

REPUBLIC OF TÜRKİYE
ANKARA UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF JOURNALISM

**SOCIAL MEDIA, YOUTH AND KNOWLEDGE DEVELOPMENT: A
RESEARCH ON KERKUK UNIVERSITY STUDENTS**

Master of Thesis

Mohammed Adnan Mohammed ALWINDAWI

Ankara, 2024

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Prof. Dr. Gamze YÜCESAN ÖZDEMİR I stated that all the information in my master's-doctoral/integrated doctoral thesis titled "Social Media, Youth and Knowledge Development: A Research on Kirkuk University Students (Ankara. 2023)", which I prepared under the supervision of the advisor, was collected and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical behavior principles, and that I included the information I received from other sources in the text. I declare that I have fully presented the information in the bibliography, that I have acted in accordance with the rules of scientific research and ethics during the study process, and that I will accept any legal consequences if the contrary occurs.

Date: 11/01/2024

Mohammed Adnan Mohammed ALWINDAWI

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ABBREVIATIONS

DIY	do-it-yourself
KMO	Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin
TV	Television



INTRODUCTION

With the evolution and development of communication tools, lifestyle, and technology, the process and content of acquiring information and personal development have undergone a transformation, taking on a different dimension. Particularly, the transformation of media, coupled with the emergence of social media, has played a decisive role in diversifying, disseminating, shaping the form of information, facilitating access to information, and internalizing knowledge. Individuals now easily access political, social, cultural, economic, artistic, and other information and agendas through the internet and social media. The encounter with information, internalizing it, generating new knowledge from it, and applying or using this knowledge in the life cycle result in an enhancement of personal development.

Personal development or personal growth involves individuals working to develop their abilities, skills, knowledge, or other qualities. Self-improvement is not an isolated phenomenon; it occurs through mutual interaction with the individual's environment (Kari and Savolainen, 2007:49). Especially, social media applications and the internet enable individuals to interact more frequently with their social environment. McLoughlin and Lee define social networks as structures that are accessible from anywhere at any time and have high connectivity. They characterize the structure as individuals actively participating or co-producing content, thereby considering learning as a social process that supports personal life goals and needs (2007). Additionally, the concept of "lifelong learning" is increasingly prevalent within personal development (McLoughlin and Lee, 2007). Individuals leverage the communication and access opportunities of the internet and social media to find learning opportunities in various subjects. In this context, virtual spaces are now the most widely utilized areas for personal development opportunities. The fact that social media shapes the trends, consumption habits, lifestyles, perspectives

on social life, and ideas about social and political agendas for young people, and forms the agenda of their peers, raises the question of whether social media contributes to the knowledge accumulation and personal development of young individuals. Additionally, the preferences in social media usage serve as a significant rationale for affirming these tools to expose young people to social media and to support their personal development. In this context, one of the important motivations of this study is to determine whether social media supports the personal development of young people. Among the objectives of the research is the examination of social media tools, the social media theory, and the determination of the degree and significance of each tool in an individual's access to information.

This study, conducted on a sample from Kerkuk University in Iraq, aims to determine the social media usage status of university students and whether social media supports the personal development of young people.

The study is structured into five sections. The first section delves into the historical development of the concept of new media and focuses on new media tools, examining the advantages and disadvantages of new media. In the second section, the concept of social media is discussed, exploring the historical development of social media, presenting results regarding the usage and intensity of social media tools found in the literature, and addressing the advantages and disadvantages of social media. The third section evaluates the contribution of social media to personal development within the framework of social media theories and discusses the social media effects on health, social, economic, and financial literacy. The fourth section of the research presents and tests the demographic information of the participants reached in the sample from Kerkuk University and the hypotheses considered within the scope of the study. The fifth section provides the results obtained from the research findings.

Purpose of the Research and Hypotheses

The following hypotheses and sub hypotheses were discussed in this research, which was conducted to reveal the effect and role of social media on the cognitive development of Iraqi university students.

Hypothesis 1: There is a statistically significant relationship between demographics and increased knowledge awareness within the context of Facebook usage.

This hypothesis branches out into several sub-hypotheses as follows:

H₁₁. There is a statistically significant relationship between the gender of the researchers and increased knowledge awareness within the context of Facebook usage.

H₁₂. There is a statistically significant relationship between the educational level of the researchers and increased knowledge awareness within the context of Facebook usage.

H₁₃. There is a statistically significant relationship between the residence location of the researchers and increased knowledge awareness within the context of Facebook usage.

H₁₄. There is a statistically significant relationship between the responder's specialization and the increase in knowledge awareness within the context of using Facebook.

H₁₅. There is a statistically significant relationship between the languages spoken by the responders and increased knowledge awareness within the context of Facebook usage.

Hypothesis 2: There is a statistically significant relationship between the time allocated by the responders and increased knowledge awareness within the context of Facebook usage

Hypothesis 3: There is a statistically significant relationship between the researchers' confidence in the content of Facebook and the increase in cognitive awareness within the context of using Facebook.

Hypothesis 4: There is a statistically significant relationship between the type of content used by the responders on Facebook and the increase in knowledge awareness within the context of using Facebook.

Importance of Thesis

In today's world, new media, which effectively influences young people against traditional media, continues to maintain its importance as a subject to be examined in terms of communication. In order to develop creative strategies in new media, whose effectiveness is increasing day by day in social, political, and societal domains, it is necessary to analyze the dynamics of this new medium well. Especially, the internet and social media environments frequently used by young people determine their lifestyle and communication style. Understanding the expanding influence of new media applications on young people, examining their relationships with the internet and social media, and determining the degree, direction, and weight of the effectiveness of social media and the internet on young people are essential for establishing more effective communication with them.

In our era, information and the processes of accessing information have diversified as much as communication and its structure. Although the internet and social media are initially perceived as entertainment platforms, they are becoming alternatives to both traditional media and sources of information. Based on this perspective, a research study conducted among university students, focusing on how young people use the internet and social media for the purpose of obtaining information, reveals the significant dimension of the effectiveness of the internet and, especially, Facebook on university students.

The target audience of the research is the vibrant force representing society, the university youth group, who live the truth, strive to build the present, and prepare for the future. University students are generally characterized by knowledge, enthusiasm, sacrifice, and positive change. Furthermore, the importance of this study lies in

highlighting the role of social media platforms in cognitive development, especially in revealing the values and directions of university youth. The study is crucial in terms of utilizing the results and assisting those responsible for promoting cognitive development.

Research Method

In this section, the research model, research hypothesis, research population and sample, data collection tool and statistical analysis of the data are examined.

Research Model

This research is descriptive research of its kind, in this research, the researcher used the screening method and the comparison model from quantitative research methods in research design. Survey (online) was used as the data collection technique and convenience sampling method was preferred as the study sample.

Population and Sample of the Research

The population of this study consists of social media audiences of Iraqi university students, including Kerkuk University. The sample consisted of 400 students reached through convenience sampling at Kerkuk University.

A preliminary questionnaire sheet was prepared with the aim of knowing the extent to which Kirkuk University students use social networking sites or not, and to identify the priorities for using social networking sites by Kirkuk University students, and then use its results in formulating the final questionnaire.

(40) survey forms were distributed through which university youth's use of social networking sites was identified, as well as the most prominent priorities of Kirkuk University youth regarding the six most prominent social networking sites used by them.

Data Collection Method

This survey, which was administered to students at Kerkuk University in Iraq, consists of 3 parts: a section covering students' demographic characteristics (5 items), a section covering teachers' social media usage (9 items), and a section containing the "Knowledge Development Measurement" scale, which measures students' social media (Facebook) information awareness. "Knowledge Development Measurement" scale consists of sections which titled Social Aspects (6 items), Political Aspects (5 items), Economic Aspects (5 items), Sports Aspects (5 items), Scientific aspects (6 items) and Entertainment Aspect and chat (5 items). In the answers given to the questions in the subsections under the following, a 3-point Likert scale corresponding to the expression "1: Agree", "2: I don't know", "3: Disagree" was used.

The Validity Analysis

The KMO and Bartlett Test results of the scale used in the study to determine the validity of the data obtained from the scale used to measure students' knowledge development are given in Table 1.

Table 1. KMO and Bartlett Test Results

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.	0,814
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity Approx. Chi-Square	5737,614
df	496
Sig.	0

According to Table 1, it was understood that the KMO value in the Knowledge Development Measurement scale was 0.877. A Sig value of 0.000 in the Bartlett test is significant, meaning that there is a high correlation between the variables. These results show that the data are suitable for factor analysis (Büyüköztürk, 2018).

As a result of the factor analysis conducted in this research, it was determined that the factor loadings of the items in the Knowledge Development Measurement scale were between 458 and 758.

The Reliability Analysis

The results of the reliability analysis of the Knowledge Development Measurement Scale and its subscales used in this study are given in Table 2.

Table 2. Reliability Analysis Results

	Number of items	Cronbach Alpha
Knowledge Development Measurement Scale	32	0,81
Social Aspects	6	0,82
Political Aspects	5	0,81
Economic Paste	5	0,86
Sports Aspects	5	0,90
Scientific Aspects	6	0,84
Entertainment Aspects	5	0,83

As seen in Table 2, it was determined that the Cronbach's Alpha value of the Knowledge Development Measurement scale was 0.94, and the Cronbach's Alpha values of its sub-dimensions varied between 0.81 - 0.90. These findings show that the scale is quite reliable.

Data Analysis

The data in the survey forms obtained in this study were transferred to IBM SPSS 25.0 program and analyzed. The results of the normality test (Skewness-Kurtosis) performed to determine the method to be used to test the hypotheses of the study are given in Table 3.

Table 3. Normality Test Results (Skewness-Kurtosis)

	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
Knowledge Development Measurement	-0,887	0,122	1,204	0,243
Social Aspects	-1,2	0,122	1,139	0,243
Political Aspects	-1,164	0,122	1,14	0,243
Economic Paste	-0,998	0,122	0,426	0,243
Sports Aspects	-1,024	0,122	0,148	0,243
Scientific Aspects	-0,903	0,122	0,579	0,243
Entertainment Aspects	-1,09	0,122	0,749	0,243

As seen in Table 3, it is understood that the skewness values of the scale used in the research are between -1.164 and -0.887 and the kurtosis values are between 0.148 and 1.204. It was observed that these values were outside +2 and -2 and it was accepted that the data were normally distributed ((George and Mallery, 2010).

Frequency analysis was used for the demographic characteristics and social media usage characteristics of the students participating in the research, and frequency, percentage, average and standard deviation methods were used in the analysis of the scale. In the analysis of the hypotheses, since the data were normally distributed, T-test was used for parametric tests for two groups and one way ANOVA tests were used for groups of more than two.

CHAPTER 1

NEW MEDIA

In this section, the concept of new media will be discussed. After addressing the emergence and historical development of new media, the practices of new media are examined under the headings of positive and negative aspects, advantages, and disadvantages. The scope of new media and the tools used are also discussed.

Throughout various periods in history, humanity has witnessed significant changes and transformations. Just as in every aspect of life, innovations have occurred in the field of media, leading to the gaining momentum of innovations at different times, especially with the advent of digitalization. The transformation of media has accelerated. While traditional forms of written, visual, and auditory media, which have become ingrained in social life, continue their publications, new media platforms have begun to emerge.

Before delving into the meaning of the concept referred to as new media, it is important to understand the processes through which the phenomenon of communication has evolved and found its place within new media tools. This understanding is crucial for evaluating the structural characteristics, as well as the positive and negative aspects of contemporary mass communication environments.

Communication and messaging, which emerged alongside the first humans, have gone through different stages. In the early stages of communication, signs and sounds were used as communication tools. As time progressed, messengers on foot or horseback conveyed messages to recipients in different locations. In the constantly advancing field of communication, limitations began to diminish and at present, large masses can engage

in instantaneous communication without considering time or distance (Yüksel & Gürcan, 2005:5).

All tools and environments that facilitate communication among the masses are defined as media (Yücedoğan, 1997:83). Media encompasses all means that enable communities to stay informed about each other. In other words, written, visual, and auditory tools are collectively referred to as media (Gönenç, 2005: 61).

All tools falling under the definition of media are now consolidated under the umbrella of new media. Traditional media organizations have taken their place in new channels of mass communication to reach their target audiences more effectively. With new media, individuals can access a variety of media content, including traditional communication tools, thanks to digitization. The role of digitization in the emergence of this opportunity is significant.

With the digitization of all forms of communication, barriers between mobile technologies, media, and internet networks have been lifted. Mobile devices have become actively involved in content production. Moreover, the ability to upload, exchange, and redistribute this content via the web has not only expanded access to this content but has also led to a transformation in the sender and receiver roles in traditional media (Castells, 2009:80).

1.1. The Concept of New Media

Although the term "new media" might give the impression of being a recent concept, it is, in fact, an ancient term. Stöber (2004: 484) states that "even old media was once new, and at some point, every new medium will become old." He emphasizes that media seems to create itself out of nothing, and when contemporaries of Gutenberg were asked about the societal consequences of his invention, no one could provide the correct answer. According to Stöber, today, Gutenberg and his invention might not be given much

importance, as centuries have passed; however, it is a fact that neither he nor his contemporaries could have envisioned the dimensions newspapers and magazines would reach. This holds for other media as well. It is unlikely that Guglielmo Marconi, the credited inventor of radio, and the scientists of his time could foresee the extent of radio broadcasting, or that Paul Nipkow, John Loggie Baird, and Campbell Swinton could predict the future of television broadcasting. Therefore, the answer to when the evolution of media is and what new media is often emerges as conceptualizations made later.

The term "new media" can also be referred to as the 'New World' in the contemporary era. Here, we can also discuss a new form of communication. Humanity can find itself in a conscious process of change, transformation, and design beyond the fixed assumptions of the past. To understand the 'New World' and grasp how society has changed, it is essential to be aware of this design. The Word "new" is related to interaction, and this concept has been in use since the 1970s. social media, in a sense, articulates the language of a new world or the 'New World.'

In other words, new media and social media are virtual platforms where users interact independently of time and space. Furthermore, it is stated that the "new" in new media comes from an innovation in sharing the environment rather than the message. The main goal here is the transportation of the message in some way. Throughout the historical process, it has always been this way. Nowadays, with information evolving as the transport of all kinds of data, the concept of "new media" has emerged (Sanlav, 2014:29).

In a general sense, it can be said that all communication tools are a means for humans to survive. This can also be expressed as a societal anchor. Therefore, humans are in a continuous exploration of the "new," and this exploration can mean a journey in place for the future. However, this journey must be a journey with a high level of consciousness because all innovations can only gain continuity with consciousness and awareness.

Before delving into the concept of social media, it is crucial to fully grasp the phenomenon of new media. Globally, there is a plethora of research, books, and articles that focus on the concept of new media. New media is primarily referred to as a digital or electronic media environment. Interactive mutual information exchange holds a significant place in media environments. Therefore, if an individual uses the internet, digital television, or blog sites, it means they are utilizing new media (Ormanlı, 2015:371).

Looking at the historical process of the concept of the media, it was introduced in the 1970s by researchers conducting information and communication-based research in societal, psychological, economic, political, and cultural studies. However, the meaning attributed to this concept in the 1970s underwent rapid development in the 1990s, expanding and evolving into different dimensions with the advancements in computer and internet technology (Aytakin, 2012:103). Due to the expanded meaning of new media, it is observed that various media environments are also integrated into it.

In this context, new media plays a significant role in redesigning societal structure and production connections, proving to be highly efficient and important in creating various societal models (Törenli, 2016:88). Consequently, the "new" in new media needs to update the previous environment in terms of context and bring forth some characteristics.

Therefore, the ability for the content to be continually produced and replicated is among the features of the concept of the media (Törenli, 2005:157). However, the advanced state of new media may not necessarily imply equal accessibility to everyone worldwide. The development parallel to the reach of internet technology to the average global population is the only valid point to discuss, and this situation can lead to misconceptions.

Moreover, many people believe that being connected to the internet is an effective force for communication through the same channel, simultaneously connecting individuals to a broader world. As mentioned in the above paragraph, internet technology has not been able to reach the global population equally. Looking at the online population, an asymmetric segmentation of the global population is evident.

Therefore, when an average world citizen gains full access to new media environments, they will not necessarily look at the headlines and trending topics that occupy the top ranks of popular culture (Monfort, 2003)

In this regard, when examined, social and inter-societal gaps between those with and without the Internet can vary, and various definitions may yield different results. Therefore, meaning and perceptions can differ.

New media is a communication concept that encompasses a broad spectrum. Digital technologies and platforms, online journalism, and electronic and multimedia broadcasting fall within the scope of the concept of new media (Franklin, Hamer, Hanna, Kinsey, & Richardson, 2005:160-161). New media has altered the one-way information flow in traditional communication tools, changing viewer characteristics, and enriching content and channel numbers.

The tools and Technologies that emerged at the end of the significant change in media can be referred to as new media. New media refers to communication tools and channels that conduct digital or numerical communication, characterized by simultaneous, interactive, and multi-layered interaction, and possessing a multimedia structure. It is also possible to define new media as media forms and technologies that are developed, reprocessed, and digitized by reworking existing media formats digitally through computers (Kürkçü, 2015:290).

To explain what the concept of new media means or does not mean, Wardrip-Fruin and Monfort (2003:16-23) have initially compared new media and cyberculture. They assert that new media and cyberculture are two distinct areas, with cyberculture focusing on social events in new forms of the internet and other communication networks, while new media is concerned not only with computer networks but also with cultural objects and paradigms encompassing all forms of information processing. The authors include media objects that use computer technologies as a distribution channel under new media, but they do not categorize television programs, films, and printed sources that, although benefiting from computer Technologies in production and storage stages, do not utilize them in the final distribution. However, the authors emphasize the need to revise these definitions every few years.

Manovich (2001:49-63) states that new media is built on five fundamental principles. According to Manovich, digital representation is an important principle for new media. He notes that all new media content, regardless of whether it is computer-generated or transformed from analog media content, consists of digital representations composed of digital code. Modularity is another principle of new media. In the new media, media elements are represented as collections of separate samples, such as images, sounds, shapes, or behaviors. These elements can be aggregated into larger objects without losing their characteristic. Manovich emphasizes the need to revise these definitions every few years.

In new media, when a document is added to another document, it continues to maintain its independence and can always be edited with the program originally used to create it. The modular structure of new media enables all these possibilities. Another feature of new media is referred to as automation. The digital coding feature and modular structure of media allow the automation of many processes involved in media creation, manipulation, and access. This allows some aspects of the human creative process to be

intentionally removed, at least partially. In other words, thanks to the automation feature, it is possible for devices to make changes to the media object instead of humans.

The fourth principle of new media is variability, closely related to the principle of automation. Variability is inherent in the character of new media. While content in old media is copied as it is, content in new media can take on new forms in new hands. Code conversion is also possible in new media. Contents specific to new media can be transformed into different file formats.

1.2. The History of The New Media Concept

With advancements in technological fields, the internet has become crucial for the media. New media, grounded in computer technology in addition to traditional media, has ushered in a new era in societal life. The emergence of new media technologies became possible through the convergence of historical developments in both computer and media domains.

Lev Manovich associates the emergence of new media with the developments of the 1830s. The process starts with Charles Babbage's analytical engine and Louis Daguerre's invention of the daguerreotype, continuing until the mid-20th century with the development of the modern digital computer. The evolution initiated by the analytical engine and computer technologies and the introduction of motion to images in media technologies that began with the daguerreotype bear witness to the transformation of sound and text using different forms. The convergence of these two historical developments and the digitization of media data gave rise to the concept of new media (Başlar, 2013).

The diversification of media tools and significant increases in various channels and digital platforms across different sections of the media have been instrumental. When we revisit periods where the impact of new media tools was not felt, there was substantial

growth driven by demand for newspapers, magazines, and TV channels. Increases in the number of newspaper pages, the emergence of new TV channels, along with the rise in the number of magazines, were accompanied by the activation of thousands of websites. Internet sites, featuring various names, started providing services in sports, arts, politics, culture, and more. Despite the ease of access for users to numerous TV channels, newspapers, magazines, and websites due to the diversification of media tools, there has been a separation and autonomy of users in the media landscape. Additionally, the advertising revenue, the primary income source for media operators, is selected based on user characteristics. Thus, it can be said that users directly influence the revenue models of businesses. With the increase in production outputs, there is an enhancement in the quality and richness of content. The challenges faced by individual units within the media may weaken businesses and communication processes. However, since difficulties affecting the entire media are addressed, the increase in production outputs mitigates significant risks. This diversification is observed to enrich the content further (Gürcan, Kumcuoğlu 2017).

As production output becomes richer and media enterprises grow, there is an increased risk of the media losing power. The power of media, dependent on the business, has transformed today's world due to user demands. Media users, expressing their opinions and shares through the internet, have become the most significant stakeholders with influence over media enterprises. This process has made media users factor in directly affecting the revenues of businesses (Picard, 2011).

New media, evolving with communication technologies, possesses a richer structure compared to traditional media dominated by newspapers, magazines, and TV. Historically, media management first emerged in the form of print media enterprises, diversifying later with the advent of visual and auditory media tools like TV and radio. It can be said that press movements played a role in the innovations in the field of media

management (Atılğan, 1998). The transformations in the Turkish press began after World War II, aligned with global developments, contributing to the transformation of press enterprises into large-scale media businesses.

While newspapers, magazines, and TVs hold a significant place in human life, it can be said that internet-focused social networks have gradually expanded into a broad area since 1990 with technological advancements. Albarran summarizes the periodical stages in the transition from traditional media management to new media management. Periods shown by Albarran for media management, characterized by globalization, technological developments, user differentiation, and the effects of monopolization, have become more complex (Albarran, 2008).

- 1940s: After World War II, media studies were conducted.
- 1950s: Television, a mass communication tool, emerged, but newspapers and magazines were predominant as print media.
- The 1960s: Technological developments in satellite communication made global communication possible, and studies focused on TV.
- 1970s: Studies on cable TV and satellite systems, as well as video technology, were conducted.
- 1980s: The internet emerged as a mass communication tool, reducing the dominance of TV and newspapers in media management studies.
- 1990s: Technological developments in the internet accelerated new media studies.
- 2000s: The internet became central to studies, altering the direction of social media studies.

- 2010s: The rise of social media significantly transformed the media landscape, shifting media management from traditional to new media.

In new media management, four fundamental variables can be identified:

- Diversification of media tools
- Fragmentation and autonomy of media users
- Increase in production outputs.
- Risk of power loss in media enterprises and all communication processes

1.2.1. The Distinction Between New Media and Traditional Media

With the proliferation of technological innovations, the number of communication environments has increased, making it challenging to classify them. We can distinguish between traditional and new media environments based on technical knowledge and digitization features (Yengin, 2014:77).

Until the 1990s, mass communication tools had a one-way characteristic. Although communication through the telephone was two-way, for a long time, it was limited to verbal interaction. With the internet and the use of cables, sharing, images, sounds, and multimedia applications became mutual (Kesim, 2013:43).

Yengin expressed that, despite being new, new media is nourished by traditional media: "There is an inseparable connection between the new media we define as 'new', and the media tools previously used. The formation of new media cannot occur without communication achieved through phones, radio, and satellites. New media tools cannot be used without the infrastructure of the old media (Yengin, 2014: 88).

We can think of the concept of new media as a building that adds a new floor every day based on accumulated knowledge, taking advantage of the opportunities provided by technology according to needs. New media did not emerge independently of previous

media and technological developments; on the contrary, it continues by nourishing and adapting. Roger Fidler defines this situation as "metamorphosis" (Lilleker, 2013: 62). New media has many significant capacities that differentiate it from traditional media. One of the most important is its unifying structure, allowing it to bridge distances. Thanks to this feature, geographical locations lose their importance, and the entire world establishes connections through new media (Dijk, 2018:32-33).

If we remember that new communication technologies encompass all kinds of visual, auditory, written, and printed tools that enable information transportation, production, and sharing, it can be said that they have brought many innovations that facilitate life (Uğurlu, 2013:13). When evaluating new media in terms of information access, and speed, the most significant contribution of digital technical infrastructure to mass communication tools, stands out. This speed in accessing information facilitates the ease of access by reducing costs. Another distinguishing feature is the storage capability, which is stronger than our memory in face-to-face communication. Digital media has a wider storage capacity compared to other media types (Dijk, 2018:33).

With new media, the structure in which minorities have a say has evolved into a user-centric digital storage-based structure. Another fundamental distinction that sets the new screen apart from the traditional screen is portability. Portability is considered one of the fundamental distinctions of new media. The new screen, as an interactive surface, becomes free from time and space limitations with its portability (Altunay, 2012:17).

In traditional media, messages sent from a one-way source to many receivers are given within specific time intervals. With its storage feature, new media can provide these messages to the receiver at a time determined by the receiver within a certain time frame, using a tool of their choice. In new media, the concept of "mass" in mass communication tools transforms into an individual user. Compared to traditional media channels, social media platforms are places where information freely circulates, and users can actively

share. Users have the opportunity to be both the subject and commentator of the news. This process should be considered as the new media revolution (Babacan, Haşlak ve Hira, 2011:72; Kuyucu, 2013:120). New media networks can restructure themselves around this 'old' essence to facilitate new distribution types that are not centrally controlled and directed but are subject to a higher degree of viewer differentiation and discrimination (Yengin, 2014:88).

We can mention some fundamental differences between social media and traditional media. Among these are the one-way communication of traditional media and the two-way communication of new media, the control and scrutiny of traditional media before publication compared to the lack of control and scrutiny in new media. While traditional media allows access to old information through archives, there is no access problem in new media, and information can be easily accessed through search engines. While there is a single publisher in traditional media, users in new media have also become publishers. Being a publisher in traditional media requires capital and financial power, while there is no such requirement in new media. Being a publisher in traditional media requires expertise and knowledge, while in new media, and user can become a Publisher regardless of age gender, or education (Çetinöz, 2013:152).

Social media has significantly influenced social, economic, and business life. While traditional channels that provide one-way communication continue to exist, these new communication channels, called social media, have opened the way for two-way or even multi-directional communication (Kuyucu, 2013:143).

1.3. New Media's Key Features

New media, offering numerous advantages compared to traditional media, creates an interactive space by utilizing internet networks and social communication media, distinguishing itself from tools such as books, television, newspapers, and radio. In traditional media, tasks such as printing, geographic competence, and various technical

equipment played crucial roles in the necessity of communication. With the development of the internet, new media provides users with a platform that is both globally and economically more feasible simultaneously (Shirky, 2008; Ünalan, 2021).

However, alongside the conveniences it provides to individuals, new media also paves the way for certain problems in social life. While contributing significantly to the phenomenon of socialization, new media enables society to come together on various issues; however, the fact that this gathering takes place solely in a virtual environment poses a challenge (Sütçü-Algül, 2013:61). Digital media platforms such as YouTube, Twitch, Twitter, Facebook, Clubhouse, Instagram, and others encompass individuals in society, altering the understanding of socialization.

Under the influence of this change, differences in relationships among users transforming are observed. With the developments in technological devices, new media encompasses a wide range of areas, from websites to blog addresses, mobile computer games, and cell phones. Digital devices have emerged as a significant tool for individuals to adapt to the communication age in societal life by providing conveniences.

Understanding the fundamental features of a concept that continuously evolves and changes, especially in the context of communication technologies, would be beneficial for comprehending the concept. The interactive feature that allows versatile communication in new media highlights a structural aspect. Providing multidirectional, two-way communication with a dimension in space, simultaneousness is achieved when looking at the dimension of time. Allowing individuals to determine both time and space in communication increases personal control, creating an opportunity for contemplation (Dijk, 2018:21-22). This situation disrupts the concept of distance, replacing face-to-face communication that is mutually established.

In the era of new media, which has a global impact, changes have been observed in socialization tools due to the formation of a society based on digital technology. When

we travel back to the periods dominated by traditional media, the idea that gathering around any thought and conveying it to the masses took time predominates. However, with the opportunities provided by new media, it is observed that the message quickly conveyed to the individual accelerates the process of socialization.

According to Richard A. Rogers, three fundamental features distinguish new media from traditional media (Rogers cited Geray, 2003: 18):

- Interactivity: Corresponds to the interaction where the recipient and sender share simultaneously.
- A synchronicity: Encompasses the process of conveying or receiving a message to different individuals at different times without the need for the same time in the message exchange.
- De-massification: This feature particularly allows delivering individualized messages to group members individually within any group of users.

Jan Van Dijk describes interactivity, one of the most important features of new media, as "successive effects and reactions." In this sense, the most basic level of interactivity is the ability to communicate bidirectionally or multi-directionally (Van Dijk, 2016: 21-22).

A synchronicity, another feature of new media, signifies that in digital communication, there is no time and space dimension in message transmission. Rogers' last-mentioned feature, de-massification, surrounds the individual as a personalized user with messages and shares, similar to traditional media tools such as TV, newspapers, and radio, as well as in new media devices. In addition to this, with the opportunities offered by new media, the viewer transformed into a user also falls into the position of content creator (Alanka, Cezik, 2016).

Lev Manovich, one of the first theorists to work on new media, summarizes the characteristics of new media in seven main headings:

1. **New Media Against Cyber Culture:** While cyberculture corresponds to various social phenomena associated with internet and network communication, new media is related to multicultural objects and paradigms. While cyberculture focuses on online social structures and cultural transformations, the concept of new media examines the cultural and social transformation produced by all digital technologies not covered by cyberculture.
2. **New Media as Computer Technologies Used as Distribution Platforms:** Manovich defines new media as cultural objects that use digital computer technologies for distribution and presentation. In contrast, he illustrates what is not new media by providing examples from traditional communication environments such as TV, film, and magazines, emphasizing the interpretation of the subject.
3. **New Media as Digital Data Controlled by Software:** The assumption here is based on the idea that the language of new media and some common qualities of all cultural objects are based on digital representation and computer-based transmission.
4. **New Media as a Blend of Cultural Traditions and Software Traditions:** This feature, as touched upon by Manovich, emerges as a blend of old cultural traditions for data presentation, access, and intervention with new traditions. In this sense, new media data are the digitized forms of existing audio-visual representation traditions.
5. **Aesthetic New Media Accompanying the Early Period of Modern Media and Communication Technology:** Many aesthetic strategies may reappear two or

three times. It is suggested that a more comprehensive examination associating the history of technology with the social, political, and economic histories of the modern era needs to be developed.

6. New Media as a Faster Execution Process of Past Technologies: Computers appear as accelerated versions of techniques that were previously applied manually. The significant acceleration of execution has made possible presentation techniques that did not exist in the past.
7. New Media as the Encoding of Avant-Garde; New Media as Meta-Media: Manovich suggests that, in terms of new media, the 1920s are more relevant than other periods. Both avant-garde and meta-media overlap with postmodernism in their tendency to reinterpret the old instead of creating new works. New media avant-garde is about 'accessing and intervening in information in new ways' (e.g., hypermedia, databases, search engines, etc.). Meta-media is an example of how new media technology and intervention techniques can 'recode modernist aesthetics into very different postmodern aesthetics,' transforming quantity into quality.

In today's context, it can be stated that not only journalism and TV broadcasting but also any individual aiming to deliver a message to a target audience utilizes new media tools for such activities. Applications such as Zoom, Skype, FaceTime, WhatsApp, Telegram, Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter are frequently used in new media tools. Consulting with an expert, broadcasts on video conferencing platforms can be conducted without the need for a specific time constraint. Additionally, applications like "Twitter Space Room" and "Clubhouse," where users from thousands of different countries can gather under the same roof without the need for video broadcasting, impact the process of socialization. In these platforms where numerous speakers and listeners discuss a designated topic, diverse thoughts are conveyed to the target audience. Thus, it is not

incorrect to say that alternative media has emerged without the need for traditional devices such as newspapers, TV, and radios.

Here, it is also observed that new media serves as a tool for expressing thoughts for suppressed groups or those who cannot make their voices heard in traditional media. In the expanding realm of participation in new media, content production, and consumption both complement each other and create environments of conflict. Therefore, this situation between producers and consumers sometimes reinforces each other and sometimes provides an opportunity for the discussion of power. The monopoly of media companies in content production and distribution has come to an end with participation, and social media has highlighted the status of “user” and “consumer” (Dueze; Zinderen, 2020).

Socialization behaviors facilitated by digital media applications reduce the necessity of establishing emotional connections, a fundamental characteristic of the socialization process, by eliminating the obligation to communicate mutually in enclosed environments. Although New Media transforms into the fundamental tool of socialization, enabling the development of society's social resources, significant challenges arise in terms of socialization because this development occurs in a virtual environment (Sütçü; Algül, 2013).

The Internet, especially with its features such as interactivity, hypermobility, and supporting user-generated content production, stands out as one of the most studied and distinctive environments in the 21st century in various aspects (Doğu, et.all., 2014).

Publicly accessible pages prepared in the new media environment have the hypertext feature, allowing users to navigate between pages and establish inter-page connections easily. Taking advantage of technological possibilities, it presents visual and auditory content rather than written content (Binark, 2018:21).

The digital technical infrastructure has added features such as mutual interaction, transitioning from a passive to an active state, to mass communication tools. With the interactive feature, the receiver has also become the sender of the message (Uğurlu, 2013:10). Convergence is the presence of the characteristics of other communication tools in one communication tool. Thanks to the digital technical infrastructure, the phone, television, and internet are all present in a single communication tool. An example of convergence is seen in the smartphones we use today, where, in addition to making phone calls, we can easily access information on the internet and watch television broadcasts at our desired time and place (Uğurlu, 2013:11).

Dijk has listed the characteristics of the Internet, which is sometimes seen as a democratic tool and sometimes as a harmful tool, as follows (Dijk, 2018:156):

- An interactive tool that differs from the one-way communication of existing mass communication tools
- An active and creative environment that allows users to transform from viewers, listeners, or readers to participants.
- A direct tool that allows individual users to determine what is happening at the centre of politics and mass communication, among many other things.
- In principle, an equal platform for everyone, as expertise needs to prove itself before being accepted.
- A network tool where products can be co-created online, rather than relying on individual authors or businesses.

New media encompasses internet-based platforms that allow people to participate in spontaneous encounters with both large and small markets, appreciating consumer-generated content and interpersonal engagement (Carr and Hayes 2015). It goes "beyond Web 2.0 and is often connected to more contemporary branded networks like Facebook

and Twitter" (Baym, 2015). The use of new media is broadly social (Jensen and Helles, 2017).

First: Digitization is the fundamental characteristic that distinguishes new media from traditional media. Digitization involves processing data and converting it into numbers through coding. In digital technology, information is transformed into 0s and 1s, known as the computer language, through microprocessors. Computers can only understand the states of information as "on" and "off," representing the existence and absence of information. These states are represented by 0 and 1, known as "bits" (short for binary digit).

This information is stored in the computer with the definition of "binary code." With the transformation of data into digital codes, storage, and access have become more convenient. Today, digital codes, especially on the internet, form the basis of many network-supported structures, emphasizing the ease of copying (transferability) of these codes. New media technologies, with the use of the internet, distinguish themselves from traditional media by sharing a digital code. Digitality not only enables the mutual translation of new media content but also facilitates their easy copying and embedding into other narratives. With this digitization feature, data can circulate, be reproduced, and transferred in the digital environment. The mutual reproduction and structuring of discourses produced in the digital environment allow hate speech to more easily create agendas in new media environments compared to traditional media. Messages constructed more easily than traditional media are transformed into virtual codes as soon as they enter circulation, digitizing sociality.

Second: Interaction, by its literal meaning, signifies the mutual nature of an action. With the characteristic of interactivity, data in the new media environment is not unilaterally transmitted, as in traditional media; rather, there is a two-way active nature to the communication process. It allows communication processes to flow in both

directions, enabling bidirectional interaction. Through interactivity, users can access different texts or images and modify them.

For this reason, the consumer of new media is defined not as a viewer or reader but as a "user." For instance, sharing, reading, liking, or commenting on a tweet related to hate speech created on Twitter is now considered part of that content. Social media applications already find the opportunity for the circulation of shared data through interaction and the reproduction of this interaction, thereby transforming new media users into active content producers.

Interactivity has four dimensions: spatial, temporal, behavioral, and mental. The spatial dimension is related to providing multidirectional communication opportunities. All digital media tools we use today have a spatial dimension. The temporal dimension of interaction is its ability to offer simultaneity. Multidirectional communication, or the spatial dimension, is a prerequisite for achieving simultaneity. The third stage, the behavioral dimension, is the ability of the sender and receiver to participate in events in the interaction process. The ability of the receiver and sender to intervene in the process, to participate, is the behavioral dimension. In the fourth stage, the mental dimension involves participants in the interaction process grasping meanings and context and responding with behaviors and reactions. Interactivity in all dimensions allows individuals to construct their identities in digital environments, create social capital, and engage in socialization.

Third: Hyper textuality the term "hyper" is derived from the Greek word "hyper," which means beyond, above, or outside. The word "hyper" has become a term used in the interface by combining with the word "text" to express the relationship of a text on the interface with other texts. With the feature of hypertextuality, new media environments provide reading and writing practices that deviate from a specific order through hypertexts, directing the user to completely different content. Hypertexts, thanks to

hypertextuality, enable the user to navigate through various networks since hypertexts are not limited to a single network or application. For instance, a user can click on any hashtag given under a post shared on the Twitter application, entering a vast pool of data and connecting to an unlimited number of networks from there.

An individual connected to an unlimited pool is exposed to numerous contents within that pool. Hypertextuality is what provides users with this limitlessness in new media environments. Through hypersexuality, hate speech created on Twitter, for example, can gather under hashtags and open the door to interaction with the same or different individuals. The hypertextual feature of Twitter allows individuals to establish a mutual digital discourse production and consumption relationship with those who are like them or others in the virtual environment.

Fourth: De-Massing Environments categorized as new media have expansive user bases and characteristics tailored to individuals. Unlike traditional media, where messages were limited to specific audiences, new media has eliminated this restriction, allowing messages to reach diverse audiences. Consequently, the concept of "de-massing" has come to the forefront. Now, your bank or a store where you frequently shop can send you personalized messages or emails directly. This creates a sense of individual importance and streamlines daily life. Users of new media can customize such messages and prevent unwanted communications.

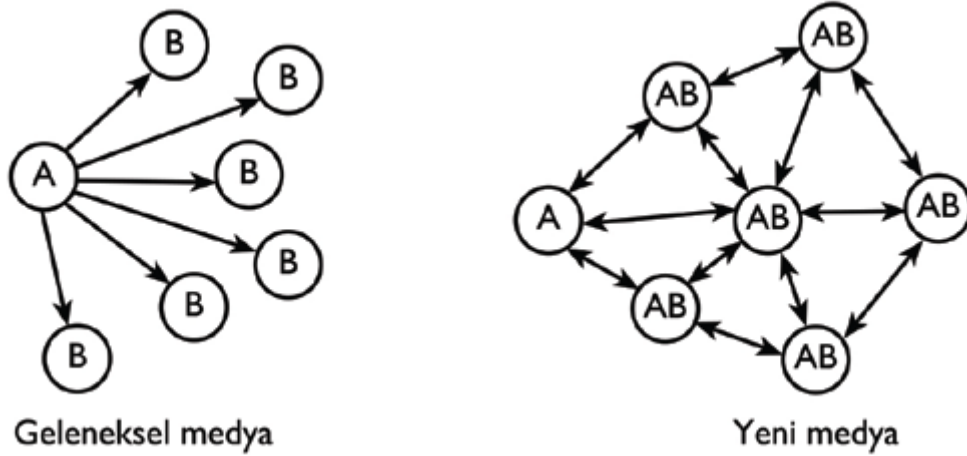


Figure 1 Difference in mass communication between traditional and new media.

Source: Birsen, H. (2013). Digital Communication and New Media, Ankara.

Fifth: Individualization With the increasing commercialization of the environment, trust among people is eroding day by day. Changes in the societal and cultural context contribute to alienating individuals from each other, fostering an increase in individualization. The ability of individuals to shape their communication style according to their needs and preferences has enhanced individualization. Radio and television, by adapting to new media and changing their broadcast content, have embraced thematic specialization in certain areas, paving the way for individualization (Kırçıl ve Karagüler, 2003)

The tools and technological opportunities provided by new media indicate a communication process based on individuals. In this new communication environment, individuals have the opportunity to showcase their characteristics such as identity, preferences, or criticism more prominently.

In the increased competitive conditions of traditional media, commercially operating private broadcasting organizations integrate into this new communication environment, turning this situation into a tool for their commercial interests, and presenting all kinds of content to individuals in society without the need for any filtering.

In other words, thanks to this technological capability, an individual can become the direct target of the message sender.

Sixth: Multimedia Format New media facilitates and supports user-generated content through multimedia formatting. Multimedia formatting involves the collection of indicators, symbol systems, communication types, and different data types in a single tool. Many of the technology tools we use today have features for reading sound, text, and numerical data. Along with multimedia features, the production and popularization of user-generated content become easier in new media environments. Multimedia formatting is a new media feature that enables the integration of multiple spaces, such as text, sound, and images, into a single space perceived by the human sensory organs in harmony on the screen of digital devices. Accessing all these features with a single tool facilitates the spread of data and makes the content interesting.

Different text formats are found together on the internet. The reconstructed form of text, image, and sound presented to users through new communication technologies is defined as multimedia, i.e., a multiple environment.

Multimedia, i.e., a multiple environment, is defined and categorized as a synthesis of digitized media affecting two or more senses, such as animation, graphics, text, sound, video, computer-controlled, integrated media, presentation, and storage form (Fluckiger, 1996:268).

In the context of easily grasping and effectively expressing the content in new media, multimedia plays a significant role.

In an online news article, situations such as accessing videos related to the news on the same page as the news text or receiving a video message containing a brand's advertisement on our mobile phones demonstrate how multimedia is widely used in new media. In other words, it is an indicator of the existence of multimedia within new media.

Seventh: Content Production New media is also examined in the context of content creation and presentation. In new media, users play an active role in creating content. In the new media environment, individuals are both users and content providers.

Thanks to new media technologies, devices themselves have become media environments. Smartphones, computers, tablets, etc., have become data repositories. Individuals, using various new media tools and applications, create their newspapers, watch TV channels, watch what they choose instead of what is offered to them, and share what they want. Integrated new media environments, which facilitate transitions between screens, add flexibility, speed, and convenience to individuals' communication (Uğurlu, 2016:216).

The characteristics of its users are also reflected in the content of new media. The impulsive, change-focused, fast, and visually sensitive nature of new media users leads to the rapid aging of new media content after a certain period, creating a need for renewal.

The feature that enriches and makes new media content attractive is the ability to present content to users quickly through various features such as sound, motion, and images via a single channel. The internet, considered the most important source of new media today, can present content to users without any limitations by diversifying it with features like sound, motion, and images through the same channel.

Through the internet, content is liberated from time and space constraints. Users can access the content they want anytime, anywhere.

Eighth: Simultaneity and Virtuality If we cannot listen to a program or music broadcast on the radio at the moment it is aired, we might miss it. There may not be another chance to listen to it, or we may have to wait for its replay later.

Information published in new media, on the other hand, can be viewed at any time.

With new communication technologies, individuals have been provided with an environment of unlimited freedom, enabling them to initiate communication whenever they want and pause or terminate it at their convenience.

We don't have to check the broadcast date and time, and it also provides the opportunity to access posts from a very long time ago. Simultaneity allows us to have easy and instant access to information.

Another characteristic of new media, virtuality, defines the nature of the communication between the media user and the media. It is the virtuality that gives the user the feeling of being there. Virtuality is, in fact, the space where individuals feel they exist when they are engaged in online communication (Coleman 2012:1). Virtuality defines the communication established by the user through the interface, making the perception of space more fluid (Reid, 1995:164).

With new media applications and devices, users can have a sense of immediacy in any environment. In other words, virtuality is the space individuals feel when communicating in new media environments. Unlike traditional media, individuals communicate virtually instead of face-to-face communication in new media environments.

With the virtuality feature, individuals who have a sense of immediacy in their virtual communications can sharpen their statements when there is no social response and interaction for their virtual communications. Consequently, due to the lack of consequences and responsibilities for their statements in the digital environment, they may have the opportunity to make comments devoid of empathy towards individuals or groups.

Ninth: Dissemination refers to applications where digital data circulates over a network and information is accessed through that network. This structure facilitates the spread of data and content, enabling different types of data to be used by various applications. This network where communication occurs is often applications operating on larger or local networks, such as interconnected networks like the internet. Thanks to the dissemination feature of networks, users can access different applications and work with these applications simultaneously. In short, dissemination is the rapid distribution of any text on the interface over the network, allowing access to this text at different times and spaces repeatedly (Binark ve Löker, 2011:12). Through the dissemination feature of new media, recipients are both active and, at the same time, in the position of being both producers and consumers.

Tenth: Low Cost, High Efficiency new media, in addition to its structure that allows for speed, freshness, and instant interaction, differs from the traditional media process in that it is a less costly field of use. News falls into an economically fragile product category, particularly due to the high cost of the production process. While traditional media maintains its fixed investments (printing press, newspaper offices, television studios, salaried-copyrighted media professionals, etc.), creating and using social media platforms does not require such significant investments (Kalsın, 2016:342). In fact, for many national newspapers, only 40% of total expenses are allocated to gathering, writing, and editing the news. The remaining 60% of expenses, which go to printing, marketing, and distribution, are eliminated with online journalism (Harper, 1998). According to Jennifer Alejandro from the Reuters Institute (2010), traditional print media requires a printing press, and the circulation of the product is limited to a specific geography. Radio and television rely on expensive devices that send signals to a region or country. However, with the internet connection brought by new media tools, a user can instantly access a global and free platform (Bakan, 2017).

Moreover, traditional media organizations, unable to generate a profitable income despite high-cost investments, cover their costs with the support of political powers, directing the political, social, and economic tendencies of the public in line with the desires of these powers. Independent media organizations operating within the low-cost structure of the internet perform all the functions of both written and visual press and, due to the structural bias in traditional media resulting from industrial processes, are considered by users as a more reliable source of news.

Media pluralism, particularly absent in traditional mainstream media organizations, is easily observed in the online environment due to its low-cost structure. The breaking of the monopoly of traditional media organizations changes the face of competition. "In less than 10 years, platforms like Google, Facebook, and Twitter have become competitors to international news media such as New York Times, Guardian, and BBC in the news environment" (Alejandro, 2010). These social media-based tech companies are aware of the importance of journalism and content for the success of businesses, and they are increasingly focusing on journalism. For instance, in recent times, Facebook developed Instant Articles, Twitter launched Moments, and Google announced the Accelerated Mobile Pages Project (Kalsm, 2016: 343). The actors in the new media space, with all these innovative steps and the advantages of internet technology, position themselves as a significant force against media companies that held the news monopoly of the last century. This situation compels national and international media organizations engaged in traditional journalism to take new media environments seriously and be strongly present here (New York Times, 2019).

The New York Times company claims to have generated more than \$709 million in digital revenue last year, anticipating reaching its goal of \$800 million in digital sales by the end of 2020. Another noteworthy figure for the company is in digital advertising. In the fourth quarter of the year, the company surpassed print advertising for the first time,

increasing its digital advertising revenue to \$103 million, a 23% increase. Print advertising, on the other hand, decreased by 10% to \$88 million (2019).

1.4. New Media Tools

It is observed that social media tools and platforms are classified differently in various sources. In this stage of our study, we will present different classifications from various sources, followed by information sharing about significant social media tools. The table below summarizes the classifications of various social media platforms based on the literature review.

(iCrossing, 2008:6)	○ Social Networks (Facebook) ○ Blogs ○ Wikis (Wikipedia) ○ Podcasts (Apple iTunes) ○ Forums ○ Content Communities (YouTube) ○ Microblogs (Twitter)
(Weinberg, 2009)	○ Social News Sites (Reddit) ○ Social Bookmarking Sites (Delicious) ○ Social Networks (Facebook, Myspace) ○ Other Content Sharing Sites (Podcast, Flickr)
(Zarella, 2010)	○ Blogs ○ Twitter and Microblogging ○ Social Networks ○ Media Sharing ○ Social News and Tagging ○ Voting and Rating Sites ○ Forums ○ Virtual Worlds

(Carabiner, 2009)	○ Social Networks (Facebook, Orkut) ○ Professional Networks (LinkedIn) ○ Blogs ○ Bookmarking Sites (Delicious) ○ Video Sharing Sites (YouTube) ○ Information Sharing Sites (Wikipedia) ○ Private Social Network Creation Sites (KickApps, Ning) ○ Interactive E-Commerce Sites (eBay, Amazon.com)
(Kaplan ve Haenlein, 2009)	○ Collaborative Projects (Wikipedia, Social Bookmarking Sites) ○ Blogs ○ Content Communities (YouTube, SlideShare) ○ Social Networks (Facebook) ○ Virtual Game Worlds (World of Warcraft) ○ Virtual Social Worlds (SecondLife)
(Akar, 2010)	○ Blogs ○ Microblogging ○ Wikis ○ Social Bookmarking ○ Media Sharing Sites ○ Podcasting ○ Online Social Networks and Social Networking Sites ○ Virtual Worlds

Source: Mahmut Sami İşlek, 2012, The Effects of social media on Consumer Behaviors: A Study on Social Media Users in Turkey, Master's Thesis, p.23.

As seen in the table, different classifications of social media tools made by researchers are presented. In our study, platforms that meet the criteria of the social media definition will be generally classified as social networking sites, blogs, microblogs, social bookmarking sites, content (media) sharing sites, wikis, podcasts, and forums, and general information will be provided.

1.5. Components of New Media

Internet and Multimedia

Internet technology has evolved spontaneously. In 1969, Arpanet (Advanced Research Projects Agency) had a limited system primarily for military purposes. Initially, it consisted of a network connection with 500 computers, and by chance, a way to send messages was discovered, leading to the addition of email applications.

Originally used in military and academic fields, the internet began to spread for personal use after the 1990s. Internet users can share their content globally and rapidly. It has become capable of carrying graphic, audio, and video files that are instantly accessible. The Internet supports users in various sectors, from commerce to entertainment.

With the advancement of technology, we now benefit from wireless and mobile internet services. The development of the internet has led to the evolution of social networks and the emergence of new communication services like social media.

Multimedia is the term used to describe various formats coexisting in a single environment. These environments process at least two of the following elements: text, static or moving images, sound, and animation. The interactivity level of multimedia applications is low, positioning users more as viewers than active participants.

Hypermedia and Computer-Mediated Communication

Hypermedia refers to interactive environments created by the combination of computer and image technologies. In our daily web usage, hypermedia includes applications containing text, static and moving images, sound, and animations. When performing any activity on the web, interface design allows us to navigate between pages and access visually presented information.

Computer-mediated communication involves transmitting information developed by individuals through network-based communication. Thanks to this communication, individuals can reach each other through messages or emails, as well as engage in real-time communication through instant messaging.

Virtual Reality

Virtual reality environments are three-dimensional spaces created by computers in the form of simulations. These environments are active and interactive.

They are actively used in the entertainment and education sectors. In the three-dimensional environments we create, we can change our perspective or lift and land an airplane. Virtual reality environments are applications that allow human-technology interaction, providing simultaneous and fully interactive experiences.

1.6. Advantages and Disadvantages of New Media

The changes and transformations in new media tools can influence the processes of socialization. In this regard, differences in the new forms of relationships in the digital age draw attention to changes in individual habits. When the characteristics of new media and the advantages it provides to individuals are discussed, it is observed that many different points touch upon the individual. According to Jenkins (2019), personalized media emerged as the primary goal of the digital revolution in the early 1990s. With the development of digital media, individuals would have the chance to consume only the content they find meaningful. This situation suggests the end of uniform broadcasting networks.

With the technological advancements in the world of information technology, ideas, thoughts, and messages presented are spreading globally quickly and effectively. The concept of "new media," used since the 1970s, differentiates itself from traditional media with the influence of evolving technology, introducing electronic communication

environments. The prefix "new" in front of the word "media" refers not only to the previous old information but also to the expression meaning "the latest technology" and "innovative" for people who foresee the future. Therefore, it is necessary to mention the different claims of new media, such as enhancing communication understanding and creativity.

While traditional media tools provide news only with text and photos, new media applications, occupying more space in our lives with the development of the internet, present videos, audio, graphics, and many photos to the target audience. In addition, media platforms active in social media applications provide a participatory environment to the target audience by allowing readers and viewers to convey their questions and thoughts to them (Pınarbaşı & Astam, 2020). Furthermore, the archiving of news and easy accessibility in digitized media also facilitates media professionals.

In traditional media, such as newspapers and magazines, once printed, there is no chance for corrections, while in internet publications, content can be instantly modified (Sayımer, 2009).

New media tools provide an opportunity for individuals with different thoughts to come together. Groups gathered for a specific purpose in various fields such as art, politics, and sports have the chance to defend their ideas and thoughts. In this context, new media is considered to be functional in making participation, a prerequisite for being democratic, instrumental in socialization, integrating individuals into society, and reshaping political and social life. Thus, we can say that new media provides online tools that offer internet users the opportunity to share thoughts, information, and knowledge, enabling interactive communication.

Looking at the recent changes in the purposes of new media tools since their initial moments, it is observed that they have undergone significant transformations. Instagram,

initially introduced as a sharing platform for photos people liked, has contributed to alternative journalism over time due to its live broadcasting feature.

Compared to previous years when users closely followed developments in art, politics, society, and sports from TV and newspapers, the integration of new media tools into life has enabled users to stay informed about developments by following alternative applications. Individuals, without time and day constraints, can watch any news at any time, leading them to increasingly prefer alternative applications. Moreover, users, gaining the right to write their thoughts in the comments section of various content, directly communicate with the broadcaster, especially on platforms like YouTube and Twitter. Additionally, with the development of the internet, new media has gained significant power over traditional media with speed, up-to-datedness, interaction, low cost, and multimedia features (Bulunmaz, 2011).

In Turkey, especially with the increasing presence of digital media in the field of sports broadcasting, mutual communication processes have emerged in programs in recent years. Broadcasters, especially during transfer periods when football fans show intense participation, diversify their broadcasts by continuously accepting questions from viewers and listeners. Developments in this field encourage individuals to show interest in new media. With the introduction of the 'space' feature on Twitter, users participating in conversation rooms present their ideas to thousands of participants, expressing their opinions on the current agenda.

Users who possess advanced analytical skills can receive information from individuals and, in digital media, compare new information they read, see, and hear with their thoughts, allowing for a comprehensive evaluation of the topic. Thus, we can say that social media platforms go beyond the function of providing up-to-date news and, by allowing users to comment on the content offered, increase the interaction created by broadcasts (Behar, 2013). Accordingly, social media has transitioned from a mass

communication model marked by the one-way selection and presentation of news to user networks that personalize their content, convey their stories to others, add comments, and increase the visibility of the story through popularity. New media transforms the one-dimensional information flow that occurs in traditional media into a multidimensional process, allowing for the displacement of the source and recipient and the occurrence of dialogues (Avcı, Topçu 2021).

One of the significant advantages of publishing in digital media is the continuous awareness of current events. In journalism in new media, the process of filtering news that occurs in traditional media tools such as newspapers and magazines is rarely observed. In online publishing, an editor or writer can upload many news articles to the site on the same day, reaching the reader. Additionally, with the hypertext feature, journalists have the opportunity to easily add reports and links related to the news within the text, providing readers with pages of information (İrvan, 2014).

The emergence of new media, driven by technological advancements, has influenced various aspects of human life, resulting in certain differences in behavior patterns. New media, which affects a broad spectrum from socialization processes to lifestyle, brings with it many disadvantages alongside the advantages it provides to users. In an environment where traditional communication processes undergo change and transformation, many concepts have come under discussion. Social media applications enable users from different geographical locations to communicate with each other. While digital media platforms fulfill the function of being a tool for socialization, contributing to the emergence of new formations, friendships, and new information, they also push the risk of surveillance into the background (Çakır, 2013).

As discussed in George Orwell's novel "1984," the concept of surveillance has gained significant power in today's world as a form of socialization provided by new media environments, known as passive socialization. Alongside this, the concept of

passive socialization, prominently featured in new media environments, creates a significant public space that legitimizes an exhibitionist culture, necessitating visibility and accessibility in this area. Despite the convenience mentioned in acquiring information and the learning process with the development of new media, it is observed that it reduces and diminishes the importance of face-to-face communication, a crucial element of socialization. The negative situation mentioned here leads to problems in touch and contact processes in human relationships, resulting in unhappy and lonely individuals, whose increased interactions in the virtual environment led to schizophrenic societal problems in real life (Çambay, 2015). Despite the advantages provided by technological devices that bring information to an international level and facilitate its exchange, it can negatively impact communication processes, leading to antisocial behavior disorders and the emergence of an antisocial society different from real life.

The Socialization of New Media provides advantages in terms of the internationalization of information and its easy accessibility; however, it affects the quality of communication and, in this context, enables the emergence of anti-social behavior patterns. Markus and Nurius argue that individuals can distinguish their self-conception into two categories: the 'present self,' which is an identity created for others, and the 'possible self,' which others do not know. Users active on social media can reach the second scenario by hiding and role-playing their characteristics (Markus & Karatay, 2021).

In connection with this, it is anticipated that social media affects individuals' dislike of physical features, eating disorders, and behavioral disorders. Additionally, observed issues such as low self-esteem, depression, internalizing the ideal of perfection, and increasing sadness and anxiety are commonly associated with social media users (Karatay, 2021).

A topic widely discussed in new media recently, stemming from these behaviors, is hate speech. Due to the inability to prevent individuals close to committing crimes, lacking moral values, and malicious users among social media users, harmful content is present on social media. In this situation, despite the advantageous features of new media, it can also be invaded by those who want to harm society (Lokke, 2018). Hate speech observed in new media arises within the social, historical, cultural, and political structure of society, as well as traditions and customs. Individuals with extreme views may attempt to marginalize the opposing group to show that they belong to a particular group, and over time, posts containing hate speech may appear natural and acceptable to the user (Vardal, 2015).

Active users on social media applications such as Twitter, Instagram, Clubhouse, Twitch, Facebook, etc., sharing their thoughts and adopting a confrontational style in communication contribute to the emergence of hate speech. According to Ilde Dirini's research conducted through passive observation on four internet portals, "Comments are written in a fanatic/side-disclosing/insulting style rather than expressing opinions about the event/topic of the news. In the examined period, comments were mostly made on ethnically based news. Hate speech is widely used here (on average 80%). In comments that deviate as far as possible from the content of the news, commentators can engage in arguments, and even among commentators, polarization can occur".

The frequent sharing of personal living spaces on social media platforms by people using new media has become a significant problem. Additionally, individuals' behaviors and conversations can be listened to and viewed, easily disseminating to wider audiences. Within these problems where privacy areas are threatened, issues such as exposure, intimidation, and more are present.

However, the situation of unauthorized use occurs when photos and videos shared by users are captured by another user (Yüksel, 2014).

The monitoring and eavesdropping of content shared by users on social media applications such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and similar platforms have become a societal issue. According to Westin, privacy threats are explained by three sources: self-disclosure, curiosity, and surveillance (Yüksel, 2014).

Self-disclosure: In the disclosure processes that occur on social media, the violation of oneself has been as influential as the attacks experienced by others. Many organizations, such as TV producers, advertising agencies, and polling companies, can collect information through field research. Individuals who have the right to refuse these requests can easily provide information about their attitudes and behaviors.

Thus, digital media users can share their privacy about various topics such as personal life, income, sexual behaviors, political tendencies, religious beliefs, hobbies, attitudes, etc., with those around them through the disclosures they make about themselves.

Curiosity: Curiosity, shown as the second source of threat mentioned by Westin, is a behavior tendency inherent in human nature. While these tendencies vary according to individuals and cultures, they serve various functions. Curiosity contributes to learning different information, the circulation of information, and the development of group and community norms. It expresses the desire of individuals to know which topics enter their private lives. Activities aimed at satisfying curiosity through newspapers, magazines, books, radio, and TV play a significant role in the media world.

Surveillance: Being one of the fundamental tools of social control, surveillance is considered among the sources of privacy threats. Surveillance can be described as the control-oriented observation of teachers over students, law enforcement over streets, government organizations over citizens, parents over children, and employers over employees. Based on this, it can be stated that surveillance techniques have developed

over historical periods. Discussing three types of surveillance techniques, considering their historical evolution, becomes possible.

- 1) Surveillance through observation: The act of observing or listening suggests that observation has a compulsory and restrictive impact on the individuals being observed. Even when a person knows they are being watched, they shape their behavior according to the norms of the community they are part of.
- 2) Confession: Confession corresponds to the process of revealing or confessing information, feelings, and preferences that could be considered within an individual's psychological privacy zone. Interventions of this kind pose a threat to an individual's private life.
- 3) Reproduction of communication: Due to technological advancements, new recording devices and cameras can easily obtain sounds, images, and various information belonging to individuals without their knowledge. The observer, present in the same environment as the observed person, can achieve this through listening and watching. The significant feature of this surveillance type is highlighted by the reproduction and alteration of the observed person's lengthy conversations, including additions.

CHAPTER 2

SOCIAL MEDIA

In this section, the concept of social media has been addressed, and the historical development of social media has been examined, analyzing the advantageous and disadvantageous results of usage practices. After discussing the tools used by social media users and the development and user densities of major social media platforms, current trends in social media are explored.

2.1. Concept of Social Media

Social media is a new form of media that allows users to share data instantly and interactively in a simple and two-way manner, while also providing access to information shared by other users. One of the most general definitions of the concept of social media is, "environments where users can create an open or semi-open profile, share content with users they have relationships with, and observe their profiles" (Boyd and Ellison, 2008).

In today's world, social media is actively used by almost everyone. This enables rapid access to real-time information, and users can view content, articles, news, thoughts, daily events, and photos shared by others through social media. If one were to express the concept of social media in a single word, 'sharing' would likely be the first term that comes to mind.

2.1.1. Features of Social Media

Social media emerges as a form of online media where a significant amount of sharing takes place. Social media, constantly expanding and evolving, possesses various features, and it has been stated that social media has five characteristics (Gürsakal, 2009).

- Participation: The most crucial aspect that constitutes social media is user participation. It enables users to provide feedback to each other, making individual participation more accessible. Leaving comments on each other's posts is an example of participation.
- Openness: Social media is directly open to interaction. Simultaneously, benefiting from content is transparent and swift.
- Two-Way Communication: Social media not only offers users bidirectional communication but also the opportunity to provide timely and easy feedback.
- Connectivity: Many social media applications are interconnected. Links can be provided to other websites, research, and individuals.
- Community: Social media allows communities to form rapidly and effectively by permitting individuals with common interests to connect (Gürsakar, 2009; Tutgun Ünal, 2015).

Boyd (2013) has discussed five features of social media. Firstly, continuity, where differences in content may exist, but continuity always remains central. Users can use their accounts as long as they adhere to the rules. Secondly, replicability, as content on social media can be copied and easily stored, allowing shared content to be reused. Thirdly, search ability, as many social sharing platforms have a search feature, enabling users to search through social media. Fourthly, scalability, as collecting and measuring data through social media is more comfortable and faster. Surveys can be conducted by sending links. The final feature is location independence. Access to social media is possible wherever the internet is available, especially with the ease of access provided by mobile devices reaching our pockets (Kırık, 2013). Social media offers individuals a space to express themselves without the constraints of time and place, uncontrollably.

Social media is a realm where participants choose communication tools and content based on their individual needs. The capacity of social media to facilitate both individual and mass communication, coupled with its profound influence, renders this space highly valuable (Akgün, 2021; Blossom, 2009). Among the defining features of social media are its suitability for content sharing, its foundation on interaction, the existence of personal accounts for participants, and the provision of personal privacy and accessibility (Lietsala and Sirkkunen, 2008). Thanks to these attributes, social media manages to reach extensive audiences. The ability to be online at any moment in life and to be an integral part of the virtual space has now become achievable through the distinctive features of social media (Ergüder, 2019).

2.2. History and Development of Social Media

Following the transition from the web 1.0 structure to the web 2.0 structure in the Internet system, an internet structure emerged where users could contribute to the content offered online, transforming media interaction into a two-way structure. With this radical change, websites emerged where users could individually participate. The onset of the web 2.0 structure in the Internet system was facilitated through blogs, enabling users to comment on the content published on blogs. Evolving rapidly within the media structure, these blogs gave rise to a new media class known as social media, creating a framework where users could create their own content, view content generated by others, and provide comments.

The precursor to social media platforms was UseNet, established in 1979. During its usage, UseNet facilitated discussions and conversations on various topics. Established with around a thousand members, UseNet reached one million members between 1985 and 1990 (Markoff, 1990).

The first platform that can be considered a precursor to social media is SixDegrees.com, launched in 1997. This platform allowed users to create profiles and

communicate with friends. However, due to the company's inability to sustain itself, it experienced an economic downturn and ultimately closed in 2000.

The subsequent platform established was Ryze.com, and it can be considered the precursor to future platforms such as Friendster, LinkedIn, and Tribe.net, where professional connections were formed. Later, environments like MySpace, Orkut, Facebook, Flickr, and YouTube emerged and quickly gained popularity (Güçdemir, 2017).

The proliferation of social media platforms is much faster compared to traditional mass communication tools. For example, it took 38 years for radio to reach 50 million users worldwide, television took 13 years, while Twitter achieved this milestone in just 9 months (Kara, 2013). Social media platforms spread rapidly among users, and this expansion continues to progress swiftly.

2.2.1. Difference Between Social Media and Traditional Media

If we analyze the distinctions between Social Media and Traditional Media, it would be apt to start with the aspect of accessibility. Both types of media have open communication channels, yet the characteristics and access opportunities for users may vary based on the goals and plans of brands.

Another factor to consider is accessibility. Messages from traditional media outlets are static, and additionally, there is a need to pay to access them. In contrast, individuals reach out to traditional media outlets rather than the other way around. In contrast, social media can be used for free as long as there is internet access. In social media, users can access content based on their preferences and requests, which is not applicable to traditional media.

Moreover, while traditional media may take a long time for a new development, news, or idea to spread, social media enables the rapid dissemination of new ideas,

thoughts, and trends within short periods. Another feature to assess is usability. In traditional media, content creators are professionally trained individuals, but the same does not hold true for social media, where users generate content themselves.

Finally, regarding permanence, outputs in social media are not permanent but are conveyed instantly. However, in traditional media, all outputs are archived and permanent (Stein, 2013).

2.3. Advantages and Disadvantages of Social Media

Research on internet and social media usage often falls into two distinct perspectives. The technological determinism theory, which predominantly emphasizes the positive aspects of social media and internet usage, applauds these technologies within the contexts of participatory culture, the surge of individual content creation, interaction, and democracy. Conversely, theories that liken the internet and social media to traditional media production tools criticize these technologies, pointing to issues such as digital inequality, misinformation, and the proliferation of hate speech (Yıldırım, 2020: 70).

While literature acknowledges several positive facets of social media, the favorable aspects can be outlined as follows:

- Social media is swift and constantly updated. It operates significantly faster and maintains a more current status compared to traditional media due to its ability for instantaneous data sharing (Akar, 2013: 53; Spence et al., 2016: 55).
- Social media is cost-effective. In contrast to traditional media, it proves to be much more economically feasible (Akar, 2013: 53; İmre, 2020: 1667).
- Social media is reliable (users make trustworthy decisions based on individual likes) (Akar, 2013: 53; Kuzucanlı, 2018: 4).
- Social media facilitates communication. (Ying, 2012: 22-23; Akar, 2013: 53; Olcay, 2018: 92).

- Social media improves a company's image. (Bilgin, 2018: 128; Akar, 2013: 53; Hermanda et al., 2019: 76).

As can be seen, one of the most significant opportunities provided by social media is the fast and easy communication it offers. Replacing conventional communication practices of our era, the new media medium enables individuals to easily communicate with each other and make various shares through communication platforms. In this context, social media stands out as one of the crucial communication resources available on the internet. However, excessive use of social media at the level of dependency leads to a decrease in an individual's communication skills (Demir, 2016: 28).

While social media positively influences people's daily lives, especially in terms of dependency, it can be a factor that diminishes life satisfaction and increases social isolation. In this regard, individuals who use social media at the level of dependency often exhibit high levels of loneliness. The number of studies on this subject is increasing every day, and various solutions are being proposed. The disadvantages of social media or situations that negatively affect individuals and society can be listed as follows:

- It leads to a reduced sense of socialization, resulting in feelings of loneliness, which, in turn, can lead to various psychological disorders. Various addictions, depression, and anxiety conditions are known to be consequences (Karakuş, 2019: 1; Türkmen-Kocatürk, 2019: 2; Brailovskaia and Margraf, 2020: 818; Balcı and Baloğlu, 2018: 211; Haand and Shuwang, 2020: 780).
- It opens the door to various forms of exploitation (Parsa and Akmeşe, 2019: 189; Duygulu, 2019: 428).
- It negatively affects the perception of privacy (Budak, 2018: 147).
- Social media applications that lead to academic procrastination negatively impact academic achievement (Gürültü, 2016:4).

- Increasing individuals' screen exposure results in a sedentary lifestyle and various physical ailments (Tatar, 2018:7).

2.4. Prevalence of Social Media Usage

The most popular social media platforms used globally include Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Twitter, Snapchat, TikTok, LinkedIn, Pinterest, MySpace, Periscope, Tumblr, and podcast applications. According to the latest report on the global "state of digital" (<https://wearesocial.com/ca-en/blog/2023/01/the-changing-world-of-digital-in-2023-2/>), as of the beginning of 2023, there is a total urban population of 8.03 billion worldwide. More than 57% of the world's population resides in urban areas. At the beginning of 2023, a total of 5.44 billion people is using mobile phones. 68% of the total global population are mobile phone users. In the world with a total of 5.16 billion internet users, 64.4% of the total population is now online. Currently, there are 4.76 billion social media users worldwide, accounting for just under 60% of the total global population. The figure below illustrates the total global population and digital technology users (wearesocial.com).

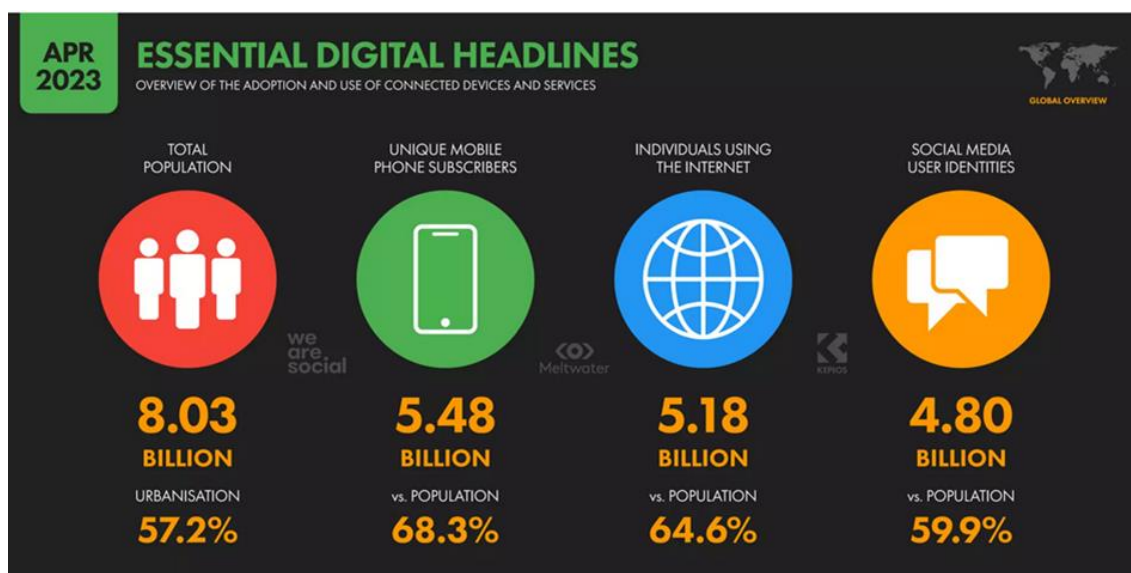


Figure 1. Worldwide Internet and Mobile Usage Statistics 2023

Social media types are used for different purposes, and each social media tool has a different content (Yıldırım and Kalender, 2018: 571). There are many tools that people benefit from when using social media. Social media tools that are widely used today have been examined under subheadings. However, the general features of social media tools are as follows.

- **Blogs:** Blogs are defined as areas where personal ideas and network connections are transferred on the medium. Just as blogs have been described as the emergence of new journalism, they have been evaluated as a new tool for adding a different dimension to democracy and as a powerful marketing tool for profit purposes. In addition, the number of people who share their thoughts and feelings on the platform on a daily basis is very high (Özü Dođru, 2014: 36). In a typical blog; Pages that the blog owner likes or links related to the subject of the blog, archive, most notable posts, link channels to other social media applications of the blog owner, RSS feeds that can be transferred in the form of aggregators that simply combine and briefly present new updates on the site, sharing on social media platforms There are icons, sections showing how to add comments and the number of comments made, post-date, post text, post title, blog title and blog subheadings (Akar, 2013: 54). Blogs commonly used today are personal blogs, community blogs, newspaper blocks, corporate blocks and microblogs (Pelenk-Özel and Yılmaz-Sert, 2014: 306-307; Menteşe, 2013: 8; Akar, 2013: 57).

- **Social Network Sites:** Social networks, in addition to being present in our lives in the first form of the Internet, can be described as one of the basic components of the Web 2.0 format. As the dating sites, IRC chat rooms and forums of the Web 1.0 world have undergone some changes with Web 2.0 technologies and the new sharing approach, they are turning into today's extremely large social networks such as MySpace, Facebook and Orkut (Kahraman, 2014: 22).

- Wikis: The term "Wiki" is an abbreviation of the phrase "What I Know is" and can be translated to mean "As far as I know." A Wiki is a community of information pages that allows individuals to make edits as they see fit (Menteşe, 2013: 9). Among all social media tools, Wikis are considered to attract the least attention in Turkey. Structurally, a Wiki is a web page where members can make changes as they wish to page created by other members. Wikipedia.org, which provides encyclopedic services, is the most widely known and utilized Wiki globally. With 262 languages and over 12 million articles, Wikipedia is considered the most extensive publicly accessible content archive in human history (Kahraman, 2014: 21-22).

- Social Bookmarking Sites: These are pages that offer the ability to search, share, store, and categorize individuals through location images. Bookmarking sites allow individuals to follow and save links to web pages that they may find useful in the future. Well-known social bookmarking sites include StumbleUpon, Newsvine, Reddit, and Digg (Sobacı et al., 2015: 20).

- Podcasts: Podcasts are a distribution method for digital media documents that can be accessed on portable media players or computers via internet streaming. The term "Podcast" is derived from Apple's portable music player, the iPod, with "pod" representing iPod and the "broadcast" part of the English word "broadcast." While initially associated with Apple's iPod, the term Podcast is not directly linked to iPod today. Although there is no precise equivalent in Turkish yet, the term is used to convey the meaning of "Playable Broadcast Subscription." The New Oxford American Dictionary defines a podcast as a "digital recording that is made available on the internet for downloading to a personal audio player" (Menteşe, 2013: 11-12).

- Media/Video Sharing Sites: Video sharing platforms are changing people's attitudes toward individuals and their attitudes toward the media. Amateur producers in the online world share their content with thousands of users, drawing attention to

themselves beyond Hollywood stars. The internet is filled with partial scenes from popular movies, interesting news videos, video clips, or images searched for entertainment. Video sharing platforms make it easy to find the desired content and watch popular videos. These platforms provide opportunities and tools for members to shoot videos and upload them, allowing anyone to become instantly famous. Video sharing networks offer resources and articles for useful editing that users can access. Some video sharing platforms publish content for everyone to access, while others provide personalized content (Menteşe, 2013: 11; Akar, 2013: 68).

The figure below illustrates the usage durations of various social media tools. It can be understood from this that users spend the most time on the YouTube platform. Following YouTube are Facebook, WhatsApp, and Instagram.

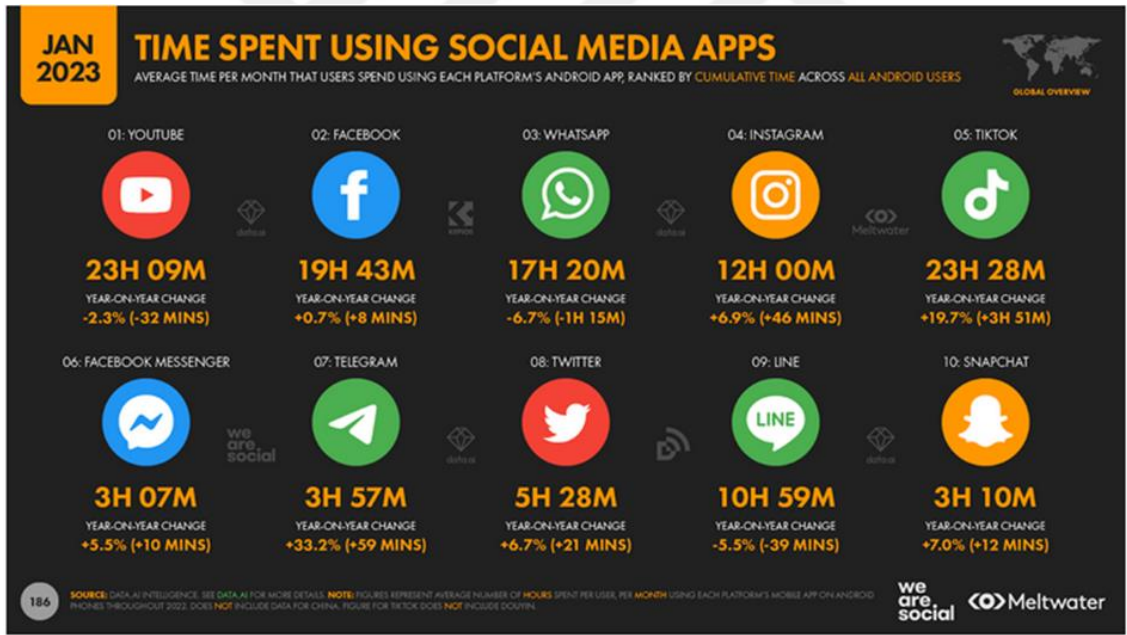


Figure 2. Time spent using social media applications

As can be seen from the Figure, which contains data on the time spent using social media applications, YouTube has the highest viewing time, followed by Facebook and Whatsapp.

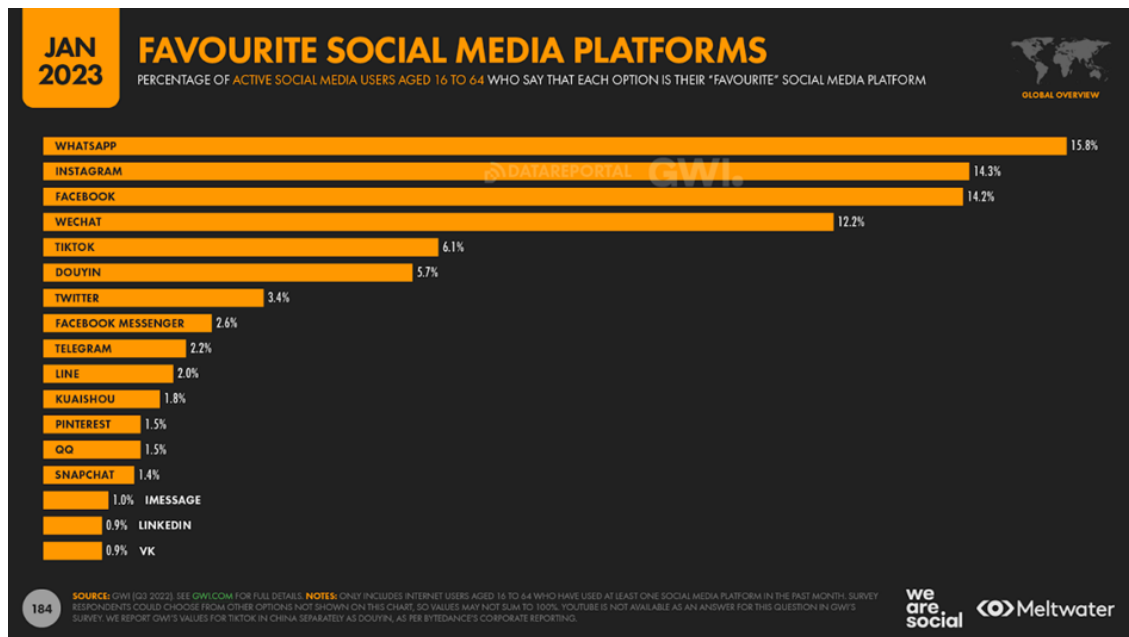


Figure 3. Time spent using social media applications

Comparatively, considering the active usage statistics of the platforms, YouTube lags behind. Here, WhatsApp seems to be more effective as it directs individuals' relationships with people they are in close contact with and the community, beyond the video viewing site.

First: Facebook

Facebook was founded on February 4, 2004, by Harvard University student Mark Zuckerberg, with the aim of enabling Harvard students to communicate with each other and share photos, videos, music, etc. It has become a widely used social networking website globally (Sanlav, 2014). Among social platforms worldwide, Facebook is the most commonly used. It encompasses various features such as instant messaging, photo, music, and video sharing, following friends' profiles, and playing games (Mavnacıoğlu, 2015).

In today's world, many individuals use this social media application to interact with friends, family, new people, and brands they follow. Due to being one of the most widely used social media platforms globally, Facebook holds significance for businesses.

Advertisers on Facebook can directly reach their target audience because the platform offers various targeting options such as age, location, gender, and interests (Zengin, 2017).

Second: Twitter

Twitter is a social media platform founded in 2006 by Jack Dorsey, Noah Glass, Biz Stone, and Evan Williams. Initially, Twitter was a platform where posts were limited to 140 characters, but this limit was later increased to 280 characters with an update. Posts made by Twitter users are referred to as tweets. Users can share text-only posts or include photos and videos in their tweets.

Users who want to create a profile on the Twitter application need to register with a unique username. The sharing of a message written by another user with one's own followers on Twitter is called a retweet. The widespread use of the retweet feature on Twitter enables messages to spread more quickly (Zengin, 2017). On October 27, 2022, the platform gained global attention when it was acquired by Elon Musk for 44 billion dollars.

Third: Instagram

Instagram was derived from an application called Burbn. Initially created as an iPhone application by Kevin Systrom, the platform did not achieve success in its early days. Working with another developer, Mike Krieger, they completely redesigned the application (Bostancı, 2019: 43; Garber, 2014; Uluç and Yarcı, 2017:90).

The name "Instagram" is a combination of the words "instant," referring to immediacy, and "telegram," meaning a message or communication (Rushe, 2012). This social media platform, which can be freely registered and used, employs a tagging system known as "hashtags," allowing users to access all publishers and desired content. Users can like or comment on shared images from other accounts.

With features such as direct messaging for conversations, stories that are temporary posts deleted after 24 hours, and live broadcasts, Instagram has become one of the world's largest social media platforms since its introduction in 2010.

Fourth: LinkedIn

LinkedIn is the most professional global network in the digital space. It is a platform specifically designed for the business world. Users can utilize it to find the job or internship they desire, as well as to build and expand professional relationships through networking. Access to the platform is available both from desktop computers and mobile devices (Caers & Castelyns, 2011). By using the LinkedIn application, you can write articles, organize events, and share videos and photos.

Fifth: Pinterest

Pinterest can be defined as a video and visual content platform that offers the opportunity to share various contents within its framework. Users can share their own content or content from other users. Unlike other social networks, a significant portion of Pinterest users are women.

Pinterest can be integrated with other social media platforms. Additionally, the shared content on the platform covers various topics, including but not limited to fashion, art, food, do-it-yourself (DIY), and decoration (Paige, 2015). The application also features a "save" option for photos, videos, and any other content you like. You can later revisit the saved items if you wish. Moreover, there are numerous business accounts on Pinterest, and many transactions take place through these accounts (McMullen, 2020).

Sixth: YouTube

YouTube was founded by three former PayPal employees in 2005. In the first month after its establishment, the site was visited by three million people, and by the end of the first year, the monthly visitor count reached 38 million. Google took notice of this

success in its first year, and in October 2006, YouTube was acquired by Google for \$1.65 billion (Zengin, 2017).

Being the world's first video-sharing site, YouTube is currently the most comprehensive and largest among existing video-sharing sites. The platform allows free viewing of various content, including movies, TV series, and music videos. In some cases, YouTube has even surpassed television (Sanlav, 2014). Users on YouTube have profiles referred to as "channels," and they can upload videos to their channels.

Seventh: Virtual Games

Virtual social worlds and game worlds (graphic worlds) are built upon modeling real-world spaces that go beyond face-to-face interaction. In these modern virtual worlds, users have the opportunity to create new spaces or objects and automate their behaviors using various programming languages. Virtual social and game worlds, considered the most sophisticated forms of social media, are the earliest form of the concept of the "Metaverse," a term first used by Neal Stephenson in the novel "Snow Crash" in 1992 and academically explained in 2006 by Kemp and Livingstone using the example of Second Life. In recent times, Meta (Facebook) has rebranded itself with reference to the "Metaverse."

In social worlds like The Sims and Second Life, users create virtual worlds with mechanics very similar to real life, while in virtual game worlds like World of Warcraft and Farmville, users engage in entertainment. Unlike simple card games or arcade-type games, the game systems in these virtual worlds involve players joining a specific group, location, or tribe.

Businesses can evaluate virtual social and game worlds as simulations of customers' real-life decision-making processes and draw various insights. Moreover, they consider establishing a presence in these virtual worlds by opening stores, creating

advertisements, or forming sponsorships. On the other hand, for users, virtual social and game worlds offer the opportunity to experience experiences without bearing any consequences in the physical world, unlike experiences in the real world where they have to bear the results.

Virtual social worlds and game worlds provide experiences that are not available in the real world. Users can step into fantastical universes, create their own stories using their imaginations, and connect with people in virtual communities who share similar interests. These platforms enhance users' social interactions while combining entertainment, learning, and creative experiences. Virtual social and game worlds continue to emerge as a constantly evolving and advancing field. With the progression of technology, a greater integration of virtual worlds with the real world is expected. For example, augmented reality and virtual reality technologies enable users to have more interactive and immersive experiences.

Eighth: TikTok

TikTok is a social media application that revolves around lip synchronization and dance performances, allowing users to create short videos lasting 15-60 seconds. In addition to video creation features, the application also has typical social media features that enable users to interact with each other. Although reciprocity is not required, users can follow each other, like others' videos, comment on them, and communicate directly through the messaging feature (Savic, 2021:3181). The short video sharing platform TikTok has become one of the leading social networks worldwide since its launch in 2016 and stands out as a widely used social media application in almost every country (Erol and İstikbal, 2020: 21). TikTok, with users from different age groups, is particularly popular among young individuals.

Ninth: MySpace

MySpace is a social media application where users can perform various actions such as sharing photos, videos, making friends, joining different groups, and creating their own profiles. In 2005, MySpace became the most widely used social network globally with its large user base (Çiğdem, 2019).

After the emergence of Facebook, MySpace experienced a significant decline in user numbers and transformed into an ordinary social media application (Miltner and Gerrard, 2022).

Today, with the existence of various social media applications and new ones emerging every day, MySpace still provides services but is not as widely preferred as other popular social media applications (Barrot, 2021).

Tenth: Snapchat

This application provides users with the ability to exchange messages through photos or videos. However, Snapchat is not limited to just that; it is a social media platform that allows users to combine created content with stickers, emojis, and effects before publishing (Patel, Yazd, & Dellavalle, 2017). After its introduction, Snapchat quickly gained popularity among young users, leading companies to consider implementing new sales and marketing tactics through Snapchat.

What sets Snapchat apart is its emphasis on privacy and transience. The shared content, seen by followers within 24 hours, self-destructs and is deleted. This feature is unique to Snapchat and not present on other social media platforms, showcasing the app's transient nature. Snapchat allows users to use 'aliases,' permitting them to use a nickname, which appeals to privacy-conscious youth (Alhabash and Ma, 2017).

Facebook started copying the Story feature existing on Snapchat and integrated it into its own platform. Subsequently, this feature was also integrated into WhatsApp and

Instagram. Additionally, the application is supported on both mobile and web platforms (Wilken and Humphreys, 2021).

Eleventh: Periscope

Periscope is an application provided by Twitter that allows users to livestream online. This means you can go live at any time or watch the live broadcasts of your followers (Haimson and Tang, 2017). The application is mobile-supported and can be used on your phones. To use this application, you need to have a Twitter account. If you have a Twitter account, you can use this application (Willems et al., 2018).

Twelfth: Tumblr

Tumblr was founded by David Karp in February 2007 in New York. It is a microblogging site that allows users to write short blog posts and share multimedia content. What sets this site apart from other blogs is its application, which enables users to update text, audio, image, and video posts. In this context, it has become one of the most preferred sites among other platforms (Özutku et al., 2014:134).

One of the most significant features of Tumblr is that there are no restrictions or rules regarding the structure and characteristics of the content shared by users. The application allows the sharing of various file types, including gifs, music, or videos, not limited to text only. This flexibility in content creation has attracted companies, social groups, or subcultures to use this platform. With its user-friendly interface, Tumblr has become an attractive choice for companies or e-commerce sites looking to promote their brand (Kırcova and Enginkaya, 2015:71).

Thirteenth: Foursquare and Swarm

This application, which emerged in 2009, started recording individuals entering a location. The founders of Foursquare intended to inform users when they entered physical places such as cafes and restaurants and, at the same time, planned to provide users with

different services using the data they collected. Additionally, this application allows users to check in at locations and leave user-specific reviews and recommendations for venues (Saker & Evans, 2016). Other social media platforms also integrated this feature into their systems and began using it. Despite this, people continued to use Foursquare (Marti et al., 2021).

However, the emergence of new social media platforms over time, such as Twitter and Instagram, began to diminish the popularity of Foursquare. At this point, the company founders had to adopt a different strategy and established a new platform called Swarm in place of Foursquare.

The Swarm application allows users to share their location information, enabling them to find friends near their location and communicate with them. Users can be aware of the presence of friends near their location while using the application (Ghorbanpour et al., 2021). Additionally, the feature present in Foursquare continues here, where friends can like a user's check-in when they enter any location (Tokgöz-Şahoğlu, 2018).

Fourteenth: Podcast

Another concept we often hear in digital platforms is the term 'podcast.' Users who were new to the digital world initially preferred to use blog pages to express their thoughts and feelings. Although this trend continues today, users now choose different ways to express their thoughts and feelings. As is known, a common feature of social media platforms is that they are digital platforms based on visual and video content. The podcast, however, positions itself differently by evaluating this situation. The concept of a podcast is expressed as an audio blog. These audio blogs can cover various topics. These broadcasts are recorded in advance by content creators and then uploaded to different channels to be presented to listeners (Sullivan, 2019).

Podcasts created based on users' interests can be listened to at desired hours and contribute significantly to users' personal development. Especially with the widespread use of mobile devices, users can make use of their travel time, public transportation, and other idle times by listening to podcasts, provided they have internet access.

If we were to talk about why podcasts are so popular, it is because it adapts to the fast pace of modern life and provides listeners with enjoyable, entertaining, useful, and quality content. For this reason, it is loved and used by many people (Stefancik and Stradiotová, 2020).

2.5. New Trends of Social Media

Developing within the framework of new communication technologies, social media has evolved through the concepts of participation, mutual communication, community, openness, and connectivity, allowing users to communicate and share simultaneously, eliminating geographical, physical, and time boundaries (Güçdemir, 2017: 12). From another perspective, social media can be defined as a formal and technical infrastructure that enables users to have unlimited access to information (Safko & Brake, 2009: 3-4). Weinberg (2009: 1-2) also describes network-based social media platforms, which are crucial for the development of online communication and behavior, as an application area that enables the sharing of knowledge, different thoughts, perspectives, and experiences through the web.

Web 3.0, also known as the Semantic Web, can be defined as the third generation of the internet. In this context, Web 3.0 can be said to represent an internet environment where elements of the physical and digital worlds are blended, along with artificial intelligence, augmented reality, and virtual reality technologies (Nath, 2022: 1).

In today's world, where the interaction element has gained significance, the rapid growth of online social media platforms has led brands to collaborate in this direction,

focusing on communication efforts that will take place through new communication technologies on social media platforms (Verissimo & Tiago, 2014: 703). The development of low-cost and measurable processes within the scope of social media marketing has led to the emergence of a new field of expertise (Vinerean et al., 2013: 41). The professionalization of content production in social media has increased the importance of proper social media usage for brands and advertisers in the intense competitive environment of the market. In this context, the necessity of closely following current applications such as the use of artificial intelligence, mobile devices, the Internet of Things, smart technologies, etc., has become apparent (Kitchen & Pelsmacker, 2004; Boyd, 2008: 211; Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010: 60; Van Dyck, 2017; Kelley & Sheehan, 2022).

It is anticipated that, like social media platforms, the metaverse world will become a routine part of life practices and be used extensively in various aspects of daily life (Altun, 2021). The name changes of Facebook, one of the most widely used examples of social media platforms, to Meta in the late months of 2021, has facilitated the convergence of physical reality with virtual and augmented reality technologies (Çevik Aka, 2022). Under the umbrella of the Meta company, investments related to the metaverse ecosystem of social media platforms have begun, and avatar add-ons are being developed to allow individuals to represent themselves in this new digital world.

Avatars, which can be considered as the initial steps in the adaptation of social media to the metaverse, can be created via Instagram accounts. Avatars, which currently have limited visual elements, remain hidden on the platform once created. In addition to the avatars not yet opened for use, technological structures and investments are being developed that are anticipated to change habits related to both visual and aesthetic elements and the metaverse ecosystem (Haney, 2013: 40).

CHAPTER 3

INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT, SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL MEDIA

In this section, approaches related to the impact of social media on the individual and social development of young people are discussed. The effects of social media on the social and cognitive development of young individuals, its impact on economic and financial literacy, its influence on health literacy, and its effects on accessing and reaching information are examined.

3.1. Theories on the Impact of Social Media

Uses and Gratifications Theory

According to the uses and gratifications theory, individuals use social media for various purposes. These purposes include appropriateness, personal development, relaxation, entertainment, and identity formation. McQuail explains usage purposes in motivation types such as "information," "personal identity," "integration," "social interaction," and "entertainment" (Muntinga et al., 2011: 19, cited in Koçak, 2012).

Elihu Katz first introduced the uses and gratifications approach in an article published in 1959. Katz emphasizes in this publication that communication studies are generally concerned with the subject of persuasion and seek answers to the question "What does media do to people?" The article highlights that the first question to be asked is "What are people doing with media?" (Tekinalp and Uzun, 2004). Katz states that individuals have social and psychologically based needs, and the media plays a significant role in fulfilling these needs (Yaylagül, 2016:70).

In 1960, the first studies related to the uses and gratifications approach began. Although these studies were conducted on different research groups, their common focus was on the psycho-social needs of individuals and how media tools respond to these needs. Efforts were made to reveal how much individuals use media and media content to meet these needs and achieve satisfaction. There are individuals who fulfill their need for entertainment by watching entertainment programs on television, as well as those who satisfy their need for information by reading articles from media tools. In contrast to the impact studies initially pursued by mass communication research, this approach takes the audience or consumer from a passive position to an active position (Yaylagül, 2016:74). McQuail (2005:426) states that behind media usage are the needs, desires, and motivations of the audience, listing these needs and motivations as follows:

- To obtain information.
- To reduce individual insecurity levels.
- To be informed about national and global issues.
- To find support for individual values.
- To add meaning to individual life.
- To empathize with others' problems.
- To establish social contact.
- To accumulate social contacts.
- To feel connected to others.
- To avoid problems and troubles.
- To enter the world of imagination.
- To spend time.

- To experience emotional relief.
- To create daily routines.

People initially start using social media with a rational attitude, expecting benefits or to meet certain needs. However, due to habit, deviations from this attitude may occur over time. Strack et al. (2006:41) express their belief that habit plays a primary role in the development of social media addiction, stating, "apparently harmless habit leads to continuous use behavior, then turns into addiction through the influence of the irrational behavior system."

When we look at the function of Twitter within McQuail's satisfaction categories, it is observed that it fulfills the pleasure derived from diversion excessively. While many social networks involve following all kinds of information, Twitter allows individuals to follow topics and people of interest, respond instantly, and engage limitlessly within the selected pool, enabling individuals to engage in all kinds of dialogues with someone they have never known, satisfying the need for "emotional discharge." Individuals on Twitter can also make comparisons based on each other's likes, choices, and sensitivities, and the personal identity builders McQuail refers to as "discovery of reality" and "personal reference" gain functionality in this environment. Through the retweets corresponding to shared tweets, individuals experience the phenomenon of "value reinforcement." This implies, "I am liked, I am important, what I share is shared by others, so I exist, and I am approved" (Altan, 2015:108-112).

Widely known platforms within the concept of social media include Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Google+, Youtube, Flickr, Instagram, Pinterest, Blogger, Myspace, Tumblr, etc. In these virtual environments with hypertexts, socialization is presented in a different dimension. However, that's not all they do. Do these virtual platforms merely entertain us, like computer games from 25 years ago? Or are they harmless toys from the

early 2000s? What place do these platforms have in individuals' daily lives? What needs do they satisfy that traditional media cannot fulfill? Why is it important to be present in these platforms? All these questions open up a discussion on social media within the framework of the uses and gratifications theory (Altan, 2015:79).

Individuals decide to use social media based on their personal preferences and needs. An individual may choose to share messages and comments using Twitter, which has a character limit, or use Facebook for sharing photos and videos. Blogs may be preferred for different and more extended forms of sharing (Tosyalı and Sütçü, 2016:10).

A study conducted by Whiting and Williams (2013:366-367) on why people use social media and for what purposes yielded the following results:

- **Social Interaction:** Participants indicated that they primarily use social media for social interaction, with a high percentage of 88%. Facebook, in particular, is seen as a place for "interaction," and individuals use these platforms to communicate with family and friends, make acquaintances, and connect with new friends.
- **Information Seeking:** Social media is used to obtain information about sales, opportunities, or products, stay informed about events like birthdays and parties, and acquire information about businesses.
- **Time Spent:** Many individuals mentioned that they use social media to spend time at work or school and when they are bored.
- **Entertainment:** Users find entertainment on social media platforms through funny pictures, videos, music, and games. Reading comments is also considered enjoyable.

- Relaxation: Some users find looking at profiles relaxing and use social media platforms like Facebook to escape from reality and the stress of the real world, finding it relaxing.
- Expression of Thoughts: Users enjoy expressing their thoughts and opinions on social media, liking to comment and criticize others, and taking pleasure in the opportunity to "show themselves."
- Communication Aid: Participants noted that social media provides them with things to talk about with friends and others. On Facebook, discussions and likes of others become communication topics for them.
- Ease of Use: Advancing technology makes social media applications more easily accessible. The absence of location and time constraints also facilitates usage.
- Information Sharing: Unlike television and the internet, social media is inherently interactive. It enables consumers to communicate and share information through two-way dialogue.
- Learning About Others: Participants mentioned using social media to learn about others, such as what others think, do, or wear.

Many theorists who advocate the Uses and Gratifications approach argue that these needs are rooted in psychological factors. The concept of needs forms the basis of Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory and Erik Erikson's psychosocial development stages. Psychologist Frederick Samuels (1984) notes that when examining needs in terms of functionality, vital needs such as eating and sleeping are fundamental and indispensable. He emphasizes that needs such as personal security, social belonging, self-confidence, inherent traits, self-realization, cognitive needs, aesthetic needs, and expressive needs exist in the nature of human beings and form the essence of individual

experiences. All these needs also constitute the essence of individual happiness (Lull, 2000:102-103).

Among those actively using social media, motivations such as "increasing follower count" and simultaneously becoming a "social media phenomenon" are frequently featured in the news. Social media is portrayed as a place for fame and a source of financial income to achieve these motivations. In this context, it can trigger the intensity and frequency of social media platform usage.

Goffman's Presentation of Self Theory

With the rapid increase in globalization, the restructuring of conditions, and the internet evolving into a contemporary, cultural, and free space, names, identities, global and societal values, habits, and behaviors are thought to have rapidly become part of an economic market. The internet, providing an environment and opportunity for the emergence of new individual and societal relationship types, has also facilitated the formation of an integrated and global culture that is quite different from the traditional. However, from the perspective of communication and interaction, on the internet, users' physical characteristics such as appearance, voice, and gender are not prominently featured. Users can freely decide on the content they share and shape their profiles as they wish, creating new identities. In other words, not every profile created always reflects the truth. Users interact with other users by sharing about themselves or the selves they want to be in these newly created profiles (Ellison and Boyd, 2013:4).

According to Goffman's theory of self-presentation, individuals display the desired forms of their selves through various roles in their daily lives. The theorist examines the concepts of the "front stage" and "backstage," establishing the relationship between life and the stage. In interpersonal communication, Goffman suggests that individuals showcase the self they want to possess in their daily lives through different performances (Özök, 2019). Considering that Goffman's role approach is a type of

approach designed to explain the ideal self rather than the true self of the individual, "Instagram and social media" become the space where individuals present their selves (Kavut, 2018).

Social Comparison Theory

The social comparison theory, introduced by Festinger, suggests that individuals continuously compare themselves with others in the social realm and develop a sense of belonging to social groups. Thus, individuals approach groups they find close to themselves in terms of abilities and opinions while disregarding others (Özen and Ortaç, 2020). Body image, brand usage, entertainment, and visited places are socio-cultural areas of this comparison, and dissatisfaction arises when individuals repeatedly compare themselves with others in terms of appearance and what they use (Bayköse and Esin, 2019). Social media has become the primary domain where social comparison behavior is most prevalent.

Jean Baudrillard, Simulation Theory

French philosopher Jean Baudrillard's (1929-2007) Simulation Theory is undoubtedly one of the most significant theories proposed in the twentieth century. Offering a critical analysis of the postmodern Western world, Baudrillard argues that our lives have undergone a transformation with the development of technology, reality has been lost, and we live in a simulated reality through media and communication tools. "Reality is produced from miniature units, matrices, memory banks, and command models and is reproduced an unlimited number of times. Since it is no longer measured against some ideal or negative examples, it does not have to be rational. In fact, since it is now surrounded by the imaginary, it is no longer real" (Baudrillard, 2011:3).

In our era, all kinds of real processes have been replaced by a reality surrounded by indicators and an operational twin. Thus, this newly created reality, synthetically formed, both short-circuits the stages of reality and becomes a hyperreal condition without being in a relationship with any form of reality. Images, which are important tools in the artificial production of reality and contribute to the emergence of hyperreality, have always had a lethal power, according to Baudrillard. The concept of the simulacra, which Baudrillard defines as the appearance that wants to be perceived as reality, refers to an image that emerges only as its own simulacrum without any connection to any form of reality.

With the widespread adoption of digital media technologies, the concept of simulation, which has found its own place within new media environments, is derived from the Latin verb "simulare," meaning imitation/imitating, making similar/reproducing similar, when examined etymologically. Simulation, which artificially reproduces the distinctive functioning of reality while obliterating what is real, signifies a hyperreal condition by taking the place of the reality it annihilated. "Everyone is involved in a world equipped with infinite diversity within a single virtuality. In this mentioned world, technology is the simulation environment itself" (Güngör, 2011:172). Baudrillard, defining the situation that simulates the reality enveloping humanity as hyperreality, asserts that the perception of reality has collapsed, and simulation has taken the place of reality.

In this universe where individuals are trapped within the social order, it is impossible to distinguish between what is fictional, what is real, or what is imitation. According to Gianni Vattimo, the loss of reality and the erosion of the principle of reality in the postmodern world have occurred due to the proliferation of images in the world. As a result of the incredible proliferation of images in the world, the reality that postmodern individuals will conceive creates an escape/refuge environment from

physical reality to virtual reality. "With a perverse internal logic, the world of objects measured and processed with techno-science (measuring reality's world according to metaphysics) has become a world of trade and images, the phantasmagoria of mass media" (Vattimo, 1992:8). The visual relationship reflecting a virtual world established by users with this universe seeks to displace reality by attempting to represent it. The contribution of digitalization to the reproduction of reality leads to the emergence of hyperrealistic environments in new media. Hyperreality, produced in a reality-free manner, involuntarily draws individuals into this new environment, rendering society passive. According to David Lyon, simulation is the "reproduction of reality through developed codes and images of computerized images, in short, the reproduction of reality" (Lyon, 2006:236). Thus, in such a hyperreal environment, simulacra and new media become two mutually reinforcing sources.

According to Jean Baudrillard, individuals idealize themselves and construct new identities in the virtual environments they are trapped in (Metin, Karakaya, 2017). Thus, individuals create new identities in the virtual environments they are trapped in. This situation becomes a problematic communication method for every individual involved.

Objectification Theory

The objectification theory proposed by Barbara Fredrickson and Tomi-Ann Roberts suggests that the objectification of a woman or a girl can lead to increased feelings of anxiety or self-awareness. According to the Objectification Theory, the most insidious stage of objectification occurs in visual media. Women internalize the viewer's perspective as the primary view of their physical selves through media publications, leading to increased concerns about their bodies and voluntary self-objectification (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997:175-178). Social networks also provide an environment conducive to such voluntary objectification, as a considerable amount of visual content circulates uncontrolled on these platforms.

According to Fredrickson and Roberts' theory, objectification can result in psychological and experiential consequences, such as feelings of shame, anxiety, heightened states of motivation, increased external bodily awareness, and decreased internal bodily awareness. Due to the culture that objectifies the female body, practices like dieting or restricted eating become part of women's lives from adolescence onwards. Objectification can also lead to mental health risks such as depression, unipolar depression, sexual dysfunction, and eating disorders.

According to Fredrickson and Roberts (1997:176-177), objectification occurs in three stages: Objectification first emerges in interpersonal and social encounters. Research shows that women feel more observed than men in interpersonal encounters, experience more gaze directed at them, receive more unreciprocated gazes from men, often accompanied by sexually suggestive comments. Objectification secondly emerges in visual media. The third and perhaps most insidious stage of objectification is when the viewer encounters visual media that emphasizes women's bodies and body parts. Sexual objectification of women in visual media is not limited to pornography; it is prevalent in mainstream films, visual arts, advertisements, television programs, music videos, women's magazines, and sports photos. Each of these cultural products provides evidence that the sexual objectification of women's bodies is more frequently targeted towards men. There are studies that establish a relationship between Objectification Theory and both traditional media and social media (see (Aubrey, 2006; Choma et al., 2007; Harper & Tiggemann, 2008; Daniel & Bridges, 2010; Dakanalis & Riva, 2013; Lanzieri & Hildebrandt, 2016). In these studies, it is argued that the media encourages individuals to adopt the perspective presented in the media regarding their physical selves, socializes them to monitor their appearance, and thus plays a role in objectification.

Attachment Theory

Attachment theory is often emphasized to explain social media addiction, internet addiction, and online gaming addiction. Developed by John Bowlby, this theory defines attachment as the first and most crucial relationship a baby establishes with a caregiver (mother or caretaker). Individuals with high attachment anxiety use social media to feel a sense of social belonging and to relax by receiving feedback (Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters and Wall, 1978: 17; Taluy, 2021). For these individuals, consumption becomes a means to an end.

After Bowlby (1969/1982, 1973), attachment theory developed through the works of Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, and Wall (1978), Ainsworth (1982, 1985), and Main and Solomon (1986, 1990). According to Ainsworth (1963: 67), attachment is "a secure base from which to explore," and this idea has remained a fundamental principle of attachment theory since then. Ainsworth and others (1978: 32) proposed individual differences based on the baby's reactions to separation and reunion behaviors with the caregiver using a method they called the "Strange Situation," identifying three different attachment styles in infants. These are "Secure Attachment," "Anxious-Ambivalent Attachment," and "Avoidant Attachment" styles. According to attachment theory, the attachment relationship remains important throughout life (Ainsworth, 1989; Bowlby, 1980, 1982). The mother-child relationship serves as an example for later attachment in relationships (Collins and Laursen, 2004: 55).

Hazan and Shaver (1987: 511) presented an adult attachment model parallel to Ainsworth and others' (1978: 55) classification. Accordingly, those who are "securely" attached are identified as individuals with high self-esteem, no problems in their relationships, and trust in relationships. In contrast, individuals with "anxious-ambivalent" attachment have low self-esteem, fear of rejection in relationships, excessive jealousy, and obsession in relationships, while individuals with "avoidant" attachment

have the weakest sense of trust in relationships, negative expectations about relationships, and an avoidance of forming close relationships.

Following Hazan and Shaver, Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991: 226), in the light of Bowlby's attachment theory, proposed four different attachment styles based on two internal working models that the individual forms for others and the individual's self. These styles consist of different combinations depending on whether the internal working model for self is positive or negative (i.e., worthy of love or unworthy) and whether the internal working model for others is positive or negative (accessible, reliable, or rejecting, unreliable). According to this model, there are four attachment styles: "secure," "dismissive," "preoccupied," and "fearful." Secure attachment is formed with the belief and expectation that the self is lovable, and others are reliable and accepting. Dismissive attachment involves the belief that the self is valuable, but others are untrustworthy, leading to negative expectations. Preoccupied attachment carries the belief that the self is worthless and undeserving of love while perceiving others positively. In the fearful attachment style, there is a belief that both the self is worthless and others are rejecting and untrustworthy. Considering the interactions of early attachment patterns acquired in the first years of life with various variables in interpersonal relationships, it can be speculated that the excessive use of social media, where virtual relationships are easily formed, may be related to attachment styles. Social media addiction is characterized by the compulsive use of social media sites, which manifests itself as one of the symptoms of behavioral addiction (Hawi and Samaha, 2017: 576). Flores (2004: 63) sees addiction as an attempt at self-regulation and self-soothing and introduces the concept of addiction as an attachment disorder.

According to him, dependent individuals will continue their addictions until they learn the necessary skills to regulate their emotional states and develop interpersonal reciprocity and healthy closeness, or they will be inclined to replace the missing piece

within themselves that they experience as a lack with an object of addiction. Therefore, a dependent person is always considered vulnerable to behaviors that create addiction until their own structure is restored (Höfler and Kooyman 1996: 511). The same situation applies to non-substance addictions, just as drug use can alleviate a lack of intimacy (Flores 2004: 64) (Estévez, Jáuregui, Sánchez-Marcos, López-González, and Griffiths, 2017: 534). This can be any element that fills the void, such as an object or activity (Flores 2004: 64). Manteghi (2010: 18) found a relationship between emotional gaps in the family environment and the tendency to visit chat rooms. Dozier, Stovall-McClough, and Albus (1998: 720) have indicated that negative emotions can increase the usage of substances (e.g., drugs) and/or non-substances (e.g., social media) that lead to addiction. Drawing on studies conducted in the last decade that examine attachment and addiction more broadly, attachment styles seem to influence the time spent online (Kowert and Oldmeadow, 2015: 556), and attachment theory adds meaning to explaining excessive social media participation. Therefore, the purpose of this article is to provide a general review of studies on this topic to understand the role of attachment styles in social media addiction. There have been numerous studies in the last decade on the impact of attachment styles on internet addiction and more specifically on social media addiction. Monacis, De Palo, Griffiths, and Sinatra (2017: 853) have mentioned that social media addiction and similar addictive online activities could fall under the umbrella of internet addiction. The same researchers reported that a secure attachment orientation negatively predicts both social media addiction and internet addiction.

Media Dependency Theory

Media Dependency theory can be considered as an advancement beyond the Uses and Gratifications theory, going a step further. What distinguishes Media Dependency from the Uses and Gratifications theory, which is rooted in psychological needs, is its

focus on the relationship between media and the audience, along with the societal system (Severin and Tankard, 1994:463).

The foundation of the Media Dependency theory or approach was shaped by the works and research of Ball-Rokeach and Defleur in 1976. The theorists reevaluated the Uses and Gratifications approach, expanding the examination of media effects more comprehensively and introducing this theory to the field. In the information society, media plays a crucial role as a tool. In this context, it is anticipated that the target audience is largely dependent on the media. Since media and the content, it offers largely shape people's lives, dependency arises (Ayhan and Çavuş, 2014:45).

The Media Dependency approach emphasizes the reciprocity between macro and microstructures. Within this framework, the target audience is not only dependent on the media, but the media is also structured according to the societal system (İnal, 1996: 143). The dependency model also addresses the effects of the media, examining the changes that occur in the historical context of society (Fejes, 2005:308).

Emerson's Power-Dependency theory has influenced and contributed to the Media Dependency theory (Çakır and Çakır, 2010, p. 107). The Media Dependency theory is also a theory of media power. Emerson explains the changing aspect of power as dependency. However, in the Media Dependency approach, there is no concern for the strong or weak aspects of power. The focus is on the conditions that increase and limit power (Ball-Rokeach, 1998:12-15).

Ball-Rokeach and De Fleur emphasize that individuals turn to the media for news and information within the societal system, and therefore, they become dependent on media tools. The personal and societal needs of an individual are related to the media system and the socio-political-economic structure of this system (McQuail and Windahl, 1993:78).

However, this relationship is not as straightforward. There are other prerequisites for dependency on the audience side. These include:

- Perceived and objective usability of the media,
- Social and cultural acceptance of the media as a message source,
- Perceived benefits of the media and its content,
- Existence, awareness, and acceptance of functional alternatives.

Social structures and events, media functions, and the audience's media usage are constantly changing due to the interaction between the audience, media, and society. The agenda presented in the media is the result of a complex relationship between the social system, media, and the audience. The media agenda is formed through organizations and individuals aiming to determine the agenda in society. The directed information provided in this way also allows individuals to obtain more information from the media. As a result, dependency or the effort to seek information from these sources may occur (Rubin & Windahl, 1986:192).

The Dependency model emphasizes the broad impact of mass communication tools and is more inclined towards addressing societal issues compared to other theories. It places greater importance on societal structure and historical context rather than individual characteristics. The effects on the audience eventually loop back to influence the system and the media. However, a weak point of the model is its tendency to consider the media as too independent of the societal system. Previous approaches regarded media tools as neutral, apolitical, functioning within the framework of needs, and serving institutions. In this approach, media tools are considered to collaborate with institutional structures (McQuail and Windahl, 2010:143-144).

Social media plays a significant role as a source of information in modern society. The fundamental goal of contemporary society is to highlight the importance of

information, disseminate knowledge, expedite the process of acquiring information, ensure access to accurate information through appropriate channels, facilitate easy access to information, and enable the free discussion of information on every platform. The initial stage of the information acquisition process is understanding the content of the desired information, or in other words, what it is. The individual must first choose which information they want to access and be able to distinguish those that fall within their area of interest among millions of pieces of information.

Accessing information that enters an individual's agenda or discovering new information that captures their interest, even if it was not on their agenda, contributes significantly to personal development. The process of associating the information obtained through choice or awareness with other existing knowledge and, in this relationship, critically thinking to generate new insights is another crucial phase. Internalizing information acquired through the correct methods and from reliable sources and positioning this information in the life cycle, thus making it actionable, becomes an integral part of personal development.

With the changes and advancements in communication opportunities, lifestyle, and technology, the process and content of information acquisition and personal development have undergone transformation, taking on a different dimension. Particularly, the transformation of the media, coupled with the advent of new media and the social media environment, has played a decisive role in the diversification, dissemination, form, accessibility, and internalization of information. Individuals can now easily acquire political, social, cultural, economic, artistic, and various other types of information and stay updated on current events through the Internet and social media.

In the sociocultural structure characterized by the era of information, the impact of globalization has transcended boundaries, leading to the global dissemination of information. Marshall McLuhan emphasizes telecommunications, especially after the

telegraph, in his descriptions of the global village and the age of communication and information. New communication technologies such as the telephone and computer, as rapid information carriers, have further advanced the electric age, turning the world into a global village. Based on the perspectives of McLuhan and Masuda, the characteristics of the information society can be listed as follows (cited in Geray, 2003:122):

- The access to information, which does not decrease when consumed, is easy and free.
- Equality and a classless structure are envisaged in the information society.
- Localization and participation take precedence.

The diversification of information/news sources with the advent of new media applications, particularly social media tools, has brought along some challenges. People, in a sense, find themselves under an information bombardment, struggling to comprehend what constitutes information. At this point, T. S. Eliot's lines, "Where is the wisdom we have lost in knowledge? / Where is the knowledge we have lost in information?" are crucial in understanding the structure of information that constitutes today's knowledge society. In the contemporary information society where everyone continuously shares information through social networks provided by the new media environment, searching for news or information has become crucial for us. Nowadays, information is not in a pure form as it used to be in the past; instead, it gets lost within the realm of information.

In the new media environment where speed and quantity have increased, quality has become the most important factor.

3.2. The Impact of Social Media on Individual Development

The impact of social media on individual development has been a subject of significant interest in the field of communication in recent years. Scientific studies on this topic demonstrate that social media has significant effects on individual development. Understanding these effects can assist individuals in directing their use of social media more consciously.

Individuals become social beings over time by learning the cultural norms and values of the society they live in. This process is defined as socialization (Koştaş, 1987:329). Socialization is the process that turns an individual into a member of the social system. In this process, individuals learn to conform to group norms. In this context, the process of socialization can be described as a learning process. Socialization plays a crucial role in the formation of personality and self, leading to the development of self-concept and self-esteem. This process, starting from birth, continues throughout an individual's life.

In the socialization process, all members and society with whom the individual communicates play an instructive role. The family is the most influential in this regard. The family environment is where cultural values and social norms are initially learned. This learning process is a part of individual development. This process that begins in the family continues in school and among friends. Nowadays, this environment is generally known to take place in the virtual realm. There is a significant amount of research conducted on this topic. Studies have revealed that individuals' experiences of socialization in virtual environments have both positive and negative outcomes (Cansever, 2009).

The widespread use of the virtual environment has negatively impacted social gatherings among friends, relatives, and acquaintances, with people increasingly

preferring online meetings over face-to-face interactions (Yıldırım, 2014). In a study on online interactions, the use of abbreviated words and sentences by young people has led to the formation of a unique technological jargon among them, negatively affecting their language skills in daily life (Akbulut, 2013). Among positive findings, it can be mentioned that individuals can easily establish relationships in their daily lives that they could never establish otherwise, thanks to interactive tools, and they make friends from different parts of the world in an environment without national boundaries (Yıldırım, 2014).

Online environments also influence individuals' identity formation processes. Individuals in the virtual environment try to appear not with their real identities but with fictional identities, different from who they really are. This situation brings personality and psychological problems along with it. Young people using virtual identities eventually start to lose their sense of trust, leading to the emergence of individuals who lack confidence. Young people who lose their sense of trust eventually become alienated from themselves (Yıldırım, 2014).

The time spent in online environments and in front of the internet also leads individuals to develop an addictive personality structure. Addiction causes adolescents to become weak in interpersonal relationships and turn into asocial individuals detached from their surroundings (Günel, Turhal & İmal, 2011). Excessive use of social media or its negative effects can also bring about adverse consequences. Studies show that excessive use of social media can lead to mental health problems, especially issues like depression and anxiety. Additionally, the display of unreal perfect lives on social media creates a sense of low self-esteem and unhappiness in individuals.

The Internet and consequently online communication platforms (such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, etc.) are significant elements influencing individuals' processes of socialization and identity formation. Moreover, social media provides

opportunities for individuals to access information, communicate, and be exposed to different thoughts and perspectives. This increases individuals' access to information and assists them in self-development. For instance, educational materials or expert opinions shared on social media support individuals in their learning processes.

Studies on the impact of social media on individual development also emphasize the importance of digital citizenship skills. Digital citizenship skills encompass abilities such as questioning information, preventing online harassment, and being aware of digital security issues. These skills can help individuals use social media more responsibly. In conclusion, the impact of social media on individual development is a complex subject. When used appropriately, it can enhance access to information and facilitate communication. However, misuse can lead to mental health issues. Therefore, it is crucial for individuals to use social media consciously and develop digital citizenship skills.

3.2.1. The Impact of Social Media on Education

Social media, which brings innovations to many areas of social life and makes transformations possible, inevitably influences education. As known, education is the journey of an individual, contributing to the process of self-development with the expectation of experiencing any kind of experience and acquiring knowledge related to a specific subject. Teaching/learning is one of the tools of this journey. Thus, education can be defined as the intentional process of behavior change based on the expectations of the society in which individuals live. In this sense, social media plays a significant role in acquiring the desired behaviors, skills, and attitudes as an important part of education (Arslan, 2006: 6).

In today's world, the use of social media is prevalent in every field. Due to its systematic and planned use in communication and interaction, and its impact on work processes, it has become widespread for organizational purposes (Babacan, 2014: 137).

Social media has surpassed other communication tools because it can be used in multiple areas that are constantly evolving. Individuals can engage in dialogue with any topic and person they desire in the face of any need, express emotions and thoughts, and even create discussion topics when necessary (Vural and Bat, 2010: 33-49, cited in Cerrah, 2016: 1393). Additionally, practically, social media aligns with the fundamental processes of education. Holding a significant place among the resources of the current era, social media is also important for the sociological evaluation of education (Öztürk and Talas, 2015: 114).

Considering that the individual is a student as an element of education in every era, social media tools that allow students to take simple steps to form specific groups, create dialogues with each other, and provide feedback are widely used in both formal and informal education processes (Öztürk and Talas, 2015: 114).

In recent days, social media appears as a virtual environment where a wide range of people, from the governing masses to consultants, from the actively involved audience on the internet to the advertising sector, and from individuals practicing the education profession to journalists, convey their emotions and thoughts. Simply put, through this virtual environment where individuals establish social connections, the transfer of emotions, thoughts, information, and experiences is possible. In many cases, the opinions of many people can be as influential as the impact created by well-known journalists and experts (Breakenridge, 2009:15).

The use of computers and the internet in the education process has made the education system more effective and brought about important developments. These developments bear the signs of a shift from the classical style of education-to-education styles that combine new developments. While in the beginning it was only beneficial for research-examination, access to resources and scanning, now it has become an area where

education can be given specifically. Thus, it both meets the necessary needs for education and increases diversity (Güneş, 2016: 192).

Social media in education is spreading rapidly along with collaborative learning and increasing in number every day. Education on social media is provided in a place with high connection speed; It covers the process in which students actively participate by exploring, doing, experiencing and producing a product in collaboration (McLoughlin & Lee, 2007: 95). It is clearly stated that the audience using social media tools such as blogs, wikis and podcasts is supported by the division of labor, as it is possible to identify and share the necessary information in line with communication and interaction (Öztürk and Talas, 2015: 114).

Social networks play an active role in places where education is carried out in practice; It effectively strengthened communication between both teachers and students and provided them with the opportunity to get to know themselves individually. Although applications such as Facebook and YouTube have an important place in the private lives of individuals, it is desired to determine how appropriate their applications are in the context of the sociality of feedback and learning and to create qualified educational technology in terms of institutionality. Therefore, it is a situation that attracts attention from many educators. It attracts attention as it offers rapid change that allows students to produce and be creative as well as just consume.

Social media tools, which are referred to as pedagogical materials, are assumed to have many benefits in terms of education. These; Social support and connectivity are stated as collaborative knowledge discovery and sharing and content creation (McLoughlin & Lee, 2007: 667).

In addition to constructivist learning, social media also offers the opportunity to create an environment based on collaborative learning and informal learning. However, the challenge for educators is how to reframe their pedagogical practices towards new

technological developments and design to facilitate online communication and information exchange to empower learners and create an enriched social learning environment. (Bartlett-Bragg, 2006:2).

With cooperative learning, students can quickly join new networks in a short time. In this way, informal learning environments are provided. Informal learning can be used at any age. Structuring new knowledge of taught subjects based on collaboration is achieved through informal learning. Therefore, it is extremely important that this situation is not ignored (Selwyn, 2007: 17).

Pettenati and Ranieri (2006) stated that “social networks support informal learning and enable the formation of communities of practice in online collaborative learning environments.” At the same time, since there is active participation of the students, it is possible to create new content and initiate the adaptation process to meet the needs. Therefore, in order to achieve this, it is necessary to provide information in the digital environment (Pettenati and Ranieri, 2006: 408).

Nowadays, the internet and social media environments, which eliminate many temporal and spatial difficulties, come to the fore as an important complementary element of socialization. In the fast-paced, disconnected relationships of today's society, people can have the chance to establish a social relationship or maintain their existing relationships with the help of social sharing networks. Social sharing networks appear as a component that socially complements individuals in the direction society is heading. Thanks to the press and publications, a much wider audience has been reached, and it has greatly contributed to the realization of the desired learning and its use in daily life. Individuals have been enabled to take all the cultural elements that emerged through these communication tools into their homes, and the power to convey the desired message to many people at the right time and in the right way has emerged. When we evaluate this

entire process, the role played by social media in communication has affected the education process by affecting socialization.

Although educators have difficulty in developing popular, functional and interesting educational technologies in the learning-teaching process; Young individuals becoming members of thousands of social networking sites created without concern for educational purposes, discovering and writing blogs, sharing photos, and establishing online message systems make social network societies effective. Social media, which provides effective tools and environments that attract the attention of many students and increase their motivation, has also attracted the attention of educators and started to be used. Therefore, in the rapidly globalizing world, social media has become mandatory as an important part of education.

The impact of social media on education has been a topic closely examined by researchers in the field of education and communication. Research shows that social media has significant potential in education. For example, Junco and Mastrodicasa (2007) found in a study that social media platforms such as Facebook can increase students' academic achievement. It has been demonstrated that these platforms allow students to share course materials and collaborate with each other.

However, the negative effects of social media in education should not be ignored. It is stated that especially excessive social media use can be distracting and cause students to have focusing problems (Kirschner & Karpinski, 2010). There is also the risk of being exposed to misleading or unsafe content on social media.

In conclusion, the impact of social media in education is a complex issue. Therefore, it is important for educators and researchers to guide and enhance students' educational experiences by taking into account the potential benefits and risks of social media.

Social media has positive and negative effects in the field of education. These can be listed as follows.

Positive Effects:

- **Access to Instructional Materials and Resources:** Social media provides students with access to online course content, instructional materials, and resources. Students can use social media platforms to support their studies or learn new information.
- **Communication and Collaboration:** Social media can make it easier for students to communicate and collaborate with their classmates and teachers. It provides platforms for group projects, discussions, and student communities.
- **Learning Communities:** Social media enables students or learning communities with similar interests to come together. These communities are important for sharing information and creating a student support network.
- **Authentic Learning Experiences:** Social media can provide students with authentic learning experiences. For example, virtual tours, educational games, and simulations can provide students with interactive learning opportunities.

Negative Effects:

- **Digital Discomfort:** Constant use of social media can be distracting and make it difficult for students to focus. This may reduce learning efficiency.
- **Information Reliability:** The reliability and accuracy of information shared on social media are frequently questioned. There is a risk that students may be exposed to false or misleading information.

- **Social Isolation:** Excessive social media use can encourage detachment from the physical world and social isolation. This may negatively affect students' social skills.
- **Privacy Issues:** Social media platforms may raise concerns about the privacy of personal information. There is a risk of misuse of students' personal data.

In conclusion, the impact of social media on education includes both positive and negative aspects. Educators should guide students to consciously use social media and develop digital literacy skills. Additionally, educational institutions can integrate these platforms to enrich the student learning experience by leveraging the potential benefits of social media.

3.2.2. Health Literacy and Social Media

Social media, which entered our lives with the development of internet technologies, has gone beyond being an ordinary means of communication and has caused a transformation towards digital in every aspect of our lives. So much so that this transformation has brought about profound changes in many areas, from our family relations to our commercial relations, from political campaigns to marketing campaigns, from our consumption habits to service delivery. Because the most dramatic of these changes has been experienced in the field of health, which is one of the most important issues for people. In this respect, social media emerges as one of the most important tools in protecting, developing and strengthening health, as it provides the opportunity to reach very large audiences in a very short time and the fastest access to information and developments all over the world. In this context, social media is one of the most effective tools in protecting and strengthening public health when used consciously and correctly (Darı, 2017).

Health literacy refers to individuals' ability to access, understand and evaluate health-related information (Nutbeam, 2000). With the development and widespread use of social media, general information, suggestions and experiences regarding health began to be widely shared on social media platforms in a short time (Şahin & Yıldırım, 2011-37-46; Özkan & Purutçuoğlu, 2011). Social media has made it easier for individuals to access health-related information. For example, platforms such as Facebook and Twitter provide quick access to up-to-date information and health tips provided by healthcare organizations and experts (Moorhead et al., 2013). This can help individuals become aware of their own health and make better health decisions.

Social media also plays an educational role. Information sharing and educational videos on health-related issues are widely carried out on social media. For example, the number of views of health-related videos on YouTube is increasing day by day (Basch et al., 2018). These videos allow individuals to learn more about health topics and can increase health literacy. However, social media also has negative effects on health literacy. Social media platforms can lead to the rapid spread of false or misleading health information. Additionally, there are risks of generalizing personal experiences and giving health advice to non-experts (Moorhead et al., 2013). Considered in this context, it would be more accurate to say that social media has a complex effect on health literacy. When used correctly, it can increase access to health information and provide education. However, there are also risks such as the spread of misinformation and advice given without expertise. It is important for individuals to approach health-related information from a critical perspective and choose reliable sources.

Again, the increased use of social media in the field of health is also related to some current problems and crises. During the Covid-19 pandemic, individuals have begun to prefer the internet to obtain health-related information, thanks to features such as healthcare professionals not being able to devote enough time to existing diseases and

struggling with the pandemic, and healthcare personnel not being able to allocate enough time to individuals and confirming information. Using the internet to search for health-related information provides solutions to many problems, but also brings about some debates.

With the spread of social media, it has become an important tool not only in meeting health needs but also in sharing information among physicians. Physicians can share reliable health information with their patients, colleagues, and the public by using blogs or social networking sites. They can also convey research results or current health-related events (Chretien & Kind, 2013). The use of social media in health provides great opportunities for communicating with the society and also serves to narrow the gap in health inequality (Öztürk & Öymen, 2013).

The results of a study conducted with the participation of patients in family medicine clinics in Southern Utah, USA, to evaluate patients' use of social media and their preferences on this subject, showed that 56% of patients wanted physicians to use social media. In the same study, it was found that 83% of patients used at least one of the social media tools, and healthcare professionals wanted them to use social media to schedule and remind appointments, report test results, provide health information, or as a forum to answer questions (Fisher & Clayton, 2012).

Social media enables communication and partnerships on health and behavior change, and this also provides convenience for health education. Social support provided through the use of social media has a positive effect on individuals' health and well-being (Vollum, 2014). It has been observed that 40% of individuals with health problems use the Facebook network for social support, and this online support increases their level of health self-efficacy (Oh, Lauckner, Boehmer, Fewins-Bliss & Li, 2013). However, there are also studies indicating that social media has no benefit on health. In a study in this

context (Cavallo, Tate, Ries, Brown, DeVellis & Ammerman, 2012), it was found that social media use did not increase the level of physical activity.

3.2.3. Financial Literacy and Social Media

Financial literacy refers to individuals' personal finance management skills and financial decision-making abilities. Social media has become an important platform for discussing, sharing and learning financial issues today. Social media platforms provide quick and easy access to financial information. For example, platforms such as Twitter and Reddit allow financial analysts and economic experts to share their current analyzes and recommendations (Chen et al., 2020). This helps individuals stay informed and stay abreast of financial developments. Social media is also used as a tool for financial education and learning. There are thousands of educational videos on YouTube on financial planning, investment strategies, and debt management (Hung et al., 2019). These videos can help individuals increase their financial literacy.

However, social media also has negative effects on financial literacy. Social media platforms can lead to the dissemination of false or misleading financial information. Individuals are at risk of exposure to misleading or fraudulent financial advice (Hung et al., 2019). Therefore, it is important to verify the source of financial information and choose trusted sources.

Social media has a complex impact on financial literacy. When used correctly, it can increase access to financial information and provide educational resources. However, there are also risks of spreading misinformation and being exposed to misleading content. It is important for individuals to use social media critically to increase their financial literacy.

3.2.4. Social Media as a Way to Access and Obtain Information

The main purpose of modern society is to reveal the importance of information, to disseminate information, to accelerate the process of acquiring information, to ensure access to correct information through the correct channel, to facilitate access to information and to enable information to be discussed freely on every platform. The first stage of the information acquisition process is the content of the information to be obtained, that is, what it is. The individual must first choose which information he wants to access and be able to distinguish the ones that interest him among millions of information. While accessing information that is on the individual's agenda, accessing new information that interests him, even if it is not on his agenda, and collecting information about them provide significant contributions to his personal development. Another important process is for the individual to associate the information he/she has accessed by choice or awareness with other information he/she has, and to reveal new information with the ability to think critically along with this relationship. Internalizing the information obtained from the right method and the right source by the individual and putting this information into action by positioning it in the life cycle becomes an important part of personal development.

With the change and development of communication opportunities, lifestyle and technology, the process and content of obtaining information and personal development have changed and taken on a different dimension. In particular, the change in the form of the media and the social media environment born with new media have played a determining factor in the diversification of information, dissemination of information, form of information, access to information and internalization of information. Now individuals are political, social, cultural, economic, artistic, etc. They can easily obtain information and agenda from the Internet and social media. An individual's encounter with information, internalizing that information, producing new information with that

information, and applying or using this information in his life cycle is a result that increases his personal development.

Within the social structure of the age characterized by information, with the influence of globalization, information sharing crosses borders and spreads around the world.

In his definitions of global village, communication and information age, Marshall McLuhan focuses especially on telecommunications while talking about a new social structure. Telephone, computer, etc. developed after the telegraph. New communication technologies, which are fast information carriers, take the electric age even further and turn the world into a global village. Based on the views of McLuhan and Masuda, the characteristics of the information society can be listed as follows (cited in Geray, 2003:122):

- Information that does not decrease when consumed is easy and free to access.
- An egalitarian, classless structure is envisaged in the information society.
- Localization and participation are at the forefront.

In this age, where globalization and the process leading to the information society follow each other at a tremendous speed, developments in information technologies directly affect the communication and production processes, bringing the human position and roll into a new structure. These developments in information technologies enable all changes and transformations to spread around the world in a short time (Ulugay, 2001:118-119). The reason why globalization has become widespread and the dizzying developments in information technologies are experienced simultaneously is that developments in the field of communication make globalization possible. Stating that people are becoming liberated in an equal environment thanks to new communication technologies, McLuhan emphasizes that information rains down on us, and when it

reaches us, it immediately becomes obsolete and invalid because the next one arrives (McLuhan and Fiore, 2005:63). Therefore, the conceptual framework of globalization It is directly related to the effects of information technology on the changing process. In the process leading to the information society, time and space differences disappear. In this context, the subject takes us from the manifestations of technology to the media (Kaya, 2000:101).

Digital technologies, which emerged with the interoperability of communication and computer technologies, especially in the 70s, have enabled the creation of many vehicles with computer processing power. In the digital technology base, especially the Internet, in addition to increasing the number of users with the Web 2.0 transformation, has also shown a change in which the sharing between users has intensified and they are closer to living their social lives on the Internet. The Internet, which has gained so much importance that it will leave its mark on our age, has radically affected the vital structure and created behavioral and operational differences. Users dominate the communication process with the functional interaction they establish (Timisi, 2003:132). Today, the Internet takes people beyond their spatial or metaphysical proximity, allowing them to buy products from virtual stores that they have not physically encountered, to see places they have not been to spatially, to make friends with people they have not met, etc. mediates. Similarly, access to information and resources is also in transformation. In this context, "information technologies have caused major changes in interpersonal communication and have created significant differences in human life in the level of access to the desired information." (Vural & Bakır, 2007:1). The internet and therefore the changing information age is now in the process of giving way to the communication age created by communication technologies that are at its core and change its dimension.

The first stage of the information acquisition process is the content of the information to be obtained, that is, what it is. The individual must first choose which

information he wants to access and be able to distinguish the ones that interest him among millions of information. While accessing information that is on the individual's agenda, accessing new information that interests him, even if it is not on his agenda, and collecting information about them provide significant contributions to his personal development. Another important process is associating the information obtained by choice or awareness with other information that the individual has and revealing new information with this association and critical thinking ability.

Knowledge is personalized information with facts, methods, interpretations, ideas, observations and judgments in the minds of individuals. Information is data that has been processed and made meaningful, and as soon as information is processed in the minds of individuals, it is transformed into knowledge (Alavi and Leidner, 2001:109). Internalizing the information obtained from the right method and the right source and putting this information into action by positioning it in the life cycle becomes an important part of the individual's personal development.

Users create, disseminate and store a lot of potentially useful information about themselves, events, places and objects. In this context, it can be said that social media is an alternative way to information production and sharing processes. Especially among social media applications, wikis, blogs, social networks and extensive documentation are created, which play an important role in the information production and sharing process. According to Capogna (2010), the Internet is generally used to obtain professional knowledge, improve individual productivity, socialization, information acquisition and language learning. As Nonaka (1994) stated, information can be both individual and collective (as cited in Alavi and Leidner, 2001:109). Therefore, social media allows both individual and collective formation and acquisition of information.

Personal development or personal growth means developing an individual's abilities, skills, knowledge or other qualities by working on them. Self-improvement is

not a phenomenon done alone but occurs through mutual interaction with the person's environment (Kari and Savolainen, 2007:49). Especially social media applications and the Internet allow the individual to interact more frequently with his social environment. While McLoughlin and Lee define social networks as structures with high connectivity that can be accessed from anywhere at any time, they evaluate their structure as a social process in which people move away from passive consumerism and actively participate or produce content together, and thus learning supports their personal life goals and needs (2007). Additionally, the concept of "lifelong learning" within personal development is becoming increasingly widespread. Young people who spend 50 hours a week on social media, 25 hours on weekdays and 25 hours on weekends (http://www.civiltoplumakademisi.org.tr/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=860:gen-cler-sosyal-medyada-lost&catid=44:son-news&Itemid=118) In the context of lifelong learning approach, social media and the Internet should be examined and addressed as the basis of information need and information source.

Taatila et al. Although they claim that today humanity lives in a network society that pushes aside capital and labor as value sources of organizational knowledge, personal creativity and learning capacity (2006: 312), German social scientists, Duimel and De Haan, (2007) state that young people in the Netherlands mostly use the Internet. (71%) reported using it to download music, 76% to gather information, and 79% to watch videos (Dijk, 2009: 872).

Social media has become an important tool in accessing and obtaining information. In this article, we will examine the role of social media in accessing and obtaining information and discuss how these platforms are effective in information sharing, learning and awareness.

Social media makes access to information significantly easier. Platforms such as Twitter are widely used, especially to quickly access information about news and current

events (Hermida, 2010). Additionally, social media supports access to specific information through the sharing of communities specialized in different topics.

Social media is used as a valuable resource for learning and education. Platforms like YouTube and LinkedIn allow educational materials, online courses and tutorials to share their content. Especially during the pandemic period, the role of social media in education has become even more evident and offers distance education opportunities (Veletsianos & Houlden, 2020).

Social media provides access to different perspectives and information. Users can follow content according to their interests and have the opportunity to gain information from various perspectives. This can encourage individuals to be exposed to and become aware of a wider range of information.

However, there is also a risk of being exposed to misleading or unsafe information on social media platforms. Therefore, critical thinking skills and source evaluation are important in information access processes.

Social media is a powerful tool that significantly affects the processes of accessing and obtaining information. When used correctly, these platforms encourage knowledge sharing, provide learning opportunities, and increase access to diverse perspectives. However, caution should be exercised against misleading information.

3.3. Social Effects of Social Media

The social effects of social media use are related to many topics. As it is known, social events influence and transform each other and prepare the ground for other social events with new forms (Ünsal and Ramazanoğlu, 2013). When considered in this context, there is almost no social event that is not related to each other. Social media is an environment that has entered our lives in the developing and expanding period and has been easily accepted by almost all the populations in developing and developed countries.

While this environment is sometimes beneficial, it can also be detrimental to the space and opportunity for violent incidents. When using social media sites, individuals should behave respectfully and tolerantly towards other people and act with an awareness appropriate to the situation. Particularly on the social media platforms with the most users, the posts of violent groups aimed at alienating, fearing and increasing tension harm society. On the other hand, it has become easier and more common for individuals to obtain their rights by organizing through social media. Actions, civil wars, organizations, revolutions, innovations, developments, etc. occurring in societies. It is seen that the first steps of events and facts are taken through social media today, and this makes it easier to follow the developments of the situation.

The fact that technology continues to dominate and creates effective techniques in all areas of life makes the use of these innovations widespread. Social media has created the opportunity to share and convey compiled pieces of information and thoughts of very different and high quality around the world. This situation increases collective thinking and supports the emergence of better ideas. Freedom of expression has an important place in order for better and innovative ideas to emerge.

The uniqueness of social media data, which breaks down the boundaries between the real world and the virtual world, requires new data mining techniques to effectively process user-generated content with rich social relationships. For example, 'Social Media Mining' introduces basic concepts and basic algorithms suitable for mining large social media data; Discusses theories and methodologies from different disciplines such as computer science, data mining, machine learning, social network analysis, network science, sociology, ethnography, statistics, optimization and mathematics. It encompasses tools to formally represent, measure, model and mine meaningful patterns from large-scale social media data. (Zafarani & Abbasi, 2014: 16- 18).

It is now inevitable to talk about the use of social media, whose effects are seen in family life, social relations, language, tradition, in short, the entire cultural structure. Similarly, the use of social media, which changes consumption styles, consumers, and goods and service offerings, is becoming more widespread day by day. As the time spent on social media increases, family relationships decrease. “Intensive use of social media not only affects family relations but also causes other problems in the family” (Güleç, 2018:105). Adolescents, who spend most of their time on social networks (Hacıfendioğlu, 2010:57), turn into individuals alone in their rooms and isolated from social life. Individuals who complete the communication gap with social media or add new practices to their communication arguments prefer to spend time on the internet instead of engaging in social activities, and this situation causes family members to spend their free time separately (Aslan and Cansever, 2012:31). Young people who isolate themselves from social life become a part of the virtual world, moving away from real-life events and may be deprived of socializing in physical life.

The social power of social media is; It is believed that social media will have an important place today and in the future due to the fact that the messages sent are up-to-date and their recycling is instantaneous, personal and mass reactions to media messages are freely transmitted without restrictions and censorship, and also because there is no concept of time and space (Thompson, 2008). On the other hand, it is also seen that social media increases the speed of social life. It is a fact that social media, as an important factor of the concept of time in social life, eliminates the concept of time or increases the pace of life of individuals and society by minimizing time (Alav, 2014).

- Impact on Politics: Social media websites have played an important role in many elections around the world, including the US, Iranian and Indian elections. In addition, these websites have helped bring people together for a specific reason, inspiring mass movements and political turmoil in many countries . For example, the recent "Arab

spring" refers to the social power of the media in popular revolutions. In the Arab Spring revolutions, the unorganized people organized around social media leaders and radically changed the social structure politically.

- **Impact on Commerce:** Companies that use the Internet extensively use social media to advertise their products, create customer loyalty and perform many other functions. Interactions with customers and the feedback they provide help businesses understand the market and set the best tone for their products and strategies. Many companies organize contests and give away gifts to encourage customers to visit their social media websites more often. Compared to television commercials and other expensive forms of marketing, having a presence on social media is a cheap and effective way to improve brand image and popularity.

- **Impact on Socialization:** Social networks offer people the opportunity to reconnect with friends and acquaintances, make new friends, exchange ideas, share content and images, and perform many other activities. Users can follow global and local developments and participate in campaigns and activities of their own choosing. Working individuals use social media sites such as LinkedIn to develop their career and business goals (Göker, 2015). Students can collaborate with their peers to increase their academic expertise and communication skills. By connecting with people in different countries, they can learn about other cultures and societies.

- **Effect on Illegal Activities:** With the increase in the use of social media, malicious and irresponsible people benefit themselves by lying, deceiving and harming people in many ways thanks to the freedom of social media (Amedie, 2015). Many criminals take advantage of social media to hide their identities and commit crimes such as cyberbullying, cyberterrorism, human trafficking, drug dealing, and similar crimes (Amedie, 2015). Revealing personal information on social media sites can make users vulnerable to crimes such as identity theft and stalking. Most companies conduct an

online background check before hiring an employee. If a prospective employee has made an embarrassing post online, this can greatly affect his or her chances of being hired. The same situation is valid for bilateral relations; When an unwanted post is shared on social networks, the individual's circle can easily learn about these posts.

- **Effect on Tendency to Violence:** Another effect of social media on society is that it increases the tendency to violence. At this point, its impact on bullying and terrorist activities can be particularly mentioned. Peer bullying is an aggressive act carried out repeatedly over a long period of time by an individual or group towards a victim who cannot easily protect himself. With the use of the internet and mobile phones, a new type of peer bullying, cyber bullying, has emerged. Cyberbullying has become a big problem among young people in the last 20 years because it allows people to humiliate the victim by sharing information about the victim in front of their peers. In cyberbullying, aggression occurs electronically via the internet and especially social media (Bannink et al., 2014). People can target many people on social sites for cyber bullying and online harassment. School-aged children, young girls and women can fall prey to online attacks, which can create tension and unrest. People who engage in cyberbullying can hide their identities and scare their victims by sharing posts under someone else's identity. Recent studies indicate that approximately 20-35% of young people are involved in peer bullying, either as bullies or victims (Bannink et al., 2014). In case of cyberbullying, appropriate legal action must be taken against the attacker. Another dangerous aspect of social media is that this environment is rapidly adopted by terrorist groups. Terrorism uses social media for its own benefit to gather information, recruit members, collect resources and make propaganda (Çınar, 2012). Many researchers have shown that depressive symptoms, independent of psychosocial distress, are associated with violent protests and sympathy for terrorism. A new study conducted in England revealed a link between depression and radicalization (Amedie, 2015).

- **Social Media and Anxiety:** In addition to being a source of depression and anxiety, social media is also a common source of stress for its users. Another survey conducted with the participation of 7,000 mothers shows that 42% of mothers who use the photo sharing site Pinterest occasionally suffer from Pinterest Stress (O'keeffe and Clarke-Pearson, 2011). Social media causes anxiety in two ways. Chronic stress causes depression anxiety. Being constantly alert for new social media messages is the same as being constantly on guard like predators for one's fight-or-flight limbic system, which causes the release of the stress hormone cortisol (Amedie, 2015). The other way social media causes depression anxiety is through the stress of constantly trying to project unrealistic and unattainable perfection within one's social network. Stress caused by social anxiety is associated with the person's effort to always portray himself as perfect to the other party. The constant stress of constantly trying to project a picture of perfection (perfect career, perfect marriage, etc.) leads to the constant secretion of the stress hormone cortisol and causes depression anxiety, just like social media use. The constant release of this hormone due to excessive use of social media causes damage to the digestive tract in people after a while, causing an immuno-inflammatory response in the body and brain and depression anxiety (Amedie, 2015).

- **Impact on Productivity:** Many companies have blocked social networks on office internet networks, as employees who are addicted to these sites can distract themselves by visiting these pages instead of focusing on work. In fact, studies show that British companies lose billions of dollars a year in terms of productivity due to social media addiction among employees.

3.3.1. The Effect of Social Media on Political Participation

The real functionality of a democratic system is closely related to the extent to which the public participates in the political process. New media technologies, which we encounter in all areas of social life, visibly affect the political sphere and participation activities. In response to the participation problems experienced by representative democracies, new media offers new and diverse participation opportunities with its multidimensional and interactive structure.

Participatory democratic media theory, developed by McQuail as an extension of liberal theory, emerged as a reaction against centralization and bureaucratization in the press field. The theory basically proposes that mass media should be connected to daily life, have a citizen-centered and participatory structure. Accordingly, the main duties of the media are to provide an interactive communication atmosphere, to pave the way for participation and ultimately to include the public in the management process (Türk, 2016:58). In other words, the essence of participatory democratic media theory is the idea of transforming individuals who are passive viewers or readers into active participants of the democratic process.

Participatory democratic media theory, which advocates the idea that all segments of society (even those at the lowest levels) should be involved in management through speaking and sharing activities, foresees a liberal and interactive media structure, free from pressure and impositions. In this context, the theory advocates a horizontal and egalitarian approach rather than a top-down vertical organization and bureaucratic communication (Türk, 2016:58).

McQuail listed some basic propositions of participatory democratic media theory as follows (McQuail, 1983:96-98 cited in İrvan, 1994:223):

- Media exists for the public, not for institutions and customers.
- Interactive and participatory media are better than one-way media.
- Citizens and minority groups have the right to access the media and be informed in line with their needs.
- The organization of the media and the regulation of its content should be independent from political authorities.
- Groups, organizations and local communities have the right to own their own media.

The basic features of participatory democratic media theory and the propositions listed above are parallel to each other and the opportunities offered by new media technologies. Accordingly, participatory democratic media theory, which advocates a decentralized, pluralistic media approach that is independent of state intervention and opposes institutionalization, overlaps in many respects with the egalitarian, individual, libertarian and uncontrolled structure of new media. Based on these similarities, it is possible to evaluate the relationship between new media and political participation on the basis of theory, based on the criteria listed below:

Access to Information and Political Participation: Individuals who freely access information through new media technologies can develop opinions on social issues and thus take part in decision-making processes as an active participant of the democratic system. In the information age we are in, new media technologies, which prioritize the individual and the right to be informed, transform the understanding of participation in representative democracy, which is limited only to voting, and support continuity in participation with the free flow of information they offer.

Interaction and Political Participation: The interactivity feature of new media technologies makes it possible to express thoughts and exchange views without time and

space limitations. By bringing like-minded individuals together or allowing groups with different views to exchange ideas and democratic discussion processes, new media facilitate and encourage political participation. According to Meriç (2014:152), information sharing and interactivity in the digital environment through new media paves the way for a structuring from the traditional management approach to the "reciprocal" management approach.

Pluralism and Political Participation: With its egalitarian and non-institutional structure open to everyone, new media brings political participation to a daily and classless dimension. In other words, new media is effective in thinning the bureaucratic wall that alienates the public as an obstacle to the participation of democratic processes. In this way, people can communicate via e-mail, forum, social media, etc. They can express their thoughts and feelings in daily speech and engage in online political participation activities through online platforms such as.

Free Structuring and Political Participation: New media technologies, with their decentralized and free structures, can offer a wide range of participation opportunities to their users without state intervention. This prominent libertarian structure of the new media allows all segments of society to engage in political participation activities, away from pressure and interference. Expressing opinions on social media, participating in online actions and campaigns, and sharing political content are some of these.

As a result, new media technologies help remove obstacles to political participation and revitalize participation processes, thanks to their independent structuring and network-based technical equipment. Since the existence of a healthy democratic system can only be achieved with a participatory atmosphere, the participation opportunities offered by new media technologies are important at this point and bring a functional dimension to democratic processes.

Social networks, which are becoming more widespread day by day in parallel with the developments in information and communication technologies, affect social movements and structures on a global scale. As one of the interactive application areas of new media technologies, social media has a decisive potential on the organizational activities of the 21st century. For this reason, it is known that many activities and actions of non-governmental organizations are directed in social media environments as a means of political participation, and in this sense it can be said that they support political participation.



CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

4.1. Distribution of Students' Demographic Characteristics

The findings regarding the demographic characteristics of the Kerkuk university students participating in the research are given in Table 4.

Table 4. Distribution of Students Participating in the Research According to Demographic Characteristics

	Demographic Characteristics	n	%
Gender	Male	124	31
	Female	276	69
Academic Level	1. Freshmen	2	0,5
	2. Sophomore	151	37,8
	3. Junior	48	12
	4. Senior	199	49,8
Residence	City Center	291	72,8
	Districts	70	17,5
	Village	39	9,8
Specialization	Humanistic Studies	177	44,3
	Scientific Studies	223	55,8
Languages	Arabic	178	44,5
	Kurdish	151	37,8
	Turkish	71	17,8

When the distributions according to demographic characteristics are examined in Table 4, it is seen that 31% (124 people) of Kerkuk University students participating in the research are male and 69% (276 people) are female. It is understood that 49.8 % of the students (199 people) are studying at the 4th stage, 37.8 % (151 people) of them are 2nd stage 12 % (48 people) of them are at 3rd stage and 0.5 % 12 (2 people) of them are at 1st stage. It is found that the vast majority of the students participating in the study, 72.8% (294 people), live in the city. 17.5 % (70 people) in the districts and 9.8 % 20 (39 people) of them live at the villages. It is seen that 44.3% of the participants (177 people) have specialized on Scientific Studies and 55.8% (223 people) have specialized on Humanistic Studies. It is understood that 44.5% (178 people) of the students participating in the research know Arabic, 37.8% (151 people) know Kurdish and 17.8% (71 people) know Turkish.

4.2. Distribution of Students' Social Media Usage

The distribution of Kerkuk University students participating in the study regarding their social media usage is given in Table 5.

Table 5. Distribution of Students Participating in the Research According to Social Media Usage

Using Social Media	n	%
Yes	398	99,5
No	2	0,5

According to the Table 5, it is examined that 99.5 % (398 people) of Kerkuk University students participating in the research use social media and 0.5 % (2 people) do not use social media.

The distribution of Kerkuk University students participating in the study regarding the duration of social media usage is given in Table 6.

Table 6. Distribution of Students Participating in the Research According to the Duration of Social Media Usage

Hours of Using Social Media	n	%
(1-3) hours	169	42,2
(4-6) hours	147	36,8
More than 6 hours	84	21

According to the Table 6, it is examined that 42.2 % (169 people) of Kerkuk University students participating in the research use social media 1-3 hours, 36.8 % (147 people) use 4-6 hours and 21 % (84 people) of them use social media more than 6 hours.

The distribution of Kerkuk University students participating in the study regarding the start time of using social media is given in Table 7.

Table 7. Distribution of Students Participating in the Research According to the Start Time of Using Social Media

Start Time of Using Social Media	n	%
(1-4) years	171	42,8
(5-8) years	133	33,2
More than 8 years	96	24

According to the Table 7, it is examined that 42.8 % (171 people) of Kerkuk University students participating in the research start using social media for 1-4 years, 33.2 % (133 people) start using for 5-8 years and 24 % (96 people) of them start using social media for more than 6 hours.

The distribution of Kerkuk University students participating in the study regarding the times to use social media is given in Table 8.

Table 8. Distribution of Students Participating in the Research According to the Time to Use Social Media

Times to Use Social Media	N	%
(8-12) am	65	16,3
(12-18) afternoon	149	37,3
(18-24) evening	151	37,8
After midnight (00-later)	35	8,8

According to the Table 8, it is examined that 16.3 % (65 people) of Kerkuk University students participating in the research use social media at 8-12 am, 37.3 % (149 people) use in the (12-18) afternoon, 37.8 % (151 people) use in the (18-24) evening and 8.8 % (35 people) of them use social media after midnight (00-later).

According to the Table 7, it is examined that 42.8 % (171 people) of Kerkuk University students participating in the research start using social media for 1-4 years, 33.2 % (133 people) start using for 5-8 years and 24 % (96 people) of them start using social media for more than 6 hours.

The distribution of Kerkuk University students who participated in the research regarding their trust in social media content is given in Table 9.

Table 9. Distribution of Students Participating in the Research According to Their Trust in Social Media Content

Do You Trust in Social Media Content	n (400)	%
Always	62	15,4
Sometimes	239	59,8
Never	99	24,8
*Reasons for the answers sometimes and never	n (338)	%
Because many topics contain fake news	257	56,7
Because many topics do not have names	47	10,4
Because many topics are exaggerating	119	26,3
Because a lot of the topics are plagiarized	30	6,6

*Multiple choices

According to the Table 9, it is examined that 15.4 % (62 people) of Kerkuk University students participating in the research trust social media content, 59.8 % (239 people) sometimes trust and 24.8 % (99 people) never trust social media content. Totally 239 students mentioned that they do not trust social media content. 56.7 % of them stated that the reasons for not trusting is "Because many topics contain fake news", 10.4 % of them "Because many topics do not have names", 26.3 % of them "Because many topics are exaggerating" and 6.6 % of them " Because a lot of the topics are plagiarized".

The distribution of Kerkuk University students who participated in the research regarding the satisfaction of their needs and desires through social media is given in Table 10.

Table 10. Distribution of Students Participating in the Research According to the Satisfaction of Their Needs and Desires through Social Media

Did social media satisfies your needs and desires	n (400)	%
Always	99	24,8
Sometimes	247	61,8
Never	54	13,5

According to the Table 10, it is examined that 24.8 % (99 people) of Kerkuk University students who participated in the research always, 61.8 % (247 people) sometimes, 13.5 % (54 people) never satisfy their needs and wishes through social media.

The distribution of Kerkuk University students participating in the study regarding the topics used in social media is given in Table 11.

Table 11. Distribution of Students Participating in the Research According to the Topics Used in Social Media

Topics Used in Social Media	n	%
Political	95	23,8
Economic	101	25,3
Scientific	104	26
Chat, Entertainment	58	14,5
Sports	13	3,3
Religious	19	4,8
Social and Cultural	4	1
Others	6	1,5

The distribution of Kerkuk University students participating in the study regarding the extent of social media usage is given in Table 12.

Table 12. Distribution of Students Participating in the Research According to the Extent of Social Media Usage

Social Media		n	%
Facebook	Always	292	73
	Sometimes	59	14,8
	Never Use	49	12,3
Instagram	Always	145	36.2
	Sometimes	176	44
	Never Use	79	19,8
Tik Tok	Always	119	29,8
	Sometimes	165	41,3
	Never Use	116	29
Snap Chat	Always	115	28,7
	Sometimes	163	40,8
	Never Use	122	30,5
Telegram	Always	136	34
	Sometimes	212	53
	Never Use	52	13
Youtube	Always	148	37
	Sometimes	189	47,3
	Never Use	63	15,8

According to the Table 12, it is examined that 73 % (292 people) of Kerkuk University students participating in the research always use Facebook, 14.8 % (58 people) sometimes use and 12.3 % (49 people) never use Facebook; 36.2 % (145 people) of the students always use Instagram, 44 % (176 people) sometimes use and 19.8 % (79 people) never use Instagram; 29.8 % (119 5people) of the students always use Tik Tok,

41.3 % (165 people) sometimes use and 29 % (116 people) never use Tik Tok; 28.7 % (115 people) of the students always use Snap Chat,, 40.8 % (163 people) sometimes use and 30.5 % (122 people) never use Snap Chat; 34 % (136 people) of the students always use Telegram, 53 % (212 people) sometimes use and 13 % (52 people) never use Telegram; 37 % (148 people) of the students always use Youtube, 47.3 % (159 people) sometimes use and 15.8 % (63 people) never use Youtube.

The distribution of Kerkuk University students participating in the study regarding the devices used to access social media is given in Table 13.

Table 13. Distribution of Students Participating in the Research According to the Devices Used to Access Social Media

Devices Used in Accessing Social Media	N*	%
Mobile	391	86,5
Tablets	23	5,1
Computer	11	2,4
Laptop	27	6

*Multiple choice

According to the Table 13, it is examined that 86.5 % (391 people) of Kerkuk University students participating in the research use mobile, 5.1 % (23 people) use tablets, 2.4 % (11 people) use computer and 6 % (27 people) use laptop to access media.

The distribution of Kerkuk University students participating in the study regarding the contribution to publishing on Facebook is given in Table 14.

Table 14. Distribution of Students Participating in the Research According to the Contribution to Publishing on Facebook

Contribution to Publishing on Facebook	n	%
Always	38	9,5
Sometimes	144	36
Rarely	218	54,5

According to the Table 14, it is examined that 9.5 % (38 people) of Kerkuk University students participating in the research always, 36 % (144 people) sometimes and 54.5 % (218 people) rarely publish on Facebook.

4.3. Descriptive Statistics for the Scale

The percentages, averages and standard deviations of the answers given by the students participating in the research to the scale regarding "Knowledge Development Measurement" are shown in Table 15.

Table 15. Descriptive Statistics for Statements on the Knowledge Development Measurement Scale

Scale Statements	%			$\bar{X}$	SS
	Disagree	I don't know	Agree		
Social Aspects				2,40	0,518
1- Social media Facebook contributes to uncovering the social challenges faced by youth (marriage, divorce, job opportunities, etc.	13,5	40,8	45,8	2,32	0,700
2. Social media (Facebook) help detect community problems (female genital mutilation, sexual harassment, women's work, etc..	15,3	30,3	54,5	2,39	0,738
3. Social media (Facebook) contributes to raising awareness of the serious dangers and risks threatening youth, such as (drugs, prescription medication, and psychotropic substances).	13,3	28,7	58	2,45	0,717
4. Some social media (Facebook) may negatively impact the values, customs, and traditions passed down to young people.	11,3	41,5	47,3	2,36	0,676
5. Social media (Facebook) help in developing the culture and personal knowledge of young people (movies, books, novels and stories, plays, etc).	14,8	34,5	50,7	2,36	0,726
6. Social media (Facebook) help in learning about the cultures of other societies and communities.	14,8	20	65,3	2,51	0,739

Political aspects				2,36	0,520
1. Social media (Facebook) helps people gain intimate knowledge of the most significant and current news in Iraq..	10,5	31	58,5	2,48	0,679
2. Social media (Facebook) contribute to the development of knowledge about the latest international news and updates around the world.	10	31	59	2,49	0,672
3. Social media (Facebook) reduces reliance on the role of personal expertise in shaping political trends.	15	45,8	39,3	2,24	0,696
4. Social media (Facebook) helps bring out new political figures.	16,5	44	39,5	2,23	0,713
5. Social media (Facebook) provides an opportunity to exercise political criticism.	13,3	39	47,8	2,35	0,702
Economic aspects				2,37	0,568
1. Social media (Facebook) contribute to informing citizens about the current economic conditions in Iraq.	11,3	34	54,8	2,44	0,687
2 Social media (Facebook) contribute to informing citizens about local economic issues in the country (inflation, the value of the Iraqi currency, delayed government projects, infrastructure, and desertification).	11,5	35	53,5	2,42	0,689
3. Social media (Facebook) help to keep track of news related to the Iraqi and global financial markets."	15	38	47	2,32	0,720
4. Social media (Facebook) contribute to finding employment opportunities and job vacancies for those interested in various government sectors.	14,2	42,8	43	2,29	0,701
5. Social media (Facebook) contribute to informing about international economic news.	14,8	33,3	52	2,37	0,728
Sports aspects				2,41	0,606
1. Social media (Facebook) contribute to following the latest local sports news (national teams, player transfers, sports articles, etc).	10,3	27,8	62	2,52	0,675
2. The speed and immediacy of reporting sports news can be considered one of the main reasons for the increasing popularity of social media (Facebook) in Iraq	12,5	32,8	54,8	2,42	0,704
3. Using social media (Facebook) as a source or reference for previous sports information.	14,8	38	47,3	2,33	0,718
4. Using social media (Facebook) to watch live sports events.	15,8	30,3	54	2,38	0,743
5. social media (Facebook) provides global coverage of the sports news briefing.	16	28,5	55,5	2,40	0,749
Scientific aspects				2,38	0,518
1. Some Social media (Facebook) pages provide links to sources and data related to science.	8,3	31,3	60,5	2,52	0,645
2. Social media (Facebook) may be utilised to carry out and finish scientific tasks.	17,8	43,8	38,5	2,21	0,722
3. Social media (Facebook) is assisting in getting a current update on our academic major.	16,3	36,8	47	2,31	0,734
4. Social media (Facebook) helps participate in seminars and live sessions.	12,5	36	51,5	2,39	0,699
5. Social media (Facebook) helps create scientific correspondence and communication groups within common disciplines.	13,5	30,3	56,3	2,43	0,718
6. Social media (Facebook) helps to satisfy our preferences in getting scientific news in its various disciplines.	10	40	50	2,40	0,664

Entertainment Aspect and chat	2,42 0,541				
1. Some social media (Facebook) help in making new friends and acquaintances.	10,8	10,8	10,8	2,53	0,682
2. Some social media (Facebook) can be used for engaging in conversations and participating in interactive electronic games locally and internationally.	14,3	34,8	51,0	2,37	0,720
3. Social media (Facebook) contribute to creating imaginary worlds that allow virtual experience of many famous tourist destinations (such as museums, theatres, and global landmarks).	13,5	39	47,5	2,34	0,704
4. Social media (Facebook) allow watching the latest local and global TV productions such as (movies, plays, documentaries, etc).	12,5	30,5	57	2,45	0,706
5. Some social media (Facebook) contribute to displaying inappropriate content that can sometimes be offensive to public.	12,5	32	55,5	2,43	0,705
General Knowledge	2,39 0,268				

According to the in Table 15, it is seen that the general average of Kerkuk University students' perceptions towards Knowledge Development is higher than the average with ($\bar{X} = 2.39 \pm 0.268$). It was understood that the averages of "Social Aspects" dimension ($\bar{X} = 2.4 \pm 0.518$), "Political Aspects" dimension ($\bar{X} = 2.36 \pm 0.520$), "Economic Aspects" dimension ($\bar{X} = 2.37 \pm 0.568$), "Sports Aspects" dimension ($\bar{X} = 2.41 \pm 0.606$), "Scientific Aspects" dimension ($\bar{X} = 2.38 \pm 0.518$) and "Entertainment Aspects" dimension ($\bar{X} = 2.42 \pm 0.541$) of the students participating in the research were higher than the average.

It is understood that the statements that the students participating in the research agreed with the most were " Social media(Facebook) contributes to raising awareness of the serious dangers and risks threatening youth, such as (drugs, prescription medication, and psychotropic substances)" with ($\bar{X} = 2.45 \pm 0.717$) in the "Social Aspects" dimension, "Social media (Facebook) contribute to the development of knowledge about the latest international news and updates around the world." with ($\bar{X} = 2.49 \pm 0.672$) in the "Political Aspects " dimension, "Social media (Facebook) contribute to informing citizens about the current economic conditions in Iraq." with ($\bar{X} = 2.44 \pm 0.687$) in the " Economic Aspects" dimension, " Social media(Facebook) contribute to following the latest local sports news (national teams, player transfers, sports articles, etc)." with ($\bar{X} = 2.52 \pm 0.675$)

in the " Sports Aspects" dimension, "Some Social media(Facebook) pages provide links to sources and data related to science" with ($\bar{X}= 2.52\pm 0.645$) in the " Scientific Aspects" dimension and "Some social media(Facebook) help in making new friends and acquaintances." with ($\bar{X}= 2.53\pm 0.683$) in the "Entertainment Aspects" dimension.

4.4. Analysis of Research Hypothesis

4.4.1. Results of Increased Information Awareness of Students by Demographic Characteristics

According to the answers of the Kerkuk University students participating in the research, the T Test results of the increased information awareness in the context of Facebook use by gender are given in Table 16.

Table 16. T Test Results of Students' Increased Knowledge Awareness According to Gender

	Gender	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	t	p
Social Aspects	Male	124	2,35	0,550	-	0,186
	Female	276	2,42	0,503	1,324	
Political Aspects	Male	124	2,37	0,452	0,222	0,824
	Female	276	2,35	0,549		
Economic Aspect	Male	124	2,36	0,539	-	0,863
	Female	276	2,37	0,581	0,173	
Sports Aspects	Male	124	2,34	0,603	-1,44	0,151
	Female	276	2,44	0,606		
Scientific Aspects	Male	124	2,39	0,512	0,43	0,667
	Female	276	2,37	0,521		
Entertainment Aspects	Male	124	2,38	0,589	-	0,333
	Female	276	2,44	0,519	0,969	
General Knowledge	Male	124	2,37	0,267	-	0,26
	Female	276	2,40	0,268	1,127	

When the T-test results are examined in Table 16, it was determined that there was no significant difference in general and in the dimensions of social, political, economic sports, scientific, entertainment aspects between the increased knowledge awareness and their gender of the university students. ($p > 0.05$).

According to these results.

“H₁₁. There is a statistically significant relationship between the gender of the researchers and increased knowledge awareness within the context of Facebook usage.” is rejected.

According to the answers of the Kerkuk University students participating in the research, the one-way ANOVA test results of the increased information awareness in the context of Facebook use by education level are given in Table 17.

Table 17. One way ANOVA Test Results of Students' Increased Knowledge Awareness According to Education Level

	Academic Level	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	F	p	Difference
Social Aspects	1. stage	2	2,42	0,589	0,612	0,608	-
	2. stage	151	2,35	0,584			
	3. stage	48	2,45	0,364			
	4. stage	199	2,42	0,497			
Political Aspects	1. stage	2	2,40	0,566	1,662	0,175	-
	2. stage	151	2,28	0,607			
	3. stage	48	2,43	0,458			
	4. stage	199	2,39	0,456			
Economic Aspect	1. stage	2	2,90	0,141	4,01	0,008	3. stage > 2. stage
	2. stage	151	2,27	0,675			
	3. stage	48	2,56	0,376			
	4. stage	199	2,39	0,501			
Sports Aspects	1. stage	2	2,30	0,424	1,935	0,123	-
	2. stage	151	2,32	0,702			
	3. stage	48	2,54	0,454			
	4. stage	199	2,44	0,552			
Scientific Aspects	1. stage	2	2,42	0,589	0,012	0,998	-
	2. stage	151	2,38	0,541			
	3. stage	48	2,36	0,498			
	4. stage	199	2,38	0,508			
Entertainment Aspects	1. stage	2	2,00	0,000	1,834	0,14	-
	2. stage	151	2,42	0,594			
	3. stage	48	2,29	0,427			
	4. stage	199	2,47	0,522			
General Knowledge	1. stage	2	2,41	0,133	2,769	0,041	-
	2. stage	151	2,34	0,324			
	3. stage	48	2,44	0,185			
	4. stage	199	2,41	0,232			

When the One way ANOVA test results are examined in Table 17, it was determined that there was a significant difference in general ($F_{3,396}=2.759$, $p < 0.05$) and in the dimension of economic aspects ($F_{3,396}=4.01$, $p < 0.05$) between the increased knowledge awareness and their education level of the university students, but no significant difference in the dimensions of social, political, sports, scientific and entertainment aspects was found. ($p > 0.05$). It was determined that the academic level variable were not homogeneously distributed at the end of the Levene Test. Because of this, to determine which groups had the significant difference provided in general and in economic aspects the Post Dunnett's T3 test applied from the unequal variance assumptions.

As a result of the Post Dunnett's T3, it has been determined that the increased knowledge awareness of the 3. stage group ($\bar{X}= 2.56 \pm 0,376$) is higher than the 2. stage group ($\bar{X}= 2.27 \pm 0,675$) in the dimension of economic aspects. Also, it was found that there was no significant difference in general (between the increased knowledge awareness and their education level of the university students after the Dunnett's T3 test.

The only statistically significant relationship is in the economic aspects, as a result of this.

"H₁₂. There is a statistically significant relationship between the educational level of the researchers and increased knowledge awareness within the context of Facebook usage" is rejected.

According to the answers of the Kerkuk University students participating in the research, the one-way ANOVA test results of the increased information awareness in the context of Facebook use by the residence are given in Table 18.

Table 18. One way ANOVA Test Results of Students' Increased Knowledge Awareness According to Residence

	Residence	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	F	p	Difference
Social Aspects	City Center	291	2,42	0,519	1,345	0,262	-
	Districts	70	2,32	0,516			
	Village	39	2,34	0,515			
Political Aspects	City Center	291	2,39	0,506	2,821	0,061	-
	Districts	70	2,23	0,587			
	Village	39	2,32	0,472			
Economic Aspect	City Center	291	2,41	0,553	5,487	0,004	City Center>Districts Village> Districts
	Districts	70	2,17	0,657			
	Village	39	2,43	0,419			
Sports Aspects	City Center	291	2,41	0,622	1,174	0,31	-
	Districts	70	2,35	0,631			
	Village	39	2,53	0,388			
Scientific Aspects	City Center	291	2,38	0,515	0,002	0,998	-
	Districts	70	2,38	0,506			
	Village	39	2,38	0,573			
Entertainment Aspects	City Center	291	2,44	0,533	0,53	0,589	-
	Districts	70	2,36	0,607			
	Village	39	2,43	0,482			
General Knowledge	City Center	291	2,41	0,263	4,214	0,015	A>B
	Districts	70	2,30	0,300			
	Village	39	2,40	0,222			

When One way ANOVA test results are examined in Table 17, it was determined that there was a significant difference in general ($F_{2,397}=4.214$, $p < 0.05$) and in the dimension of economic aspects ($F_{2,397}=5.487$, $p < 0.05$) between the increased knowledge awareness and their residence of the university students, but no significant difference in the dimensions of social, political, sports, scientific and entertainment aspects was found.

($p > 0.05$). It was determined that the residence variable were not homogeneously distributed at the end of the Levene Test. Because of this, to determine which groups had the significant difference provided in general and in economic aspects the Post Dunnett's T3 test applied from the unequal variance assumptions.

As a result of the Dunnett's T3 test, it has been determined that the increased knowledge awareness of the city centre residents' ($\bar{X} = 2.41 \pm 0.553$) is higher than the districts residents' ($\bar{X} = 2.17 \pm 0.617$) and the village residents' ($\bar{X} = 2.43 \pm 0.419$) is higher than the districts residents' ($\bar{X} = 2.14 \pm 0.617$) in the dimension of economic aspects. Also, it was found that in general increased knowledge awareness of the city centre residents' ($\bar{X} = 2.41 \pm 0.263$) is higher than the districts residents' ($\bar{X} = 2.40 \pm 0.222$).

As there was a significant difference in general.

"H₁₃. There is a statistically significant relationship between the residence location of the researchers and increased knowledge awareness within the context of Facebook usage." is accepted.

According to the answers of the Kerkuk University students participating in the research, the T Test results of the increased information awareness in the context of Facebook use by specialization are given in Table 19.

Table 19. T Test Results of Students' Increased Knowledge Awareness According to Specialization

	Specialization	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	t	p
Social Aspects	Humanistic Studies	177	2,36	0,530	-1,445	0,149
	Scientific Studies	223	2,43	0,508		
Political Aspects	Humanistic Studies	177	2,31	0,567	-1,612	0,108
	Scientific Studies	223	2,40	0,478		
Economic Aspect	Humanistic Studies	177	2,33	0,642	-1,235	0,218
	Scientific Studies	223	2,40	0,500		
Sports Aspects	Humanistic Studies	177	2,39	0,671	-0,666	0,506
	Scientific Studies	223	2,43	0,549		
Scientific Aspects	Humanistic Studies	177	2,30	0,530	-2,615	0,009
	Scientific Studies	223	2,44	0,501		
Entertainment Aspects	Humanistic Studies	177	2,38	0,571	-1,465	0,144
	Scientific Studies	223	2,46	0,515		
General Knowledge	Humanistic Studies	177	2,34	0,292	-3,119	0,002
	Scientific Studies	223	2,43	0,241		

When the T-test results are examined in Table 19, it was determined that there was a significant difference in general ($t = -3.119$, $p < 0.05$) and in the dimensions of scientific aspects ($t = -2.615$, $p < 0.05$) between the increased knowledge awareness and their specialization of the university students but no significant difference in the dimensions of social, political, economic, sports, economic and entertainment aspects was found ($p > 0.05$). In general, the increased knowledge awareness of the specialist in Scientific Studies ($\bar{X} = 2.43 \pm 0.241$) is higher than the specialist in Humanistic Studies ($\bar{X} = 2.34 \pm 0.292$). Also, the increased knowledge awareness of the specialist in Scientific Studies ($\bar{X} = 2.44 \pm 0.501$) is higher than the specialists in Humanistic Studies ($\bar{X} = 2.30 \pm 0.530$) in the dimensions of Scientific Aspects.

As there was a significant difference in general.

“H₁₄. There is a statistically significant relationship between the responders’ specialization and the increase in knowledge awareness within the context of using Facebook.” is accepted.

According to the answers of the Kerkuk University students participating in the research, the one-way ANOVA test results of the increased information awareness in the context of Facebook use by language spoken are given in Table 20.

Table 20. One way ANOVA Test Results of Students' Increased Knowledge Awareness According to Language Spoken

	Language Spoken	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	F	p	Difference
Social Aspects	Arabic	178	2,36	0,566	2,1	0,124	-
	Kurdish	151	2,47	0,431			
	Turkish	71	2,35	0,553			
Political Aspects	Arabic	178	2,39	0,539	0,763	0,467	-
	Kurdish	151	2,32	0,505			
	Turkish	71	2,36	0,505			
Economic Aspect	Arabic	178	2,33	0,603	0,849	0,429	-
	Kurdish	151	2,39	0,521			
	Turkish	71	2,42	0,570			
Sports Aspects	Arabic	178	2,35	0,633	1,759	0,174	-
	Kurdish	151	2,44	0,588			
	Turkish	71	2,50	0,563			
Scientific Aspects	Arabic	178	2,37	0,520	0,255	0,775	-
	Kurdish	151	2,37	0,531			
	Turkish	71	2,42	0,489			
Entertainment Aspects	Arabic	178	2,41	0,555	0,165	0,848	-
	Kurdish	151	2,44	0,522			
	Turkish	71	2,44	0,554			
General Knowledge	Arabic	178	2,37	0,273	1,14	0,321	-
	Kurdish	151	2,40	0,236			
	Turkish	71	2,41	0,314			

When One way ANOVA test results are examined in Table 20, it was determined that there was no significant difference in general and in the dimensions of social, political, economic sports, scientific, entertainment aspects between the increased knowledge awareness and language spoken of the university students. ($p > 0.05$)

According to these results.

“H₁₅. There is a statistically significant relationship between the languages spoken by the responders and increased knowledge awareness within the context of Facebook usage. “is rejected”.

4.4.2. Results of Increased Information Awareness of Students by the Times Allocated

According to the answers of the Kerkuk University students participating in the research, the one-way ANOVA test results of the increased information awareness in the context of Facebook use by the times allocated are given in Table 21.

Table 21. One way ANOVA Test Results of Students' Increased Knowledge Awareness According to the Times Allocated

	The Times Allocated	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	F	p	Difference
Social Aspects	(8-12) am	65	2,32	0,599	0,819	0,484	-
	(12-18) afternoon	149	2,42	0,465			
	(18-24) evening	151	2,40	0,543			
	After midnight (00-later)	35	2,47	0,465			
Political Aspects	(8-12) am	65	2,43	0,402	1,504	0,213	-
	(12-18) afternoon	149	2,31	0,546			
	(18-24) evening	151	2,34	0,519			
	After midnight (00-later)	35	2,47	0,594			
Economic Aspect	(8-12) am	65	2,40	0,447	0,186	0,906	-
	(12-18) afternoon	149	2,34	0,596			
	(18-24) evening	151	2,38	0,523			
	After midnight (00-later)	35	2,38	0,806			

Sports Aspects	(8-12) am	65	2,37	0,580	0,094	0,964	-
	(12-18) afternoon	149	2,41	0,613			
	(18-24) evening	151	2,41	0,584			
	After midnight (00-later)	35	2,42	0,726			
Scientific Aspects	(8-12) am	65	2,34	0,554	0,527	0,664	-
	(12-18) afternoon	149	2,35	0,503			
	(18-24) evening	151	2,41	0,529			
	After midnight (00-later)	35	2,40	0,470			
Entertainment Aspects	(8-12) am	65	2,38	0,536	0,488	0,691	-
	(12-18) afternoon	149	2,41	0,537			
	(18-24) evening	151	2,46	0,527			
	After midnight (00-later)	35	2,39	0,639			
General Knowledge	(8-12) am	65	2,37	0,225	0,565	0,639	-
	(12-18) afternoon	149	2,37	0,267			
	(18-24) evening	151	2,40	0,265			
	After midnight (00-later)	35	2,42	0,350			

When One-way ANOVA test results are examined in Table 21, it was determined that there was no significant difference in general and in the dimensions of social, political, economic, sports, scientific, entertainment aspects between the increased knowledge awareness and the times allocated of the university students ($p > 0.05$).

According to these results.

“Hypothesis 2: There is a statistically significant relationship between the time allocated by the responders and increased knowledge awareness within the context of Facebook usage” is rejected.

4.4.3. Results of Increased Information Awareness of Students by their Confidence in the Content of Social Media

According to the answers of the Kerkuk University students participating in the research, the one-way ANOVA test results of the increased information awareness in the context of Facebook use by their confidence in the content of social media are given in Table 22.

Table 22. One way ANOVA Test Results of Students' Increased Knowledge Awareness According to their Confidence in the Content of Social Media

	Confidence in the Content	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	F	p	Difference
Social Aspects	Always	62	2,52	0,413	3,682	0,026	Always > Sometimes
	Sometimes	239	2,34	0,542			
	Never	99	2,45	0,504			
Political Aspects	Always	62	2,36	0,506	0,794	0,453	-
	Sometimes	239	2,38	0,533			
	Never	99	2,30	0,498			
Economic Aspect	Always	62	2,42	0,552	0,377	0,686	-
	Sometimes	239	2,35	0,583			
	Never	99	2,38	0,543			
Sports Aspects	Always	62	2,48	0,550	2,016	0,135	-
	Sometimes	239	2,43	0,582			
	Never	99	2,31	0,684			
Scientific Aspects	Always	62	2,45	0,439	1,074	0,342	-
	Sometimes	239	2,37	0,513			
	Never	99	2,33	0,572			
Entertainment Aspects	Total	400	2,38	0,518	0,525	0,592	-
	Always	62	2,49	0,481			
	Sometimes	239	2,41	0,514			
General Knowledge	Never	99	2,40	0,636	2,547	0,08	-
	Total	400	2,42	0,541			
	Always	62	2,46	0,241			

When One way ANOVA test results are examined in Table 22, it was determined that there was a significant difference in the dimension of social aspects ($F_{2,397}=3.682$, $p < 0.05$) between the increased knowledge awareness of the university students and their confidence in the content of social media, but no significant difference in general and in the dimensions of political, economics, sports, scientific and entertainment aspects was found. ($p > 0.05$). It was determined that the residence variable was homogeneously distributed at the end of the Levene Test. Because of this, to determine which groups had the significant difference provided in social aspects the Post Turkey test applied from the equal variance assumptions.

As a result of the Turkey test, it has been determined that the increased knowledge awareness of the students who always confident with in the content of social media ($\bar{X}=2.52 \pm 0.413$) is higher than who sometimes confident with in the content of social media ($\bar{X}=2.34 \pm 0.542$) in social aspects.

The only statistically significant relationship is in the social aspects, as a result of this.

“Hypothesis 3: There is a statistically significant relationship between the researchers' confidence in the content of Facebook and the increase in cognitive awareness within the context of using Facebook.” is rejected.

4.4.4. Results of Increased Information Awareness of Students by the Type of Content Used

According to the answers of the Kerkuk University students participating in the research, the one way ANOVA test results of the increased information awareness in the context of Facebook use by the type of the content used are given in Table 23.

Table 23. One way ANOVA Test Results of Students' Increased Knowledge Awareness According to the Type of the Content Used

	Type of the Content Used	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	F	p	Difference
Social Aspects	Political	95	2,29	0,637	0,819	0,484	-
	Economic	101	2,40	0,475			
	Scientific	104	2,45	0,486			
	Chat, Entertainment	58	2,39	0,482			
	Sports	13	2,49	0,240			
	Religious	19	2,54	0,530			
	Social and Cultural	4	2,50	0,192			
	Others	6	2,58	0,405			
Political Aspects	Political	95	2,32	0,564	1,544	0,151	-
	Economic	101	2,38	0,526			
	Scientific	104	2,27	0,508			
	Chat, Entertainment	58	2,45	0,480			
	Sports	13	2,45	0,367			
	Religious	19	2,35	0,577			
	Social and Cultural	4	2,85	0,191			
	Others	6	2,63	0,151			
Economic Aspect	Political	95	2,30	0,608	1,525	0,157	-
	Economic	101	2,33	0,577			
	Scientific	104	2,32	0,557			
	Chat, Entertainment	58	2,47	0,546			
	Sports	13	2,54	0,395			
	Religious	19	2,54	0,550			
	Social and Cultural	4	2,80	0,231			
	Others	6	2,60	0,335			
Sports Aspects	Political	95	2,44	0,597	0,575	0,776	-
	Economic	101	2,40	0,636			
	Scientific	104	2,40	0,637			
	Chat, Entertainment	58	2,39	0,581			
	Sports	13	2,37	0,354			
	Religious	19	2,53	0,555			
	Social and Cultural	4	2,65	0,342			
	Others	6	2,03	0,686			

Scientific Aspects	Political	95	2,35	0,485	0,7	0,672	-
	Economic	101	2,31	0,563			
	Scientific	104	2,41	0,509			
	Chat, Entertainment	58	2,39	0,518			
	Sports	13	2,59	0,351			
	Religious	19	2,45	0,515			
	Social and Cultural	4	2,42	0,957			
	Others	6	2,33	0,408			
Entertainment Aspects	Political	95	2,39	0,593	0,769	0,614	-
	Economic	101	2,35	0,590			
	Scientific	104	2,47	0,463			
	Chat, Entertainment	58	2,48	0,484			
	Sports	13	2,42	0,331			
	Religious	19	2,44	0,756			
	Social and Cultural	4	2,70	0,346			
	Others	6	2,63	0,197			
General Knowledge	Political	95	2,35	0,298	1,752	0,096	-
	Economic	101	2,36	0,286			
	Scientific	104	2,39	0,248			
	Chat, Entertainment	58	2,43	0,246			
	Sports	13	2,48	0,146			
	Religious	19	2,48	0,243			
	Social and Cultural	4	2,64	0,170			
	Others	6	2,47	0,119			

When One way ANOVA test results are examined in Table 23, it was determined that there was no significant difference in general and in the dimensions of social, political, economic sports, scientific, entertainment aspects between the increased knowledge awareness of the university students and their type of the content used ($p > 0.05$).

According to these results.

“Hypothesis 4: There is a statistically significant relationship between the type of content used by the responders on Facebook and the increase in knowledge awareness within the context of using Facebook.” is rejected.



CHAPTER 5

RESULT

In this study, which aims to measure the knowledge awareness of Kerkuk University students in Iraq in the context of (Facebook) social media, the following results were obtained.

The information about the demographic characteristics and descriptive statistics of the research are as follows:

- 31% of the students participating in the research were male and 69% were female.
- Most of the students were participating in the research studying at the 4th stage with 69% and at the 2nd stage with 37.8 %.
- the vast majority of the students participating in the study lived in the city with 72.8%.
- 44.3% of the participants have specialized on Scientific Studies and 55.8% of them have specialized on Humanistic Studies.
- 44.5% of the students participating in the research spoke Arabic, 37.8%) know spoke Kurdish and 17.8% spoke know Turkish.
- 99.5 % of the students participating in the research had using social media; 42.2 % of them used social media 1-3 hours, 36.8 % of used for 4-6 hours and 21 % of them used social media more than 6 hours.
- The students participating in the research mostly used social media in the (12-18) afternoon with 37.3 % and in the (18-24) evening with 37.8 %

- It was found that the students participating in the research mostly start using social media for 1-4 years with 42.8 % and for 5-8 years with 33.2%.
- The students participating in the research sometimes with 59.8 % and always with 15.4 %. trusted social media content. The most reasons for not trusting was “Because many topics contain fake news” with 56.7 % and “Because many topics are exaggerating “with 26.3 %.
- The students participating in the research sometimes satisfied their needs and wishes through social media with 61.8 % and 13.5 % of them never satisfied their needs and wishes through social media.
- The students participating in the research mostly used scientific topics, with 26 %, economic topics with 25.3 % and 23.8 % of them used political topics.
- The students participating in the research mostly used Facebook with 73 % (always) and then Instagram with 36.2 % (always) as social media. The least used social media tools used by the students participating in the research were Tik Tok with 28.9% and Snap-chat with 28.7%.
- The students participating in the research mostly used mobile with 86.5 % to access media.
- 54.5% of the students participating in the research rarely published on Facebook. and 36 % of them sometimes published on Facebook.
- The general average of Kerkuk University students’ perceptions towards Knowledge Development Measurement is higher than the average (2) with ($\bar{X}= 2.39 \pm 0.268$). All of the dimensions of the scale is higher than the average, but “Entertainment Aspects” dimension ($\bar{X}= 2.42 \pm 0.541$) was the highest. The lowest average was “Political Aspects” dimension ($\bar{X}= 2.36 \pm 0.520$),

The results related to hypotheses are as follows.

- As there was no significant difference in general and in the dimensions of social, political, economic sports, scientific, entertainment aspects between the increased knowledge awareness and their gender of the university students.

“H₁₁. There is a statistically significant relationship between the gender of the researchers and increased knowledge awareness within the context of Facebook usage” is rejected.

- There was only significant difference in the dimensions of economic aspects between the increased knowledge awareness and their educational level of the university students. The increased knowledge awareness of 3rd stage group of students is higher than 2nd stage group of students. But as there was no significant difference in general between the increased knowledge awareness and their educational level of the university students.

“H₁₂. There is a statistically significant relationship between the educational level of the researchers and increased knowledge awareness within the context of Facebook usage” is rejected.

- There was a significant difference in general and in the dimension of economic aspects between the increased knowledge awareness and their residence of the university students. The increased knowledge awareness of the city centre residents’ is higher than the districts residents and the village residents’ is higher than the districts residents’ in the dimension of economic aspects. Also, in general increased knowledge awareness of the city centre residents was higher than the districts residents. As a result of these.

“H₁₃. There is a statistically significant relationship between the residence location of the researchers and increased knowledge awareness within the context of Facebook usage.” is accepted.

- There was a significant difference in general and in the dimensions of scientific aspects between the increased knowledge awareness and their specialization of the university students. the increased knowledge awareness of the specialist in Scientific Studies is higher than the specialist in Humanistic Studies in general and in scientific aspect. As a result of these.

“H₁₄. There is a statistically significant relationship between the responder’s specialization and the increase in knowledge awareness within the context of using Facebook” is accepted.

- As there was no significant difference in general and in the dimensions of social, political, economic sports, scientific, entertainment aspects between the increased knowledge awareness and language spoken of the university students.

“H₁₅. There is a statistically significant relationship between the languages spoken by the responders and increased knowledge awareness within the context of Facebook usage” is rejected.

- As there was no significant difference in general and in the dimensions of social, political, economic, sports, scientific, entertainment aspects between the increased knowledge awareness and the times allocated of the university students.

“Hypothesis 2: There is a statistically significant relationship between the time allocated by the responders and increased knowledge awareness within the context of Facebook usage” is rejected.

- There was only a significant difference in the dimension of social aspects between the increased knowledge awareness of the university students and their confidence in the content of social media. The increased knowledge awareness of the students who always confident with in the content of social media is higher than who sometimes confident with in the content of social media. But as there was no significant difference in general between the increased knowledge awareness of the university students and their confidence in the content of social media.

“Hypothesis 3: There is a statistically significant relationship between the researchers' confidence in the content of Facebook and the increase in cognitive awareness within the context of using Facebook.” Is rejected.

- As there was no significant difference in general and in the dimensions of social, political, economic sports, scientific, entertainment aspects between the increased knowledge awareness of the university students and their type of the content used.

“Hypothesis 4: There is a statistically significant relationship between the type of content used by the responders on Facebook and the increase in knowledge awareness within the context of using Facebook.” is rejected.

The sample of this research is limited to 400 students at Kirkuk University. By increasing the sample size across Kirkuk and Iraq, the research can yield more generalizable results. The university student sample can also be applied to high school students. As the use of mobile devices and the internet becomes increasingly widespread, and even primary school children are utilizing these tools, it is crucial to apply the research to additional subgroups. The study reveals that nearly all participating students are engaged in the use of social media and digital applications. The research, in terms of

its subject matter, did not identify the participants' dependencies. It is well-known in the literature that social media addictions have been extensively studied. Almost all types of addictions are confronted with negative life experiences. Therefore, studies that address both addiction and personal development can be conducted.

Developing applications that individuals using social media and new media can actively benefit from to enhance their personal development, emphasizing educational applications, safeguarding against harmful practices, conducting activities to increase education, health, and financial literacy levels, and engaging in academic activities are recommended for education administrators.

DISCUSSION

Almost all of the students participating in the research use social media. The results of the research conducted by Salihoğlu, (2022) and Karakaya (2019) are similar to the results of this study. The use of social media has become one of the most important means of communication among young people.

In today's world where work and responsibilities are busy, the time spent on social media is thought to be important. The results of the research conducted by We Are Social (2022) point us that active internet users around the world spend at least 3 hours in the virtual world and real life and virtual life relationships are becoming increasingly complex. However, considering that many different social media tools have been developed especially for the personal development of young people in areas such as language development and socio-cognitive development. It is thought that more and more people will devote more time (Kara, 2013; Marklund, 2015).

In this study, it was showed that Kirkuk University students use social media to exchange information, access information, improve their skills, learn different professional perspectives, and follow innovations in both economics and economics and also it was seen they use it for both economic and political knowledge development and to meet their individual needs. A similar study was conducted by Barham Hasan Mustafa at Iraq Saladin University and similar results were revealed with our study.

Again, in the study conducted by Kök (2019), it was observed that the participants mostly used social media for communication, entertainment, following the current agenda and getting news. Although it seems to support individual development, some research on social media; It was stated that the fact that social networks contain distracting elements such as games and applications creates a disadvantage in terms of educational use (Uslu, 2015).

As a result of the research of Sarsar et al. (2015), it was found that the use of social media in the education and training process is efficient and necessary in terms of professional and personal development while Sarıdaş (2018) stated that online learning communities contribute to the professional development of individuals; and also showed us they received support to improve their knowledge and skills.

Some studies have shown that participants also think that the information obtained from social media dulls thinking and creativity. Kalkan (2021) stated that unconscious media and technology use harms some cognitive processes. Skills such as listening, understanding, memory and reasoning are some of these. In Günaydın (2017)'s study, participants stated that social media could be beneficial or harmful depending on their purpose of use. The study results are similar to these studies. It was revealed that the participants in the Kirkuk University sample use social media more effectively in parallel with their increased cognitive awareness about social media use, and this situation leads to contributing to their individual development.

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SUMMARY

In today's world, new media and social media, which are extensively used mass communication tools, have brought about significant changes in both individual and societal communication. While social media contributes to personal development, its excessive use can lead to various addictions and psychological problems. It is crucial for the youth, seen as the heirs of the future and raised within the framework of universal education, to grow up exposed to the beneficial effects of social media. Otherwise, the negative impacts may affect hopes for the future due to this trend. This study, conducted on a sample from Kerkuk University in Iraq, aims to determine the social media usage status of university students and whether social media supports the personal development of young people. The research, which is descriptive, used a survey (online) as the data collection technique and employed the survey method and comparative model as part of the quantitative research design. The study involved 400 university students, and a convenience sampling method was chosen for the sample selection. The survey conducted as part of the research consists of sections covering students' demographic characteristics (5 items), teachers' social media usage (9 items), and the "Information Development Scale" measuring students' social media (Facebook) knowledge awareness. The "Information Development Scale" consists of sections titled Social Aspects (6 items), Political Aspects (5 items), Economic Aspects (5 items), Sports Aspects (5 items), Scientific Aspects (6 items), and the Entertainment Dimension and Chat. Based on the data obtained from the research, it was found that 99.5% of the participants use social media, and a significant portion of them uses social media for more than 4 hours. Furthermore, the research results indicate that students use social media for scientific, economic, social, and political purposes. It was observed that students mostly prefer TikTok and Snapchat applications as social media tools and predominantly utilize mobile devices while using these platforms.

Key Words: Social media, addiction, psychological problem, knowledge development scale

ÖZET

Günümüzde yoğunlukla kullanılan kitle iletişim araçlarından biri olarak yeni medya ve sosyal medya hem bireysel iletişim hem de toplumsal iletişim açısından önemli bazı değişimlere sebep olmuştur. Sosyal medyanın kişisel gelişime katkısı olduğu kadar aşırı kullanımı sebebiyle çeşitli bağımlılık ve psikolojik sorunları beraberinde getirmektedir. Geleceğin mirasçıları olarak görülen ve üniversal bir eğitim çerçevesinde yetiştirilen gençliğin sosyal medyanın yararlı etkilerine maruz kalarak yetişmesi son derece önemlidir. Aksi takdirde olumsuz etkileri sebebiyle geleceğe ilişkin umutlarda bu gidişattan etkilenecektir. Irak'ta Kerkük Üniversitesi örnekleminde ele alınan bu çalışma üniversite öğrencilerinin sosyal medya kullanım durumları ve sosyal medyanın gençlerin kişisel gelişimlerine destek olup olmadığının belirlenmesi amacıyla gerçekleştirilen bu çalışma 400 üniversite öğrencisinin katılımıyla gerçekleştirilmiştir. Betimsel bir araştırma olan bu araştırma tasarımı nicel araştırma yöntemlerinden tarama yöntemi ve karşılaştırma modelini kullanmıştır. Veri toplama tekniği olarak anket (çevrimiçi) kullanılmış olup, araştırmanın örneklemini kolayda örnekleme yöntemi tercih edilmiştir. Araştırma kapsamında uygulanan anket, öğrencilerin demografik özelliklerini kapsayan bölüm (5 madde), öğretmenlerin sosyal medya kullanımını kapsayan bölüm (9 madde) ve " Öğrencilerin sosyal medya (Facebook) bilgi farkındalıklarını ölçen "Bilgi Geliştirme Ölçeği" ölçeği. "Bilgi Geliştirme Ölçeği" ölçeği Sosyal Yönler (6 madde), Siyasi Yönler (5 madde), Ekonomik Yönler (5 madde), Spor Yönleri (5 madde), Bilimsel Yönler (6 madde) ve Eğlence Boyutu ve sohbet başlıklı bölümlerden oluşmaktadır. Araştırma sonucunda elde edilen verilerden hareketle; katılımcıların %99,5'inin sosyal medya kullandığı ve önemli bölümünün 4 saatten fazla sosyal medya kullandığı tespit edilmiştir. Yine araştırma sonuçlarından hareketle öğrencilerin, bilimsel, ekonomik, sosyal ve politik amaçlarla sosyal medya kullandığı tespit edilmiş olup öğrencilerin en fazla TikTok ve Snapchat uygulamalarını tercih ettiği sosyal medya araçlarını kullanırken çoğunlukla mobil araçlardan yararlandığı tespit edilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sosyal medya, bağımlılık, psikolojik sorun, bilgi geliştirme ölçeği