



ISSN: 2146-1740
<https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/pub/ayd>,
Doi: 10.54688/ayd.1380473
Araştırma Makalesi/Research Article



THE RISK OF POLITICAL MANIPULATION TURNING INTO A POLITICAL INFODEMIC: PRECAUTIONS FOR GENERATION Z

Ertuğrul Buğra Orhan¹

Abstract

Article Info

Received:
24/10/2023

Accepted:
25/12/2023

This article examines the notion of infodemic in relation to political manipulation, specifically focusing on Generation Z as a case study. The analysis is based on relevant literature and utilizes an inductive approach. The initial segment emphasizes the significance of mass communication and social media in the dissemination of information. Additionally, the paper delves into artificial intelligence and cybersecurity, specifically addressing the potential dangers of infodemics. Research literature indicates that Generation Z is more vulnerable to disinformation disseminated through social media platforms. Hence, it is imperative for lawmakers and members of Generation Z to actively engage in tackling this matter. Media literacy is promoted to empower Generation Z in discerning between reality and fiction. The article advocates for the development of analytical thinking skills and underscores the significance of discerning between different sources of information and trustworthy news outlets. Furthermore, there is a strong emphasis on adhering to regulations pertaining to the utilization of social media. In essence, it asserts that cooperation is required to safeguard Generation Z against political information breakouts and manipulations that may give rise to issues regarding democratic norms and societal repercussions. Additionally, greater investigation into this subject is important.

Keywords: Political Manipulation, Social Media, Generation Z, Infodemy

Jel Codes: D72, D79, Z18.



*Çalışmanın ortaya çıkmasında yapıcı fikir ve desteklerini esirgemeyen Doç. Dr. Haluk YAMAN' a teşekkürlerimi sunuyorum.

¹ Associate Professor, Fırat University, ORCID: 0000-0003-2455-5441, bugraorhan@firat.edu.tr.

Cite: Orhan, E. B. (2023). The risk of political manipulation turning into a political infodemic: Precautions for generation z. *Akademik Yaklaşım Dergisi*, 14 (2), 860-883.

1. Introduction

In recent years, mass communication technologies have been developing rapidly. Therefore, we live in a world where the boundaries of communication and information transfer are lifted. Consequently, the use of mass communication techniques is important in influencing the dynamics of information flow among different populations (Avcıoğlu, 2013). The rapid advancement of technology has greatly facilitated the speed and accessibility of mass communication, leading to its widespread adoption (Gönenç, 2014). The process of massification has resulted in the establishment of a comprehensive and interconnected infrastructure (Adorno, 2007). The emergence of social media networks has facilitated heightened and reciprocal engagement among individuals on many platforms. Social media has a significant role in facilitating the dissemination of information on the internet as it provides users with the ability to participate in virtual interactions and maintain these interactions across many domains (Tutgun Ünal, 2020). By use of these options, individuals are able to disseminate their visual and auditory data, so increasing the visibility of their contributions across various regions globally. Therefore, the act of visually sharing content fosters the illusion that individuals possess a shared language (Öztürk, 2013). The perception of shared traits or resemblances can foster a greater inclination among users to engage actively on social media platforms and provide a larger volume of data. One could argue that social media is the primary catalyst for the phenomenon of massification on the internet, as it facilitates heightened levels of contact. Nevertheless, it is imperative to consider the potential drawbacks associated with the widespread utilization of social media, rather than solely focusing on its advantageous aspects. In addition to the inherent appeal of social media platforms for their users, it is imperative to underscore the adverse consequences associated with their usage (Amedie, 2015). Mason (1986) conducted an evaluation of the mentioned drawbacks by analyzing four main factors and developed a set of ethical rules within the framework of potential disadvantages, covering intellectual property, accuracy, accessibility, and privacy areas. Irrespective of the subject matter, the act of humans sharing information over the internet possesses a distinct characteristic pertaining to intellectual property. Nevertheless, the issue of ownership pertaining to shared content or information that is accessible online encompasses more than just mere ownership. It is imperative that the data given is both accurate and devoid of any deceptive content. Likewise, it is seen unacceptable for data to possess differential accessibility, wherein certain individuals are granted access while others are denied. The concept of accessibility should encompass more than mere direct access to data. The evaluation of misleading and

directing effects on data access can also be examined from the perspective of accessibility. Leymun (2020) asserts that the aforementioned ethical concepts continue to be universally acknowledged. The comprehension of cybersecurity encompasses various dimensions, including political, social, and economic factors, particularly when addressing the issue of manipulation on social media (Singer & Friedman, 2018). Hence, it can be seen that there exists a compatibility between the comprehension of cybersecurity and the ethical understanding in the online realm. It is imperative to build a comprehensive framework for implementing countermeasures against the manipulation of social media platforms. Concrete solutions within this framework encompass several strategies, such as the implementation of legal safeguards to combat the dissemination of fake news and deceptive information. Additionally, submitting social media platforms to taxation represents another potential avenue for addressing this issue (Nagasako, 2020). When examining the matter and digging into particularities, it is imperative to establish the theoretical foundation of the concept of manipulation that has been referenced. Following the establishment of a conceptual framework, a comprehensive analysis was undertaken to examine the impact of the Z generation on political manipulation, drawing upon relevant literature and research conducted within the purview of this subject matter. The concept of "infodemic" has been narrowed down to the central topic of the ongoing debate within the realm of scholarly research and discourse. The study has assessed the pertinent concepts within the comprehensive framework of the infodemic notion and examined them using inductive reasoning. The subsequent section introduces the concept of political manipulation by examining its constituent elements and evaluating the scholarly literature's approach to this topic. In conclusion, a discourse has taken place regarding the methods by which Generation Z might safeguard themselves from the manipulation tactics employed on social media platforms and the spread of misinformation, known as infodemics. The research findings have yielded potential recommendations for this purpose.

2. The Phenomenon of Political Manipulation And Its Consequential Impacts

The concept of manipulation encompasses a wide range of occurrences and events within the setting of the internet. While manipulation encompasses a broad spectrum of behaviors, it is feasible to offer a comprehensive definition. As per the provided description, manipulation is characterized as engaging in activities that seek to disrupt individuals' capacity to make decisions and exploit emotions such as trust, concern, fear, and so forth (Netsparker, 2017). Verbs such as omitting or concealing the source of online information, modifying the content of information, and algorithmically intervening in content might be assessed as actions that may

be relevant in this particular situation. In the realm of politics, manipulation refers to the deliberate act of generating and distributing inaccurate or modified information via the circulation of the internet, with the intention of achieving political objectives (Silverman, 2020). Social media platforms also employ manipulation techniques, including the manipulation of information by detaching and distorting its context, restricting access to certain information, and spreading information from sources that lack clarity or credibility.

Upon conducting a more thorough analysis of the information disseminated on the internet and various social media platforms, it becomes evident that a classification system can be discerned. Wardle (2017) posits that there exists a categorical differentiation with regards to the precision of information. The initial component of this differentiation pertains to the content that fulfills the function of satire and parody. It is important to highlight that these particular posts are not intended to cause harm, but rather possess deceptive attributes. The second point of differentiation pertains to misleading and deceptive content, which involves the distortion of factual information with the intention of diverting attention. Artificial content, as the third component, refers to content that is entirely disjointed and intentionally created. Manipulated content, denoted as the fourth constituent, refers to content that has been deliberately modified through the manipulation of authentic information. The final component involves establishing inaccurate associations and constructing an erroneous framework. The objective of this component is to alter the contextual framework of the content through the manipulation of headlines during the transmission of information. It is evident that there are various approaches of exerting manipulative impact on information. The primary objective of these methodologies is to impede the transmission of information in its original form from its source to its recipients, and instead manipulate it for diverse goals by disrupting the inherent connection between information and end users.

One of the topics under consideration within the realm of political manipulation pertains to the phenomenon of fake news. The dissemination of false information, sometimes referred to as "fake news," is a deceptive tactic employed to manipulate public opinion by strategically presenting content that pertains to specific events or phenomena now under discussion. These forms of content seek to alter the course of collective political endeavors and can introduce a perplexing impact on ongoing political dialogues. At the individual level, the presence of fake news introduces complexities and challenges to the cognitive processes involved in sound political decision-making (Edelson et al., 2017; Karp et al., 2018; Redlawsk, 2002). In the realm of individual political decision-making, the objective of fake news extends beyond the

manipulation of knowledge and rationality, encompassing the deliberate influence on emotional responses (Druckman, 2012; Flynn et al., 2017; Prior, et al., 2015).

The internet, with its global reach and vast accessibility to information, undeniably presents a highly conducive environment for the dissemination of misinformation. Given that internet usage is not controlled by any particular group or political party, it can be argued that the phenomenon of fake news is decentralized and subject to change. However, it is not unfounded to suggest that political groups may have a notable presence in this context (Uscinski, 2018). Hence, the deliberate manipulation of facts by political factions might be regarded as a detrimental circumstance. The dissemination of news with the intention to manipulate public opinion and undermine the veracity of information is characterized by the presence of deliberate falsehoods and fabrications (Kavanagh & Rich, 2018). Nevertheless, it is important to note that while these sources may not necessarily include entirely inaccurate information, they exhibit a limited correspondence with actuality or represent a fusion of disparate realities. The challenge of discerning truth amidst the abundance of information available on the internet is a common experience for individuals. As noted by Loveless (2020), people tend to gravitate towards familiar sources while consuming political information.

The limitation of individuals' access to information or the prevention of persons from acquiring information also gives rise to the phenomenon known as information siloing (Garrett, 2017). The term "algorithmic filter bubble" pertains to the process of constraining online searches and generating search filters by algorithms, resulting in less exposure to diverse sources of information. As a consequence of employing algorithmic filters, individuals inadvertently reinforce their limited information within a confined and insular communication system, so further constraining their knowledge and understanding. The limited availability of alternate sources of information contributes to the reinforcement and perpetuation of individuals' existing worldviews. The prevalence of those who engage in information creation being susceptible to exposure to misinformation and manipulation is considerable.

The persistence of conspiracy theories remains evident in both the United States and Europe, as indicated by their continued popularity (Uscinski, 2018). Research conducted on the 2016 presidential elections in the United States has revealed that conspiracy theories and news-style information played a significant role (Allcott & Gentzkow, 2017; Flynn et al., 2017; Lewandowsky et al., 2017). Likewise, scholarly investigations on the Brexit process in the United Kingdom also offer compelling instances of comparable consequences (Karp et al., 2018; Lazer et al., 2018). Based on the findings of these investigations, it has been observed

that false news is employed as a strategic instrument for the purpose of political manipulation and influence. The phenomenon of false news, with its ability to manipulate and distort reality, engenders pessimistic perceptions regarding the future of democratic systems. Indeed, throughout its nascent stages, the internet was anticipated to play a pivotal role in fostering democratization, as highlighted by scholars such as Dahlgren (2000), Park et al., (2009), and Weber, Loumakis, and Bergman (2003). This phenomenon indeed seems to have the potential to lead to unpredictable outcomes related to the process of democratization. The proliferation of misinformation on the internet, along with its widespread dissemination, gives rise to concerns regarding the advancement of notions such as democracy and equality inside the global internet infrastructure. Nevertheless, determining the extent of this skepticism or its perception across various age cohorts appears to be a challenging task, lacking a conclusive verdict. Hence, it is crucial to refrain from employing broad methodologies in order to comprehend the impact of political manipulation techniques on both individuals and the broader populace. One of the overarching findings in this context suggests that the emotional dimension of political inclinations tends to intensify when individuals distance themselves from factual knowledge. The aforementioned belief is assessed within the framework of the emergence of emotional politics (Loveless, 2020).

There is a growing body of academic research indicating that individuals' preferences tend to exhibit less rationality as they distance themselves from the knowledge available to them (Kunda, 1990; Hart & Nisbet, 2012; Suhay et al., 2015; Lodge & Taber, 2000). The issue of generalizability arises when considering the extent to which these research can be applied to a wider population, as they focus on the capacity of people to derive advantages from their preferences. In relation to this inquiry, the rationality inherent in individual preferences can be observed to vary across different stages of development. Consequently, when individuals possess a diminished level of trust in the primary information source, their political decision-making processes tend to exhibit a reduced degree of rationality and an increased reliance on emotions (Lau et al., 2008; Sniderman et al., 1993; Taber & Lodge, 2006).

In order to enhance one's awareness and take proactive measures against the dissemination of false information, individuals must engage in a preparatory procedure. In the foreseeable future, it is probable that the dissemination of false information through online platforms and social media will become increasingly intricate. Media literacy and digital literacy education play a significant role in increasing awareness and providing individuals with knowledge regarding the prevalence of fake news, disinformation, and manipulation

(Roozenbeek & Van der Linden, 2019). There is a growing trend of inaccurate information being disseminated at a quick pace across online platforms (Zarocostas, 2020). According to Sarioğlu and Turan (2020), this pattern of flow exposes individuals to susceptibility towards manipulation and escalates to perilous extents. There were significant worries regarding the potential impact on persons who are exposed to manipulative content inside the online sphere, as it may result in fragmented consciousness and susceptibility to external influence (Pettman, 2016).

The examination of psychological aspects of voter profiles has been conducted in several regions globally, yielding data that has proven valuable in political campaign processes for the prediction of voter behavior (Confessore, 2018). Research conducted on the 2016 United States presidential elections provides substantiation for the utilization of this approach, including indications of Russian involvement in this endeavor, a notion that has garnered validation from Facebook (Dale, 2017). It has been reported that a significant number of fraudulent accounts were created and utilized across various social media platforms as part of these operations. Actors possessing political influence may exhibit inclinations to manipulate information within the context of their remarks, irrespective of its veracity (Krasni, 2020). The extent to which individuals exhibit a propensity to absorb information without discerning between verifiable and unsubstantiated claims warrants scrutiny in this context. In the present era, there exists a viewpoint that emphasizes the prominence of perceptions over facts, suggesting that the dissemination of fraudulent content and manipulative endeavors can exert significant effect on a wide audience (Yerlikaya & Toker Aslan, 2020). This concept aligns with the thesis that political players deliberately employ bot and troll accounts to disseminate deceptive information and manipulate public sentiment (Metodieva, 2018). At present, it is imperative to prioritize the purpose over the identity of the actors, as the issue lies in the systematic utilization of manipulative tools and techniques, rather than the individuals involved in political manipulation. Given the problem's emphasis on ways, it is vital to explore the measures that individuals and groups can use to safeguard themselves against those tactics.

Various strategies can be implemented to counteract the manipulation of information. The aforementioned methods encompass the enactment of governmental legislation targeting the dissemination of false information and misinformation, the formulation of novel legal frameworks and regulations aimed at safeguarding against such occurrences, the establishment of a repository housing inaccurate material, and the creation of specialized offices staffed by subject matter specialists (Nagasako, 2020). The "Social Media Law" enacted by Germany in

2022 to combat fake news, the disinformation law implemented by the UK in 2022, and the "Disinformation Governance Board" established by the law approved by the US in 2022 can be given as examples (Oymak, 2022). When implementing these measures, there is a possibility of encountering unwanted consequences as side effects, such as the potential infringement on democratic principles like the freedom of expression for individuals (Hartke, 2016). Nevertheless, the efficacy of governmental measures against misleading information and manipulation can be enhanced provided democratic considerations are not overlooked. An illustrative instance of this phenomenon can be observed in the context of China. According to Zhang (2019), China has implemented legislation aimed at imposing penalties for the disturbance of public order resulting from the dissemination of content on social media platforms. This regulation may be seen objectionable from a democratic standpoint. Furthermore, it is important to note that any online actions that infringe upon an individual's intellectual property, privacy, reputation, and legal rights are classified as criminal offenses (Zhang, 2019). The Chinese government classified this legal framework as a criminal offense in 2016, citing its infringement upon social and economic stability (Funke & Flamini, 2018). The imposition of sanctions on social media posts, as exemplified by the Chinese case, raises concerns over the preservation of public order. Nevertheless, it is necessary to undertake thorough research on the extent and type of criminal activities, as well as issues pertaining to the freedom of speech. The operations conducted within the realm of social media manipulation are subject to ongoing transformation due to the impact of advancing technology. In contemporary times, the tendency to perceive political manipulation on social media as solely attributable to individuals or groups fails to acknowledge the significant impact of technology tools.

Artificial intelligence has emerged as a prominent subject of discourse within the realm of political manipulation. The influence of artificial intelligence-controlled devices is progressively growing in various domains, including politics, society, and the economy (Rahwan et al., 2019). Hence, it is vital to acquire further knowledge regarding the novel interaction framework provided by artificial intelligence to enhance comprehension of its inherent characteristics and level of excellence. The current state of knowledge about the generation, dissemination, control, and societal impact of artificial intelligence remains incomplete. The complexity and advancement of artificial intelligence-based internet traffic are contributing factors to this phenomenon. This discourse highlights concerns pertaining to the adverse implications and uncertainties associated with artificial intelligence, including the

detrimental consequences and influence on the general populace during the stages of production, utilization, and dissemination of political information. Prior to delving into the ramifications of artificial intelligence and its ethical implications, it is imperative to provide a comprehensive definition of this idea. Hence, despite the absence of a precise delineation of artificial intelligence, numerous researchers allude to its capacity to manifest intelligent conduct, adaptively react to the surroundings, and acquire knowledge from it (Samoili et al., 2020). The aforementioned attributes of artificial intelligence have rendered AI a prominent phenomena employed in many computer and internet-based applications and gadgets within the external realm. The significance of artificial intelligence in the context of internet-based software lies in its capacity to evaluate vast quantities of data and provide highly potent outcomes. Nevertheless, the use of artificial intelligence in processing large amounts of data and successfully utilizing the processed information gives rise to uncertainties within the expansive boundaries of its application. Hence, it is imperative to acknowledge and address the legal, social, and ethical aspects associated with artificial intelligence, as emphasized by Doshi-Velez et al. (2017), Sculley et al. (2014), and McCarthy (1960). Concurrently with this imperative, the capacity of artificial intelligence to manipulate material exposes a growing prejudice against algorithms (Loucks et al., 2018). It is vital to comprehend the development of this growing bias at an individual level, its perception within the realm of social media usage and data sharing, and the nature of the individual actions taken to address this issue.

The cohort commonly referred to as Generation Z, encompassing individuals born in the late 1990s and beyond, exhibits a notable inclination towards employing social media platforms, computers, and mobile devices as means of social interaction. This inclination is mostly attributed to the pervasive use of said technological devices (Aydın & Başol, 2014; Bostancı, 2015). The assertion that individuals belonging to Generation Z encounter stress when they are separated from electronic devices is a conclusion drawn in relation to the widespread use of such devices (Gazzaley & Rosen, 2019). Hence, contemplating the correlation between social media and Generation Z in isolation from manipulative influences proves to be challenging. The level of awareness among Generation Z with regards to their susceptibility to political manipulation on social media, their cautiousness in selecting reliable sources of information for decision-making, their consideration of the potential presence of fake news content, and their attitudes towards being influenced by artificial intelligence and algorithms are of utmost importance. The brain structure and cognitive viewpoint of this generation have been influenced by their exposure to technology breakthroughs, which have emerged as a

defining aspect of their era. Consequently, this has led to the adoption of distinct thinking and learning approaches. Savaş and Karataş (2019) and Prensky (2001) differentiate between individuals who have acquired proficiency in digital technology and its associated language prior to their later counterparts, labeling the former as "digital natives" who are inherently familiar with the digital landscape from birth. This categorization positions Generation Z as a prominent group in terms of their utilization of social media and their interaction with content. Hence, the viewpoint of Generation Z regarding this matter can offer insights into the prospective trajectory of political influence via social media. Furthermore, it is widely posited that the acquired data will also have an impact on the strategies implemented to counteract political manipulation on social media platforms.

3. Literature Review

It is imperative for the extant scholarly research to discern the areas of divergence within the literature evaluation pertaining to the correlation between social media and Generation Z. The selection of qualitative and quantitative field research is intended to validate the novelty of the present study in relation to the findings given. The scholarly discourse extensively examines the correlation between social media and political engagement, particularly within the context of Turkey (Çam, 2018; Keser, 2017; Selvi, 2020; Şahinbaş, 2016; Yüceel, 2019; Zubair, 2017). The research population of interest in these investigations primarily consisted of university students belonging to Generation Z. All of the aforementioned investigations were carried out using either online or in-person survey methods. Remarkably, despite sharing comparable samples, theories, and inquiries, it may be said that certain investigations produce divergent outcomes. According to Selvi (2020), the correlation between social media usage and political engagement among Generation Z is found to be relatively weak. Conversely, Keser (2017) asserts that the association between the social media environment and political participation, as well as information acquisition, is notably robust due to the significant role that social media plays in the daily lives of young individuals. Yüceel (2019), conversely, asserts that a notable correlation between social media usage and political engagement is absent. In his critique, Çam (2018) challenges the prevailing literature that posits Generation Z adolescents as apolitical, asserting that they are, in fact, significantly more politically engaged than commonly perceived. According to Şahinbaş (2016), the limited political engagement and expressive hesitation observed among Generation Z can be attributed to their attitude of distrust. According to Zubair (2017), there exists a range of political engagement levels among individuals belonging to Generation Z, which can be attributed to cultural and economic factors. The variability observed

in the outcomes of comparable quantitative field studies can potentially be attributed to divergent theoretical frameworks employed by researchers or challenges encountered in obtaining precise data from the target population.

The scholarly investigation of the influence of social media use on political matters involved the implementation of content analysis techniques specifically focused on Twitter tweets (Mınarlı, 2019; Ün, 2021). Both papers examined the 2018 Presidential election in Turkey; however, they addressed distinct aspects of the existing research. Mınarlı (2019) examined the correlation between social media and democracy, specifically focusing on the emergence of hate speech during election campaigns. The study's findings indicate that political content pertaining to elections elicits associations with democratic principles. However, it is important to note that social media does not fully meet the criteria of serving as a viable substitute platform for democracy. In a similar vein, the study conducted by Ün (2021) examines the relationship between the frequency of Twitter posts by political groups and their electoral performance in the context of the 2018 Presidential election. The findings of this research indicate a correlation between a reduced volume of Twitter activity by political groups and their heightened level of success in the election. The researcher, Ünlü (2020), examined the conceptual dimension of the subject within the framework of social media and the public domain. Consequently, it has been deduced that the utilization of political manipulation, social media bots and troll accounts, big data, and algorithms has an adverse influence on democracy and undermines the comprehension of the public sphere. The available research in the national literature is constrained in both approach and scope, as evidenced by current investigations. There is a pressing need for comprehensive investigation into the social media usage and political engagement of Generation Z, with the aim of augmenting the existing body of scholarly work. The utilization of qualitative research methodologies that delve into empirical evidence is regarded as significant for this objective.

Upon examining the worldwide literature, it becomes evident that the subject matter possesses a wider scope, employs a more varied array of methodologies, and delves into greater depths. In Ireland, a study was done by Lynch and Hogan (2012) to investigate the manner in which political parties engage with young voters through social media platforms. The research included a combination of quantitative and qualitative methodologies, including data gathering instruments including questionnaires and open-ended focus group interviews. The study's findings indicate that political parties were unable to effectively harness their capabilities in order to appeal to voters. Furthermore, the findings from focus group interviews indicate that

individuals belonging to Generation Z exhibit a preference for face to face interaction. However, political parties are actively seeking novel avenues for engagement, particularly through the utilization of social media platforms. The study undertaken by Lailiyah, Pradhana, and Yuliyanto (2020) aimed to investigate the manner in which Generation Z engages with and assesses political content disseminated through social media platforms. The research was carried out utilizing quantitative methodologies and employing data collection instruments such as surveys. At the outset, the research participants were exposed to socialization through social media platforms. The findings of the study indicated a favorable influence on the political behavior and attitudes of the survey participants belonging to Generation Z both prior to and subsequent to their engagement in the informative training. The study conducted by Alfred and Wong (2022) examined the perception and dependability of social media among Generation Z, as well as its association with political engagement. The research was carried out via quantitative methodologies, with the primary instrument for data collection being a survey. The findings of the study indicate a notable degree of trust among Generation Z individuals towards social media platforms with regards to their engagement in political activities. Furthermore, a significant correlation has been shown between political engagement and the level of trust individuals place in social media platforms. In a recent study conducted by Tandon, Singh, and Tripathi (2022), the researchers examined the utilization of political comedy images on social media platforms among persons belonging to Generation Z in Delhi. The research was carried out via quantitative methodologies and employing data collection instruments, including surveys. Based on the findings of the study, it was asserted that the act of sharing political comedy photos on social media platforms afforded users a means of expressing dissent and facilitated the creation of spaces for self-expression. According to Jago's (2022) conceptual qualitative study, algorithms have been found to have a detrimental impact on the religious beliefs of Generation Z.

Bradshaw and Howard (2018) and Bradshaw et al. (2021) conducted two extensive and authoritative research on the subject of social media manipulation and tools. These studies successfully classify a substantial volume of material. In their study on coordinated social media manipulation, Bradshaw and Howard (2018) employed content analysis as a qualitative methodology and data gathering instrument. The paper asserts that states are forming cyber armies with the intention of engaging in political manipulation, hence presenting considerable threats to democratic systems in the forthcoming years. In their seminal publication, Bradshaw et al. (2021) presented a comprehensive and significant scholarly work that delves into the

intricate dynamics of misinformation and the capacity for coordinated manipulation inside different countries. The book presents comprehensive information regarding the utilization of manipulation tools, the quantity of organizations, their respective functions, and the varying degrees of efficiency observed across different countries. The topic matter pertains to Spain's limited capacity for social media manipulation, which exhibits notable efficacy during election cycles, notably among separatist regions. The literature study reveals that the studies predominantly examine the correlation between social media and politics, focusing on aspects such as political engagement, manipulation, political perception, democracy, and cybersecurity. Moreover, these research primarily adopt a macro-level perspective when investigating these phenomena. However, it is posited that conducting a phenomenological study to explore the viewpoints and perspectives of Generation Z, a cohort closely intertwined with social media and susceptible to political manipulation, would offer a valuable opportunity to gain a comprehensive understanding of this phenomenon. This approach would enable a more nuanced examination of both the advantages and disadvantages associated with this phenomenon. Qualitative research often employs observations and interviews as primary methods, as they offer a direct focus on the human element and facilitate a comprehensive comprehension of the human factors involved in the data collection process. The interpersonal nature of human beings facilitates the occurrence of specific events and phenomena by means of communication. The significance is in the researcher's role as a subject of inquiry in qualitative studies, which serves to enhance the phenomenon under investigation by including many views and ultimately contributing to a deeper comprehension of said phenomenon. Hence, it is hypothesized that this research endeavor will provide a valuable contribution towards comprehending the attitudes and outlooks of the targeted cohort regarding the utilization of social media as a tool for political manipulation by politicians belonging to Generation Z. This contribution extends beyond the mere expression of subjective opinions on the aforementioned phenomena. Furthermore, it is imperative to ascertain the perspectives of Generation Z regarding political manipulation on social media, as this has significant implications for the regulation of legal frameworks pertaining to information accessibility, restrictions, criminal elements, cyber security, freedom of expression, and the establishment of future expectations. The scarcity of data in field studies pertaining to the perspectives of Generation Z on political manipulation on social media enhances the scholarly significance of the proposed research. This study presents a viable opportunity for scholars to employ qualitative research methods and undertake comparative research across several age cohorts. Recent studies have examined the topics of Generation Z, social media relationships, social

media manipulation, and cyber security using both conceptual and empirical approaches (Alfred and Wong, 2022; Bradshaw and Howard, 2018; Bradshaw et al., 2021; Lailiyah et al., 2020; Tandon et al., 2022). Nevertheless, it is often believed that these studies lack comprehensive data that encompasses the simultaneous examination of various topics at a micro-level. Lynch and Hogan (2012) employed a mixed techniques approach in order to enhance the richness of their data and successfully created a robust dataset. Nevertheless, the present study did not show a definitive link between social media manipulation and Generation Z. The absence of this linkage precludes a definitive determination of the present state about the political manipulation of Generation Z. Based on the aforementioned discoveries, it is posited that our planned study will yield comprehensive empirical evidence about the "relationship between political manipulation on social media and Generation Z," a topic that has been notably underexplored in scholarly literature. Moreover, it is widely stated that investigating the perspectives of Generation Z on political manipulation on social media will not only yield valuable insights into this phenomena, but also generate empirical evidence pertaining to the perception of many facets therein. Moreover, the perspectives of Generation Z on the online dissemination of political information hold significant relevance in terms of influencing forthcoming political outlooks. The limited availability of data in field studies pertaining to the perspectives of Generation Z on political manipulation on social media enhances the scholarly significance of the proposed research.

This study sets itself apart from prior research by expanding beyond the boundaries of existing quantitative and qualitative studies in the academic literature. It accomplishes this by constructing a framework that addresses the dissemination of disinformation and the concept of an infodemic within a more comprehensive context. Moreover, the results derived from a thorough examination of the existing body of literature offer empirical support that underscores the imperative for conducting research that specifically investigates Generation Z in the context of the infodemic phenomena. Hence, it is imperative to conduct additional scientific investigations in order to address this research gap.

4. Political Manipulation Infodemic in Generation Z and Possible Preventive Measures

The Z generation is characterized by their immersion in socialization processes during a time when internet networks have become ubiquitously prevalent worldwide. Consequently, this process of social interaction occurs to a greater extent on social networks in comparison to earlier generations. According to Pichler's (2021) research on online platforms, it has been

shown that 45% of individuals belonging to Generation Z dedicate approximately 9 hours of their daily routine to online activities. It can be inferred with relative ease that Generation Z, characterized by their substantial online presence, actively participates in widespread information sharing. These individuals satisfy their information need by utilizing various web channels. Platforms characterized by a high degree of information dissemination offer a convenient framework for the attainment of political objectives and the utilization of manipulative techniques. The proliferation and manipulation of information on digital platforms, particularly in light of the ongoing pandemic, have given rise to widespread worldwide challenges and heightened scrutiny of this phenomenon. In a previous study, Eysenbach (2002) coined the term "infodemiology" to describe the dissemination of health information through misinformation. However, in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, the World Health Organization has identified the circulation of false information as a more significant threat, referring to it as a "infodemic" (WHO, 2021). Hence, the issue at hand pertains to the adverse consequences arising from the dissemination of inaccurate, deceptive, and manipulative content within digital platforms. As a result, several scholarly investigations have examined the notion of "infodemic" and its associated ramifications. According to Arao et al., (2020), an information epidemic can be characterized as the swift dissemination of both reliable and erroneous information to a broad spectrum of individuals. Smith (2021) highlights the potential dangers posed by information epidemics in the realm of cybersecurity, as unscrupulous individuals leverage weaknesses inside digital networks to initiate cyber assaults. In his study, Araújo (2022) delves into a range of concepts pertaining to the present-day information landscape, emphasizing the imperative of precise assessment and comprehension of these occurrences. In his recent publication, Zielinski (2021) provides an analysis of the prevalence of information epidemics and the concurrent rise in the dissemination of false information. The author proposes potential remedies to address this issue, which encompass the utilization of cutting-edge technology and the establishment of regulatory frameworks. In conclusion, these investigations highlight the difficulties presented by information epidemics in relation to the distribution of information, cybersecurity, and the need for accurate comprehension and countermeasures. Hence, the notion of infodemic has expanded its applicability beyond misinformation and manipulation specifically pertaining to health, encompassing many forms of internet manipulation in a broader sense. Nevertheless, it is important to recognize that the creation and distribution of deceptive information should not be limited to a narrow focus on specific events. It is arguable that Generation Z, a demographic known for their extensive engagement with online platforms, is more susceptible to

manipulative material, particularly within the realm of social media manipulation. Hence, it is imperative to prioritize Generation Z as the primary target for investigation and analysis about the phenomenon of social media manipulation. Nevertheless, given the rapidity with which information is disseminated and the potential adverse consequences it may entail, it is imperative to acknowledge and address these concerns. In recent history, there have been notable demonstrations showcasing the possible utilization of political information as a means of manipulation. The social media messages posted by Donald Trump during the 2018 US Presidential elections, in which he disseminated offensive content to attain broad viewership regarding the construction of a border wall with Mexico and the prohibition of Muslims from entering the country, are commonly cited as an illustration of this phenomenon (Aydın, 2020). The impact and acceleration of the "Arab Spring," which originated in Tunisia, were influenced by the dissemination of both true and inaccurate information through social media platforms (Özalp, 2012). The primary factor contributing to the magnitude of this influence is the fact that social media is an affordable and easily available internet-based platform (Tonta, 2009). While acknowledging the potential benefits of utilizing this tool in various aspects of everyday life, it is important to consider Han (2022)'s assertion that digitization is transforming surveillance into a form of communication. This serves as a reminder to direct our attention towards comprehending the influence of political manipulation on Generation Z, particularly within the realm of social media.

The issue of safeguarding Generation Z against the proliferation of misinformation, characterized by its manipulative consequences like an epidemic, holds significant importance. Nonetheless, it is imperative to acknowledge that the concept of protection should not be approached unilaterally, but rather, should encompass the active involvement of both politicians and Generation Z. Consequently, the existence of two distinct pillars of protection necessitates a dual-pronged approach towards addressing the required actions. First and foremost, it is imperative to implement political measures aimed at enhancing the sensitivity and resilience of Generation Z towards infodemic attacks. In the present setting, it is imperative to provide media literacy education to Generation Z, fostering their capacity to discern between veracious and deceptive information. The acquisition of skills such as evaluating news sources, assessing data, and confirming information is of utmost importance in the realm of media literacy. Furthermore, it is imperative to offer assistance to young individuals in cultivating their critical thinking abilities. Promoting the practice of questioning encountered expressions in internet streams, verifying information from diverse sources, and engaging in critical thinking prior to

accepting any assertions is vital. Furthermore, it is imperative to cultivate the practice of seeking knowledge from multiple sources rather than relying just on a single source, in addition to the aforementioned encouragement. The findings of Lailiyah, Pradhana, and Yuliyanto (2020) illustrate the good outcomes associated with providing education to Generation Z, hence highlighting the possible advantageous consequences of this proposition. Engaging in the act of actively listening to and critically examining diverse viewpoints can contribute to the cultivation of a more well-rounded and impartial outlook. Even in cases when the user has gathered information from several sources, it is essential for them to possess a discerning understanding of reputable news sources and authoritative expert perspectives. Consequently, it is imperative to facilitate the acquisition of critical information literacy skills among persons belonging to Generation Z, enabling them to discern and evaluate the credibility of the sources upon which they rely. Given the prominent role of social media in facilitating the quick dissemination of infodemics, it is imperative to establish guidelines that promote a judicious utilization of social media platforms while also emphasizing the importance of critically evaluating the material encountered therein. Furthermore, the significance of education in safeguarding personal information and digital gadgets cannot be overstated. There is a need to enhance awareness on the prevalence and potential risks associated with computer viruses, malware, and fraudulent websites. One of the primary requirements for the successful implementation of these guidelines involves the establishment of a robust communication channel with individuals belonging to Generation Z. Hence, it is imperative to preserve an ongoing and inclusive discourse with individuals belonging to Generation Z. One potential strategy for mitigating the impact of the infodemic on individuals is to offer support through addressing their inquiries, attentively acknowledging their apprehensions, and facilitating their access to information resources. One crucial need for effectively addressing political influence is to enhance the political literacy of Generation Z, thereby empowering them to develop and articulate their own political perspectives. Alfred and Wong (2022) assert that the findings of their study indicate a notable level of trust in social media platforms with regards to political engagement. This perspective aligns with the notion that the youth population have the ability to independently develop political perspectives and exercise their freedom of expression. These proposals are articulated with the aim of equipping Generation Z with the necessary skills to navigate the manipulative techniques that contribute to the proliferation of an infodemic. It is imperative to bear in mind that the obligations of the group in question should not be disregarded. In the present situation, it is imperative for Generation Z to cultivate both individual and communal proclivities towards critical thinking. This entails actively striving to

make informed decisions when selecting sources of information, engaging in impartial reflection subsequent to information consumption, and placing a high priority on developing media literacy skills. Due to the increasing prevalence of online platforms and social media, which have emerged as significant channels for communication and information retrieval, it is anticipated that their usage will further expand in the foreseeable future. Furthermore, as the sources and algorithms facilitating the dissemination of information on these platforms continue to advance, there is an increased possibility for manipulation and the proliferation of misinformation. The potential consequence of this is the potential for a complete manipulation of Generation Z in relation to critical aspects such as political representation and democratic governance, which are essential to the contemporary nation-state. This is in line with the destructive possibilities associated with democracy as discussed by Bradshaw and Howard (2018). In the given context, the occurrence of detrimental consequences, such as substantial risks pertaining to political representation and democratic government, is possible.

5. Conclusion

Generation Z dedicates a substantial amount of their time engaging with online platforms and obtaining knowledge from these digital sources. Nevertheless, it is important to acknowledge that these digital platforms also expedite the widespread dissemination of political manipulation. Infodemics, which refers to the widespread distribution of abundant and often deceptive information, might present a substantial threat to individuals in Generation Z and facilitate the propagation of political manipulation. Policymakers can bolster Generation Z's capacity to discern veracity from falsehood by offering media literacy instruction. It is imperative to aid young persons in cultivating their critical thinking abilities and fostering their inclination to scrutinize information. Enhancing the propensity to scrutinize information can significantly contribute to cultivating the practice of consulting diverse sources.

Maintaining a well-balanced utilization of various social media platforms and exercising caution when consuming information are crucial for ensuring the protection of personal information. Regarding the consumption of information, the utilization of advancing artificial intelligence technologies and their possible manipulative impacts on social media necessitate the establishment of legal procedures grounded in scientific evidence. Artificial intelligence applications necessitate the establishment of control mechanisms that consider their strengths, limitations, and susceptibility to manipulation. While Generation Z members may possess greater technological proficiency than earlier generations, they are nonetheless susceptible to deliberate infodemics. To mitigate this issue, it is advantageous for public authorities to

establish and sustain a transparent means of contact with Generation Z. Engaging in an open dialogue around conscious media consumption can prove to be beneficial. Furthermore, it is crucial to ensure that individuals from Generation Z cultivate political acumen and augment their capacity to construct and articulate their own political viewpoints. This can enhance their immunity to political manipulation. Policymakers can collaborate with persons from Generation Z to jointly assume the responsibility of mitigating the transformation of political manipulation into an infodemic. Instilling a strong inclination towards critical thinking, deliberately choosing trustworthy sources of information, striving for objectivity, and acknowledging the significance of media literacy can solely be accomplished by engaging Generation Z youth in these endeavors. To mitigate political infodemics and curb the dissemination of political manipulation, it is feasible to implement essential measures while ensuring the inclusion of Generation Z persons. Nevertheless, achieving successful implementation necessitates the combined endeavors and cooperation of politicians, families, and individuals. This endeavor is essential for safeguarding democratic processes and societal results. Alternatively, if not addressed, the concept of infodemics, which is relevant to our subject, may become a commonplace occurrence of deliberate and ongoing political manipulation tactics. The Generation Z cohort presents a possible threat for state-centered democratic political systems. In the event that the problem becomes prevalent, it has the potential to result in a bleak future scenario concerning the state's affirmative rights, individuals' restrictive rights, political representation, and legitimacy. Hence, it is crucial to employ several tactics with the objective of safeguarding Generation Z from the repercussions of political infodemics. Additionally, it is imperative for future conceptual research to prioritize these problems, while conducting empirical investigations to effectively tackle the current challenge associated with Generation Z. These endeavors possess the capacity to greatly enhance the current understanding in this domain.

Peer-review: Externally peer-reviewed.

Contribution Rate Statement: Corresponding author: %100.

Conflicts of Interest: There is no potential conflict of interest in this study.

REFERENCES

- Adorno, T. W. (2007). *Kültür endüstrisi kültür yönetimi*. İletişim Publication.
- Alfred, J. J. R. & Wong, S. P. (2022). The relationship between the perception of social media credibility and political engagement in social media among generation Z. *Journal of Communication, Language and Culture*, 2 (2), 18-33.
- Allcott, H. & Gentzkow, M. (2017). Social media and fake news in the 2016 election. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 31, 211–236.
- Amedie, J. (2015). Impact of social media on society. *Pop Culture Intersections*, 2. <https://doi.org/10.18311/gjeis/2016/15773>
- Araújo, C. A. Á. (2022). Infodemic: The new informational reality of the present times. *Journal of Information Science Theory and Practice*, 10 (1), 59-72.
- Arao, D. A., Brooten, L., Custodio, P. A., Du, R., Rivera, M. T., & Zhang, N. Y. (2020). Fighting infodemics. *Media Asia*, 47, 85-87.
- Avcıoğlu, G. Ş. (2013). Bilginin küreselleşmesinde kitle iletişim araçlarının manipülatif rolü. *Selçuk Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Dergisi*, 29, 21–34.
- Aydın, A. F. (2020). Post-Truth dönemde sosyal medyada dezenformasyon: COVID-19 (Yeni koronavirüs) pandemi süreci. *Asya Studies*, 4 (12), 76-90.
- Aydın, G. Ç. & Başol, O. (2014). X ve Y kuşağı: Çalışmanın anlamında bir değişme var mı? *Ejovoc (Electronic Journal of Vocational Colleges)*, 4 (4), 1-15.
- Bostancı, M. (2015). *Sosyal medya ve siyaset*. Palet Publications.
- Bradshaw, S. & Howard, P. N. (2018). Challenging truth and trust: A global inventory of organized social media manipulation. *The Computational Propaganda Project*, 1, 1-26.
- Bradshaw, S., Campbell-Smith, U., Henle, A., Perini, A., Shalev, S., Bailey, H., & Howard, P. N. (2021). Country case studies industrialized disinformation: 2020 global inventory of organized social media manipulation. *Oxford Internet Institute*.
- Confessore, N. (2018). Cambridge analytica and facebook: The scandal and the fallout so far. *The New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/04/04/us/politics/cambridge-analytica-scandal-fallout.html>
- Çam, A. (2018). *Gençlik politik mi, apolitik mi? Siyasetin değişen doğası: Üniversite gençliğinin siyaset algısı ve siyasal katılımı* (Unpublished Master Thesis). Institute of Social Sciences.
- Dahlgren, P. (2000). The internet and the democratization of civic culture. *Political Communication*, 31 (3), 329-384.
- Dale, H. C. (2017). Russia used facebook ads to wield influence in America. We need greater transparency. <https://www.heritage.org/government-regulation/commentary/russia-used-facebook-ads-wield-influence-america-we-need-greater>

- Doshi-Velez, F., Kortz, M., Budish, R., Bavitz, C., Gershman, S., O'Brien, D. & Wood, A. (2017). Accountability of AI under the law: The role of explanation. *arXiv preprint arXiv:1711.01134*.
- Druckman, J. N. (2012). The politics of motivation. *Critical Review*, 24 (2), 199-216.
- Edelson, J., A. Alduncin, C. Krewson, J. A. Sieja. & J.E. Uscinski (2017). The effect of conspiratorial thinking motivated reasoning on belief in election fraud. *Political Research Quarterly*, 70, 933-946.
- Eysenbach, G. (2002). Infodemiology: The epidemiology of (mis)information. *American Journal of Medicine*, 113 (9), 763-765.
- Flynn, D.J., B. Nyhan, & J. Reifler (2017). The nature and origins of misperceptions: Understanding false and unsupported beliefs about politics. *Political Psychology*, 38, 127-150.
- Funke, D. & Flamini, D. (2018). A guide to anti-misinformation actions around the world. *Poynter*. <https://www.poynter.org/ifcn/anti-misinformation-actions/#china>
- Garrett, R. K. (2017). The "echo chamber" distraction: Disinformation campaigns are the problem, not audience fragmentation. *Journal of Applied Research in Memory and Cognition*, 6, 370-376.
- Gazzaley, A. & Rosen, L. D. (2019). *Dağımkı zihin, yüksek teknoloji dünyasında kadim beyinler*. (A. Babacan, Trans.). Metis Yayınları.
- Gönenç, Ö. (2014). *İletişim dünyası*. Yılmaz Printing & Publishing.
- Han, B. C. (2022). Infocracy: Digitization and the crisis of democracy. *John Wiley & Sons*.
- Hart, P.S. & Nisbet, E.C. (2012). Boomerang effects in science communication: How motivated reasoning and identity cues amplify opinion polarization about climate mitigation policies. *Communication Research*, 39 (6), 701-723. DOI: 10.1177/0093650211416646
- Hartke, R. (2016). The Oedipus Complex: A Confrontation at the central cross-roads of psychoanalysis. *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 97 (3), 893–913. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1745-8315.12561>
- Jago, E. (2022). Algorithmic manipulation: How social media is shaping our theology. *Eleutheria*, 6 (1). <https://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/elevol6/iss1/9>
- Karp, J.A. Nai, A. & Norris, P. (2018). Dial "F" for fraud: Explaining citizens' suspicions about elections. *Electoral Studies*, 53, 11-19.
- Kavanagh, J. & Rich, M. D. (2018). *Truth decay: An initial exploration of the diminishing role of facts and analysis in American public life*. Rand Corporation.
- Keser, A. (2017). *Sosyal medya siyaset ilişkisi: Sosyal medyanın siyasal katılıma etkisi üzerine bir araştırma* (Master Thesis, Institute of Social Science).
- Krasni, J. (2020). How to hijack a discourse? Reflections on the concepts of post-truth and fake news. *Palgrave Communications*, 7 (1), 1-10.
- Kunda, Z. (1990). The Case for motivated reasoning. *Psychological Bulletin*, 108, 480-498. DOI: 10.1037/0033-2909.108.3.480

- Lailiyah, N., Pradhana, G. A. & Yuliyanto, M. (2020). Youthizen political literacy: Educating the generation z. *Jurnal Ilmu Sosial Volume, 19* (1), 22-39.
- Lau, R., Andersen, D.J. & Redlawsk, D.P. (2008). An exploration of correct voting in recent US presidential elections. *American Journal of Political Science, 52* (2), 395-411.
- Lazer, D.M.J., Baum, M.A., Benkler, Y., Berinsky, A.J., Greenhill, K.M. & Menczer, F. (2018). The science of fake news. *Science, 359*, 1094-1096.
- Lewandowsky, S., Ullrich, K.H.E. & Cook, J. (2017). Beyond misinformation: Understanding and coping with the post-truth era. *Journal of Applied Research in Memory and Cognition, 6*, 353-369.
- Leymun, O. Şenay. (2020). *Dijital etik. In pandemi döneminde sınanan dijital vatandaşlık* (Ed. A. A. Kurt & H. F. Odabaşı, (s. 173-203), Anı Publications.
- Lodge, M., & Taber, C. (2000). Three steps toward a theory of motivated political reasoning. In A. Lupin (Ed.), *Elements of reason: Cognition, choice, and the bounds of rationality* (s. 183-213). Cambridge University Press.
- Loucks, J., Davenport, T. & Schatsky, D. (2018). *State of AI in the enterprise*. Deloitte Insights Report.
- Loveless, M. (2020). *Information and democracy: Fake news as an emotional weapon*. In *Democracy and Fake News* (s. 64-76). Routledge.
- Lynch, K. & Hogan, J. (2012). How Irish political parties are using social networking sites to reach generation z: An insight into a new online social network in a small democracy. *Irish Communications Review, 13*, 83-98.
- Mason, R. O. (1986). Four ethical issues of information age. *MIS Quarterly, 10* (1), 5-11.
- McCarthy, J. (1960). *Programs with common sense*. RLE and MIT computation center.
- Metodieva, A. (2018). *Disinformation as a cyber threat in the V4: Capabilities and reactions to Russian campaigns*. Strategic Policy Institute.
- Minarlı, M. A. (2019). *İletişimsel bir ortam olarak sosyal medya ve demokrasi* (Unpublished Doctoral Thesis), Marmara University Institute of Social Sciences, İstanbul.
- Nagasako, T. (2020). Global disinformation campaigns and legal challenges. *International Cybersecurity Law Review, 1*, 125-136. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1365/s43439-020-00010-7>
- Netsparker. (2017). İstihbaratın sınıflandırılması. *Siber Güvenlik, 1*.
- Özalp, O. N. (2012). Arap baharının orta Asya cumhuriyetlerini etkileme potansiyeli. *Sosyal ve Beşeri Bilimler Dergisi, 4* (2), 251-259.
- Öztürk, A. (2013). *İmajoloji*. Elis Publications.
- Park, N., Kee, K. F. & Valenzuela, S. (2009). Being immersed in social networking environment: Facebook groups, uses and gratifications, and social outcomes. *Cyberpsychology & Behavior, 12* (6), 729-733.
- Pettman, D. (2016). Infinite distraction: Paying attention to social media. *Politiy Press*.
- Prensky, M. (2001). Digital natives, digital immigrants. *On the Horizon, 9* (5), 1-6.

- Prior, M., Sood, G. & Khanna, K. (2015). You cannot be serious: The impact of accuracy incentives on partisan bias in reports of economic perceptions. *Quarterly Journal of Political Science*, 10, 489-518.
- Rahwan, I., Cebrian, M., Obradovich, N., Bongard, J., Bonnefon, J. F., Breazeal, C., ... & Wellman, M. (2019). Machine behaviour. *Nature*, 568 (7753), 477-486.
- Redlawsk, D. P. (2002). Hot cognition or cool consideration? Testing the effects of motivated reasoning on political decision making. *Journal of Politics*, 64 (4), 1021-44.
- Roozenbeek, J. & Van Der Linden, S. (2019). The fake news game: Actively inoculating against the risk of misinformation. *Journal of Risk Research*, 22 (5), 570-580.
- Samoili, S., Cobo, M. L., Gomez, E., De Prato, G., Martinez-Plumed, F. & Delipetrev, B. (2020). AI watch. *Defining artificial intelligence. Towards an operational definition and taxonomy of artificial intelligence*. Technical Report. Joint Research Centre.
- Sarıoğlu, E. B. & Turan, E. (2020). COVID-19 ile ilgili haberlerde bilginin yeniden üretilmesi sürecinin infodemik açıdan analizi. *Turkish Studies*, 15 (6), 819-837. <https://dx.doi.org/10.7827/TurkishStudies.44109>
- Savaş, S. & Karataş, S. (2019). Z kuşağı öğrencisini tanımak. *Eğitim Araştırmaları*, 223-237.
- Sculley, D., Holt, G., Golovin, D., Davydov, E., Phillips, T., Ebner, D., ... & Young, M. (2014). *Machine learning: The high interest credit card of technical debt*. (NIPS Workshop)
- Selvi, M. (2020). Sosyal medya ve z kuşağı siyasal katılım davranışı ilişkisi. (Unpublished Master Thesis), Anadolu University Institute of Social Sciences, Eskişehir.
- Oymak, H. (2022). Kamuoyunda dezenformasyon yasası olarak bilinen, 7418 sayılı “Basın Kanunu İle Bazı Kanunlarda Değişiklik Yapılmasına Dair Kanun”’un getirdikleri. *Yeni Medya*, 504-514.
- Pichler, S., Kohli, C. & Granitz, N. (2021). Ditto for gen z: A framework for leveraging the uniqueness of the new generation. *Business Horizons*, 64 (5), 599-610. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bushor.2021.02.021>
- Silverman, C. (2020). Investigating disinformation and media manipulation. In C. Silverman (Ed.), *Verification Handbook on Disinformation and Media Manipulation* (pp. 4-8).
- Singer, P. W. & Friedman, A. (2018). *Siber güvenlik ve siber savaş*. Buzdağı Publications.
- Smith, T. (2021). The infodemic as a threat to cybersecurity. *The International Journal of Intelligence, Security, and Public Affairs*, 23, 180-196.
- Sniderman, P. M., Brody, R. A. & Tetlock, P. E. (1993). *Reasoning and choice: Explorations in political psychology*. Cambridge University Press.
- Suhay, E., Druckman, J. N., Kraft, P. W., Lodge, M. & Taber, C. S. (2015). Why people don't trust the evidence. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 658 (1), 121-33.
- Şahinbaş, Y. (2016). *Gençliğin siyaset algısı ve yönelimleri: Trakya üniversitesi öğrencileri üzerine bir çalışma* (Unpublished Master's Thesis). Trakya University Institute of Social Sciences, Edirne.
- Taber, C. S., & Lodge, M. (2006). Motivated skepticism in the evaluation of political beliefs. *American Journal of Political Science*, 50 (3), 755-769.

- Tandon, M. S., Singh, M. N. V. & Tripathi, D. (2022). Like, share and comment: Gen-Z and political memes on social media. *Specialusis Ugdymas*, 1 (43), 2973-2998.
- Tonta, Y. (2009). Dijital yerliler, sosyal ağlar ve kütüphanelerin geleceği. *Türk Kütüphaneciliği*, 23 (4), 742-768.
- Tutgun-Ünal, A. (2020). Social media addiction of new media and journalism students. *Turkish Online Journal of Educational Technology-TOJET*, 19 (2), 1-12.
- Uscinski, J. E. (2018). Conspiracy theories and the people who believe them. *Oxford University Press*.
- Ün, E. (2021). *Türkiye'de sosyal medyanın seçimler üzerindeki etkisi: 2018 cumhurbaşkanlığı seçimleri ve Twitter örneği* (Unpublished Master Thesis). İstanbul Gelişim University, İstanbul.
- Ünlü, A. (2020). *Habermasçı kamausal alanın imkânı: Sosyal medya üzerine bir inceleme* (Unpublished Master Thesis). Institute of Social Sciences.
- Wardle, C. (2017). Fake news. It's complicated. *First draft*, 16, 1-11.
- Weber, L. M., Loumakis, A. & Bergman, J. (2003). Who participates and why? An analysis of citizens on the internet and the mass public. *Social Science Computer Review*, 21 (1), 26-42.
- World Health Organization (2020). Munich Security Conference. <https://www.who.int/director-general/speeches/detail/munich-security-conference>.
- Yerlikaya, T. & Toker Aslan, S. (2020). Social media and fake news in the post-truth era: The manipulation of politics in the election process. *Insight Turkey*, 22 (2), 177-196.
- Yüceel, M. (2019). *Üniversite öğrencilerinin siyasal katılımında sosyal medyanın rolü*. Uşak Universty, (Unpublished master's thesis). Institute of Social Sciences.
- Zarocostas, J. (2020). How to fight an infodemic. *The Lancet*, 395 (10225), 676.
- Zhang, L. (2019). Government responses to disinformation on social media platforms. *The Law Library of Congress*.
- Zielinski, C. (2021). Infodemics and infodemiology: A short history, a long future. *Revista Panamericana de Salud Pública*, 45.
- Zubair, S. (2017). *A comparative study of the impact of social media on political attitude & behavior of the university students in Pakistan & USA* (Master's thesis), Institute of Social Sciences.