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THE EFFECT OF TWITTER USAGE OF PUBLIC STAFF ON INSTITUTIONAL IMAGE: A STUDY IN PEOPLE WORKING AS AN ADMINISTRATOR IN YOUTH SERVICES AND SPORTS PROVINCIAL/DISTRICT DIRECTORATE

ABSTRACT

The aim of the research is to study the using social media of the people serving as manager in providences and districts organizations of Youth Services and Sport General Management. Main focuses are influence of their sharing to institution image and opinion of all employees of YSGM about restriction on social media usage. Participants are selected and also 209 participants of them became volunteer for this research. "The using of Twitter and scale of institution image" which is developed by Özel (2014) and "personal information form" which is developed by investigator are used for the research. In data analysis, socio-demographic characteristics was analyzed by using descriptive tests, one-way ANOVA test was used to find out the differences between educational status, working position, year of working, the time spent in social media in terms of the using Twitter effect on institutional image. Tukey HSD test was used to determine which group caused the differences. The significance level was accepted as $p < 0,05$. Consequently, No significant differences were found between educational status, working position, working year, and the time spent in social media of people working as an administrator in Youth services and sports provincial / district directorate.

Key Words: Twitter, Social Media, Corporate Image, Sports Manager

KAMU PERSONELİNİN TWITTER KULLANIMININ KURUMSAL İMAJA ETKİSİ: GENÇLİK HİZMETLERİ VE SPOR İL/İLÇE MÜDÜRLÜKLERİNDE YÖNETİCİ POZİSYONUNDA ÇALIŞAN BİREYLER ÜZERİNE BİR ÇALIŞMA

ÖZ

Araştırmanın amacı; Gençlik Hizmetleri ve Spor Genel Müdürlüğü il ve ilçe teşkilatlarında yönetici pozisyonunda çalışan bireylerin, çalışanların Twitter kullarımlarının, yaptıkları paylaşımların kurum imajına etkileri, çalışanların kurumu sosyal medyada temsili ve GHSİM çalışanlarının Twitter kullarımları ile ilgili kurum yaptırımlarına dair görüşlerinin araştırılmasıdır. Çalışmanın evrenini GSGM il ve ilçe teşkilatlarında yönetici olarak görev yapan bireyler oluşturmaktadır. Mevcut çalışmanın araştırma grubunu ise çalışmaya gönüllü olarak dahil olan 209 katılımcı oluşturmaktadır. Araştırmada veri toplama aracı olarak Özel (2014) tarafından geliştirilen "Çalışanların Twitter Kullanımının Kurumsal İmaja Etkisi Ölçeği" ve araştırmacı tarafından geliştirilen "Kişisel Bilgi Formu" kullanılmıştır. Elde edilen verilerin analizinde; katılımcıların sosyo-demografik özelliklerini belirlemek için frekans ve yüzde analizi, spor yöneticilerinin çalışanların Twitter kullarımlarının kurumsal imaja olan etkisi hakkındaki düşüncelerini öğrenmek amacıyla cinsiyetler arasındaki farklılığın tespiti için t-testi ve eğitim durumu, görev yaptığı pozisyon, kurumda çalışma süresi, sosyal medyada geçirdiği süre değişkenleri arasındaki farklılığı belirlemek için tekyönlü varyans analizi (ANOVA) uygulanmıştır. Tek yönlü varyans analizi (ANOVA) sonucunda ortaya çıkan istatistiksel farkın hangi gruplardan kaynaklandığını belirlemek amacıyla Tukey HSD çoklu karşılaştırma testi uygulanmıştır. Verilerin istatistiksel analizinde ve yorumlarda, $p < 0,05$ anlamlılık düzeyi dikkate alınmıştır. Araştırma sonucunda; GSGM il ve ilçe teşkilatlarında yönetici olarak çalışan bireylerin, cinsiyet, eğitim durumu, görev yapılan pozisyon, kurumda çalışma süresi ve sosyal medyada günlük harcanan zaman değişkenleri açısından istatistiksel olarak anlamlı bir fark tespit edilmemiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Twitter, Sosyal Medya, Kurumsal İmaj, Spor Yöneticisi

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INTRODUCTION

The success and influences of agents and institutions in society depend on whether they work in harmony with the individuals working inside the institution itself, and whether they project a good image (Uğur and Uğur, 2015). Thus, image management is of crucial importance for both agents and institutions not only in terms of daily life but also for the individuals working together in management (Özer, 2013).

Image is defined as “the impression and effect of an entity in a human’s mind” (Gemlik and Sığır, 2007). Another definition of image refers to “...the understanding and value of an agent or institution on another agent’s or institution’s mind which are left intentionally or unintentionally” (Gümüş, 1997). Corporate image is perception and it can be defined as “all emotional and rational thoughts and perceptions of an institution on its target group,” (Ivy, 2001; Kazaules et al., 2001).

Employees comprise one of the most important elements of the impressions institutions leave on its target group (Özel, 2014). The researches in the literature reveal that individuals are of profound influence on corporate image through corporate communication, corporate appearance and behavior (Peltekoğlu, 212). The transfer of an image from within an institution to the public is a significant leap, thus the communication channels within an institution should be managed thoroughly (Küçük, 2005). In this sense, if there would be established a healthy communication with employees and they internalized the corporate image, these people who in fact comprise an important component of the institution would be a representative of the institution externally (Koçel, 2011).

Organizations run by legal entities or individuals are known by their image and are either appreciated or not appreciated

by the public. A positive or negative image ensures societal approval, in other words it brings acceptance or rejection by society (Ural, 2009). Today, information circulates fast and preferences change quickly, rivalry becomes difficult. In such an environment, any negative or positive information about an executive can reach the public easily, which directly affects the corporate image (Uğur and Uğur, 2015).

Social Media (Twitter) and Corporate Image

Fast changes in internet technology has also accelerated the appearance of sub applications related to technology. Social media is one of these internet-based innovations (Aydın, 2016). In a review of the studies concerning social media, the researchers agree that social media is a change coming with Web 2.0 (Miguens, Baggio and Costa, 2008; Xiang and Gratzel, 2009; Vural and Bat, 2010; Küçükaltan and Kılıçaslan, 2013, Göksel and Serarslan, 2016). Web 2.0 also includes second generation web based tools and services, as well as online platforms used by the masses (Vural and Bat, 2010).

Social media is defined as: online human communities sharing their interests and activities with each other (Miguens, Baggio and Costa, 2008); as websites which are constituted with the cooperation and participation of individual users, and which include updated content (Aymankuy, Soydaş and Saçlı, 2013); or social platforms which enable users to share their knowledge, experience and interests through the internet or mobile systems (Ersöz and Doğdubay, 2012). In Turkey, some of the most prominent websites are Facebook and Twitter (Onat, 2010). Twitter is micro blog in which its users share news, comments and opinions. Micro blogs are a new kind of blog with a limited number of writing characters and the ability to instantly publish messages. Compared with other micro blogs such as Plurk, Jaiku and

Open Source Tool, Identice etc. Twitter is the most well-known micro blog platform (Özel, 2014).

Social media is a common term meaning "...online tools and websites which create mutual interactions through providing the users with the opportunities to share information, thoughts, interest and knowledge," (Sayımer, 2008). Although social media contains the word 'media,' it differs from traditional media. Its most significant difference, which is also the reason for its originality, is the fact that any agent can comprise the content of social media, can comment and contribute (Yağmurlu, 2011; Vural and Bat, 2010).

However, these fast and new developments also contain both opportunities and risks for both corporations and individuals. The number of dismissed employees owing to a tweet, video or a comment which is thought to be against corporation principles has risen, and some corporations prefer to control the social media accounts of its employees (Özel, 2014). In this sense, it can be inferred that social media has an important influence on corporate strategic communication (Göksel and Serarslan, 2015). In an overview of the related literature, some researchers have been found to study corporate image and social media specifically (Theus, (1993); Parameswaran and Glowacka, (1995); Ivy, (2001); Kazoleas, Kim and Moffitt, (2001); Nguyen and LeBlanc, (2001); Palacio, Meneses and Perez, (2002); Arpan, Raney and Zivnuska, (2003); Paden and Stell, (2006); Eyrich et al., (2008); Cankurtaran and Özbek, (2015).

This study deals with the concept of social media and Twitter because it has been one of the newest and most preferred social media channels by users in Turkey recently. And in this context, the aim of the study is to investigate the social media uses of executives at the Provincial Directorate of Youth and

Sports (PDYS), the effects of their social media usage on their corporate image, the corporation representation of the employees in social media and PDYS executives' opinions concerning their sanctions exposed to employees related to their social media usage. The effects and opinions of the social media use of PDYS executives on corporate image is examined in terms of gender, education status, working position, term of employment and daily time spent in Twitter. In light of these goals, the answers to the following questions are sought;

- (1) What is the range of scale scores?
- (2) Are there any statistically meaningful differences among executives' opinions related to the effects of employees' social media (Twitter) usage on corporate image based on education status?
- (3) Are there any statistically significant differences among the executives' opinions related to the effects of their social media (Twitter) usage on corporate image based on working position?
- (4) Are there any statistically meaningful differences in the effects of the executives' social media (Twitter) usage on their corporate image based on the term of employment?
- (5) Are there any statistically meaningful differences among the executives' opinions related to the effects of their social media (Twitter) usage on corporate image based on daily time spent on social media?

In seeking answers to the questions above, we also think that this study would possess significance in that it would help executives at Ministry of Youth and Sports and General Directorate of Sports in public relations and human relations departments protect corporate image on social media. It would also provide them with resources for composing new

strategies to determine controls and sanctions over employees related to their

social media usage.

MATERIALS and METHOD

The Population and Sample of the Study

The population of the study consists of the individuals working as executives at Provincial Directorate of Youth and Sports (PDYS). The data collection instrument of the study was sent to the e-mail addresses of all executives at PDYS in the form of an online survey. The sample of the study includes 209 volunteer participants after excluding missing and incomplete answers of 226 participants.

Data Collection Tool

The Scale of Effects of Employees' Twitter Usage on Corporate Image and the Personal Information Form were used as the data collection tools of this study. The scale of the study was developed by Özel (2014), the validity and reliability studies were conducted by the researcher. The scale consists of 12 items and 3 sub dimensions (The Effects of Social Media on Actively Working Corporations, Corporation Sanctions and the Representation of the Work Place on Social Media by Employees). It is a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5 (5=Strongly Agree, 4=Agree, 3=Neutral 2=Disagree, 1=Strongly Disagree). The maximum score that can be obtained from the scale is 60.00 while the lowest is 12.00. The Personal Information Form, which was developed by the researcher, aims to gather information about the participant executives' education status,

working position, term of employment and daily time spent on Twitter.

The internal consistency coefficient (Cronbach's Alpha) of the scale was measured as 0.85. Based on the Alpha coefficient, the reliability of the scale is interpreted as follows: $0.00 \leq \alpha \leq 0.40$ = scale is not reliable; $0.40 \leq \alpha \leq 0.60$ = scale is of low reliability; $0.60 \leq \alpha \leq 0.80$ = scale is quite reliable and $0.80 \leq \alpha \leq 1.00$ = scale is of excellent reliability (Kalaycı, 2008). The scale can be said to possess excellent reliability (0.85).

Data Analysis

In the context of this study, the data gathered from the executives working at Provincial Directorate of Youth and Sports was analyzed with frequency and percentage analysis with the aim of determining participants' socio-economic statuses and one-way variance analysis (ANOVA) was used to determine whether the effects of employees' Twitter usage on corporate image would differ in terms of education status, working position, term of employment and daily time spent on social media. Upon the results of one-way variance analysis (ANOVA), Turkey HSD multi comparison test was conducted to define the source of statistical differences among groups. $p < 0.05$ level of significance was taken into consideration in statistical analysis and interpretations. The internal reliability was measured considering the consistency coefficients (Cronbach's Alpha) of the scale.

RESULTS

Table-1 Findings Related to Participants' Demographic Features

Variables		N	%
Highest Level of Education	High school	12	5,7
	Bachelors	160	76,6
	Masters	37	17,7
Current Position	Provincial Director	22	10,5
	District Director	105	50,2
	Department Manager	51	24,5
	Youth Center Manager	31	14,8
Term of Employment	Less than 1 year	39	18,7
	1-3 years	36	17,2
	4-6 years	27	12,9
	More than 7 years	107	51,2
Daily Time Spent on Social Media	Less than 30 min.	89	42,6
	31-60 min.	87	41,6
	More than 1 hours	33	15,8
Total		209	100

Table 1 presents the demographic information about the participants. In terms of level of education, 5.7% (N=12) graduated from high school; 76.6% (N=160) had a bachelor's degree and 17.7% (N=37) had master's degree. Based on the working positions of the participant executives, 10.5% (N=22) were provincial directors, 50.2% (N=105) district directors, 24.5% (N=51) were department managers and 14.8% (N=31)

were Youth Center Managers. On the basis of terms of employment, 18.7% (N=39) were working for less than 1 year while those working more than 7 years were found to be 51.2% of the population (N=107). In terms of the daily time spent on social media, the rate of executives spending less than 30 minutes on social media was 42.6% (N=89) while the rate of those spending more than 1 hour daily was found to be 15.8% (N=33).

Table-2 The Range of Scale Scores

	N	Min.	Max.	\bar{x}	Sd	Skewness	Kurtosis
Scale Scores	209	12.00	60.00	2.98	0.84	-.077	-.190

The arithmetic mean of the scores of executives working at Provincial Directorate of Youth and Sports (PDYS) on the Scale of Effects of Employees' Twitter Usage on Corporate Image was

2.98. In a review of skewness (-.077) and kurtosis (-.190) values, it can be seen that the gathered data shows a normal distribution. And the standard deviation values was measured as .84 (Table-2).

Table-3 Anova Results Showing the Participant Employees' Opinions about the Effect of Twitter Usage on Corporate Image Based on Education Level

Sub Dimensions	Education Level	N	\bar{x}	Sd	F	P
The Effects of Tweets on Active Corporation	High school	12	3.90	1.06	2.274	.065
	Bachelors	160	3.09	1.22		
	Masters	37	2.99	1.17		
Corporation Sanctions Related to Twitter	High school	12	4.14	0.88	2.910	.057
	Bachelors	160	3.28	1.23		
	Masters	37	3.33	1.12		
The Representation of The Work Place on Twitter by Employees	High school	12	2.83	1.30	.247	.782
	Bachelors	160	2.65	0.89		
	Masters	37	2.65	0.76		

p>0.05

Based on Anova results, the statistical data related to sports executives' education status are presented in Table 3. No significant difference was found among any of the sub scales *the effects of tweets on active corporation* ($p=.065>0.05$); *Corporation sanctions*

related to Twitter ($p=.057>0.05$); *the representation of the work place on Twitter by employees* ($p=.782>0.05$). It can be inferred that the opinions of the sports executives in the three education level groups show similar dispositions.

Table-4 Anova Results Showing the Participant Employees' Opinions about the Effect of Twitter Usage on Corporate Image Based on Current Working Position

Sub Dimensions	Current Working Position	N	\bar{x}	Sd	F	P
The Effects of Tweets on Active Corporation	Provincial Director	22	3.16	1.12	.235	.991
	District Director	105	3.13	1.22		
	Department Manager	51	3.10	1.26		
	Youth Center Manager	31	3.15	1.21		
Corporation Sanctions Related to Twitter	Provincial Director	22	3.71	1.00	1.824	.054
	District Director	105	3.40	1.20		
	Department Manager	51	3.37	1.17		
	Youth Center Manager	31	3.27	1.34		
The Representation of The Work Place on Twitter by Employees	Provincial Director	22	2.49	0.68	.385	.764
	District Director	105	2.66	0.91		
	Department Manager	51	2.73	1.01		
	Youth Center Manager	31	2.75	0.73		

$p>0.05$

Table 4 shows the Anova results of executives based on their current positions in their corporations. No statistically significant differences were found in any of the sub scales (*The effects of tweets on active corporation* ($p=.991>0.05$); *Corporation sanctions related to Twitter* ($p=.054>0.05$); *the*

representation of the work place on Twitter by Employees ($p=.764>0.05$). It is revealed that executives working in different positions share similar opinions in all sub scales concerning the effects of employees' Twitter usage on corporate image.

Table-5 Anova Results Showing the Participant Employees' Opinions the Effect of Twitter Use on Corporate Image Based on Term of Employment

Sub Dimensions	Term of Employment	N	\bar{x}	Sd	F	P
The Effects of Tweets on Active Corporation	Less than 1 year	39	3.19	1.16	.101	.959
	1-3 years	36	3.08	1.43		
	4-6 years	27	3.19	1.02		
	More than 7 years	107	3.09	1.21		
Corporation Sanctions Related to Twitter	Less than 1 year	39	3.29	1.34	.031	.993
	1-3 years	36	3.32	1.20		
	4-6 years	27	3.36	1.14		
	More than 7 years	107	3.35	1.18		
The Representation of The Work Place on Twitter by Employees	Less than 1 year	39	2.72	0.93	.091	.965
	1-3 years	36	2.66	0.91		
	4-6 years	27	2.61	0.62		
	More than 7 years	107	2.65	0.93		

$p>0.05$

According to Anova results and statistical information about term of employments of the employees demonstrated in Table-5,

no significant difference was found in any sub scales (*The effects of tweets on active corporation* ($p=.959>0.05$);

Corporation sanctions related to Twitter ($p=.993>0.05$); The representation of the work place on Twitter by employees ($p=.965>0.05$). In all sub scales and four different term of employment groups,

sports executives were observed to share similar thoughts about the effects of employees' Twitter use on corporate image.

Table-6 Anova Results Showing the Participant Employees' Opinions the Effect of Twitter Use on Corporate Image Based on Daily Time Spent on Social Media

Sub Dimensions	Time Daily Spent on Social Media	N	\bar{x}	Sd	F	P
The Effects of Tweets on Active Corporation	Less than 30 min.	89	3.14	1.26	.138	.871
	31-60 min.	87	3.13	1.14		
	More than 1 hour	33	3.02	1.31		
Corporation Sanctions Related to Twitter	Less than 30 min.	89	3.37	1.21	.580	.561
	31-60 min.	87	3.38	1.18		
	More than 1 hour	33	3.13	1.23		
The Representation of The Work Place on Twitter by Employees	Less than 30 min.	89	2.52	0.16	2.976	.052
	31-60 min.	87	2.84	0.80		
	More than 1 hour	33	2.73	0.84		

$p>0.05$

Table 6 presents the Anova results of sports executives' daily time spent on social media. There were no significant differences found in any sub scales based on daily time spent on social media (*The effects of tweets on active corporation* ($p=.871>0.05$); *Corporation sanctions related to Twitter*

($p=.561>0.05$); *the representation of the work place on Twitter by employees* ($p=.052>0.05$). In terms of 3 sub scales and three different time groups, the sports executives were seen to possess similar opinions concerning the effects of employees' Twitter usage on corporate image.

DISCUSSION and CONCLUSION

The following section discusses the results of this study. The internal reliability coefficient of the study was measured as $\alpha= .855$, which indicates excellent reliability. In the study conducted by Özer (2014), the internal reliability coefficient was found to be $\alpha=.0831$, which is parallel with the current study. In the study by Uğur and Uğur (2015), which studied the executives' perceptions towards personal and corporate images, 98 executives participated 35.7% of participants had high school diplomas as their highest level of education; 28.6% bachelors and 3.1% masters. In comparison, in this study 5.7% of participant executives had high school diplomas as their highest level of education, 76.6% had bachelors and 17.7% had master degrees. The reason for the relatively high number of master

and doctorate degrees in the current study is thought to stem from the fact that the previous study included executives working in private corporations. Based on the term of employment variable, it was determined that 51.2% of the sports executives have been working in the same corporation for more than 7 years while the rate of employees working at the same corporation for less than 1 year was found to be 18.7%. In their study examining the effects of social media on corporations Arslan and Zaman (2014) stated that only 21.6% of the participants were working at the same corporation for more than 6 years while the rate of employees working at the same corporation for less than 1 year was 27%. The reason for such a large difference between the two studies is that in the current study, only executive level workers were included, but in the study of

Arslan and Zaman, all levels of corporate employees were included.

In terms of education status, no statistically significant differences were found in any of the sub scales among the participants who had high school, bachelor and master degrees. However, in the sub dimension of representing their corporation on Twitter, the participants with high school degrees were seen to score a master average when compared with other groups. In this sub scale, the most common statement was *I think employees should share content (posts, photographs and video) in accordance with the corporation they work for.*

No statistically significant differences were found among the opinions of the executives working in various positions at the Provincial Directorate of Youth and Sports concerning the effects of employees' Twitter usage on corporate image. However, in the sub dimension of corporate sanctions against employees' Twitter usage, Provincial Directors were found to be of master averages.

Especially in this sub dimension, Provincial Directors had the master average with the statement that *I think dismissing an employee due to his posts on Twitter which are not consistent with corporate image would be reasonable.* In this sense, it can be inferred that these sports executives who have the highest position in provincial organizations, think that anyone who shares contradictory opinions to that of the corporation should not be employed at that corporation.

In conclusion, implications for future studies are as follows: This study was conducted to measure the opinions of executives at the Provincial Directorate of Youth and Sports concerning the effects of employees' Twitter usage on corporate image. However, it would enhance the research to include the opinions of employees as well as executives. Similarly, using this study's scale, a different perspective would be found upon implementing it with employees who both work in the public and private sector.

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