

Social Media Usage Behaviors of Individuals: An Application in Eskişehir

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Abstract

Web 2.0 transformation, which represents a new era in Internet applications, provided an interactive platform more than ever before with its opportunity to enable create and share content by users and has changed the user's role as an active participant instead of passive audience of the contents. Social media, that gains a huge popularity in consequence of Web 2.0 transformation, gradually reaches users everyday and stands out as a highly effective communication platform. In this study, social media usage behaviors of individuals were studied in the case of the province of Eskişehir. Data were collected through a questionnaire conducted with 401 persons and both descriptive and inferential statistics were used for the analysis.

Keywords: Web 2.0, Social Media, User Generated Content

1. Introduction

The most important development which is taking place in new media in recent years is the move to the new generation web or Web 2.0 applications from Web 1.0 applications. With this development, Internet applications have started to gain a new dimension and have moved to an interactive platform than ever before.

Generating content, copying, sharing, editing and reproducing information are common practices in the Web 2.0 domain. Such practices lead to democratization of technology, information and knowledge and facilitate the active participation of the user as contributor, reviewer and reporter (Constantinides, 2009: 10-11). The most important characteristics of Web 2.0 can be summarized as user-generated content, users' control over the data, the ability to tap into the collective intelligence of users, unique communication and collaborative environment, unique sharing of content, a major emphasis on social networks and to facilitate connections, ease of use, an architecture of participation and digital democracy encourages users to add value to the application and to create new business models (Lai & Turban, 2008: 388-389). On the other hand, another concept that has gained a huge popularity in consequence of Web 2.0 transformation is social media. Therefore, a better understanding of the nature of Web 2.0 and social media, to develop a deeper understanding of social media and its users come into prominence as social media has become one of today's most commonly used communication channel.

In this study, a part of the findings are given from our PhD dissertation (Koçak, 2012) that explores the general patterns of social media usage of the individuals and their basic motivations in the case of the city of Eskişehir.

2. Literature Review

The phenomenon Web 2.0 is a result of several factors such as; the improvement and the development of the Internet over the last decade, the access of one billion people around the globe to the Internet and the software sectors' attempt to build a new positive perception to the concept (Levy, 2009: 121). Many of the first genuine Web 2.0 sites began emerging in late 2003 and early 2004. (Cormode & Krishnamuthy, 2008: 6).

The term Web 2.0 has been introduced by O'Reilly and MediaLive International in 2005 (O'Reilly, 2005). Web 2.0 is mostly used to emphasize the different aspects as technology, attitudes and philosophy of emerging communities than earlier forms of online communities. Web 2.0 is defined as "the philosophy of mutually maximizing collective intelligence and added value for each participant by formalized and dynamic information sharing and creation." (Hoegget.al., 2006: 13).

Web 2.0 differs from Web 1.0 the former being consumer-centric, providing user-generated content, being interactive and dynamic, promoting community participation and collective intelligence. Especially interaction, consumer participation and sociability are the crucial elements of Web 2.0 (Singh et.al., 2008: 282). The most important difference between Web 1.0 and Web 2.0 is that content creators were few in Web 1.0 and the vast majority of users simply acting as consumers of content. On the other hand, in Web 2.0 any user can be a participant by creating content and numerous technological aids have been created to maximize the potential for content creation (Cormode&Krishnamuthy, 2008: 1-2). The term User-Generated Content (UGC) is used to emphasize this special attribute of Web 2.0 (Constantinides, 2009:10). In all categories of Web 2.0 applications, the user is the most basic element not only as a consumer but also as a contributor of the content and the concept of user-generated content is often used to underline this feature (Constantinides& Fountain, 2008: 233).

Web 2.0 brings individuals to the center of a creation process that enable them to produce their own content and share those contents with the communities they choose. Low-cost of Internet access made available of the diffusion of those creative contents to larger audiences. User-generated content may appear in various ways from users' thoughts and comments on various issues to users' sharing of photos, music and video. In this manner, user-generated content transforms the processes of production and distribution of cultural products (Koren, 2010: 2).

2.1. Social Media

Web 2.0 technologies enable the emergence of social media. Social media refers to the online platforms that people use to share opinions and experiences including photos, videos, music, insights and perceptions with each other (Lai & Turban, 2008: 389). Kaplan & Haenlein (2010: 61) define social media as a group of application which is based on ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0 that allows the creation and exchange of user-generated content.

The social media may be defined as a sort of web service that collects majority of contents from users or other web sites. It is based on social networks and creativity of users of one or multiple communities. In social media, anyone can become a content producer, but the majority of people consider themselves as participants in a community rather than the producers. The content in social media has its own audience as well as in traditional media, but the main difference is that users enjoy sharing self-produced or copied content. The contents can be created entirely by the users themselves or can be copied from other sites (Lietsala&Sirkkunen, 2008: 13-19).

Social media provides the democratization of content and changes the roles of people in the process of reading and dissemination of information. Social media transforms broadcast mechanism into many-to-many model by providing a format based on dialogues established in the social channels of writers and peers. Today, individuals have a chance to publish their own thoughts and perspectives on a global scale by using social media (Solis & Breakenridge, 2009: xvii).

2.2. Social Media Platforms

Social media is gradually becoming widespread with its new application areas. Social media platforms can be categorized as "social networking sites", "blogs", "microblogs", "content sharing sites", "social bookmarking sites", "wikis", "podcasts" and "forums" (Kennedy et.al., 2007; Constantinides& Fountain, 2008; Mayfield, 2008; Bell, 2009; Constantinides, 2009; Levy, 2009; Richardson, 2009; George & Scerri, 2007).

Social networking sites are online communication systems that allow users to build personal websites accessible to other users for exchange of personal content and communication. Social networks play an important role in the distribution of information and word-of mouth and allow users to communicate and interact (Constantinides, 2009: 9). Sites such as Facebook and MySpace are the best known examples of social network sites. Today, Facebook, which is the world's most popular social networking site, has 845 million active users as of 2012 (Facebook, 2012).

Blogs are known as online diaries and the term *blog* is the abbreviation of “Weblog” which is the unification of two separate words “web” and “log” (Bell, 2009: 75; Constantinides, 2009: 9; Levy, 2009: 124). In its broadest sense, a *weblog* is a website that allows author/s to make instant broadcast to the Internet. Also, *blogs* can be created and updated easily.

Microblogs can be considered as social networking combined with bite-sized blogging, where small amounts of content are distributed online and through the mobile phone network. Twitter is the best known and the most popular example of *microblogs* (Mayfield, 2008: 6).

Content sharing sites are the websites that make possible to store and share multimedia content. These websites allow people to create and share various contents such as video, music, photograph and so on (Anderson, 2007: 10). Websites like Youtube or Flickr are the examples of content sharing sites. .

Wikis are the combination of a website and a Word document. Wikis are the applications that allow people to work on the content in collaboration just by using a standard web browser and without requiring any privilege for access. Thanks to the ease of use, wikis make possible to create or edit the content without the need for any special technical knowledge or tool (Bell, 2009: 143-144). Today, the best known wiki type is “Wikipedia”. On the other hand, the success of Wikipedia and wiki technology has sprouted a series of similar sites such as Wikibooks, Wikitravel and so on (Tétard et al., 2009: 1).

Social bookmarking sites are applications that allow users to label websites easily based on their interests by using keywords. Other users can access these lists through labeling and keywords (Boulos & Wheeler, 2007: 7-8). Websites such as StumbleUpon, del.icio.us, CiteUlike are the examples of social bookmarking.

Podcasts are audio or video files that can be accessed via the Internet. Podcasts are often stored in MP3 formats which provide users with access to sound files or music recordings on demand. The term *podcast* is a blend of “iPod” and “broadcast”. Podcasts are played on computers or digital audio players. Podcasts make easy for people to save and load their own programs and provide subscription to these programs for other users (Bell, 2009: 96).

Forums are interactive online environments that allow users to share experiences, ideas and information on particular issues (Bickart & Schindler, 2001: 33). By using forums, people can exchange information usually by sending messages that have titled related the topics (Pitta & Fowler, 2005: 266).

3. Methodology

Eskişehir is taken as the application universe in terms of this study¹. A sample of 401 people was chosen by using the method of stratified sampling, who represent the city of Eskişehir in terms of gender, age and education level. The data on demographic features, the frequency of social media use and behaviors of social media use of the sample group were collected by using a questionnaire. After the application of the questionnaire, the data were analyzed with SPSS 20.0 (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences 20.0).

For the question concerning the frequency of the social media use that have eleven sub-statements, the Cronbach alpha coefficient was set to; $\alpha=,890$. For the question about the social media usage behaviours that have 20 sub-statements, the Cronbach alpha coefficient was set to; $\alpha=,914$. The frequencies and the percentages about the gender, age and education level of the sampling is given in the Table 1.

¹Eskişehir is a slightly big city in north western Turkey (Population approx.: 700.000), situated in the middle of Istanbul and Ankara, about 330 km east of the former and 233 km west of the latter. Commonly known as a university town, the city has a considerable high level of education and income among other cities in Turkey.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of the Sample

DEMOGRAPHICS		f	%
Gender	Female	203	50,6
	Male	198	49,4
Total		401	100,0
Age	15-24	89	22,2
	25-34	89	22,2
	35-44	80	20,0
	45-54	73	18,2
	55-69	70	17,5
	Total		401
Education	Primary education	118	29,4
	High school graduate	110	27,4
	Higher	91	22,7
	Post-graduate (Masters/PhD)	82	20,5
	Total		401

3.1. The Frequencies of the Uses of Diverse Social Media Platforms

The participants were asked to mark one of the following choices for each social media platform, which they thought it fit concerning the frequency of their use of social media platforms: “(5) always, (4) frequently, (3) seldom, (4) rarely, (1) never, (0) no idea”. The numbers of people that marked each frequency and their calculation in percentage is given in Table 2.

Table2: The Frequencies of the Uses of Diverse Social Media Platforms (n=401)

SOCIAL MEDIA	Always		Frequently		Seldom		Rarely		Never		No idea	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Social networking sites	162	40,4	116	28,9	81	20,2	34	8,5	8	2,0	0	0,0
Professional networking sites	10	2,5	37	9,2	50	12,5	39	9,7	70	17,5	195	48,6
Video sharing sites	62	15,5	96	23,9	115	28,7	62	15,5	42	10,5	24	6,0
Photograph sharing sites	13	3,2	27	6,7	54	13,5	70	17,5	95	23,7	142	35,4
Music sharing sites	24	6,0	46	11,5	58	14,5	61	15,2	70	17,5	142	35,4
Microblogs	28	7,0	37	9,2	61	15,2	56	14,0	131	32,7	88	21,9
Blogs	12	3,0	24	6,0	78	19,5	85	21,2	96	23,9	106	26,4
Wikis	19	4,7	71	17,7	83	20,7	53	13,2	56	14,0	119	29,7
Social Bookmarking	3	0,7	4	1,0	26	6,5	31	7,7	79	19,7	258	64,3
Podcast	6	1,5	15	3,7	34	8,5	42	10,5	93	23,2	211	52,6
Forums	13	3,2	30	7,5	76	19,0	91	22,7	86	21,4	105	26,2

The Table 2 shows that; the 40,4% of the participants “always”, the 28,9% of them “frequently”, 20,2% “seldom” and 8,5% of them “rarely” use social networking sites. The percentage of those who “never” uses the social networking sites is 2%. Therefore, it may be said that social networking sites are very common and it is the most frequently used social media platform. Second most common sort of social media platform after the social networking sites is that of the video sharing sites. Concerning this, the 15,5% of the participants said they “always” used them. The 23,9% used the video sharing sites “frequently” whereas the 28,7% “seldom”. Among all categories the percentages of the social bookmarking sites are the lowest (always: 0,7%; frequently: 1,0%; seldom: 6,5%; rarely: 7,7%). Therefore it may be safely said that the social bookmarking sites are the least favorite sites of all. When compared to other social media platforms, all of the participants proved to be aware of the social network sites. On the contrary, not all the participants know the other sorts of social media platforms. Among these, the least known social media platform is the social bookmarking sites. More than half of the participants have no idea about the social bookmarking sites, this is followed by the podcast(52,6%) and professional networking sites(48,6%).

3.1.1. The differentiation of the frequencies of the use of social media platforms according to the demographic features (Gender, Age, Education).

In order to determine whether there is a statistically significant difference according to the *gender* for the frequencies of the use of social media platforms, t-test analysis was applied. The results of t-test analysis have shown that the significant difference according to the gender has appeared only for the social bookmarking sites. The results of t-test analysis are given in Table 3.

Table 3: The Differentiation of the Frequencies of the Use of Social Media Platforms According to the Demographic Features (Gender, Age, Education).

Social Media	Gender	n	\bar{X}	Sd	t	p
Social networking sites	Female	203	4,07	1,010	1,942	,053
	Male	198	3,87	1,105		
Professional networking sites	Female	101	2,49	1,205	,866	,387
	Male	105	2,33	1,306		
Video sharing sites	Female	190	3,17	1,211	-,362	,717
	Male	187	3,22	1,231		
Photograph sharing sites	Female	127	2,20	1,182	-,052	,959
	Male	132	2,20	1,196		
Music sharing sites	Female	125	2,66	1,338	,919	,359
	Male	134	2,51	1,273		
Microblogs	Female	149	2,21	1,318	-,830	,407
	Male	164	2,34	1,377		
Social Bookmarking	Female	64	1,52	,797	-2,581	,011*
	Male	79	1,94	1,090		
Forums	Female	146	2,24	1,052	-,921	,358
	Male	150	2,36	1,189		
Blogs	Female	146	2,15	1,085	-1,118	,265
	Male	149	2,30	1,136		
Wikis	Female	140	2,79	1,220	-,118	,907
	Male	142	2,81	1,208		
Podcasts	Female	89	1,96	1,076	,148	,882
	Male	101	1,93	1,177		

*p<,05

Table 3 shows that there is a significant difference (p=,011) between the gender and the frequency of the use of social bookmarking sites and the mean of male ($\bar{X} = 1,94$) is higher than the mean of female ($\bar{X} = 1,52$). It may thus be said that men tend to use the social bookmarking sites more frequently than women. No significant difference is observed as regards the other social media platforms in terms of gender.

In order to determine whether there is a statistically significant difference according to the *age*, one-way ANOVA analysis is applied. Relevant results are shown in Table 4.

Table 4: The State of Frequency of the Use of the Social Media Platforms According to the Age

Social Media	Age	n	\bar{X}	Sd	F	p
Social networking sites	15-24	89	4,33	,850	4,549	,001*
	25-34	89	3,96	1,196		
	35-44	80	4,03	1,043		
	45-54	73	3,78	,961		
	55-69	70	3,69	1,136		
	Total	401	3,97	1,061		
Professional networking sites	15-24	47	2,30	1,140	2,637	,035*
	25-34	55	2,53	1,260		
	35-44	48	2,06	1,156		
	45-54	38	2,47	1,179		
	55-69	18	3,11	1,676		
	Total	206	2,41	1,257		
Video sharing sites	15-24	85	3,81	,994	15,679	,000*
	25-34	86	3,38	1,150		
	35-44	75	3,27	1,166		
	45-54	68	2,79	1,204		
	55-69	63	2,46	1,175		
	Total	377	3,20	1,220		
Photograph sharing sites	15-24	71	2,51	1,361	4,085	,003*
	25-34	63	2,33	1,150		
	35-44	54	1,94	1,106		
	45-54	38	2,26	1,107		
	55-69	33	1,64	,783		
	Total	259	2,20	1,187		
Music sharing sites	15-24	72	3,06	1,403	4,414	,002*
	25-34	67	2,64	1,411		
	35-44	53	2,36	1,162		
	45-54	40	2,25	1,006		
	55-69	27	2,15	1,064		
	Total	259	2,59	1,304		
Microblogs	15-24	77	2,75	1,443	7,811	,000*
	25-34	71	2,56	1,317		
	35-44	58	2,17	1,353		
	45-54	53	2,04	1,344		
	55-69	54	1,59	,836		
	Total	313	2,28	1,348		
Social bookmarking sites	15-24	42	1,86	1,026	3,727	,007*
	25-34	36	2,17	1,108		
	35-44	32	1,34	,653		
	45-54	20	1,60	1,046		
	55-69	13	1,46	,660		
	Total	143	1,75	,989		
Forums	15-24	79	2,66	1,208	6,949	,000*
	25-34	65	2,37	1,140		
	35-44	59	2,42	1,148		
	45-54	51	2,06	,904		
	55-69	42	1,64	,791		
	Total	296	2,30	1,123		
Blogs	15-24	79	2,59	1,225	6,356	,000*
	25-34	64	2,31	1,125		
	35-44	58	2,26	1,052		
	45-54	51	2,00	1,959		
	55-69	43	1,63	1,817		
	Total	295	2,22	1,112		
Wikis	15-24	83	3,25	1,057	6,089	,000*
	25-34	67	2,90	1,233		
	35-44	53	2,51	1,234		
	45-54	41	2,56	1,141		
	55-69	38	2,32	1,233		
	Total	282	2,80	1,212		
Podcasts	15-24	59	2,19	1,210	2,643	,035*
	25-34	48	2,13	1,231		
	35-44	40	1,65	,893		
	45-54	21	1,86	1,108		
	55-69	22	1,50	,859		
	Total	190	1,94	1,128		

*p<,05

As seen on Table 4, the results of ANOVA analysis lead to a significant difference ($p < .05$) between the frequency of use of all the social media platforms and the age groups. In order to explore the differences in detail, Post-Hoc (Tukey HSD) test was applied. According to this, the age group of 15-24 proved to be different from the age groups of 45-54 ($p = .009$) and 55-69 ($p = .001$). The mean of the 15-24 age group is ($\bar{X} = 4.33$) higher than the means of other age groups.

When the frequency of the use of professional networking sites were considered, we found that there was a significant difference between the age group of 35-44 and 55-69 ($p = .021$). The mean of 55-69 ($\bar{X} = 3.11$) is higher than that of the age group of 35-44 ($\bar{X} = 2.06$).

As regards the video sharing sites, there was a significant difference of the age group of 15-24 from the groups of 35-44 ($p = .022$), 45-54 ($p = .000$) and 55-69 ($p = .000$). The mean of 15-24 age group was ($\bar{X} = 3.81$), the highest mean of all other age groups. In the same context, there was a further significant difference of 25-34 age-group from the age groups of 45-54 ($p = .013$) and 55-69 ($p = .000$). The mean of the 25-34 group was ($\bar{X} = 3.38$), which was higher than the older age groups. There is also significant difference of the frequency of the use by the age groups of 35-44 from the age groups 55-69 ($p = .000$), where the mean of the former was higher ($\bar{X} = 3.27$) than the latter ($\bar{X} = 2.46$).

Similar patterns of frequency of the use according to the age group was observed in the following social media platforms: photograph sharing sites, music sharing sites, microblogs, social bookmarking sites, forums, blogs, wikis and podcasts. In all of these cases the younger the people the more frequent they tend to use the social media platforms and the significant differences have occurred generally between the younger and the older age group.

In order to determine whether there is a statistically significant difference according to the *level of education*, one-way ANOVA analysis is applied. The results are shown in Table 5.

Table 5: The State of Frequency of the Use of the Social Media Platforms According to the Age

Social Media	Educational Level	n	\bar{X}	Sd	F	p
Social networking sites	Primary education	118	3,93	1,107	,962	,410
	High school graduate	110	4,05	,952		
	Higher Education (Polytechnics/Faculty)	91	4,07	1,041		
	Post-graduate degree	82	3,83	1,153		
	Total	401	3,97	1,061		
Professional networking sites	Primary education	30	1,63	1,066	5,101	,002*
	High school graduate	49	2,53	1,260		
	Higher Education (Polytechnics/Faculty)	54	2,41	1,221		
	Post-graduate degree	73	2,64	1,251		
	Total	206	2,41	1,257		
Video sharing sites	Primary education	104	2,99	1,235	1,586	,192
	High school graduate	104	3,23	1,240		
	Higher Education (Polytechnics/Faculty)	90	3,24	1,174		
	Post-graduate degree	79	3,37	1,211		
	Total	377	3,20	1,220		
Photographsharing sites	Primary education	58	1,97	1,199	1,520	,210
	High school graduate	67	2,42	1,361		
	Higher Education (Polytechnics/Faculty)	64	2,20	1,115		
	Post-graduate degree	70	2,19	1,040		
	Total	259	2,20	1,187		
Music sharing sites	Primary education	61	2,79	1,331	1,267	,286
	High school graduate	66	2,70	1,414		
	Higher Education (Polytechnics/Faculty)	63	2,49	1,203		
	Post-graduate degree	69	2,39	1,251		
	Total	259	2,59	1,304		
Microblogs	Primary education	81	2,07	1,212	,973	,406
	High school graduate	77	2,36	1,441		
	Higher Education (Polytechnics/Faculty)	80	2,29	1,425		
	Post-graduate degree	75	2,41	1,306		
	Total	313	2,28	1,348		
Social Bookmarking	Primary education	26	1,77	1,107	,206	,892
	High school graduate	28	1,82	,945		
	Higher Education (Polytechnics/Faculty)	35	1,80	1,052		
	Post-graduate degree	54	1,67	,932		
	Total	143	1,75	,989		
Forums	Primary education	69	2,01	1,050	3,299	,021*
	High school graduate	75	2,23	1,158		
	Higher Education (Polytechnics/Faculty)	74	2,35	1,128		
	Post-graduate degree	78	2,58	1,099		
	Total	296	2,30	1,123		
Blogs	Primary education	67	1,97	1,114	1,747	,158
	High school graduate	76	2,38	1,127		
	Higher Education (Polytechnics/Faculty)	76	2,24	1,118		
	Post-graduate degree	76	2,38	1,070		
	Total	295	2,22	1,112		
Wikis	Primary education	62	2,60	1,348	4,161	,007*
	High school graduate	75	2,68	1,187		
	Higher Education (Polytechnics/Faculty)	68	2,66	1,114		
	Post-graduate degree	77	3,21	1,128		
	Total	282	2,80	1,212		
Podcasts	Primary education	35	1,97	1,382	,741	,529
	High school graduate	46	1,80	1,128		
	Higher Education (Polytechnics/Faculty)	43	1,84	1,022		
	Post-graduate degree	66	2,09	1,048		
	Total	190	1,94	1,128		

*p<,05

As seen on Table 5, the results of ANOVA analysis lead to significant differences only as regards professional networking sites ($p=,002$), forums ($p=,021$) and wikis ($p=,007$) according to the level of education. No significant differences appear between level of education and frequency of use of the other social media platforms.

In order to explore the differences in detail, Post-Hoc (Tukey HSD) test was applied. According to this, as regards the professional networking sites, there was a significant difference ($p<,05$) between the participants who have primary education degree and the participants from other levels of education. The means of high school graduates ($\bar{X}=2,53$), higher education graduates ($\bar{X}=2,41$) and post-graduates ($\bar{X}=2,64$) are higher than the mean of primary education graduates ($\bar{X}=1,63$). It may thus be said that when comparing primary school education graduates, participants from all other levels of education tend to use professional networking sites more frequently than participants who have primary school education degree.

When the frequency of the use of forums were considered, we found that there was a significant difference ($p=,013$) between the participants who have post-graduate degree and the participants who have primary education degree. The mean of post-graduates ($\bar{X}=2,58$) is higher than the mean of primary education ($\bar{X}=2,01$). So, it may be said that participants who have post-graduate degree tend to use forums more frequently than participants who have primary school degree.

When the frequency of the use of wikis were considered, we found that there was a there was a significant difference ($p<,05$) between the participants who have post-graduate degree and and the participants from other levels of education. The mean of post-graduates ($\bar{X}=3,21$) is higher than the means of all other levels of education. It may thus be said that participants who have post-graduate degree tend to use wikis more frequently than participants from other levels of education.

3.2. Social Media Usage Behaviors

In social media, individuals can display various behaviors such as watching videos, listen to music, photo sharing, reading, writing comments or sharing their own produced contents. In this study, the participants were asked to mark one of the following choices for the statements about social media usage behaviors: “(5) always, (4) frequently, (3) seldom, (2) rarely, (1) never”. The means and standard deviations for the statements are given in Table 6.

Table 6: Means and Standard Deviations for the Statements Related to Social Media Usage Behaviors

Social Media Usage Behaviors	\bar{X}	Sd.
I look at the photos	3,60	1,059
I listen to music	3,44	1,203
I watch video	3,37	1,100
I read writings on the subjects in which I am interested	3,36	1,245
I follow the webpages of the people in whom I am interested	3,18	1,186
I share the music that I like	2,99	1,269
I share the video that I like	2,92	1,191
I make chat(online conversation)	2,89	1,344
I share the photos that I like	2,88	1,176
I share my own photos	2,87	1,182
I write comments on the content (video, music, photograph, comment, text etc.)	2,84	1,233
I follow the webpages of the activities	2,65	1,248
I become a member of the groups that I like	2,63	1,293
I share my own views and writings	2,59	1,242
I participate in the discussions that attract my attention	2,31	1,191
I regularly update my personal/professional info	2,17	1,203
I give information about my status/mood/location	1,99	1,222
I use the game applications in the social media	1,94	1,219
I share the video that I produce	1,80	1,062
I share the music that I produce	1,30	,781

As seen on Table 6, the highest mean ($\bar{X}=3,60$) belongs to the statement of “*I look at the photos*”. The second highest mean ($\bar{X}=3,44$) belongs to the statement of “*I listen to music*” and the third highest mean ($\bar{X}=3,37$) belongs to the statement of “*I watch video*”. So, it may thus be said that the most frequent behaviors that the individuals tend to display are looking at the photos, listening to music and watching videos. These are followed by the statements of “*I read writings on the subjects in which I am interested*” ($\bar{X}=3,36$) and “*I follow the webpages of the people in whom I am interested*” ($\bar{X}=3,18$). On the other hand, the lowest mean ($\bar{X}=1,30$) belongs to the statement of “*I share the music that I produce*” and the second lowest mean belongs to the statement of “*I share the video that I produce*” ($\bar{X}=1,80$).

In this context, the participants’ tendencies may be listed from the most common to the least as follows: 1. Consuming the content (watch/listen/read) 2. Participation to the content (Writing comments on the contents or sharing the contents) 3. Production of the content.

4. Conclusion

At the end of this research we have revealed that all of the participants know about the social networking sites. Yet many participants appeared to be non-aware of other social media platforms. Besides, one may discern the social networking sites, as the most-used social media platform. This result shows that the perception of the individuals about the social media platforms is limited to the social network sites. The research outcomes show, on the one hand, the extent of the impact and influence of the social networking sites and; that there is not adequate and sufficient knowledge as regards the variety of social media platforms on the other. This situation may be related to the variety of the aims of the use of social media platforms. The difference between the levels of individuals’ awareness of the social network sites from those of the other social media platforms may be explained by the fact that the former offer platforms to the individuals for an easier communication and interaction, whereas the use of the latter is limited to more limited and specific purposes.

This research shows that gender is not a prominent variable, whereas the age is decisive as regards the frequency of the use of the social media platforms. It is also shown in this context that the age-group that spends the longest time for the social media platform is the one between 15-24 years. This group is followed by the 25-34 years age-group. Significant differences with these age groups may be observed in the individuals having 45 and more years of age. This outcome reminds us of the concepts of digital natives and digital immigrants. We may define the digital natives as the persons born after 1980 having sound skills and possibilities to reach the digital technology. The digital natives refer to the individuals who spend most of their times using the digital technology, connect to each other in this way and also express themselves by digital means. The ways by which the digital natives reach and create knowledge are reformed by the ongoing development of the digital technology. By contrast, the digital immigrants are those who are alien to this technological environment and who tend to prefer the traditional communication ways and means (Palfrey & Gasser, 2008: 1-4). Indeed the digital natives constitute a generation comprising persons of 15-24 and 25-34 years of ages who may be said to be born and grown in an already constituted digital environment. These people do not see the social media as something bizarre or doubtful. Perceiving the social media as a natural part of their social life, the digital natives do not have any difficulty in adapting themselves to the new modes of communication. This leads them to have a rather intuitive and spontaneous relationship with the digital technology as compared to the old generation. (Buckingham & Willett 2006: 6). On the other hand for the digital immigrants, the social media may be somewhat a vague phenomenon, which may hardly replace the conventional old ways of face-to-face conversation. Therefore, it is quite comprehensible that the young people are more visible in the social media.

The digital immigrants being the hegemonic group of people in the social media, it is important to observe them, their needs, expectations and tendencies. On the other hand, it should also be reminded that the social media is an undeniable and influential communication tool which leads us to infer that every age group is related to it in some way or other. Thus, considering the digital immigrants tendencies to social media is also important for the state or private institutions and other social and economic actors that use the social media. When we observed the frequency of social media platform use in the context of the level of education, the significant differences only appeared for the professional networking sites, forums and wikis. According to the results, the post-graduate participants, holding master and doctoral degrees, tend to use the wikis more frequently as compared to the other groups of education levels.

This may be explained by referring to Wikipedia-the most commonly known example of wikis- which offers an online encyclopedia. Thus the participants in the group of high-level education showed a tendency to use the wikis which have a rather, informative and educative function. Symmetrically, the group of lowest-level education(i.e. primary school graduates) showed the tendency to the least use of professional network sites, as compared to the other participants. Regarding the frequency of using the forums, we may observe a significant difference between the post-graduate and primary school graduates. Here, the frequency to use the forums increases as the level of education becomes higher. To conclude the use of these three platforms; professional network sites, forums and wikis increases in parallel to the level of education. However, such a significant difference does not appear in other social media categories. This leads us to assume that education level does not have an impact on the frequency of the social media use in general.

When we look at the result of the behaviors of social media use, it may be said that the most common behaviors that the individuals tend to display are the ones that related with the consumption behavior. This is followed by participation and production behaviors.

Shao (2009:8-19) states that individuals can take part in social media in three main ways as “consumer”, “participant” or “producer”. The behaviors such as watching/reading/viewing contents are considered as “consume”; the behaviors which provide interaction with contents and other users such as writing comments, sharing or rating contents are considered as “participation” and the behaviors such as creating and broadcasting text/audio/video contents are considered as “produce”. Shao states that, these three different behaviors are connected and support each other.

At this point, one may ask the question as “to what extent an individual/actor’s online pattern of behavior -who writes his/her thoughts with a less timid attitude, shares photos, music, text etc., gradually spends more time to read others’ writings and response the others, in other words who socialize online in a more protected and anonymous environment- is consistent to his/her offline pattern of behavior?” Will online experiences affect offline experiences in a positive way in terms of active content producing and socializing? In this manner, for the future researches examining social media usage behaviors in terms of “consumption of the contents” “participation to the contents” and “production of the contents” in more detail, put forth the relationships between demographics and these behaviors and explore the underlying motivations for each pattern of behavior may contribute to the field.

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