Virtual Communities as a Social and Cultural Phenomenon

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Abstract

The developments which were experienced in the communication and technology area made internet an important part of the daily life. In this respect, the virtual communities are in prominent place which are insulated from the time and place. In the study, Hakkarim.net is researched that formed our subject as one of the most different examples of these virtual communities. A qualitative research which is based on the observation fundamentally and richened with a survey and in-depth interviews is carried out in accordance with the ethnographic research which is used in this study. The behavior-oriented observations are performed and the oral reports are arranged with the requirements that the research is performed in the natural environment. In the research, the participants define being member of Hakkarim.net which they turned into a social sharing network and virtual community as commitment, unrequited love, happiness, belonging and entertainment respectively. The findings show that the persons in Hakkarim.net were expressing the everything they could not find in the real life, women, chats, words and dreams in this geography in which the people struggle with the problems such as terror, unemployment, violence and the feeling of being marginalized for years in Turkey.

Keywords: virtual communities, patriarchy, social network sites, sense of belonging

1. Introduction

The province Hakkari is a province which takes part in the Eastern Anatolia Region of the Republic of Turkey. It is a province with the surface area of 7,121 km^2. Its population is 236.581 people according to the 2006 census. It is one of the smallest provinces of Turkey with such population. Hakkari is neighbored by Iran at the east, Iraq at the south, and surrounded by Sirnak province at the west and Van province at the north. The unemployment is at a very high level in Hakkari, which has only four districts and have stockbreeding and border trade as the primary sources of living, because the stockbreeding is affected by terror and the border trade is affected by Iraq war. The city, which is one of the provinces having lowest per capita income throughout Turkey, indicates a geography in which the "agha" culture and patriarchal community structure are still experienced dominantly. The reason of making a city as subject of this study is a website which is founded with the name of this city, which is called Hakkarim.net.

This modest website, which is founded with the aim of introducing the city, has become a "tale" in a short period of time. Everything started with a website which is opened in the year 2000 by a lecturer who teaches in the vocational school in Hakkari of Van 100. Year University. Ihsan Karagulle, who is personally from Erzurum but resents because the name of Hakkari is remembered only with terror, decided to open a website which introduces Hakkari, and put its name as www.hakkarim.net. The website was firstly a local area which introduces the city and visited by maximum 150 persons in a day. However, after that, it is encountered by intensive requests for embedding the 101 game which is a version of okey game and played widely in all of the café houses situated in the Eastern and Southeastern regions of Turkey, and when these requests are evaluated, the website made a real boost. The people of the Southeastern region started to play their most favorite table game in their homes, workplaces and everywhere accessed by internet.

The website is turned to a social network in the course of time. It has become one of the most popular media contents of the Eastern and Southeastern regions. The men from the Southeastern region, who are mostly in user status in particular today, even changed their lifestyles in order to follow the game contents provided in Hakkarim.net (especially 101 which is a local game) and to play game through this website. Such that, the café customers considerably decreased in this city in which the computer usage rate is quite below Turkey average.

Even because playing game in the website is fee-charging. However, the game is not the only reason for attracting such remarkable attraction by the website, but the aspiration of the men from the Southeastern region is also another significant reason. The number of those who sell their houses, cars, cows and lands in order to be in the website increases every day. Because of this reason, their marriages are dissolved, some murders are committed and the moneys varying from 10 thousand to 50 thousand Turkish Liras are easily spent in order to be a hall owner, namely "admin" in the website. The purpose seems not only playing games but also meeting a member of the opposite sex. Hakkarim.net, for which some marriages are dissolved and murders are committed, could be considered a total social phenomenon. At the same time, the website indicates a virtual environment in which a lot of elements of the agha culture and patriarchal culture are experienced as well as the attitudes and behaviors in the website and the website members.

Tens of women come to the region through the acquaintanceships obtained through the website, and walk around, buy some foods and beverages and even settle permanently sometimes. This virtual life which is settled in the center of the life of the people has already reached an amazing point in all of the provinces such as Diyarbakir, Mardin, Batman, Sirnak, Van, Hakkari and a lot of other provinces, districts and villages. The website is so widespread that, the people introduce themselves by means of their "nicknames" in addition to their real names, and even some of them assign their nicknames as their company names. For instance, everybody knows who is "Berf" or why the name of "Asilbey" Company is "Asilbey" in fact.

In line with such arguments, the purpose in the article is to perform an ethnographic research and sets forth the existing cultural structures and the behaviors and experiences forming these structures through Hakkarim.net. In the research, a lot of participants from the childhood to the age 60 are asked what they find in the website which they call "the system". Besides, the influence of Hakkarim.net on their identity formation is mentioned and it is tried to reveal various attitude scales as well.

1.1 Hakkarim.net as a Virtual Community and with the Attitudes of the Members

The developments which were experienced in the communication and technology area made internet an important part of the daily life. Nowadays most of the users connect with one another through online channels to form virtual communities (Tonteri, Kosonen, Ellonen, & Tarkiainen, 2011) and obtain useful information instead of offline sources (Yen, Hsu, & Huang, 2011). Prior research has explored different aspects of online user behavior, such as intentional information seeking (Yan & Davison, 2013; Zha et al., 2015) and social interactions involving communities (Yi & Gong, 2013), and time spent chatting online (Yen et al., 2011). Yet, although virtual communities are rapidly growing, many still fail because of a lack of sufficient active contributors and continuous supply of knowledge content (Chen & Hung, 2010). In this respect, the virtual communities which are insulated from the time and place concepts have been formed for the consumers coming from every part of the world to connect with each others (Flavian & Guinaliu, 2005, p. 407). The virtual communities are in the position of communities having importance in the marketing communication in particular, because of its positive or negative influences on the consumer behaviors. Starting from this point, various studies are carried out by means of using the cyber-ethnographic research method for the purpose of examining the formations, developments and social structures of the virtual communities and their influences on the consumer behaviors in the literature (Kanayama, 2003, p. 273; Fox ve Roberts, 1999, p. 651; Cova ve Pace, 2006, p. 1092; Kozinets, 2002, p. 66; Maclaran ve Catterall, 2002, p. 231; Ward, 1999, p. 96; Langer ve Beckman, 2005, p. 191). The main mass of the research is formed by the virtual communities in these researches. In this respect, the virtual communities and news groups are scanned relating to the subject of the research and the example target audience is selected from among them. The compliance of the virtual community with the research subject, the intensity of the communication traffic in the virtual community, communication details and richness are taken into consideration in selecting the virtual community/communities which will be subject of the research (Kozinets, 2002, p. 63). Hakkarim.net also formed our subject as one of the most different examples of these virtual communities.

The turning point of this website became Sanal (Virtual) 101 which is a local game which was transferred internet after intensive efforts. Hakkarim.net website, which had a low average in terms of visitor number until that day, became a center of attraction at a moment. While cafes lost a considerable number of customers, the indispensable "white good" of the homes become computer as well. The website, which was established five years ago, now is a giant portal having more than 1.5 million members. Hakkarim.net, which has about six hundred thousand visitors daily and published through four separate servers rented from Germany, is an important example of the equality of opportunity in the virtual environment. Sanal 101 could be played in six different floors just like a real building. There are 125 game rooms in every floor. Maximum 101 players could

play in these rooms because of the name of the game. The money matter starts from this point. Every room is rented to two separate admins. This rental price varies according to the floor of the room, while the first floor is the most expensive one, the sixth floor is the cheapest floor. However, it is a little bit difficult to find a player in the sixth floor. The monthly rent of a room in the first floor is 350 TL. Two room owner admins are entitled to make any intervention desired on the players; they could either kick them out from the game or ban their IP and prevent their access to the website from that computer. In addition to this, there is a gold member system, and money is also paid for this and the gold members could play in any room desired.

When you register in the website, you start with one thousand five hundred points. As you loss game your point increases, and as you lose your point decreases. The high point is a reason of prestige in the games which are entered with a nickname. Normally, the sleepless nights started for the frequenters who left the cafes and started to sit in front of the computers. The point system is a factor which increases the attraction; however social communication is also very important. The meetings through the websites gave rise to friendships, city visits, marriages and even quarrels and murders. As a result of unpredictable development of the website, the only occupation of Ihsan Karagulle who resigned hi duty and then moved to Erzurum which is his place of birth is Hakkarim.net at present. The website owner Karagulle states that a lot of people having opposite opinions who do not even think to be side by side in the real life establish friendships by means of realizing that they are human before the identities and opinions and the "virtual base of expansion" with the fashionable expression has been established since 2005. Maybe there are some people who take unnecessarily serious the 101 game which turned into a phenomenon with Hakkarim.net. Such that, there are a lot of people who made this a lifestyle and recognized with their nicknames rather than their real names.

A participant who deals with farming compares renting a room and being an admin in the website to being a village agha. "Everybody should obey the words of the 'admin'. Imagine that you have people of 100 persons. You can kick out anybody from this village and you can make anybody 'op' and authorize further." A participant who is an administrator in a website with okey application in internet and states that it has some negative aspects together with its attraction states that lots of people meet and become friends through the website and also some hostilities may also appear through the website. Because the arguments in the virtual environment turn into quarrels, the hostilities which are carried to the real life may give rise to murders as well. He also states that no news could be taken from the website frequenter who went to Van for another player that they met in a game in Batman, and a lot of quarrels may be experienced and two persons made a quarrel and then met and shot each others in Mardin and a lot of marriages are collapsed in this manner. According to a participant who is a trader, Hakkarim.net became an area of living for the persons who could not prove his identity in the real life. Everybody is behind a nickname and the people could produce lies easily. He states that there are a lot of tragedies and inconveniences such as the girls who escape from their homes, husbands who left their spouses and the people who lost all of their properties in order to rent rooms in the website. Another participant, who works as a driver and has a room in the website, states that he rents room because he is having a lot of fun and met with friends from there and thus expanded his social environment.

2. Method

A qualitative research which is based on the observation fundamentally and richened with a survey and in-depth interviews is carried out in accordance with the ethnographic research which is used in this study (Arnould & Wallendorf, 1994, p. 485). The behavior-oriented observations are performed and the oral reports are arranged with the requirements that the research is performed in the natural environment (Elliot & Elliot, 2003, p. 216). For this purpose, the research people are observed in their homes, workplaces, schools or internet cafes, and the behaviors of such people are tried to be understood in this manner. The stipulation that a description which is directed at the social behaviors of the persons without understanding the symbolic worlds of the persons who are subject of this study could not be developed is taken into consideration. Because the group is small in the research, the observation is performed without participation and the observations are recorded as notes in the process of the research. There were also open-end questions in the in-depth interviews in the ethnographic research which is used in the research, and the flexibility is ensured in our comments in this manner.

3. The Data Obtained by Research and Analysis of Findings

The research revealed some demographical data concerning the participants in the first stage of the research. According to this, 49.1% of the participants are male and 50.9% of them are female in the research. 48.5% of the same participants have primary school education, 36.4% percent of them have secondary school education, 7.9% have university education and 7.3% have post-graduate education level. 20% of the participants are between the age range 18-24, 21.8% are between 25-29, 7.3% between 30-34, 21.8% between 35-39, 18.2% between 40-44,

7.3% between 45-50 and 3.6% are 50 and above. 33.3 % of the participants are traders, 13.4% are students, 6% are workers and 33.3% are self-employed persons and 10.4% of them are unemployed. The data concerning the personal computer and internet access of the participants are seen in the Table 1.

Table 1. Computer ownership and internet access of the participants

	Yes		No		Total	
Participants have their own computers	n	%	n	%	n	%
	147	89,1	18	10,9	165	100,0
	Yes		No		Total	
Participants have their own access	n	%	n	%	n	%
	89	53,9	76	46,1	165	100,0

According to this, 89.1% of the participants have their own computers and 53.9% of them have internet accesses. When we look at the data concerning the period of using internet by the participants, it is stated that 41.8% of the participants have been using for 3-5 years, 36.4% for more than 6 years. The data concerning where the participants have access to the internet are also mentioned in the frame of the research. According to this, 12.1% of the participants have internet access from home, 9.1% from workplace, 34.5% from home and workplace and 44.2% from internet café. The internet connection periods in hour at the weekly basis by the participants realized as follows: 27.9% of them connect internet for 40 hours and more, 18.8% between 21-40 hours and 16.4% between 10-12 hours. The most favorite purpose of using internet by the participants is seen in the Table 2.

Table 2. Most favorite purpose of using internet by the participants

	n	%
Shopping	14	8,5
Entertainment	121	73,3
Communicating with the other individuals	30	18,2
Total	165	100,0

The participants use internet mostly for entertainment (73.3%), communicating with the other individuals (18.2%) and shopping (8.5%). The data concerning how the participants define themselves as the internet users are presented in the Table 3.

Table 3. Defining themselves as internet users

	n	%
Regular users (absolutely daily)	79	47.9
Users at the modarate level (1-3 times at week)	49	29,7
Sometimes (1-3 times at month)	37	22,4
Total	165	100,0

It is seen that most of participants (47.9%) define themselves as the regular users. When the results concerning the evaluation concerning how the participants consider the place of internet in their lives are examined, 76.3% of the participants stated their opinions as important and very important. The situations of using Hakkarim.net by the participants that are members of that website are presented in the Table 4.

Table 4. Situations of using Hakkarim.net website

(Weekly)	n	%
2-4 hours	17	10,3
5-6 hours	11	6,7
7-9 hours	16	9,7
10-12 hpurs	30	18,2
21-40 hours	44	26,7
Over 40 hours	47	28,5
Total	165	100,0

According to this, 26.7% of the participants use Hakkarim.net website between 21-40 hours, 28.5% above 40 hours, 18.2% between 10-12 hours and 9.7% between 7-9 hours.

Attitude Scale of the participants towards Hakkarim.net

The attitudes of the participants towards Hakkarim.net are as follows:

Table 5. Attitudes of the participants concerning Hakkarim.net

	n	Ranj	Min	Max	$\overline{X}$	Median	S
Scale	165	16	32	48	39.45	40	3.36

As it is stated in the Table 5, the average attitude point of the participants (n=165) is 39.45. Because the median is 40 and it is close to the arithmetic mean, it shows that the participants are close toe the normal distribution. When the average attitude point 39.45 is evaluated out of 5, it makes 3.59 points. It could be said that the attitudes of the participants towards Hakkarim.net are positive. In addition to this, the arithmetic means and standard deviations concerning the attitude points of the participants are given in the Table 6.

Table 6. Arithmetic means and standard deviations concerning the attitude points of the participants

Points	n	$\overline{X}$	S
Visiting Hakkarim.net website is one of the indispensable points of the daily life	165	4,10	1,14
Information which is obtained from Hakkarim.net website is determinant on the daily conversations	165	4,38	,92
Forms on Hakkarim.net enable the people to make new friends	165	3,33	1,67
It is an important part of the daily life	165	4,31	,89
It influences the political preferences	165	3,12	1,37
Hakkarim.net website makes the life more meaningful	165	3,87	,94
Hakkarim.net website in a patriarchal structure	165	2,70	1,24
It gives rise to showing negative behaviors	165	3,38	1,56
Hakkarim.net is the environment in where people integrate with each other	165	2,65	1,56
Although Hakkarim.ne website is virtual, its influences are real	165	4,60	,491
I keep my identities hidden at the site	165	2,97	1,33

According to this, the items in which the participants show attitude at high levels could be stated as follows.

- Visiting Hakkarim.net website is one of the indispensable points of the daily life ($\overline{X}$ =4.10),

- Information which is obtained from Hakkarim.net website is determinant on the daily conversations ($\overline{X}$ =4.38),

- Forms on Hakkarim.net enable the people to make new friends ($\overline{X}$ =4.31),

- It is an important part of the daily life ($\overline{X}$ =3.87),

- Although Hakkarim.ne website is virtual, its influences are real ($\overline{X}$ =4.60),

The items in which the attitudes and behaviors of the participants are at medium level are stated as follows.

- Hakkarim.net website makes the life more meaningful ($\overline{X}$ =3.72),

- It influences the political preferences ($\overline{X}$ =3.12),

- It gives rise to showing negative behaviors ($\overline{X}$ =3.38),

The important point here is that the regional people having a patriarchal structure do not consider Hakkarim.net website in a patriarchal structure ($\overline{X}$ =2.70). Another point here is that the participants do not keep their identities hidden ($\overline{X}$ =2.97).

The one-way variance analysis is performed for the purpose of determining whether there is any difference or not in terms of educational level, profession and age among the attitude points of the participants (Table 7).

Table 7. Variance analysis results of the points which are taken from the attitude scale according to different variables

Variable	Levene Test	Groups	Total Square	sd	Avarage Square	F	p
Education Level	p>.011*	Intergroups	57,496	3	19,165	1.713	.166
		Ingroups	1801,413	161	11,189		
Occupation	p>.171	Intergroups	188,762	5	37,752	3,594*	,004
		Ingroups	1670,147	159	10,504		
Age	p>.758	Intergroups	74,182	7	10,597	,932	,483
		Ingroups	1784,727	157	11,368		

*p<.05

According to the Table 7, a meaningful difference is found between the attitudes of the participants in terms of profession. The LSD test is applied in order to determine between which groups there is a meaningful difference. As a result of this, a meaningful difference is found between the self-employed persons and unemployed persons and students, and the workers and students in terms of profession. Kruskal Wallis H test is applied because it is revealed that the distribution is not homogenous in terms of the educational level. The analysis results are given in the Table 8.

Table 8. Variance analysis between the non-parametric variables

Education Level	n	Sequence Avarage	sd	Kruskal Wallis H		Groups which differs
				χ^2	p	
Primary school	80	74,56	3	7.289	.063	-
High School Student	60	86,96				
Ungraduate	13	109,46				
Graduate	12	90,83				

As a result of Kruskal Wallis H test, it is determined that there is not any meaningful difference between their attitudes in terms of their educational level. The independent groups t test is applied in order to determine whether there is any difference between the attitude points in terms of gender (Table 9).

Table 9. Independent groups t test results concerning the attitudes of the participants in terms of gender

Gruplar	n	$\overline{X}$	S	sd	t	Significance level
Woman	84	40,66	3,27	163	5.04*	p<.000
Man	81	38,19	2,98			
Levene Test Value=.261 Significance level=.610						

*p<.05

Also according to the independent groups t test result performed, a meaningful difference is found between the attitudes in favor of the women in terms of gender. According to this, it could be said that the women have more positive attitudes than the men. In addition to this, 60.6% of the participants met the persons introduced through Hakkarim.net and 76.3% in the social networks outside the website or in environments such as MSN. The results concerning how the participants define to be member of Hakkarim.net are given in the Table 10.

Table 10. Defining to be member of Hakkarim.net

	n	%
Unrequited love	36	21,8
Commitment	42	25,5
Happiness	31	18,8
Sense of Belonging	30	18,2
Entertainment	26	15,8
Total	165	100.0

21.8% of the participants define to be member of Hakkarim.net as unrequited love, 25.5% as commitment, 18.8% happiness, 18.2% as belonging and 15.8% as entertainment.

Exemplary cases from Hakkarim.net as a continuance of the Ethnographic Research

Example case 1: Virtual life and real life are mixed with each others.

(N.D., trader, age 24)

A.D. who was been in the system since 2004 and uses the nickname esref lost 28,000 TL money until today. Eşref, who paid 350 TL for the room rented, enters the website for libertinism before marriage. He stated that, although he has no intention of libertinism any longer, he became totally a website addict and offered 3 million dollars to purchase the website and the website owner did not accept this suggestion. According to him, "the virtual life and real life are mixed with each others in the region".

Example case 2: Here is a social environment. I meet new people.

(age 52, retired, male)

"I have been playing 101 in the system for three years. I entered the website with the friend recommendation, and I looked at it and saw that there is a beautiful environment, I stayed. I have a lot of user names. While I am playing game, I am also having chat with friends. I love to make friends with the people that I do not know and to play game with them. I also met with somebody that I met in the system. I had a lot of friends from Diyarbakır, Ankara, Istanbul, Mersin, Zonguldak. As of the environment which we live, there is not any social activity, and because of this reason, we are spending our time by playing in internet. Although I am retired at present, I have a petitioner office and I am always in the system if I do not have a particular work. I have been an internet user since 1998 and I am online sometimes until midnights. I do not pay money but the admins pay money according

to the floor they find every month. I am playing in all of the floors. Thousands of admins are in queue to be an admin. I am in the system sometimes for 10 hours."

Example case 3: To be a member in this website is a reason of prestige.

(Z.E., age 33, self-employed, female)

"Some rooms are favorite in the system, because there are higher number of female op (operators) and players there. Because of this reason, in addition to the rental price, there is black market of such favorite rooms. The people purchase these rooms from their owners against thousand of liras and, in addition to this, they are paying money every month. The only matter is girls. There are even some persons that buy cars for the girls they met in the system, and the girls come here every day. If you wonder why 101, then go to the café houses and you will see that nobody plays normal okey there and everybody plays 101. It is an attractive game because it is played rapidly and finishes instantly, and the chat is fine as well. The incoming people are mostly admins and they speak with the ops, and this provides a prestige, even virtually, for the admins and ops. As a matter of fact, the people put on frills with their virtual prestige. Even all of the internet cafes become gold members in the Southeast Region and they are called 'café gold', because the customers come there to be in the system only. The cafes pay 110 TL in three months and their number exceeded 5 thousand throughout Turkey."

Example case 4: There is real life in this website.

(31, former supervisor of the website)

"I was a website supervisor in the past. We were evaluating the complaints and controlling the people banned and the contents. Now it is even possible to be gold member with prepaid cell minutes. I had no income, apart from eight-hour free internet access. Because I was in the management, I was able to purchase room and sell to my friends with money, for example I sold room to one of my friends against 7 milliard liras. Sale is not allowed normally. The actual reason of spreading the game to the region is chat. The number of girls is quite limited with us in comparison with the west side. They realized that there is a girl in the 'system', they had a chat, passed to MSN, opened cam there and some quarrels happened and some marriages also occurred. I had about 100 female guests to Kızıltepe. The lover of my brother is also from this website. As Kızıltepe region, we have 60 rooms. Whenever an illegal action is performed in the website, for example when they speak in Kurdish or shout slogans, then they will be banned. There are a lot of people who became aggrieved in this website and many married as well. Even the members of parliament enter the website. They are writing petitions to the prime minister because they are banned. There are people who go to the first meeting with the jewel sets, buy Peugot 306 car for the girls, girls rescuing from home and coming to the boys here, nearly everything possible..."

Example case 5: There is not only entertainment but also friendship in this website.

(M.S., age 27, driver, male)

"My monthly income is 1500 TL and I am paying 350 TL as the room rent every month. I have been in the system for four years and I am having great fun, at the same tie there is a good friend environment around there. I am also married for five years. We could establish the friendships, which we could not establish in the real environment, in virtual environment. A married female friend of me came over to visit me from Mardin in the previous week. But I lost money as well. I wanted to purchase room for 5 thousand TL, I gave the money but then the man disappeared afterwards."

Example case 6: Being "admin" in the website is like being the agha of a village!

(İ.K., 27, farmer, male)

"Because the registration plate number of Mardin is 47, I paid 7 thousand TL in order to purchase the room numbered 47 in the system. The room sale is not allowed. I spent 4 thousand TL more to take it back. Being admin in the website is like being the agha of a village. Everybody should obey the words of the 'admin'. Imagine that you have people of 100 persons. You can kick out anybody from this village and you can make anybody 'op' and authorize further. I had no personal income, and the man was making money through us. When the room is taken back from me, I stopped hanging out the website as before."

Example case 7: The people have a lot of reasons to be in the website!

(A.B., age 37, self-employed, male)

It is totally based on money, if you have money, than this place is a heaven of women. You buy the airplane ticket of the woman, accommodate her in a hotel for one week, buy foods and beverages for her and show her around, buy some gifts for her and then send her back. There are also men who deceive the women and get their

debts paid. Recently a woman performed belly dance in front of me for two hours. According to my opinion, the primary reason of such spreading of the website is unemployment, and the second reason is that the men can see women there. There are such people that, they sell their lands and sell their cows and buy room in the website. There are some people who sell 100.000 square meters land and sell their cars and even sell their houses. I know a kid from Cizre, his house, job and car are captured by a girl, he will work as a waiter in Antalya but he does not have even travel money. There is no peace in the houses, the marriages are dissolved and the women accept is compulsorily not to lose their husbands. A man divorced his wife in the past in a village, also he had a child, and the woman begged saying that "Do not send me out, I can be slave of you", but the man did not listen. He brought a girl from Tekirdag, this girl deceived the man and disappeared, and then the man committed suicide.

4. Results and Discussion

We want to start the conclusion chapter by means of making a comment relating to the exemplary cases. In the research, even if the participants pronounce the concepts such as "ip, admin, op, cam, face, online" which they do not know the English meanings, the answer was obvious: These persons were expressing the everything they could not find in the real life, women, chats, words and dreams in this geography in which the people struggle with the problems such as terror, unemployment, violence and the feeling of being marginalized for years in Turkey.

In the research, the participants define being member of Hakkarim.net which they turned into a social sharing network as commitment, unrequited love, happiness, belonging and entertainment respectively. According to this, when we look at the factors which the participants show a high level of attitude, we see some factors such as visiting Hakkarim.net became an indispensable part of the daily life and the information obtained through Hakkarim.net website is determinant on the daily conversations. As we mentioned in the website, the factors such as the marriages which are performed through the website, using the nicknames in their daily lives by the people, and even assigning such nicknames to their company names, bankruptcies and the murders committed because of the website show us that, the participants think that its influences are real although Hakkarim.net website is virtual. Likewise, this situation is put forward in the attitude scale as well.

As a result of the research, the important point here is that the members of the website which is established in a patriarchal region and estimated to have a patriarchal structure do not consider Hakkarim.net website in a patriarchal structure ($\overline{X}$ =2.70). Although it is estimated that the website is not patriarchal at least in terms of the user profile, it is still possible to see the signs of the "agha" culture which is another patriarchal organization in the Turkish community. It is possible to hear this from the mouth of a user in exemplary cases: "Everybody should obey the words of the 'admin'. Imagine that you have people of 100 persons. You can kick out anybody from this village and you can make anybody 'op' and authorize further." This situation is considered the result of the agha culture which has been continuing for centuries in the territory.

The website considerably acquired a legal belonging because of the deprivations in the region and to such an extent that we see that the participants could not keep their identities in the website in an amazing manner ($\overline{X}$ =2.97). In the journey which is started as game website by Hakkarim.net website, we see that it has been converted into a social sharing network in the course of time and then it became a virtual community in the present case. Likewise, we also see that 21.8% of the participants define to be member of Hakkarim.net as unrequited love, 25.5% as commitment, 18.8% happiness, 18.2% as belonging and 15.8% as entertainment. Finally it should be stated in the research that there is a meaningful difference between the attitudes of the participants in terms of profession. This difference formed up between the self-employed persons and unemployed persons and students, and the workers and students.

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