



School Administrators' Use of Social Media as a Part of Colleague Solidarity

Okul Yöneticilerinin Meslektaş Dayanışması Kapsamında Sosyal Medya Kullanımı

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SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS' USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA AS A PART OF COLLEAGUE SOLIDARITY

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research is to examine school administrators' views on the use of social media within the scope of collegiality. The phenomenology pattern, which is a qualitative research model, was used in the research. 11 school administrators working in Kahramanmaraş city center were included in the research. The administrators were selected by criterion sampling method, taking into account gender, undergraduate branch, school type, education level, age, and managerial seniority, with maximum diversity and the requirement to have served as an administrator for at least one year. The opinions of the participants were obtained through a semi-structured interview form and in-depth interviews. Content analysis technique was used to interpret the interview texts. The research findings showed that school administrators used WhatsApp and Telegram applications, school websites, and social networking tools such as Instagram, X (Twitter) and Facebook within the scope of collegiality. The purposes for which school administrators used social media platforms with their colleagues are grouped under the categories of sharing content, following current events, and communicating. The participants emphasized the functionality of social media, stating that the communication they established with their colleagues on social media supported their personal development and managerial work. However, concerns about harm caused by social media use, reliability problems, and technical problems caused them to approach these platforms cautiously and prevented them from using social media. There is a need to provide more functionally structured social media platforms where school administrators can have conversations among themselves. Our results provide valuable information that school administrators' use of social media within the scope of collegiality may affect school performance and provide a framework to encourage the use of social media in educational organizations and take precautions against its drawbacks.

Keywords: Colleague Solidarity, Social Media Platforms, Social Media Use, School Administrator.



OKUL YÖNETİCİLERİNİN MESLEKTAŞ DAYANIŞMASI KAPSAMINDA SOSYAL MEDYA KULLANIMI

ÖZ

Bu araştırmanın amacı, okul yöneticilerinin meslektaş dayanışması kapsamında sosyal medya kullanımına ilişkin görüşlerini incelemektir. Araştırmada nitel bir araştırma modeli olan fenomenoloji deseni kullanılmıştır. Araştırmaya Kahramanmaraş il merkezinde görev yapan 11 okul yöneticisi dâhil edilmiştir. Yöneticiler cinsiyet, lisans branşı, okul türü, öğrenim durumu, yaş, yöneticilik kıdemi özellikleri göz önünde bulundurularak maksimum çeşitlilik ve en az bir yıl yönetici olarak görev yapması koşulu aranarak ölçüt örnekleme yöntemi ile seçilmiştir. Katılımcıların görüşleri yarı yapılandırılmış görüşme formu ve derinlemesine görüşmeler yoluyla alınmıştır. Görüşme metinlerinin yorumlanmasında içerik analizi tekniğinden yararlanılmıştır. Araştırma bulguları, okul yöneticilerinin meslektaş dayanışması kapsamında Whatsapp ve Telegram uygulamalarını, okul web sitesini ve Instagram, X (Twitter), Facebook gibi sosyal ağ araçlarını kullandıklarını göstermiştir. Yöneticilerin meslektaşlarıyla sosyal medya platformlarını kullanım amaçları; içerik paylaşma, günceli takip etme ve iletişim kurma kategorileri altında toplanmıştır. Katılımcılar meslektaşlarıyla sosyal medya üzerinde kurdukları bu iletişimin, kişisel gelişimlerine ve yönetsel işlerine destek olduğunu dile getirerek sosyal medyanın işlevselliğini vurgulamışlardır. Ancak sosyal medya kullanımının ortaya çıkardığı zarar görmeye yönelik duyulan endişeler, güvenilirlik ile ilgili sıkıntılar ve teknik problemler ise temkinli yaklaşımlarına neden olarak sosyal medya kullanımlarını engellemektedir. Okul yöneticilerinin kendi aralarında görüşmeler yapabilecekleri daha işlevsel olarak yapılandırılmış sosyal medya platformlarının hizmete sunulmasına ihtiyaç duyulmaktadır. Sonuçlarımız okul yöneticilerinin meslektaş dayanışması kapsamında sosyal medya kullanımının okul performansını etkileyebileceği yönünde değerli bilgiler sağlamakta olup eğitim örgütlerinde sosyal medya kullanımını teşvik etmek ve sakıncalarına yönelik önlem almak için bir çerçeve sunmaktadır.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Meslektaş Dayanışması, Sosyal Medya Platformları, Sosyal Medya Kullanımı, Okul Yöneticisi.



INTRODUCTION

Today, communication mostly takes place digitally worldwide (Dunn et al., 2024). According to Statista's "Worldwide Digital Population 2025" report, out of the world population that is approximately 8.2 billion (United Nations, 2024), an average of 5.56 billion people are internet users, and more than 5.24 billion of these internet users are social media users (Statista, 2025). The data belonging to Türkiye shows that 77.3 million people out of 87.6 million population are internet users and 58.5 million are social media users (Clicks'us Digital, 2025). This report shows that thanks to the internet, which provides innovations and transformations in social life, the way of communication between people is increasingly realized through social media. *Social media* are systems based on all kinds of applications and services designed to provide communication and interaction through network technologies (Konuk and Güntaş, 2019). Vural and Bat (2010) define social media as a rich type of interaction in online media where telecommunication and social communication are provided through web technologies with text, audio, and visual content, where people share ideas, experiences, information, and content, and which provides production opportunities and peer support. Social media and social networks offer everyone connected to the Internet the opportunity to reach various resources anytime and anywhere (Knackmuhs, 2012). These platforms are mostly used informally (Ellison, 2008). Social networks such as WhatsApp, Facebook, X (Twitter), LinkedIn, Myspace, Flickr, Instagram, and YouTube are among the most used social networks. Social media, which constantly renews itself and offers ease of access, allows people to express their feelings and thoughts easily and create a topic of discussion when necessary (Konuk and Güntaş, 2019). Social media affects both social interaction forms and professional communication and interaction forms (Karabağ Köse, Yurdakul, and Onuk, 2017).

The primary appeal of social media is that it creates an environment for collaboration (Hogan and Quan-Haase, 2010; Lusk, 2010). The formation of groups among educators through social media, the dialogues between them, the feedback received in this way, and the sharing of experiences and information pave the way for the formation of a collaborative environment (Öztürk and Talas, 2015). Studies on educators' use of social media show that it increases cooperation, sharing, and solidarity. Ünüvar et al. (2018) found that preschool teachers determined the areas in which they requested assistance through peer collaboration on social media, thus guiding the addition of subjects and courses to the institution's programs in teacher training. In the thesis study examining the role of social networks in the professional development of teachers, Yörük (2016) found that social networks increased interaction and collaboration among teachers and made them increasingly more sharing.

Education services are complex team effort that requires high levels of professional knowledge. School administrators are in a central position in this teamwork. School administrators are in coordination and communication with many professional groups. They need the support of their colleagues to improve the quality of education and training services, make administrative arrangements, and reduce the problems they encounter. *Colleague solidarity* is defined as the support that colleagues provide to each other through the sharing of professional knowledge, skills, and techniques (Çoban, 2005). This form of solidarity, in which the distribution of power is equal, does not have a formal or hierarchical structure, and the number and purpose of groups can vary, is seen as a practical and economical way for colleagues to care about each other's thoughts, feelings, and problems. Studies show that in educational environments, colleague solidarity is effective in coping with feelings of burnout, disinterest in work, and exhaustion, that it develops the individual personally and professionally, and that it is an important dimension that creates the school climate (Benshoff and Paisley, 1996; Bernard and Goodyear 1992; Crutchfield and Borders, 1997; Yılmaz and Demir, 2015). Moreover, there are study results in the literature showing that school administrators ensure the sustainability of their professional development through colleague solidarity (Polat et al., 2018), support teachers' leadership skills (Sinha and Hanuscin, 2017), and provide effective solidarity by exchanging ideas with colleagues and reading and monitoring professional publications (Kasalak, 2020).

School Administrators' Colleague Solidarity and Social Media Use

In general terms, solidarity between professionals is a concept that expresses the solidarity between those who practice the same profession in relation to the professional field. It can be considered as a dimension of solidarity between individuals in daily life (Karataş and Çankır, 2023). Colleague solidarity is a process that involves encouraging personal visions to create a vision based on synergy (Senge, 1990:214) and encourages active participation in its transformation into development (Singh and Manser, 2002). Colleague solidarity is often used synonymously with collaboration (Hargreaves, 1991). In school settings, it is described in terms of support among colleagues, sharing of concerns, trust, caring, professional and personal dialogue, reflective problem solving, and out-of-school peer group discussions (Cooper and Boyd, 1994). Educators not only communicate with each other at school, they also socialize with each other's families and collaborate to enhance their personal development and meet their economic, social, and other needs (Karataş and Çankır, 2023; Özdoğru et al., 2025). Colleague solidarity can be experienced in four dimensions: emotional solidarity, solidarity through sharing professional knowledge, solidarity through practice, and solidarity through professional appreciation (Çoban, 2005). Colleague solidarity among educators also includes solidarity among school administrators (Karataş and Çankır, 2023). Hossler

(2000) argued that colleague solidarity among school administrators is important for teacher learning and school improvement. Moreover, it is known that solidarity with colleagues makes significant contributions to the personal and professional development of school administrators (Armour, 2005). It also has an important role in school administrators' establishing social networks (Connors, 2002).

The fact that school management carried out with classical methods became obsolete (Krutka and Carpenter, 2016), forced school administrators, who undertake the task of maintaining and developing the organization, to keep up with technological developments. School administrators can receive support from social networks based on social media in competing with the speed of change, abundance of information, rapid transformation processes, and complexity of problems (Arkan and Yünter, 2018). Studies show that school administrators have a positive attitude towards the use of social media (Çakır, 2012; Richardson, McLeod, and Sauers, 2015; Young, Berube, and Perry, 2008). In Turkish literature, there are quantitative studies showing a positive relationship between school administrators' use of social media and organizational image (Ateş, 2022) and individual innovation (Titrek and Sarı, 2018), as well as qualitative studies showing its positive contributions to instructional leadership (Yıldız, 2022) and school management skills (Işık, 2019; Yiğittürk, 2020). Similarly, international literature shows that school administrators' use of social media improves their communication and promotes their professional development (Cho and Jimerson, 2017; Cox, 2012), increases transparency in decision-making, enables stronger relationships with stakeholders, and thus increases trust with stakeholders (Cox and McLeod, 2014). School administrators mostly use social media to share information with teachers and to create team spirit among teachers and students (Bayram, 2017). However, there are also studies in which school administrators state that social media keeps them very busy (O'Reilly and Matt, 2013) and that they are afraid of technology (Cox and McLeod, 2013).

School administrators need to use every available means of communication to reach other educational leaders in their school district during their management processes (Berube, Perry, and Young et al., 2008). Engebritson (2011) found that school administrators used social media mostly to communicate with their colleagues and that they could reach each other more quickly and easily than before. Sauers and Richardson (2015) examined the tweets of school administrators who actively used Twitter (X). They concluded that school administrators used Twitter (X) for educational purposes to connect with other school administrators in online professional learning communities and to learn about current practices in education. It is understood from study results that school administrators' use of social media is inevitable. In this context, social media can be a primary source of reference for school administrators to collaborate and share with their colleagues. This process appears as the use of social media in colleague solidarity.

School administrators can improve their professional skills by communicating with their colleagues. They can continue this process outside of school through social media. School administrators can use social networks to quickly convey the information they produce to their colleagues or to use the information they produce to solve problems and to stay up to date on the latest developments. School administrators' use of social networks will provide them with opportunities to get to know their colleagues better, connect with other administrators and stakeholders across the country, evaluate comments made about their posts from a different perspective, and enable continuous professional learning. In this context, whether the purpose of school administrators' use of social networks ensures colleague solidarity or not emerges as an important research topic. Although there are various studies in literature examining school administrators' social media use, no study has been found examining the role it plays in colleague solidarity. Examining the contribution of school administrators' social media use to colleague solidarity will be useful in determining what contributions these environments can make to education and teaching and educators. This study is important in terms of revealing the content and quality of colleague solidarity formed by school administrators through social media environments and tools; and how it affects and directs their practices. School administrators' colleague solidarity and search for help on social media can be considered as an important clue in determining pre-service and in-service training needs. The purpose of this study is to examine school administrators' views regarding the use of social media in colleague solidarity. The sub-objectives determined in line with this purpose are as follows:

1. Which social media platforms do school administrators use within the scope of colleague solidarity?
2. For what purposes do school administrators use social media within the scope of colleague solidarity?
3. What are the benefits of school administrators' use of social media within the scope of colleague solidarity?
4. What are the factors that prevent school administrators from using social media within the scope of colleague solidarity?

METHOD

Research Model

Because this study aims to examine school administrators' views on their use of social media within the scope of colleague solidarity from a holistic perspective and in depth, the qualitative research method design of phenomenology was used. The phenomenology design focuses on phenomena that we are aware of but do

not have a deep understanding of (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2005). In this context, the study was designed according to the principles of phenomenology in order to determine school administrators' approach to the phenomenon of "social media use within the scope of colleague solidarity", which is the subject of the study, which platforms they use, their purposes, the benefits of social media use, and the factors preventing its use.

Study Group

The participants of the study were 11 school administrators working in the Onikişubat district of Kahramanmaraş province in the 2024-2025 academic year, selected using maximum diversity and criterion sampling methods. While the school administrator's gender, undergraduate branch, school type, education level, age, and managerial seniority were taken into account with maximum diversity, the condition of having served as an administrator for at least one year was sought with criterion sampling. The participants were given detailed information about the scope and purpose of the study, emphasizing the principle of voluntariness. Demographic characteristics of the participants are given in Table 1.

Table 1. *Demographic characteristics of the participants*

Administrator	Gender	Undergraduate Branch	School Type	Education Level	Age	Managerial Seniority
A1	Male	Primary school teaching	Primary school	Undergraduate	53	21
AA2	Male	Primary school teaching	Primary school	Postgraduate	38	10
AA3	Male	Primary school mathematics teaching	Secondary school	Undergraduate	42	13
AA4	Male	Primary school teaching	Primary school	Postgraduate	37	10
AA5	Male	Turkish language and literature teaching	High school	Postgraduate	45	15
AA6	Male	Physics teaching	High school	Undergraduate	35	3
A2	Male	Religious culture and moral knowledge teaching	Secondary school	Postgraduate	48	5
A3	Female	Preschool teaching	Preschool	Undergraduate	49	4
A4	Female	Psychological counseling and guidance teaching	Preschool	Postgraduate	48	12
AA7	Male	Turkish language and literature teaching	High school	Postgraduate	50	19
A5	Female	Primary school teaching	Primary school	Doctorate	41	8

When Table 1 is examined, it is seen that school administrators were mostly male. It is also seen that approximately one quarter of the participants had an undergraduate degree in primary school teaching, the school type distributions were close to each other, and they were over 30 years old.

Data Collection Tool

The data of the study were obtained through a semi-structured interview form. Interviews are one of the main data collection tools of phenomenological research (Fraenkel and Wallen, 2008). In a semi-structured interview, in addition to the previously prepared questions, new questions can be asked to the interviewee if needed throughout the interview (Yüksel, Mil, and Bilim, 2007). The questions in the interview form were developed by the researcher after examining Turkish and foreign literature. In order to ensure the validity of the developed draft form, the opinions of two experts (two experts in educational administration) were used and then a pilot application was conducted on a school administrator who was not included in the study group. After the pilot application, the necessary changes were made to the questions in the form and its final form was created. There are four questions in the interview form to find answers to the sub-problems of the study.

Interview Process

The participation of school administrators in the study was carried out on a voluntary basis. The interviews were conducted face to face, in a quiet, trustworthy, and friendly environment, with administrators selected from different schools, after obtaining permission. The interviews lasted an average of 30 minutes and were recorded with the permission of the participants. The administrators were given detailed information about the purpose of the interview and the purposes for which the data would be used.

Data Analysis

The interviews with managers were audio-recorded after receiving permission. Afterwards, the audio recordings were deciphered, and the data were obtained using the content analysis technique. The purpose of content analysis, which is a preferred technique in the analysis of data obtained from interviews, is to reach concepts and relationships that can explain the collected data (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2005). To do content analysis, the codes obtained from the participants' opinions were reviewed separately and then together by the researcher, and the codes were grouped into various categories as meaningful groups. Relevant literature was taken into consideration when naming the codes and categories. Under the heading of the findings, it was aimed to increase reliability by using the direct

quotation method by conveying the opinions about the codes. These categories and codes, which emerged within the scope of four themes compatible with the sub-objectives of the study, are shown in the findings as summary tables. Moreover, direct quotes from participants' opinions on relevant themes and categories are shared under each table. In order to ensure the confidentiality of participant information, codes such as A1, A2.... were given to administrators and AA1, AA2.... to assistant administrators.

Validity, Reliability, and Ethics

Validity and reliability are explained with the concepts of credibility, transferability, consistency, and confirmability in qualitative research methods (Houser, 2015). Credibility refers to the level of similarity of the data to reality; transferability refers to the generalizability of the data; consistency refers to the repeatability of the study; and confirmability refers to the objectivity of the study data (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2005). In the study, interview questions were prepared by scanning the relevant literature and taking expert opinions, interviews were recorded with a voice recorder, and direct quotes were included in order to ensure credibility. Within the scope of transferability, all stages of the study were explained in an understandable and detailed manner, plain and simple language was used, and non-random convenience sampling was preferred. For consistency, the participants were told that they could leave the study at any time they wished, opinions were received from more than one researcher in determining the themes and categories, and an attempt was made to reach a general consensus for the themes and categories created. To ensure confirmability, participants with different attributes were selected and the study data was stored using encryption.

Ethics Committee Approval Information

In this study, all the rules specified in the "Higher Education Institutions Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Directive" were followed.

Name of the Committee Conducting the Ethical Evaluation: Kahramanmaraş Sütçü İmam University Social and Human Sciences Ethics Committee

Date of Ethical Evaluation Decision: 31.05.2024

Ethical Evaluation Document Number: 2024-11

The Role of the Researcher

The researcher did not include any questions that directly or indirectly guided the participants throughout the data collection process. The statements made by the participants were reported without any comment. Additionally, in order to

prevent misunderstandings in the study, probe questions were also included in line with the main questions. Care was taken to ensure that the main and probe questions used were appropriate for the phenomenon that the study aimed to explain and the study objectives. With the educational administration and teaching experiences, the researcher took on the role of an impartial observer and narrator who “tried to make sense of the lived experiences” of school administrators regarding their use of social media in the collection and analysis of data. Finally, the researcher kept the expectations and opinions about the study topic confidential, ensuring that the study was conducted independently of the personal consent.

FINDINGS

The findings obtained regarding the questions determined in the study are presented below in the form of figures, taking into account the order of the sub-problems. The parts related to the codes considered important from the answers received were summarized with the participants' own expressions.

Findings Regarding the Social Media Platforms Used by School Administrators as Part of Colleague Solidarity

Within the scope of the first sub-problem of the study, the school administrators were asked which social media platforms they used within the scope of colleague solidarity. The social media platforms that the participants used with their colleagues are shown in Figure 1.

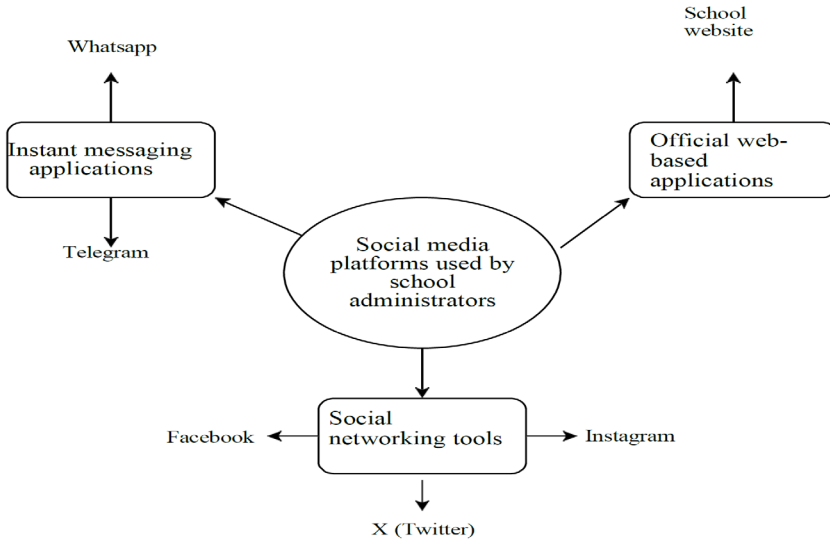


Figure 1. Social media platforms used

When Figure 1 is examined, it is seen that the school administrations used various social media platforms. These are WhatsApp and Telegram, which are expressed as instant messaging applications, the school website, which is an official web-based application, and Instagram, X (Twitter), and Facebook, which are stated as social networking tools. Some of the opinions obtained during the interviews are presented below.

“We have WhatsApp groups with administrators in our district and school. Information is shared in these groups” (A1)

“I use WhatsApp, Telegram, Twitter (X), Instagram, Facebook, but I can communicate faster and more comfortably with WhatsApp” (AA3)

In the opinions regarding the theme, the participants stated that they mostly used WhatsApp, an instant messaging application, in their communication with their colleagues. The participant codenamed AA5 explained this situation with the words, “Of course, we cannot be very open since social media other than WhatsApp is open to everyone.” Another participant stated that this communication, which is mostly informal among themselves, should be conducted through a formal platform by saying “The Ministry should create a platform for us. More formal. Only administrators can use it among themselves...(AA6)”

Findings Regarding the Purposes of School Administrators in Using Social Media as a Part of Colleague Solidarity

Within the scope of the second sub-problem of the study, the school administrators were asked about their purposes of using social media within the scope of colleague solidarity. The participants' purposes to use social media are shown in Figure 2.

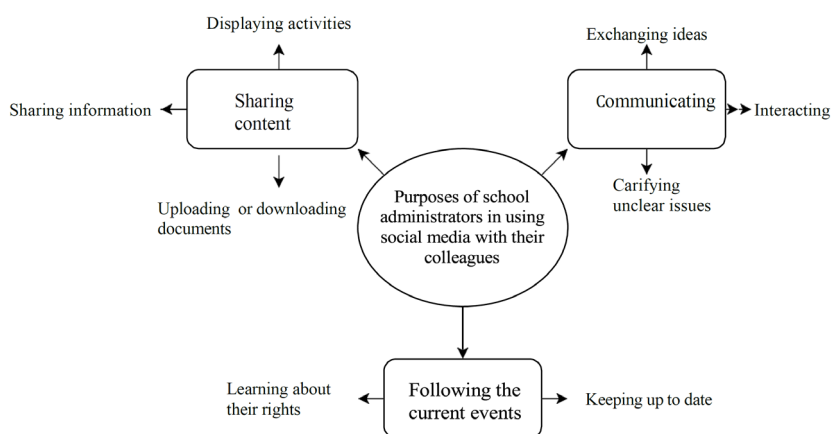


Figure 2. *Purposes of using social media*

When Figure 2 is examined, it is seen that the school administrators used social media for various purposes under the categories of “sharing content”, “communicating”, and “following the current events” within the scope of colleague solidarity. Under the sharing content category, the administrators stated that they used social media to display the activities they carried out at school, share information they considered important, and upload or download documents necessary for procedures. Moreover, they communicated with their colleagues to exchange ideas, interact, and clarify unclear issues. They also used social media to follow innovations related to their work, to fully learn about their rights, and to keep up to date. Some participant opinions regarding relevant categories are presented below:

“We support each other in educational activities by ensuring that the work and activities carried out at school are seen.” (A1)

“We use it mostly for sharing information. Information usually comes through social media. We exchange ideas about the school’s operation, parents, and academic situations regarding students.” (AA4)

“We can share the good work we do or examples. For example, we say I sent this message to teachers, if you want, I can send it to you. I can go through it and send the same message. In this way, we connect from real life to social media... I use it to ask questions about articles I don’t understand. Since the issues in the regulations are written in a very formal language, they are not very understandable. We ask other managers about that regulation. Sometimes when a confusing piece of legislation or regulation is introduced -many things are confusing when they first come out- I find the parts I do not understand in the posts of other administrators on social media. For example, when I look at the comments, the questions that are on my mind are usually asked by others. Everything becomes clear in my head.” (AA1)

“For example, when a document comes to school, you cannot download it on your phone, you can download it from WhatsApp. For example, the administrator asks for a document and sends it via WhatsApp, I immediately print it out and give it to him/her. I mostly use it to upload and download documents.” (AA2)

“In the last 10 years, social media has started to come to the fore. Especially in terms of legislation. You see one piece of legislation in the morning and a different one in the afternoon. We still have not adapted to this. In the school I worked at before, we were entering norm cadres. While doing this, we entered the normal course numbers, the norm cadre number, and were about to approve it. I had a habit at that time. I always visited news from the public, agencies from the public. In other words, I visited some sites that reported news about civil servants. I visited a site at around three in the evening, I was looking through it, and I saw that the number of hours of English lessons had changed there. Until that period, the num-

ber of hours of English lessons were four, but they were reduced to three in the fifth and sixth grades. A different lesson was also added. All the plans I made changed, I re-entered them all and approved them all. It was different in the morning; it was different in the afternoon. In short, we can follow the current changes closely in this way” (AA3)

“I use social media to communicate. With this type of communication, we are informed about what other schools are doing and everything that is going on. We warn each other about issues that may cause us trouble... In this way, we can also establish close interaction with parents.” (A4)

“I use it to be informed about innovations and to know and protect our rights” (A5)

Findings Regarding the Benefits of School Administrators' Use of Social Media within the Scope of Colleague Solidarity

Within the scope of the third sub-problem of the study, the school administrators were asked about the benefits of using social media with their colleagues. The benefits of participants' use of social media are presented in Figure 3.

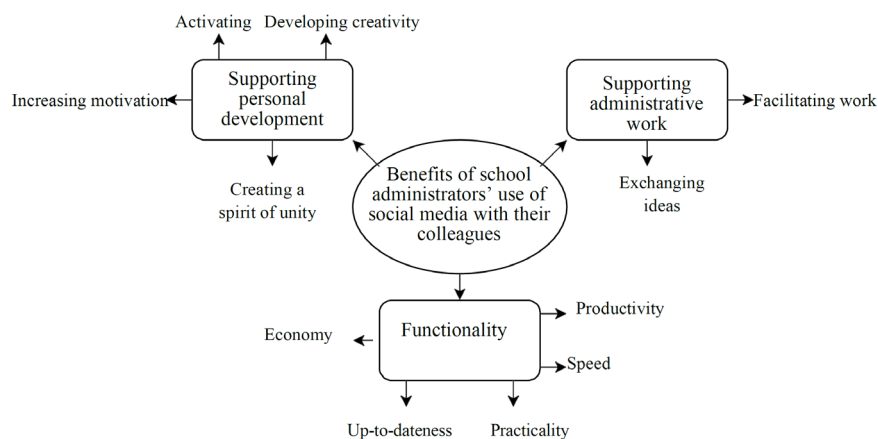


Figure 3. *Benefits of Using Social Media*

When Figure 3 is examined, it is seen that the benefits provided by school administrators' use of social media in the context of colleague solidarity are grouped under the categories of “supporting personal development” with the codes of activating, developing creativity, increasing motivation, and creating a spirit of unity; “supporting administrative work” by facilitating work and exchanging ideas; and “functionality” by providing speed, economy, practicality, up-to-dateness, and productivity. According to the participants, the use of social media was inevitable. A3

summarizes this situation with the statement, *"It is a necessity of the time. If you do not use it, you will fall behind in every aspect."* Some examples of statements from other participants regarding the codes in the categories are presented below:

"We, the administrators, can quickly reach consensus among ourselves. When a letter arrives or a decision is to be made, we first communicate through correspondence and exchange of ideas, even if we are in different places. Ehen administrators march to a different tune... I mean when a manager speaks differently to a teacher and another one speaks differently, teachers use this very well. They start going to the one from whom they will receive the fatwa." (A3)

"We send via WhatsApp or e-mail rather than paper consumption; it is more economical and reaches instantly. It reduced bureaucracy, enabled us to do our work faster and made it easier." (A1)

"We are informed about the developments instantly, that is perfect. When an article is published in the national education, it goes from the province to the district, from the district to the school; instead, we are informed as soon as it comes from the province, and we start working. I think it is very good to start working immediately. We have a WhatsApp group with the administrators in our district and school. When there is an article, two administrators are at school and one is outside, the administrator outside learns about that work and writes his views to the group, we can start working here immediately. For example, when an article about *İYEP* comes, I immediately plan it in my head even if I am outside. Who wants it? I think that that teacher wants it. I plan in my head that I will hold a meeting and keep the minutes. I apply the same way when s/he comes to school. Participation in decisions can be achieved quickly. Instant information, practicality, I am informed even if I am outside, I can make plans in my head thinking that there is that work to be done at school tomorrow. It is good in terms of getting the work done on time." (AA1)

"Social media usage is fast, practical, we can make decisions quicker, the process is fast, friends can sometimes conduct surveys, we quickly send surveys to each other from forum sites etc. Or sometimes there are mini forms for emergencies, we answer and send them immediately... Preparation can be done quicker and easier. Even if it is twelve at night, you can prepare from the moment you see it. Sharing can happen even at night." (AA3)

"It's very practical, it's like a snap. For example, I have something on the brain, let's say it is about zero waste, I see that another school worked on it in another province, for example, I can open it and get its documents."

“Social media provides great convenience. We can say that it saves time in terms of management.” (AA6)

“I think it is important to motivate each other as colleagues... The spirit of unity. If we are a crowd, our voices will be strong, this is the motivation.” (A5)

Findings Regarding Factors that Prevent School Administrators from Using Social Media within the Scope of Colleague Solidarity

Within the scope of the fourth sub-problem of the study, the school administrators were asked about the factors that prevent them from using social media with their colleagues. The factors that prevent the participants from using social media are in Figure 4.

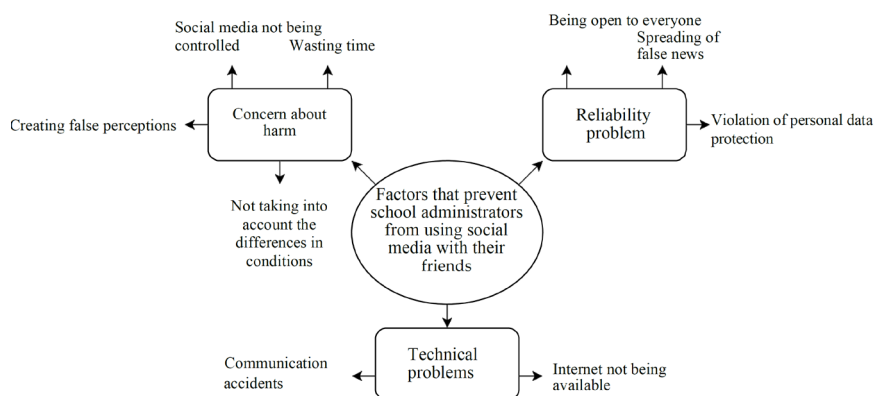


Figure 4. *Factors that hinder social media use*

When Figure 4 is examined, it is seen that there are a variety of factors that prevent school administrators from using social media. The categories of “concern about harm” were formed with the codes of social media not being controlled, creating false perceptions, wasting time, and not taking into account the differences in conditions of schools; “reliability problem” with the codes of social media being open to everyone, violation of personal data protection, spreading of false news, and “technical problems” with the codes of internet not being available and communication accidents. There was a hesitation to avoid being harmed/causing harm due to social media being a very effective channel that can reach large audiences. A3 explained this situation with the words, “...I mean, it is such an effective channel that even the slightest mistake can be very costly. One must be very careful...It would be better if it was used only in emergencies.” Some of the participant opinions regarding the codes in these categories specified in Table 4 are presented below:

"There can be problems in helping colleagues through social media. Because everyone writes with ease. After a while, it can no longer serve its purpose and can turn into an environment of mutual discussion and bickering. Because people can say things that they cannot say face to face in these environments. Unfortunately, this situation cannot be controlled. This causes communication problems and deterioration of relationships." (AA6)

"When one person writes something in this group, it means that hundreds of people write in groups like Telegram where there are thousands of people. You ask something, you get a lot of answers, then you have the right to reply again, etc. When this is the case, I do not discuss it on social media. We waste more time unnecessarily. When this is the case, you cannot access the information you need to access. I do not want to do this in that crowd." (AA3)

"Once you start using it, you start following it every day. Being active is like a necessity. We have trouble finding time when our other works are added." (A2)

"I am against discussing school-related issues on social media. Because you are writing something to someone you do not know. Without knowing the environment here, s/he comments on you with her/his own thoughts and guides you. S/he does not know what you are going through here. S/he is trying to guide you with his/her one-sided listening. You are looking at it from your own perspective and telling it, maybe the other person is right. But you explain it in such a way that the other party gives you the direction to do it this way or that way. This creates a wrong perception in the environment." (AA2)

"Sometimes, a problem you share may be understood as a simple problem by another friend. "Oh, s/he could not solve this problem either?" But there are differences in this, arising from the education level of the parents of the school, their socioeconomic level, and their entire environment. Even if we experience the same problem, you cannot solve the problems in the same way. While you are actually looking for different solutions, people can be more condescending and have different attitudes. However, the conditions of each school are different. I can say that there are many differences between this school and the school next door, which is 1.5 minutes away." (AA2)

"Not being able to be free enough because it is open to everyone. There is always a fear that our posts are being followed or will they cause us any trouble." (A5)

"I do not these platforms reliable. Messages are recorded. It could be a problem if they fall into the hands of malicious people."

“Here is an example we experienced recently. A fake account posted fake news, as if it was an order from above. An administrator shared it on social media and in the school principals group. Then a few hours later, it's fake news, change it, etc. But when we do not see the official document first, we hesitate. We make preparations for the procedures, but we really take action according to the official document.” (AA3)

“Students should not be visible on social media. Personal data should also be protected. Sometimes it is overlooked in the sharing, but here it is ...” (AA2)

“Sometimes I can send a message to someone else, I can send it to a different group. So sometimes groups can get mixed up. There might be something different that should not go there. We have some friends on social media. They constantly share their photos. I have to comment as if I just see it. Personal sharing, that is. I mean, someone's having a funeral, or having a baby... you have to write privately; everyone writes the same messages one after another. Sometimes I am afraid to announce something, and while trying to be practical, I lose time replying to messages one after another.” (A4)

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Colleague solidarity refers to the interaction between employees of an organization and individuals who can understand them in terms of their emotions, knowledge, and practice in work-related matters. School administrators who aim to help their schools achieve their goals use social media in the context of colleague solidarity. School administrators have used social media platforms with their colleagues for some purposes and have encountered both their benefits and negative effects. The purpose of this study is to examine school administrators' views on the use of social media within the scope of colleague solidarity. In the study, which social media tools are used, the purposes of using social media, the benefits of using social media, and the factors that hinder the use of social media within the scope of colleague solidarity were examined in line with the opinions of 11 school administrators.

The study findings show that the school administrators actively used social media platforms within the scope of colleague solidarity. It can be said that the participants considered social media as an effective tool. This result is similar to the findings of Bowman's (2018) mixed-method study that the school administrators used social media very actively and thus created social capital. Porterfield and Carnes (2012) similarly found that social media tools provided a powerful network for school administrators to gain support from their colleagues and their acquaintances. The findings show that the school administrators communicated with their colleagues mostly via WhatsApp, an instant messaging application. It can be stated that this is due to the fact that they received faster feedback from this applica-

tion and found it more secure than other applications. School administrators use WhatsApp and Telegram applications for instant messaging, the school website to share school-related content, and platforms such as Instagram, Twitter (X), and Facebook, which they use in a more controlled manner because they are open to everyone, for many educational/administrative sharing. Allman (2012) found that technology-based communication between principals and any school founder group in the state of Virginia was almost entirely limited to the use of email. The study showed that this result was due to problems with internet connection. Considering the year in which the study was conducted, it can be said that there were periods when the use of social media platforms for corporate purposes was not common. Our findings also contribute to research that highlights the importance of use of social media within the context of colleague solidarity in educational settings (Penuel et al., 2013; Vega and Kannan, 2015).

In the study, when the school administrators were asked about their purposes of using social media in the context of solidarity with their colleagues, the participants' statements were categorized as sharing content, communicating, and following the current events. In studies examining the use of social media by school administrators in Türkiye, it was determined that they were mostly used for collaboration and communication purposes and mostly in administrative tasks (Doğan and Çevik, 2021; Işık, 2019; Keskin, 2014; Şahin, 2017; Titrek and Sarı, 2018; Yıldırım and Kılıç, 2021; Yiğittürk, 2020). However, in this study examining school administrators' use of social media within the scope of colleague solidarity, the purposes of using social media were explained as being informed about the activities of their colleagues or informing them, exchanging ideas especially about situations in which they are in trouble, and thus being informed about innovations. Yıldırım and Bayraktar (2021) explained this situation by the fact that individuals wanted to get support and attention from their colleagues, thinking that they had experienced similar situations in order to get rid of the situations they were anxious about, and believing that they would make the best contribution.

In the study, the benefits of school administrators' use of social media with their colleagues were categorized as supporting personal development, supporting administrative work, and the functionality of social media. Based on the findings of the current study, it can be stated that the participants thought social media use an inevitable necessity and wanted to benefit from its benefits. The functional aspects of social media, such as being fast and practical revealed that it facilitated administrative tasks in the study by Yıldırım and Kılıç (2021). The participants stated that when they connected with their colleagues via social media, they created a spirit of unity, took action, were motivated, felt stronger, and their creativity improved. The active nature of social media use motivates individuals (Quan-Haase and Young, 2011). In this way, school administrators create "social capital" (Liang, Commins, and Duffy, 2010; McCarthy, 2010). Faizi, Afia, and Chiheb (2013) stated that all the

above-mentioned benefits of social media enabled stakeholders to participate in the school management process, while EdWeb (2010) and Fancera (2019) also touched on an implicit benefit of social media by arguing that interaction between administrators through social media helped professional development. Moreover, the finding in the current study that school administrators' use of social media increased their motivation showed that it increased self-efficacy in the studies by Durksen, Klassen, and Daniels (2017) and Prenger, Poortman, and Handelzalts (2017).

This study revealed both the benefits school administrators derive from using social media as part of colleague solidarity and the factors that prevent them from using it. In Holmes' (2016) thesis study, the school administrators described this situation as a "double-edged sword." Although social media tools used for instant messaging such as WhatsApp and Telegram were considered safer by administrators because they are not open to everyone, it was stated that they cause waste of time. Studies show that educators fear that social media use may reveal confidential information about school and that social media wastes a lot of time (Chang and Chen, 2014; Yost and Fan, 2014). These findings are consistent with studies in the literature that indicate the factors that negatively affect school administrators' use of social media (Cox and McLeod, 2013, 2014; Heath, Maghrabi, and Carr, 2015; Yiğittürk, 2020). Moreover, when the participant opinions are examined, it is seen that some administrators thought that it is not right to share information about their schools with their colleagues. They cite reasons such as differences in the situation and conditions of schools and the possibility of creating false perceptions about the situation described. The participants thought that especially the problematic situations experienced should be resolved within the school's own stakeholders and should not be reflected outside. Cho and Jimerson's (2017) study findings show that the interaction between school administrators on social media lacks originality and sincerity.

As a result, school administrators actively use various social media tools for colleague solidarity. They see social media as a means of communication for reasons such as sharing with their colleagues and being informed about current developments. However, they are careful about using social media due to concerns about getting harmed, problems with the reliability of social media, and some technical problems. Based on the results of this qualitative study, school administrators' use of social media with their colleagues can be examined through a quantitative, mixed-methods design. Colleague solidarity among school administrators via social media can be examined in more detail with different qualitative research methods and questions. It is recommended that functionally structured, formal and official social media platforms be made available for school administrators to communicate with each other.

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