Criteria	TA/Grader	Instructor
Presentation		
Overall		

Bilkent Connect

Sensin

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Project Requirements Report

(version 2.0)

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1.   Introduction

Social media has a very vital place in today's modern society. Becoming an inseparable part of our daily life, social media applications save us from being bored in our free time, as well as helping us to fulfil our needs by allowing us to interact with those around us when it is necessary. Although there are currently a wide variety of social media applications, these applications do not always fully satisfy the needs and wishes of the user, and sometimes users can be frustrated. Bilkent Connect is a project that was set out with the idea of covering this gap felt by many Bilkent students. This android application aims to be a free platform where Bilkent students can communicate

with only Bilkent students. In the application, Bilkent students will have an environment where they can share their school-related problems, chat with their friends and share their ideas in freedom.

2.   Details

2.1.   Features

Bilkent Connect will be an Android app. This way Bilkent students can interact with each other just by using their mobile phones. Among the many features it will provide, the most crucial one will be the anonymous/nonanonymous post sharing system. This system also makes the app unique among other social media platforms. This feature will offer users to share their ideas without fear and restrictions by hiding their nicknames and profiles. Besides, the posts shared anonymously will be erased after some time to prevent problems about privacy. Bilkent Connect will encompass various features to enhance the overall experience of Bilkent University students. By integrating a lot of features into a single platform, Bilkent Connect aims to create a lively and engaging community within the university. The application will also provide numerous useful features and utilities, such as:

- **Sharing Ideas:** At the core of Bilkent Connect is a feature that encourages the free exchange of thoughts and ideas. Users can express themselves openly, either anonymously or with their identity, promoting a diverse and enriching exchange of perspectives.
- **Specialised Profile Settings:** Recognizing the importance of individual identity, Bilkent Connect provides customizable profiles. Users can tailor their profiles by changing their nicknames, showcasing their uniqueness with their profile photos and fostering deeper and more meaningful interactions by writing their biographies.
- **Interactions with Posts:** Bilkent Connect facilitates dynamic interactions with posts through features such as comments, likes, and dislikes. Each post becomes a focal point for discussion, enabling users to actively participate in conversations, express their opinions, and engage with diverse perspectives.
- **Post History Search:** Bilkent Connect allows users to easily search their previous posts through an intuitive search functionality. This feature enables users to revisit their own posts, facilitating self-reflection and a seamless way to track personal discussions and ideas within the platform.

2.2.   The Features We Are Dreaming to Add

- **BCC Cafeteria:** Bilkent Connect will have a part that shows the cafeteria's daily menu, and users will be able to interact with the menu by liking, disliking, or leaving a comment about the meal.
- **Second Hand Book/Tool Sales:** Bilkent Connect will let users buy and sell used products related to a university student's needs, such as course materials or musical instruments. Thanks to that feature, students will find their needs safer, cheaper, and easier than buying from elsewhere.
- **Finding Sport Mates:** Bilkent Connect will connect people who need a buddy for any sport. The user who searches for a sports mate can send an invitation publicly so that other users can contact them and do sports together.
- **Finding Roommate:** Bilkent Connect will have a section to connect people who are searching for a roommate or a housemate. Users will input their room type or house

information, and matching people can share their house or dormitory room. This feature can solve students' accommodation needs.

● **Private Chatting:** Bilkent Connect provides a private chatting option to users in order to increase the communication level of the users. Thanks to that feature, users can chat with their prospective sportsmates or roommates. Additionally, users can bargain for a used product sale.

2.3. Comparison with Other Applications

● **Instagram[1]:** While administrators on Instagram occasionally impose restrictions on the free expression of ideas, our approach is to foster an environment where individuals are encouraged to freely share their thoughts. Nevertheless, we will exercise oversight to ensure that inappropriate usage is managed.

● **Letgo[2]:** In the Letgo program, users often come across various updates related to their listings. However, we've observed that this general information can occasionally prove distracting for our student user base. As a result, we have chosen to refocus the program on student-centric items, such as second-hand books and tools.

● **Twitter[3]:** On Twitter, users have the capability to assess and evaluate the comments made by others. This feature enhances the application's utility as it enables individuals to quickly discover high-quality content within the platform. Consequently, we are considering the implementation of a similar functionality in our own application.

2.4. Audience
Although there are plenty of social media applications, the main purpose of this application is to provide an environment where only Bilkent students are present. In this way, they can be in their own safe environment without being disturbed. This will encourage them to say things that they are afraid to say out of fear, while at the same time increasing the amount of socialising within the university.

2.5. Technologies

● In the application we are developing, we decided to use a database to store information such as users' posts and profile information. We need flexibility to structure our data, so instead of a relational database, we chose to use a NoSQL database that offers scalability and data modelling flexibility. We decided to use Firebase for reasons such as ease of interface and developer friendliness.

● We use Android Studio because it offers a comprehensive set of features and tools that simplify the mobile application development process. We prefer Android Studio because of its many advantages such as a drag and drop editor for user interface design, a large library of pre-made code, and the fact that it is an IDE (Integrated Development Environment) designed specifically for Google's own mobile operating system Android.

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[1] "Instagram." Retrieved October 17, 2023, from https://www.instagram.com

[2] "Letgo." Retrieved October 17, 2023, from https://www.letgo.com

[3] "X." Retrieved October 17, 2023. from https://twitter.com

- We need to use a version control system to synchronise the code we write with each other and to control the versions of the code we write. Therefore, we decided to use Git and GitHub.

3.   Summary & Conclusions

In conclusion, Bilkent Connect is a unique social media app that aims to provide an environment where Bilkent students can enhance their social connectivity with other people on campus. The essential feature of Bilkent Connect is sharing posts and interacting with other people's posts, whether anonymously or not. Bilkent Connect will also include additional features that will advance the application further. These additional features are selling used products, primarily related to the needs of university students, finding roommates or sports mates, a cafeteria meal commenting page, and private chatting. Bilkent Connect can play an important role for strengthening the bonds of Bilkent students and creating a social network that will benefit all of the Bilkent students.