

Social network sites for book readers: The example of 1000Kitap, a Turkish social network

1000Kitap is Turkey's largest social network for book readers. This network is a social network that mediates readers to realize reading as a social activity with other readers. The first purpose of this research is to reveal how the readers who use this social network start using the network and what they aim by using the network. The second aim is to reveal whether this network has brought about a change in their reading habits and preferences according to the readers who use this network. Finally this research aims to reveal the positive/negative aspects of this network based on the users' experiences. For this purpose, phenomenological design was used in this study. The participants are 54 users who are actively using the 1000Kitap. The results indicate that introducing such social networks to the readers and teaching them how to use these social networks correctly can be beneficial in terms of enabling them to reach the right books and motivating them to read. However, the results also indicate that such social reader networks may serve different purposes and lead to negative results if they are not used in accordance with their purpose or in case of excessive use.

Keywords: Social network sites for book readers, digital social reading, digital social reading platforms, reading motivation, digital reading

1. Introduction

Today, communication via the internet has become an important part of people's lives (Subrahmanyam et al., 2008). With the increase in internet access, electronic devices such as smart phones and tablets are intensively used to interact in social networks such as Facebook, Twitter, and Goodreads (Lau et al., 2017). With the increase in digitalization and internet access, the forms of communication among readers have also begun to change. Social reading platforms accessible via digital tools and the internet have encouraged readers to socialize and collaborate. With the rapid increase in digitalization and the development of social media platforms in the last decade, reading has become an interactive, social experience in which the internet plays an important role. Platforms such as Goodreads, Librarything, Lovelybooks, Litsy are online environments where millions of people from all over the world share about their reading experiences. Platforms such as 1000Kitap, Vikitap, Kitapdostum, Neokur are online reader environments originating from Turkey, where mostly Turkish readers are present. In such environments, members discuss what they read, offer advice to each other, in short, interact (Rebora, et al., 2021: 230). According to Rebora et al. (2021: 230), this phenomenon is expressed by concepts such as online book discussion or digital social reading among researchers. 1000Kitap, which is emphasized in this research, is the most used social reader network in Turkey.

1000Kitap is a reader-oriented social network established in Turkey in 2012. This network helps members choose the books to read, discover readers with similar reading pleasure, and follow the authors, books and readers they want. Members in this network can mark the books they have read or want to read on their profiles. While doing this, they can indicate whether they like the book by scoring and write comments about the book. Therefore, a profile page is created for each reader, each book, and each author in the course of time. As readers socialize and post on 1000Kitap, their book and author profiles are filled with more information. In this way, more information is created for readers who want to examine those books and authors (1000Kitap, 2012). 1000Kitap is an online reader platform where Turkish readers create reading diaries, share their reviews about the books, record the books they read and share excerpts from the books (Carvalho, 2021: 53). (*see* <https://1000kitap.com/>)

One of the social networks used by a large readership is Goodreads. When the literature is examined, it is seen that there are many studies on Goodreads in the last 5 years (e.g., Alghamdi & Ihshaish, 2021; García-Roca, 2020; Thelwall & Kousha, 2017; Thelwall, 2019; Wang, Liu & Han, 2019). Similarly, reader networks such as librarything (eg., Bartley, 2009; Worrall, 2010), lovelybooks (eg., Rebora et al., 2021) are mentioned in various sources. In a study conducted by Alghamdi and

Ihshaish (2021), focusing on Goodreads, a social reader network in the style of 1000Kitap, it was found that the use of Goodreads had a significant impact on book choices and book purchase decisions. However there is no promotional activity or research about 1000Kitap, which is Turkey's most used reader social network. In addition, when the literature is examined, no study has been found that examines these types of social networks from the eyes of their own users. For this reason, first of all, it is aimed to find how the readers who use the network start to use the network and what they aim by using this network in the current research. Then, this study has the purpose of revealing the positive and negative aspects of using this network according to the users as well as their opinions on whether this network makes a change in their own reading habits and preferences.

2. Research Questions

The present research questioned how the readers using 1000Kitap started to use this network, their purposes of use and the positive / negative aspects of this network according to their experiences. In addition, it was aimed to interrogate whether this network caused any changes in the reading habits and preferences of its users according to their perceptions. In this direction, answers to the following questions were sought.

1. How did the participants start using the reader social network called 1000Kitap?
2. For what purposes do the participants use the reader social network called 1000Kitap?
3. Has using the social network called 1000Kitap caused a change in the participants own reading habits?
4. Has using the social network called 1000Kitap caused a change in the participants own reading preferences?
5. What are the positive and negative aspects of the reader social network called 1000Kitap according to the participants?

3. Literature review

3.1. Digital reading

One of the most important skills in today's digital world is to understand electronic texts (Gil-Flores, Torres-Gordillo & Perera-Rodríguez, 2012). Because, these texts reach us intensively through digital tools that have become widespread in all areas of our lives today, and thus they have a great place in our lives (Rasmusson, 2016). Reading through digital tools is called digital reading and differs from traditional printed reading in many ways (Kurata et al., 2017). The environments where people do digital readings are generally the environments offered to us by mobile devices, which are the digital tools we use most frequently today. Digital reading with mobile devices has caused the act of reading to go beyond schools and libraries, and lifted the barriers in front of reading (Shimray, Keerti, Ramaiah, 2015). For this reason, digital reading has gained importance in terms of being an action that can be performed almost everywhere today.

In recent years, it can be seen that there has been a tendency from printed materials to digital materials in the reading preferences of young people (Konuk, 2018) and that digital devices are among the most important tools with which individuals interact in the reading process (Baştuğ & Keskin, 2017). Today, the internet has become a great resource for obtaining news, information and different views. Individuals who cannot access or benefit from these resources for any reason will be deprived of these gains. For this reason, mastering digital reading skills is important both in the context of personal and professional life (Naumann, 2015).

Recent studies show that interesting changes occur in the reading attitudes, duration, preferences and habits of readers with the increase in digitalization and internet access (Wang, Chiu,

Ho & Lo, 2016). For example, with the increase in the use of the internet, people now generally review long books and articles to find the parts they are interested in instead of reading them from beginning to end (Varga, 2020: 950). One of the important changes mentioned is that the interaction in the reading process increases and reading becomes a more social act (Rebora, et al., 2021).

3.2. Social reading (SR)

While reading was widely perceived as an individual act in the past, for the last 40-50 years, the social aspect of reading has come to the fore with the influence of research that emphasizes that reading (e.g., Fuller & Sedo, 2014; Ivey, 2014; Swann & Allington, 2009) is a social act. Social reading is a form of communication that has become widespread with new technological developments and especially in the field of electronic publishing (Cordón-García et al., 2013). The social constructivist view emphasizes that reading is a social practice and means the co-construction of meaning (Kiili, 2012). Reading has undergone serious changes with the emergence of new information technologies and has emerged as a more social action (Rebora, et al., 2021). Programs and platforms specially created to facilitate communication between readers enrich the reading experience and provide an experience far beyond the narrow circles of traditional reading clubs (Cordón-García et al., 2013). Such programs and platforms are accessed in digital environments, so social reading takes place in digital environments. This situation is known as digital social reading.

3.3. Digital social reading (DSR)

Today, with the spread of digitalization and the increase in internet access, some changes have occurred in social life. For example, digitalization and the internet have changed the way we obtain information, entertainment, shopping and socializing (Musik & Bogner, 2019:1). According to The Kids & Family Reading Report, younger generations are turning to digital reading and the percentage of digital readers is increasing day by day (Cordón-García et al., 2013). Along with the increasing interest in digital reading, there have been changes in reader behavior: The way readers socialize, communicate and shop has changed significantly. One of the more frequent phenomena that we encounter with this change is the concept of digital social reading (DSR). An important part of digital social reading is carried out through digital social reading platforms.

3.3.1. Digital social reading platforms

The distance barrier in social reader meetings which were held face-to-face in schools, libraries or cafes in the past, has disappeared with the spread of digital tools and internet access, and readers have had the opportunity to easily come together and communicate through various platforms such as Goodreads and 1000Kitap even from thousands of kilometers away. Therefore, it has become easier for readers to interact with other readers and to access social reading environments. This situation mediated the emergence of reading as a more social activity in which the interaction is more intense today.

Social reading platforms have developed significantly in recent years with the technological opportunities offered by digital tools. When traditional readers are members of traditional book clubs, digital readers are generally members of social reading platforms (Cordón-García et al., 2013). With the increase in digitalization and internet access, most of these platforms have been designed with an online feature and are called online digital social reading platforms.

The fact that our reading and writing habits have been transferred to the digital environment in our age has led to the production and use of a number of social media applications (Konuk, 2018). Some of these social media platforms such as Copia, Goodreads, Read-Ups focus on the readers. One of these platform is 1000Kitap, which is covered in this article. With such platforms, readers share their reading experiences, meet each other and share their thoughts (Vlieghe, Muls & Rutten, 2016). Thus, the phenomenon we call digital social reading takes place.

4. Theoretical framework

Addressing the social aspect of reading and Rosenblatt's reader response theory, which deals with the relationship between the reader and the social environment, will be relevant to the scope of this research. Reading emerges as a communicative, social process (Bloome, 1985; Fuller & Sedo, 2014; Ivey, 2014; Swann & Allington, 2009). Because while reading, social groups can be created and interact with others. The interactions that occur during a reading activity can be defined as the social context of reading. Social interactions affects how readers interact with and interpret the text (Bloome, 1985). In support of this, it has been stated by researchers (Kragler & Nolley, 1996; Reuter, 2007; Rosenblatt, 2016) that social environment and relationships can have an impact on reading preferences and behaviors. In the reader response theory, Rosenblatt (1978) emphasizes the interaction between the reader and the text in the reading process, emphasizing the importance of the reader's experiences, expectations and choices in this interaction. It also points out that the experiences, expectations and choices of the readers are related to the social environment they interact with. Today, the social networks accessed with the internet have evolutionized reading behaviors. Such networks allow readers to interact with each other, establish social relations and create a social environment (Nakamura, 2013). In these networks, people communicate with each other, share their experiences, and thus can be influenced by each other (García-Roca, 2020). With these networks, readers can obtain information about the quality and content of the books (Wang et al., 2019). Because such networks allow readers to interact with other readers and share their comments with them. Researchers (Cordón-García et al., 2013; Li & Wu, 2017, Merga, 2015; Rebora et al., 2021; Vlieghe, Muls & Rutten, 2016; Wang, Liu & Han, 2019) have stated that such networks can be used for many different purposes such as sharing experience and evaluating the agenda. In short, such networks can shape the social environment and interaction that Rosenblatt (1978) emphasizes the importance in the reading process, by mediating the readers to share their own experiences, choices and expectations. As a matter of fact, in the research conducted by Alghamdi and Ihshaish (2021), the remarkable effect of the recommendations in such networks on the book choices of the readers is mentioned. In this context, these social networks can be effective on readers' experiences, expectations and preferences in the reading process. Knowing how readers start using such networks and what they think about these networks can help us understand their expectations, experiences and preferences as readers.

5. Method

5.1. Research Design

There is a list of users who read the most books in 1000kitap social network accessible from <https://1000kitap.com/okurlar/en-cok-okuyanlar>. In the research, the first 200 participants in this list were tried to be reached by sending a written message, thanks to the message sending feature of the network. Written interviews were conducted with those who responded and volunteered to participate (e.g., https://1000kitap.com/Gul_G) among these 200 participants. In the written interviews, it was questioned how the participants joined this network and for what purpose they used it. In addition, it has been questioned whether there has been any change in their reading habits and preferences since they started using this network. In addition, in the written interviews, the positive and negative aspects of this network were questioned. In this context, phenomenological design was used within the framework of qualitative research approach in research. Data were obtained through phenomenological inquiry (Ersoy, 2017; van Manen, 2014).

5.2 Study Group

The study group of the research consisted of 54 readers selected from among the 200 readers who were stated to have read the most books in the reader social network called 1000Kitap. Criterion sampling was used to determine the study group. Participants were selected considering the criteria of being among the 200 people who read the most books in the social network, being

volunteer and accessible, and having experience of using the network for at least 6 months. Voluntary and accessible criteria were created in order to collect data within the framework of scientific research and ethical rules. The criteria of reading the most books and having experience of using the network for at least six months were taken into account in order to ensure high validity of the obtained data. Twenty-four (46.2%) of the participants were female and 28 (53.8%) were male. Among the participants, there are individuals from 42 different professions such as family physicians, mechanical engineers, teachers, students, nurses.

5.3. Instruments

In the research, two different data collection tools were used. The first is the personal information form. This form was created by the researcher in order to reveal demographic information about the participants such as gender, age and occupation. The second is the interview form. The first draft of the interview form was created by the researcher in line with the research questions. Then, the form was edited by taking the opinions of 2 different field experts apart from the researcher. After the editing, 5 participants were interviewed and the answers were evaluated and the form was finalized. There are six open-ended questions in total in the interview form.

5.4. Data collection and analysis

The data of the research were obtained through written interviews with the readers. While collecting the data, first of all, the questions and explanations in the interview form were transferred to Google forms. Afterwards, 200 users, who were stated to have read the most books and had been active for at least 6 months, were identified in this network. After these participants were informed about the research via the message sending feature, the link of the prepared interview form was shared. If they were volunteers, they were offered to answer the questions in the link available. Responses from volunteer participants were first transferred to the Microsoft Word Program. Then, the data were transferred from here to the MAXQDA Qualitative Data Analysis Program.

In order to reach saturation in the analysis (Ando et al., 2014), the code book was prepared before starting the coding. During the analysis of the data, the codes were created by two different coders. At the end of the process, inter-rater reliability was calculated. The formula suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994) was used to calculate the inter-rater reliability, which was found to be .92. Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014) state that the inter-rater reliability should be between .85 and .90, depending on the size and spacing of the code scheme. Therefore, it can be said the coding process is reliable.

In order to ensure the content validity of the interview form, which is the data collection tool used in the research, this form was presented to the opinion of 3 experts who have studies in the field of reading education. The form was edited as a result of the feedback received from the field experts. In order to test the reliability of the form, 5 readers were interviewed using this form. Afterwards, the consistency of the responses received from the candidates was examined. All these indicated that the form is a valid and reliable measurement tool.

6. Results

The first question of the research is: "How did the participants start using the reader social network called 1000Kitap?". The findings are presented in Table 1:

Table 1. The way participants join the social reader network called 1000Kitap

Form of participation	Common explanation	N	Participants
Via the internet	I come across while searching a website about books on the internet.	13	P1, P3, P5, P6, P14, P19, P25, P32, P39, P40, P42, P52, P54
	I come across by accident while surfing on the internet.	11	P4, P8, P11, P12, P15, P21, P27, P30, P33, P45, P53
	Came across while searching for a book online.	7	P13, P18, P24, P34, P46, P48, P51
	While surfing on the internet, I came across the advertisement of the network.	5	P2, P29, P44, P47, P50
	Came across while surfing on social media	5	P7, P16, P26, P28, P36
	I come across while surfing on another social network for readers.	3	P9, P20, P35
	Total	44	P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P8, P9, P11, P12, P13, P14, P15, P16, P18, P19, P20, P21, P24, P25, P26, P27, P28, P29, P30, P32, P33, P34, P35, P36, P39, P40, P42, P45, P46, P48, P50, P51, P52, P53, P54
Via recommendations	My friend recommended	7	P10, P22, P23, P37, P38, P43, P49
	My wife/husband recommended	1	P17
	My nephew recommended	1	P31
	My daughter recommended	1	P41
	Total	10	P10, P17, P22, P23, P31, P37, P38, P41, P43, P49

When Table 1 is examined, it is understood that the participants' acquaintance with the social reader network called 1000Kitap generally occurs through the internet (N=44) or recommendations (N=10). Participants who discovered 1000Kitap via the internet stated that they encountered this network while searching for a site about books on the internet (N=11), surfing on the internet (N=11), searching for a book on the internet (N=7), surfing on social media (N=5) or browsing the another social network created for readers (N=3). Participants who discovered 1000Kitap through recommendations stated that they discovered this network with the advice of their friend (N=7), spouse (N=1), niece (N=1) or daughter (N=1).

One of the participants, K6, who discovered 1000Kitap on the internet, said, *"One day I came across 1000Kitap while researching book on the internet and I became a member immediately because I liked the content of the site."* P53, on the other hand, summarized the story of discovering the network: *"I saw it while surfing on the Internet. I like the quotes and reviews. I wanted to keep tally for not to confuse with others the books I read. So I thought it would be good for me to become a member..."*. P24 summarized the situation as follows: *"While researching to buy a book, I came across the content of 1000Kitap. At first I thought it was a book sale site. Then when I got interested, I started using it."* On the other hand, P28 said, *"I saw it in one book club on Facebook. So I got curious and started to use it."* In addition to these, P35 said, *"This network was mentioned on a site where readers gather and share their comments. Thus I learned this network there and started exploring it."*

One of the participants, P23, who discovered 1000Kitap with recommendations, said: *"I joined this network with the advice of some of my friends who are good readers."* P17, on the other hand, stated: *"My wife stated that it is a useful network and recommended me and my daughter to become members."* In addition to these, P31 said *"When my nephew saw that I was reading a book, he said it would be good to use it"*. P41, on the other hand, told his story of meeting with the

network as follows: “My daughter said that reading would be more fun if I used it, and she downloaded it to my phone.”

The second question of the research is “For what purposes do you use social reader network called 1000Kitap?”. The findings regarding this question are presented in Table 2:

Table 2. Purposes of the participants to use

Purpose	f	Participants
Creating a list of books that have been read and/or to be read	29	P2, P4, P9, P10, P11, P12, P14, P15, P16, P17, P18, P21, P22, P24, P25, P26, P27, P28, P29, P30, P31, P37, P38, P39, P41, P42, P46, P48, P53
Learning about books and/or authors	15	P8, P9, P10, P14, P18, P20, P24, P25, P33, P36, P39, P40, P42, P43, P49
Accessing other readers' opinions and/or thoughts	11	P9, P12, P17, P22, P26, P28, P29, P32, P33, P39, P41
Being helpful to other readers	10	P1, P3, P12, P14, P17, P19, P36, P39, P42, P43
Being motivated to read	9	P5, P7, P12, P18, P23, P25, P33, P34, P45
Reaching them by setting reading goals	9	P11, P12, P13, P27, P36, P40, P42, P52, P54,
Sharing quotes and/or reviews of books	8	P12, P24, P26, P28, P29, P32, P39, P40, P50
Sharing thoughts about what they have read	8	P1, P3, P10, P14, P17, P19, P45, P47
Discovering good books and/or readers	6	P15, P16, P24, P28, P35, P38
Accessing thoughts on what has been read by others	5	P3, P12, P13, P45, P44
Selecting the books to read	5	P9, P15, P16, P17, P32, P38
Communicating with other readers	5	P12, P14, P19, P22, P29
Following the book agenda	4	P6, P53, P42, P47

Table 2 shows the purposes of using the 1000Kitap network. When the table is examined, the usage purposes stated by the users of this network are as follows: Creating a list of books that have been read and/or to be read (f=29), learning about books and/or authors (f= 15), accessing other readers' opinions and/or thoughts (f=11), being helpful to other readers (f= 10), being motivated to read (f=9), reaching them by setting reading goals (f=9), sharing quotes and/or reviews of books (f=8), sharing thoughts about what they have read (f=8), discovering good books and/or readers (f=6), accessing thoughts on what has been read by others (f=5), selecting the books to read (f=5), communicating with other readers (f=5), following the book agenda (f=4).

P9 said, “My first goal was to make a list of the books I read and the books I own... Another goal was to get information by looking at the reviews of the books I wanted to read and decide whether to read it or not.” This explanation indicates that the participant uses the network both to keep a list of what they have read or to choose the books they will read, and to obtain information about books and authors by accessing the opinions of other readers. On the other hand P12 said: “The app is also a virtual library for me. I can digitally see the contents of my library at home from the app. I can arrange my reading list by adding the books that I haven't read but I plan to read. I am sharing excerpts from the books I have read. In summary, I can use this platform as my agenda. Of course, I also use it for purposes such as following other readers, sharing what I wrote, and increasing my reading motivation.” This explanation shows that the participant uses the network for purposes such as being useful to the readers, motivating themselves to read, sharing quotes and reviews, communicating with other readers.

The third question of the research is “Has using the social network called 1000Kitap caused a change in your own reading habits?”. The findings regarding this question are presented in Figure 1:

Figure 1. The change in readers own reading habits caused by the use of the social reader network named 1000Kitap

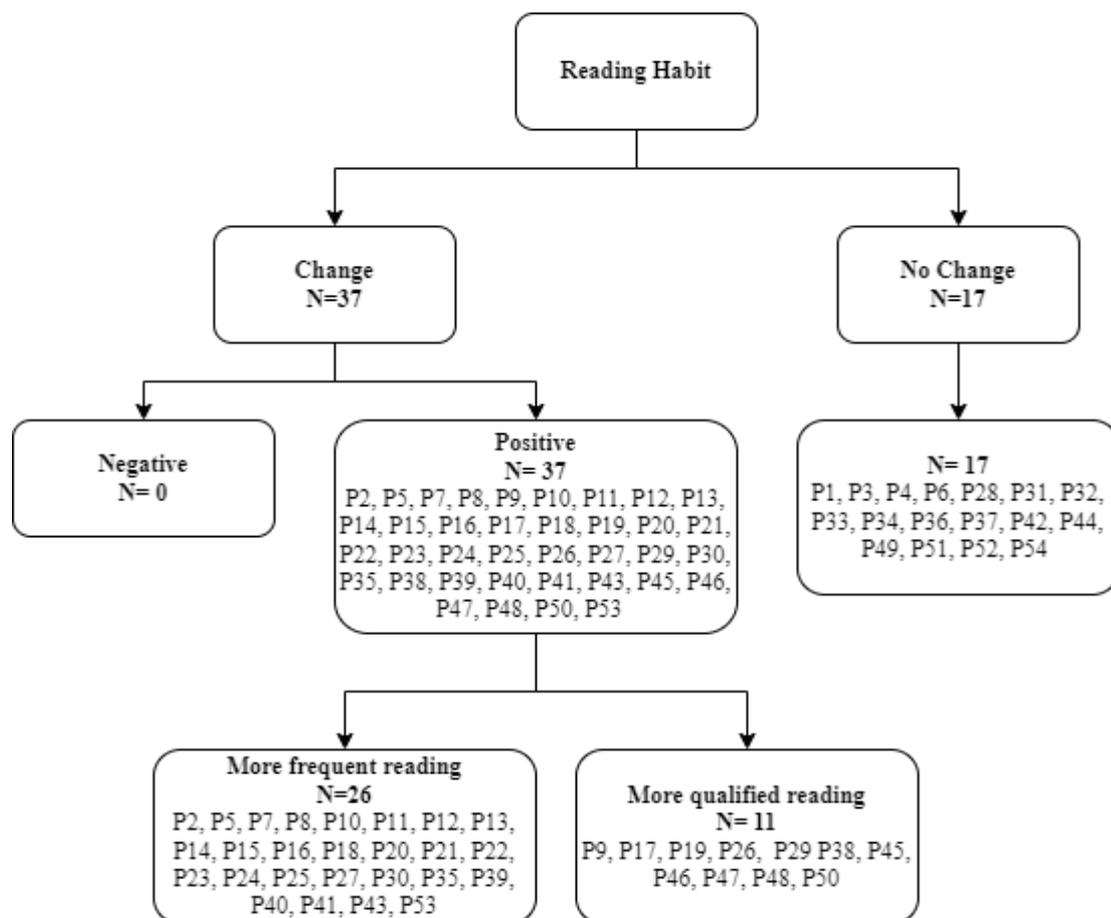


Figure 1 summarizes the participants' views on whether or not their reading habits changed after they started using the 1000Kitap network. When Figure 1 is examined, it is seen that most of the participants (N=37) think that there is a change in their reading habits. All participants (N=37) who stated that there was a change in their reading habits stated that this change was positive. Some of these participants (N=11) who stated that there was a positive change were of the opinion that their readings have become more qualified since they started using the network. Some of the participants (N= 26) think that their reading frequencies have increased since they started using the network. In addition to these, there are also those who think that there is no change in reading habits since they started using the network, but these (N=17) are relatively in the minority.

One of the participants, P17, who stated that there was a positive change in his/her reading habits after s/he started using the 1000Kitap network expressed the positive change in his/her reading habits by saying: *“There is a section called reading target. Thanks to this section, I set goals. In this way, I increase my reading and I am happy to achieve my goal.”* P41, on the other hand, expressed the positive change in reading habits as follows: *“As I saw different authors, categories, and books on this network, I was curious about them. My reading frequency increased with a sense of curiosity.”* On the other hand, P28, stated that there was no change in his/her reading habits after s/he started using the 1000Kitap network and expressed: *“There was no change in my reading habit. I am a person who reads whenever I can.”*

The fourth question of the research is “Has using the social network called 1000Kitap caused a change in the participants own reading preferences?”. The findings regarding this question are presented in Figure 2:

Figure 2. The change in the readers their own reading preferences caused by the use of the social reader network named 1000Kitap

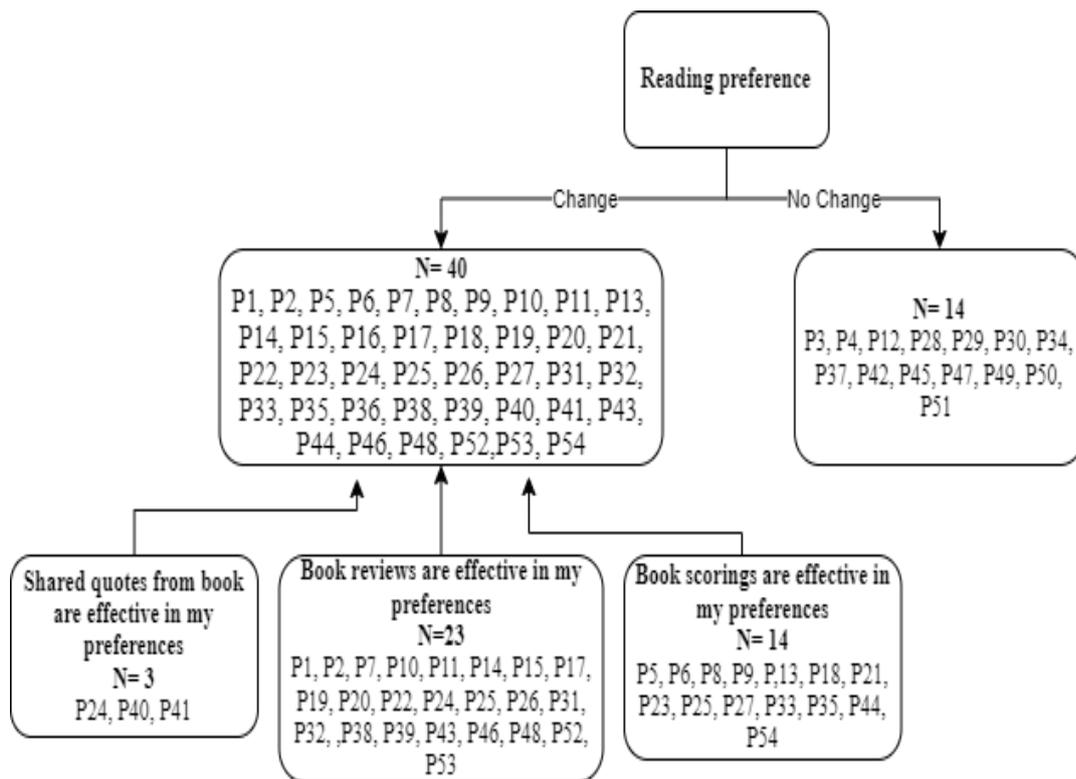


Figure 2 summarizes the opinions of the participants on whether there has been a change in their own reading habits after they started using the 1000Kitap network. When the figure is examined, it is seen that the majority of the participants (N=40) thought that there was a change in their own reading preferences after they started using the network. However, it is seen that the relatively small number of participants (N=14) thought that there was no change in their own reading preferences. Those who think that there has been a change in their reading preferences stated that this change was due to the following 3 reasons: Book reviews (N=23), book scores (N=14) and shared quotes (N=3) on the network.

One of the participants, P25, who stated that there was a change in their reading preferences after they started using the 1000Kitap network, said: *“When I want to read a book, I look at comments and ratings about the book. If the reviews and ratings are not good, I don't read. If I am interested in a book someone has read and commented on, I read it.”* On the other hand, P40 summarized the situation by saying: *“The comment of the person I follow about a book can cause me to be interested in that book. So I find that book and read it. Thanks to the network, I have read such books that I might not have come across otherwise.”* In addition to these, one of the participants, P30, who stated that there was no change in his/her own reading preference, said: *“There hasn't been any change because I already made a list of the books I'd read a long time ago. I decided to finish the world classics first.”*

The fifth question of the research is “What are the positive and negative aspects of the reader social network called 1000Kitap according to the participants?”. The findings regarding this question are presented in Figure 3:

Figure 3. The positive and negative aspects of the social reader network named 1000Kitap according to the participants

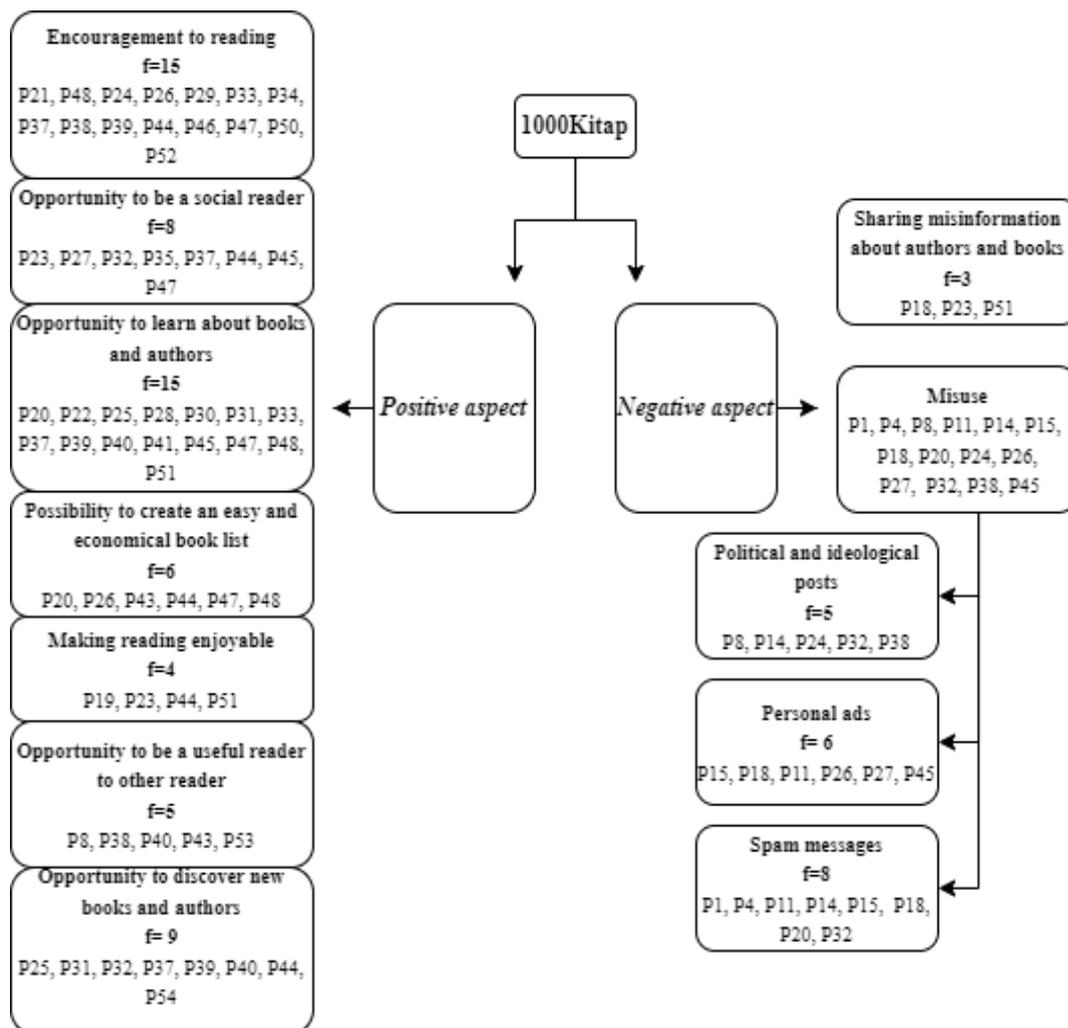


Figure 3 summarizes the participants' thoughts on the positive and negative aspects of 1000Kitap. When the table is examined, it can be seen that the positive aspects are more than the negative aspects and are frequently stated. According to the participants, the positive aspects of this network are: Encouraging reading (f=15), providing an opportunity to learn about books and authors (f=15), providing an opportunity to discover new books and authors (f=9), providing an opportunity to be a social reader (f=8), providing the opportunity to create an easy and economical book list (f= 6), providing other readers with the opportunity to be a useful reader (f=5) and making reading fun (f=4). The negative aspects are the misuse of the network (f=12) and the sharing of false information about authors/books on the network (f=3). Moreover, spam messages (f=8), personal ads (f=6) and political and ideological posts (f=5) were mentioned under misuse.

Stating that the network has both positive and negative aspects, P20 said the following about its advantages: *"Thanks to the reviews and comments on the network, I get to know quickly about the books I'm looking for. I can see the books I've read together, I can create lists, so I don't fall into repetitions."* The same participant said the following about the negative aspects of the network. *"I get weird messages from time to time. I get weirder messages when I have a profile picture. I try to reply to messages that are generally well-intentioned. But there are also bad intentioned people. This is disturbing."* Expressing that the network does not have a negative aspect, K37 expressed the following: *"It increases motivation. I think it increases my critical thinking skills thanks to the book reviews on the network. Different comments about the book you read broaden your horizons. There are those who write such good reviews that is really impressive. Sometimes just users' comments about the book make me read the book."*

7. Conclusion and discussion

Research findings show that most of the participants discovered the reader social network called 1000Kitap via the internet. This finding is consistent with the view that internet use can affect reading processes (Odabaş et al., 2018) and reading behaviors (Mokhtari, Reichard & Gardner, 2009; Varga, 2020). For this reason, it is important to investigate how the internet can be used to encourage reading, as expressed by Derksen et al. (2022). In the research conducted by Hu & Yu (2021), it was stated that the use of social media and positive attitudes towards social media can improve digital reading performance. On the other hand, Derksen et al. (2022) noted that restricting internet access with a source of engaging and accessible reading material can promote independent reading. Therefore, restricting internet access to social reader networks such as 1000Kitap, especially for individuals who have not gained self-control, may be beneficial in terms of encouraging reading. The findings show that the recommendations of close social circles and family members are also effective in discovering and starting to use the social reader network called 1000Kitap. This finding is consistent with the view pointing out that the social environment may have an impact on reading preferences and behaviors (Kragler & Nolley, 1996; Reuter, 2007; Rosenblatt, 2016). It is known that those living in social environments where reading is valued can improve their reading habits and have higher motivation to read (Huang, Capps, Blacklock & Garza, 2014). Therefore, at the point of the correct use of such social networks, the encouragement made by the close social environment such as family, teachers and peers can be beneficial in terms of motivating individuals to read and improving their reading habits.

Research findings show that 1000Kitap users use this network for many different purposes such as creating a list of what has been read or to be read, getting information about books and authors, accessing other readers' opinions and thoughts, being useful to other readers in the network, motivating themselves to read, and setting reading goals for themselves. These findings are consistent with the view that such networks are used for many different purposes, such as sharing opinions and experiences, evaluating the agenda (Cordón-García et al., 2013; Li & Wu, 2017; Merga, 2015; Rebora et al., 2021; Vlieghe, Muls & Rutten, 2016; Wang, Liu & Han, 2019). As a matter of fact, with the use of digital applications, reading can go beyond the words on the pages and become an activity where thoughts, opinions and quotes are read and shared (Li & Wu, 2017). Social reading platforms allow readers to share their reviews on these platforms (Wang, Liu & Han, 2019). Considering all these, 1000Kitap-style social reader networks, when used appropriately, can serve their users to achieve the above-mentioned goals, thus helping them become a social reader, and making reading a more enjoyable and productive process. Merga (2015) also stated that such social networks can increase the reading time by enabling readers to discover new books and encourage their users to read. Therefore, as the findings of this study indicate, introducing such networks, conducting awareness raising activities about these networks and encouraging the correct use of such networks may help individuals develop reading habits.

According to the findings, most of the participants think that changes have occurred in their own reading habits and preferences since they started using 1000Kitap. These findings are consistent with the findings of Alghamdi and Ihshaish (2021), who stated that the recommendations in such social networks are effective on book-purchasing decisions. Participants who stated that there was a change in their reading habits think that this change was positive both qualitatively and quantitatively. When the participant statements are examined, it is understood that the positive change in reading habits and preferences is due to the fact that this network makes reading a more social and enjoyable process for its users. This situation confirms the importance of the social environment on reading behaviors, as stated by Rosenblatt (1978). The findings obtained by Konuk (2018) also showed that most of those who use applications like 1000Kitap think that these applications give them the habit of reading. On the other hand, in the study conducted by Merga (2015), it was stated that such social networks may have positive effects on reading habits and preferences, as well as negative effects (like peer pressure to read specific books). For this reason, it

seems important to ensure control and take protective measures, especially during the use of such networks by young people. As a matter of fact, Merga (2015) stated that the users frequently use such networks for different purposes. In support of these, the findings obtained in this study show that some of 1000Kitap users use this network for different purposes such as communicating with the opposite sex, advertising, and sharing their political and ideological views. For this reason, when it comes to such networks, it is important to encourage correct use and take the necessary precautions. As a matter of fact, the findings of this study indicate that such networks can support reading interests and habits when used correctly. However, the findings obtained by Çömlekçi and Başol (2019) show that young people spend most of their time on Instagram, Twitter and Facebook for purposes such as having fun, communicating and following the agenda, instead of such reader-oriented networks. In addition, the survey findings conducted by the Statista Research Department show that social networks such as Facebook, Youtube and Instagram are the networks with the highest number of active users in the world in 2022. However, instead of social media tools, encouraging the use of social networks such as 1000Kitap, may be beneficial in terms of supporting individuals' reading interests and habits, as the findings of this study indicate.

According to current research, the reader social network named 1000Kitap gives its users the opportunity to become social readers, helps them learn about books/authors and easily create book lists, provides the opportunity to be useful to other readers and discover new authors and books. Therefore, the network encourages them to read. It is understood from the participant's statements that such networks can help readers acquire a social environment and make reading an interactive and enjoyable process. Such a process can be effective in developing reading habits by motivating readers. These findings are compatible with Rosenblatt's (1978) theory, which points to the importance of the social environment in the process of reading and meaning making. However, some participated in the research stated that this social network has positive sides as well as negative sides, albeit relatively few. For example, the participants stated that there are those who use this network for different purposes such as making personal advertisements, interacting with the opposite sex, and sharing political and ideological thoughts. In addition, participants stated that they occasionally encounter false information about authors or books on this network. Merga (2015) also mentioned that such social networks have advantages and disadvantages, and emphasized that it is easy to turn to different sites and side-track into different sites when accessing such social networks with devices such as computers or phones. In addition, studies on social networks in recent years (Brailovskaia et al., 2019; Wolfers & Utz, 2022) emphasize the relationship between stress and overuse of these networks. All of these highlight the importance of raising awareness on the conscious use of such social networks.

8. Implications

The results of this research provide inferences about the importance of social reader networks, the use of which has increased with the widespread use of internet access. Research results indicate that such networks can be used to improve individuals' reading habits. Results indicate that when these networks are used in accordance with their purpose, they can support their members' reading regularly as social readers. In addition, the results indicate that these networks can help their users in choosing books and reaching the right reading materials. For this reason, introducing these social networks to readers who have difficulties in choosing a book and teaching them how to use these networks when choosing a book can help them reach suitable books. The selection of books suitable for their interests and needs by the reader can motivate them to read and help them develop reading habits. However, the results of the research also point out that such social reader networks may serve different purposes and lead to negative results when they are not used in accordance with their purpose or when a balance cannot be achieved in the usage period. Therefore, raising awareness of individuals about the use of such networks in accordance with their purpose and applying restrictions when necessary may be beneficial in terms of supporting reading habits.

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