

**UNDERSTANDING RELATIONSHIP MAINTENANCE  
BEHAVIORS ON INSTAGRAM: EXPLORING THE ROLE OF  
RELATIONAL MOBILITY**

by  
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**UNDERSTANDING RELATIONSHIP MAINTENANCE  
BEHAVIORS ON INSTAGRAM: EXPLORING THE ROLE OF  
RELATIONAL MOBILITY**

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## ABSTRACT

### UNDERSTANDING RELATIONSHIP MAINTENANCE BEHAVIORS ON INSTAGRAM: EXPLORING THE ROLE OF RELATIONAL MOBILITY

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Keywords: relational mobility, relationship maintenance, investment model, social media

Growing number of research studies focus on relationship maintenance behaviors on social media. Given the prevalence of social media in today's world, this study investigates the effects of relational mobility on social media behaviors using the investment model (Rusbult et al. 1998). Instead of relying on self-report measures about participants' use of social media, this study utilizes data extraction from Instagram, providing an objective dataset of newlyweds. Specifically, the study examines the number of posts in which participants tag their partners (i.e., partner tags), the number of opposite-sex friends who are not common friends with their partners (i.e., exclusive opposite-sex friends), and the number of users that both partners follow (i.e., common followings). The results indicate that relational mobility does not predict partner tags although significant gender differences were found. Additionally, relational mobility predicts the number of exclusive opposite-sex friends when gender is not included in the model. However, including gender made the effect of relational mobility on the number of exclusive opposite-sex friends non-significant. Lastly, relational mobility does not predict the number of common followings for both genders. This study provides novel insights by examining the effect of relational mobility on relationship maintenance strategies on Instagram using objective data.

## ÖZET

### INSTAGRAM'DA İLİŞKİ SÜRDÜRME DAVRANIŞLARINI ANLAMAK: İLİŞKİSEL HAREKETLİLİĞİN ROLÜNÜ KEŞFETMEK

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Anahtar Kelimeler: ilişki hareketliliği, ilişki sürdürme stratejileri, yatırım modeli, sosyal medya

Artan sayıda araştırma, sosyal medyada kullanıcıların ilişkilerine olan bağlılık davranışlarına odaklanmaktadır. Bugünün dünyasında sosyal medyanın yaygınlığı göz önüne alındığında, bu çalışma ilişki hareketliliğinin sosyal medya davranışları üzerindeki etkilerini yatırım modelini (Rusbult vd. 1998) kullanarak araştırmaktadır. Katılımcıların sosyal medya kullanımına ilişkin öz bildirim ölçümlerine güvenmek yerine, bu çalışma Instagram'dan veri çıkarma yöntemini kullanarak, yeni evli çiftlerin Instagram davranışları hakkında objektif bir veri setine sahiptir. Özellikle, çalışma katılımcıların partnerlerini etiketledikleri gönderi sayısını, partnerleriyle ortak arkadaş olmayan karşı cinsiyetten arkadaşların sayısını ve her iki partnerin de takip ettiği kullanıcı sayısını incelemektedir. Sonuçlar, ilişki hareketliliğinin partner etiketlerini öngörmediğini, ancak önemli cinsiyet farklılıkları bulunduğunu göstermektedir. Ek olarak, ilişki hareketliliğinin cinsiyetin modele dahil edilmediği durumda kişilerin partnerleriyle ortak arkadaş olmayan karşı cinsiyetten arkadaşlarının sayısını öngördüğü görülmüştür. Ancak, cinsiyetin modele dahil edilmesi, ilişki hareketliliğinin kişilerin partnerleriyle ortak arkadaş olmayan karşı cinsiyetten arkadaşlarının sayısı üzerindeki etkisini anlamsız hale getirmiştir. Son olarak, ilişki hareketliliği her iki cinsiyet için de ortak takip edilenlerin sayısını öngörmemektedir. Bu çalışma, Instagram'da ilişki sürdürme stratejilerine ilişki hareketliliğinin etkisini objektif veriler kullanarak inceleyerek yeni içgörüler sunmaktadır.

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*To my loved ones*

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The importance of responsive and loving social bonds is discussed in many theories, such as Baumeister and Leary's (1995) sense of belonging theory, Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs theory, and Deci and Ryan's (2001) self-determination theory. In this broad field of social interactions, romantic relationships attracted the attention of many researchers and had extensive literature. Once humans form a romantic bond, they typically strive to nurture and sustain it. For instance, people may use different relationship maintenance strategies to strengthen their relationships or alleviate possible threats. As an illustration, research studies have shown that individuals in highly committed relationships tend to underestimate the attractiveness of potential alternative partners, often due to unconscious processes (Cole et al. 2016; Rusbult et al. 2001). Likewise, individuals tend to view their romantic partners more favorably than their partners evaluate themselves (Murray et al. 1996). Holding positive illusions about one's partner engages cognitive and behavioral resources. Once these positive illusions are formed, individuals tend to evaluate their partner in a more positive light, leading to more positive behaviors toward their partner (Ogolsky et al. 2017). Behaviors that aim to understand and support the partner's needs are considered important relationship maintenance strategies that contribute to relationship satisfaction and enhance relationship quality (Reis 2007).

Given the widespread use of social media globally, romantic partners are expected to also engage in relationship maintenance behaviors on social networking sites (SNS). Inspired by the investment model components of relationship maintenance, I aimed to explore how relational mobility impacts relationship maintenance behaviors on SNS in the present study. Relational mobility refers to the extent to which individuals have the freedom to shape and change their social relationships based on their own autonomous decisions (Kito et al. 2017). Research indicates that individuals with high levels of relational mobility demonstrate greater engagement in relationship maintenance behaviors, including higher levels of love, self-disclosure, and support, compared to individuals with low levels of relational mobility (Kito et

al. 2017). In this thesis, conducted with a sample of newlywed couples, I examined the potential role of SNS usage as a tool for relationship maintenance. Specifically, the study explored whether relational mobility would predict relationship maintenance behaviors on Instagram.

## 1.1 Relationship Maintenance

Romantic partners hold cognitions and behaviors that help their relationship to endure. The investment model of (Rusbult et al. 1998) helps to understand why partners choose to remain in committed relationships considering factors such as satisfaction, alternative quality and investment size. The satisfaction factor is positively associated with commitment, indicating the individual's overall happiness and contentment within the romantic relationship. Conversely, the alternative quality factor is negatively correlated with commitment as it examines the presence of potential alternative partners, which may influence the inclination to end the current romantic relationship. The third component of the investment model, called investment size, refers to the resources individuals allocate to their relationships, such as time, effort, and emotional energy. The level of investment size made by an individual influences their perception of commitment. In other words, the more an individual invests in their relationship, the stronger their sense of commitment becomes. The investment model posits that these three factors work together to influence relationship commitment and maintenance (Rusbult 1980). The modified version of Rusbult's investment model (1980), which was proposed by (Agnew et al. 2008), places emphasis on satisfaction and alternative quality, similar to the original investment model. Additionally, it incorporates valued linkages that mirror the investment size and subjective norms that conceptualize the influence of individuals outside the relationship (Agnew et al. 2008). Rusbult's investment model (1980) emphasizes the active role of individuals in their relationships, including the allocation of resources and the use of strategies like the derogation of alternatives as a means of mitigating threats (Ogolsky et al. 2017).

The investment model offers a valuable framework for organizing various relationship maintenance behaviors (Rusbult et al. 1998). Love, self-disclosure, support, and derogation of alternative partners are some strategies that assist romantic relationships (Karremans and Finkenauer 2015). Love, in particular, serves as a powerful tool for relationship retention by strengthening the romantic bond. Research has shown that high levels of love foster commitment and reduce one's attention toward

alternative romantic partners (Kito et al. 2017).

Self-disclosure is an effective strategy for increasing commitment within a relationship. Similar to love, self-disclosure plays a crucial role in demonstrating commitment within a relationship. It involves individuals willingly sharing information with their partners, encompassing a wide range of topics from everyday details to personal vulnerabilities. Such disclosures convey trust and vulnerability, thus fostering intimacy and commitment (Karremans and Finkenauer 2015; Schug et al. 2010). Furthermore, research indicates that self-disclosure plays a significant role in cultivating liking and connection between individuals. As people develop a liking for someone, they tend to engage in increased self-disclosure, creating a self-fulfilling prophecy where the act of disclosing leads to further closeness and connection (Collins and Miller 1994).

Social support serves as another mechanism for maintaining strong bonds within relationships (Ogolsky et al. 2017). In particular, the perception of partner responsiveness is associated with higher levels of relationship satisfaction and more effective communication. Being a responsive partner involves the ability to understand and empathize with one's partner's needs, offering appropriate assistance, and being emotionally available (Reis 2007). By demonstrating responsiveness, individuals contribute to their partner's well-being and foster a more fulfilling and satisfying relationship.

Additionally, threat mitigation strategies serve as alternative means of investing in a relationship. One method for threat mitigation is to be inattentive to romantic alternatives. High relationship satisfaction, investment size, and commitment levels were associated with less attentiveness to possible romantic alternatives. According to research, partners who showed high attentiveness to potential alternative partners tended to break up with their romantic partner two months later. People in committed romantic relationships tend to underestimate the attractiveness of opposite-sex partners more than single people (Miller 1997). Committed individuals in romantic relationships often exhibit a tendency to place a higher value on their relationship. In the study (Rusbult et al. 2000), participants were assigned to a relationship-threatening or control condition. Then researchers asked participants to determine the positive and negative aspects that make their relationship unique. Results showed that committed partners in a relationship-threatening condition overvalued their relationship by emphasizing more positive aspects.

Moreover, the impact of others on the dynamics of a relationship extends to the significance of receiving approval from one's social network, which holds significance in maintaining the relationship. For example, when close others express approval

of the relationship, there is a decreased likelihood of a breakup (Felmlee 2001). Similarly, social network approval can increase one’s investment in the relationship (Sprecher 2011).

Previous research has shown that individuals employ various relationship maintenance behaviors to mitigate threats and enhance their relationships. These behaviors are aimed at sustaining and improving the quality of the relationship (Ogolsky et al. 2017). However, whether people engage in relationship maintenance behaviors on SNS is an understudied area.

## **1.2 Using Social Media as a Form of Relationship Maintenance**

Through technological advances, many people use SNS to maintain and strengthen their relationships (Craig and Wright 2012; Hall 2014; Fejes-Vékássy et al. 2020). SNS presents a novel approach to relationship maintenance by enabling couples to publicly share their dyadic moments. These platforms offer romantic partners an opportunity to post dyadic photos and relationship-relevant information. These public displays of connection not only reflect their strong bond but also contribute to the reinforcement and enhancement of their relationship. (Saslow et al. 2012). Another benefit that SNS provides is sharing content through messages. For example, a study conducted with a sample of undergraduate students in Canada demonstrated that instant messaging on Facebook serves as an effective tool for relationship maintenance (Quan-Haase and Young 2010). Research shows that these online opportunities are perceived as relationship investment behaviors by partners and enhance partners’ relationship satisfaction and commitment (Mod, 2010; Toma and Choi 2015; Marcotte et al. 2020). Announcing the relationship to one’s Facebook network, the number of dyadic photos shared, and the number of comments the partner posted on the participant’s Facebook wall were positively related to relationship commitment, as measured by the relationship commitment subscale of the investment model (Toma and Choi 2015). In a study utilizing Rusbult’s (1998) Likert scale to evaluate commitment level, quality of alternatives, satisfaction level, and investment size, individuals who perceive themselves as more inclusive of their partners’ values, known as Inclusion of Other in the Self (IOS) (Aron, Aron, and Smollan 1992), exhibited a higher degree of overlap with their partners’ Facebook profiles in comparison to those with lower levels of IOS. The study revealed that a greater extent of overlap in Facebook profiles was linked to increased engagement in investment behaviors within relationships and a stronger expression of IOS. Additionally, higher levels of

Facebook IOS were predictive of lower-quality alternatives (Castañeda et al. 2015). In another study, researchers discovered an association between IOS scores and the number of tags regarding status updates and notes. The researchers put forth a hypothesis suggesting that tagging one’s partner represents a merging of interests between the individual and their partner. The underlying assumption is that individuals believe the information they share would also be of interest to their partner. Consequently, they tag their partner to create a shared experience and make the information accessible to both themselves and their partner. Consistent with their hypothesis, the researchers found that the frequency of tagging one’s partner in status updates and notes was positively associated with IOS scores (Carpenter and Spottswood 2013). From a similar point of view, tagging serves as an indicator of relationship awareness and can be considered as a technique for maintaining relationships wherein partners demonstrate their vigilance over each other. Their study revealed that tagging one’s partner in status updates was positively associated with perceived partner commitment, leading to increased relationship satisfaction (Ito et al. 2021). Photo tags serve as a strategy for relationship maintenance, specifically making the relationship public to one’s network, and were associated with relationship escalation. They provided a rationale for this finding, suggesting that making the relationship public not only allows partners to share their lives with each other but also seek social approval (Sosik and Bazarova 2014). In their 2021 study, Sharabi and Hopkins discovered several noteworthy findings. First, they observed that satisfaction within a relationship was positively associated with an increased number of pictures posted and the number of likes received on Instagram. Second, they identified a negative correlation between the presence of high-quality alternatives and engagement with a partner’s Instagram page. Lastly, the researchers found that higher levels of investment size in the relationship were linked to greater engagement with a partner’s Instagram page.

While SNS have many positive effects, it’s important to acknowledge that they can also contribute to feelings of jealousy by providing a platform to explore alternative partners. Platforms such as Facebook provide an opportunity to notice changes in other users’ profiles, such as following new friends, making new posts, and interacting with friends on each other’s walls. Being capable of such actions may result in increased levels of jealousy for romantic partners (Muisse et al. 2009). Instagram is a software where people can quickly meet with potential alternatives, such as easily accessing people more attractive than their current partners and ex-partners (Van Ouytsel et al. 2019; Utz and Beukeboom 2011). Engaging in such actions without the knowledge or consent of one’s partner can indeed lead to feelings of jealousy (Axford 2020; Utz and Beukeboom 2011). These actions can include activities like



browsing through other users' profiles or liking their posts (Ridgway and Clayton 2016). It is worth noting that having a large network on social media can potentially pose a threat, as it provides more opportunities for alternative connections (Axford 2020). Additionally, adding new friends or engaging in posts with individuals of the opposite sex can serve as sources of jealousy in the context of SNS (Baker and Carreño 2016).

Emerging research indicates that individuals' actions on social media can function as relationship-maintenance strategies. However, the extent to which these behaviors may vary depending on relational mobility is still not fully understood.

### **1.3 Relational Mobility and Relationship Maintenance Behaviors**

Relational mobility, a socio-ecological factor, plays a crucial role in determining individuals' perceptions of their freedom to initiate new relationships and end unsatisfactory ones. Those with high relational mobility prioritize their autonomy and act based on their preferences when it comes to maintaining or terminating relationships. They are more likely to replace their current partner with a more desirable one. On the other hand, individuals with low relational mobility value harmony and tend to have longer-lasting relationships (Oishi and Tsang 2022). This socio-ecological concept sheds light on the actions and contextual variations among individuals, highlighting the significant role it plays in shaping their relationship dynamics.

While the prevailing literature often relies on the individualism-collectivism framework to explain cross-cultural variations, it is important to acknowledge that high levels of relational mobility are associated with individualistic tendencies (Thomson 2018). Within this framework, research has highlighted the differential emphasis placed on romantic love and the impact of intimacy on marital satisfaction and overall well-being between individuals in individualistic and collectivistic cultures. Studies have shown that individuals in individualistic cultures tend to place greater value on romantic love compared to those in collectivistic cultures. Furthermore, the impact of intimacy on marital satisfaction and overall well-being is more significant for individuals in individualistic cultures than those in collectivistic cultures (Dion and Dion 1993). Studies involving participants from American and French cultures, characterized by high individualism, have shown higher levels of commitment, love, and disclosure maintenance than Japanese participants, who exhibit high levels of collectivism (Ting-Toomey 1991). For example, European American students,

known for their individualistic tendencies, have been found to provide more support than Japanese students, who tend to embrace collectivism (Chen et al. 2012). Additionally, research has indicated that Chinese Canadians, who exhibit lower levels of individualism, report less intimacy compared to European Canadians, who exhibit higher levels of individualism (Marshall 2008). Despite the limited body of research on how culture influences social media usage, some studies have demonstrated the impact of individualistic and collectivistic differences on this phenomenon. For example, one study found that while American students, who tend to exhibit high levels of individualism, and Korean students, who tend to exhibit high levels of collectivism, do not significantly differ in the daily duration of their social media use, their behaviors on social media platforms do vary significantly. American students have larger social networks compared to Korean students, and the composition of their networks also differs, with American students having fewer relatives and close acquaintances than Korean students (Kim et al. 2011). In another study, researchers categorized Americans as individualistic and Chinese as collectivist. The findings revealed that American participants placed higher value on social networking sites compared to their Chinese counterparts, spending more time on these platforms and having more friends (Jackson and Wang 2013). Similarly, research comparing Instagram use among Croatian and US students, where collectivism is higher in Croatia than in the US, showed that Croatian students primarily used Instagram for social interaction purposes, while American students utilized it more for self-promotion and documentation. Furthermore, American students had a larger number of followers than Croatian students, supporting the hypothesis that Croatian students' Instagram usage is more influenced by collectivistic traits than that of American students (Sheldon et al. 2017).

Moving from the discussion of individualistic and collectivistic cultures' influence on social media usage, the concept of high relational mobility in certain contexts sheds light on the dynamics of relationship maintenance and its impact on individuals' lives. In contexts with high relational mobility, both partners are more likely to act based on their preferences. This creates a continuous risk of relationship loss as both parties strive to remain in desirable relationships and terminate unsatisfactory ones (Kito et al. 2017). Consequently, behaviors aimed at relationship maintenance are more prevalent in high-relational mobility countries compared to low-relational mobility countries. Relational mobility also impacts various domains of individuals' lives, such as support-seeking, trust, and levels of self-disclosure (Kito et al. 2017). A study conducted by Komiya et al. (2019) operationalized the divorce rate as an indicator of relational mobility and gift exchange as an indicator of commitment level in a sample of married couples. The researchers found that gift exchange was

more common in the United States than in Japan, suggesting that individuals in a high relational mobility context exhibited more commitment behaviors than those in a low relational mobility context. Individuals in both Japan and the United States were more inclined to engage in self-disclosure with their friends when they perceived greater levels of relational mobility. However, interestingly, perceiving higher levels of relational mobility did not influence self-disclosure to family members in either country (Schug et al. 2010). In another study focusing specifically on Japan, the same researchers explored different levels of relational mobility within the same cultural context and found that individuals who perceived higher levels of relational mobility exhibited increased levels of self-disclosure (Schug et al. 2010). In another study conducted in two countries: Japan and the United States, researchers made a clear differentiation between individual and country levels, and their findings demonstrated significance at both levels. In contexts with higher relational mobility, individuals showed stronger passion towards their romantic partners. The study also revealed that increased levels of relational mobility intensified passion, leading to a significant increase in proximity-inducing behaviors, such as frequent contact and spending more time together. Furthermore, the heightened passion significantly predicted prioritizing the partner, even to the extent of canceling other plans to spend time with the partner. Lastly, the intensified passion was also found to significantly predict a decrease in the search for alternative partners, as individuals focused more on their current partner in crowded occasions, forgoing one-on-one meetings with members of the opposite sex (Yamada et al. 2017). Furthermore, there is a positive correlation between relational mobility and enhanced relationship quality, at both the individual and national levels, where relationship quality was evaluated based on a composite score encompassing intimacy with a romantic partner, intimacy with a close friend, self-disclosure to a romantic partner, and self-disclosure to a close friend (Park et al. 2022).

Although previous research has demonstrated that individuals in cultures characterized by high levels of individualism tend to prioritize and value love, intimacy, and support more than those in cultures with a high collectivist orientation, there is limited literature on the effects of relational mobility on relationship maintenance behaviors. Given the strong association between individualism-collectivism and relational mobility, it is reasonable to anticipate similar differences in romantic investment behaviors across different levels of relational mobility. It is essential to emphasize that relational mobility can be applied at both individual and contextual levels. Since this construct captures individuals' perceptions of the relationships in their surroundings, it can be employed at the individual level. Therefore, in this thesis, relational mobility is utilized as an individual-level construct. However, the

extent to which these differences manifest in the context of social media as a means to express commitment remains relatively unexplored.

Social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter are widely used globally. Among these platforms, Instagram has gained particular popularity among individuals aged 18 to 29 (Sheldon et al. 2017). Instagram offers various features that allow users to share visual content, follow others within their network, view shared content, express appreciation through likes, and engage through comments. Furthermore, Instagram facilitates communication within one's network through direct messages, enabling individuals to stay connected with their social environment (Fejes-Vékássy et al. 2020; Xu et al. 2018). Previous research has shown a positive association between higher levels of relational mobility and a greater tendency to engage in commitment behaviors. Given the prevalence of SNS in today's world, it is reasonable to expect differences in relationship maintenance behaviors on SNS based on varying levels of relational mobility.

#### **1.4 The Present Study**

The present study aims to examine the influence of relational mobility on individuals' behavior on SNS, utilizing the investment model. To ensure a more comprehensive analysis of relationship maintenance behaviors on social media, this study employed an integrated data collection approach that combined individual and dyadic data from Instagram. By moving beyond exclusive reliance on self-reports, this approach aimed to enhance the depth of analysis (Griffioen et al. 2020). In their review of research methodology on social media use and well-being, researchers found that the majority of the studies they examined heavily relied on self-report measures, which centered on participants' retrospective reports of their SNS usage. However, this exclusive reliance on self-reports poses challenges to the ecological validity of the findings (Griffioen et al. 2020). For example, in a study, participants' self-reported frequency of phone calls and messaging from the previous day were compared with the actual data obtained from a telecommunication company. The researchers identified a discrepancy between the self-report measures and the actual data, indicating a lack of correspondence between participants' reported behaviors and their real-world activities (Boase and Ling 2013). Although the literature on SNS behavior and romantic relationships is limited, there is an overuse of self-reports in the current literature. In contrast to previous studies that relied solely on self-reports of SNS behaviors, the present study measured SNS behavior directly from partici-

pants' Instagram accounts. This approach reduces recall errors and helps mitigate self-presentation biases.

My first research question aims to explore whether relational mobility can predict the number of partner tags. The hypothesis is based on the idea that tagging one's partner in posts can be viewed as an investment behavior. Investment size in this context is associated with resources that individuals contribute to the relationship. Tagging one's partner in posts serves as a symbol of commitment to the relationship, as it showcases the partner's presence in the individual's life by featuring them in their feed (Goodcase 2019). Tagging a partner on social media can imply that they are in a committed relationship and not available for dating, as this act signals public verification of the romantic relationship. Studies have shown that people who publicly post their relationship status on platforms like Facebook tend to have higher commitment levels, greater relationship satisfaction, and perceive lower alternative quality compared to those who do not. Additionally, posting a relationship status on Facebook has been associated with increased levels of investment in the relationship (Lane et al. 2016). Given that sharing about the relationship reflects the partner's connectedness and the tendency for highly satisfied partners to share about their relationship, combined with the knowledge that individuals with high levels of relational mobility exhibit more commitment behaviors (Komiya et al. 2019), I hypothesized that relational mobility would positively predict the number of partner tags.

My second research question investigates the relationship between relational mobility and the number of exclusive opposite-sex friends. The rationale behind this question stems from the potential role of these opposite-sex friends as alternatives to the participant, leading to two contrasting possibilities. Firstly, individuals with high relational mobility are often characterized by a greater number of relationships and an active search for more fulfilling connections while terminating unsatisfactory ones. Consequently, it is plausible that higher relational mobility predicts a larger number of exclusive opposite-sex friends. These opposite-sex friends may have been part of the participant's social network on SNS prior to entering into a relationship. Conversely, drawing on the investment model, it is also conceivable that higher relational mobility would forecast a smaller number of exclusive opposite-sex friends. This line of thinking is grounded in the notion that higher relational mobility indirectly reduces the pursuit of alternative options by discouraging one-on-one interactions with the opposite sex (Yamada et al. 2017). Consequently, this may lead to the removal of opposite-sex friends from the participant's SNS network. In summary, my second research question aims to explore whether relational mobility is associated with the number of exclusive opposite-sex friends. This investigation is

driven by two competing possibilities based on the participant's pursuit of satisfying relationships and the investment model's perspective on relational mobility.

My final research question aims to explore the relationship between relational mobility and the number of common followings. The rationale behind this question is based on the idea that a greater number of common followings can be interpreted as a measure of investment in the relationship. To be considered a common friend in the social network, the individual should be added as a friend by both partners. This suggests that the partners have introduced their social networks to each other and have become friends with each other's social circles. Additionally, in line with the modified version of the investment model, becoming friends with each other's social networks on Instagram may suggest the approval of the partners' social circles. The hypothesis proposes that higher levels of relational mobility will predict a larger number of common followings between partners.

While my research did not specifically focus on gender, studies indicate that behaviors on SNS vary between genders. The literature on gender differences in Internet use enlarges, but research on the effects of SNS on romantic relationships is limited (Colley and Maltby 2008; Utz and Beukeboom 2011). Based on the current literature, women tend to utilize SNS with more emotional motivations, whereas men are more inclined to use SNS for informative purposes (Ye et al. 2018). Women's SNS usage is often focused on relationships and emotions, while men tend to prioritize status and technology-oriented activities on SNS (Haferkamp et al. 2012). Additionally, women actively employ relationship maintenance strategies on SNS, such as posting photos, sending messages, and leaving public messages on their partner's page, which they engage in more frequently than men (Muscanell and Guadagno 2011). In terms of time spent on SNS, multiple studies indicate that women spend more time on Facebook compared to men (Muisse et al. 2009; Haferkamp 2012; Legkauskas and Kudlaitė 2022; Kim and Yoo 2016; Acar 2008). Moreover, women tend to actively build and shape their profiles more than men (Haferkamp 2012; Legkauskas and Kudlaitė 2022). Men are more likely to meet new people on SNS, while women tend to have a network comprising mostly existing social relationships (Haferkamp, 2012; Mazman and Koçak Usluel 2011). In terms of motivations for using SNS, men are more motivated to utilize SNS for potential dating opportunities compared to women (Muscanell and Guadagno 2012). Women tend to use SNS to maintain their friendships more than men (Tufekci 2008). Furthermore, women tend to gather information by browsing other users' profiles and engaging in social comparisons more frequently than men (Haferkamp et al. 2012). Gender differences are also evident in the types of posts shared on SNS. Women tend to use more portrait photos, while men prefer full-body shots and change their profile

pictures more frequently (Haferkamp et al. 2012). Women are more likely to make appearance-related comparisons than men (Legkauskas, V. and Kudlaitė, U. 2022). Women share public messages, create new posts, use direct messages, and add new people to their network more frequently than men (Muscanell and Guadagno 2012). Women tend to act earlier than men in following their partner's close network, such as family members, and also share more about the relationship on SNS (Fox and Anderegg 2014). Women experience more Facebook jealousy than men (Muisse et al. 2009). As a result of the existing research on gender differences in SNS behavior, I also explored the role of gender as part of an exploratory analysis for all of my research questions.

## 2. METHOD

### 2.1 Participants

This study is part of a longitudinal research project funded by TUBITAK (The Scientific and Technological Research Institution of Turkey; Project No: 220K274) that investigates individual differences in desired partner support.

In the original study, a total of 472 participants (236 couples) took part. However, for the purpose of this thesis, only couples who use Instagram were included, resulting in a sample size of 254 participants (127 couples).

The age of participants varied from 24 to 49 ( $M = 30.79$ ,  $SD = 3.20$ ). The marriage duration of participants changed from 1.31 years to 3.84 years ( $M = 2.84$ ,  $SD = .58$ ). Participants' duration of knowing each other ranged from 2 years to 23 years ( $M = 6.83$ ,  $SD = 4.05$ ). Two hundred twenty participants completed at least some higher education, and 18 completed high school or less (16 missings). The participants' monthly income ranged from 1 to 23 on an income level scale. Each bracket represents an increase of 2000 TL, meaning that Bracket 1 corresponds to incomes between 0-2000 TL, Bracket 2 corresponds to incomes between 2000-4000 TL, and so on. The scale is based on income brackets, where 1 indicates a monthly income lower than 2000 TL, and 23 represents a monthly income exceeding 50000 TL ( $M = 7.97$ ,  $SD = 4.07$ ). The majority of participants reported an income between 8000 TL and 10000 TL. On average, participants' perceptions of subjective socioeconomic status (SES) were 6.21 ( $SD = 1.53$ ).

Participants' daily use of Instagram was measured on a scale from 1 to 10, representing the number of hours spent on Instagram each day. A score of 1 indicated daily use of less than one hour, while a score of 10 represented daily use of more than 10 hours. Each bracket represents an increase of one hour. On average, participants reported daily use of Instagram for 2.61 hours ( $SD = 1.67$ ). Most participants (29.8%)



reported daily use of Instagram between 1 and 2 hours. On average, participants followed 601.78 users (SD = 373.33, range: 54 - 2229) and followed by 512.49 users (SD = 926.50, range: 25 - 10525). On average, participants had 1.27 Instagram accounts (SD = .56). The majority of participants (86.6%) used their Instagram accounts without their romantic partners, while a small percentage (7.1%) indicated using their accounts jointly with their partner. The privacy settings of participants' Instagram accounts varied, with 66.9% of accounts set to private, 17.7% set to public, and 9.1% having both private and public accounts (6.3% missing data). Participants were asked to indicate the extent to which they use Instagram to follow people they know from their daily life and people they do not personally know on a constant sum scale. The sum of these two statements should be equal to 100. Most participants (M = 69.42, SD = 22.58) reported using Instagram primarily to follow people they know from their daily life, such as friends and family members. In contrast, a smaller proportion of participants (M = 30.58, SD = 22.58) indicated using Instagram to follow people they do not personally know, such as celebrities. Participants were again asked to indicate their level of active or passive usage of Instagram, specifically in terms of posting, commenting, or viewing their friends' posts. Ratings were provided on a constant sum scale totaling 100. The majority of participants reported a higher preference for viewing their friends' posts (e.g., passive usage) (M = 69.27, SD = 25.63) compared to actively posting content (e.g., active usage) (M = 30.63, SD = 25.63). Most participants (31.5%) reported that Instagram holds neither significant importance nor insignificance to them. The mean age to sign up for Instagram was 21.91 (SD = 4.27). 62.6% of participants reported that their frequency of using Instagram remained unchanged after their marriage, while 26.8% experienced a decrease in their Instagram usage. Additionally, 4.3% of participants reported an increase in their Instagram usage, while 6.3% of participants had missing data for this question (See Table 2.1).

Table 2.1 Sample characteristics

Variable	M	SD	Range
Marriage Duration (years)	2.84	0.58	1.31–3.84
Duration of Knowing Each Other (years)	6.83	4.05	2–23
Education	0.85	0.53	-1–1
Income	7.97	4.07	3–26
Socioeconomic Status	6.21	1.53	2–10
Daily Use of Instagram (hours)	2.61	1.67	1–11
Number of Followers	512.49	926.50	25–10525

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Variable	M	SD	Range
Number of Followings	601.78	373.33	54–2229
Number of Instagram Accounts	1.27	0.56	1–5
Using Instagram with Partner	1.92	0.27	1–2
Public & Private Account	1.91	0.53	1–3
Network Characteristics: Following People They Know	69.42	22.58	5–100
Network Characteristics: Following People They Do Not Know	30.58	22.58	0–95
Active Usage of Instagram	30.63	25.63	0–100
Passive Usage of Instagram	69.37	25.63	0–100
Importance of Instagram for the Participant	3.70	1.44	1–7
Age to Sign Up for Instagram	21.90	4.24	5–41
Frequency of Instagram Usage after Marriage	1.76	0.53	1–3

*Notes:* Education was assessed using a 7-point scale (1=primary school, 7=Ph.D. degree). To simplify the analysis, we recoded education as -1 to represent high school or less, and 1 to indicate some higher education. Income was assessed using 23 brackets, each bracket representing a 2000 TL increase. Socioeconomic status was assessed by asking participants to rate their socioeconomic status on a 10-step ladder, following the method described by (Adler et al., 2000). Daily use of Instagram was assessed using 11 brackets, with each bracket representing a 1-hour increase in usage. Number of Instagram accounts was assessed using a multiple-choice question with the options: only one, 2, 3, 4, or more than 4. Using Instagram with a partner was assessed using a yes or no question, with 1 indicating "yes" and 2 indicating "no". The type of Instagram account (public or private) was assessed using a multiple-choice question with options: public (1), private (2), or both (3). Network characteristics were measured using a constant sum scale, where participants allocated a total of 100 points between following people they know and following people they do not know. Active and passive usage of Instagram was assessed using a constant sum scale, where participants allocated a total of 100 points between active and passive usage. Frequency of Instagram usage after marriage was assessed using a multiple-choice question with the options: decreased (1), stayed the same (2), or increased (3). Relational mobility was grand-mean centered.

To estimate statistical power, I first calculated the effective sample size for the effect of relational mobility on two variables: partner tags and the number of exclusive opposite-sex friends. The effective sample size takes into account the lack of independence in my dyadic data while considering the number of observations. To calculate the effective sample size, I utilized intraclass coefficients (ICC) (Wiley

and Wiley 2019). For this study, I calculated the intraclass correlation coefficient (ICC) by dividing the dyad-level variance by the sum of within-level and dyad-level variance in the null model. Following that, I conducted a sensitivity analysis to ascertain the minimum effect size necessary to attain a power of 80%. For the first research question, investigating the effect of relational mobility on the number of posts that participants tagged their partner, the standardized association that could be detected with a power of 80% was .21. For the second research question, exploring the effect of relational mobility on the number of exclusive opposite-sex friends, the standardized association that could be detected with a power of 80% was .22. However, since my third question was identical for both partners in the couple, there was no need to calculate an effective sample size. In terms of the effect of relational mobility on the number of common followings, the standardized association that could be detected with a power of 80% was .19. The present research was approved by the Sabancı University Research Ethics Committee prior to data collection.

## 2.2 Procedures

This study specifically targeted participants who were native Turkish speakers and had been married for a maximum of two years, with a particular focus on individuals in their first marriage.

Eligibility was determined through a survey completed by participants, and eligible individuals received invitation emails from the research team to participate in the study. Respondents who replied to the research team's email were invited to an online meeting, where they received detailed information about the study. Subsequently, participants were requested to follow the laboratory's Instagram account and approve the laboratory's following request. To extract data from Instagram, an algorithm was employed to automatically retrieve the relevant indicators of interest.

This longitudinal project was conducted over five waves with intervals of three months. The first wave consisted of two sessions, encompassing both demographic information and additional measurements (See Appendix A.4). The remaining four waves were completed in a single session with three-month intervals between each. This thesis includes the demographic data collected during the first wave and assessments of relational mobility collected during the second and third waves. It is important to note that relational mobility was not measured in the first wave. Social media behaviors were extracted during the first six months of 2022. At the time of writing this thesis, the first three waves had been completed. To enhance

the measure's reliability, I utilized the mean of relational mobility assessed in the second and third waves. Participants engaged in the study by completing all surveys online using the Qualtrics software. Respondents willingly participated in the study and received monetary compensation and gift cards as a token of appreciation for their time and contribution.

To ensure ethical compliance, participants were initially asked to approve the informed consent for the study (See Appendix A.1), which included the extraction of social media data. The measures employed in the study were counterbalanced, and the items within the scales were randomized to minimize potential order effects.

## 2.3 Measures

### 2.3.0.1 Relational mobility

Participants were asked to complete twelve items of the relational mobility scale created by Yuki and colleagues (2007) (See Appendix A.2). The relational mobility scale has two sub-dimensions: choosing and meeting. The meeting sub-component refers to the opportunities to encounter and establish new connections with individuals, within the boundaries set by the prevailing social context (e.g., "It is common for these people to have a conversation with someone they have never met before."). Choosing sub-component refers to the extent to which a social context grants individuals the freedom to select and terminate their current interpersonal relationships and group memberships. (e.g., "If they did not like their current groups, they could leave for better ones.") (Thomson et al. 2018). These sub-dimensions are highly correlated. Participants rated the items on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree). The correlations for meeting and choosing sub-components in waves two and three were .447 and .540, respectively. The correlation between relational mobility in waves two and three was .415 ( $M = 4.68$ ,  $SD = .97$ ,  $\alpha = .85$  for wave 2,  $M = 4.62$ ,  $SD = 1.03$ ,  $\alpha = .86$  for wave 3). To increase the reliability, I used the mean score of two assessments of relational mobility ( $M = 4.66$ ,  $SD = .86$ ,  $\alpha = .89$ ) and centered relational mobility for data analysis.

### 2.3.0.2 Social media behavior

Participants were asked to follow our laboratory’s Instagram account and accept our follow request if their account was private as part of the social media component of the project. Besides self-report measures on social media (See Appendix A.3), an algorithm was employed to extract data from participants’ Instagram profiles, providing objective measures for various parameters. The extracted data included the number of posts, followers, followings, and female and male friends in their network. Additionally, it captured the number of friends participants had in common with their partners, both overall and categorized by gender. Furthermore, the algorithm identified the number of exclusive opposite-sex friends. It also counted the number of partner tags, the number of people they tagged in their posts, and the number of posts in which they tagged themselves. For this study, I used the partner tags, the number of people the participant tagged in their posts, the number of friends, the number of common followings, and the number of exclusive opposite-sex friends. By leveraging this algorithmic approach, the study obtained objective measures of participants’ Instagram profiles, enabling a more accurate analysis of their social connections and activities.

To ensure the normality of the social media behavior data, extreme values were adjusted using winsorization (See Appendix A.5).

Specifically, the number of partner tags exhibited positive skewness (skewness = 3.99, kurtosis = 26.26). A majority of the posts (95.3%) had values equal to or less than 29. Therefore, values exceeding 29 were winsorized to 29. This adjustment reduced the skewness of the distribution (skewness = 1.58, kurtosis = 1.31) (See Figure A.1 and Figure A.2).

Similarly, the distribution of the number of people that participants tagged in their posts also showed positive skewness (skewness = 3.45, kurtosis = 15.05). The majority of the values (93.7%) were equal to or less than 43. Therefore, values greater than 43 were winsorized to 43, resulting in reduced skewness (skewness = .54, kurtosis = -.98) (See Figure A.3 and Figure A.4).

For the variable representing the number of exclusive opposite-sex friends, the distribution displayed positive skewness (skewness = 1.22, kurtosis = 1.92). Approximately 95.7% of the values were equal to or less than 223. Values exceeding 223 were winsorized to 223, leading to reduced skewness (skewness = .58, kurtosis = -.55) (See Figure A.5 and Figure A.6).

Likewise, the distribution of the number of common followings exhibited positive

skewness (skewness = 1.30, kurtosis = 2.57). The majority of the values (95.3%) were equal to or less than 115. Values exceeding 115 were winsorized to 115, resulting in reduced skewness (skewness = .61, kurtosis = -.00) (See Figure A.7 and Figure A.8).

Lastly, the distribution of the number of followings exhibited positive skewness (skewness = 1.47, kurtosis = 2.76). The majority of the values (95.7%) were equal to or less than 1360. Values exceeding 1360 were winsorized to 115, resulting in reduced skewness (skewness = 0.81, kurtosis = .06) (See Figure A.9 and Figure A.10).

By winsorizing the extreme values, the distributions of these variables were adjusted to better meet the assumption of normality, allowing for more accurate statistical analyses.

### 3. DATA ANALYTIC STRATEGY

I used multilevel modeling for the effect of relational mobility on the partner tags, and the number of exclusive opposite-sex friends, as participants were nested within couples. There were two levels of data; Level 1 included participants ( $N = 254$ ), whereas Level 2 included couples ( $N = 127$ ). I conducted these multilevel analyses on HLM 7 Hierarchical Linear and Nonlinear Modeling. HLM 7 is a software well-suited for analyzing clustered data due to its ability to account for the clustered structure and dependency within the data. By incorporating random effects at different levels, HLM7 effectively captures the hierarchical nature of the data, allowing for an accurate representation of the dependency among observations within clusters. This consideration of random effects helps account for the clustered structure and ensures that the analysis appropriately addresses the dependency present in the data. For all analyses, I used grand-mean centered relational mobility and utilized winsorized variables of interest. All intercepts varied among individuals. For the multilevel model analyses, I initially created the indistinguishable model since I did not have a specific hypothesis related to gender differences. After running the analysis for the indistinguishable model, I then created the distinguishable model by adding gender, the control variable, and the interaction between gender and relational mobility.

For my first research question, Equation 1 presents the indistinguishable model illustrating the relationship between relational mobility and the number of partner tags.

Level 1 Model (within-dyad) (Equation 1):

$$\text{PartnerTags}_{ij} = \beta_{0j} + \beta_{1j} \cdot (\text{cRelationalMobility}_{ij}) + r_{ij}$$

Level 2 Model (between-dyad):

$$\beta_{0j} = \gamma_{00} + u_{0j}$$

$$\beta_{1j} = \gamma_{10}$$

The level-1 equation in the indistinguishable model explains within-dyad variation in partner tagging behavior as described in the mixed model.  $\text{PartnerTags}_{ij}$  refers to the partner tags for participant  $i$  in couple  $j$ , which is a function of the couple's relational mobility.  $\beta_{0j}$  refers to the predicted number of partner tags when relational mobility is average, with relational mobility being grand mean centered.  $\beta_{1j}$  refers to the change in the number of partner tags when grand mean-centered relational mobility increases by one unit. It estimates the relationship between the number of partner tags and the grand mean-centered relational mobility for dyad  $j$ .

Equation 2 represents the distinguishable model, demonstrating the impact of grand-mean centered relational mobility, effect-coded gender (Female = 1, Male = -1), and the number of people the participant tagged in their posts on the number of partner tags. To account for the participant's inclination to use the tagging feature, I controlled for the number of people they tagged in their posts. It is reasonable to expect that individuals who frequently utilize the tagging feature may also tag their partner.

Level-1 Model (within-dyad) (Equation 2):

$$\begin{aligned} \text{PartnerTags}_{ij} = & \beta_{0j} + \beta_{1j} \cdot (\text{cRelationalMobility}_{ij}) \\ & + \beta_{2j} \cdot (\text{Gender}_{ij}) + \beta_{3j} \cdot (\text{UniqueTags}_{ij}) + r_{ij} \end{aligned}$$

Level-2 Model (between-dyad):

$$\beta_{0j} = \gamma_{00} + u_{0j}$$

$$\beta_{1j} = \gamma_{10}$$

$$\beta_{2j} = \gamma_{20}$$

$$\beta_{3j} = \gamma_{30}$$

where  $\beta_{0j}$  represents the number of partner tags when all predictors are zero.  $\beta_{1j}$  represents the effect of grand mean-centered relational mobility on the number of partner tags.  $\beta_{2j}$  represents the effect of gender on the number of partner tags.  $\beta_{3j}$  represents the effect of the number of people the participant tagged in their posts on the number of partner tags.  $\gamma_{10}, \gamma_{20}, \gamma_{30}$  refer to the grand mean of grand mean-centered relational mobility, gender, and the number of people the participant tagged in their posts, respectively.

Lastly, I observed whether the grand mean-centered relational mobility moderated the association between the distinguishable variable, gender, and the number of partner tags. Equation 3 shows the interaction effect as follows:



Level-1 Model (within-dyad) (Equation 3):

$$\begin{aligned} \text{PartnerTags}_{ij} = & \beta_{0j} + \beta_{1j} \cdot (\text{cRelationalMobility}_{ij}) + \beta_{2j} \cdot (\text{Gender}_{ij}) \\ & + \beta_{3j} \cdot (\text{UniqueTags}_{ij}) + \beta_{4j} \cdot (\text{Gender} \times \text{cRelationalMobility}_{ij}) + r_{ij} \end{aligned}$$

Level-2 Model (between-dyad):

$$\beta_{0j} = \gamma_{00} + u_{0j}$$

$$\beta_{1j} = \gamma_{10}$$

$$\beta_{2j} = \gamma_{20}$$

$$\beta_{3j} = \gamma_{30}$$

$$\beta_{4j} = \gamma_{40}$$

where  $\beta_{4j}$  represents the effect of the association between gender and relational mobility on the number of partner tags, and  $\gamma_{40}$  refers to the grand mean of the interaction effect between gender and relational mobility.

For my second research question, I again used multilevel modeling to see the effect of relational mobility on the number of exclusive opposite-sex friends. Equation 4 shows the effect of relational mobility, which is grand-mean centered, on the number of exclusive opposite-sex friends.

Level 1 Model (within-dyad) (Equation 4):

$$\text{ExclusiveOpposite-SexFriends}_{ij} = \beta_{0j} + \beta_{1j} \cdot (\text{cRelationalMobility}_{ij}) + r_{ij}$$

Level 2 Model (between-dyad):

$$\beta_{0j} = \gamma_{00} + u_{0j}$$

$$\beta_{1j} = \gamma_{10}$$

The level-1 model in the indistinguishable model explains within-dyad variation in having exclusive opposite-sex friends as described in the mixed model.  $\text{ExclusiveOpposite-SexFriends}_{ij}$  refers to having exclusive opposite-sex friends for participant  $i$  in couple  $j$ , which is a function of the couple's relational mobility.  $\beta_{0j}$  refers to predicted having exclusive opposite-sex friends when relational mobility is average with relational mobility being grand mean centered.  $\beta_{1j}$  refers to the change in having exclusive opposite-sex friends when grand mean-centered relational mobility increased by one unit and is an estimate of the relationship between having exclusive opposite-sex friends and the grand-mean centered relational mobility for dyad  $j$ .

I created the distinguishable model as an exploratory analysis by adding effect-

coded gender (Female = 1, Male = -1) to the equation. Equation 5 shows the effect of grand mean-centered relational mobility and gender on the number of exclusive opposite-sex friends.

Level 1 Model (within-dyad) (Equation 5):

$$\text{ExclusiveOpposite-SexFriends}_{ij} = \beta_{0j} + \beta_{1j} \cdot (\text{cRelationalMobility}_{ij}) + \beta_{2j} \cdot (\text{Gender}_{ij}) + r_{ij}$$

Level 2 Model (between-dyad):

$$\beta_{0j} = \gamma_{00} + u_{0j}$$

$$\beta_{1j} = \gamma_{10}$$

$$\beta_{2j} = \gamma_{20}$$

$\beta_{0j}$  refers to the number of exclusive opposite-sex friends when grand mean-centered relational mobility and gender are zero.  $\beta_{1j}$  refers to the effect of grand mean-centered relational mobility on the number of exclusive opposite-sex friends.  $\beta_{2j}$  refers to the effect of gender on the number of exclusive opposite-sex friends.  $\gamma_{00}$ ,  $\gamma_{10}$ ,  $\gamma_{20}$  refer to the grand mean of the number of exclusive opposite-sex friends, grand mean centered relational mobility, and gender, respectively.  $u_{0j}$  refers to the couple's deviation from the grand mean.

Lastly, I observed whether the grand mean-centered relational mobility moderated the association between the distinguishable variable, gender, and the number of exclusive opposite-sex friends. Equation 6 shows the interaction effect as follows:

Level 1 Model (within-dyad) (Equation 6):

$$\begin{aligned} \text{ExclusiveOpposite-SexFriends}_{ij} = & \beta_{0j} + \beta_{1j} \cdot (\text{cRelationalMobility}_{ij}) \\ & + \beta_{2j} \cdot (\text{Gender}_{ij}) + \beta_{3j} \cdot (\text{Gender} \times \text{cRelationalMobility}_{ij}) + r_{ij} \end{aligned}$$

Level 2 Model (between-dyad):

$$\beta_{0j} = \gamma_{00} + u_{0j}$$

$$\beta_{1j} = \gamma_{10}$$

$$\beta_{2j} = \gamma_{20}$$

$$\beta_{3j} = \gamma_{30}$$

where  $\beta_{3j}$  represents the effect of the association between gender and relational mobility on the number of exclusive opposite-sex friends, and  $\gamma_{30}$  refers to the grand mean of the interaction effect between gender and relational mobility.

To see the effect of relational mobility on the number of common followings with the partner, I conducted linear regression analysis on SPSS for the effect of grand

mean-centered relational mobility on the number of common followings separately for women and men, as this variable did not differ across partners. To investigate the impact of relational mobility on the number of common followings, I conducted a linear regression analysis using SPSS, separately for both genders as the variable of interest, the number of common followings did not vary across couples. I chose not to use a multilevel model because this type of analysis does not allow for predicting a second-level outcome from level-1 predictors. Also, in a second linear regression analysis on SPSS, I controlled for the effect of the number of followings and relational mobility on the number of common followings separately for both genders.

## 4. RESULTS

Correlations among variables of interest are presented in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 Correlations

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Number of Partner Tags	-	.038	.622**	.323**	.040	.197**	.145*	.154*
2. Relational Mobility	.038	-	.073	-.062	-.034	.125	.080	.099
3. Gender	.622**	.073	-	.000	-.001	.179**	.000	.114
4. Number of People the Participant Tagged in Their Posts	.323**	-.062	.000	-	.126	.277**	.267**	.253**
5. Gender*Relational Mobility	.040	-.034	-.001	.126	-	.009	-.024	.036
6. Number of Exclusive Opposite-Sex Friends	.197**	.125	.179**	.277**	.009	-	.322**	.828**
7. Number of Common Followings	.145*	.080	.000	.267*	-.024	.322**	-	.335**
8. Number of Followings	.154*	.099	.114	.253**	.036	.828**	.335**	-

Notes: \*\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

### 4.1 Does Relational Mobility Predict the Number of Partner Tags?

The analysis showed that relational mobility did not significantly predict the number of partner tags ( $B = .04$ ,  $CI = [-.109, .197]$ ) (See Table 4.2).

Table 4.2 Mixed model: effect of relational mobility on the number of partner tags

Effect	Estimate	SE	95% CI	p
Fixed Effects				
Intercept	-.015	.052	[-.002, .087]	.779
Relational Mobility	.044	.078	[-.109, .197]	.577

Notes. SE = Standard Error; CI = Confidence Interval;

LL = Lower Limit; UL = Upper Limit

Relational mobility was grand-mean centered.

## 4.2 What Is the Role of Gender and General Tagging Behavior in the Relationship Between Relational Mobility and the Number of Partner Tags?

Relational mobility did not significantly predict the number of partner tags on Instagram ( $B = .02$ ,  $CI = [-.116, .134]$ ). Gender significantly predicted the number of partner tags ( $B = .59$ ,  $CI = [.493, .689]$ ). Given that gender is effect-coded, women significantly tagged their partners in their posts more frequently than men. The number of people that the participant tagged in their posts significantly predicted the number of partner tags ( $B = .33$ ,  $CI = [.250, .410]$ ). This finding suggests that individuals who tagged more people in their network also tended to tag their partner more frequently compared to those who tagged fewer people in their network (See Table 4.3).

Table 4.3 Mixed model: effect of relational mobility, gender, and the number of people the participant tagged in their posts on the number of partner tags

Effect	Estimate	SE	95% CI	p
<hr/>				
Fixed Effects				
Intercept	-.017	.042	[-.099, .065]	.674
Relational Mobility	.017	.058	[-.116, .134]	.768
Gender	.591	.051	[.493, .689]	<.001
Number of People the Participant Tagged in Their Posts	.330	.041	[.250, .410]	<.001

*Notes.* SE = Standard Error; CI = Confidence Interval;

LL = Lower Limit; UL = Upper Limit

Relational mobility was grand-mean centered.

Gender was effect-coded.

## 4.3 Testing for Moderation Effects

The results for the effect of relational mobility, gender, and the number of people the participant tagged in their posts stayed the same with the analysis of the effect of gender and general tagging behavior in the relationship between relational mobility and the number of partner tags. The interaction effect between gender and relational mobility did not significantly predict the number of partner tags ( $B = -.00$ ,  $CI = [-1.118, 1.107]$ ), meaning that the effect of gender on partner tagging behavior did not significantly depend on relational mobility (see Table 4.4).

Table 4.4 Mixed model: effect of relational mobility, gender, the number of people the participant tagged in their posts, and the interaction effect between gender and relational mobility on the number of partner tags

Effect	Estimate	SE	95% CI	p
Fixed Effects				
Intercept	-.017	.042	[-.099, .065]	.678
Relational Mobility	.017	.059	[-.099, .133]	.771
Gender	.591	.051	[.493, .689]	<.001
Number of People the Participant Tagged in Their Posts	.330	.041	[.250, .410]	<.001
Gender*Relational Mobility	-.001	.057	[-1.118, 1.107]	.983

*Notes.* SE = Standard Error; CI = Confidence Interval; LL = Lower Limit; UL = Upper Limit  
 Relational mobility was grand-mean centered.  
 Gender was effect-coded.

#### 4.4 Does Relational Mobility Predict the Number of Exclusive Opposite-Sex Friends?

Relational mobility significantly predicted having exclusive opposite-sex friends ( $B = .15$ ,  $CI = [.006, .284]$ ) (see Table 4.5).

Table 4.5 Mixed model: effect of relational mobility on the number of exclusive opposite-sex friends

Effect	Estimate	SE	95% CI	p
Fixed Effects				
Intercept	-.000	.071	[-.068, .210]	.999
Relational Mobility	.145	.070	[.006, .284]	.041

*Notes.* SE = Standard Error; CI = Confidence Interval; LL = Lower Limit; UL = Upper Limit  
 Relational mobility was grand-mean centered.

#### 4.5 What Is the Role of Gender in the Relationship Between Relational Mobility and the Number of Exclusive Opposite-Sex Friends?

When I included gender in the model, the effect of grand mean-centered relational mobility became non-significant ( $B = .13$ ,  $CI = [-.014, .269]$ ). Although relational mobility became non-significant, I observed a trend between relational mobility and having exclusive opposite-sex friends ( $p = .080$ ). Gender significantly predicted the number of exclusive opposite-sex friends ( $B = .17$ ,  $CI = [.058, .286]$ ). As gender is

effect coded (1 = female, -1 = male), women tend to have more exclusive opposite-sex friends more than men (see Table 4.6).

Table 4.6 Mixed model: effect of relational mobility and gender on the number of exclusive opposite-sex friends

Effect	Estimate	SE	95% CI	p
Fixed Effects				
Intercept	-.003	.070	[-.140, .134]	.964
Relational Mobility	.128	.072	[-.014, .269]	.080
Gender	.172	.058	[.058, .286]	.004

*Notes.* SE = Standard Error; CI = Confidence Interval;

LL = Lower Limit; UL = Upper Limit

Relational mobility was grand-mean centered.

Gender was effect-coded.

#### 4.6 Testing for Moderation Effects

Results for the effect of relational mobility and gender stayed the same with the analysis of the effect of gender in the relationship between relational mobility and the number of exclusive opposite-sex friends. The interaction effect between gender and relational mobility did not significantly predict the number of exclusive opposite-sex friends ( $B = .01$ ,  $CI = [-.142, .160]$ ), meaning that the effect of gender on having exclusive opposite-sex friends did not significantly depend on relational mobility (see Table 4.7).

Table 4.7 Mixed model: effect of relational mobility, gender, and the interaction effect between gender and relational mobility on the number of exclusive opposite-sex friends

Effect	Estimate	SE	95% CI	p
Fixed Effects				
Intercept	-.004	.071	[-.143, .135]	.958
Relational Mobility	.128	.072	[-.013, .269]	.078
Gender	.172	.058	[.058, .286]	.004
Gender	.009	.077	[-.142, .160]	.910

*Notes.* SE = Standard Error; CI = Confidence Interval;

LL = Lower Limit; UL = Upper Limit

Relational mobility was grand-mean centered.

Gender was effect-coded.

#### 4.7 Does Relational Mobility Predict the Number of Common Followings with the Partner?

For both genders, relational mobility did not significantly predict the number of common followings ( $B = 2.26$ ,  $CI = [-4.79, 9.32]$  for women;  $B = 3.87$ ,  $CI = [-3.37, 11.10]$  for men) (see Tables 4.8 and 4.9).

Table 4.8 Linear regression: effect of relational mobility on the number of common followings for female participants

Effect	Estimate	SE	95% CI	p
Fixed Effects				
Intercept	36.366	17.062	[2.567, 70.166]	.035
Relational Mobility	2.263	3.561	[-4.792, 9.318]	.526

*Notes.* SE = Standard Error; CI = Confidence Interval;

LL = Lower Limit; UL = Upper Limit

Relational mobility was grand-mean centered.

Table 4.9 Linear regression: effect of relational mobility on the number of common followings for male participants

Effect	Estimate	SE	95% CI	p
Fixed Effects				
Intercept	30.077	17.065	[-3.741, 63.896]	.081
Relational Mobility	3.866	3.650	[-3.367, 11.099]	.292

*Notes.* SE = Standard Error; CI = Confidence Interval;

LL = Lower Limit; UL = Upper Limit

Relational mobility was grand-mean centered.

#### 4.8 Predicting the Number of Common Followings with Partner: The Role of Relational Mobility When Controlling for the Number of Friends

Results revealed that relational mobility did not significantly predict the number of common followings for both genders ( $B = -.138$ ,  $CI = [-6.19, 5.91]$  for women;  $B = 2.04$ ,  $CI = [-3.64, 7.71]$  for men). However, the number of friends had a significant effect on the number of common followings for both genders ( $B = 10.47$ ,  $CI = [5.35, 15.58]$  for women;  $B = 12.80$ ,  $CI = [7.93, 17.67]$  for men). This finding suggests that for both genders, individuals who have a larger network of friends tend to share more common friends with their partner compared to those with fewer friends (see Tables 4.10 and 4.11).



Table 4.10 Linear regression: effect of relational mobility and number of followings on the number of common followings for female participants

Effect	Estimate	SE	95% CI	p
Fixed Effects				
Intercept	-2.556	2.555	[-7.618, 2.506]	.319
Relational Mobility	-.138	3.054	[-6.188, 5.912]	.964
Number of Followings	10.466	2.583	[5.348, 15.583]	.000

*Notes.* SE = Standard Error; CI = Confidence Interval;

LL = Lower Limit; UL = Upper Limit

Relational mobility was grand-mean centered.

Table 4.11 Linear regression: effect of relational mobility and number of followings on the number of common followings for male participants

Effect	Estimate	SE	95% CI	p
Fixed Effects				
Intercept	.412	2.535	[-4.613, 5.436]	.871
Relational Mobility	2.035	2.864	[-3.640, 7.711]	.479
Number of Followings	12.796	2.458	[7.925, 17.667]	.000

*Notes.* SE = Standard Error; CI = Confidence Interval;

LL = Lower Limit; UL = Upper Limit

Relational mobility was grand-mean centered.

## 5. DISCUSSION

The existing literature on relational mobility has established its association with various relationship maintenance behaviors, such as commitment, self-disclosure, increased passion, proximity-seeking, partner prioritization, reduced search for alternatives, increased support provision, and elevated intimacy levels. However, there is a notable gap in the literature regarding the extent to which relational mobility predicts relationship maintenance behaviors on SNS. Given the widespread prevalence of social media in today's society, people increasingly socialize through online platforms. Particularly, young individuals demonstrate a preference for text-based communication over in-person interactions (Pouwels et al. 2021). Therefore, the aim of this study was to investigate whether relational mobility predicts the number of partner tags, the number of exclusive opposite-sex friends, and the number of common followings among newlywed couples within the framework of the investment model.

In relation to the first research question, the findings did not support the prediction that relational mobility would predict the number of partner tags. The analysis accounted for the general tagging behavior of participants, as reflected by the number of people participants tagged in their posts. As expected, participants who tagged more individuals in their posts also tagged their partners more frequently. It is noteworthy that a majority of the current sample (125 out of 254) did not tag their partners in their Instagram posts, which could potentially explain the lack of a significant association between relational mobility and partner tags. One reason why individuals may choose not to tag their romantic partner in their posts could be attributed to the influence of potential embarrassment from their network. For instance, a study conducted by (West et al. 2009) revealed that students living in London hesitated to add family members as Facebook friends due to concerns regarding privacy and potential embarrassment stemming from their Facebook profiles. Similarly, our participants may also opt not to share explicit details about their relationships, considering potential judgments from their siblings or friends in

their work life.

Another reason why people may choose not to tag their partner is their concern about other individuals, particularly those with whom they have a professional or formal relationship, potentially seeing their shared content. It has become increasingly common for employers to review job candidates' social media profiles, and their hiring decisions can be influenced by actions and content found on these platforms (Christofides et al. 2012). This practice can have repercussions for job seekers. Furthermore, due to privacy concerns on social media, individuals in higher hierarchical positions may choose to set boundaries and avoid delving into the private lives of their subordinates within their social networks (Karl and Peluchette 2011). They may prefer to maintain a level of separation in order to respect the privacy of their lower-ranking colleagues. Overall, social media has become an integral part of our lives, impacting how we communicate and share information. It has the potential to affect professional opportunities, and individuals in different positions may navigate privacy boundaries in distinct ways (Kumar and Priyadarshini 2018; Lauriano and Coacci 2023; Christofides et al. 2012; Karl and Peluchette 2011). Hence, people may choose not to tag their partner in their posts to keep their romantic relationship private and maintain a level of privacy within their professional network.

Also, it is possible that participants may not perceive tagging their partner on Instagram posts as an investment behavior for their relationship. It is important to consider that there may be other investment behaviors that participants engage in on Instagram. For instance, we did not collect data on the number of likes and comments exchanged between partners or the frequency of posts featuring both partners. Previous research has indicated that men tend to give more likes to their partners' Instagram pages and share couple photos, while women are more likely to initiate comments on men's Instagram pages (Sharabi and Hopkins 2021). Researchers have suggested that women may consider liking posts as a form of relationship maintenance, whereas men may view sharing couple pictures as a maintenance behavior. Unfortunately, the current study did not include data on likes and comments, but it is worth considering that relational mobility could influence other investment behaviors such as the number of likes and comments exchanged, as well as the frequency of couple pictures.

Despite the lack of a significant effect of relational mobility on the number of partner tags, there were notable gender differences observed. Specifically, women were found to tag their partners more frequently compared to men. Previous studies investigating gender differences in SNS behaviors have shed light on the fact that individuals of different genders may hold distinct perceptions of what constitutes relationship

maintenance actions. While both men and women engage in relationship maintenance behaviors on platforms like Instagram, their expectations and perceptions of these behaviors may differ. For example, men may not perceive certain behaviors as actions aimed at relationship maintenance. This divergence in perception could potentially explain their lower engagement in such behaviors (Sharabi and Hopkins 2021). This line of reasoning may also be applicable to the current sample, suggesting that women may attach more significance to tagging their partners as an investment in the relationship, whereas men may not consider it an important aspect of relationship maintenance.

Regarding the second research question, an initial analysis revealed a significant association between relational mobility and the number of exclusive opposite-sex friends when gender was not included in the model. However, when controlling for gender, the significance of relational mobility diminished, while gender itself became significant. This finding suggests that women tend to have more exclusive opposite-sex friends than men. One possible explanation for this result could be attributed to gender differences in people's behavior of following others on Instagram. For instance, research has shown that men tend to follow influencers less frequently than women, while women tend to follow more than 50 influencers (Hudders and De Jans 2022). Additionally, studies have found that women have more family contacts in their Facebook network compared to men (Binder et al. 2009). Furthermore, women generally have larger network sizes and a higher number of strangers within their networks compared to men (Acar 2008). These tendencies may contribute to an increased number of opposite-sex friends within the Instagram networks of female participants.

Lastly, the third research question revealed no significant association between relational mobility and the number of common followings shared with the partner. In their study (Toma and Choi 2015) discovered that the number of common Facebook friends among partners was negatively correlated with relationship commitment. Researchers explained this observation by suggesting that in order to have an increase in the number of common friends, the overall size of the social network must also be large. Researchers have elaborated that larger networks offer greater potential for alternative partners and hence negatively predicts relationship commitment in line with the investment model. However, in the current study we found no evidence that relational mobility plays a role in the number of common followings. This lack of evidence may be attributed to the characteristics of the current sample. I did not possess data concerning the participants' following patterns, such as whether they follow all acquaintances or only those they are friends with. It is possible that participants were aware of their partners' networks, but not friends with all individuals

within those networks. Consequently, these individuals may not have been included in their own networks. To address this issue in future studies, it would be beneficial to inquire about participants' following practices.

A strength of the present study was investigating participants' SNS behaviors by directly extracting their data from Instagram instead of relying on self-reports. This approach provided objective data and eliminated potential errors that could arise from participants' false recalls and possible demand characteristics. Social scientific research relies heavily on self-report measurement of behaviors which raises concerns about their reliability. In a study using a "Massively Multiplayer Online game" to measure participants' playing time, researchers compared self-reported and actual game records and revealed a significant difference (Kahn et al. 2014). Consequently, these findings highlight the unreliability of self-reports when compared to objective data, emphasizing the need for alternative measurement methods. Researchers highlighted that self-report question responses involve complex cognitive processes including question comprehension, memory retrieval, and response articulation. Additionally, researchers emphasized the potential impact of social desirability bias when participants report their behaviors in self-reports (Kahn et al. 2014). Also, inaccuracies between participants' self-reports and actual behaviors were previously considered minor and often overlooked in the literature. However, replicating past studies with objective data might yield different results compared to previous findings (Williams et al. 2009). This raises concerns about potential Type-1 and Type-2 errors in past research (Kahn et al. 2014; Williams et al. 2009). To address these issues, future research investigating social media behaviors should consider incorporating objective measures such as data extraction from SNS as in this study to eliminate potential errors associated with self-reports.

Despite the strong methodology employed in this study, it is important to acknowledge its limitations. One significant constraint is the small sample size. This study is part of a longitudinal project, and the research questions for this thesis were developed after the grant proposal. Consequently, the data had already been collected from the participants of the longitudinal study. As not every participant had an Instagram account, the sample size for the current study remained limited. Additionally, it is worth noting that the current sample predominantly consists of highly educated newlyweds with high perceptions of SES. Moreover, a significant portion of the sample consisted of passive Instagram users who primarily engaged in activities such as browsing other people's posts and occasionally liking them. As a result, the current findings may have limited generalizability. To improve the validity and reliability of future studies, it is essential to consider including a more diverse sample that comprises both passive and active users. By incorporating ac-

tive users who create posts and engage with other users, researchers can obtain a more accurate representation of Instagram activity and its potential effects. This inclusion of a broader sample will likely yield more reliable results and enhance the overall understanding of Instagram's impact on various user groups.

One limitation arises from estimating gender from usernames. In this study, I utilized a dataset that includes the first and last names of 50 million Turkish citizens born between 1888 and 1991 to estimate gender (mkozturk 2021). However, a more accurate approach for obtaining gender information is to extract the names of followers and followings instead of relying solely on usernames and making estimations. Therefore, extracting followings' and followers' names from user profiles in future studies can enhance the accuracy of gender estimation even further.

Also, the lack of a significant effect of relational mobility could be attributed to the challenge of detecting subtle effects in a small sample size. Since relational mobility is a contextual variable, investigating its impact on subtle behaviors such as the number of common followings, the number of exclusive opposite-sex friends, or the number of partner tags can be inherently difficult. It is plausible that there may be other factors that contribute to the association between relational mobility and the variables of interest, suggesting that relational mobility might have a more distal influence on the outcome variable. In future research, it would be beneficial to examine the effect of relational mobility on more proximal behaviors and explore potential pathways linking relational mobility to these outcome variables.

Additionally, in this thesis, I examined participants' behavior on Instagram from the time of their sign-up until the extraction date. It could be valuable to analyze various time intervals, such as the duration from their Instagram registration to when they became official, from the point of becoming an official couple to their marriage, and from their marriage to the extraction date. This approach will enable us to gain deeper insights into how participants' investment behavior changes within their romantic relationships. Moreover, it is important to note that the algorithm employed in the current research did not distinguish between real users and non-real accounts on Instagram. For future studies, it would be beneficial to control for this by differentiating whether the accounts pertain to actual people. Additionally, researchers may consider examining participants' followings and followers to determine if they reciprocate within their network. Some participants might receive followers but not reciprocate by following them back. By understanding reciprocal activities between actual users on Instagram, we can gain a better understanding of relationship maintenance behaviors within the platform.

## 6. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study aimed to investigate the effect of relational mobility on relationship investment behaviors within the context of Instagram. To the best of my knowledge, this was the first study to explore this particular effect using direct data extraction on Instagram. The findings of this study demonstrate that relational mobility does not significantly predict the number of partner tags, number of exclusive opposite-sex friends, and number of common followings. However, significant gender differences were observed in the association between relational mobility and the number of partner tags, as well as relational mobility and the number of exclusive opposite-sex friends. Specifically, women were found to tag their partners more frequently and have a greater number of exclusive opposite-sex friends compared to men. These results contribute to a better understanding of romantic relationships on SNS. Additionally, the use of objective data in this study can serve as a catalyst for future research endeavors in exploring SNS and its implications for romantic relationships.

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## APPENDIX A

### A.1 INFORMED CONSENT FORM & ONAM FORMU

Yakın ilişkileri konu alan bu projede katılımcı olarak yer almaya davetlisiniz. Katılımcı olmayı kabul etmeden önce, sizden bu formu dikkatlice okumanızı ve sonrasında sorularınız olursa araştırmayı yürüten kişiye yöneltmenizi rica ediyoruz. Çalışmada katılımcı olabilmek için 18 yaşını doldurmuş (19 yaşından gün almış) ve en fazla iki yıldır evli olmanız gerekmektedir.

#### **Çalışmamız ne hakkında?**

Bu çalışmanın amacı, yakın ilişkilerle ilgili süreçleri ve onların zaman içinde nasıl değiştiğini anlamaktır.

**Sizden neler yapmanızı isteyeceğiz?** Eğer bu araştırmada katılımcı olmayı kabul ederseniz, sizden yakın ilişkilerdeki duygu ve düşüncelerinizi ölçen anketler doldurmanızı isteyeceğiz. Ayrıca çalışmamızın sosyal medya kısmı için sizden araştırma ekibimize ait bir sosyal medya hesabını çalışma süresince takip etmenizi isteyebiliriz. Çalışmanın iki aşaması bulunmakta. Birinci aşama iki oturumdan (Online görüşme ve birinci online anket) oluşacak, ikinci aşama ise üçer ay arayla yapılacak beş oturumdan (online anketler) oluşacak. Her bir oturumun bir saat içerisinde tamamlanacağı tahmin edilmektedir. Tüm oturumları tamamladığımız takdirde, katılımınız karşılığında 60 TL'lik Migros Dijital Alışveriş Çeki ve 150 TL nakit para ödemesi alacaksınız.

#### **Riskler ve Faydalar:**

Bazı katılımcılar ilişkileriyle ilgili düşüncelerini ve başlarına gelen olumsuz deneyimleri paylaşmaktan rahatsızlık hissedebilirler. Katılımcı kendisine rahatsızlık hissettiren sorular olursa bunları cevaplandırmayı reddetme ve çalışmadan çekilme hakkına sahiptir. Bunun dışında çalışmamızın günlük hayatımızda karşılaştığımız risklerden öte risklere yol açması beklenmemektedir. Araştırmaya katılmamanın size direkt bir kişisel faydası bulunmamakla beraber, araştırma sonuçlarımızın gelecekte topluma ve bilime faydalarının olacağı umulmaktadır.

#### **Cevaplarınız gizli tutulacaktır:**

Araştırma süresince elde edilen tüm bilgiler ve kişisel detaylar gizli kalacaktır. Kimliğinizin ortaya çıkmasına yol açabilecek hiçbir bilgi üçüncü şahıslarla paylaşılmayacak, katılımcılardan elde edilen veriler ve kişisel bilgiler gizli tutulacaktır. Verileriniz yalnızca araştırma ekibinin ulaşabileceği şifreyle korunan harici disklerde, bilgisayarlarda ve sunucularda saklanacaktır. Verileri saklarken ve analiz ederken cevaplarınız ile isminiz hiçbir şekilde eşleştirilmeyecektir. Araştırmadan elde edilecek sonuçlar ileride bilimsel amaçlı olarak rapor edilebilir, yayımlanabilir ve bu yayınlara konu olan veriler başka araştırmacılarla sayısal olarak paylaşılabilir; fakat bu durumlarda katılımcıların kimlikleri kesinlikle gizli tutulacaktır.

### **Sorularınız için:**

Bu çalışma Sabancı Üniversitesi Sanat ve Sosyal Bilimler Fakültesi Psikoloji Programı'ndan Doç. Dr. Emre Selçuk tarafından yürütülmektedir. Sorularınız için emre.selcuk@sabanciuniv.edu adresinden yürütücüye ulaşabilirsiniz. Eğer haklarınıza zarar verildiğini düşünürseniz, lütfen Sabancı Üniversitesi Araştırma Etik Kurul Başkanı Prof. Dr. Mehmet Yıldız ile telefonla (216) 483 9010 ya da e-mail ile mehmet.yildiz@sabanciuniv.edu iletişime geçiniz.

### **Onam Beyanı:**

Yukarıdaki tüm bilgileri okudum ve sorduğum tüm sorulara cevap buldum. Aşağıda "Kabul ediyorum" seçeneğini seçip "İleri" tuşuna basarak çalışmaya katılmayı kabul ettiğimi beyan ederim.



## A.2 RELATIONAL MOBILITY SCALE (YUKI ET AL., 2007) / İLİŞKİSEL HAREKETLİLİK ÖLÇEĞİ

"Aşağıdaki ifadeler yakın çevrenizdeki insanları (arkadaşlarınız, tanıdıklarınız, iş yerinde birlikte çalıştığınız kişiler, komşularınız vb.) ne kadar doğru tanımlıyor? Lütfen, çevrenizdeki bu insanlara ilişkin aşağıdaki ifadelere ne kadar katılıp katılmadığınızı belirtin. NOT: Birazdan göreceğiniz bazı cümlelerde geçen "gruplar" ifadesiyle, birbirini tanıyan veya aynı amaçları paylaşan arkadaş grupları, hobi grupları, spor takımları veya firmalar gibi topluluklar kastedilmektedir. (1- Kesinlikle katılmıyorum, 2 - Katılmıyorum, 3 - Biraz katılmıyorum, 4 - Ne katılıyorum / ne katılmıyorum, 5 - Biraz katılıyorum, 6 - Katılıyorum, 7 - Kesinlikle katılıyorum)."

1. Çevremdeki kişilerin başka insanları tanımak için birçok fırsatı vardır.
2. Çevremdeki kişilerin daha önce hiç tanışmadıkları biri ile sohbet etmeleri sıkça rastlanan bir şeydir.
3. Çevremdeki kişiler günlük yaşamlarında kiminle etkileşime gireceklerini kendi tercihlerine göre seçebilirler.
4. Çevremdeki kişilerin yeni arkadaşlıklar kurmaları için az fırsatları vardır.
5. Çevremdeki kişilerin daha önce hiç tanışmadıkları biri ile sohbet etmeleri nadiren rastlanan bir şeydir.
6. Çevremdeki kişiler ait oldukları gruplardan hoşlanmıyorlarsa, daha iyileri için bu gruplardan ayrılabilirler.
7. Çevremdeki kişiler kiminle sosyal ilişki kuracaklarını çoğu zaman özgürce seçemezler.
8. Çevremdeki kişilerin yeni insanlar ile tanışmaları kolaydır.
9. Çevremdeki kişiler ait oldukları gruptan tümüyle memnun olmasalar bile çoğunlukla o grupta kalmaya devam ederler.
10. Çevremdeki kişiler ait oldukları grupları ve kurumları seçebilirler.
11. Çevremdeki kişiler mevcut sosyal ilişkilerinden memnun olmasalar bile, genellikle bu ilişkilerini sürdürmekten başka seçenekleri yoktur.
12. Çevremdeki kişiler hoşlanmadıkları gruplardan ayrılmak isteseler bile, genellikle bu gruplarda kalmaktan başka seçenekleri yoktur.

### A.3 SOCIAL MEDIA USE & SOSYAL MEDYA KULLANIMI

"Geçen hafta gerçekleştirdiğimiz yüz yüze buluşmamızda çalışmamızın sosyal medya ile ilgili bir kısmı olduğundan bahsetmiştik. Şimdi sizden sosyal medya kullanımınız hakkında birkaç soruyu yanıtlamanızı isteyeceğiz."

1. Instagram hesabınız var mı? (*Evet, Hayır*)
2. Instagram uygulamasını günde toplam kaç saat kullanıyorsunuz? (*1 saatten az, 1-2 saat, 2-3 saat, 3-4 saat, 4-5 saat, 5-6 saat, 6-7 saat, 7-8 saat, 8-9 saat, 9-10 saat, 10 saatten fazla*)
3. Instagram uygulamasında toplam kaç kişiyi takip ediyorsunuz? (*0-50 arası, 51-100 arası, 101-150 arası, 151- 200 arası, 201-250 arası, 251-300 arası, 301-350 arası, 351-400 arası, 401-450 arası, 451-500 arası, 501-550 arası, 551-600 arası, 601-650 arası, 651-700 arası, 701-750 arası, 751-800 arası, 801-850 arası, 851-900 arası, 901-950 arası, 951-1000 arası, 1000'den fazla*)
4. Instagram uygulamasında toplam kaç tane takipçiniz var? (*0-50 arası, 51-100 arası, 101-150 arası, 151- 200 arası, 201-250 arası, 251-300 arası, 301-350 arası, 351-400 arası, 401-450 arası, 451-500 arası, 501-550 arası, 551-600 arası, 601-650 arası, 651-700 arası, 701-750 arası, 751-800 arası, 801-850 arası, 851-900 arası, 901-950 arası, 951-1000 arası, 1000'den fazla*)
5. Instagram uygulamasında kaç tane hesabınız var? (*Yalnızca bir tane, 2 tane, 3 tane, 4 tane, 4'ten fazla*)
6. Instagram uygulamasındaki hesabınızı/hesaplarınızı eşinizle birlikte mi kullanıyorsunuz? (*Evet, Hayır*)
7. Instagram uygulamasındaki hesabınız/hesaplarınız herkese açık mı, yoksa gizli mi? (*Herkese açık, Herkese kapalı, Herkese açık hesaplarım da var gizli hesaplarım da*)
8. Aşağıdaki iki kutucuğun toplamı 100 edecek şekilde Instagram'da kimleri takip ettiğinizi belirtin. (*Instagram'ı yüzde kaç günlük hayattan tanıdığınız (arkadaşlarınız, aile bireyleriniz, vs.) insanları takip etmek için kullanıyorsunuz?, Instagram'ı yüzde kaç günlük hayattan tanımadığınız insanları (ünlüler, fenomenler, vs.) takip etmek için kullanıyorsunuz?*)
9. Aşağıdaki iki kutucuğun toplamı 100 edecek şekilde Instagram'ı nasıl kullandığınızı belirtin. (*Pasif (başka insanların paylaşımlarına bakmak ve bazen onları beğenmek), Aktif (kendi paylaşımlarımı oluşturmak, içerik yaratmak, başkalarının paylaşımlarına yorumda bulunmak)*)
10. Instagram sizin için ne kadar önemli? (*1- Hiç önemli değil, 2- Önemli değil, 3- Pek önemli değil, 4- Ne önemli / ne önemli değil, 5- Biraz önemli, 6- Önemli, 7-*

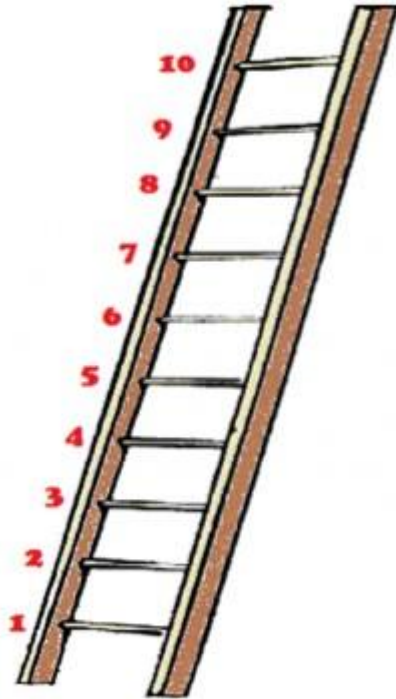
*Çok önemli)*

11. Instagram'ı kullanmaya yaklaşık kaç yaşında başladınız?

12. Evlendikten sonra Instagram'ı kullanma sıklığınız... *(Azaldı, Değişmedi, Arttı)*

## A.4 DEMOGRAPHICS & DEMOGRAFİKLER

1. Cinsiyetiniz: (*Kadın, Erkek*)
2. Lütfen doğum yılınızı seçiniz.
3. Eşinizle evlendiğiniz tarihi gün, ay ve yıl olarak belirtin.
4. Eşinizle hangi yıldan beri romantik bir ilişki içindesiniz?
5. Eşinizi hangi yıldan beri tanıyorsunuz?
6. En son mezun olduğunuz okulu belirtiniz: (*İlköğretim, Ortaokul, Lise, Lisans, Yüksek Lisans, Doktora*)
7. Lütfen ortalama aylık hane gelirinizi belirtin. (*2.000 TL'den az, 2.000 TL - 4.000 TL, 4.000 TL - 6.000 TL, 6.000 TL - 8.000 TL, 8.000 TL - 10.000 TL, 10.000 TL - 12.000 TL, 12.000 TL - 14.000 TL, 14.000 TL - 16.000 TL, 16.000 TL - 18.000 TL, 18.000 TL - 20.000 TL, 20.000 TL - 22.000 TL, 22.000 TL - 24.000 TL, 24.000 TL - 26.000 TL, 26.000 TL - 28.000 TL, 28.000 TL - 30.000 TL, 30.000 TL - 32.000 TL, 32.000 TL - 34.000 TL, 34.000 TL - 36.000 TL, 36.000 TL - 38.000 TL, 38.000 TL - 40.000 TL, 40.000 TL - 42.000 TL, 42.000 TL - 44.000 TL, 44.000 TL - 46.000 TL, 46.000 TL - 48.000 TL, 48.000 TL - 50.000 TL, 50.000 TL'den fazla*)



En üst basamak (10) toplumdaki en varlıklı grubu temsil ediyor. Bu gruptaki insanlar en çok paraya, en yüksek eğitim seviyesine ve en saygın mesleklere sahipler.

En alt basamak (1) toplumdaki en yoksul grubu temsil ediyor. Bu gruptaki insanlar en az paraya, en düşük eğitim seviyesine ve kimsenin çalışmak istemediği mesleklere sahipler.

8. Resimdeki merdivenin kişilerin toplumdaki yerini yansıttığını düşünün. Şimdi lütfen kendinizi ve ailenizi düşünün. Siz ve aileniz, bu 10 basamak arasında nerede olurdunuz? Merdivenin üzerindeki sayılardan size en uygun geleni işaretleyiniz.
9. Lütfen yaşadığımız şehri belirtin.

10. Őimdiye kadar ka kez baŐka bir yere taŐındınız? (Eęer hi taŐınmadıysanız 0 seeneęini sein, ltfen ka kere taŐındıęınızı hesaplarken seyahatleri dahil etmeyin.)

## A.5 HISTOGRAM CHARTS

Table A.1 Descriptives for histogram charts

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
N	254	254	254	254	254	254	254	254	254	254
Mean	6.52	.00	21.20	.00	102.16	.00	49.05	.00	601.78	584.58
Standard Deviation	12.14	1.00	26.42	1.00	67.22	1.00	33.85	1.00	373.33	322.93
Skewness	3.99	1.58	3.45	.54	1.22	.58	1.30	.61	1.47	.81
Std. Error of Skewness	.153	.153	.153	.153	.153	.153	.153	.153	.153	.153
Kurtosis	26.26	1.31	15.05	-.98	1.92	-.55	2.57	-.00	2.76	.06
Std. Error of Kurtosis	.304	.304	.304	.304	.304	.304	.304	.304	.304	.304

*Notes: 1: Number of Partner Tags, 2: Number of Partner Tags (Winsorized), 3: Number of People The Participant Tagged In Their Posts, 4: Number of People The Participant Tagged In Their Posts (Winsorized), 5: Number of Exclusive Opposite-Sex Friends, 6: Number of Exclusive Opposite-Sex Friends (Winsorized), 7: Number of Common Followings, 8: Number of Common Followings (Winsorized), 9: Number of Followings, 10: Number of Followings (Winsorized)*

Figure A.1 Histogram Chart for The Number of Partner Tags

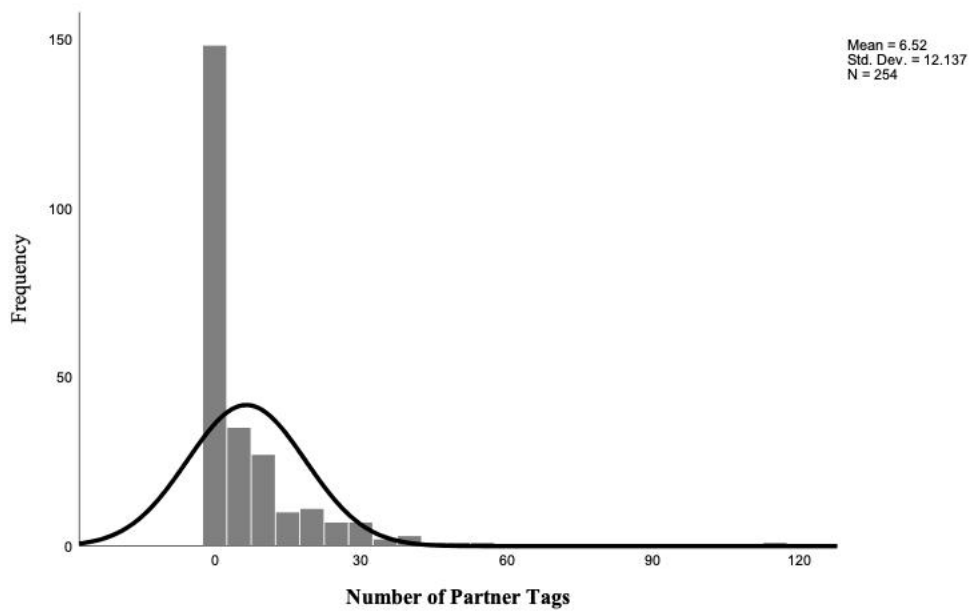


Figure A.2 Histogram Chart for The Number of Partner Tags (Winsorized)

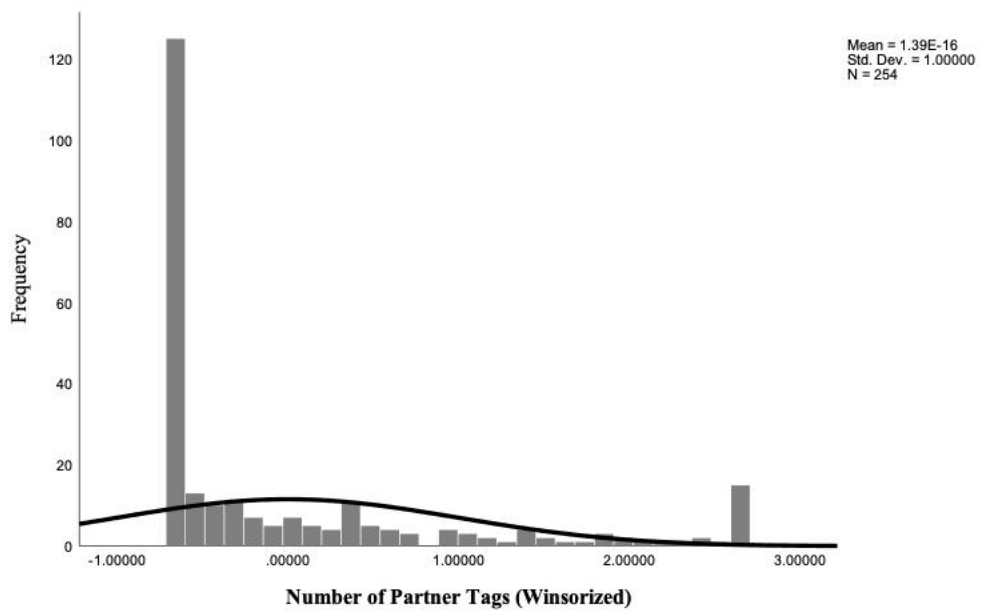




Figure A.3 Histogram Chart for The Number of People The Participant Tagged in Their Posts

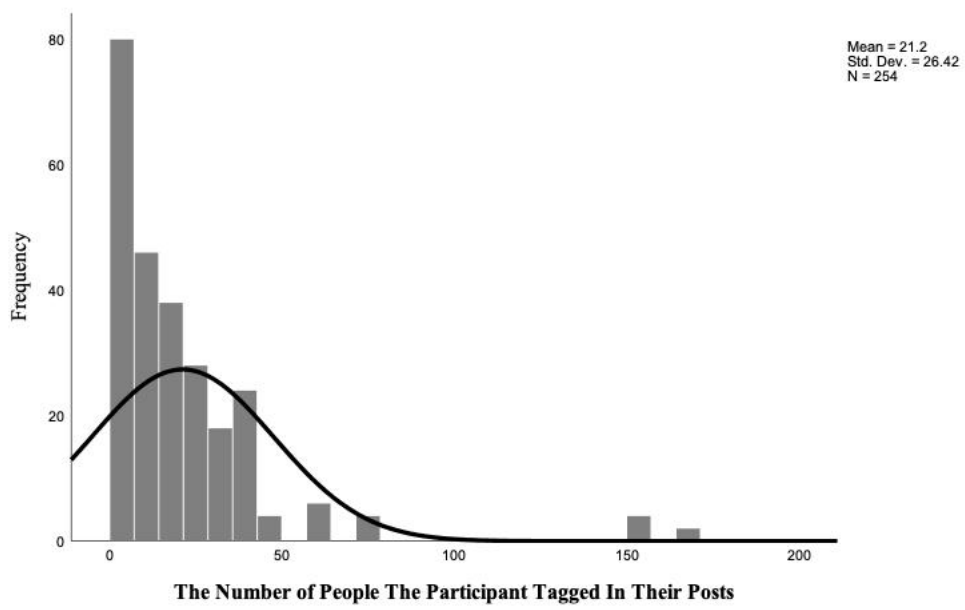


Figure A.4 Histogram Chart for The Number of People The Participant Tagged in Their Posts (Winsorized)

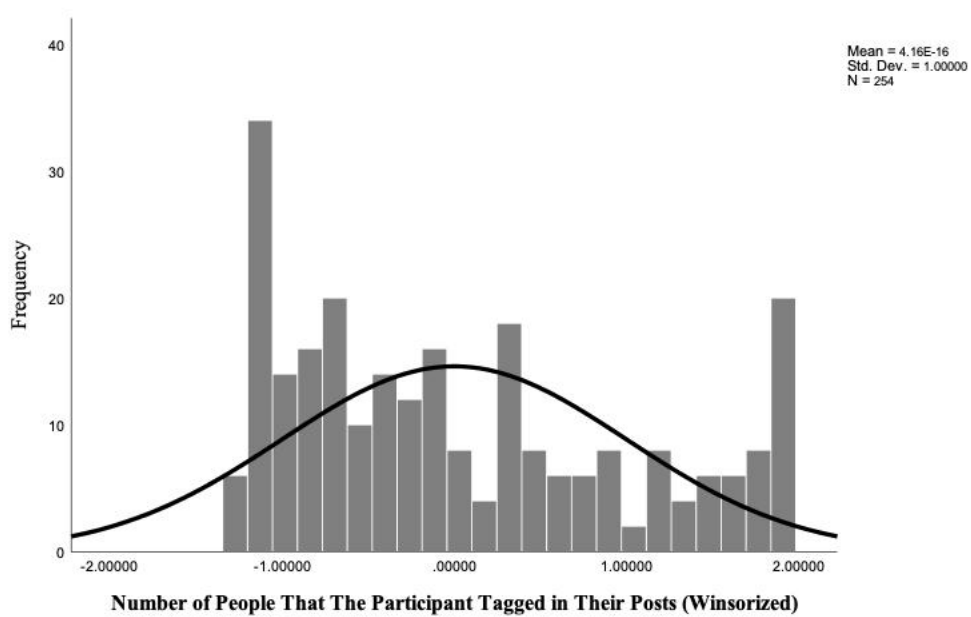


Figure A.5 Histogram Chart for The Number of Exclusive Opposite-Sex Friends

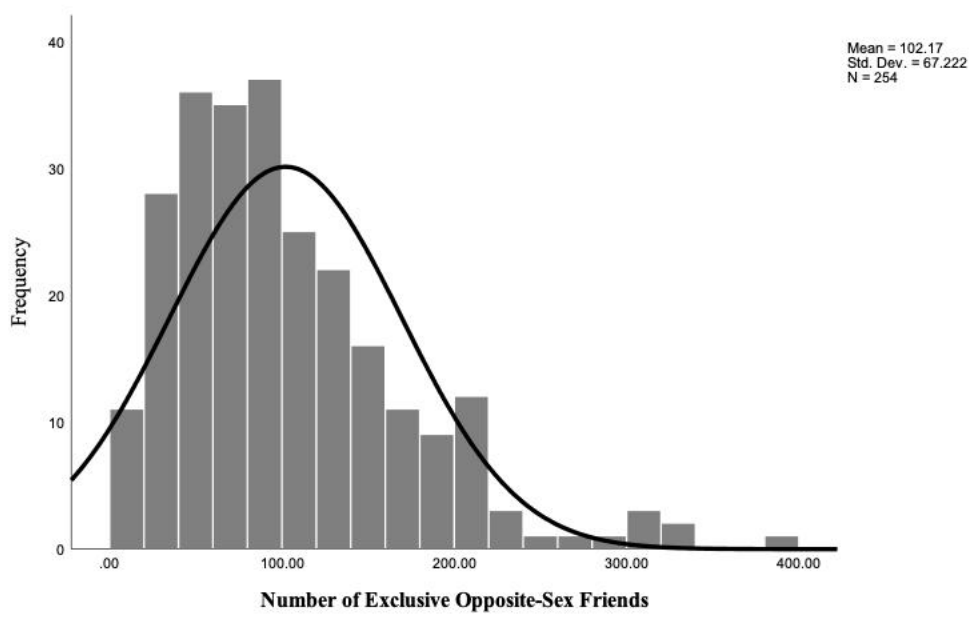


Figure A.6 Histogram Chart for The Number of Exclusive Opposite-Sex Friends (Winsorized)

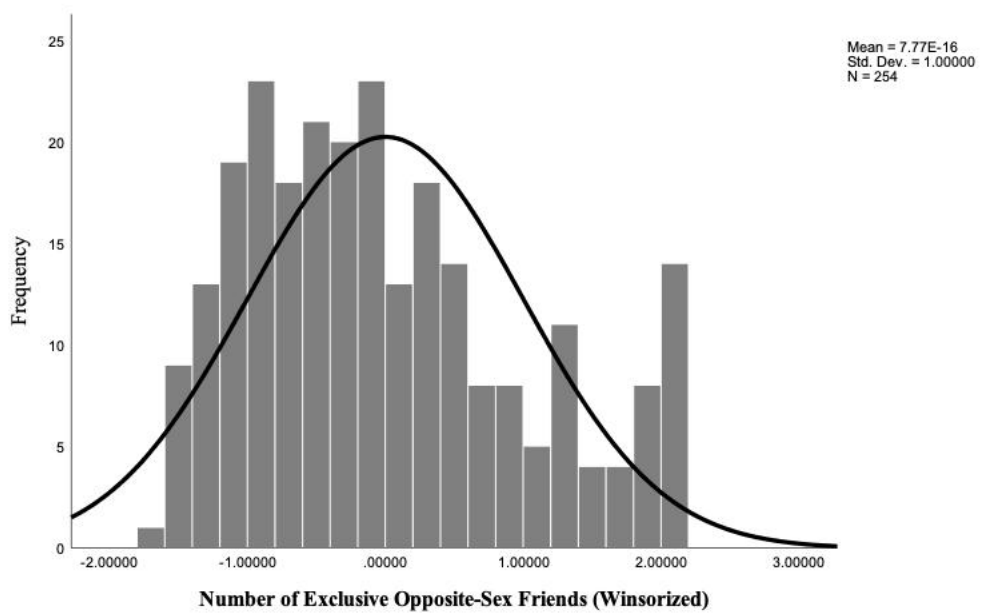


Figure A.7 Histogram Chart for The Number of Common Followings

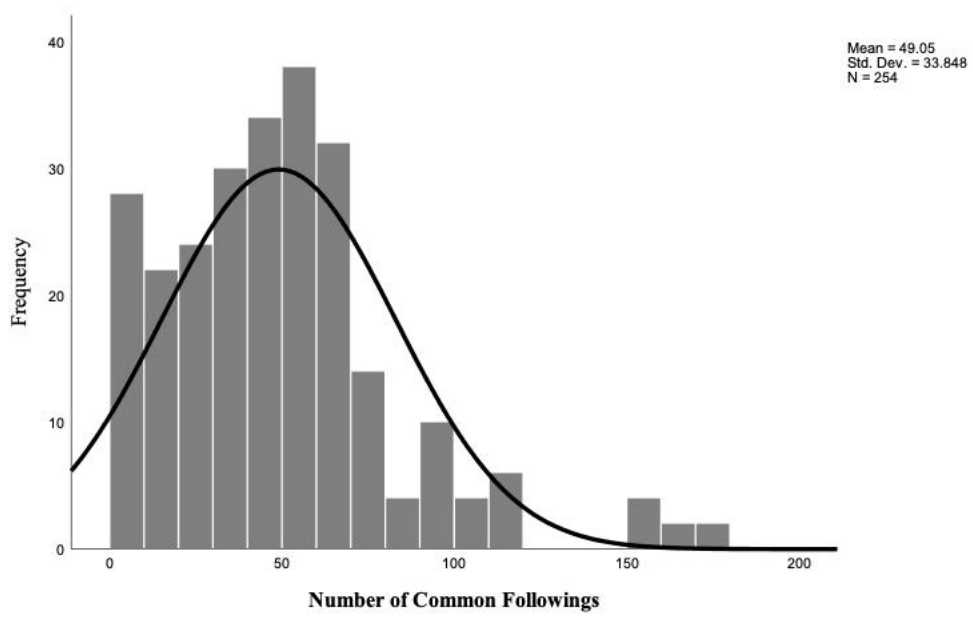


Figure A.8 Histogram Chart for The Number of Common Followings (Winsorized)

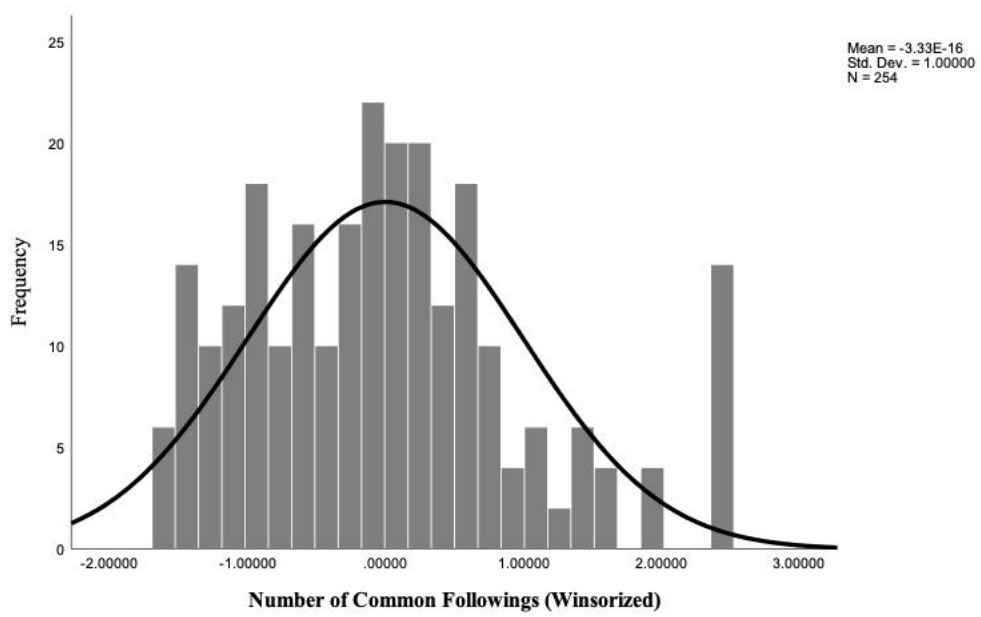


Figure A.9 Histogram Chart for The Number of Followings

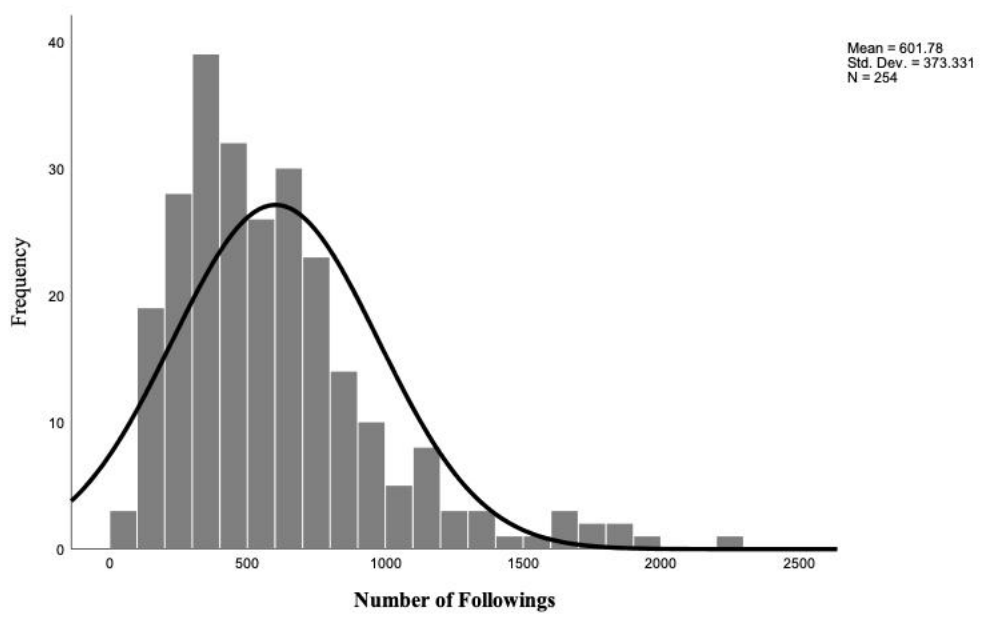


Figure A.10 Histogram Chart for The Number of Followings (Winsorized)

