Audience Preferences of News Stories on Social Media

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Abstract
This study aims at understanding the kind of news stories social media users mostly like and comment on by examining 10 Arabic language Facebook pages run by different news organizations that posted over 85,000 news stories, generating over 26.4 million likes and 1.9 million comments. The top 100 most commented on and liked news stories from each news organization are categorized into 22 news topics. The examination of 2,000 news stories shows that there are no significant differences between liking and commenting on Facebook news. Online users mostly prefer to read news topics on local order, politics, human interest, and international politics stories when it comes to liking stories. In relation to commenting on news stories, the results show that online users mostly prefer

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news topics on local and regional politics, local order, and human interest.

This study investigates online journalism practices by using large Facebook dataset taken from 10 news organizations. Arabic news outlets run by a variety of governments with diverse ideological backgrounds are chosen in the study because they offer a very good way of studying the similarities and differences in the audience's reception of international news. This is done by examining the most liked and commented on Facebook stories of various Arabic language news organizations. The study offers new insight into the news consumption patterns of social media audiences as there is a gap in this area. In fact, there are a few empirical studies that investigated SNS use by media outlets. In their review of previous research done on news sharing, Kümpel, Karnowski, and Keyling (2015) surveyed a total of 461 research papers published between 2004 to 2014, and they found that there was an obvious focus on studies that dealt with the USA (about 79%), stating that "there were only a few that addressed other countries and almost none that discussed possible cultural differences or actually made cross-country comparisons" (p. 10). The majority of studies also dealt with Twitter data in English language, for "tweets or Facebook postings in other languages than English were usually not included in the final sample of content analysis studies" (Kümpel et al., 2015, p. 3). Kümpel et al. (2015) recommend expanding news sharing studies "to multiple countries and cultural settings" (p.

10). This suggestion was also echoed by Wilkinson and Thelwall (2012) who recommended examining "international differences in news interests through large-scale investigations of Twitter" (Wilkinson & Thelwall, 2012, p. 1634). Instead of Twitter data in English language, this study attempts to fill a major gap in the literature by examining Facebook data in Arabic language that is posted by a variety of news organizations that allows a closer examination of international news. Before the literature review, it is important first to refer to the use of social media by news organizations.

This study fills another gap in literature on the use of social media in the Arab world, specifically news consumption patterns. For example, Al-Rawi (2016a) used data collected from Arabic Facebook pages that belong to news organizations to investigate news values on social media. Other empirical studies focused on Arab audience's engagement with news (Al-Rawi 2016c & 2016d), and it is important to mention here that understanding the way audiences react to news can assist in shedding light on global and regional news flow, especially from a cross-national comparative perspective (Al-Rawi, 2016b). However, no previous research is done on specific audiences reactions to news like the one conducted in this study. Further, most empirical research on social media use by Arabs has been focused on the Arab Spring events (see for example Bruns, Highfield, & Burgess, 2013; Tufekci & Wilson, 2012; Wilson & Dunn, 2011). Indeed, social media use has witnessed a spike following the Arab Spring because many people regard these online platforms as alternative outlets to express their views in a region that is dominated by totalitarian regimes (Comunello & Anzera,

2012). Gowing (2011), for example, stresses that "Facebook, YouTube, Twitter or Flickr is far more troubling to institutions of power" (p.16). This is due to the fact that social media channels provide ordinary citizens other venues to express opinions that are not under the "social control and manipulation [of] powerful political, corporate and media forces" (Keren, 2006, p. 149). Based on statistics offered by Internet World Stats, the percentage of Internet penetration in the Middle East is currently 56.7%, which is much higher than before and is a little bit above world average (49.6%). Many majority Arab speaking countries have high Internet penetration but some still suffer from low Internet usage rates including Iraq (36.2%), Syria (29.1%), Yemen (24.1%), Palestinian territories (44.7%), Algeria (36.8%), Egypt (36.5%), Libya (43.7%), Sudan (25.8%), and Somalia (5.8%) (Internet World Stats, 2017a & 2017b).

Generally speaking, the majority of news organizations today, if not all, have social media presence, and the use of social networking sites (SNS) aims at disseminating more news and creating a better connection with the news organization's online audience (Emmett, 2009; Hermida, 2010; Hermida, Fletcher, Korell, & Logan, 2012). According to a recent Pew Research Center study (2015), "clear majorities of Twitter (63%) and Facebook users (63%) now say each platform serves as a source for news about events and issues outside the realm of friends and family." In fact, Facebook launched two news-related services that enable its users to stay on the platform. The first one is called 'Instant Article' that will allow Facebook to host news stories before they are even published on the news organizations' websites. The media outlets that agreed to

be part of Facebook's new project include *The New York Times, BuzzFeed, NBC News, The Atlantic,* and *National Geographic* (Griffith, 2015). The main advantage for news organizations will be receiving part of the commercial revenues (Evans, 2015). Facebook also created the Trending sidebar that organizes news that is trending and hashtags into categories (Ma, 2015).

According to data collected from 12 different countries, it was revealed that social media are playing an increasing important role in the news consumption and sharing practices. "Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, WhatsApp, and Google+ are by far the most important networks for news in that order, but for younger users Instagram, Snapchat, and Tumblr also come into the picture" (Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, 2015, p. 80). The top news site in all the countries surveyed is Facebook as about 63% of the sample surveyed use it "in a given week for finding, reading, discussing, or sharing news" (Reuters, 2015). There is a big gap separating Facebook from other SNS as it showed "more than twice the usage of its nearest rival" (Reuters, 2015, p. 12). However, there are differences among the SNS platforms when it comes to news engagement as Twitter seems to be used for serious news reading. For example, Twitter is "populated by a relatively high proportion of News Lovers (people who have a strong interest in news and access it frequently) while Facebook and YouTube have a much higher proportion of Daily Briefers and Casual Users" (Reuters, 2015, p. 82). Another study showed that an "average Twitter user is two to three times more likely to visit a leading news Web site than the average person" (as cited in Farhi, 2009, para. 23). Finally, there are some observed cross-cultural

differences in the quality and quantity of SNS uses in relation to news consumption. For example, Twitter users in the UK "are much more likely to be actively checking their feed for what's new (69%) or clicking to view a professional news story (46%). Facebook users are more likely to discuss or comment on a story and YouTube is best for searching for videos" (Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, 2015, p. 82).

Some practical reasons make news organizations interested in SNS, including the need to better brand themselves, enhance their image, know the audience demographics, and target them with advertising (Steyn, Pitt, & Berthon, 2010; Ju, Jeong, & Chyi, 2013). More importantly, the majority of news organizations are finding it costly and time consuming to regularly monitor their websites for uncivil and inappropriate comments, so allowing their audiences to freely interact on SNS is a better solution (Braun & Gillespie, 2011). This is because news organizations do not own the social media platforms where the news stories are hosted, so they basically have no direct responsibility toward moderating their audiences' comments. In relation to news consumption and engagement on SNS, when an online user likes the Facebook page of a news organization, subscribes to its YouTube channel, or follows its Google+ or Twitter account, the user will start getting its news feeds, which can be similar to subscribing to its newscasts (Pew Research Center, 2010).

The fact that some stories get commented on or liked on Facebook or retweeted signifies that they are important. Here, the online audiences do not only select news articles to be read but also disseminate them by liking or commenting on them. Indeed, this activity can be linked to

the concept of produsage (Bruns, 2007; Horan, 2013) because of the dual activity. According to Facebook, clicking like is an indication that someone is interested in a post or a story which will also "be posted on [his] Timeline" (Facebook, n.d.1), so liking a news story shows engagement and reflects a certain degree of interactivity with the online material. Indeed, human beings have various motives for liking and commenting on social media posts such as indexing materials in order to consume them at a later stage or showing engagement with certain types of materials in order to express certain political ideas or make stances, etc. Also, Facebook likes and comments are similar to retweeting a story since one's preferences can be seen and read by his/her friends or followers on Facebook. In this way, the liked news story appears on the timeline of the Facebook user allowing friends or followers to further engage with the story by liking, sharing, or commenting on it.

In general, liking or commenting on news involves not only consumption but also diffusion in the sense that the online audiences read only what they view as newsworthy, and they become news disseminators by selecting which stories to be liked, commented on, or retweeted to their followers. Indeed, this news selection process happens during and after filtering all the other news stories online users have read. Horan (2013) found that there is a difference between the two online activities when it comes to the type of news on social media, for audiences tend to disseminate 'hard' news more than soft news, yet they consume soft news more than hard news. This research study attempts to answer the following research questions:

RQ1: What types of news stories do online audienc-

es mostly comment on and like to read? Are there significant differences between liking and commenting on social media news?

RQ2: Which countries garnered most of the online audience attention based on the top news stories they were exposed to? Is there any attention given to non-Arab countries?

Method

The researcher used a webometric tool called NCapture in January and February 2014 to mine Facebook posts, comments, and other details from 10 Arabic-language news organizations. Arabic-language outlets that belong to ideologically and geographically diverse news organizations were incorporated into this study in order to provide a better picture of international news preferences. Also, the scope of coverage is usually broad encompassing the whole Arab world and targeting Arabic-speaking audiences. The news organizations include: DW Arabic (German), RT Arabic (Russian), CNN Arabic (American), BBC Arabic (British), Al Arabiya (Saudi), Al Jazeera Arabic (Qatari), France 24 & Radio Monte Carlo (French), Radio Netherlands Worldwide (RNW) (Dutch), SkyNews Arabia (UAE & British), and Al Alam (Iranian). The US Department of State's Radio Sawa and Al Hurra TV were not included in the study because the majority of their Facebook posts were questions addressed to their online audience.

The webometric tool provided over 85,000 Facebook posts mostly comprising news stories or links to news reports that garnered over 26.4 million likes from the online audience. In relation to the most commented on news sto-

ries, they garnered over 1.9 million comments from the online audience. On average, each Facebook page had 8,515 news stories and 193,122 comments. Based on the average number of comments per news story, BBC Arabic seems to be the most active Facebook page in terms of audience engagement with 85.3 comments per story followed by Al Jazeera (80.6), RT (47), Al Arabiya (35.3), and SkyNews Arabia (22) (See Table 1).

The top 100 most liked or commented on news stories on each news organization were investigated, especially in relation to the kind of news audiences mostly like to consume. In order to be more accurate, any non-news posts like general greetings or statements were removed. In total, 2,000 news stories are studied, which generated over 4.1 million likes constituting 17.6% of the total news stories likes. In relation the most commented on posts, they generated over 487,000 comments, constituting 25.2% of the total news stories comments. The reason why Facebook likes were selected was based on a Pew Research Center survey; Facebook users more often like a page, a photo, or post than comment, send private messages, or update profiles (Smith, 2014). Back in 2012, Facebook announced that over 2.7 billion likes are made every single day, making this online behavior the most active one done by Facebook users more than any other activity (Tam, 2012). Hence, the decision was made to focus on the most liked news stories. As for Facebook comments, they are also regarded as an important online activity, for commenting on news stories indicates a certain degree of engagement. In fact, commenting requires some kind of reflection and writing a (relevant) response. When a Facebook user comments on news stories posted on another Fa-

Table 1
Number of Page and News Stories Likes and Comments along the 10 News Organizations

Channels	Total page likes	Total No. of all news stories (links & posts)	No. of likes for all news stories & posts	No. of likes & percentage for top 100 news stories	No. of comments for all news stories & posts	Average no. of comments for each news story	No. of comments & percentage for top 100 news stories
Al Alam	531,538	7986	6,572,900	972,31 (14.7%)	313,872	1.7	98,594	31.40%
CNN	581,145	7961	167,366	20,333 (12.1%)	111,264	13.9	19,787	17.70%
AlArabiya	5,508,959	6974	8,196,770	1,402,241 (17.1%)	246,504	35.3	90,390	36.60%
Al Jazeera	6,149,325	4711	3,785,830	607,110 (16%)	380,072	80.6	75,443	19.80%
RT	2,155,248	5741	3,218,913	440,763 (13.6%)	270,250	47	69,810	25.80%
DW	377,855	26,782	505,951	68,504 (13.5%)	96,533	3.6	11,709	12.10%
SkyNews	2,503,101	4985	1,494,880	177,919 (11.9%)	110,007	22	21,979	19.90%
France24	1,402,378	12,356	1,042,832	153,294 (14.6%)	155,000	12.5	25,390	16.30%
RNW	279,249	5114	129,233	61,934 (47.9%)	30,975	6	11,131	35.90%
BBC	2,104,697	2540	1,379,365	209,671 (15.2%)	216,752	85.3	63,301	29.20%
Total for all channels	21,593,495	85,150	26,494,040	4,114,084	1,931,229	307.9	487,534	
Average for all channels	2,159,349	8,515	2,649,404	411,408(17.6%)	193,122	30.7	48,753	24.40%

cebook page, his/her friends can see the comment on their news feed, so this is one way of disseminating or diffusing news allowing others to like, share, or comment on it (Facebook, n.d.2).

Indeed, there is a lot of what is called "noisy data" on social media (Agarwal et al., 2011). As a solution, some studies that examined big data focused on the most tweeted or shared posts. For example, Naaman, Becker, and Gravano (2011) identified 50 popular Twitter trends from a very large dataset collected from New York Twitter users. The trends were later qualitatively categorized into four types. In another study conducted by Wilkinson and Thelwall (2012), the scholars studied the trending topics on Twitter by qualitatively examining the top 50 most recurrent terms. Since there are over 85,000 news stories examined in this study which produced over 26.4 million likes and 1.9 million comments, it becomes extremely hard to make sense of how the online audiences collectively interact on the ten Facebook pages of news organizations. As a result, the top 100 most commented on and liked news stories are examined. As indicated above, there is a lot of noise on social media and news stories receive varying degrees of attention by the online audience.

In order to understand the type of news stories the online audiences mostly liked and commented on, news stories are categorized into 22 topics following previous studies on news values that included Atwater (1984), Riffe et al. (1986) and Shoemaker and Cohen (2006). The latter, for example, examined news values in ten countries and identified 26 main topics. In this study, order, politics, and sports are all classified based on three levels: internal, which refers to one specific Arab country, regional that in-

Table 2
News Topics Distribution along the 11 News Organizations

Topic No.	News topics	Most liked		Most comments	
		n	%	n	%
1	Local politics [confined to one Arab country]	168	15.2	262	26.2
2	Regional politics [limited to the Arab world and/or one Arab country with another non-Arab one]	71	6.4	108	10.8
3	International politics (involving non-Arab countries)	98	8.9	55	5.5
4	Local order (civil war, demonstrations, crimes, terrorism, violent incidents, etc.)	180	16.3	172	17.2
5	Regional order	15	1.3	46	4.6
6	International order	18	1.6	7	0.7
7	Local sports	9	0.8	4	0.4
8	Regional sports	12	1.09	11	1.1
9	International sports	18	1.6	19	1.9
10	Human interest	147	13.3	100	10
11	Economy, business, commerce, and industry [combined]	18	1.6	3	0.3
12	Military & defense	37	3.3	14	1.4
13	Entertainment, fashion, and beauty	15	1.3	26	2.6
14	Health/welfare/social services	6	0.5	4	0.4
15	Weather & environment	33	3	19	1.9
16	Cultural events & ceremonies (political & ethnic commemorations)	41	3.7	48	4.8
17	Disasters & epidemics	14	1.2	6	6
18	Housing & transportation	0	0	1	0.1
19	Science, technology, & energy	42	3.8	11	1.1
20	Education	11	1	4	0.4
21	Religious commemorations	50	4.5	24	2.4
22	Odd and/or funny stories	97	8.8	56	5.6

volves two or more Arab countries, and international which, includes non-Arab countries. One news topic is added that is similar to Riffe et al's "religion" topic which is "religious commemoration" such as describing pilgrimage season, Ramadan month, and/or the Eid holiday (Table 2). Finally, two coders who are fluent in Arabic coded over 10% of the sample (n=220 news stories), and intercoder reliability was a Cohen's Kappa of .875 agreement, which is rated considered very acceptable (Landis & Koch, 1977).

Results & Discussion

The examination of the top 100 most liked news stories along the 10 news organizations showed some important patterns in the online audience news consumption (See Table 2). The online audiences who read and engage with news on social media outlets distribute stories to their followers and friends by either liking or commenting on them on Facebook.

To answer the first research question on the kinds of news stories that the online audiences are collectively exposed to by the likes counts, the results show that the news topic dealing with local order including security issues in specific Arab countries garnered the highest attention as it comprised 16.3% (n=180) of the most liked stories. This was expected due to the ongoing turmoil in the Middle East especially after the Arab Spring events. The second most liked news topic is local politics which made up 15.2% (n=168) of the most liked stories. This topic deals with election news, political rivalry, and government formation dealing with a specific country. The third most liked topic is human interest 13.3% (n=147) which mostly deals with some emotional, heartbreaking, and/or moving

stories. Interestingly, the scope of the majority of these stories is focused on the Arab and/or Muslim world. The fourth most liked topic is international politics 8.9% (n=98) that deal with world powers and non-Arab countries, while the fifth most liked topic is odd and/or funny stories 8.8% (n=97). This was not expected as other topics like local order, internal politics, human interest, and international politics came first which show that there is some kind of online civic engagement with the news especially important events taking place in the Arab region. Another interesting finding here is that the above results correspond with Shoemaker and Cohen's study (2006) on the kind of news stories TV news organizations themselves focus on though the order is different. For example, internal politics came second (13.3%), international politics in the fifth place (7.4%) followed by local order (6.8%) and human interest (6.1%).

As for the least liked topics, housing and transportation news came last with the least liked news topic (n=0) followed by health/welfare/social services 0.5% (n=6), local sports 0.8% (n=9), education 1% (n=11), and regional sports 1.09% (n=12). For local and regional sports, it was expected that the online audience would like such story topics more than others based on Shoemaker and Cohen's study (2006) in which sports came in the first place (14.1%).

In relation to the kinds of news stories that the online audiences are collectively exposed to by the comments counts, the results show that the news topic dealing with local politics including political rivalry, government formation, and election issues in specific Arab countries garnered the highest attention as it comprised 26.2%

(n=262) of the most commented on stories. This was also expected due to the ongoing political changes in the Middle East especially after the Arab Spring events. The second most commented on news topic is local order which made up 17.2% (n=172) of the most commented on stories. This topic deals with security issues, protests, arrests, and terrorism. This is also expected because of the ongoing military operations in the Middle East especially in countries like Syria, Iraq, and Yemen. The third most commented on topic is regional politics 10.8% (n=108) which mostly deals with official meetings, negotiations, and/or treaties with more than one Arab country. The fourth most commented on topic is human interest 10% (n=100) that deal with emotional and/or tragic stories. Interestingly, the scope of the majority of these stories is focused on the Arab and/or Muslim world. The fifth most commented on stories are related to odd or funny news 5.6% (n=56), while the sixth most commented on topic is international politics that deal with non-Arab countries 5.5% (n=55). This is an interesting finding as other topics like local politics and order, regional politics, and human interest came first, which show that there is some kind of online civic engagement with the news especially important events taking place in the Arab region. Also the above results correspond with Shoemaker and Cohen's study (2006) on the kind of news stories TV news organizations themselves focus on though the order is different. For example, internal politics came second (13.3%) and international politics in the fifth place (7.4%) followed by internal order (6.8%) and human interest (6.1%) stories.

As for the least commented on topics, housing and transportation news came last with the least commented

on news topic 0.1% (n=1) followed by economy, business, commerce, and industry 0.3% (n=3), local sports 0.4% (n=4), health/welfare/social services 0.4% (n=4), education 0.4% (n=4), disasters and epidemics 0.6% (n=6), and international order 0.7% (n=7). For local sports, it was expected that the online audience would engage with such a story topic more than others based on Shoemaker and Cohen's study (2006) in which sports came in the first place (14.1%) in terms of news organizations' emphasis, but the online audience preference is different. As for the statistical differences between liking and commenting on Facebook news, Spearman correlation coefficient test of ranking R .177, P= .431, indicated no significant differences between the two online activities (See Table 3).

To answer the second research question on the top countries that the online audience is exposed to, the study findings indicate that Egypt

Table 3
Ranking of news stories*

Likes ranking	Comments ranking
1	1
4	4
10	2
3	10
22	3
2	5
21	9
19	8
16	15
12	6
15	16
6	21
9	22
11	7
5	11
13	13
17	20
8	14
20	12
7	17
14	18
18	19

*Spearman correlation coefficient R .177, Significance (2-tailed) P=.431 (Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed))

Table 4

References to Specific Countries in Local Order,
Politics, and Sports in Most Liked News Topics

Country	Frequency	Percentage
Egypt	194	54.3%
Syria	74	20.7%
Iraq	21	5.8%
Saudi Arabia	17	4.7%
Lebanon	12	3.3%
Libya	7	1.9%
Yemen	7	1.9%
Tunisia	7	1.9%
Palestine	7	1.9%
Morocco	5	1.4%
UAE	4	1.1%
Jordan	1	-
Algeria	1	-
Total	357	

came first 54.3% (n=194) as the country that is mostly ref-
erenced in the top 100 news stories followed by Syria
20.7% (n=74), Iraq 5.8% (n=21), and Saudi Arabia 4.7%
(n=17) (See Table 4). As for the most commented on news
topics, the study findings indicate that Egypt came first
again with 27.5% as the country that is mostly referenced
in the top 100 news stories followed by Syria 6.7%, Iraq
2.4%, and Saudi Arabia 2.1% (See Table 5). As for the dif-
ferences between liking and commenting on news, Spear-
man correlation coefficient test of ranking R .601, P=.039
showed no significant differences between the two online
activities. As for interest in non-Arab countries, the results
show that online audiences are mostly interested in news
on Arab countries as no Western or other countries show
up in the top countries list. According to two previous

Table 5

References to Specific Countries in Local Order, Politics, and Sports in Most Commented on News Topics*

Country	Frequency	Percentage
Egypt	275	27.5%
Syria	67	6.7%
Iraq	24	2.4%
Saudi Arabia	21	2.1%
Algeria	9	0.9%
Libya	7	0.7%
Yemen	5	0.5%
Morocco	5	0.5%
UAE	4	0.4%
Tunisia	3	0.3%
Palestine	3	0.3%
Lebanon	2	0.2%
Total	425	

*Spearman correlation coefficient for the ranking test between commenting and liking news is R .601, Significance (2-tailed) P=.039 (Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).)

studies on news on social media, Arabic language news organizations make ample references to Western countries as part of their core media coverage (Al-Rawi, 2016a & 2016b), yet Arab online audiences seem to prefer consuming news that is more related to their own local, national, or regional surroundings. This finding is expected to be interesting for news organizations that seem to follow certain news making rules in determining what is worthy to be reported though online audiences seem to follow different set of criteria to determine what is worthy to be read and shared with others.

In relation to the reason behind Egypt's first ranking in news topics, the researcher did not expect it, as the

Table 6

Total No. of Facebook Users for the 10 News Organizations

Rank	Countries	No. of total fans
1	Egypt	11,206,127
2	Iraq	5,362,604
3	Morocco	3,072,001
4	Syria	2,810,879
5	Saudi Arabia	2,637,699
6	Libya	2,555,362
7	Tunisia	2,282,594
8	Algeria	2,186,975
9	Jordan	1,854,127
10	Yemen	1,101,372

current conflicts in Syria and Iraq are obviously more newsworthy topics due to the high number of people killed as a result of the ongoing military operations. Yet, the demographic nature of the online audience of these news organizations was relevant here. In order to cross check this aspect, I examined Facebook data provided by SocialBakers (www.socialbakers.com) on the top 10 country users for the 10 news organizations investigated in this study (See Table 6). The data revealed that Egypt came first with a total of over 11.2 million users for all the Facebook pages followed by Iraq (5.3 million), Morocco (3 million), and Syria (2.8 million). These figures which show that Egyptian users are by far the largest from all Arab countries clearly explain why Egypt has scored first as the country mostly mentioned in local order, politics, and sport news topics.

In brief, this study examined the news consumption patterns of social media audiences by studying Facebook

data taken from 10 news organizations. Findings indicate that social media audiences mostly prefer to read stories about local order, internal politics, human interest, international politics, and odd or funny stories. The findings of other studies conducted on news organizations' news selections practices show that the same topics cited above come first though sports is not among the most liked news stories by the online audience. Also, the results indicate that there is a genuine interest in local order and politics, which shed light on the kind of civic and political engagement those users have.

As for the most commented on news stories, the findings of this study indicate that social media audiences mostly prefer to comment on stories about local politics, local order, regional politics, human interest, odd or funny stories, and international politics. The two statistical tests conducted showed no significance differences between liking and commenting on Facebook news. Further, the results indicate that the most referenced country in the most liked and commented on news stories on local order, politics, and sports, Egypt came first followed by Syria and Iraq. This is mainly due to the large number of Egyptian Facebook users who follow news from the news organizations' Facebook pages.

This study discusses the way SNSs allow news readers to choose which news stories to read due to the diversity and abundance of news stories produced by news organizations and subsequently disseminated them to their friends or followers by liking or commenting on them; this ultimately enhances online news engagement and interaction. News organizations find SNSs outlets to be extremely useful because they can further understand their

audiences and target them with advertising because there seems to be differences between what news organizations are mostly focused on in their news coverage on the one hand and their audiences' preferences of news stories on the other hand. The latter find SNS outlets to be far more practical than visiting each news organization's website because news is found in one place and is largely filtered based on their personalized and unique preferences.

Further studies can investigate more international differences among speakers of other languages and their online news consumption habits. It will also be important to examine the differences among other social media platforms like Twitter and YouTube since they are important news venues that need to be compared with Facebook news.

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