Research Square

Preprints are preliminary reports that have not undergone peer review.
They should not be considered conclusive, used to inform clinical practice,
or referenced by the media as validated information.

Development And Psychometric Evaluation of The Rage Bait Sensitivity Scale: An Exploratory Sequential Mixed-Methods Study

Mehmet Fatih Şiraz
Ministry of Health, Turkey
Abdullah Ensar Uzun
aensaruzun@gmail.com

Milli Eğitim Bakanliği
Azmi Çağlar
Bolu Abant İzzet Baysal University
Gülgün Uzun
Erciyes University

Research Article

Keywords:

Posted Date: November 17th, 2026

DOI: https://doi.org/10.21203/rs.3.rs-11071271/v1

License: This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License.
Read Full License

Additional Declarations:
No competing interests reported.

Tables are available in the Supplementary Files section.

Development And Psychometric Evaluation of The Rage Bait Sensitivity Scale: An Exploratory Sequential Mixed-Methods Study

Mehmet Fatih Şiraz[1], Abdullah Ensar Uzun[2], Azmi Çağlar[3], Gülgün Uzun[4]

[1] Psychologist, Ministry of Health, Kayseri, Türkiye, fatihsiraz@gmail.com

[2] Department of Psychological Counseling, Ministry of Education, Kayseri, Türkiye, aensaruzun@gmail.com

[3] Department of Psychological Counseling, Abant Izzet Baysal University, Bolu, Türkiye, dr.azmicaglar@gmail.com

[4]Department of Psychological Counseling, Erciyes University, Kayseri, Türkiye, gulgun@erciyes.edu.tr

Author Note

[1]Mehmet Fatih Şiraz, https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5399-5898.

[2]Abdullah Ensar Uzun, https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7809-4789

[3]Azmi Çağlar, https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7924-2229

[4]Gülgün Uzun, https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2421-7725

Word Count: 8522

Funding. The authors received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Conflict of Interest. No conflict of interest exists for this manuscript for any of the authors.

Availability of Data and Material. Data will be available on request.

Pre-registration Statement. This study was not pre-registered.

Human Ethics and Consent Declarations. The study was conducted in accordance with the ethical standards laid down in the 1964 Declaration of Helsinki and its subsequent revisions. Ethical approval was obtained from the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Social and Human Sciences at Erciyes University (Approval No: 010). All participants were 18 years of age or older and provided informed consent prior to participation.

Consent to Participate. Informed consent was obtained from all the individual participants that were included in the study.

Informed Consent

All participants in this study were 18 years of age or older. Each individual voluntarily agreed to take part in the research and provided informed consent prior to participation. Participants confirmed their willingness for anonymized data to be used for scientific purposes and publication.

Acknowledgments. We thank the participants of this study and those who developed the measures we used in the study.

Correspondence Author.

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Abdullah Ensar Uzun, Ministry of National Education, Türkiye, aensaruzun@gmail.com

Abstract

This study focuses on developing and evaluating the Rage Bait Sensitivity Scale (RBSS), which measures individuals' reactions to online anger-inducing content. The research was conducted in two stages using an exploratory sequential mixed-methods approach. In the first stage, qualitative interviews and focus groups were held with 46 participants. These revealed themes defining sensitivity to online anger-inciting content and helped create scale items. In the second stage, the scale's validity and reliability were assessed. For an exploratory factor analysis, data were collected from 300 participants, and the scale's factor structure was

determined. Confirmatory factor analysis was then performed on 378 participants, and the model's fit indices were examined. The findings suggest that the RBSS is a valid and reliable tool for measuring susceptibility to online anger-inducing content. In conclusion, this study introduces a new tool to understand reactions to anger-provoking content in digital media. It makes an important contribution to both academic research and practical application.

Keywords. Rage bait, sensitivity, scale, mixed-methods study

Introduction

Rage bait is a concept that has received increasing attention *in digital media. It* refers to a manipulation strategy intended to provoke anger, contempt, or moral indignation, capitalizing on negative emotional responses (Shin et al., 2025). Central to the effectiveness of this strategy is the relationship between individuals' motivation to address perceived injustices and the algorithmic structures of social media platforms, which reward interaction (Cover, 2025).

Research shows that popular online content often elicits high arousal (Berger & Milkman, 2012). In this context, anger is more powerful than joy or sadness. Fan et al. (2014) demonstrated that anger spreads faster and reaches a wider audience than other emotions. They studied emotional contagion in social networks.

Current research highlights how the design of digital platforms leads content producers to create inaccurate or provocative content rather than rational information (Lorenz, 2024). In this process, algorithms act as an "algorithmic lattice," pushing producers to use strong negative emotions to gain visibility (Vaidhyanathan, 2018). Content with strategic errors has become a tool for spreading information by exploiting users' urge to defend the truth (Angwald & Wagnsson, 2024).

Crockett (2017) examines moral outrage in the digital age and claims that platforms commodify this emotion. Social media architecture manipulates rewards like likes and shares, keeping people in a constant state of indignation. Brady et al. (2017) describe this spread of moral and emotional content and say it deepens polarization in social networks. Rage-bait content not only attracts attention but also feeds social polarization, as Sunstein (2018) explains through the lens of echo chambers and fragmented democracy. Fuchs (2017) calls this process the "mechanics of anger" and shows how algorithms profit from negative emotions.

Economically and structurally*, rage bait* can be seen as a mechanism that turns human behavior and emotions into data for profit. This fits Zuboff's (2023) idea of surveillance capitalism. In this context,

Ayolov (2025) shows rage bait's harmful effects on users. Lorenz (2024) describes how internet fame and power struggles became manipulative strategies over time.

Rage bait is a multi-layered strategy. It emerges at the intersection of psychology, platform design, and economic interests (Shin et al., 2025). The Uses and Gratifications Theory says individuals choose media that meet their needs. Rage-bait content draws interaction by satisfying motivations such as the urge to "right the wrong" and the need for emotional release (Berger & Milkman, 2012; Fan et al., 2014).

The Theory of Surveillance Capitalism (Zuboff, 2023) says digital platforms turn user behavior and emotions into data for profit. *Rage bait* speeds this up by triggering strong emotions, such as anger (Cover, 2025). Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 2001) states that *rage bait* strengthens group identities and increases polarization through us-versus-them thinking. Combined with Sunstein's (2018) idea of echo chambers, this weakens democratic debate. R*age bait* is not just about attracting attention. Crockett (2017) says commodifying moral anger and the emotional content spread described by Brady et al. (2017) make this a structural problem that feeds social polarization.

Rage bait is more than an individual content choice. It is a structural problem that shapes social media platforms, acts as an attention-grabbing strategy, and negatively impacts mental health (Cover, 2025). Studying this concept is key to understanding social media, user behavior, and the future of democracy. Zuboff (2023) describes how algorithms profit from social unrest via "anger mechanics." Crockett (2017) and Sunstein (2018) show that moral outrage online weakens public debate and harms rational dialogue. Academic work on rage bait helps us understand data exploitation in surveillance capitalism and supports digital knowledge and resistance against manipulative content.

The Theory of Surveillance Capitalism (Zuboff, 2023) asserts that digital platforms transform user behavior and emotions into data raw material for profit. *Rage bait* ingredients accelerate this process by triggering high-arousal emotions such as anger (Cover, 2025). Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 2001) explains that *rage bait* reinforces group identities and deepens polarization through the us-versus-them distinction. This, combined with Sunstein's (2018) concept of echo chambers, weakens the ground

for democratic debate. Therefore, *rage bait* is not just a means of attracting attention; As Crockett (2017) states, the commodification of moral anger and the spread of emotional content described by Brady et al. (2017) should be seen as a structural problem that feeds social polarization.

Rather than being an individual content choice, rage bait is considered a structural problem that shapes the design of social media platforms, is used as an attention-grabbing strategy, and has negative effects on human psychology (Cover, 2025). Examining this concept is critical to understanding the workings of social media, user behavior, and the future of democratic processes. Zuboff (2023) reveals how algorithms turn social unrest into profit through a process called "anger mechanics"; Crockett (2017) and Sunstein (2018) show that artificially fueled moral outrage harms the public debate environment and hinders rational dialogue. Therefore, academic studies on *rage bait* can contribute not only to understanding the mechanisms of data exploitation in the context of surveillance capitalism but also to maintaining healthy digital knowledge acquisition and strengthening social resistance against manipulative content.

Within this framework, the following research questions are examined:

Do RBSS items exhibit a significant factor structure in measuring susceptibility to online outrageous content?

Can the factor structure obtained as a result of the exploratory factor analysis of RBSS be re-validated on a different sample in confirmatory factor analysis?

Does RBSS have reliability coefficients (Cronbach's Alpha) in terms of internal consistency?

Are RBSS scores positively related to the psychological variable (Emotional Reactivity Scale Short Form) associated with anger?

Study 1- Qualitative Research and Content Creation

Research Design

This research is a mixed-methods scale development study. It aims to develop a multidimensional tool to assess sensitivity to provocative content online. The research used a sequential exploratory design in two

stages: qualitative item generation and quantitative psychometric verification. This approach is recommended for measuring new, context-specific psychological constructs (Boateng et al., 2018; DeVellis, 2021; Munce et al., 2021). Figure 1 presents the flow chart of the research process.

-Figure 1-

Method

All participants provided written and verbal consent before each survey interview. This study was approved by the Erciyes University Social and Human Sciences Ethics Committee (Protocol Number: 010). A qualitative design was used in the first phase of the research to explain anger incitement, identify related constructs, and develop scale items. Semi-structured interviews were conducted. Each interview lasted approximately 30-40 minutes.

Participants and Procedure

The participants in the research were selected from students in the psychological counseling department who are continuing their education at the university, using a purposive sampling method. The age range of the study participants ranged from 20 to 26 (X=21.4). 30 participants were female (65%), and 16 were male (35%). Interviews were terminated when themes began to recur, and data saturation was observed.

In the interviews, *the following semi-structured questions were used to address rage bait* sensitivity across the dimensions of emotion, thought, and behavior. 1. What emotions do you experience at first when you encounter social media content that you think is anger-provoking or provocative? 2. What thoughts go through your mind when you think that a piece of content is shared specifically to anger or provoke people? 3. When you see such content, do you have a tendency to comment, react, or engage in discussions? 4. Do you ever show self-regulation behavior, such as stopping to think, checking the source of the content, or calming yourself down before reacting when you encounter content that makes you angry or uncomfortable? 5. Do you have a tendency to share, post, or spread anger-provoking content with

others? 6. What are the signs that make you know that a piece of social media content is manipulative, taken out of context, or intentionally provocative?

During the interviews, to enable participants to elaborate on their statements and clarify their meaning, in-depth and confirmatory questions such as "Can you elaborate on this idea?" and "Can you tell us what exactly you mean by this?" were asked. All interviews were transcribed verbatim immediately after the interviews, and the analysis was carried out from these texts.

Data Analysis

All interviews were transcribed verbatim immediately after the interviews, and the analysis was carried out from these texts. The data analysis was conducted using the inductive content analysis approach, widely used in qualitative research. The analysis process was conducted independently by three researchers experienced in scale development and qualitative methods.

Findings

In the first stage, the transcripts were read line by line, and meaningful expressions reflecting rage bait sensitivity were determined and coded with the open coding method. Then, the codes were compared, overlapping and diverging points were discussed, and a consensus was reached. The theme and sub-theme structure were created at the end of this consensus process. This approach is based on the principle of analyst triangulation, a qualitative research approach (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Creswell, 2013).

In the second stage, sub-themes were created by grouping codes with similar content; the coding was examined, and higher-level themes were determined by considering the relationships between the sub-themes. Comparative evaluations were conducted until the researchers reached consensus on the theme and sub-theme configurations. As a result of this process, a total of 5 top themes and 9 sub-themes were identified from 256 responses, representing the range of bait sensitivity. The top themes identified are emotional reactions, cognitive assessment, behavioral response, self-regulation, and boundary-setting. The themes and sub-themes obtained are presented in Table 1 along with the participant citations.

-Table 1-

Discussion and Conclusion

The qualitative analysis conducted in the first phase of this study revealed that individual sensitivity to deliberately encountering provocative content in digital environments is a multidimensional construct. The themes achieved show that rage bait sensitivity is not limited to emotional responses; it also encompasses cognitive assessment processes, behavioral tendencies, self-regulation strategies, and boundary-setting behaviors. These themes conceptually coincide with the basic behavioral processes described in the self-management and self-regulation literature (Bandura, 1991; Carver & Scheier, 1998; Zimmerman, 2000). These findings provide an important starting point for the development of a context-specific and theoretically grounded measurement tool, which is the main purpose of the study.

The five top themes suggest that the process individuals go through when encountering provocative content has a gradual structure. When the responses under the theme of emotional reactions, determined through the qualitative analysis, were examined, it was found that individuals experienced emotions such as anger and sadness when encountering provocative content. For example, when the responses of participants 45 and 18 were examined, they reported feelings of nervousness, tension, and anxiety.

"I get angry, sad, and I don't want to see such content; it lowers my mood. P45"

"I feel a very intense sense of tension. I feel provoked and aroused. P18"

This finding is consistent with previous studies that emphasize the emotional stimulation of digital environments and the psychological effects of negative content on individuals (Gross, 2015; Kross et al., 2013; Verduyn et al., 2017). The intentional presentation of provocative content on social media can overwhelm individuals' capacity for emotional regulation, prompting immediate reactions and negative emotions. This supports the need to measure an emotional component of rage bait sensitivity.

When the purposeful questioning tendencies that emerge under the theme of cognitive evaluation are examined, rage bait prompts cognitive evaluations of whether the content is manipulative, taken out of

context, or deliberately provocative. For example, participants 12 and 46 reported their thoughts on the content's purpose.

“.. I think they did it to attract attention. P12"

"This content is consciously manipulating emotions. The person is using provocation to get interaction. P46"

This finding suggests that individuals are not solely focused on the content itself, but rather on the intent behind the content. It also shows that rage bait sensitivity is not just about automatic emotional responses. It reveals awareness that provocative content is produced for manipulative purposes. The responses coincide with theoretical and empirical studies that emphasize the central role of cognitive assessment and resignification in self-regulation processes (Gross, 2015). How individuals interpret a piece of content is recognized as a critical component that determines the direction of emotional and behavioral responses that arise. Therefore, measuring the cognitive dimension of rage bait sensitivity is important for understanding the structure holistically.

The theme of behavioral responses reflects the tendency of individuals to respond to provocative content actively (commenting, arguing) or passively (ignoring, staying away). For example, participants 3 and 8 reported behavioral reactions to the content.

“.. I pass without any interaction. P3"

"Sometimes I comment, but I usually try not to get into arguments." (K8)

It is noteworthy that in the theme of behavioral responses, both the tendency to react actively and the tendency to remain passive occur together. This finding suggests that individuals do not always use the same behavioral strategy to digital provocations and may react differently depending on situational and individual factors. In particular, behaviors such as commenting, engaging in discussions, or ignoring content are closely related to an individual's capacity for momentary self-control (Baumeister et al., 2007;

Hofmann et al., 2012). For this reason, the behavioral dimension of Rage bait sensitivity is particularly important in indicating the extent to which individuals can control themselves in digital interactions.

The sub-themes of self-soothing and resource control within the self-regulation theme point to the protective dimensions of rage bait sensitivity. For example, participants 9 and 23 demonstrated self-regulation in the face of rage-bait content.

"I don't react extremely angrily to such content, and I talk about my feelings and thoughts by sharing them with my friends. P9"

"If there is an accurate source in the news to see if such an incident has occurred, I will share it with my friends. P23

This finding suggests that participants, with self-soothing and source-controlling behaviors, were able to employ conscious regulation strategies rather than automatic responses to provocative stimuli. The fact that some participants tend to stop and think before reacting, question the source of the content, or consciously calm themselves shows that self-regulatory skills can also be used effectively in digital environments. This finding conceptually coincides with Bandura's (1991) self-regulation theory and Zimmerman's (2000) self-management model. In the digital context, self-regulation plays a critical function in helping individuals recognize their emotional responses, engage in cognitive reassessment, and control their behavior. This dimension of rage bait sensitivity reflects not only the level of exposure individuals have to the stimulus but also how they cope with it.

Lastly, the theme of setting boundaries suggests that individuals are consciously setting limits on their digital content consumption. For example, 37

"I usually leave that app, turn on music, and try to stay by myself. P37"

"If it is shared for manipulation, I decide not to fall for it. P40"

When the responses are examined, strategies such as moving away from provocative content, selective focus, or consciously filtering out certain types of content overlap with behavioral control mechanisms

emphasized in the self-management literature (Zimmerman, 2000; LaRose et al., 2003). This suggests that rage bait sensitivity is not only a reactive structure but also involves learned and refineable editing strategies.

When all the themes obtained are evaluated together, it is evident that rage bait sensitivity is a multidimensional construct that includes emotional, cognitive, and behavioral processes, as well as self-regulation and boundary-setting mechanisms. Although this multidimensional structure is not a directly measured concept in the current literature, it shows strong theoretical connections with self-regulation, digital behaviors, and emotional response processes. The fact that the items cover emotional, cognitive, and behavioral processes together offers an important advantage in supporting the construct validity of the scale in quantitative analyses to be conducted in the following stages. The scale development literature emphasizes that items developed without sufficient conceptual depth at the qualitative stage can yield psychometrically weak structures (Boateng et al., 2018; DeVellis & Thorpe, 2021).

The qualitative findings obtained within the scope of Study 1 provided a theoretical and empirical basis for the quantitative analyses to be conducted in the second phase of the study. In line with the determined theme and sub-themes, a 16-item scale item pool was created. The items were reviewed by the research team, taking into account the criteria of clarity, one-dimensionality, behavioral specificity, and conceptual overlap; overlapping, ambiguous, or multi-fragmented expressions are eliminated. The developed articles need to be tested for content validity and construct validity. In this regard, Study 2 aims to evaluate the psychometric properties of the developed scale and to verify rage bait sensitivity as a measurable construct.

Study 2- Design And Psychometric Evaluation of Scale

Research Design

In this study, surface, content, construct, and reliability analyses were conducted to evaluate the psychometric properties of the scale. The samples studied at each step were selected independently and explained separately.

Participants and Procedure

The study was conducted with two independent sample groups. In the study, easy sampling, a nonprobability-based sampling method, was used. Participants were reached online via announcements on social media platforms and university mailing lists. Participants who volunteered for the study and met the research criteria accessed an online questionnaire link containing an informed consent form explaining the purpose of the study, participation conditions, and confidentiality assurances. Only participants who gave electronic consent continued to complete the questionnaire.

When developing measurement tools, sample size is crucial to obtain reliable and valid results. For this reason, different sample groups were studied in both exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses. The minimum recommended number for exploratory factor analysis is reported as 300 in the literature (Kass & Tinsley, 1979; Kline, 1994). For this reason, data for EFA were collected from 300 participants. Similarly, 378 participants were reached, and data were collected within the confirmatory factor analysis group.

Criteria for participation in the research: To be between the ages of 18 and 65, to speak Turkish fluently, to be voluntary, and not to have any psychiatric diagnosis based on self-report. The exclusion criteria are a reported psychiatric diagnosis and being outside the specified age range.

First Sample Group: Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) group

The Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) group included 300 participants, comprising 177 females (59%) and 123 males (41%), aged 18 to 56 (M ± SD = 22.62± 7.44). Of the participants, 254 (83%) are undergraduate students, 14 (4.7%) are continuing their postgraduate education, and 37 (12.3%) have completed their undergraduate education. Of the participants, 260 (86.7%) were not working, and 40 (13.3%) were working.

Second Sample Group: Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) group

The Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) group included 378 participants, consisting of 283 females (74.9%) and 95 males (25.1%), aged 18 to 49 (M ± SD = 23.10± 6.18). Of the participants, 33 (8.7%)

were high school graduates, 242 (64%) were undergraduate students, and 103 (27.2%) were individuals who completed their undergraduate education. Of the participants, 268 (70.9%) are not working, and 110 (29.1%) are working.

Measurement of Constructs

Emotional Reactivity Scale Short Form (B-ERS). The scale developed by Veilleux et al. (2024) is a 5-point Likert-type, one-dimensional measurement tool consisting of 6 items. The validity and reliability of the scale for Turkish society were evaluated by Yüksel and Ekşi (2024). In the analysis, Cronbach's Alpha was 0.74. In the present study, the internal consistency of the obtained scores was .75.

Face Validity

The surface validity of the scale was evaluated to determine the extent to which its items reflected the concept being measured. First, the items were examined by the researchers, and then sent to 10 participants from the target population to obtain their opinions on the difficulty level, appropriateness, and ambiguity of the statements. Participants then scored the items on a five-point Likert scale (1 = not at all appropriate, 5 = completely appropriate), using the formula impact score = frequency (%) × importance. Substances above 1.5 have been accepted (Polit et. al., 2007).

Content Validity

To evaluate the content validity, 6 experts in psychological counseling and psychology were interviewed, and their opinions were obtained on the wording, grammar, item distribution, and item scaling. The items were evaluated in terms of CVR (Content Validity Ratio), I-CVI (Item-Level Content Validity Index), and modified Kappa values (Polit et al., 2007).

For CVR calculation, each item was examined according to three grades of Likert (1 = not necessary, 2 = useful but not necessary, 3 = necessary) scales: According to the Lawshe formula [CVR=(N e-N72)/(N72)], the minimum acceptable CVR value was determined as 0.99 with the participation of 6 experts (Lawshe, 1975). After the CVR was computed, the Item-Level Content Validity Index (I-CVI)

was computed. To do this, the same 6 experts invited to participate in the CVR assessment were asked to rate each item on a 4-point Likert scale (1 = Not relevant, 2 = Somewhat relevant, 3 = Highly relevant, 4 = Very relevant). The minimum acceptable item-level I-CVI for expert opinions involving six to ten experts is 0.78 (Polit et al., 2007). In the Modified Kappa (κ) calculation, each item was rated in pairs by experts (1 = relevant, 0 = irrelevant); Values above 0.75 were considered excellent (Polit et al., 2007).

Item Analysis

Item analysis is the first empirical evaluation of the measurement tool before factor analysis. At this stage, each item was examined for mean, standard deviation, correlation with other items, and normality of the data. Relationships among items were evaluated using inter-item and item-total correlations. This analysis provides an indication of the mean relationship between items, helping to determine if they measure the same structure without unnecessary repetition. According to methodological recommendations, optimal interitem correlation values for one-dimensional scales generally range from .20 to .50 (Clark & Watson, 1995). In adjusted item-total correlations, the recommended range is in the range of .30-.50. However, on multidimensional scales, wider ranges may emerge because items from different subdimensions are not expected to correlate strongly (DeVellis & Thorpe, 2021; Field, 2009; Kline, 2011). Therefore, when evaluated within each factor, a wider range of correlations can still reflect a satisfactory internal structure. Within the scope of item analysis, correlations between items were examined; items below .15 were evaluated in terms of weak relationship, and items above .80 were evaluated in terms of excessive overlap.

Construct Validity

The construct validity of the rage bait sensitivity scale was evaluated using exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses. First, an Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was performed to examine the factor structure of the items (Brown, 2015; Schumacker & Lomax, 2010). The principal axis factoring method and direct oblimin rotation were selected to provide a robust factor solution for correlated factors (Büyüköztürk, 2011). The suitability of the data for factor analysis was evaluated using the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity. Factor inference and loadings were evaluated to

determine the number of factors and the contribution of each item. KMO is a statistical test used in factor analysis to determine whether the data is suitable for factor analysis. It measures the sampling adequacy of each observed variable and the full model, based on the correlation among variables (Kline, 1994). The CFA was conducted to test the validity of the EFA-derived structure. To enable more precise estimation of model parameters, 95% confidence intervals were calculated for key statistical indicators, including standardized regression weights and reliability coefficients in CFA. The confidence intervals were obtained via bias-corrected bootstrap procedures (2,000 resamplings) implemented in AMOS 24 for CFA parameters. Reporting confidence intervals provides an indication of the precision and stability of the predicted parameters, thereby reinforcing the interpretability of the model results (Kline, 2011). According to the literature, acceptable model fit indicators include a chi-square/degree of freedom ratio below 5, GFI, NFI, and CFI values above 0.90, and RMSEA and SRMR values below 0.08 (Kline, 2011). These criteria were used to assess model fit in the current study.

Reliability and Convergent Validity

Convergent validity has been examined in order to assess the extent to which items that are assumed to measure the same structure are related to each other and whether they adequately represent the relevant latent structure (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). In this context, based on the results of the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), the Average Variance Extracted (AVE), Composite Reliability (CR), and Maximum Shared Variance (MSV) were calculated. In the literature, an AVE value of .50 and above is considered sufficient for convergent validity. Differential validity was evaluated by the criterion that the MSV values calculated based on the correlations between the factors were lower than the AVE values of the relevant factors."(Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Hair et al., 2019). Composite reliability (CR) was calculated to evaluate the internal consistency of the latent structure. CR values of .70 and above indicate acceptable reliability (Hair et al., 2019).

The scale's reliability was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha and McDonald's omega (ω). Cronbach's alpha and McDonald's omega coefficients of .70 or higher were considered sufficient indicators of internal consistency (DeVellis & Thorpe, 2021).

Data Collection

Data were collected online via Google Forms. For the first sample group (EFA), the form included informed consent, a demographic questionnaire, and the 13-item version of the Rage Bait Sensitivity Scale. For the second group (CFA), the online form included informed consent, a demographic questionnaire, the 9-item version of the scale, and additional measures to assess criterion validity. Data were collected over a one-month period.

Data Analysis

The data of the participant groups in the study were examined using descriptive statistics. Before performing factor analyses, item-level descriptive statistics were calculated to assess item distributions and internal consistency. Skewness, kurtosis, and item correlations were examined for each item. Field (2009) used values of 1.96± for skewness and kurtosis as acceptable thresholds for the normal distribution he proposed. In addition, item-item and item-total correlations were examined. Then, exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis were performed to determine the factor structure of the items.

All analyses were performed using IBM SPSS Statistics 23.0 and Amos Graphics 24, with significance levels set at $p<.05$ and $p<.01$. Generative AI tools (ChatGPT) were used solely for language editing and formatting.

Results

Preliminary Analyses

Face Validity Findings

As a result of the qualitative evaluation, the participants stated that 16 items were compatible with the measured concept and understandable to them. Based on the quantitative evaluation, the suitability of the

items was scored on a five-point Likert scale. The impact score was calculated by multiplying the proportion of participants who rated the substance as "appropriate" or "completely appropriate" by the average appropriateness score, and values above 1.5 were considered acceptable. This evaluation is a preliminary assessment of the items' perceived suitability, and it has been accepted that the items are suitable for further analysis.

Content Validity Findings

The content validity of the scale was evaluated with both qualitative and quantitative methods over 16 items. In the qualitative analysis, 3 experts examined the words, grammar, item distribution, and item scaling; the articles were found to be generally understandable and conceptually appropriate. In line with the experts' feedback, language and expression were revised in some items, and the scale's general structure was strengthened.

In the quantitative evaluation phase, the content validity of the items was examined using the content validity ratio (CVR), the content validity index (CVI) and the modified kappa coefficient (K*) based on the opinions of six experts. In the evaluations made with six experts, CVR values were considered as supporting information because CVR is a strict criterion for a small number of experts; The final decision on the acceptance of the substance was made on the basis of both I-CVI and modified kappa values (Ayre & Scally, 2014; Polit et al., 2007). Accordingly, three items that did not meet the threshold values of I-CVI (< 0.78) and K* (< 0.75) were removed from the scale and the total number of items was reduced from 16 to 13. The modified kappa values for the remaining substances were 0.75 or higher, indicating a high level of consensus among experts. The findings reveal that the scale adequately represents the structure to be measured in terms of content and is conceptually valid (Polit et. al., 2007; Lawshe, 1975). The content validity index (S-CVI/Ave) at the scale level, calculated by averaging the I-CVI values of the 13 accepted items, was 0.92, indicating that the overall content validity of the scale was high. The 13-item scale, whose content validity stage had been completed, was advanced to the next analysis stage to test construct validity. The data regarding the analyses are presented in Table 2.

-Table 2-

Item Analysis

Within the scope of item analysis, first, the normality and kurtosis/skewness values of the items were examined. Skewness values ranged from -.035 to .427, while Kurtosis values ranged from -1.038 to -.470. The data obtained fall within the normal distribution values (±2) recommended in the literature (DeVellis & Thorpe, 2021; Kline, 2011). These results indicate that the item distributions did not deviate substantially from normality. The mean values of the items range from 2.49±1.14 to 2.96±1.08. When the item total correlations are examined, they are between .512 and 650 ($p<.01$). When the relationships between the substances were examined, the correlations of the related substances ranged from .128 to .436 ($p<.05$). When the relationships of the items were examined, the items that were not related and the three items that were outside the range of $r<.15$ and $r>-.80$ were removed and a 10-item form was used for construct validity. The findings of the analyses are given in Table 3.

-Table 3-

Construct Validity

Exploratory Factor Analysis

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was performed to examine the construct validity of the rage bait sensitivity scale. The principal axis factor method and direct oblimin rotation were selected to provide a robust factor solution for correlated factors.

The suitability of the set of research data for factor analysis was first evaluated using the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) sampling adequacy measure. The KMO value was .87, indicating that the sample size was sufficient for EFA. According to Field (2009), a KMO value above .50 is considered adequate, and values between .80 and .90 are classified as very good. The Measures of Sampling Adequacy (MSA) for each item is at least 0.68, further validating the sample's suitability. In addition, Bartlett's Sphericity Test showed that correlations between substances were sufficient for EFA ($\chi^2 = 623.902$, $df = 45$, $p < .01$).

When the factor loads of the items were examined, it was observed that one item was below .30. Then, the item was removed, and the analysis of the remaining 9-item scale was redone. As a result of the analysis, the new values were calculated as KMO = .85, $\chi^2 = 545.884$, df = 36, $p < .01$.

The EFA revealed that the 9-item Rage Bait sensitivity Scale has a two-factor structure, with each factor having an eigenvalue greater than 1. Rotated factor loads ranged from .383 to .702. The first of the two factors was called rage bait emotional response, and the other was called rage bait bounding and explained 50.28% of the total variance. The first subscale accounted for 37.21% of the variance, and the second subscale accounted for 13.08%. Detailed results of the analyses are presented in Table 4.

-Table 4-

As shown in the table, one subscale consists of 3 items, and the other consists of 6 items. Factor loadings were at least .383. It is observed that 8 of the scale items load higher than .50. This indicates strong loading of the substances (Hair et al., 2019). However, the item's charge value was found to be 0.383. Although factor loadings above ±.40 were considered acceptable (Field, 2009), this substance, which was slightly below the limit, was not removed because it was compatible with the scale's content integrity and reflected the theme of limitation. As a matter of fact, the admissibility of the substance between ±.30 and ±.40 is stated in the literature if it contributes significantly to the relevant factors (Hair et al., 2019).

The distribution of eigenvalues obtained in the exploratory factor analysis of the Rage Bait Sensitivity Scale was examined using a scree plot. According to the analysis, a significant breakpoint (elbow) was observed between the first and second factors. After the second factor, the decrease in eigenvalues was significant, and the graph followed a horizontal course. This finding suggests that the scale has a two-factor structure. The results of the scatter plot for the Rage Bait Sensitivity Scale are presented in Figure 2.

-Figure 2-

Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Findings Regarding Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Following the exploratory factor analysis, confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was conducted with a diverse sample group of 378 participants to validate the factor structure of the revised scale. The fit indices of the obtained model were $\chi^2/df = 2.902$; AGFI = .921; GFI = .955; NFI = .934; CFI = .956; IFI = .956; TLI = .939; SRMR = .054; It is calculated as RMSEA = .071. The detailed results of the analyses are presented in Table 5.

-Table 5-

As indicated by the values, the model χ^2/df showed a good fit for AGFI, GFI, CFI, and IFI, while an acceptable fit for NFI, TLI, SRMR, and RMSEA (Kline, 2011). The CFA results confirmed the scale's two-factor structure. The factorial model of the scale is presented in Figure 3.

-Figure 3-

The standardized factor loadings for the Rage Bait Sensitivity scale ranged from .50 to .81, all of which were statistically significant ($p < .001$). These values indicate strong associations between substances and their respective latent factors, supporting the model's factor validity. The 95% bias-corrected confidence intervals obtained through bootstrapping did not include zero; This supports the sensitivity and robustness of factor loads. The results of the analysis are presented in Table 6.

-Table 6-

Reliability and Convergent Validity Results

The scale's internal consistency was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha and McDonald's omega. To evaluate the sensitivity of the reliability coefficients, 95% confidence intervals were calculated. Cronbach's alpha coefficients for the subdimensions were .71 (95% CI [.66, .76]) for the first factor and .84 (95% CI [.81, .86]) for the second factor. McDonald's omega coefficients were calculated as .73 for the first factor and .84 for the second factor. These findings suggest that both sub-dimensions exhibit acceptable internal consistency and that substances consistently measure related structures (DeVellis & Thorpe, 2021). The results of the analysis are presented in Table ....

Convergent validity was assessed using Mean Explained Variance (AVE) and Composite Reliability (CR) values calculated from standardized factor loadings obtained from confirmatory factor analysis. For both factors, CR values were above .70, while AVE values remained slightly below the .50 threshold. As stated by Fornell and Larcker (1981), convergent validity is acceptable if the CR values are sufficient even if the AVE values are below .50. In this context, it was accepted that convergent validity was achieved for the scale's factors.

Discriminant validity was assessed using maximum shared variance (MSV) values calculated from interfactor correlations. It was determined that the MSV values for each factor were lower than the relevant AVE values, indicating that the structures met the Fornell-Larcker criterion for discriminant validity. The relevant findings are presented in Table 7.

Criterion Validity Results

Exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses showed that the Rage Bait Sensitivity scale effectively measured the individual's triggerability. Within this conceptual framework, the sub-dimensions of the scale for criterion validity and the relationships between the total score and emotional reactivity were examined using Pearson correlation analysis. The results show a significant positive relationship between the first factor, the second factor, and the total score of the scale and emotional reactivity. The detailed results of the analyses are presented in Table 8.

-Table 8-

Discussion

The aim of this study is to examine the psychometric properties of the Rage Bait Sensitivity Scale and to comprehensively evaluate its structure, content, surface validity, and reliability. The findings show that the scale has a two-factor structure consisting of nine items, that the items represent the relevant structures in a meaningful and consistent way, and that the scale exhibits psychometric properties acceptable for research and application uses.

The removal of three items based on the I-CVI and modified kappa criteria at the content validity stage is appropriate for measurement economy and conceptual clarity. Polit and Beck (2006) stated that CVR may be excessively rigid in small expert panels, so I-CVI and kappa values are more distinctive. Similarly, Ayre and Scally (2014) showed that the Lawshe table can produce conservative results in small samples. For this reason, the removal of the articles based on expert consensus has increased the theoretical representation and conceptual representation of the building.

The inter-item and item-total correlations further strengthen the psychometric support for the Rage Bait Sensitivity Scale. The correlation range of the observed items was calculated between .072 and .436. This range falls outside the values (.20-.50) recommended by Clark and Watson (1995) for one-dimensional scales, indicating that some items are not sufficiently correlated and are unnecessary. However, regarding methodological suggestions, it is noted that this range may be wider in multidimensional measurement tools, and that different dimensions may exhibit lower relationships (DeVellis & Thorpe, 2021; Field, 2009; Kline, 2011). For this reason, items that had no relationship with the items and had a correlation below 0.15 were removed. Matter–total correlations above .50 (DeVellis & Thorpe, 2021) indicate that items adequately represent the latent structure. Furthermore, the acceptable distribution, as indicated by normality features (skewness and kurtosis values within ±1.96), further confirms the normality assumptions required for subsequent factor analyses. Overall, these descriptive results provide a solid statistical basis for factor analyses. In addition, it shows that substances are theoretically consistent and psychometrically functioning.

When construct validity was examined, EFA and CFA results supported a two-factor construct. The two-factor structure of the scale explained 50.28% of the total variance. Validation of the EFA-derived model with CFA assesses the inter-sample consistency of the structure and the model's structural stability. However, the fact that the two-factor structure is not only statistically but also theoretically grounded is one of the strongest indicators of construct validity (Brown, 2015; Kline, 2011). Messick's (1995) holistic validity approach also defines the support of structural findings with conceptual bases as a fundamental

dimension of validity proof. In this context, the fact that the two-factor structure of RBSS can be justified at both the statistical and theoretical levels provide important evidence in support of its construct validity.

The first factor, called the "emotional response," is based on the fact that substances reflect intense emotional reactions to provoking digital content, such as anger, resentment, and heightened arousal. This structure coincides with the concept of "emotional reactivity" in the literature. Emotional reactivity is defined as an individual's tendency to respond quickly and intensely to environmental stimuli, especially those that involve the perception of threat or moral violation (Nock et al., 2008; Davidson, 1998). Studies have shown that content that provokes anger in the social media environment attracts more attention and generates higher engagement (Brady et al., 2017; Crockett, 2017). These findings support the fact that the "emotional response" factor is a theoretically significant dimension in the context of digital provocation.

This factor also aligns with Gross's (1998) model of the emotion regulation process. According to Gross, emotional processes begin with the perception of a triggering stimulus, which is then modulated by cognitive evaluation and regulation mechanisms. The first factor of the RBSS conceptually overlaps with the emotional response tendencies that occur following the evaluation of the triggering stimulus in Gross's (1998) model. Similarly, Carver and White's (1994) model of Behavioral Inhibition/Behavioral Activation (BIS/BAS) suggests that individuals have different sensitivity systems to punishment and reward signals. The behavioral inhibition system (BIS) is specifically associated with sensitivity to threat and punishment cues, while the behavioral activation system (BAS) is associated with reward and approach behaviors. When these two theoretical frameworks are evaluated together, it becomes clear that provocative digital content can trigger both rapid emotional reactivity and approach/avoidance motivations.

The second factor, "boundary-setting," is based on the fact that the items reflect self-regulatory behaviors such as withdrawing, not reacting, and consciously limiting interaction in the digital environment. This dimension is associated with the concepts of self-regulation and impulse control in the literature (Baumeister et al., 2007). Avoiding reacting, especially to provocative content, can be interpreted as a self-regulation strategy that signals the individual's control over their behavior by regulating their

immediate emotional response. In a digital context, this type of behavior can also be considered a form of conscious behavioral self-control, since it means not participating in the cycle of interaction that provoking content creates.

Gross's *Process Model of Emotion Regulation* suggests that emotional responses can be modulated through various regulation strategies after they have emerged. In this model, cognitive reappraisal and response modulation strategies are defined as the basic mechanisms that allow the individual to regulate the resulting emotional response (Gross, 1998; 2015). In this context, the "boundary-setting" factor can be interpreted as a self-regulation process that governs the immediate behavioral response to provoking digital content. In fact, the self-control literature shows that individuals' capacity to limit impulsive responses is closely related to behavioral regulation and psychological adjustment (Duckworth & Gross, 2014). The "boundary-setting" factor, therefore, reflects not only passive avoidance of rage bait content but also an active process of self-regulation, in which the individual consciously manages their emotional response.

The intermediate correlation between the two factors suggests that these dimensions are not completely independent but represent conceptually distinguishable processes. It is known that emotional reactivity and self-regulation are considered processes that complement each other but serve different functions in the literature (Gross, 2015). Emotional arousal reflects a rapid affective assessment of an environmental stimulus, while regulatory control processes represent secondary mechanisms that determine how this arousal is reflected in behavior. These findings suggest that RBSS reflects two key components of the psychological response to provocative digital content: emotional reactivity to provocative stimuli and self-regulatory control, which regulates the expression of these responses in behavior.

The reliability analysis of the scale indicates that the sub-dimensions' internal consistency is acceptable. In the psychometric literature, it is stated that internal consistency coefficients of .70 or higher are considered sufficient for research purposes (DeVellis & Thorpe, 2021). Reporting McDonald's omega values in addition to Cronbach's alpha coefficients provides an alternative reliability indicator that more accurately

reflects the common variance of the scale items (Brown, 2015; Dunn et al., 2014; DeVellis & Thorpe, 2021). From this perspective, the fact that the alpha and omega coefficients are similar indicates that the scale's sub-dimensions exhibit a consistent measurement structure.

Findings on convergent validity indicate that the composite reliabilities of the factors exceed the accepted thresholds. The fact that the mean explained variance values are slightly below the recommended .50 limit is occasionally encountered in newly developed scales. In the psychometric literature, it is stated that if composite reliability values are sufficient, an AVE below .50 does not completely invalidate convergent validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). This is because items may naturally exhibit higher measurement error, especially in scales that measure psychological and behavioral structures. Therefore, the results suggest that the items adequately represent the relevant factors and that the scale exhibits acceptable convergent validity.

When evaluated for discriminant validity, the shared variance between factors is lower than the variance explained by each factor, indicating that the scale's dimensions represent interrelated but conceptually separable structures. In the structural equation modeling literature, the fact that the maximum shared variance is lower than the mean explained variance is considered an important indicator of the discriminating validity of the factors (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Brown, 2015). This finding aligns with the theoretical assumption that responses to digitally provocative content consist of distinct but related psychological processes, such as emotional reactivity and regulatory control.

Criterion validity analyses show that the scale is positively correlated with emotional reactivity. Emotional reactivity is a fundamental psychological trait characterized by the tendency of individuals to have rapid, intense emotional responses to environmental stimuli (Nock et al., 2008). It is known that provocative content in digital environments tends to spread, especially through messages that provoke anger, moral anger, and intense emotional arousal (Brady et al., 2017; Crockett, 2017). In this context, the direction of the relationship between emotional reactivity and rage bait sensitivity is consistent with theoretical expectations. However, the low correlation coefficients suggest that the two constructs do not completely

overlap, and that rage bait sensitivity includes cognitive and behavioral processes specific to the digital context beyond emotional reactivity. This suggests that the scale measures not only overall emotional reactivity but also a specific sensitivity to digitally provocative content.

Conclusion

This study aimed to develop the Rage Bait Sensitivity Scale (RBSS) to measure individuals' psychological sensitivity to provoking content that is increasingly common in digital environments and to examine its psychometric properties. Exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses indicated a two-factor structure, which was supported by acceptable fit indices. The findings revealed that the scale consisted of two related but conceptually separable dimensions, emotional response and boundary-setting. Reliability analyses showed that both sub-dimensions had acceptable internal consistency; convergent and discriminant validity findings supported the scale's adequacy in representing the structure it measured. In addition, the scale's positive correlation with emotional reactivity indicated that sensitivity to rage-bait content was related to individuals' general emotional reactivity tendencies.

These findings suggest that psychological responses to provocative content encountered in digital environments may have a multidimensional structure rather than a one-dimensional process. In particular, the separation of emotional activation from the control processes that regulate its behavioral consequences suggests that reactions to digital provocations cannot be explained solely by immediate emotional reactions. In this respect, RBSS introduces a new measurement tool to the literature for understanding the psychological effects of online provocations on individuals.

The study's findings also offer important implications for research examining the effects of emotional manipulation strategies on individuals in digital media environments. Provocative content designed to increase social media interaction can shape online dynamics by activating users' emotional reactions. In this context, RBSS offers a potential tool for social media psychology, digital media literacy, and online behavior research by enabling the measurement of individual sensitivity to digital provocations.

Limitations

However, the study has some limitations. The cross-sectional design of the study does not allow the evaluation of causal relationships. Additionally, obtaining data from a single sample may limit the generalizability of findings to different cultural or demographic groups. In future research, validating the scale across cultures, examining changes in responses to digital provocations over time using longitudinal designs, and testing the psychological effects of rage-bait content through experimental studies may make significant contributions to the literature.

In conclusion, RBSS offers a valid and reliable tool for assessing individual sensitivity to provocative content in digital environments. The two-factor structure of the scale indicates that psychological responses to digital provocations are associated with both emotional activation and self-regulatory control processes, providing a new conceptual framework for research in this field.

Funding Statement

No funding was received.

Conflict of Interest Statement

No conflict of interest.

References

Ayre, C., & Scally, A. J. (2014). Critical values for Lawshe's content validity ratio: revisiting the original methods of calculation. *Measurement and evaluation in counseling and development*,*47*(1), 79-86. https://doi.org/10.1177/0748175613513808

Angwald, A., & Wagnsson, C. (2024). Disinformation and strategic frames: Introducing the concept of a strategic epistemology towards media research. Media, Culture & Society, 46(7), 1527–1538. https://doi.org/10.1177/01634437241265045

Ayolov, P. (2025). Rage-baiting and Anger-clicking: The Dissent Factory of Online Media. Rage-Baiting and Anger-Clicking: The Dissent Factory of Online Media.

Bandura, A. (1991). Social cognitive theory of self-regulation. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, 50*(2), 248–287. https://doi.org/10.1016/0749-5978(91)90022-L

Baumeister, R. F., Vohs, K. D., & Tice, D. M. (2007). The strength model of self-control. *Current Directions in Psychological Science, 16*(6), 351–355. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8721.2007.00534.x

Berger, J., & Milkman, K. L. (2012). What makes online content viral? *Journal of Marketing Research*, *49*(2), 192–205. https://doi.org/10.1509/jmr.10.0353

Brady, W. J., Wills, J. A., Jost, J. T., Tucker, J. A., & Van Bavel, J. J. (2017). Emotion shapes the diffusion of moralized content in social networks. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, *114*(28), 7313–7318. https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1618923114

Boateng, G.O., Neilands, T.B., Frongillo, E.A., Melgar-Quiñonez, H.R., & Young, S.L. (2018). Best Practices for Developing and Validating Scales for Health, Social, and Behavioral Research: A Primer.*Front. Public Health*6:149. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2018.00149

Brady, W. J., Wills, J. A., Jost, J. T., Tucker, J. A., & Van Bavel, J. J. (2017). Emotion shapes the diffusion of moralized content in social networks. Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, 114(28), 7313-7318. https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1618923114

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). *Using thematic analysis in psychology*. Qualitative Research in Psychology, **3**(2), 77–101. https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa

Brown, T. A. (2015). *Confirmatory factor analysis for applied research*. Guilford.

Büyüköztürk, Ş. (2011). *Sosyal bilimler için veri analizi el kitabı.* Pegem.

Carver, C. S., & Scheier, M. F. (1998). *On the Self-Regulation of Behavior*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Carver, C. S., & White, T. L. (1994). Behavioral inhibition, behavioral activation, and affective responses to impending reward and punishment: The BIS/BAS Scales. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 67*(2), 319–333.https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.67.2.319

Clark, L. A. & Watson, D. (1995). Constructing validity: Basic issues in objective scale development. Psychological Assessment, 7, 309-319. https://doi.org/10.1037/1040-3590.7.3.309

Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications**.**

Crockett, M. J. (2017). Moral outrage in the digital age. *Nature Human Behavior, 1*, 769–771. https://doi.org/10.1038/s41562-017-0213-3

Cover, R. (2025). AI generation of rage bait: Implications for digital harms. *New Media & Society*, 14614448251400675. https://doi.org/10.1177/14614448251400675

Davidson, R. J. (1998). Affective style and affective disorders. *Cognition & Emotion, 12*(3), 307–330. https://doi.org/10.1080/026999398379628

DeVellis, R. F., & Thorpe, C. T. (2021). *Scale development: Theory and applications*. Sage Publications.

Dunn, T. J., Baguley, T., & Brunsden, V. (2014). From alpha to omega: A practical solution to the pervasive problem of internal consistency estimation. *British Journal of Psychology*, *105*(3), 399-412. https://doi.org/10.1111/bjop.12046

Duckworth, A. L., & Gross, J. J. (2014). Self-control and grit. *Current Directions in Psychological Science, 23*(5), 319–325. https://doi.org/10.1177/0963721414541462

Fan, R., Xu, K., & Zhao, J. (2014). Higher contagion of anger than joy in social networks. *PLOS ONE*, *9*(9), e110184. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0110184

Field, A. (2009). *Discovering statistics using SPSS* (3rd ed.). Sage.

Fornell, C., & Larcker, D. F. (1981). Evaluating structural equation models with unobservable variables and measurement error. Journal of Marketing Research, 18(1), 39—50. https://doi.org/10.2307/3151312

Fuchs, C. (2017). *Social media: A Critical Introduction* (2nd ed.). London: Sage.

Gross, J. J. (1998). The emerging field of emotion regulation. *Review of General Psychology, 2*(3), 271–299. https://doi.org/10.1037/1089-2680.2.3.271

Gross, J. J. (2015). Emotion regulation: Current status and future prospects. *Psychological Inquiry, 26*(1), 1–26. https://doi.org/10.1080/1047840X.2014.940781

Hair, J. F., Black, W. C., Babin, B. J., & Anderson, R. E. (2019). *Multivariate data analysis* (8th ed.). Cengage.

Hofmann, W., Baumeister, R. F., Förster, G., & Vohs, K. D. (2012). Everyday temptations: An experience sampling study of desire, conflict, and self-control. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 102*(6), 1318–1335.https://doi.org/10.1037/a0026545

Kass, R. A., & Tinsley, H. E. A. (1979). Factor analysis. *Journal of Leisure Research*, *11*(2), 120-138. https://doi.org/10.1080/00222216.1979.11969385

Kline, P. (1994). *An easy guide to factor analysis*. Routledge.

Kline, R. B. (2011). *Principles and practice of structural equation modeling* (3rd ed.). Guilford.

Kross E, Verduyn P, Demiralp E, Park J, Lee DS, Lin N, et al. (2013) Facebook Use Predicts Declines in Subjective Well-Being in Young Adults. PLoS ONE 8(8): e69841. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0069841

LaRose, R., Lin, C. A., & Eastin, M. S. (2003). Unregulated Internet Usage: Addiction, Habit, or Deficient Self-Regulation? *Media Psychology*,*5*(3), 225–253. https://doi.org/10.1207/S1532785XMEP0503_01

Lawshe, C. H. (1975). A quantitative approach to content validity. *Personnel psychology*,*28*(4).

Lorenz, T. (2024). *Extremely online: The untold story of fame, influence, and power on the internet*. Simon & Schuster.

Messick, S. (1995). Validity of psychological assessment: Validation of inferences from persons' responses and performances as a scientific inquiry into score meaning. *American Psychologist, 50*(9), 741–749.https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.50.9.741

Munce, S. E., Guetterman, T. C., & Jaglal, S. B. (2021). Using the exploratory sequential design for complex intervention development: Example of the development of a self-management program for spinal cord injury. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*,*15*(1), 37-60. https://doi.org/10.1177/1558689820901936

Nock, M. K., Wedig, M. M., Holmberg, E. B., & Hooley, J. M. (2008). The emotion reactivity scale: development, evaluation, and relation to self-injurious thoughts and behaviors. *Behavior therapy*,*39*(2), 107-116. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.beth.2007.05.005

Polit, D. F., Beck, C. T., & Owen, S. V. (2007). Is the CVI an acceptable indicator of content validity? Appraisal and recommendations. *Research in nursing & health*,*30*(4), 459-467. https://doi.org/10.1002/nur.20199

Schumacker, R. E., & Lomax, R. G. (2010). *A beginner's guide to structural equation modeling* (3rd ed.). Routledge.

Shin, J., DeFelice, C., & Kim, S. (2025). Emotion sells: Rage bait vs. information bait in clickbait news headlines on social media. *Digital Journalism*, 1–20. https://doi.org/10.1080/21670811.2024.2440000

Sunstein, C. R. (2018). *Republic: Divided democracy in the age of social media*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. C. (2001). An integrative theory of intergroup conflict. In W. G. Austin & S. Worchel (Eds.), *Intergroup relations: Essential readings* (pp. 94–109). Monterey, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Vaidhyanathan, S. (2018). *Antisocial media: How Facebook disconnects us and undermines democracy*. Oxford University Press.

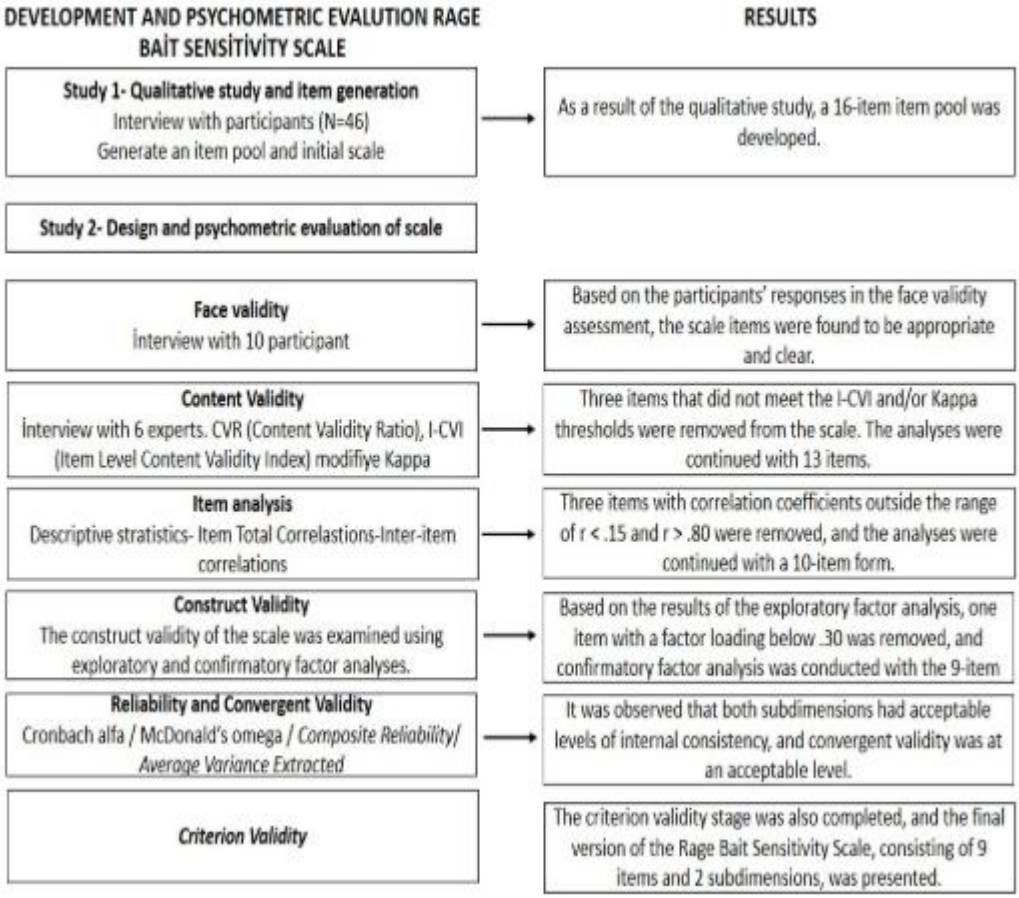
Veilleux, J. C., Schreiber, R. E., Warner, E. A., & Brott, K. H. (2024). Development and validation of a brief version of the Emotion Reactivity Scale: The B-ERS. *Current Psychology: A Journal for Diverse Perspectives on Diverse Psychological Issues, 43*(14), 12586–12600.https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-023-05323-4

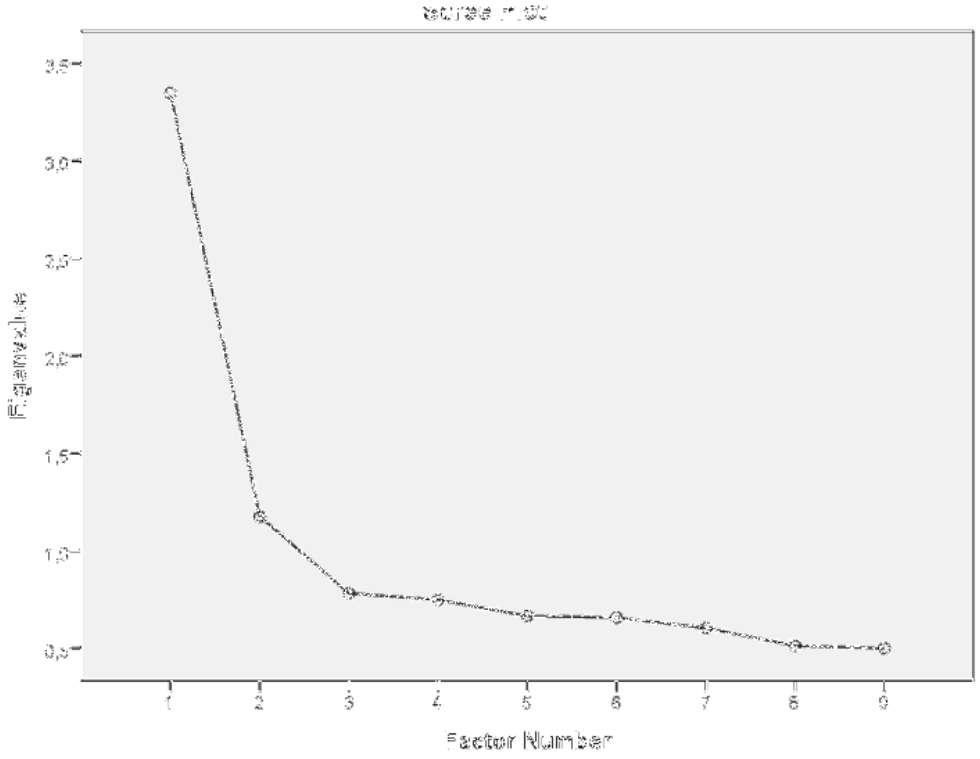
Verduyn, P., Ybarra, O., Résibois, M., Jonides, J., & Kross, E. (2017). Do social network sites enhance or undermine subjective well-being? A critical review. *Social Issues and Policy Review, 11*(1), 274–302.https://doi.org/10.1111/sipr.12033

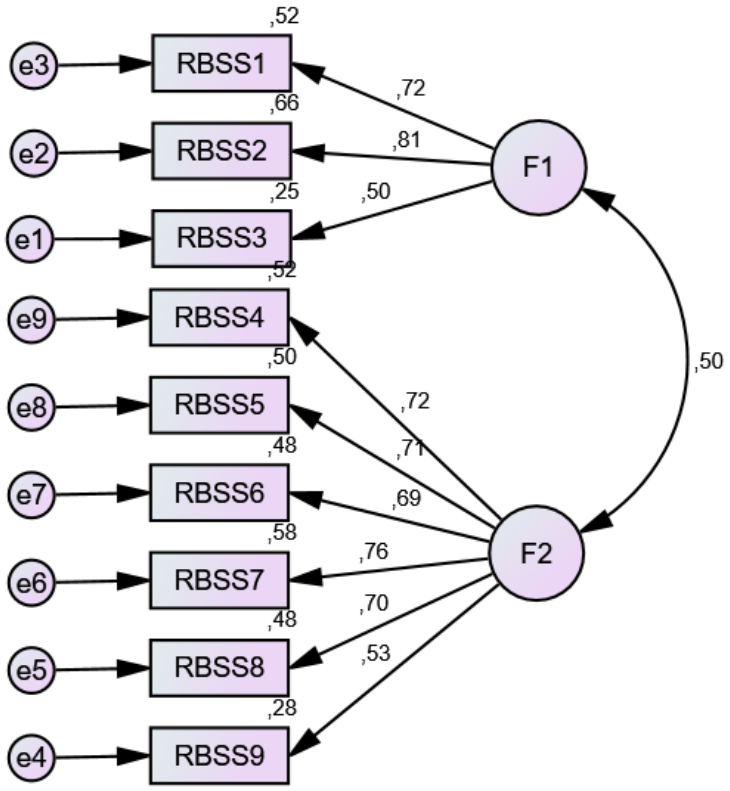
Yüksel, F. H. ve Ekşi, H. (2024). *Duygusal Tepkisellik Ölçeği Kısa Formunun Türkçe Adaptasyonu.*Kalas, M. (Ed.). *VII. International Educational Sciences Conference Kongre Kitabı içinde* (s. 5-11). Ases Publications.

Zimmerman, B. J. (2000). Attaining self-regulation: A social cognitive perspective. In M. Boekaerts et al. (Eds.), *Handbook of self-regulation* (pp. 13–39). Academic Press.

Zuboff, S. (2023). The age of surveillance capitalism. In *Social theory re-wired* (pp. 203-213). Routledge.


DEVELOPMENT AND PSYCHOMETRIC EVALUTION RAGE BAİT SENSİTİVİTY SCALE
RESULTS
Study 1- Qualitative study and item generation
Interview with participants (N=46)
Generate an item pool and initial scale
As a result of the qualitative study, a 16-item item pool was developed.
Study 2- Design and psychometric evaluation of scale
Face validity
İnterview with 10 participant
Based on the participants' responses in the face validity assessment, the scale items were found to be appropriate and clear.
Content Validity
İnterview with 6 experts. CVR (Content Validity Ratio), I-CVI (Item Level Content Validity Index) modifiye Kappa
Three items that did not meet the I-CVI and/or Kappa thresholds were removed from the scale. The analyses were continued with 13 items.
Item analysis
Descriptive stratistics- Item Total Correlastions-Inter-item correlations
Three items with correlation coefficients outside the range of r < .15 and r > .80 were removed, and the analyses were continued with a 10-item form.
Construct Validity
The construct validity of the scale was examined using exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses.
Based on the results of the exploratory factor analysis, one item with a factor loading below .30 was removed, and confirmatory factor analysis was conducted with the 9-item
Reliability and Convergent Validity
Cronbach alfa / McDonald's omega / Composite Reliability/ Average Variance Extracted
It was observed that both subdimensions had acceptable levels of internal consistency, and convergent validity was at an acceptable level.
Criterion Validity
The criterion validity stage was also completed, and the final version of the Rage Bait Sensitivity Scale, consisting of 9 items and 2 subdimensions, was presented.


Factor Number



CMIN/df:2,902; AGFI:,921; GFI:,955; NFI:,934; CFI:,956; IFI:,956; TLI:,939; RMSEA:,071

Supplementary Files

This is a list of supplementary files associated with this preprint. Click to download.

- Table1.docx
- Table2.docx
- Table3.docx
- Table4.docx
- Table5.docx
- Table6.docx
- Table7.docx
- Table8.docx
- DeclarationofInterest.docx
- Highlights.docx