comment
Attitudes Towards Social Media	Social competence	462	2.23	0.86	0.04	Low level
	Need for sharing	462	3.29	0.84	0.03	Moderate level
	Communication with lecturers	462	2.09	1.22	0.05	Low level
	Social isolation	462	3.98	1.06	0.04	High level
	Total	462	3.04	0.47	0.02	Moderate level

According to Table 7, when the attitude levels of the social media users towards social media are examined on the basis of dimensions, it is seen that the dimension with the highest level of attitudes is social isolation (M=3.98), which includes negative expressions towards social media. It is seen that the dimension with the lowest attitudes is the dimension of communication with the lecturers (M=2.09). The second dimension, which has the lowest level of attitude of the participants, is the social competence (M=2.23) sub-dimension. In addition, when an evaluation is made by considering the average score, the attitudes of the participants towards the need for sharing (M=3.29) sub-dimension were moderate level. When we look at the general attitudes of the participants towards social media (M=3.04), it was determined that this was at a moderate level.

3.3. The Relationship of Attitudes Towards Social Media and Demographic Variables

Table 8 includes the results of the independent group t-test, which was conducted to determine whether there is a significant difference in the attitudes of the participants towards social media according to the gender variable.

Table 8. T-Test Results of Participants' Level of Attitude Towards Social Media by Gender Variable

Dimensions	Gender	N	M	Std. Dev.	df	t	p
Social competence	Female	237	2.13	0.79	460	-2.426	.01
	Male	225	2.33	0.93			
Need for sharing	Female	237	3.35	0.88	460	1.624	.10
	Male	225	3.23	0.79			
Communication with lecturers	Female	237	2.13	1.16	460	0.717	.47
	Male	225	2.05	1.27			
Social isolation	Female	237	4.06	0.91	460	1.712	.88
	Male	225	3.89	1.19			
Total	Female	237	3.05	0.47	460	1.089	.27
	Male	225	3.01	0.47			

When the table is examined, the difference between the arithmetic means of the groups was found to be significant as a result of the independent group t-test, which was conducted to determine whether the social competence sub-dimension scores of the participants showed a significant difference according to the gender variable (t=-2.426; p<.05). Accordingly, it was determined that male's (M=2.33, Sd=0.93) perceptions of social competence sub-dimension were significantly higher than female's (M=2.13, Sd=0.79). No significant difference was observed in terms of other sub-dimensions and total scale scores. In Table 9, the analysis results of the relationship comparison the age variable and the attitudes of the participants towards social media are given.

Table 9. ANOVA Results for Participants' Level of Attitude Towards Social Media by Age Variable

Dimensions	Age	N	M	Std. Dev.	Source	SS	MS	F	p	Mean Dif.
Social competence	13-17 (1)	57	2.41	0.79	Between	22.32	5.58			1-4, 1-5;
	18-22 (2)	213	2.32	0.86	Within	326.57	0.71			2-4, 2-5;
	23-27 (3)	90	2.36	1.00	Total	348.90		7.810	.001	3-4, 3-5
	28-32 (4)	69	1.83	0.76						
	33+ (5)	33	1.80	0.32						
Need for sharing	13-17 (1)	57	3.72	0.78	Between	15.34	3.83			1-2, 1-3, 1-4, 1-5
	18-22 (2)	213	3.31	0.83	Within	313.81	0.68			
	23-27 (3)	90	3.22	0.83	Total	329.16		5.587	.001	
	28-32 (4)	69	3.08	0.84						
	33+ (5)	33	3.09	0.80						
Communication with lecturers	13-17 (1)	57	2.22	1.17	Between	44.11	11.02			3-2, 3-4
	18-22 (2)	213	1.99	1.19	Within	642.63	1.40			
	23-27 (3)	90	2.64	1.29	Total	686.75		7.843	.001	
	28-32 (4)	69	1.65	1.11						
	33+ (5)	33	2.00	0.94						
Social isolation	13-17 (1)	57	3.79	0.82	Between	27.04	6.76			4-1, 4-2, 4-3;
	18-22 (2)	213	3.84	1.08	Within	491.81	1.07			5-2
	23-27 (3)	90	3.92	1.32	Total	518.86		6.282	.001	
	28-32 (4)	69	4.44	0.66						
	33+ (5)	33	4.39	0.76						
Total	13-17 (1)	57	3.20	0.54	Between	3.16	0.79			1-4
	18-22 (2)	213	3.02	0.46	Within	100.78	0.22			
	23-27 (3)	90	3.10	0.47	Total	103.94		3.586	.007	
	28-32 (4)	69	2.92	0.48						
	33+ (5)	33	2.95	0.25						

ANOVA was conducted to determine whether the total sub-dimension scores of participants' social competence (F=7.810; p<.01), need for sharing (F=5.587; p<.01), communication with lecturers (F=7.843; p<.01), social isolation (F=6.282; p<.01), and attitude total (F=3.586;

p<.01) sub-dimensions differed according to the age variable. As a result of the analysis, the difference between the arithmetic means of the groups was found to be significant. After this result, complementary analyzes were started. While deciding which comparison analysis to use, first of all, the homogeneity of the variances was checked with the Levene test, and it was found that the variances were homogeneous in terms of the need for sharing sub-dimension (L_{NfS} = .538; p>.05), while the variances were not homogeneous in terms of the sub-dimensions of social competence, communication with lecturers, social isolation and attitude total (L_{SC} = 7.675; L_{CwL} = 2.597; L_{SI} = 14.299; L_{AT} = 2.874; p<.05). For this reason, Hochberg analysis was applied for the sharing need sub-dimension and Tamhane analysis was applied for the remaining sub-dimensions. It was determined that the perceptions of the 13-17 (M=2.41), 18-22 (M=2.32) and 23-27 (M=2.36) age group participants for the social competence sub-dimension were higher than the 28-32 (M=1.83) and 33 and over (M=1.80) age group participants. For the need for sharing sub-dimension, it was determined that the perceptions of the 13-17 (M=3.72) age group participants were higher than the rest of the age groups. For the sub-dimension of communication with lecturers, the perceptions of the 23-27 (M=2.64) age group participants were found to be higher than the 18-22 (M=1.99) and 28-32 (M=1.65) age group participants. For the social isolation sub-dimension, the perceptions of the participants in the age group of 28-32 (M=4.44) were higher than the participants in the age group of 13-17 (M=3.79), 18-22 (M=3.84), and 23-27 (M=3.92), and 33 and over (M=4.39) age group participants' perceptions were found to be higher than 18-22 (M=3.84) age group participants. Finally, in terms of total attitude scores, the perceptions of the 13-17 (M=3.20) age group participants were higher than the 28-32 (M=2.92) age group participants. In Table 10, the analysis results of the comparison between the education level variable and the attitudes of the participants towards social media are given.

Table 10. ANOVA Results for the Level of Attitudes of the Participants Towards Social Media According to the Variable of Education Level

Dimensions	Education level	N	M	Std. Dev.	Source	SS	MS	F	p	Mean Dif.
Social competence	Middle school (1)	15	1.76	0.45	Between	14.49	3.62			
	High school (2)	132	2.43	0.89	Within	334.40	0.73			
	Associate degree (3)	105	2.19	0.95	Total	348.90		4.953	.001	2-1, 2-5
	Undergraduate (4)	183	2.21	0.83						
	Graduate (5)	27	1.77	0.42						
Need for sharing	Middle school (1)	15	2.62	0.61	Between	7.78	1.94			
	High school (2)	132	3.35	0.93	Within	321.37	0.70			2-1;
	Associate degree (3)	105	3.31	0.86	Total	329.16		2.768	.027	3-1;
	Undergraduate (4)	183	3.32	0.79						4-1
	Graduate (5)	27	3.16	0.47						
Communication with lecturers	Middle school (1)	15	1.60	0.76	Between	5.58	1.39			
	High school (2)	132	2.13	1.27	Within	681.17	1.49			
	Associate degree (3)	105	2.20	1.28	Total	686.75		0.936	.443	---
	Undergraduate (4)	183	2.06	1.17						
	Graduate (5)	27	2.03	1.19						
Social isolation	Middle school (1)	15	4.36	0.51	Between	11.60	2.90			
	High school (2)	132	3.82	1.02	Within	507.25	1.11			
	Associate degree (3)	105	3.85	1.25	Total	518.86		2.615	.035	1-2
	Undergraduate (4)	183	4.10	0.99						
	Graduate (5)	27	4.24	0.89						
Total	Middle school (1)	15	2.72	0.27	Between	2.23	0.55			
	High school (2)	132	3.07	0.51	Within	101.70	0.22			2-1;
	Associate degree (3)	105	3.01	0.50	Total	103.94		2.510	.041	3-1;
	Undergraduate (4)	183	3.07	0.45						4-1
	Graduate (5)	27	2.93	0.26						

ANOVA was conducted to determine whether the total sub-dimension scores of participants' social competence (F=4.953; p<.01), need for sharing (F=2.768; p<.05), communication with lecturers (F=0.936; p>.05), social isolation (F=2.615; p<.05), and attitude total (F=2.510; p<.05) sub-dimensions differed according to the education level variable. As a result of the analysis, the difference between the arithmetic means of the groups was found to be significant except for the communication with lecturers (F=0.936; p=.443, p>.05) sub-dimension. While deciding which comparison analysis to use, first, the homogeneity of the variances was checked with the Levene test, and it was found that the variances were not homogeneous (L_{SC} = 5.240; L_{NfS} = 3.900; L_{SI} = 5.172; L_{AT} = 2.876; p<.05). For this reason, Tamhane analysis was applied. In this context, it was found that the perceptions of the participants at the high school (M=2.43) education level for the social competence sub-dimension of these differences were higher than the participants at the middle school (M=1.76) and graduate (M=1.77) education levels. For the need for sharing sub-dimension, the perceptions of the participants at high school (M=3.35), associate degree (M=3.31) and undergraduate (M=3.32) education levels were higher than those at middle school (M=2.62) education level; for the social isolation sub-dimension, the perceptions of the participants at the middle school (M=4.36) education level were higher than compared to the participants at the high school (M=3.82) education level; finally, when the total attitude scores are examined, it has been determined that the perceptions of the participants at the high school (M=3.07), associate degree (M=3.01) and undergraduate (M=3.07) education level are higher than the participants at the middle school (M=2.72) level.

4. DISCUSSION and CONCLUSION

Within this study, social media usage characteristics of social media users were tried to be determined and their attitudes towards social media were examined through certain variables. According to the results of the research conducted with the participation of 462 people between the ages of 13-45 who participated in the online survey application; it has been determined that most of the participants spend at least one hour a day on the Internet and nearly half of the participants use the Internet for 3-4 hours a day. Similarly, Mollaoğlu et al. (2019) in their study to determine the social media attitudes of students, concluded that most of the participants spent at least one hour on the Internet a day and that the majority of the participants spent around 3-4 hours on the Internet. This is due to the fact that most individuals today have their own personal mobile devices and can easily access the Internet. Considering the daily Internet usage times; the increase in Internet time increases the addiction to social media, causes people to spend more time on social media, and this causes people to start to need more emotional support. Students' relationships with family and friends are gradually weakening. Students become introverted and make them dependent on social media (Çiftçi, 2018). The increase in the time individuals spend on social media daily is one of the determining factors on their social media addiction (Aktan, 2018). Accordingly, the research findings also reveal that more time spent daily on social media increases the level of social media addiction. Today, people can connect to the Internet with their mobile devices from anywhere at any time. It was found that the most used device by the participants while accessing the Internet was their mobile phone. In terms of being similar to the findings of this study, Kalender (2016) determined in his research that the differentiation in the variable with which students connect to social media the most is mobile phones. Again, Aküzüm and Saraçoğlu (2017) concluded that the most connected device to the Internet is mobile devices. Otrar and Argın (2014), on the other hand, concluded in their study that a desktop computer is the most preferred one for Internet access. This situation can be explained by the prevalence of mobile technologies that have developed in the period between the two studies.

In the study, it was seen that social media users mostly use the Internet for access to social media. This is followed by purposes such as communicating, listening to music, doing research, and studying. The rate of use of the Internet for purposes such as playing games and shopping is at a low level. In the world, especially when the purposes of Internet use in mobile devices are examined, the use of social media takes the first place (Kemp, 2020). The reason for this can be shown as both the widespread use of smartphones and the fact that social media platforms are easily accessible by being installed on phones as applications. Similarly, Hazar (2011) determined that half of the students use social media, one of the applications included in Internet use, almost exclusively for social media applications. In the "Global Digital" 2021 report of We Are Social and Hootsuite, it was stated that the number of active social media users in Turkey exceeded 60 million. In this context, the findings in the research that the Internet is mostly used for accessing social media are consistent. Ideally, Internet and social media use provides opportunities such as obtaining information and personal development (Papacharissi & Rubin, 2000), interacting with other users and sharing information (Sandoval & Fuchs, 2010), and improving educational processes (Tess, 2013), and contributing to democratic culture by actively participating in socio-political issues/problems, especially to young people, through online public opinion (Bouilanne, 2015), apart from their instant or temporary functions such as leisure time and entertainment. However, when these positive functions of social media are replaced by the purposes of leisure, messaging with friends and entertainment, it is seen that social media addiction, which triggers personal (spiritual) and social problems, increases (Çömlekçi & Başol, 2019).

When the social media platforms used by the social media users participating in the study were examined, it was determined that almost half of the participants used the Instagram application. This is followed by Youtube and Twitter social networks and platforms. It is noteworthy that the least used social media platforms are Facebook and Linkedin. This result coincides with the "Global Digital" 2021 report prepared by We Are Social and Hootsuite (2021), showing Youtube and Instagram as the most used social media in Turkey. Similarly, Tükenmez et al. (2019) concluded that the most used social media network by young individuals is Instagram. Again, Akyürek (2020) reported that Instagram is the most used social media in his study for high school students. Mollaoğlu et al. (2019) concluded in their study with associate degree students that the most used social media is Facebook. This result does not coincide with the findings of the study. It can be said that the reason for this is due to the fact that Instagram users constitute the sample of this research. In addition, the fact that Facebook is an old platform and young people prefer relatively newer social media platforms such as Instagram may have caused this situation. Social networks, which enable interaction between people over the Internet, provide individuals with freedom, autonomy, and independence to create content (Akçay, 2011). It has been concluded that the participants use the platforms that they create their own content from social media networks such as Instagram, Twitter, Youtube more effectively.

When examining the purposes for which social media users use social media platforms, it is seen that they mostly aim to communicate. The topics of doing research, maintaining social relationships and watching what others are doing are among the popular uses of the participants. The aims of being recognized by others and making friends were found to be low. In their study, Çömlekçi and Başol (2019) reported that individuals mostly use social media for communication and following the agenda, and they use it at least for the purpose of reaching people, individual presentations, sharing information and getting to know people. It can be said that these results are consistent with the findings of the research. Mollaoğlu et al. (2019) reported in their research that associate degree students mostly use social media to share photos and videos. In this research, content, video, photo, etc. the purpose of sharing has a moderate

use and is partially overlapping in this respect. The reason for this may be that social media is as natural as carrying a mobile phone in our lives and in our daily lives, and sharing content, video, and photos is only a tool rather than a goal. Sofiah et al. (2011), Chen and Kim (2013), and Ryan et al. (2014) investigated the relationship between social media usage purposes and social media addiction in their research with university students who use social media. Accordingly, it has been observed that there is a positive relationship between the goals of getting to know people better, reaching people and messaging, and social media addiction. When the research findings are compared with these results, it can be deduced that the participants in the study have an addiction to social media use.

Pre-service teachers who use the Internet for six hours or more think that when they use the Internet for a long time, they distance themselves from their friends, their family relations are negatively affected, they cannot spare enough time for social activities, and they cannot pay enough attention to their lessons (Kırnık et al. 2018). Similar to the aforementioned negative situations, a small portion of social media users participating in this research stated that they sometimes get reactions because they are interested in the phone when they meet with their friends.

When we look at the attitude levels of social media users, it is seen that the dimension with the highest attitude is the dimension of social isolation, and the lowest level of attitude is in the dimension of communicating with the lecturers. The general attitudes of users towards social media are at a moderate level. These results fully coincide with the results of Aküzüm and Saraçoğlu's (2017) study titled "Examination of university students' attitudes towards social media". Similarly, Akyürek (2020) also found high school students' attitudes towards social media at a moderate level; in the sub-dimensions, it was found high in the social isolation dimension and low in communication with the lecturers. Higher social isolation scores indicate that students experience less social isolation.

When the social media attitudes of social media users are examined in terms of gender, it has been determined that the perceptions of males are higher than females only in the sub-dimension of social competence. No significant difference was found in terms of other sub-dimensions and total scale score. Social competence: It is defined as the ability to use one's social skills effectively (Ateş 2016). It supports this result; as a result of their research, Aküzüm and Saraçoğlu (2017) concluded that university students' attitudes towards social media do not differ much in terms of their genders, but male students exhibit a significantly more positive attitude than female students in terms of social media gaining social competence. Similarly, in Argın's (2013) study, it was determined that the scores of the students in the social competence and social isolation sub-dimensions differed significantly according to the gender of the students, and it was determined that both differences were in favor of male students. This result can be interpreted as male students' social competencies are higher and they are more isolated from social life because of social media sites. It is thought that this is since men in our society can act more freely, use the Internet and social media networks for various purposes, and exhibit more comfortable behavior in social networks. In addition, in the study conducted by Çiftçi (2018), in examining social media addiction in terms of gender; it has been determined that boys have more social media addictions than girls, boys cannot use social media in a controlled manner and conflict with themselves. This dependency may lead to an isolated life from social life.

Considering the social media attitudes of social media users according to the age variable, a significant difference was found in terms of social competence, need for sharing, communication with instructors, social isolation sub-dimensions and general attitude scores.

Accordingly, the lower age groups have more social competence than the participants in the higher age groups; participants aged 13-17 need more sharing than participants in other age groups; participants in the age range of 23-27 have a higher level of communication attitude with the lecturers than the participants between the ages of 18-22 and 28-32; participants in the older age group experienced less social isolation than younger participants; and in terms of total scale score, it was understood that the participants between the ages of 13-17 showed a more positive attitude towards social media than the participants between the ages of 28-32. McAndrew and Jeong (2012) found in their research that young people are the most active social media users. It is thought that people who use social media frequently in daily life have more positive views on social networks. While Gül (2019) reached similar findings in the social competence dimension in his study, unlike this study, he could not find a difference in terms of age variable in other dimensions. Elsel (2021), when looking at the social media attitudes of adolescents according to the age variable, found that social isolation increases as age increases, similar to this study. In her research, Altınay Bor (2018) concluded that 15- and 17-year-old students in the social competence sub-dimension have higher social competence than 18-year-old students and revealed that there is a decline in social competence in the individual with increasing age. The outputs in the sub-dimensions of social competence and sharing need also overlap with the findings of Sarsu's (2020) research. Acar and Yenmiş (2014), on the other hand, found in their study that students' views on the use of social networks in education did not differ significantly in terms of age. Considering the age variable of social media users, the purpose of use, frequency of use and the effect of sharing vary. While the age range that uses social media most actively is 18-34, the age range following them is 35-49 (İşlek, 2012). Within the scope of this research, significant differences were found between different age groups in each dimension. Kandell (1998) states that university students are more addicted to the Internet than students studying at a lower level of education. As the reason for this, it is shown that university students live in dormitories far from their homes, misuse their spare time without the guidance of their families, students in this period tend to interpersonal relationships and the education system directs students to use the Internet. In this study, it has been determined that younger participants lead a more isolated life from social life and have higher attitudes towards social media than adults. It is thought that this difference between the two studies is due to the great technological developments experienced in the period between studies. Today, the fact that individuals from almost every age group can easily access the Internet and that young people are less conscious than adults may cause young people to be more affected by the negative aspects of the Internet and social media.

Considering the social media attitudes of social media users according to the education level variable, a significant difference was found in terms of social competence, need for sharing, social isolation, and scale total scores. No difference was found in the sub-dimension of communication with lecturers. Accordingly, the participants at the high school education level have more social competencies than the participants at the middle school and graduate education levels. In addition, it was observed that the need for sharing increased as the level of education increased. Likewise, it was observed that participants at middle school education experience less social isolation than those in high school. The reason for this may be that users at middle school education use social media for less time. In general, it is seen that as the level of education increases, the positive attitude towards social media also increases. Ergüder (2019) similarly found in his study that as the level of education increases, the positive attitude towards social media also increases. In their studies, Duygun (2018), Şafak and Kahraman (2019), and Öztürk (2019) could not find a relationship between education level and social media attitudes and addictions, contrary to the results of this study. This situation is thought to be caused by sample difference. When the studies in question are examined, it is seen that students from two different education levels participate in the studies at most. In this study, four education levels

are discussed. Therefore, the effect of education level on attitude could be examined in more detail.

5. LIMITATIONS and IMPLICATIONS

This research has some limitations. The extent of the reliability of the findings can be considered as a limitation of the study, since the participation in the research was carried out by filling out the questionnaire form created in the online environment. The fact that the participants who filled out the questionnaire answered the questions thinking that their answers would be seen and the level of sincerity resulting from this situation may have affected the results of the study differently. In addition, the data was collected through a social media platform. Most of the participants accessed the online questionnaire form through the mobile application of this platform. The length of documents such as the questionnaire accessed through this application may affect the visibility of the form. For this reason, the questionnaire was tried to be kept as short as possible. This situation may have affected the quantity and quality of the variables examined within the scope of the study.

Some suggestions have been developed in line with the results of the research. According to this:

- Today, Media Literacy training is of great importance for individuals who spend most of their time on the Internet and are exposed to a lot of information of dubious accuracy. It can be suggested that the Media Literacy course should be included in the lifelong learning process starting from pre-school education and should be a compulsory course. Thus, it can be ensured that individuals use the Internet and social media on more useful issues and reach the right information.
- Educators can turn this situation into an educational opportunity by ensuring the effective use of social media networks, which are an inseparable part of their lives and frequently used by students, in education.
- By conducting qualitative studies on the subject, individuals' attitudes towards social media and the reasons for their attitudes can be examined in depth.

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