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The American University in Cairo  
School of Global Affairs and Public Policy

**USES AND GRATIFICATIONS OF SOCIAL MEDIA  
IN THE MIDDLE EAST NORTH AFRICA REGION**

A Thesis Submitted by  
**Yousra Osama Mohamed Taha Mohamed**

To the Department of Journalism and Mass Communication

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Arts in Journalism and Mass Communication

under the supervision of

**Dr. Ahmed Taher**

(November 2019)

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## ABSTRACT

This study explores the relation between the adoption of various social media platforms and the demographic variables of users consuming these platforms in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. It also provides a better understanding of the positive and negative gratifications acquired when users adopt social media in the region. The uses and gratifications (U&G) perspective is the theoretical grounding of the study applied to newer media, social media platforms in specific. A quantitative questionnaire, conducted within the social media users whose home countries are from the MENA region (N=561) to indicate the behavior of social media adoption in relation to 8 motivation variables. Three in-depth interviews were also conducted to analyze the findings and result, presenting insights on the assumed hypotheses. Findings of the study showed that there's a significant relation between using social media and the use of media utilities in terms of content creation and content engagement. It also showed that social media delivered not only positive gratifications, but also negative ones. Users may gain better online social activity, online learning opportunities, online active citizenship and online efficiency, but on the other hand, they also risk personal privacy violations, social media addiction, and distractions from daily tasks.

**Keywords:** *MENA region, social media, uses and gratifications, social network sites, Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter, Survey*

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# **Chapter One**

## **Introduction**

Technological advancements have changed how we experience the world. Simply, from a basic printing wheel in the press field, till the digital era we're living in, restructuring societies and our daily lives forever with the invariable introduction of such new technology throughout the history and past centuries. These life-changing developments do not only empower our human capabilities and potentials, but also impact the dynamics of people interactions. Without doubt, the communication world is developing at a neck-straining pace and reconstructing our world in the process. The technologies are transforming our lives in different ways with the turn of every decade (Meade, 2012).

Social media and its implications are just one of the significant transformations that reshape our society and social relationships. Generally, social media are defined as "Internet-based, disentrained and persistent channels of mass-personal communication facilitating perceptions of interactions among users, deriving value primarily from user-generated content" (Carr & Hayes, 2015, p. 49). To state it differently, social media can be identified as any sort of computer-mediated communication of which individuals can set up profiles to present who they are, to generate their own content, share, or interact with other online users online (Carr & Hayes, 2015).

Researchers in the media field always seek to understand elements that define a communication process, whether the channel, sender or the message itself that conveys a meaning to the recipients or receivers. Based on the uses and gratifications perspective, the message sent through a given medium, is one important influencing source on audiences. Whereas these audiences are interchanging active communicators rather than being passive messages' recipients, and their individual differences limit the media's direct effects. Uses

and gratifications is then depicted as a psychological communication perspective evaluating the mechanisms of media usage, functions and purposes (Rubin, 2009). The U&G perspective suggests that existing satisfactions from media experiences have been derived by media choices (Parker & Plank, 2000). It also highlights the notion that needs obtained, and motives behind the equivalent media consumption, vary between individuals (Papacharissi, 2008). In other words, it points out the notion that individuals are aware of their needs, assessing various channels with their content and functional alternatives, in addition to selecting the interpersonal channel or media that they think will satisfy the gratifications they seek out for (Nabi, Stitt, Halford & Finnerty, 2006).

The rise of online technologies has helped in rebooting the implementation of uses and gratification theory on the new media. A high level of interactivity is demanded from users of new media like the Internet, blogs, and social network sites (SNS), in comparison to the users of traditional media like television, newspapers or radio, who basically obtain the media's content from one direction from the sender to the receiver. The integral nature of SNS has changed the communication ecosystem (Ruggiero, 2000). Each SNS is a channel that presents a different set of possibilities for interaction with a closed group of "friends" or even the public at large.

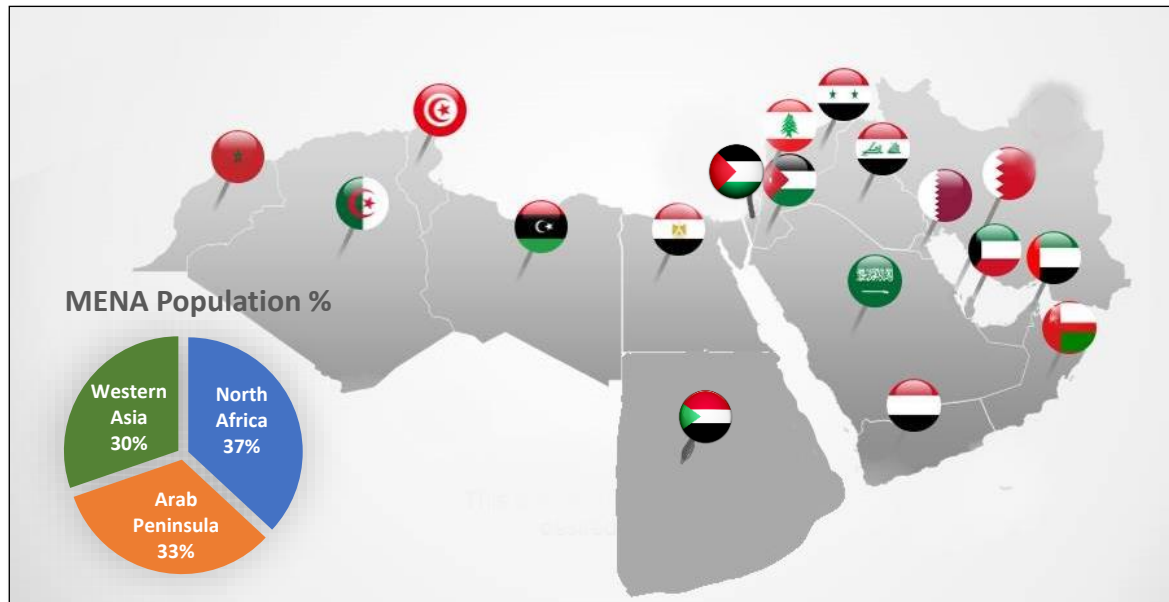
Facebook for example, allows users to actively seek out information from their news feed, they can also post a picture or status, react to friends' posts, or share insights or opinions. This means the activities of users on SNS are more interactive and goal-oriented compared to passive and hand-holding traditional media. Thus, the theory of uses and gratifications is applicable for a study of SNS, however it may require expanding and retesting.

In U&G a significant discrepancy is made between sought and obtained gratifications. Gratifications sought (known as needs or motives) are about pre-expectations. They are those

sorts of gratifications that members of the audience expect to fulfill from a medium before they initially start using it. On the other hand, gratifications obtained are about the actual experience that members of the audience encounter throughout using a specific medium. Centralizing this concept, gratifications sought may be different than those obtained, and the subsequent gap can forecast either the satisfaction or dissatisfaction levels users experience from the utilization of a specific medium (Quan-Haase & Young, 2010).

Many previous researches focused on the U&G perspective and applied it to television and other traditional media channels (Quan-Haase & Young, 2010). This research applies the U&G to the social media channels also referred to as social network sites. It sheds light on what drives individuals to switch from traditional media to social network sites and what kinds of gratifications these sites are providing before and after their usage, in an attempt to discover the links between the gratifications detected and the sociological or psychological origins of the needs satisfied.

In this research, we plan to cover three sub-regions within the Arabic-speaking MENA: Western Asia, Arabian Peninsula and North Africa. As per figure (1), countries of Western Asia include Jordan, Syria, Iraq, Palestine and Lebanon. Arabian Peninsula countries include Oman, Emirates, Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait, Yemen and Saudi Arabia. While North Africa countries include Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt and Sudan.



**Fig. (1) MENA zones classification in 2019.**

Source: UN Population & We are Social 2019

Although most of the previous research are carried out using data gathered from North America like the United States or Asia like China, little research is conducted on the online behavioral patterns of the social media constant usage in the Middle East and North Africa region.

**Table (1). MENA Region Statistics 2016 Vs. 2019**

Serial	Country	Total Population			Active Social Media Users		
		# in M. (2016)	# in M. (2019)	Grwoth %	# in M. (2016)	# in M. (2019)	Growth %
1	Morocco	34.8	36.41	5%	11	17	55%
2	Algeria	40.3	42.34	5%	12	23	92%
3	Tunisia	11.3	11.72	4%	5.2	7.5	44%
4	Libya	6.3	6.52	3%	2.5	4.5	80%
	<b>Total North Africa</b>	<b>92.7</b>	<b>96.99</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>30.7</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>69%</b>
5	Egypt	93.3	100.3	8%	28	40	43%
6	Sudan	42.01	42.01	0%	N.A	3.5	N.A
7	Saudi Arabia	32.1	33.85	5%	11	23	109%
8	Oman	4.6	4.92	7%	1.2	2.5	108%
9	Yemen	27.4	29.25	7%	1.7	2.3	35%
10	United Arab Emirates	9.2	9.61	4%	6.3	9.52	51%
11	Bahrain	1.3	1.6	23%	0.69	1.3	88%
12	Qatar	2.2	2.72	24%	1.7	2.69	58%
13	Kuwait	4	4.22	5%	1.9	3.9	105%
	<b>Total Arab Peninsula</b>	<b>80.8</b>	<b>86.17</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>24.49</b>	<b>45.21</b>	<b>85%</b>
14	Iraq	37.5	39.88	6%	11	19	73%
15	Syria	18.5	18.39	-1%	N.A	6.8	N.A
16	Lebanon	5.9	6.08	3%	2.6	4	54%
17	Jordan	7.7	9.99	30%	4.1	5.8	41%
18	Palestine	4.7	5.12	9%	1.8	1.9	6%
	<b>Total Western Asia</b>	<b>74.3</b>	<b>79.46</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>19.5</b>	<b>37.5</b>	<b>92%</b>

In table (1), a comparison of the data gathered in 2016 vs. 2019 occurs on each country's population and its active social media users. Numbers show that the population percentage of North Africa had increased by 5%, as for both the Arab Peninsula and Western Asia, their population percentage had increased by 7% in the last three years. While the active social media percentage in North Africa increased by 69%, as for the Arab Peninsula, its social media users' percentage had increased by 85%, as well as an increase by 92% in Western Asia with the highest growth percentage amongst the three MENA zones throughout the last three years (UN World Population Prospects 2016; Hootsuite & We Are Social 2016; Hootsuite & We Are Social 2019).

This research provides both theoretical and practical implications to the area of social media consumption. Theoretically, the study puts forward how the uses and gratifications theory can be applied to study social media. While practically, due to the ongoing changing nature of social media, a cross-sectional survey is being used upon the online social media users of the four leading social networks sites: Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat and Twitter, making an interesting comparative analysis of these leading platforms within the MENA region.

The findings provide insights on how and why nowadays social media is being abundantly used by the MENA residents. In addition, this study examines whether people from different demographic groups tend to develop different levels of social media use, influencing their frequency and intensity of using the leading social network sites.

## **Chapter Two**

### **Literature Review**

#### **1. History of Uses and Gratifications Theory**

The uses and gratifications theory (U&G) focuses on both the message and the sender who's considered as an active user, while being a theoretical approach derived from the research of media effects that explores the ways of which society interacts with the media (McQuail, 2010). Based on Katz, Blumler and Gurevitch's (1973, p.510) description of the theory, it's being defined as "the social and psychological origins of needs which generate mass media expectations or other sources, leading to different media exposure patterns, to eventually gratify these needs and their other consequences."

Most importantly, the U&G theory elaborates the reasons that make people actively choose a mass communication medium to achieve their goals and satisfy their personal needs. To name a need, it is considered as an immediate stimulus whether internally or externally, in order to reach an equilibrium state. In other words, if people have specific needs, they would seek to gratify them (Chen, 2011).

Uses and gratifications theory originates from the coexisting surroundings of individuals, highlighting their use of media to satisfy their wants, as proposed in reply to traditional mass communication research (Katz, Blumler & Gurevitch, 1974). Early mass communication theories such as the hypodermic needle theory, stated that mass media had an instant and uniform effect on individuals, whom they were perceived as easily prone to be controlled, being unable to form their own opinions. Such postulation noted that the exposure to typical cultural goods, caused audience members to become a passively homogenous population with diminished will to resist the impact of the mass media (Quan-Haase & Young, 2010).

Some researchers believe that the origins of the U&G perspective have been rooted with Schramm's (1949) immediate and delayed rewards model of media gratifications. (Dozier & Rice, 1984). However, Wimmer and Dominick (1994) explained that U&G began in the 1940s because researchers wanted to know why audiences participated in various forms of media behavior such as listening to radio or reading the newspaper.

Another wave of indecisiveness between communication researchers on the actual roots of the approach, occurred during the 1950s and 1960s. Blumler (1979) argues that the U&G approach became famous after desperate trials in measuring the effects of short-term exposure to mass media campaigns in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Still in 1959, others link the initial efforts of Katz in an attempt to outline the U&G approach (O'Donohoe, 1994). Katz wanted to understand the users' motivations for being attracted toward specific mass media outlets to fulfill a certain desire (Mull & Lee, 2014), requiring research to no more focus solely on what media do to people but reversely focus on what people do with media (Reinhard & Dervin, 2009).

Katz's article of "Mass Communication Research and the Study of Culture," was a key turning point for the U&G research in 1959. He stated the following in his article:

**"[L]ess attention [should be paid] to what media do to people and more to what people do with the media. Such an approach assumes that even the most potent of mass media content cannot ordinarily influence an individual who has no use for it" (McQuail, 1984, p. 178).**

Due to Katz's significant work, the theory witnessed a high demand in research in the 1960s and early 1970s (McQuail, 2000). Research continued concentrating on the notion of the active audience presence with a detailed scope on the sought gratifications. A huge amount of time was spent by U&G researchers to study the motivations of audiences, while developing

various typologies to identify people's tendencies of satisfying psychological and social needs (Ruggerio, 2000).

A precise theoretical approach was not provided by this sub-sectioned research. Still, it was opposed by Ruggerio (2000) that uses typologies enable researchers to set a fundamental infrastructure of data to other study areas specifically involved with media use. Subsequently, uses typologies are vital to allow scholars in predicting and understanding audiences' behavior. In modern U&G research, the development and refining of such the uses and gratifications typologies continued. For instance, McQuail (2000) proposed typologies of motives for television programs and radio audiences (p. 388):

- Looking for information (Surveillance)
- Emotions and stress release; escapism of problems or routines (Diversion)
- Self-exploration, reinforcement and actualization (Personal Identity)
- Sense of group belonging, social companionship (Personal Relationships)

This example reflected an intention in understanding mass communications' audiences involvement in a more specific relation to the personal experience and opinion of individuals rather than the traditional mass media effects (Blumler, 1979). Thereby, scholars eventually recognized numerous social or psychological variables that were basically the originators of several gratifications' consumption forms in the past. Despite the debate, past studies in U&G were mostly descriptive, in quest of classifying purposeful categories out of the audiences' responses (Ruggiero, 2000). A question arises here: what are the actual motivations that intrigue the users to consume content on newer media?

The timely-honored U&G theory has been applied to many media outlets including television, radio and the Internet (Roy, 2009). It inspects the motives to consume content and engage with certain forms of mass media (Mull & Lee, 2014), as individuals choose and use



media to reach a desired level of needs satisfaction in a goal-oriented way (Blumler & Katz, 1974). Ruggiero (2000) stated that for U&G researchers, either practically or theoretically, a basic question remains: Why do people be involved in a certain mediated communication outlet not the others, and what are the received gratifications out of it?

Similarly, using the U&G theory, previous research have been conducted on traditional mass media throughout the past 70 years, such as television, radio, newspapers, and the telephone beside other sources (Ruggeiro, 2000). Using mass media was hypothesized by Katz and Foulkes (1962) as a kind of escapism. The appeal towards listening to radio programs was the first simple attempt of the early studies to understand media use. This direction drew attention towards what attracts audiences to new media and their content. Stating popular examples on this, were research about why radio's serious music or soap operas were listened by women, the social needs satisfied behind following up with quiz shows, and the variables stemming from research about reading newspaper (Katz & Foulkes, 1962).

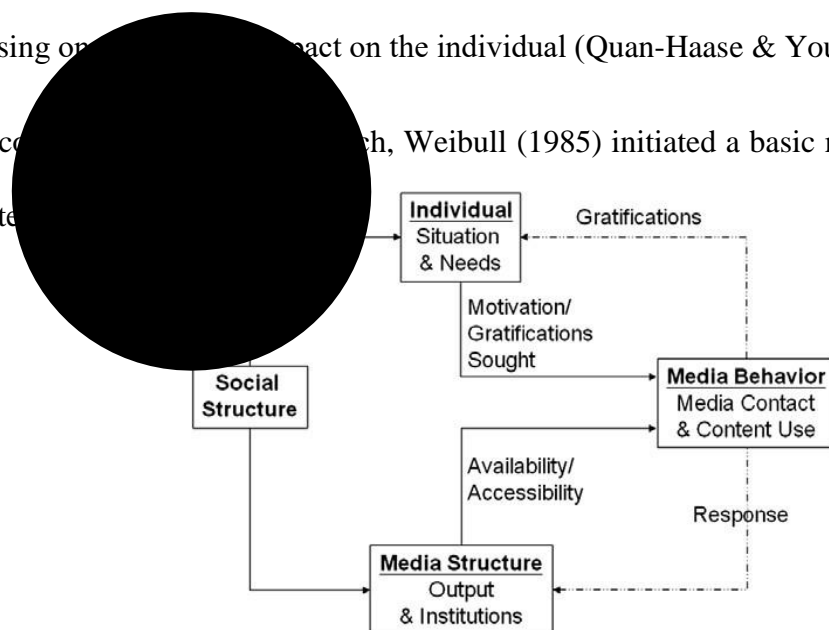
Leung and Wei (2000) studied the use of conventional telephone, to show the differences between various motives such as intrinsic (social) and instrumental (task-orientated) motives. Results showed that socially, people used the telephone to reduce anxiety and loneliness, beside maintaining friends and family relationships, while "task-oriented" to order set appointments or order things.

As for Towers (1985), the use of radio was considered in relation to other media, discovering that people were interested in listening to the radio to seek out news or for entertainment. To understand the derives of television home shopping, the study of uses and gratifications theory has been vital as home shopping provides audiences with information about brands, making it a convenient experience with no need to visit malls to shop. This

notion is related to Cortese and Rubin's (2010) research as they explained how television viewing fulfilled the audiences' personal needs, stemming out of variables like escapism, relaxation, excitement and entertainment. Other scholars like Schramm, Lyle, and Parker (1961) concluded that children use television, when they are influenced by their communication with surrounding colleagues and the relationships with their parents, alongside their mental ability to digest TV content. Through later years, scholars have recognized the important urge to apply the U&G theory on the usage of MP3s and iPods, as younger generations are inclined to these gears to combat boredom, being a source of motivation for entertainment (Ferguson, Greer & Reardon, 2007). Spotting on these research studies that were focusing on the U&G theory being implemented on the individuals' use of traditional media, their outcomes can offer insights upon the digital media use in the current era.

The aim orientation of audiences is what distinguishes U&G from early communication theories, meaning the audience is being characterized as actively motivated and judicious in their media use. The theory concentrates on what people actually do with the media rather than focusing on the impact on the individual (Quan-Haase & Young, 2010).

According to Weibull (1985), Weibull (1985) initiated a basic model of media use represented



**Fig. (2) Media use's structural model (Weibull, 1985, p. 128).**

Illustrating the U&G concept, a manifest characteristic of the generic U&G model is seen in its repeated intertwining causal relationships, because the gratification processes occur within the interactions among the individual characteristic of media use, the social structures, and the media structures (Palmgreen et al., 1985; Weibull, 1985). Social structure means the entire society, which has two dimensions; the media, which is considered a tool that is part of the social structure because people tend to communicate via media channels, while the second dimension is about the individual interests aspiring to have an expected influence by the media (Weibull, 1985).

Simplifying the model, the above declarations state that when we talk about the media, we should not define it as technical channels only but also put media policy, their resources and users into consideration. Social structure also includes the selection parameters regarding media output. Accordingly, the U&G approach looks upon a user-based direction beside emphasizing the variations in media choice and usage, when users fulfill their needs through media. Such wants and needs are resulted from psychological and social situations as well as the motives that influence media use, which further leads to behavioral, affective and cognitive outcomes (Wu, Wang & Tsai, 2010). In a later chapter in this study, a further discussion of the U&G theory will be included about its application on social network sites (SNS) research.

## **2. Criticisms of Uses and Gratifications**

The uses and gratifications theory has been popular in the mass media research; however, it was heavily criticized by many scholars. Some scholars condemn the U&G theory to be vague, lacking theoretical consistency in the practice of motives and needs' gratifications. They reasoned that the approach had a very functional orientation, ignoring the non-adaptations of media in the society. Thereby, the theory was being accused of its

continuous repetition of the functional theory's inadequacies (Lometti, Reeves & Bybee, 1977; Carey & Kreiling, 1974; Elliott, 1974).

Another point of criticism is being based upon the notion that the theory provides reasons of using media without applying systematic explanation (O'Donohoe, 1994). Others have spotted down drawbacks such as the misconceptions between the analytical model and operational definitions (Ruggiero, 2000; Stanford, 1983). While Sevrin and Tankard (2001) pointed out the simplicity of the theory, as it depends on self-reports to set the medium being used to fulfill a motive or need. Furthermore, a harsh critique on the theory was proposed by Elliott (1974). He criticized the U&G theory as being hard to predict, making it difficult to infer societal effects of media, as he defined it "individualistic".

Adding to Elliot's criticism, he also noted several points about the approach, initially that the theory preserves the society's status quo, lacking any progress in terms of social changes. He continued arguing that availability might be a reason behind media use, in other words people watch certain programs because they're available not to satisfy specific wants or needs. From his research, the theory depends on a stimulus to get a response from audiences, ignoring the role of surrounding environments of the receiver or user. Thus, the U&G approach was mostly criticized for (1) a deficiency in applying systematic explanation, leading to methodological or theoretical inconsistencies, (2) disregarding the surrounding environment of audiences and their societal changes, maintaining the status quo only (3) the overly dependency of self-reports, (4) lack of sufficient empirical data to assume having active audiences, (5) the high functionality level of the approach, while overlooking the media's effect in the society (Lometti, Reeve & Bybee, 1977; Carey & Kreiling, 1974; Elliott, 1974).

Despite the criticisms in past research, there's a consensus on the importance of uses and gratifications typologies in paving the way to conducting further empirical studies, applying them on media use (García-Jiménez, López Ayala-López, & Gaona-Pisionero, 2012). The U&G theory provides a pool of benchmark data if scholars shall conduct further studies. Based on the theory, a wide range of related topics arise, with the thriving expansion of digital technologies. Such flexibility is vital in all aspects of our personal and social lives particularly in the current information age of which its saturated with computer-mediated communication (Ruggiero, 2000).

Throughout the early 1980s, a clearer vision existed towards a more unified uses and gratifications theory (Littlejohn, 2002). Supporting this argument, media researchers were more interested in the theory, since its popularity was blooming. The approach had developed through time from the primitive descriptive method to a more empirical form, with socio-economic and demographic variables being taken into consideration among audiences, deriving away from the notion of the separated individuals from their surrounding society.

Elliott's (1974) criticism about the theory was no not valid anymore when Rosengren stated the reason behind such postulation is the amplitude of socially oriented examples of uses and gratifications research, Blumler and Katz (1974) assumed that the theory started to identify links between motives of audiences and media behaviors since its "coming of age". Dependency theory was merged with the U&G theory by Rubin and Windahl (1986). Their new merged model depends on the social system of individuals to create a connection between their societal context and their gratified needs. Katz and Foulkes (1962) specified that U&G research allows reporting media's dysfunctions that are for example media outlets being sources of entertainment or escapism. Additionally, Rosengren (1974) proposed that U&G do not essentially reflect the status quo, because information extracted from consumption of mass communication could be used as a corner-stone of societal change

trials, such attempts might go in-vain without these information, however with it, there might be a better opportunity to succeed.

Regarding claims about the U&G approach lacking theoretical basis argued by previous scholars, Palmgreen (1984) proposed the counter-notion when the approach had witnessed “vigorous theoretical growth” in mid 1980s with shifting the focus on the theory’s development (p. 20). He pointed out that many purposeful hypothesis are stated by U&G researchers rather than asking vague questions. Then applying suggested theoretical developments, he concluded six fundamental uses and gratifications scopes in his article: (1) psychological and social backgrounds of gratifications, (2) media consumption and their effects in relation to gratifications, (3) sought and obtained gratifications, (4) audience activity, and (5) the expected values of uses and gratifications.

### **3. Uses and Gratifications in the Current Digital Era**

In the current digital era, the received interactions occurring through online media content have been massively expanded by new media. New media are becoming unprecedented vital living sources in the lives of young generations, being more in connection with their digital devices, thus dominating the popular culture in the societies (Greenhow & Robelia, 2009). Nowadays, media became broader by embedding newer technologies of communication and a plethora of devices such as smart phones and their applications sources or digital implementations such as social networking sites and home shopping networks, allowing individuals to receive communication mutually through interacting with others not from one direction like in the past. The expansion and growth of all these new technologies have made the concept of updating the uses and gratifications approach more crucial, to fit the modern digital world. (Sundar & Limperos, 2013).

Lately, as the accessibility and use of the internet expanded; computer-mediated communication and modern media were investigated through the U&G theory and its uses. Scholars have analyzed the use of internet and mediated communication from numerous perspectives such as personal home pages (Papacharissi & Rubin, 2000), the internet (Parker & Plank, 2000; Papacharissi & Rubin, 2000) and the World Wide Web which facilitated the use of internet since it provided various types of information sources for the users, and a diversity of digital phenomena to be explored (Kaye & Johnson, 2002; Flanagin & Metzger, 2001; Korgaonkar & Wolin, 1999). The following are examples of studies which applied numerous types of motive typologies to implement uses and gratification theory in new media.

The relation between the internet and the uses and gratifications of retrieving online political information was studied by Kaye and Johnson (2002). More than 300 online respondents were surveyed to study their uses and motives. They found out that users accessed online political websites under four main categories of motives: entertainment, guidance, social utility and information seeking (Kaye & Johnson 2002). Other researchers such as Papacharissi and Rubin (2000) mentioned five categories of motives to predict the use of internet which are: passing time, information seeking, entertainment, convenience and utility. Moreover, in the study of blogs' readers, Kaye (2005) spotted six motives: social and political surveillance, information seeking, convenience, affiliation, public expression and personal fulfillment.

With newer media, users have versatile options of channels to choose from. Uses and gratifications theory suggests that whatever gratifications users expect to receive from a media [source] may be different than what they actually receive (Ballard, 2011). The U&G theory is today encountering a high relevance level, particularly as a method to elaborate how people interact with the surrounding technologies. One relevant scope is the study of uses and

gratifications in relation to cell phones to discover the gratifications behind using them. Some studies concluded these gratifications corresponding to sociability, affection and entertainment. Mobile phones have enhanced the role of the ordinary fixed telephone invention which satisfies the need of relationship bonding and preserving social connections. They furtherly add to the individuals' social lives for those who'd been isolated before, being able now to join communities and get along with such fashionable trend. Besides, mobility was an extra added gratification category within cell phones usage which was not formerly familiar with the usage of traditional telephones (Wei & Lo, 2006).

Likewise, social media can be studied to obtain gratifications as satisfying cognitive needs, social recognition and venting of negative feelings (Fourie, 2007). Urista, Qingwen, and Day (2009) for instance discovered five other social media gratification themes that are concluded in formation and reinforcement of personal relationships, popularity, relevant and efficient communication, in addition to curiosity about others. Through the use of the Internet and digital media, these gratifications can now be attainable.

#### **4. Traditional Media Vs. New Media**

During previous decades, the word "media" has only been referred to the traditional mass media whereas studies in uses and gratifications were examined on conventional channels such as newspaper, television, radio, and film (Ballard, 2011). Traditional media such as books, magazines, newspapers and radio were presented to the 1920s generations. Only after thirty years is when the generation of 1950s was introduced to a more visualized tool, the television. While people who lived during the 1980s witnessed game consoles such as Nintendo and cable television. But during the late 20<sup>th</sup> and earliest 21<sup>st</sup> centuries, a flood of new innovative technologies emerged, growing up in a totally different digitalized world. Every ten years, the world will encounter wide technological differences than the previous



decades (Rodman, 2010). Human beings had always strived to make things better, improving accessibility and speed. Indeed, digital advancements make life much easier.

The introduction of media technologies had been positively accepted by the Arab. Radio was welcomed as an alternative to newspaper in the early years of the 1950s, when newspapers used to address literate individuals, however, radio was more effective as it provided information as well as being a source of companionship and entertainment to many people. Being a cheap mass media tool at that time, it was introduced to both literate and illiterate citizens, whilst Arab homes used to have them operating during the individuals' daily activities. A couple of years later, the invention of the transistor allowed people to carry radio devices all around, making them more efficient to be used (Boyd, 1999).

Leaders in the Arab world had noticed how the mass communication tools were very important in developing both their countries economically and socially as well as being a medium to promote for their political agendas. Arab countries like Iraq and Syria (until 1990s) beside Egypt, had the strongest radio transmissions, with the highest effects of propaganda on countries with simple political systems such as Jordan, Kuwait, and Lebanon (Boyd, 1977, 1999). The same listening patterns of radio was equivalent to watching television in Arab countries and their neighbors. For example, in Saudi Arabia, the television's antenna in Saudi houses can pick the signals of the Egyptian television across wide seas. While the Egyptian television's signal was also picked in countries in the Gulf area. (Boyd, 1999)

Mass communication technologies in the Arab role were blooming in the 1990s decade. Beside broadcast satellites, video recorders and televisions, other technologies such as computers were more integrated in the region of the Middle East and North Africa. In table (2), the highest percentage of households with computers is in United Arab Emirates

(UAE), Bahrain and Saudi Arabia respectively, while UAE, Qatar and Kuwait represent the top countries in the percentage of individuals using computers based on a report released in 2018 by the International Telecommunication Union.

**Table (2) Percentage of households with computers and individuals using them in some MENA countries**

	Country	Proportion of Households with Computers	Year	% of Individuals Using Computers	Year
1	Algeria	47.5	2018	...	...
2	Morocco	60.6	2018	59.4	2017
3	Tunisia	47.5	2018	...	...
4	Egypt	58	2018	43.6	2017
5	KSA	86.2	2018	70.9	2017
6	Kuwait	84	2018	74	2017
7	Qatar	87.6	2018	84.9	2017
8	UAE	95.4	2018	95.6	2017
9	Bahrain	94.8	2018	71.3	2015
10	Iraq	81.2	2018	...	...

Furthermore, Network Readiness Index (NRI) was created in 2015 to measure the capability of countries to adapt new communication and information technologies in their societies to increase competitiveness and improve the well-being of its citizens (Geiger, 2015). Results of the following year is shown below in fig. (3).

**Networked Readiness Index 2016**

Country	Global Rank
United Arab Emirates (UAE)	26
Qatar	27
Bahrain	28
Saudi Arabia	33
Oman	52
Jordan	60
Kuwait	61
Tunisia	81
Lebanon	88
Egypt	96

\* Source: World Economic Forum 2016

\* Rank is out of a total of 139 countries globally

**Fig. (3) Top ten MENA countries harnessing information communication technology (2016)**

Within the global Information and Communications Technology (ICT) enabled services and outsourcing market, a few MENA countries were well-positioned amongst countries in other regions such as Morocco, UAE, Egypt, Tunisia, Jordan and Turkey. Egypt specifically had been one of the outstanding ICT sourcing turn-points, providing more than 90,000 job opportunities, and growing annually at a rate of 7.5%, while more than 80,000 people were employed in the ICT sector in Turkey, encompassing profits of \$1.6 billion (Sethi & Gott, 2016).

Currently enhanced digital algorithm accelerates the compression of visual data such as photos and videos, to be sent online through the regular telephone cables or the new technology of fiber optic cables, cellular phones, broadcast satellite, and WIFI technologies (Ruggiero, 2000). An important technological advancement widely spread and used is the cell phone. It is a device that has its own operating system just like the conventional operating systems of televisions (Alfawareh, & Jusoh, 2014). According to a recent mobile economy report, the number of unique mobile subscribers in the MENA region was 381 Million by mid-2018, accounting for 64% of the region's population, expecting to jump to 459 Million by 2025. Whereas smartphone connections reached 49% of total connections and the number is expected to reach 74% by 2025. Additionally, 4G connections will account for 51% of total connections by 2025, as the mobile industry itself contributed \$165 Billion to the GDP of the region in 2017 and the number might increase to economic value of \$200 Billion by 2022 as countries would use the evolving improvements in the mobile services sector (GSMA, 2018)

Mobile phones, specifically smart ones, are better than computers in the usage of social media as they are small devices that can be taken anywhere either indoors or outdoors. Additionally, smart phones can perform the same tasks of television like being a source of entertainment by watching series, movies or soap operas. You can also do online shopping,

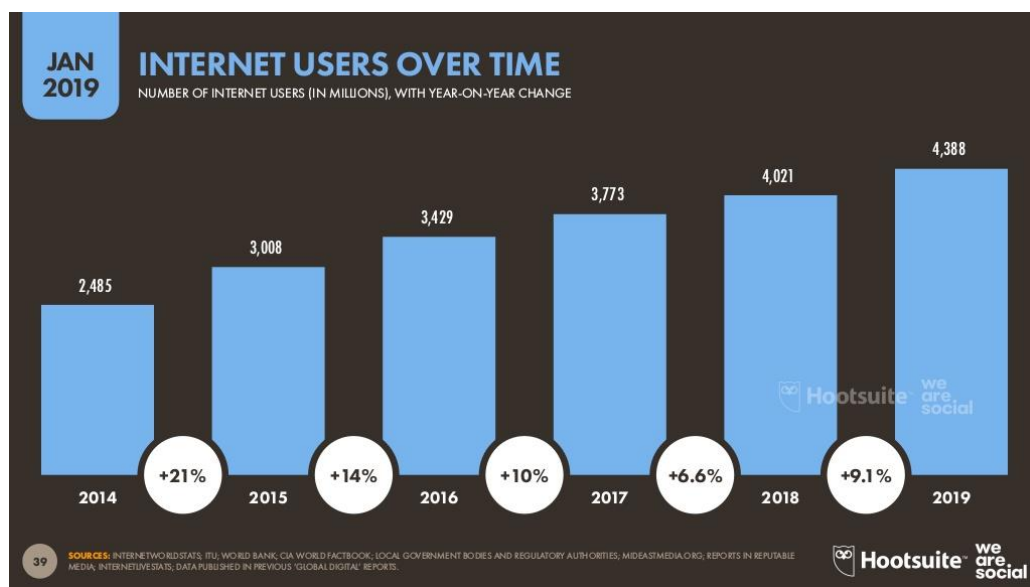
beside extra features of sending emails, chatting with others or seeking out for information on the World Wide Web (Alfawareh, & Jusoh, 2014).

The traditional sender-receiver model has been reversed by the introduction of internet communication, another point that explains the relevance of using U&G to online media. Online users can selectively decide which media outlet they want to use with only a click of the mouse. They can simultaneously send and receive messages through outlets such as Twitter (Chen, 2011). An important distinctive asset of new media is the notion of interactivity, which explains the users' capability to deliver content in response to a source or communication partner. Furthermore in new media, the discrepancy between producer and consumer tends to blur, which introduced the new term 'prosumer' to describe the ability of users to be in charge of the dissemination and production of content. This permits control over content and its use by the audience members, clarifying the importance of the gratifications in new media in comparison to traditional media. Explicitly concentrating on social media is important to understand what intrigues users to switch from one communication tool to the other. Furthermore, the concurrent use of various tools suggests that each fulfills a distinct need making an analysis of U&G crucial (Quan-Haase & Young, 2010).

## **5. The Internet as a New Medium**

No one expected that the internet would have that much of power and impact like in today, when it was invented by the U.S army in the 1960s to share information and communication throughout an internal network. The Internet created a revolution in the communication world, just like how the telephone or printing press were important in the past with many research papers discussing these tools. It started creating a huge successful boom during the 1990s, being enabled as an open network to the public. Since then, millions of

individuals had been added each year to the population of Internet users. Recently, the number of internet users reached to 4,388 Million (4.38 billion) globally with an annual growth of 9.1% compared to 2018. From 2014 to 2019, the internet users' percentage jumped by 77% to reach a total of 1.9 billion users during that period (Hootsuite & We Are Social, 2019). Indeed “The Internet has become impossible to ignore” (p. 39) as stated by Morris and Ogan (1996).



**Fig. (4) Percentage of Internet users over the last 5 years**

Transitioning from low speed to high-speed networks is another wave of the digital revolution. In the fixed-line field, using broadband networks is an important addition. Such evolution also applies on mobile connections with new broadband networks like third, fourth and fifth generation mobile systems (3G, 4G, and 5G) (ITU, 2005). An increasing growth of broadband access sustains with a similar increase in fixed broadbands. In 2018, it was reported that 1.1 billion fixed-broadband connections existed in comparison to 942 million fixed-telephone connections. However, a way significant increase was spotted in the subscriptions of mobile broadbands as in 2018 the penetration rate boosted from 4.0 in 2007 to 69.3 subscriptions for every 100 inhabitants, with active subscriptions of 5.3 billion. In 2018, Africa, Asia-Pacific and the Arab regions recorded the strongest mobile broadband

subscriptions. As their penetration reached 61/100 inhabitants with a high potential of extra growth range. While the less developed countries numbers reached 28.4/100 inhabitants (ITU, 2018).

As the Internet becoming faster nowadays, we access it from our phones where we're in a coffee shop or anyway away from our home. Human beings always strive to fulfill their gratifications instantly. The development of internet raises up an adapted human behavior. For instance, people might be irritated if their sent text messages hadn't been seen and replied on fast by others. That's why instant gratifications are greatly valued by our societies. Thus our children in this era or in the future will witness even faster digital technologies that shall fulfill more gratifications (Prensky, 2001; Barnes, Marateo, & Ferris, 2007).

Internet provides motives interpersonally or in the broad mass communication world. Several scholars differentiated between the type of motives in the mass communication field (i.e surveillance, passing time and for entertainment) and the motives acquired interpersonally (i.e social group interactions and personal identity searching) (Tewksbury & Althuas, 2000; Kaye & Johnson, 2002; Papacharissi & Rubin, 2000). The internet had offered a multitude of gratifications concentrated in one source in comparison to the past when they were scattered in numerous sources, thus the effect of internet advancing the human interactions potential is undeniable.

There are more media choices available through new technologies, introducing new aspects of uses and gratifications that were not previously applied on conventional media sources, these additional characteristics are: asynchronicity, demassification and interactivity (Ruggiero, 2000). Explaining the interactivity function, Ha and James (1998) recognized five dimensions for it: mutual communication, playfulness, gathering information, connectedness and choice. The notion of interactivity is very relevant to be implemented through the

advanced digital devices because they can offer alternative sources of communication to their users, allowing them to actively access information throughout any desired channel that suits them.

Sundar & Limpos (2013) defined Interactivity as the ability to change the content of the medium in real-time through responding, interacting and being in full control of it. For example, any piece of news available through a website is dynamic as users choose how they watch or read it. Control and various options are what make interactivity crucial in the process of satisfying gratifications.

The internet has the ability to create a community, it intrigues its users to interact and participate in conversations. Using web services and tools such as Social Networking Sites (SNSs), online users can articulate their social lives into words, pictures, videos and many others. They're able to present themselves in advanced way (Ellison, Steinfield & Lampe, 2007).

Another feature that distinguishes new media is demassification. Williams et al. (1988) defined the notion of demassification as the individual's control of the medium, resembling the new media with face-to-face interpersonal communication. Demassification is also the media user's potential to pick from an extensive menu of content. As argued by Chamberlain (1994), we are now in an era of demassification as the users of media have the advantage throughout newly advanced technologies, to choose and consume content from a huge selection of media sources and outlets, defined as mass media, that were shared with other users previously. Differently than traditional mass media, a new media source such as the Internet, has the ability to offer the characteristics of selectivity which enables tailoring the media's messages depending on their needs. (Ruggiero, 2000)

An additional approach to the new media capabilities, is found in the term ‘asynchronicity’ referring to the idea that messages may occur then being consumed in different times. Both senders and recipients have the choice to read and filter their digital messages at the time and place they want, allowing extra flexibility. (Williams et al.,1988). Moreover, it indicates the individuals’ capability at their convenience not only to send and receive vast numbers of messages, but also save or retain them (Chamberlain, 1994). Concerning television, asynchronicity can be detected in the usage of VCR in which users record any programs to be viewed later. While in case of the Internet and the new digital world, a person has the opportunity to save, print or replicate visual and textual materials to be sent to the World Wide Web sources such as web pages, sites or personal emails. After the messages are transferred in a digital format, it’s easy to manipulate the media, due to the infinite possibilities of individual’s content control more than traditional means. Thereby, asynchronicity, interactivity and demassification, the extended features previously mentioned, suggest a wide range of communication attitudes and behaviors to be examined by U&G scholars (Ruggiero, 2000).

Furthermore, Sundar and Limperos (2013) identified other new gratifications categories from media technology that are listed as follows: modality, agency, and navigability. With the word Interactivity, the four words spell an acronym of ‘MAIN’. The first characteristic of the three new categories is Modality. It means the ability of media content to be available in different formats like video and audio. It’s called ‘Multimedia’ when a medium is applied in several modalities (Sundar & Limperos, 2013). Previous research highlighted the fact that users can use different modalities in a medium. In textual content for example, users exert ultimate level of mental efforts to concentrate while being exposed to the information, however, in audiovisual content it represents a challenge as users



become distracted by the visuals in higher rates (Sundar, 2000). Types of modality gratifications are availability, realism and originality (Sundar & Limperos, 2013).

Agency is the next gratification which means that everyone gets to be sources or agents of information using the internet (Sundar & Limperos, 2013). Research recognized that users are very picky in terms of identifying the role of information sources, due to the customized technologies propagation (Sundar, Oh, Bellur, Jia, & Kim, 2012), which limits the gatekeepers role, and allows users to disseminate content over the web (Sundar & Limperos, 2013). Agency's necessity mainly depends on the rise of user-generated content (UGC) and is clearly observed in social media platforms like Twitter and Facebook (Shao, 2009). Applications of agency gratification categories are building communities and enhancing sources (Sundar & Limperos, 2013).

The last gratification for the new media would be navigability, defined as the free movement of users within a medium. Surfing the internet and browsing for information through various platforms became a common activity within users, as well as having a great time using assisting tools of navigation, to be some of the main gratifications raised by navigability (Sundar & Limperos, 2013). All those mentioned gratifications by Sundar and Limperos are very relevant to the uses and gratifications implementation in new media. These two scholars also wrote a paper which defied the notion of users' needs being created through their gratifications by stating that new media technologies are the methods which enables shaping the needs to level up to new unique gratifications (Sundar & Limperos, 2013). That belief differs than previous U&G research because it states that novel gratifications are created as a result of the modern digital era and the rise of the Internet. A question arises here: what are the possible acquired positive gratifications after consuming social media?

Despite the positive aspects of the Internet and the high percentages of internet penetration worldwide, internet access should be more systematically and fairly available to boost digital opportunities as well as avoid any knowledge divisions in societies. Although one in every three internet users are aged less than 18 years, yet 29% of young generations aged from 15 to 24 years do not have internet access, specifically in the MENA region (UNICEF, 2017).

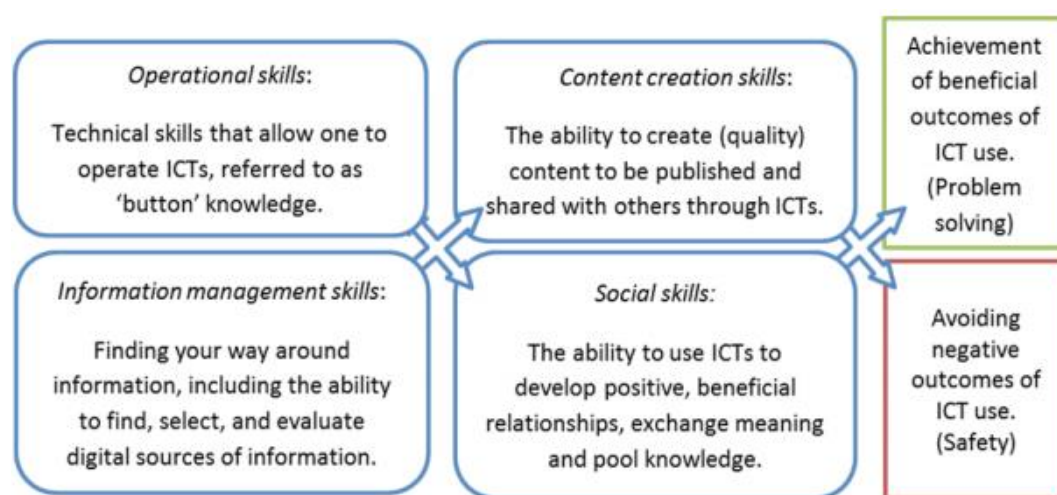
A competitive business world had raised up from the innovations in the new ICT services, with unique success stories in various sectors such as Amazon in online shopping, Google in search engines, SoundCloud in music, Netflix in audiovisual streaming (Bygstad and Aanby 2010), Booking in travel services, Uber in transportation and many others. Even though these services focus on the materialistic perspective of the business, which is making money, they still need to improve within a better innovated infrastructure. This stands for the infrastructure of broadband connections in the MENA region which is underdeveloped in some of its countries. Broadband internet connections are seen as the catalysts of economies across the world, just like how the steam engine was the motivator of the industrial revolution. So broadband Internet is seen as an essential tool in the social development process of societies. Connectivity gaps could be solved within poor countries specifically if these gaps occurred between urban and rural areas, if the Internet infrastructures were enhanced and empowered (Gelvanovska et al. 2014: 219).

Many jobs had been influenced by the rise of technology in all societal institutions whether charitable, commercial or organizations. In the tech industry, the need of constant trainings and courses to enhance digital skills is inevitable. Digital skills are defined as the ability of any individual to use software or hardware personal computers. Either these skills were basic, intermediate or advance, they're still needed by everyone anywhere. Developing countries are in constant need of digital skills to improve businesses and their employees'

potentials, being a gateway to solve the problem of unemployment as it creates new job opportunities (Anderson, 2008)

A research paper discovered seven skills used in the 21<sup>st</sup> century which are: critical thinking, technical skills, communication skills, creativity, collaboration, problem-solving, and information management (European Commission, 2001). They all have a common link which is a digital factor included, in addition to information navigation and content creation which makes using technologies more beneficial.

The European Commission's framework of digital competencies (DigComp) identifies problem-solving, information, safety, collaboration and communication as the digital literacy's five main pillars. Another digital skills framework was conceptualized by Van Deursen et al. (2016) which consists of four skills related to the ICT user. The framework was initially created for the Internet; however it covers now more ICT applications such as mobile phones, tablets and many other interactive technologies (Van Dijk & Van Deursen, 2014). The below figure explains the digital skills with a combined conceptualizations of Van Deursen and DigComp.



Source: Adapted from Van Deursen et al., 2017.

**Fig. (5) Framework of the four main digital skills in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and their societal role**

The combined framework shows that information management skills and operational skills are the core foundations to both creative and social skills, leading to problems skills and safety skills (Web 2.0 related), which thereby are key to a comprehensive use of ICTs.

## **6. Definition of Social Network Sites**

Social media can be defined as a set of applications existing throughout the Internet, building on Web 2.0 technological foundations which allows the user generated content (UGC) creation (O'Reilly, 2007) such as social network sites, virtual communities, blogs, forums, readers' comments on online newspaper, and media files shared on audiovisual sites (Salcudean & Muresan, 2016). Web 2.0 is a digital destination whereas content and applications are changed by the users in a collaborative and involving way (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Social media platforms have different business models and characteristics; however, they all unite upon the notion of user-generated content which can be based on posts, photos, messages and videos. Another term sometimes emerge called computer-mediated communication which means any type of communication existing on technological tools such as computers, smartphones and tablets (Haraker, 2010).

User-generated content has differences compared to traditional media, as nowadays users became very conscious in consuming the media, when they actively select information with various formats which is relevant to their beliefs in a short period of time, additionally any user can produce and publish news materials via social network sites (OECD, 2007). Beside the flexibility in the creation, editing and sharing of media content, "democratization of knowledge" is an added social media feature that users get use of (Ballard, 2011), to share ideas, empowering them to escape governmental control of information dissemination (Ding & Zhang, 2010). A question then arises: Does the usage of social media platforms affect the usage of media utilities?

Social media had attracted millions of users, since their introduction in 1997, encompassing online platforms in their everyday lives (Boyd & Ellison, 2008). A definition of social network sites was proposed by Ellison (2007):

**“Web-based services that allow individuals to (1) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, (2) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and (3) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system” (p. 211).**

Since this early definition had been posted, there were several waves of evolutions, changing the knowledge about social network sites. The definition was remodified by Ellison and boyd (2013), taking into consideration the technological alterations within the Web 2.0 context. Based on Ellison and boyd (2013), the preliminary elements of social media which were the profile, users lists and sharing features, had all changed. They believe that the act of sharing contacts is not a powerful criterion to differentiate between social network sites and other virtual websites such as gaming sites, audiovisual sharing sites and other navigation sites (Ellison & boyd, 2013). New functions such as the newsfeed on Facebook generates a better user experience and its being considered as a salient factor in social network sites.

To sum it up, social media are now becoming more media focused rather than profiling focused. Reaching the latest definition of Ellison and boyd (2013) of social network sites as the new amends were added, as social network sites are subsets of social media:

**“A social network site is a networked communication platform in which participants 1) have uniquely identifiable profiles that consist of user-supplied content, content provided by other users, and/or system-level date; 2) can publicly articulate connections that can be viewed and traversed by others; and 3) can consume, produce, and/or interact with**

**streams of user-generated content provided by their connections on the site” (p. 158).**

Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) categorized platforms of social media based on their self-disclosure (how much personal information are revealed) as well as their richness (amount of shared information in a specific time). Current social network sites have more benefits than the traditional ones, one of these benefits is the ability to share photos or videos rather than textual ones (Mull & Lee, 2014). Instagram, for example, is one of the photos-sharing applications whereas users can shoot videos or photos and re-post them on other applications such as Facebook or Twitter.

Referring to a varied range of services and sites, terms like “social networking sites”, “online social networks” or only “social networks” had been interchangeably used (Ellison & boyd, 2013). The distinctive asset that differentiates social network sites (SNSs) and makes them unique, is that they leave space for the audience to spread out their content and make them visible to others. Regardless of friend lists, comments or profile creation, SNSs have various characteristics. Some of them allows blogging, sending instant messaging, videos and photos-sharing, all connected through mobile phones (Boyd & Ellison, 2007).

Going back to the history of SNSs, the first identifiable social network site was initiated in 1997, called SixDegrees.com. This website encouraged users to create profiles with friends’ list, then look for other lists by the year 1998. There were other websites at that time with similar features such as classmates.com which enabled students to socialize with their colleagues and classmates, but the users were not able to create profiles or add up lists of friends for my successive years. In contrary, SixDegrees was the first website to add up all these features in the same website. The main promotion aspect that the website endorsed, was the capability to sending multiple messages to others. Despite this familiarity and fan base,

the website failed in becoming a financially sustainable business by the year 2000 and was closed after. Early adopters complained that most of the friends were not online due to the newness of the Internet as a medium, also limited activities were available after basically accepting a friend request, meeting new strangers was not a motive to intrigue them to continue using the website (Boyd & Ellison, 2007).

Virtual community sites such forums are different than the social network sites nowadays, in many aspects: 1) users are interactive within media content (Clever et al. 2008), 2) communication lists had already been established offline first before being transferred to the online world (Williams, 2006), 3) applications' functions improve the communication process such as sharing comments on Facebook statuses (Clever, Kirchner, Schray & Schulte, 2008). Thereby to unleash creativity and newness, an updated online canvas is offered through social network sites.

As social media had been an efficient tool for social conscience and communication, they had developed new routes to provide social knowledge via peer contacts, acting as an vital role in individuals' beliefs and behaviors. Businesses and social lives were affected once the social media emerged in the societies (Moody, 2010). Understanding the reasons of users' attraction towards social media is inevitable, since research shows the popularity of social media (Quan-Hasse et al., 2002).

The rise of social network sites reflected on the online community's organization (Ellison, 2007). Before the presence of social media, online communities were centralized around the interests of users, but nowadays, social media users are at the core of their very own communities. This notion gathers up users with additional gratifications, attracting active daily figures of individuals to consume, return or even become addicted to the

platforms of social media. A question arises here: what are the potential acquired negative gratifications of consuming media?

In platforms such as LinkedIn or Facebook, people create profiles to keep in touch with their list of connections or be updated with the latest viral information (Pew Internet, 2011; Ellison, Steinfield, & Lampe, 2007). By hitting some simple clicks using the mouse or the keyboard, individuals can apply for jobs, buy online or even advocate for societal cases. Even political figures such as Barack Obama, the former president of the United States, used social media to promote for his presidential election campaign in 2008, being a tool that helped him ace his victory (Carr, 2008).

It's not astonishing that versatile industries involve social media in their businesses to reach millions of consumers across the world, due to their expanded reach (Mull & Lee, 2014). Industries interact with the consumers to know their feedback about their services or promote for new available products. Not only businesses, but the consumers themselves can communicate together in groups related to brands to share information about the products reaching more people than just simply the basic word-of-mouth (Libai et al., 2010).

## **7. Examples of Social Network Sites**

From the renowned social media platforms nowadays are Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, and Instagram.

### **7.1 Facebook**

It's very important to identify the history of Facebook and how exactly the application works. The CEO and founder of Facebook is Mark Zuckerberg. Way before creating Facebook, he developed a website named "Coursematch" to initiate a virtual community between Harvard students and alumni in the same academic track. After a short time, he



developed “Facemash”, a website that allows students to rate each other based on their attractiveness and physical beauty. Then eventually, he formed the current Facebook website in February 2004 in collaboration with his Harvard classmate Eduardo Saverin, but it was previously named as ‘The Facebook’ (Phillips, 2007). ‘The core mission of Facebook is giving people the power to make the world connected and closer’, as per Facebook’s mission statement in 2014 (Facebook, 2014). The originality of Zuckerberg’s idea of creating Facebook was threatened by several students as they claimed that the idea was theirs, however the case was dismissed by the court and Zuckerberg remained in charge of Facebook (Carlson, 2010).

While being an on-the spot success in Harvard because 1,200 students signed up on the website only 24 hours after its launch. Then half of the students were registered by the end of the same month. The next step was spreading the new Facebook website, through promoting it in universities across the U.S and the rest of the world, which Zuckerberg succeeded in doing so (Phillips, 2007). Only after five years since its developing, Facebook management claimed that the website contained 300 million users from all countries around the world (Johnson, 2009). Although these numbers seemed outstanding at that time, Zukerberg promised that numbers will even grow bigger than this as he wants to connect literally everyone. On February 2012, Facebook had an initial public offering which raised more than \$16 billion the largest amount in the history of companies (Jon, 2012). By the second quarter in 2019, the total number of users had peaked to 2.41 billion monthly active users globally (Statista, 2019). Obviously, these numbers are not compared to the gained 300 million users when they first started.

The company’s website in 2014 announced as well that 82.2% of its users are from outside Canada and the United States, which means Facebook’s reach is going internationally being fixed in the users’ daily lives. The quick adaptation to the new smartphone technology

could be the reason behind the application's success. "Majority of the users use Facebook through its mobile platform" (Goggin, 2014, p. 1069). While in August 2019, the top countries using Facebook are India with 270 million users, when the U.S came in second rank, followed by Indonesia, Brazil, Mexico, Philippines, Vietnam, Thailand, Egypt and Turkey. And as of January 2019, 96% of Facebook's active users were reported to have accessed the platform via smartphones or tablets (Statista, 2019). Since Egypt is on the top 10 list, 24 million users check the platform daily, with 37 million people accessing it via mobile phones, upholding the biggest national market for Facebook in the MENA region (MENAFN, 2018).

Facebook is very easy in its usage. The first thing you need to do on the website is create an account on Facebook.com; you can login by mobile number or email and password. When you register through the application you can then add your friends either the ones you already know or even people whom you don't know at all. The homepage contains the photos and updates from people in your friends' list. When the timeline option was created in 2011, people were able to share the details of their lives through posting videos, statuses, and photos into one on-going newsfeed as seen in fig. (6). These basic steps make it easier to allow people to check their newsfeed to learn about what's going on in the world (Facebook, 2014).



**Fig. (6) Newsfeed Interface of Facebook on Laptops and Smartphones**

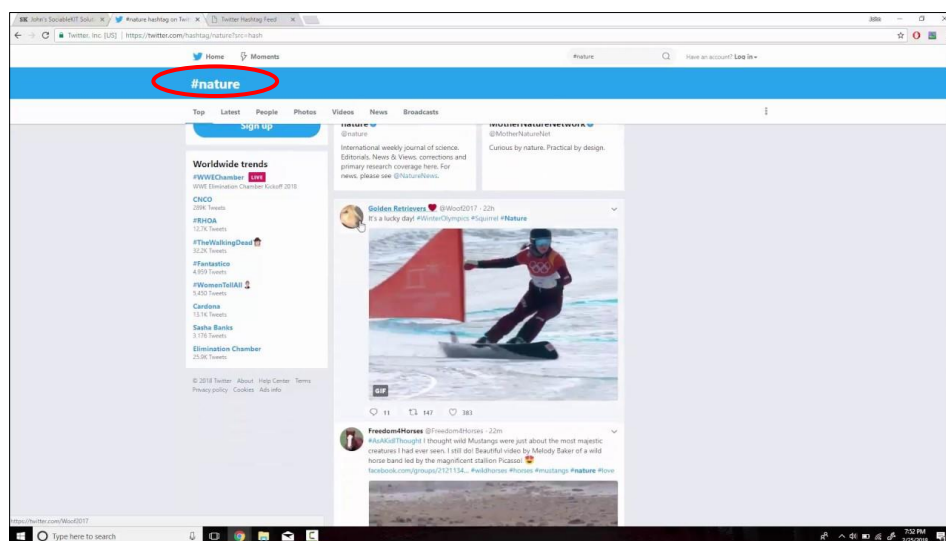
The additional messaging application, which is owned by Facebook, went under a wave of criticism, claiming that its being forced on the users to download with the main Facebook application. Additionally, the privacy terms in the Messenger application claims Facebook's ability to record audio, call numbers or take photos and videos any time from any individual's account (Dewey, 2014). Both the Messenger the Facebook application itself can gather any needed data from individuals and sell it to other companies either through customizing advertising based on age, gender, personal preferences and many other or they directly sell the data for other companies for money (Facebook, 2014).

## **7.2 Twitter**

Twitter is an online social network site created in July 2006 by four main contributors: Noah Glass, Evan Williams, Jack Dorsey and Biz Stone. It is used as a microblogging service whereas users have the chance to post tweets with a maximum length of 140 characters (Twitter Statistics, 2014). Users can read tweets from the Twitter website through using PCs and laptops or they can read them via mobile smartphones (Twitter, 2014). As one of the top 10 most visited social media websites, more than 500 million tweets are being sent daily as well as the application being used daily by at least 284 million monthly active users (Twitter Statistics, 2014; Twitter, 2014). Every couple of days, there are at least one billion tweets shared about all possible trending topics of celebrities, world events, political leaders, news and entertainment outlets alongside the regular personal topics of users (Twitter, 2014). Twitter is very popular amongst teenagers aged from 18 to 29 just as the rest of applications, however, it has a higher adoption rate other than Instagram in specific (User Demographic Highlights, 2014).

The power of Twitter lies in the users' ability to effectively and dynamically communicate with others around the world, allowing them to discover what's happening

globally. This supports the notion of “society and mass media constantly influence each other”, as suggested by McQuail’s (2010). Twitter is in its fashionable condition due to its functionality as a marketing tool as well as a source to gather news (Ahmad, 2010). It is somehow complicated to understand the uses and gratifications of this website due to its multiple ways of use. However, it’s being very useful in advocating for national cases beside the actions of activism more than any other social media network. The presence of #hashtags us available through keyword searches which makes reading tweets about the same topic much easier even if those who shared them are not following each other (Comunello & Anzera, 2012).



**Fig. (7) Using Hashtags to Search for Same Topics on Twitter**

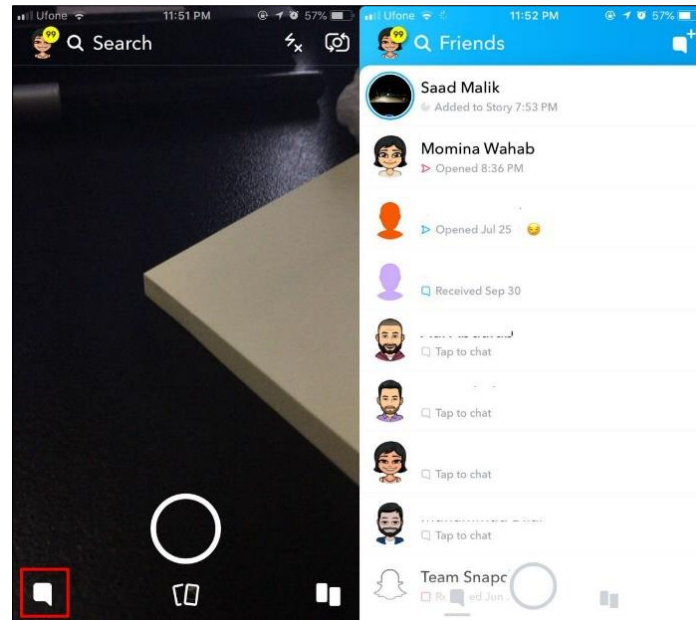
### 7.3 Snapchat

Snapchat is an application that allows users to share temporary audiovisual content, disappearing after limited seconds (1-10 seconds) as they’re being opened by the users to offer more privacy, encouraging people to share daily lives updates on a regular basis and explore news or talk to friends over posted temporary stories. This app was released in 2011 with its headquarters in California, USA, being created by Bobby Murphy, Reggie Brown

and Evan Spiegel from the University of Stanford. From 2011 reaching 2014, the value of Snapchat was \$10 billion, possessing the highest market share in between social media applications (Rusli & MacMillan, 2014). Snapchat was created during one of the product design classes in Stanford by Spiegel. “Picaboo” was the first name of the application, then being named currently as Snapchat. Murphy owned 40% of the company, while Spiegel dominated the rest of company’s share (Dumenco, 2013). When the application became successful, Spiegel disregarded resuming his education in Stanford to pursue his career working on improving the social network site (Luckhurst, 2014).

Snapchat is free to be downloaded by anyone anytime on a smartphone. The application asks the user to login or sign up when he/she presses on the application icon. To create your account for the first time, you enter the email, birthday and password. Then a username is needed to be as a unique identity for the user on Snapchat. Eventually to make sure that the user is a real person, a verification is required using a code sent to the mobile, but this step could be skipped. Now the application is open to send ‘snaps’ to friends and family, with a tutorial on how to take your first snap and share it with others. A cautious privacy reminder pops on the screen claiming the ability of any user to save your snaps which might put your security and life details in jeopardy (Snapchat, 2019).

New concepts were raised about the functionality of Snapchat which enabled the app to stand out within their competitors. Self-destructing messages are inserted to allow friends within the list to communicate privately and freely, knowing that these texts would be later deleted as in fig. (8). A collection of snapchat stories can throughout 24 hours be displayed over ‘my story’ before being deleted, thus uses continuously update their activities within their circle. The feature of ‘my story’ is similar to the newsfeed of Twitter or Facebook, leveraging the social media communication forms by being a huge hit (Stampler, 2014).



**Fig. (8) Sending Temporary Snaps to Friends List on Snapchat**

A similar feature is ‘our story’, but it’s different as users -in the same location- can add their photos or videos to be posted in public where everyone can see, if users wanted to have more public exposure and reach (Stampler, 2014). Even if you did not go to a specific event, you can still see what’s going on from the ‘our story’ where people keep posting updates. Our story empowers the community not only the personal experiences of individuals, whereas revolutions, activism and any sort of societal events are uploaded up there, raising awareness about these topics at the time when the traditional media actually does not cover these events.

Filters are an additional benefit in the application, which is sometimes related to your location. For example, if someone is present in Disneyland and takes a snap picture, filters about California or Disneyland appears. Allowing users to be more creative while using Snapchat in adaption to the surroundings.

Due to the upscaling growth of Snapchat’s fame, by 2013 for the first time, the Pew Research started to track the number of users, whereas Snapchat is being used by 9% of cell phone owners globally (Duggan, 2013). While in 2015, it was reported that an increase of

users' percentage reached 17% of Snapchat's presence on the smartphones (Duggan, 2015). From 2012 to early 2014, active users grew from 10 to 70 million users, while in 2015, the number reached to 100 million users, according to the Wall Street Journal (Macmillan & Rusli, 2014). Four years later as of the second quarter in 2019, Snapchat had 203 million daily active users worldwide, in comparison to the same quarter in 2018 which reached 188 million daily active users globally (Statista, 2019).

In 2018, there were about 12 million active users daily in the Middle East, specifically Gulf countries such as Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (George, 2018), which accounts an estimate of 9.4 million users out of its total population of 32 million people according to a report shared by Forbes Middle East. Snapchat is not only used for individuals; it's used by entertainment industries in the MENA region. Snapchat announced in November 2018, that there are more than 30 shows from 20 popular MENA entertainment outlets being launched on the network. These shows' duration are for 5 minutes with only 10 seconds available before its story can be swiped on the newsfeed (George, 2018).

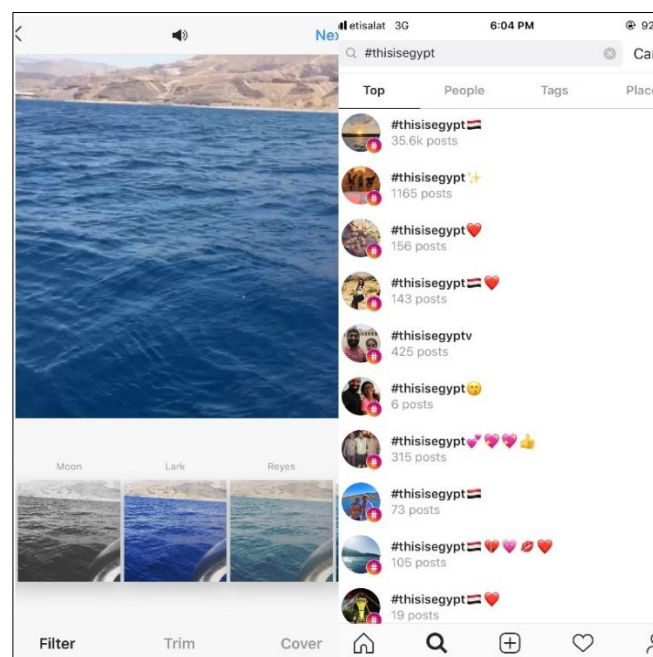


**Fig. (9) MENA shows on Snapchat**

Content had been adjusted to fit the standard vertical screen of the smartphone. Such audiovisual content had a narrative style supported by motion graphics features, quick cuts or split screens all inspired by how users of Snapchat communicate accordingly (Campaign Middle East, 2018).

## 7.4 Instagram

Launched by Mike Krieger and Kevin Systrom in 2010, Instagram is a social network site which allows users to share video or photos on the application and externally via other networks (Sengupta et. al, 2012). The application then was sold to Facebook in 2012, for \$1 billion. At the time of this acquisition, Instagram had accessed 30 million accounts across the world (Tsotsis, 2012), and then reaching 100 million active users after less than a year (Grandoni, 2013), increasing by 70%, while in 2013, the company reached 150 million monthly active users (Hernandez, 2013). The main use of Instagram is using hashtags (#) to share audiovisual posts. As in fig. (10), users can edit the photos adding filters or adjusting the resolution, colors, contrast, brightness... etc., before being posted.



**Fig. (10) Editing and sharing content via Instagram**



The application is very famous within the younger generations from 18- to 29-year-old (User Demographic Highlights, 2014). In 2014, Instagram reached around 300 million active users (Tweedie, 2014), while reaching more than 600 million active users in 2015 (Wagner, 2017). On a daily average in 2015, 40 billion photos were uploaded on the app. As of the MENA region during 2017, there were 63 million Instagram users, representing 10% of the total platform users globally. According to a research on the media habits of Arab Nationals conducted by Northwestern University in Qatar, the platform's consumption by the MENA users had impressively grown from 7% in 2013 to 42% in 2017. Additionally, the platform is widely preferred by young citizens in the region as their daily consumption time reaches 20% compared to other social network sites, based on the annual Arab Youth Survey (Radcliffe, 2018).

## **8. Demographic Variables Associated with Social Media Use**

### **8.1 Age**

Age plays a very important role in understanding the individual differences in media use (Dimmick, McCain, & Bolton, 1979). It was stated in previous research that age is directly related to more intense media use specifically the recently launched social network sites (Barker, 2012). Based on the Pew Research Center, 90% of young adults aged between 18 to 29, use social media globally (Perrin, 2015). The high usage level is reported from college students, whereas 80% use Twitter, 73% use Instagram, and 95% use Facebook (Social Media Statistics, 2014). Additionally, young adults consume social network sites for diverse benefits compared to other older adults (Pfeil et al., 2009). They call college students who are aged 18 to 24 years as in the age of “young adulthood or “late adolescence”. Moreover, this period is sometimes called the “emerging adulthood”, whereas young generations face adolescence problems in work, love issues, or general issues about the

world, while they try to solve them as grownup adults (Arnett, 2000). That's why younger generations face high pressures from the society when they explore their identities or who they really are.

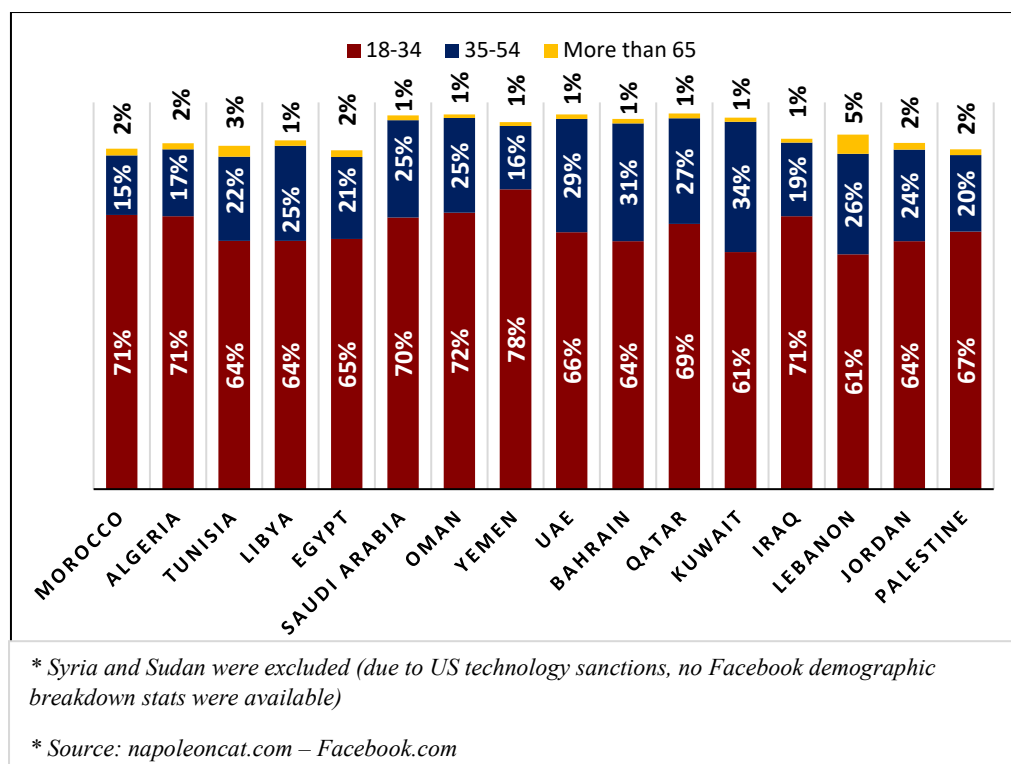
Self-disclosure with peers is one of the pressuring challenges in the emerging adulthood phase (Pempek et al., 2009). Also, interactions through social network sites may add insecurities to adults of this age such as the urging need to create friends and being informed with feedback from the surrounding circles. Meanwhile, the excessive consumption of social media may risk youngsters to be in a state of addiction.

The impact of Internet on different generations was characterized in the book of "Grown up Digital: How the Net Generation is Changing Your World", written by Tapscott. The book mentioned three different generations as the following: Baby Boomers, Baby Bust and Net Generation. Firstly, those who were born in 1946 till 1964, during the end of World War II, are called Baby Boomers. While those who were born after the war between 1965 and 1976 are called Baby Bust (Leung, 2013). Eventually, "Net Generation" was the term given to those who were born during 1977 till 1997 (Tapscott, 2009), meaning those aged between 22 and 42 years old in 2019. Millennials can be a synonym term for Net Generation both used reciprocally to represent the same age group. However, differences occur between Baby Boomers and Millennials in matters related to "family values, studying, personal preferences in music, fashion and others" (Leung, 2013, p. 999; Djamasbi, Siegel & Tullis, 2010).

Social media is embedded in the cultural patterns of the digital generation, of which they adapt to the society entirely differently than their parents (Livingstone, 2002). Having more refined digital skills in the 21<sup>st</sup> century specifically hardware-related skills, enable them to communicate better on social media platforms that are trendy such as Snapchat. Being constantly bombarded by internet content from versatile sources, helped Millennials in

digesting the digital economy (Leung, 2013). The reason of their ability to use social media platforms easily, is that they were born in the era these networks emerged, being their voice, social networks sites are vital tools that makes it easier for this generation to openly share their opinions about daily encounters either in politics, entertainment, culture, or even their own personal topics.

In the MENA region, young users aged from 18-34 years old contribute to an average of 70% of Facebook users in the area, which reflects a minor increase of users in this age segment comparing to the previous 30 years since 2011. In 2018, the Facebook users' dominating age bracket in all MENA countries was the bracket of 18-34 years old, with Yemen contributing with the highest percentage of 78%. Then the age bracket of 35 to 54 came in second with an average of 25% of Facebook users aged from 18 to 34 years old. While those who aged more than 65 years old contributed to an average of 1% only.



**Fig. (11) Age Breakdown of Facebook Users in the Arab Region (2018)**

In Saudi Arabia, as an example of one Middle Eastern country, within 10,000 social media users, it had 91.7% of the citizens use social network sites, based on a recent survey conducted by the Saudi Communications and Information Technology Commission (CITC). 98.7% of the sample was aged from 20-24 years and were the most active age segment, then comes the age segment of 30-34 years with active percentage of 97.4% (Nugali, 2019).

## **8.2 Gender**

Scholars discovered significant gender variances in consuming social media. In the beginning, research indicated that the gender using the Internet in 1994, was almost 95% of males (Pitkow & Recker, 1994). Weiser (2000) stated that the Internet was created by men for men. While based on the Social Role Theory, females tend to initiate social bonds face-to-face between each other. Thus, using text-based communication tools was more challenging than using traditional tools such as telephones which were way efficient in satisfying the women's constant need of mutual communication (Kimbrough et al., 2013).

The Internet's rate of usage increased by the year of 2000, since both men and women became interested in using it. Past research indicated that both genders use the Internet for different activities and functionalities (Kimbrough et al., 2013). Males, for example, use the Internet to search for jobs, watch sports, play games or read politics (Kimbrough et al., 2013, p. 896; Weiser, 2000, 2001). In contrary, women use the Internet to achieve interpersonal activities such as chatting through emails (Weiser, 2000, 2001).

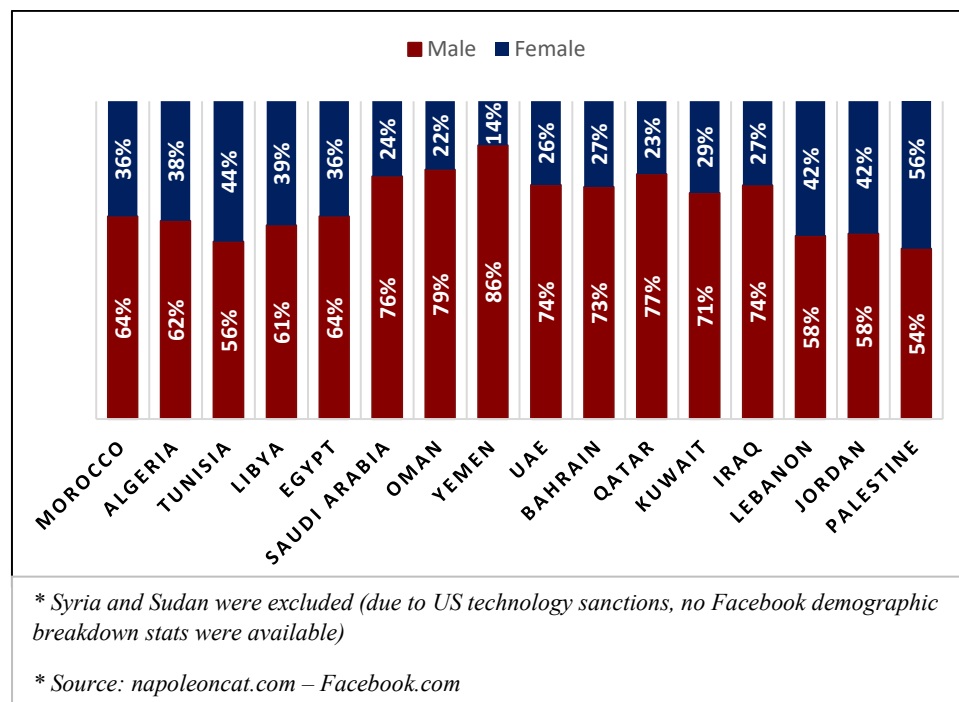
Gender differences is more obvious during using social network sites in specific rather than the Internet generally. Females attempt to use social media frequently more than males (Thompson & Loughheed, 2012). Females' interpersonal skills began to enhance right after the introduction of social media into the digital world. It was shown by prior research

that they use social network platforms to keep and develop their existing connections and relationships (Fallows, 2005; Muscanell & Guadagno, 2012). Additionally, while using the platforms, females tend to engage in family activities, and maintenance of relationships to highlight the notion of self-presentation (McAndrew & Jeong, 2012; Muscanell & Guadagno, 2012; Tifferet & Vilnai Yavetz, 2014). On the other side, males used social media to expand their network rather than their maintenance (Fallows, 2005; Muscanell & Guadagno, 2012). For instance, they use the online applications for dating, searching for new events to participate in and to discover new people doing interesting activities or experiences (Raacke & Bonds-Raacke, 2008), as all these functionalities would convey their social status (Tifferet & Vilnai Yavetz, 2014).

Focusing on a certain platform such as Facebook, scholars found out that females tend to use it more than males. Women spend more time in comparison to men, when using Facebook, as they have bigger networks and initiate interesting topics every now and then, which might turn on them and flip the table leading to gossiping on their own selves (McAndrew, 2008). Not only females share topics online, but they also tend to experience higher concerns over privacy than males if they shared personal information such as mobile phones or the links of their social media profiles (Lewis et al., 2008; Thelwall, 2008).

During the first quarter of 2011, an increasing percentage of females in the MENA region used Facebook reaching 33.5%, based on a gender breakdown for the Facebook platform. However, this number was still low compared to the global trend of females using Facebook globally which reached 61% of the platform's users. While in 2018 according to fig. (12), males are dominating Facebook in all MENA countries with an average of 75% of the platform's users, while females represent an average of 32% of Facebook users in the MENA region with Palestine being the on the top of the list when it comes to female usage of

Facebook, however, the country is almost gender balanced. The percentage of females in the MENA region using Facebook in 2018 had slightly decreased in comparison to 2011, 7 years apart, but the numbers are relatively close.



**Fig. (12) Gender Breakdown of Facebook Users in the Arab countries (2018)**

Another study created in Saudi Arabia indicated that in 2018, 93.2% of social media usage was given to males. The reason behind this is that the majority of users in Twitter, Facebook and Instagram was males, but only Snapchat was used more by females. While a second independent nation-based poll created showed that as 23 million people in Saudi Arabia are social media surfers, men were most dominant in Twitter with 71% to 29% women, Facebook with 78% to 22% women, and Instagram was used by 63% of men to 37% females (Nugali, 2019).

Those usage patterns show differences in gender consumption to online content. That's necessary in analyzing the uses and gratifications of social media, as it can shed light on similarities and differences in females and males.

### **8.3 Marital Status**

A research study was conducted by Business week on 13.2 million people to know their social media usage pattern. Results showed that married women are massively using social network sites while married men join in lesser rates. These rates differ between platforms and the others. Furthermore, the study indicated that single men use social media to find partners, when they get married, they use it less as their main goal had already been satisfied, seeing less value in them (Hoffman, 2008). Single people tend to use social media platforms more than those who are in a relationship for the upcoming motives: to reconnect with connections they lost a long time ago, make new friendships with strange people, keep in touch with the people they already know within their circles as the network is very beneficial for them (Lennon et al., 2012).

### **8.4 Education**

Research conducted on the relationship between educational level and computer usage is scarce. Education level is usually being considered by scholars as a less important variable to be studied independently, and not being tackled as one of the main constructs (e.g. Igbaria *et al.*, 1995). In a study carried out by Igbaria (1993), he found out that educational level is related to computer anxiety, which is the individual's fear of using computers for the fear of not having the sufficient digital skills. People had less computer anxiety if they were highly educated, with positive perceived usefulness. Such usefulness influenced users' acceptance to use digital appliances affecting their behavioral intents. Summing it all up, high educational level means high tendency towards the notion of usage generally, and specifically means a greater familiarity with computers and gadgets, thus, more social media consumption (Brancheau & Wetherbe, 1990).

## 8.5 Occupational Status

Digital literacy is being connected to the living earning, the more employees know how to use the digital devices and their applications, the higher their income (Anderson, 2008). There are several research papers that proof the notion of better technical equipment is being used by people with higher status (e.g., Zillien, 2006), these people with higher occupational status, also have better skills of online surfing through the Internet (Mossberger, Tolbert & Stansbury, 2003)— and the higher the internet usage, the higher the economic returns on these individuals. If someone for instance had an advanced computer device with a fast speed Internet connection, they would be more interested to surf the Internet for any purpose rather than those who had slow broadband who would not bare the bumpy speed to look for something online.

It was stated by DiMaggio and colleagues (2004) that Internet usage is linked to the individuals' digital skills and the digital device itself. Additionally, Van Dijk (2005) indicated that materialistic resources are very important after an Internet connection is maintained. As a reaffirmation, the Internet resources' power remains restricted to those individuals using them (Ryder & Wilson, 1996). People's online actions could be also inhibited if they had a lack of enough know-hows of the basic Internet tools. In contrary online content creation is directly dependent on socioeconomic status (Hargittai & Walejko, 2008).

Those who possess high incomes adopt the Internet more, however, they spend less time online, and vice versa is adopted. Two main reasons are behind this: 1) low-income people have more free time, putting high costs on luxurious activities due to low wages, and 2) low-income people see the Internet as of a valuable asset to them, being an important source of information or data gathering (Goldfarb & Prince, 2008).



## 8.6 Urban Vs. Rural

The use of information technologies differs from rural and urban residents, despite the numerous benefits that are offered to rural residents who are placed in remote regions. Limitations of Internet speed occur more in rural areas, even with the presence of 1996's Telecommunications Act that states provisions of universal access (Hindman, 2000). Satellites systems' services don't actually make the shortage of technological infrastructure a big problem to get access to rural areas, (Richardson, 1996), yet, due to the presence of traditional values and beliefs, rural citizens don't adapt to innovations that much, leading to the resistance of cultural and societal ideas proposed to the rural community.

However with the constant developments of Information and communication technology (ICT) in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, a strong potential to foster social innovation occurs in rural areas through allowing interactive communication and networking, which are not restricted by space and time, two characteristics previously linked to traditional networking (Bock, 2016). ICT had been spreading rapidly, changing the scopes of information-sharing and communication globally. On a macro dimension, online access to information had been provided to a growing number of rural residents due to the prevalent adoption of digital portable devices, such as smartphones, in addition to wireless and cable connections (Onitsuka, 2019). ICT is thought to be vital to current rural developments, as it augments the imminent sustainability of rural communities (Bock 2016; Bosworth 2016). Rural communities are aware of ICT benefits; however, they prefer to remain in a state of conservation, leading to what is called the "digital inequality" or the "digital divide" (Salemink, 2017).

The community-level digital divide is linked to the individual level, due to the lack of motivated individuals that should call for community revival and promoting for the

importance of information-sharing within the community. This shall hinder the community's success of going digital. Moreover, remoted rural communities, which are located in peripheral areas, mostly have older generations beside much lower literacy and internet penetration rates, making it a lot harder for these communities to start using ICT voluntarily in order to share information within their networks (Blank, 2018). After going through each of the mentioned variables a question arises: Do these demographic variables affect the adoption of social media in the MENA region?

## **9. The Integration of Social Network Sites in the MENA Societies**

It had been argued by Langman (2005), that computer experts can use the Internet to create and organize a broad types of activities such as public demonstrations or products' boycotts, through using social network sites such as Instagram, Facebook or Twitter to initiate online events or gatherings that are being positioned as social or civic activism (D'Onfro, 2016). Scholars like O'Lear, (1999); Della Porta and Mosca, (2005); Langman, (2005); and Wasserman, (2007) have shed light on the importance of social media in organizing social movements, establishing a sense of community-belonging and a cultural identity within marginalized groups in the society, while linking the created social movements with others to set a global support system from various societies.

Stating some examples about social activism are HIV or AIDS disease activism and some activities of Muslim women. HIV first started to be promoted during the 1990s and 1990s, to spread out the health treatment options that were available beside the political and cultural activists who already had the disease in their bodies (Gillet, 2005). These groups lacked the authority and financial resources to publish their causes on traditional media, so the Internet was a much cheaper and more available information spreading source to mobilize people who are located specifically in developing countries. Additionally, Muslim women in

the MENA region use social media to foster all sorts of communication networks to link Muslim women of the same diasporas scattered in different countries to share their societal obstacles and their solutions, through creating aid groups and nearby support initiatives (Moghadam, 2000).

Citizens also use social media to raise awareness on issues about corruption, cities' reformations, poverty or gender equality. In some countries, renowned social network sites are not restricted, however some limitations are being imposed on applications such as Telegram. According to the freedom on the net report (2017), many users were complaining about such limitations including sharing audiovisual files. Furthermore, content that are being evaluated from the authorities as 'anti-Islamic', 'offensive' or 'illegal' were being blocked from the servers. Other online disseminations sources of news, such as the Egyptian websites of MadaMasr and Daily News Egypt are blocked where users have no access to them.

There are human catalysts that intrigue people to spread their words publicly online, these are called social actors who can be either separate individuals or organizations. They can also be journalists, opinion leaders, bloggers or any sort of activists who have a communication network with the public or private institutions. They play a vital role in criticizing those elites holding high positions in the government through being active on social media platforms, enabling them to share articles, videos or photos to highlight the events which they participate in. The success of social actors is being linked to their two-way discussions with other social actors, reflecting on the digital shared content which then mobilize the masses in street-level demonstrations across their respective countries. Social actors are not only individuals found in the political arena but they can also be non-governmental organizations (NGOs) spotted in social, environmental, human rights and women-rights arenas.

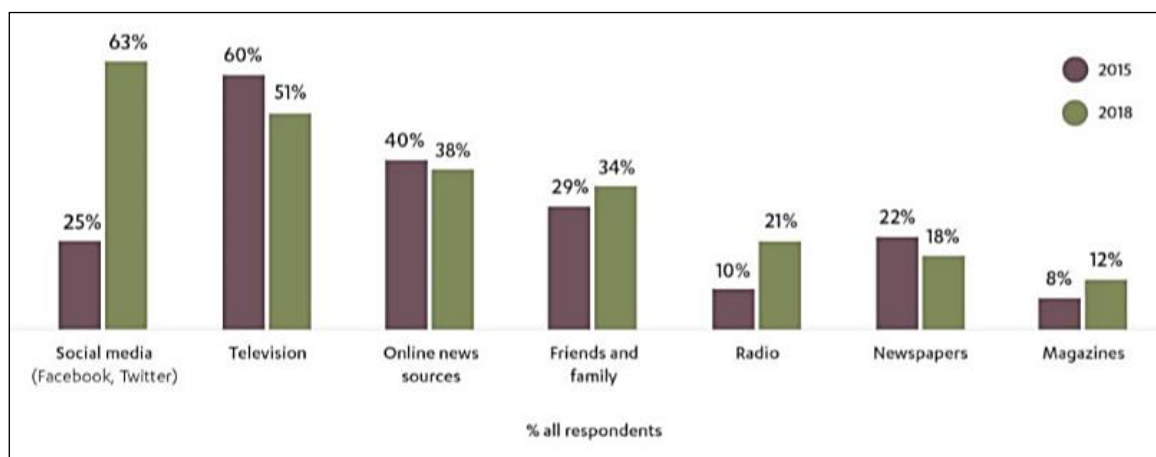
Despite both the political actors and the public figures such as presidents, military forces, parliament representatives or religious leaders have presence on traditional media, they have their input in the digital world as well, through creating their own blogs or websites and sometimes their own accounts on social network sites Stevenson and Greenberg (2000). Some of those public figures may represent weak political parties due to the absence of democracy and favoring certain political elites in the MENA countries. Political leaders utilize their power to disseminate their beliefs through their controlled national newspaper outlets and television channels that have their own agendas, acting as gatekeepers to disrupt communication discourse by filtering media content and applying restrictive actions such as shutting down the Internet in several cases.

## **10. Role of Social Media in the Rise of the Arab Spring**

Arab revolutions which happened in 2011, also known in the media as the "Arab Spring", were famous uprisings that were spread in many Arab countries, being partly promoted using several social media platforms, not only through one platform in specific (Kneissel, 2011). Due to the powerful impact of platforms like Facebook and Twitter on the MENA societies and their civil movements, it was important to analyze the uses and gratifications of social media during such democratic transitional phase. The Arab world had witnessed an increased social media engagement by citizens who independently used the Internet to plan things, discuss and work on them all together, despite the presence of vast distances between each other (Ghannam, 2011), whereas written or audiovisual communication content can be created and shared by the individuals across multiple platforms at the same time (Keser, Uzunboylu and Ozdamli, 2011, Poorkarimi and Hasani, 2012). These platforms mobilize the citizens, due to their ability to create a vibe of transparency which eventually enables activists to evaluate governments for their accountable actions (Ghannam, 2011: 4).

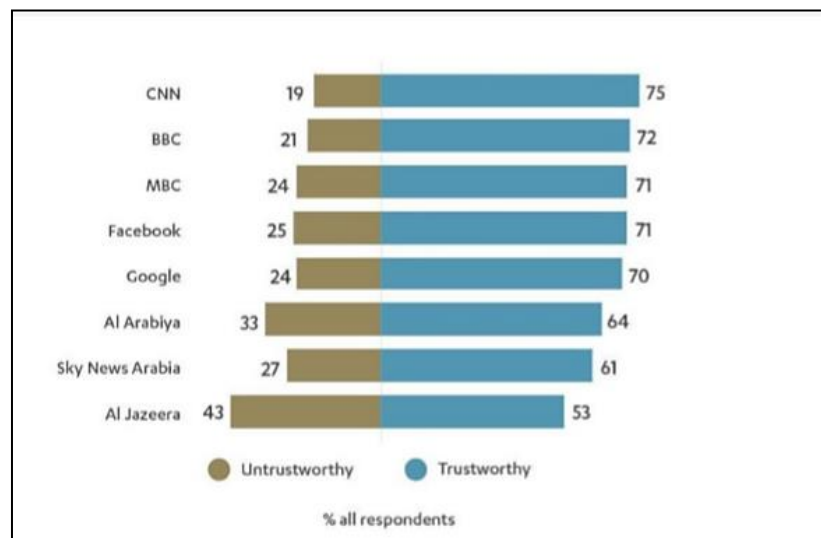
According to Caglar and Demirok (2010), although social media were used to gather up people to protest against any injustices, however, they are not the sole creators of these revolutions. Social media only plays as catalysts for the revolution to spread awareness and public opinion. In parallel, citizens in the MENA region had a pre-tendency to ask for their rights in the society (Taki & Coretti, 2013). Despite blocking the Internet and several websites in many MENA countries, young citizens were smart enough to know their way out using Virtual Private Networks (VPNs).

A survey conducted in 2018 named as the '10th Arab Youth Survey', using 3500 in-depth interviews with Arab men and women aged from 18 to 24 in 16 countries across the MENA region, revealed that Arab youth recently check out news through social media rather than television or any other traditional media outlet (Radcliffe, 2018), as almost 63% equivalent to two thirds of young Arabs, searched for news on Twitter or Facebook in 2018, compared to 2015 with only 25% of the youth using social media for news searching. In contrary, magazines held the last place in the news searching category (Arab Youth Survey, 2018).



**Fig. (13) News Sources of Arab Youth.**

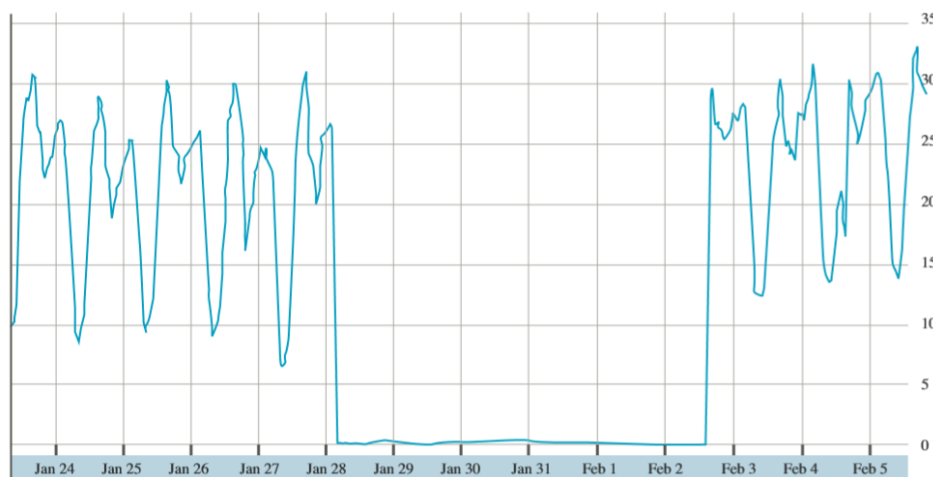
Digging deeper into news sources' trustworthiness, CNN was the most trustworthy news outlet (75%) based on what young youth reported, then followed by the BBC (72%), while MBC, a regional satellite company, was ranked third at 71%, being in a tie with Facebook despite the popularity of social media use (Arab Youth Survey, 2018).



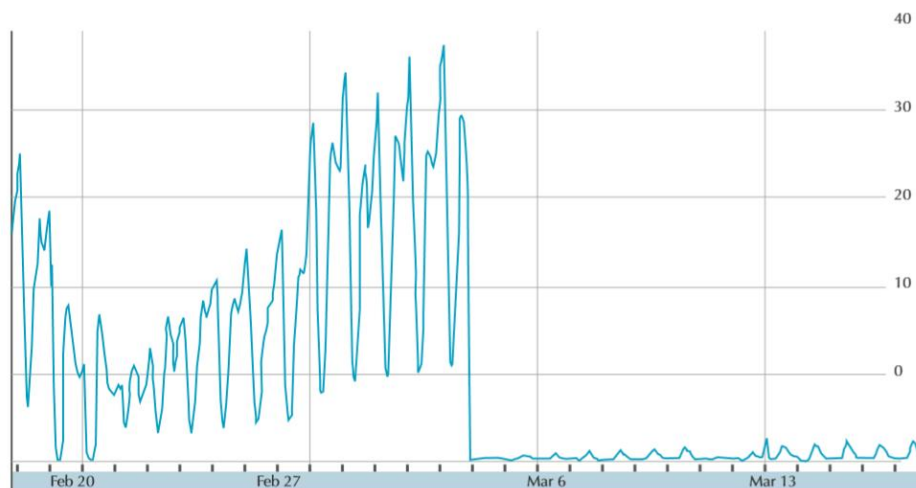
**Fig. (14) Credible News Channels in the MENA Region**

Twitter was a useful tool for political demonstrations expansions, leading to the Arab spring (Chaudhry, 2014). The outcomes of the Arab spring lead to successfully ousting Prime Minister Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, and the Egyptian ex-president Hosny Mubarak, then Yemen and Tunisia witnessed an uncertain transitional period, furthermore Syria was dragged into an internal civil war (Manfreda, 2017). Thereby, other countries in the region started to censor the Internet and their users' activities (Chaudhry, 2014). The Libyan government for instance, reduced the access to international phone calls beside the Internet due to the violent protests at that time. Also in Saudi Arabia, the monarchy issued a verdict which bans news that contradicts the Islamic law, or the news which insults religious leaders and threatens the national security (Freedom House, 2012).

During the first quarter in 2011, the below figures 16 and 17, illustrate the days of which the Internet was blocked in Egypt and Libya. In Egypt, the blackout went from January 28 to February 2, lasting for five entire days. In the intervening time, Libya experienced a reduced traffic due to limited Internet connections. (Arab Social Media Report, 2011).



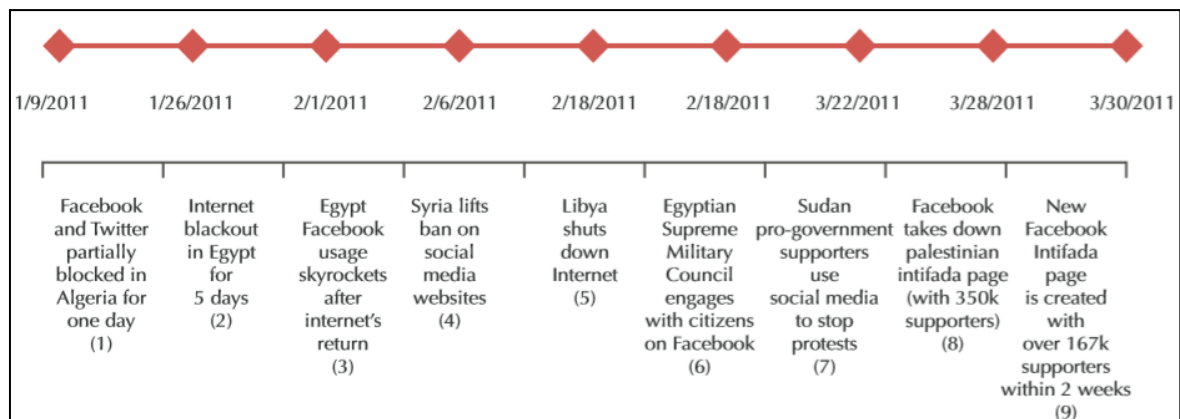
**Fig. (15) Egypt's Internet Traffic from the Jan. 24th till Feb. 5th (2011)**



**Fig. (16) Libya's Internet Traffic from Feb. 20th till March 13th (2011)**

To show the milestones of the first quarter in 2011 with the political social media use of both the citizens and their governments, figure 18 illustrates the events which happened in some countries beside the companies of social media platforms themselves. For instance,

Facebook Inc. faced a backlash in regards to how they remain politically neutral without risking the users' rights to freedom of speech when the Israeli government contended the company to take actions towards the created page of "Third Palestinian Intifada", until the page was eventually taken down in March 2011, and then by mid-April a new page was created to address the intifada updates (Arab Social Media Report, 2011).



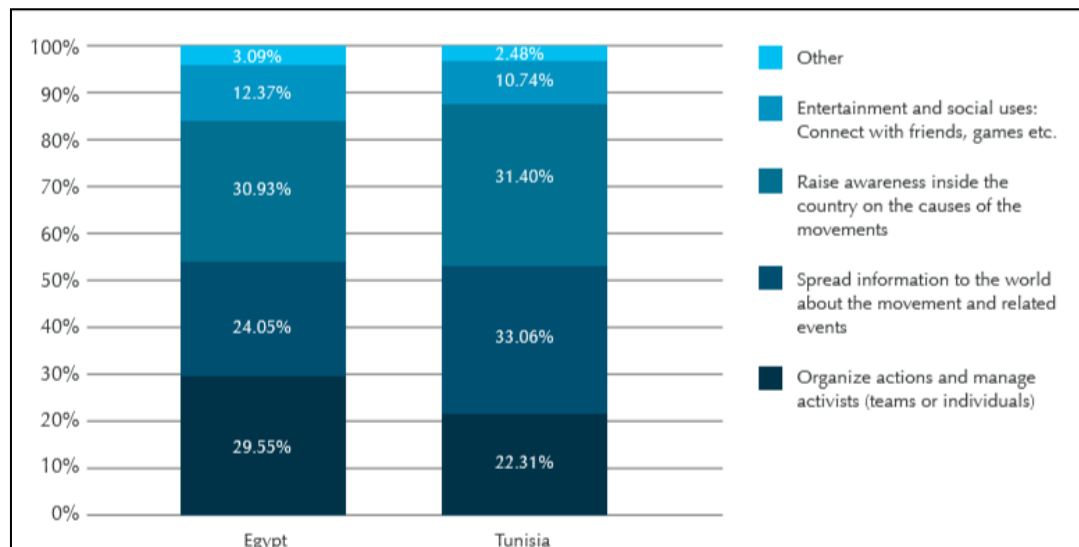
**Fig. (17) Milestones of Internet Connectivity in the Arab Spring (2011)**

## 10.1 Egypt and Tunisia

To elaborate the uses of Facebook by the Tunisian and Egyptian citizens during their revolutions, a survey was conducted by the Governance and Innovation Program at the Dubai School of Government which lasted for 3 weeks during March 2011, using three languages: Arabic, English and French. With a sample size of 126 respondents from Egypt and 105 from Tunisia, an average of 25% of users from both countries believed that Facebook was used to organize demonstrations and protests, 33% of the Tunisians believed it could be used to spread information about the movements in parallel to 24% of the Egyptians with the same opinion. In both countries, approximately 31% of users stated that the platform is used to raise awareness about the causes of these protests, while around 15% in both countries

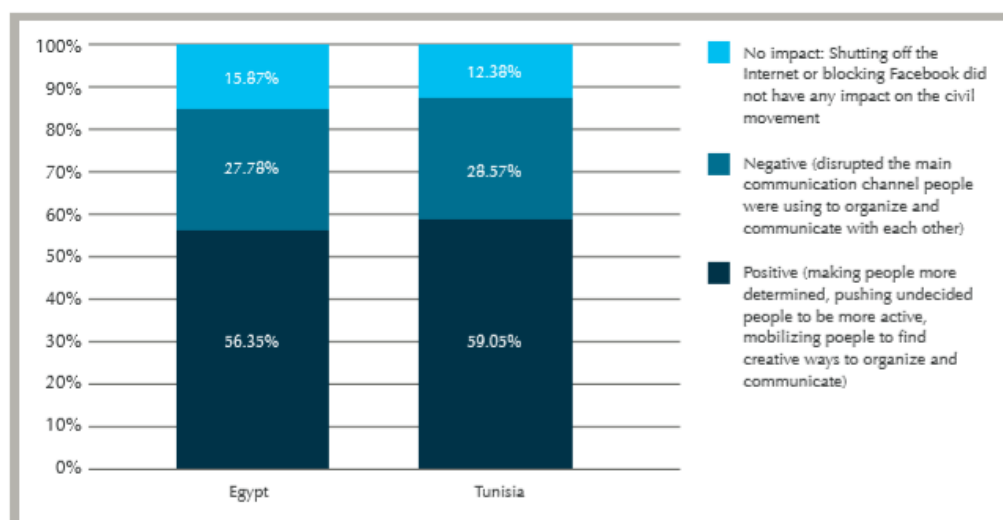


believed that Facebook might have been used for entertainment or any other social reasons (Arab Social Media Report, 2011).



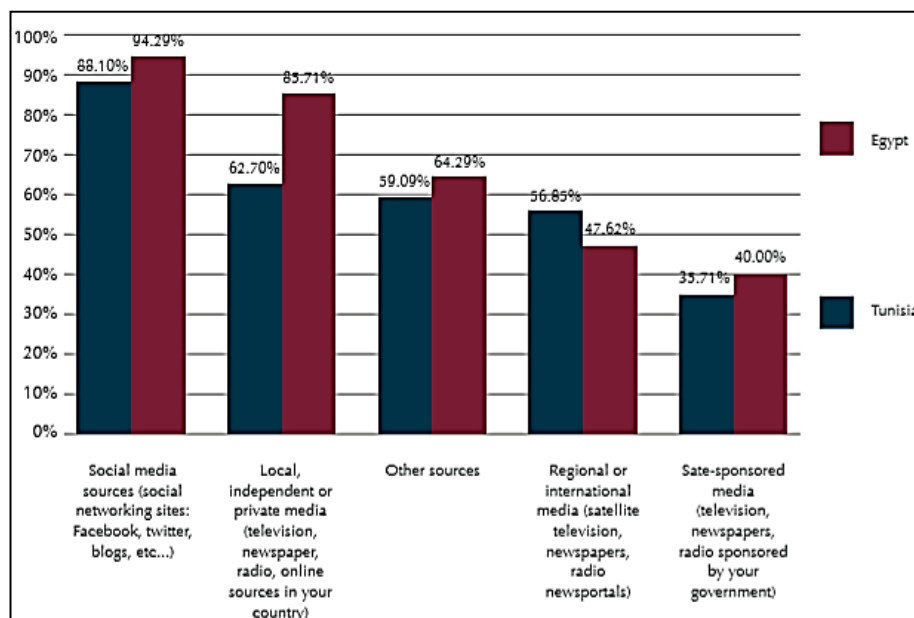
**Fig. (18) Uses of Facebook in Egypt and Tunisia During 2011**

Almost 60% of users in each country said that blocking the Internet access in their countries had a positive impact on their movements, as this action encouraged more citizens to find other creative ways to communicate and organize themselves, being more proactive then before blocking the Internet.



**Fig. (19) Impact of Civil Movements in Egypt and Tunisia on Blocking the Internet**

Due to the fact that the survey was distributed among Facebook users, it's not a surprise that Facebook was a source of information and news being ranked high in both countries with 94% in Tunisia and 88% in Egypt. Also citizens in these countries used local media as a source of information with a higher percentage in Egypt than Tunisia. However, vice versa occurred when it comes to regional media, with 56% of Tunisian citizens and 47% of Egyptian ones.



**Fig. (20) Sources of News During Civil Movements in Egypt and Tunisia (2011)**

## 10.2 Sudan

Recently in 2018, protests took place in Sudan and accordingly social network sites such as WhatsApp, Facebook and Twitter were all blocked, except for Snapchat which was still running and Sudanese citizens used them to speak up and share the dilemma they were going through (Elbagir, Altaher & McKenzie, 2018).

### 10.3 Yemen

The role of social media in Yemen as the war become intense, was increasingly important by the year 2017. During the war, Houthis detained anyone who was suspected as an opponent whether journalists, politicians or even normal citizens posting their opinion on social network sites (Inskeep, 2018). Citizens in Yemen then used Twitter to share their opinion, in a campaign named "Bring Development Back to Yemen", using the hashtag #BringDevBack. They use social network sites to talk about solutions to improve the situation in Yemen and deviate away from war.



**Fig. (21) A User's Tweet about the Campaign of 'BringDevBack' in Yemen (2018)**

Another online campaign was created using social media to boycott purchasing any Saudi products to protest against Yemeni people, since Saudi Arabia was one of the reasons behind the war in Yemen (BBC, 2019). Since Iran was also against Saudi Arabia, Press TV, an

Iranian television station, wrote about the initiative taken by people all over countries like Yemen, Tunisia, Iraq, Egypt, Palestine, and Lebanon beside other Arab countries, to gather online on social network sites such as Twitter , calling for a global movement in opposition to the Saudi-led war on Yemen (Press TV, 2018).

## **11. Research Questions**

By analyzing the literature review from previous studies, five research questions are being asked to understand the nature of MENA region's social media usage, through applying categories such as: bundle of media utilities, demographics, motivations positive and negative gratifications.

### **Media Utilities**

A past research indicated that social media create their own communicational utilities to their users. Users simply don't replace one platform for the other, because each platform has its own distinctive asset that satisfies a certain need for the user. Recently, online social media users consume a versatile range of platforms not only a single one (Quan-Haase & Young, 2010). Media utilities as coined by the author contains four main contributors: content creation, content dissemination, content engagement and content browsing. Content creation means writing status updates or posts on social media platforms or contributing any sort of content generally. Content dissemination means the way the content is being spread online either by organic reach by reaching out to your normal list of contacts or either by paid ads to reach more people outside your circle to more visible audiences.

Additionally, content engagement is participating in conversations with others through commenting on their content, providing feedback or showing appreciation by likes or shares.

While content browsing is basically about surfing social media in search for interesting news, topics or issues. A question then is addressed:

***RQ1: Does the usage of social media platforms affect the usage of media utilities?***

### **Demographic Variables**

#### **A: Age**

It was stated in previous research that age is directly related to more intense media use specifically the recently launched social network sites (Barker, 2012). Young adults consume social network sites for diverse benefits compared to other older adults (Pfeil et al., 2009).

#### **B: Gender**

Gender differentiates between the use of social media platforms in their motivations and their gratifications. For example, the number of visits on Facebook was affected by the individual's gender who clicks on their friends' profiles or photo albums as well as the frequency of status updates (Quan-Haase & Young, 2010, p. 353).

#### **C: Marital Status**

Single people tend to use social media platforms more than those who are in a relationship for the upcoming motives: to reconnect with connections they lost a long time ago, make new friendships with strange people, keep in touch with the people they already know within their circles as the network is very beneficial for them (Lennon et al., 2012).

## **D: Education**

High educational level means high tendency towards the notion of usage generally, and specifically means a greater familiarity with computers and gadgets, thus, more social media consumption (Brancheau and Wetherbe, 1990).

## **E: Occupation Status**

Those who possess high occupation status with high digital literacy adopt the Internet more, spending more time online (Goldfarb and Prince, 2008).

## **F: Urban Vs. Rural**

The use of information technologies differs from rural and urban residents, despite the numerous benefits that are offered to rural residents who are placed in remote regions. Limitations of Internet speed occur more in rural areas, even with the presence of 1996's Telecommunications Act that states provisions of universal access (Hindman, 2000). Accordingly, a question is addressed:

***RQ2: Do demographic variables affect the adoption of social media in the MENA region?"***

## **Motivations**

Motivations or motives, both used interchangeably, are general dispositions that influence people's actions taken to fulfill a need or want. When examining uses of newer media, researchers sometimes integrated interpersonal and mediated motives. In most cases, depending on the nature of the new medium, researchers have augmented more traditional uses and gratifications motives. For example, Garramone, Harris and Anderson (1986) used open-ended questions to assess gratifications sought from electronic bulletin board systems

and found gratifications such as surveillance and personal identity. Other motivations type are social interaction, passing time, information-seeking, enjoyment and social interaction (Flaherty et. al, 1998).

Concerning new media such as the Internet, scholars and researchers acknowledge the importance of Internet as a tool of marketing, yet, there's still a shortage in empirical information about the actual motivations for using different types of social network sites and their outcomes or behaviors if used across each other (Lim & Ting, 2012). Internet provides motives interpersonally or in the broad mass communication world. Several scholars differentiated between the type of motives in the mass communication field (i.e surveillance, passing time and for entertainment) and the motives acquired interpersonally (i.e social group presence and self-presentation), (Tewksbury & Althuas, 2000; Kaye & Johnson, 2002; Papacharissi & Rubin, 2000). Exploring motivations of social media users in the MENA region, a third question is addressed:

***RQ3: What are the motivations that intrigue MENA users to consume content on social media platforms?***

### **Positive and Negative Gratifications**

The Internet had offered a multitude of gratifications concentrated in one source in comparison to the past when they were scattered in numerous sources, thus the effect of internet advancing the human interactions potential is undeniable. Gratifications obtained are different, and the subsequent gap between their types can forecast either the satisfaction or dissatisfaction levels of which users meet from the utilization of a specific medium (Quan-Haase, & Young, 2010). Gratifications can be classified into two types: positive and negative. Positive gratifications are the ones that have positive effect on the behavior of social media users, while negative gratifications are the ones that negatively influence the behavior of

social media users. Examples of positive gratifications are activity and intimacy of social media relationships (Sutcliffe, 2018), entice learning opportunities to users (Manuela, 2019), active citizenship through social media platforms (Matiuta, 2015), and online efficiency whereas users can save time, effort and money by finalizing any needed activities online instead of offline tasks. Providing examples for negative gratifications are like privacy concerns linked to social media by sharing personal information of users with third parties (Brookshire, 2017), creating a feeling of addiction as stated by neuropsychologist resembling it with the addiction of drugs (Hilliard, 2019), as well as distractions from daily activities in work such as meetings, assignments ..etc., at school such as doing homework or participation in class, and at home such as parenting. Another type of negative gratifications that may have an effect on users, is the lack of physical interactions whereas some users replace face-to face interactions with online ones such as sending birthday wishes online instead of attending the celebration.

***RQ4: What are the acquired positive gratifications after consuming social media?***

***RQ5: What are the acquired negative gratifications after consuming social media?***

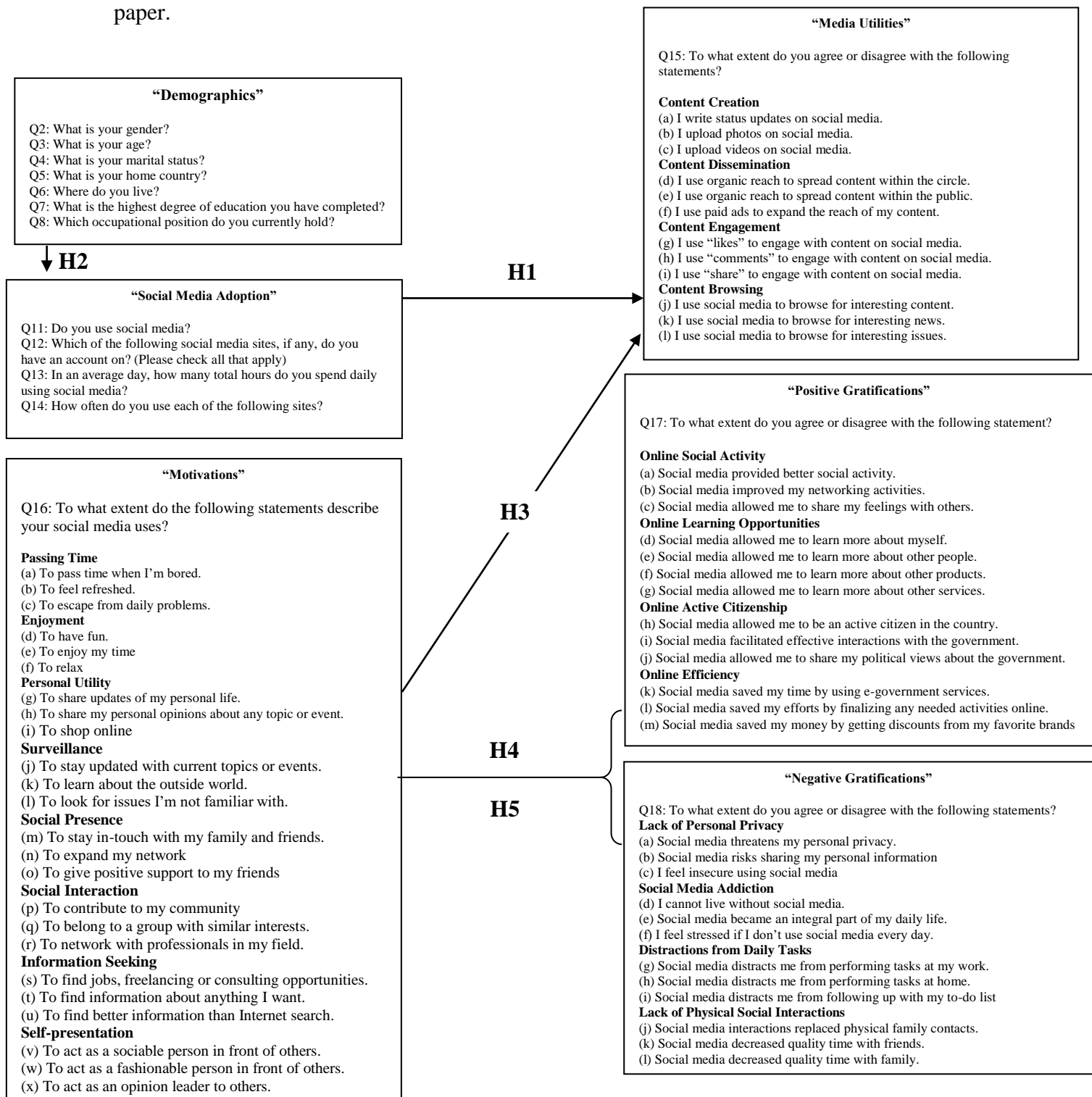


## Chapter Three

### Methodology

In this chapter, we will discuss the method used in this study to measure its findings.

The chapter includes six main sections: the conceptual model, the development of hypotheses, operationalization and measurement of the variables, sampling design, the sample, and the descriptive statistics of the study. Below is the conceptual model of the paper.



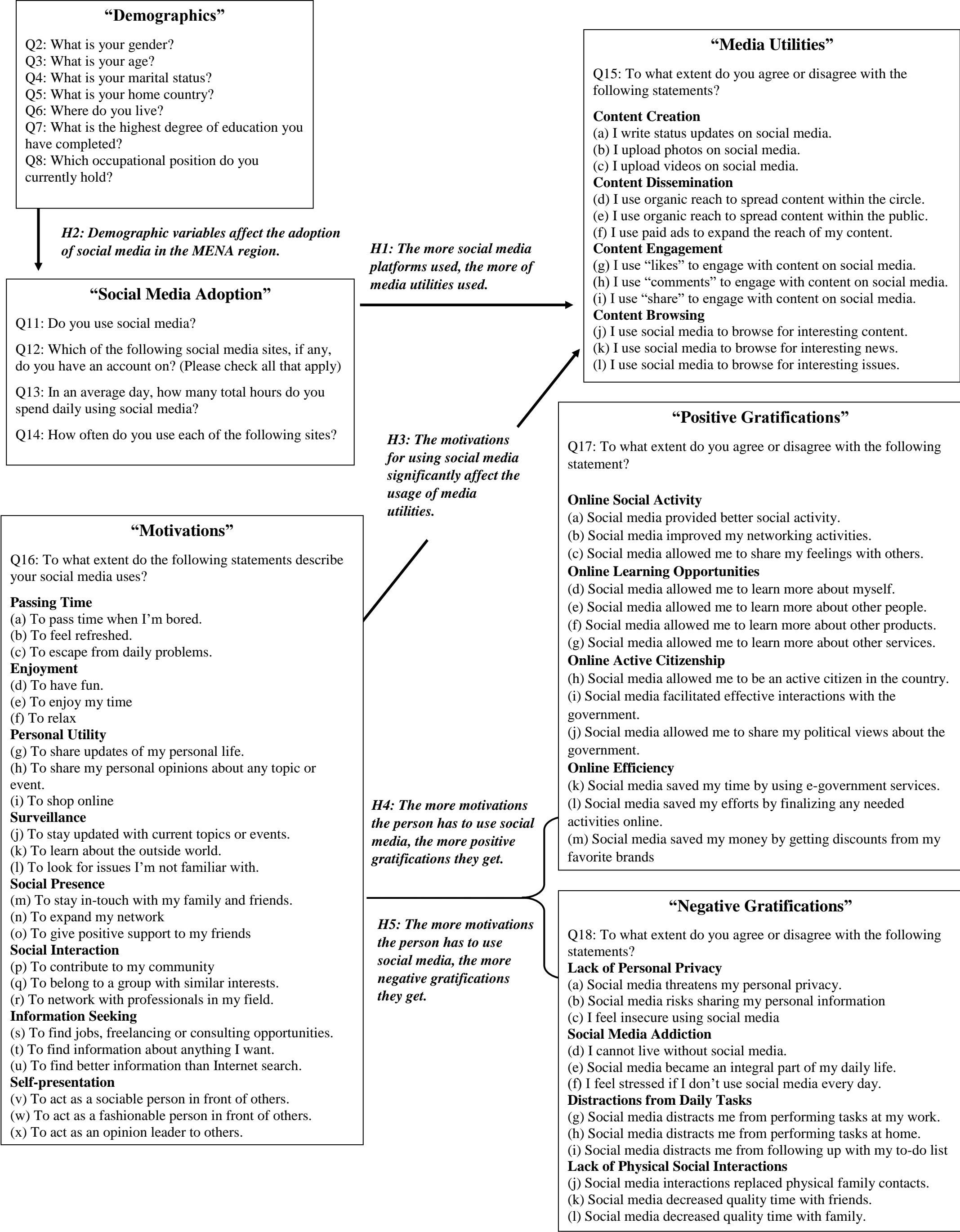


Fig. (22). Conceptual model of the study

## 1. Development of Hypotheses

The research questions asked in the chapter of literature review were all developed into hypotheses. To address the first research question which said: “*Does the usage of social media platforms affect the usage of media utilities?*”, the following hypothesis was developed:

***H1: The more social media platforms used, the more of media utilities used.***

***H1.1: The more social media platforms used, the more content creation.***

***H1.2: The more social media platforms used, the more of content dissemination.***

***H1.3: The more social media platforms used, the more of content engagement.***

***H1.4: The more social media platforms used, the more of content browsing.***

To test this hypothesis, two variables were included (social media adoption) and (media utilities). The variable of social media adoption included the type of social media platforms used and the users’ time spent on these platforms, while the media utilities variable included 4 constructs that are content creation, content dissemination, content engagement and content browsing.

To address the second research question which said: “*Do demographic variables affect the adoption of social media in the MENA region?*”, the following hypothesis was developed:

***H2: Demographic variables affect the adoption of social media in the MENA region.***

To test this hypothesis, two variables were included (demographics) and (social media adoption). Demographics included 7 constructs which are: gender, age, marital status, home country, urban/rural, education level and occupation. While social media adoption’s constructs are as previously explained in the development of hypothesis (1).

To address the third research question which said: “*What are the motivations that intrigue MENA users to consume content on social media platforms?*”, the following hypothesis was developed:

***H3:*** *The motivations for using social media significantly affect the usage of media utilities.*

***H3.1:*** *Passing time as a motivation for using social media significantly affects the usage of media utilities.*

***H3.2:*** *Enjoyment as a motivation for using social media significantly affects the usage of media utilities.*

***H3.3:*** *Personal utility as a motivation for using social media significantly affects the usage of media utilities.*

***H3.4:*** *Surveillance as a motivation for using social media significantly affects the usage of media utilities.*

***H3.5:*** *Social presence as a motivation for using social media significantly affects the usage of media utilities.*

***H3.6:*** *Social interaction as a motivation for using social media significantly affects the usage of media utilities.*

***H3.7:*** *Information seeking as a motivation for using social media significantly affects the usage of media utilities.*

***H3.8:*** *Self-presentation as a motivation for using social media significantly affects the usage of media utilities.*

To test this hypothesis, two variables were included (motivations) and the previously mentioned (media utilities). The motivations variable included 8 constructs that are passing time, enjoyment, personal utility, surveillance, social presence, social interaction, information seeking, and self-presentation.

To address the fourth research question which said: “*What are the gained positive gratifications after consuming social media?*”, the following hypothesis was developed:

***H4:*** *The more motivations the person has to use social media, the more positive gratifications they get.*

***H4.1:*** *The more motivations the person has to use social media, the more online social activity they get.*

**H4.2:** *The more motivations the person has to use social media, the more online learning opportunities they get.*

**H4.3:** *The more motivations the person has to use social media, the more online active citizenship they get.*

**H4.4:** *The more motivations the person has to use social media, the more online efficiency they get.*

To test this hypothesis, two variables were included (motivations) and (positive gratifications). The positive gratifications variable included 4 constructs that are online social activity, online learning opportunities, online active citizenship, and online efficiency.

To address the fifth research question which said: “*What are the gained negative gratifications after consuming social media?*”, the following hypothesis was developed:

**H5:** *The more motivations the person has to use social media, the more negative gratifications they get.*

**H5.1:** *The more motivations the person has to use social media, the more they lack personal privacy.*

**H5.2:** *The more motivations the person has to use social media, the more social media addiction they get.*

**H5.3:** *The more motivations the person has to use social media, the more distractions from daily tasks they get.*

**H5.4:** *The more motivations the person has to use social media, the more they lack physical social interactions.*

To test this hypothesis, two variables were included (motivations) and (negative gratifications). The negative gratifications variable included 4 constructs that are lack of personal privacy, social media addiction, distractions from daily tasks, and lack of physical social interactions.

## **2. Operationalization and Measurement of Variables**

This research adapts the measurement of some constructs from past scholars; however, some modifications were made to the measurement tools in other constructs to fit the purpose

of the research context. In table (3), demographics' variable is being represented through gender, age, marital status, home country, urbanity/rurality, education and occupation levels.

**Table (3) Operationalization of demographics and social media adoption variables**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Construct</b>	<b>Measurement</b>	<b>Choices</b>
<b>Demographics</b>	Gender	Nominal	Male/ Female/Prefer not to answer
	Age	Ordinal	From +18 to +60
	Marital Status	Nominal	From single to widowed
	Home Country	Nominal	Listed 18 MENA countries
	Urban/Rural	Nominal	City (Urban)/Village (Rural)
	Education Level	Ordinal	From below high school to postgraduate degree
	Occupation	Ordinal	From unemployed to retired
<b>Social Media Adoption</b>	Usage	Nominal	Yes/No
	Platforms	Nominal	List of social media platforms
	Total Hours	Ordinal	From less than an hour to +8 hours
	Frequency	Ordinal	From never to several times per day

A five-point Likert Scale was applied to the constructs of motivations, media utilities, positive and negative gratifications variables. Scales range from (1) strongly disagree to (5) strongly agree, whereas multi-item perceptual statements were used to measure the constructs. According to table (4), the measurement scales of passing time, enjoyment, social interaction, social presence, information seeking, self-presentation are adapted from Papacharissi and Rubin (2000), Zhou et al. (2014), Li et al. (2015), Ozanne et al. (2017) and Gan (2017). The measurement of personal utility is adapted from Palmgreen & Rayburn (1979), Wenner (1986) and Abdulla, R. (2003), while Surveillance is adapted from McQuail, Blumler & Brown (1972), Vincent & Basil (1997) and Kaye (2005).

**Table (4) Representing constructs for the motivations' variable**

Construct	References
<b>Passing Time</b> To pass time when I'm bored To feel refreshed To escape from daily problems	Papacharissi and Rubin (2000), Zhou et al. (2014); Li et al. (2015), Ozanne et al. (2017) and Gan (2017)
<b>Enjoyment</b> To have fun To enjoy my time To relax	
<b>Social Presence</b> To stay in-touch with my family and friends To expand my network To give positive support to my friends	
<b>Social Interaction</b> To contribute to my community To belong to a group with similar interests To network with professionals in my field	
<b>Information Seeking</b> To find jobs, freelancing or consulting opportunities To find information about anything I want To find better information than Internet search	
<b>Self-presentation</b> To act as a sociable person in front of others To act as a fashionable person in front of others To act as an opinion leader to others	Palmgreen & Rayburn (1979); Wenner (1986), and Abdulla, (2003)
<b>Personal Utility</b> To share updates of my personal life To share my personal opinions about any topic or event To shop online	
<b>Surveillance</b> To stay updated with current topics or events To learn about the outside world To look for issues I'm not familiar with	McQuail, Blumler & Brown (1972), Vincent & Basil (1997), Kaye (2005)

While constructs of the category “media utilities” which are content creation, content dissemination, content creation, and content browsing are developed by the author. Additionally, based on table (5), the category “positive gratifications” includes constructs which are: (1) online social activity being adapted from Spiliotopoulos & Oakley’s (2013), boyd & Ellison (2007), and Ellison & boyd (2013). (2) online learning opportunities was adapted from Nabi et al. (2006), Greenberg (1974), and Ferguson & Perse (2000), (3) online active citizenship was adapted from Gil de Zúñiga et al. (2012), and (4) online efficiency was developed by the author.

**Table (5) Constructs of the category “positive gratifications”**

<b>Construct</b>	<b>References</b>
<b>Online Social Activity</b> Social media provided better social activity Social media improved my networking activities Social media allowed me to share my feelings with others	Spiliotopoulos & Oakley’s (2013); boyd & Ellison (2007); and Ellison & boyd (2013)
<b>Online Learning Opportunities</b> Social media allowed me to learn more about myself Social media allowed me to learn more about other people Social media allowed me to learn more about other products Social media allowed me to learn more about other services	Nabi et al. (2006); Greenberg (1974); Ferguson & Perse (2000)
<b>Online Active Citizenship</b> Social media allowed me to be an active citizen in the country Social media facilitated effective interactions with the government Social media allowed me to share my political views about the government	Gil de Zúñiga et al. (2012)
<b>Online Efficiency</b> Social media saved my time by using e-government services Social media saved my efforts by finalizing any needed activities online Social media saved my money by getting discounts from my favorite brands	Developed by the author



As for the variable of “negative gratifications” in table (6), the construct of (1) lack of personal privacy was adapted from Belanger, Hiller and Smith (2002), boyd & Ellison (2007), and Ellison & boyd (2013). The constructs of (2) social media addiction and (3) distractions from daily tasks, were both adapted from Liu, Y. (2016) and Chang, D. (2017), while the construct (4) lack of physical social interactions was developed by the author.

**Table (6) Constructs of the category “negative gratifications”**

Construct	References
<b>Lack of Personal Privacy</b> Social media threatens my personal privacy Social media risks sharing my personal information I feel insecure using social media	Belanger, Hiller and Smith (2002), boyd & Ellison (2007), and Ellison & boyd (2013)
<b>Social Media Addiction</b> I cannot live without social media Social media became an integral part of my daily life I feel stressed if I don’t use social media every day	
<b>Distractions from Daily Tasks</b> Social media distracts me from performing tasks at my work. Social media distracts me from performing tasks at home. Social media distracts me from following up with my to-do list	
<b>Lack of Physical Social Interactions</b> Social media interactions replaced physical family contacts Social media decreased quality time with friends Social media decreased quality time with family	Developed by the author

The following operational definitions were added in the data collection tool:

- **Social Media:** social networking sites such as: Facebook, Twitter..etc.
- **Technical College:** college for specific technical fields such as: culinary art, fashion design..etc.

- **Uninterrupted Broadband:** continuous internet connection such as: WiFi, DSL.. etc.
- **Regular Bandwidth:** regular internet connection.
- **Content Creation Activities:** posting photos, videos or status updates.
- **Content Dissemination:** spreading content using organic reach within circle or public or through paid ads.
- **Content Engagement:** inciting communication by engaging users using likes, comments or shares.
- **Content Browsing:** browsing for interesting content, news or issues.

### 3. Sampling Design

#### 3.1 Population

**Table (7) Population, mobile subscriptions, Internet users and active social media users' statistics in the MENA region**

Serial #	Country	Total Population	Mobile Subscriptions		Internet Users		Active Social Media Users	
		# in M.	# in M.	Vs. Population	# in M.	Penetration	# in M.	Penetration
1	Morocco	36.41	43.76	120%	22.57	62%	17	47%
2	Algeria	42.34	49.53	117%	24.48	58%	23	54%
3	Tunisia	11.72	17.55	150%	7.9	67%	7.5	64%
4	Libya	6.52	11.22	172%	4.5	69%	4.5	69%
	<b>Total North Africa</b>	<b>96.99</b>	<b>122.06</b>	<b>126%</b>	<b>59.45</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>54%</b>
5	Egypt	100.3	93.48	93%	49.23	49%	40	40%
6	Sudan	42.01	30.29	72%	11.82	28%	3.5	8.30%
7	Saudi Arabia	33.85	43.8	129%	30.26	89%	23	68%
8	Oman	4.92	6.66	135%	3.78	77%	2.5	51%
9	Yemen	29.25	18.4	63%	7.19	25%	2.3	7.90%
10	United Arab Emirates	9.61	19.23	200%	9.52	99%	9.52	99%
11	Bahrain	1.6	2.63	164%	1.54	96%	1.3	81%
12	Qatar	2.72	4.27	157%	2.69	99%	2.69	99%
13	Kuwait	4.22	7.1	168%	4.14	98%	3.9	92%
	<b>Total Arab Peninsula</b>	<b>86.17</b>	<b>102.09</b>	<b>118%</b>	<b>59.12</b>	<b>69%</b>	<b>45.21</b>	<b>52%</b>
14	Iraq	39.88	38.22	96%	19.68	49%	19	48%
15	Syria	18.39	13.61	74%	6.03	33%	6.8	37%
16	Lebanon	6.08	4.65	76%	5.55	91%	4	66%
17	Jordan	9.99	7.97	80%	8.7	87%	5.8	58%
18	Palestine	5.12	4.29	84%	3.06	60%	1.9	37%
	<b>Total Western Asia</b>	<b>79.46</b>	<b>68.74</b>	<b>87%</b>	<b>43.02</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>37.5</b>	<b>47%</b>

According to a recent report released in January 2019, conducted by Hootsuite and We Are Social, two statistical websites gathering data from credible sources, as per table (7), the

total population size in the North African region was approximately 97 Million, in the Arab Peninsula 86 Million, while in Western Asia was 79 Million. As for the number of Internet users, it was around 59 Million in both North Africa and the Arab Peninsula, while it was 43 Million in Western Asia, with a penetration rate of 61% in North Africa, 69% in the Arab Peninsula, and 54% in Western Asia. On the other side, the social media penetration rate in North Africa is 54% with Libya holding the highest rate in comparison to its total population, the social media penetration rate of the Arab Peninsula is 52% with both UAE and Qatar contributing with the highest rates in comparison to their total population size. Moreover, in Western Asia, the social media penetration rate is 47% with the highest contribution of Lebanon in comparison to its total population size.

## **3.2 Sample**

### **3.2.1 Data Collection**

Since the U&G theory was introduced in the 1940s era, several researchers had been using it to understand its significance to new media. The survey method had been actively used by many scholars to look for answers about why people use media and what for (McQuail, 2000). For example, 279 college students had been surveyed by Papacharissi and Rubin (2000) in their paper that predicts the uses of Internet. Moreover in 2010, 1,989 respondents were surveyed by Kaye (2010), to understand their motivations behind reading blogs, which proved the survey tool was valuable. Nowadays, surveys had been used to understand new media in contexts like Facebook (Sheldon, 2008; Park, et al., 2009; Papacharissi & Mendelson, 2011), personal home pages (Papacharissi, 2002) and the World Wide Web (Kaye & Johnson, 2002), to name a few.

In this study, a self-selected sampling method was used through conducting a survey, with its design created via Survey Monkey to be able to disseminate an online questionnaire

with 18 questions and a slot for emails to be added by the users in case they wanted to receive a summary of the research findings. All in all, the questionnaire had three main webpages: the participant consent page alongside the title of the paper and its purpose, the questionnaire itself, and the third page was a thank you page written as: “Thank you for your spent time and input,” which was visible after the successful submission of the questionnaire. The questionnaire was anonymous as users had the freedom to quit the survey at any time without any penalties. An incentive was added which was a “Beats Solo3 Wireless Headphones”, in a draw using the emails added in the survey, and the email chosen shall win the gift.

The survey was originally created in English for the research purpose, then it was translated by the author to Arabic to be able to disseminate it to all MENA citizens as it was their main language, then back into English by a translator from the Literature Department to make sure that the meaning was the same in both English versions, the original and translated ones. Both Arabic and English versions of the questionnaire were approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB). An initial pilot phase was created by sending the questionnaire to 10 social media users aged above 18 years old as the least accepted targeted age, feedback was positive, and the questionnaire was well-understood by the respondents. Then a second pilot phase was assigned by sending the questionnaire to experts in the mass communication field to give feedback about the questions, some amends were added such as “others” in question #12 which mentioned the total number of hours spent on social media to be an exhaustive question in case respondents had other answers regarding this question in specific. Eventually, the questionnaire was launched online, and the data collection phase lasted for 14 days.

### **3.2.2 Sampling Unit**

To measure the proposed research questions and hypotheses, the target sample size was 500 social media users, however, the actual sample size reaches was 561. Respondents' genders were both males and females, whose home countries were from the main three zones in the MENA region (North Africa, the Arab Peninsula and Western Asia) beside Egypt and Sudan. Their age was above the age of 18 to 60 years old or above.

### **3.3 Sampling Procedures**

Data of these respondents were collected by reaching out to online groups of youth forums on Facebook and posting a link of the questionnaire on these groups such as "World Youth Forum", "North Africa, Middle East & West Asia Discussion", "Travelling Experience" and "Nomads", moreover, it was disseminated within university professors, and citizens from the MENA countries. Additionally, a Facebook page was created, then a paid post was used to boost the reach of individuals to the targeted audience via pay/click option, with a cost of \$30 within 7 days.

### **3.4 Data Analysis**

After data was collected on Survey Monkey, descriptive statistics were created using an SPSS version 24, with the support of the Research Center in the university. While results will be reported in the next section.

## Descriptive Statistics

**Table (8) Demographics' descriptive statistics**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	300	53.5
Female	249	44.4
Prefer not to answer	12	2.1
Total	561	100
<b>Age</b>		
18 -25 years	166	29.6
26 - 40 years	249	44.4
41 - 60 years	136	24.2
61 and above	10	1.8
Total	561	100
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Single	280	49.9
Married	242	43.1
Separated	5	0.9
Divorced	24	4.3
Widowed	10	1.8
Total	561	100
<b>Home Country</b>		
North Africa	412	73%
Rest of 13 MENA Countries	149	27%
Total	561	100
<b>Urban/Rural</b>		
City (Urban)	480	85.6
Village (Rural)	81	14.4
Total	561	100
<b>Education Level</b>		
Below High School	50	8.9
High School	114	20.3
Technical/Vocational College	44	7.8
University Degree	268	47.8
Postgraduate Degree	85	15.2
Total	561	100
<b>Occupation</b>		
Unemployed	107	19.1
Student	110	19.6
Self-employed	71	12.7
Professional	9	1.6
Employee	187	33.3
Retired	21	3.7
Other	56	10
Total	561	100

Table (8) reports on the demographics' percentage of the sample. As for the gender, 53.5% (n=300) of the sample were males, 44.4% (n=249) were females and 2.1% (n=12) preferred not to mention their gender. As for the age in table (8), 29.6% (n=166) of the sample aged from 18-25 years, 44.4% (n=249) aged from 26-40 years, 24.2% (n=136) aged from 41-60 years and 1.8% (n=10) aged above 60 years. Addressing the marital status in table (8), 49.9% (n=280) of the sample are single, 43.1% (n=242) are married, 0.9% (n=5) are separated, 4.3% (n=24) are divorced, while 1.8% (n=10) were widowed.

The home country percentage distribution was 73% (n=412) in North Africa and 27% (n=149) the rest of 15 countries in the MENA region. Moreover, the urban/rural distribution was 85.6% (n=480) living in cities/urban and 14.4% (n=81) living in villages/rural. As for the education level, 8.9% (n=50) had education below high school, 20.3% (n=114) reached high school level, 7.8% (n=44) reached technical/vocational college level, 47.8% (n=268) had a university degree and 15.25 (n=85) had a postgraduate degree. Occupation position varied between respondents whereas 19.1% (n=107) of the users were unemployed, 19.6% (n=110) were students, 12.7% (n=71) were self-employed, 1.6% (n=9) were professionals, 33.3% (n=187) were employees, 3.7% (n=21) were retired and 10% (n=56) had other occupations such as electricians, engineers, doctors ..etc.

**Table (9) Social media adoption percentage**

<b>Platform</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
Facebook	525	93.6
Twitter	230	41
Instagram	377	67.2
Snapchat	148	26.4
No Platforms	6	1.1
Others	511	91.1

In this paper, users were asked if they use single or multiple platforms. Data showed in table (9) that 525 users (93.6% of sample) used Facebook, Twitter's users were 230 (41%), Instagram's users were 377 (67.2%), Snapchat's users were 148 (26.4%) and only 6 users did not have any accounts at all. Additionally, 511 users (91.1%) had other accounts on different platforms such as WhatsApp, LinkedIn, YouTube ..etc.

**Table (10) Social media daily spent time percentages**

Variable	N	%
Less than an hour	6	1.1
1-2 hours	26	4.6
+2 but -5 hours	127	22.6
5-8 hours	247	44
+8 hours	97	17.3
Others	58	10.3
Total	561	100

According to table (10), 44% (n=247) of social media users in the sample spend a total of 5 to 8 hours daily on social media which represents a strong insight on their adoption of social media. While 22.6% (n=127) of users spend more than 2 hours daily on social media but less than 5 hours. Only around 1% of the sample spend less than an hour daily on social media.

**Table (11) Social media daily frequency of usage**

	Social Media Platforms							
	Facebook		Twitter		Instagram		Snapchat	
Variable	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Never	30	5.3	337	60.1	154	27.5	397	70.8
1-2 days/week	21	3.7	92	16.4	71	12.7	54	9.6
3-5 days/week	21	3.7	19	3.4	40	7.1	28	5
Once/day	70	12.5	55	9.8	88	15.7	39	7
Several times/day	419	74.7	58	10.3	208	37.1	43	7.7
Total	561	100	561	100	561	100	561	100



Facebook had the highest frequency of time spent daily with 74.7% of Facebook users in the sample, consuming it several times per day as per table (11). Instagram comes in the second place, with approximately 37% of its users consuming it several times per day. In contrary, Twitter and Snapchat had the highest rates of never spending time on those platforms with approximately 60% and 71% of each platform respectively.

In hypothesis (1), the composite variable was the social media adoption, focusing only on the kind of social media platforms used. Hypothesis (2) had no composite variables, however, the relation of each construct of the demographics was linked to the kind of platforms used in the variable of social media adoption. Moreover, in hypothesis (3), media utilities is the composite variable. While in hypothesis (4) and (5), the motivations variable is composite.

## Chapter Four

### Results and Findings

In this chapter, we'll report the results and findings of each hypothesis. There are five main hypotheses in the paper.

#### Hypothesis (1)

*H1: The more social media platforms used, the more of media utilities used.*

*H1.1: The more social media platforms used, the more of content creation.*

*H1.2: The more social media platforms used, the more of content dissemination.*

*H1.3: The more social media platforms used, the more of content engagement.*

*H1.4: The more social media platforms used, the more of content browsing.*

Hypothesis 1 assumes the usage of social media platforms is related to the media utilities. A T-test was used to measure this relationship.

**Table (12) Use of social media platforms in relation to the bundle of media utilities**

Media Utilities	Social Media Platforms	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
<b>H1.1: Content Creation</b>	1 Plat.	139	2.9592	.86203	.07312	588	.000**
	2 or more Plat.	421	3.2842	.76926	.03749		.
<b>H1.2: Content Dissemination</b>	1 Plat.	139	2.8945	.78844	.06687	588	.069
	2 or more Plat.	421	3.0317	.76189	.03713		.
<b>H1.3: Content Engagement</b>	1 Plat.	139	3.6882	.78452	.06654	588	.001**
	2 or more Plat.	421	3.9153	.64893	.03163		.
<b>H1.4: Content Browsing</b>	1 Plat.	139	3.7794	.87693	.07438	588	.572
	2 or more Plat.	421	3.8242	.78897	.03845		.

\*\* Significant at  $p < 0.01$

Table (12) reports on the relation of using social media with the bundle of media utilities. A question was asked in the questionnaire asking the respondents about the used social media platforms as: “Which of the following social media sites, if any, do you have an account on? (please check all that apply)”. Two categories were created to differentiate between the number of used platforms, whereas (1) refers to 1 platform used, and (2+) refers to those who use 2 or more platforms. While the category of “media utilities” had four constructs: content creation, content dissemination, content engagement and content browsing. All four constructs were measured using three statements each on a 5-point Likert Scale from (1) meaning strongly disagree to (5) meaning strongly agree.

The content creation construct included three statements about writing status updates, uploading photos or videos. In table (12), the significance of this construct for both 1 platform and for 2 or more platforms were .000 ( $< 0.05$ ), which means it’s significant. The content dissemination construct included three statements about using organic reach whether within the circle or the public and using paid ads. The significance of this construct for both 1 platform and for 2 or more platforms were .069 ( $> 0.05$ ), which means it’s not significant. The content engagement construct included three statements about using likes, comments or shares. The significance of this construct for both 1 or more platforms and for 2 or more platforms were .001 ( $< 0.05$ ), which means it’s significant. Additionally, the construct of content engagement included three statements about browsing social media for interesting content, news and issues. The significance of this construct for both 1 platform and for 2 or more platforms were .572 ( $> 0.05$ ), which means it’s not significant. So H1.1 and H1.3 are accepted, while H1.2 and H1.4 are rejected.

## **Hypothesis (2)**

***H2: Demographic variables affect the adoption of social media in the MENA region.***

Hypothesis 2 assumes the demographic variables influence using social media platforms. A Pearson Chi-Squared test was used to measure this assumption. A 5x7 table was analyzed in relation to the main social media platforms and each of the demographics' constructs: gender, age, marital status, home country, urban/rural, education level and occupation.

**Table (13) The effect of gender to the social media adoption**

<b>Social Media Platforms</b>	<b>Chi Sq.</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>Asymptotic Sig. (2-sided)</b>
<b>Facebook</b>	1.668	1	.197
<b>Twitter</b>	0.307	1	.58
<b>Instagram</b>	22.651	1	.000*
<b>Snapchat</b>	46.472	1	.000*
<b>No Platforms</b>	1.112	1	.292

\*\* Significant at  $p < 0.01$

Table (13) reports on the relation of gender with adopting social media platforms. In the table, Facebook's adoption has no relation to gender as its significance is .197 ( $>0.05$ ), Twitter has no significance as .58 ( $>0.05$ ) as well as not using any platform as .292 ( $>0.05$ ), in contrary, both of Instagram and Snapchat had a relation with gender as they're both ( $<0.05$ ), which means they're significant. Data of the paper showed that 77.8% of the female respondents used Instagram, and 58,7% of the male respondents used the platform, meaning females used Instagram more. The same applies for Snapchat, whereas 39.5% of the male respondents used Snapchat, while 41% of the female respondents used the platform. Meaning females used Snapchat more.

**Table (14) The effect of age on the social media adoption**

<b>Social Media Platforms</b>	<b>Chi Sq.</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>Asymptotic Sig. (2-sided)</b>
<b>Facebook</b>	19.517	3	.000**
<b>Twitter</b>	7.271	3	.064
<b>Instagram</b>	53.526	3	.000**
<b>Snapchat</b>	42.227	3	.000**
<b>No Platforms</b>	38.373	3	.000**

\*\* Significant at  $p < 0.01$

In table (14), the platforms of Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat were all significant in relation to age. However, Twitter has no significance as it's .064 ( $<0.05$ ). Data of the paper showed that 41.8% of those aged 26 – 40 years old used Twitter, while 41.5% of those who aged from 41 – 60 years old used the platform. In contrary if compared to one of the other platforms, 84.9% of those who aged from 18 – 25 years old used Instagram, while 67.5% of those who aged 26 – 40 years old used the platform. Which indicates younger generations have high social media adoption rates of Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat.

**Table (15) The effect of marital status on the social media adoption**

<b>Social Media Platforms</b>	<b>Chi Sq.</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>Asymptotic Sig. (2-sided)</b>
<b>Facebook</b>	9.59	4	.048*
<b>Twitter</b>	5.202	4	.267
<b>Instagram</b>	36.266	4	.000**
<b>Snapchat</b>	40.331	4	.000**
<b>No Platforms</b>	55.308	4	.000**

\*\* Significant at  $p < 0.01$

\* Significant at  $p < 0.05$

Table (15) reports on the relation of marital status with the adoption of social media platforms. Data showed that Twitter had not been significant when it comes to marital status differences, as its significance is .267 ( $>0.05$ ). While in contrary, using no platforms or any

of the other three platforms: Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat were significant, with all of their significance being .000. Data showed that 96.3% of the married respondent used Facebook, while 92% of the single respondent used the platform. As for Instagram, 78.2% of single respondents used Instagram, while 54% of married respondents used the platforms. And in Snapchat, 31% of single respondents use Snapchat, while 16.9% of the married respondents use the platform.

**Table (16) The effect of home country on the social media adoption**

<b>Social Media Platforms</b>	<b>Chi Sq.</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>Asymptotic Sig. (2-sided)</b>
<b>Facebook</b>	56.668	17	.000**
<b>Twitter</b>	30.37	17	.024*
<b>Instagram</b>	49.088	17	.000**
<b>Snapchat</b>	85.227	17	.000**
<b>No Platforms</b>	122.885	17	.000**

\*\* Significant at  $p < 0.01$

\* Significant at  $p < 0.05$

Table (16) reports on the relation of the home country with the social media adoption, whereas data showed that all of the platforms were significant when it comes to home countries ( $<0.05$ ). As an example, data showed that 100% of the respondents from Tunisia used Facebook, and 95.9% of respondents from Egypt used the platform. Referring to Twitter, 100% of respondents from Kuwait used Twitter, and 80% of respondents from Lebanon had no accounts on the platform. While in Instagram, 66.7% of respondents from Oman used Instagram, and 83.3% of respondents from United Arab Emirates used the platform. Moreover, in Snapchat, 50% of Saudi Arabian used it.

**Table (17) The effect of urban/rural on the social media adoption**

<b>Social Media Platforms</b>	<b>Chi Sq.</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>Asymptotic Sig. (2-sided)</b>
<b>Facebook</b>	0.925	1	.336
<b>Twitter</b>	0.445	1	.505
<b>Instagram</b>	3.72	1	.054
<b>Snapchat</b>	2.17	1	.141
<b>No Platforms</b>	6.208	1	.013*

\* Significant at  $p < 0.05$

In table (17), Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat and Instagram were not significant as their significance were all ( $>0.05$ ). While using no platforms was significant as it's .013 ( $<0.05$ ). Only 0.6% of respondents living in cities have no accounts on any of social media platforms.

**Table (18) The effect of education level on the social media adoption**

<b>Social Media Platforms</b>	<b>Chi Sq.</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>Asymptotic Sig. (2-sided)</b>
<b>Facebook</b>	8.511	4	.075
<b>Twitter</b>	33.753	4	.000**
<b>Instagram</b>	15.139	4	.004**
<b>Snapchat</b>	7.559	4	.109
<b>No Platforms</b>	3.832	4	.429

\*\* Significant at  $p < 0.01$

In table (18), data showed that Twitter and Instagram were significant when they came to education level in relation to the social media adoption. Both had their significance .000 ( $<0.05$ ). As an example, 86% of respondents with below high school education level used Facebook, 93% of respondents with high school education level used this platform as well as 97.6% of respondents with a postgraduate degree.

**Table (19) The effect of occupation on the social media adoption**

<b>Social Media Platforms</b>	<b>Chi Sq.</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>Asymptotic Sig. (2-sided)</b>
<b>Facebook</b>	22.544	6	.001**
<b>Twitter</b>	5.238	6	.514
<b>Instagram</b>	39.689	6	.000**
<b>Snapchat</b>	22.913	6	.001**
<b>No Platforms</b>	16.173	6	.013*

\*\* Significant at  $p < 0.01$

\* Significant at  $p < 0.05$

In table (19), the platforms of Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat and having no platforms were all significant .000 ( $<0.05$ ) when it came to the occupation and its relation to social media adoption. Only Twitter was not significant as it was .514 ( $>0.05$ ).

### **Hypothesis (3)**

**H3:** *The motivations for using social media significantly affect the usage of media utilities.*

**H3.1:** *Passing time as a motivation for using social media significantly affects the usage of media utilities.*

**H3.2:** *Enjoyment as a motivation for using social media significantly affects the usage of media utilities.*

**H3.3:** *Personal utility as a motivation for using social media significantly affects the usage of media utilities.*

**H3.4:** *Surveillance as a motivation for using social media significantly affects the usage of media utilities.*

**H3.5:** *Social presence as a motivation for using social media significantly affects the usage of media utilities.*

**H3.6:** *Social interaction as a motivation for using social media significantly affects the usage of media utilities.*

**H3.7:** *Information seeking as a motivation for using social media significantly affects the usage of media utilities.*

**H3.8:** *Self-presentation as a motivation for using social media significantly affects the usage of media utilities.*



Hypothesis (3) assumes that the main motivations used to consume content on social media affect the media utilities. A correlation test was used to measure the findings of this assumption.

**Table (20) The motivations that intrigue users to consume content on social media platforms**

		Media Utilities
<b>H3.1: Passing Time</b>	Pearson Correlation	.360
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000**
<b>H3.2: Enjoyment</b>	Pearson Correlation	.402
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000**
<b>H3.3: Personal Utility</b>	Pearson Correlation	.539
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000**
<b>H3.4: Surveillance</b>	Pearson Correlation	.510
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000**
<b>H3.5: Social Presence</b>	Pearson Correlation	.487
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000**
<b>H3.6: Social Interaction</b>	Pearson Correlation	.481
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000**
<b>H3.7: Information Seeking</b>	Pearson Correlation	.431
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000**
<b>H3.8: Self-presentation</b>	Pearson Correlation	.381
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000**

\*\* Significant at  $p < 0.01$

As per table (20), reported data showed that all 8 constructs of the motivations' variable were significant .000 ( $<0.05$ ), in relation to the usage of media utilities. Which means all hypothesis (3) with its constructs are accepted.

### **Hypothesis (4)**

**H4:** *The more motivations the person has to use social media, the more positive gratifications they get.*

**H4.1:** *The more motivations the person has to use social media, the more online social activity they get.*

**H4.2:** *The more motivations the person has to use social media, the more online learning opportunities they get.*

**H4.3:** *The more motivations the person has to use social media, the more online active citizenship they get.*

**H4.4:** *The more motivations the person has to use social media, the more online efficiency they get.*

Hypothesis 4 assumed there's a relation between the motivations behind using social media and positive gratifications gained. A correlation test was used to measure this assumption.

**Table (21) The positive gratifications after consuming social media**

		Motivations
<b>H4.1: Online Social Activity</b>	Pearson Correlation	.668
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000**
<b>H4.2: Online Learning Opportunities</b>	Pearson Correlation	.624
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000**
<b>H4.3: Online Active Citizenship</b>	Pearson Correlation	.628
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000**
<b>H4.4: Online Efficiency</b>	Pearson Correlation	.543
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000**

\*\* Significant at  $p < 0.01$

As per table (21), reported data showed that all 4 constructs of the positive gratifications' variable were significant .000 ( $<0.05$ ), in relation to the motivations behind using social media. Which means all hypothesis (4) with its constructs are accepted.

### **Hypothesis (5)**

**H5:** *The more motivations the person has to use social media, the more negative gratifications they get.*

**H5.1:** *The more motivations the person has to use social media, the more they lack personal privacy.*

**H5.2:** *The more motivations the person has to use social media, the more social media addiction they get.*

**H5.3:** *The more motivations the person has to use social media, the more distractions from daily tasks they get.*

**H5.4:** *The more motivations the person has to use social media, the more they lack physical social interactions.*

Hypothesis 5 assumed there's a relation between the motivations behind using social media and the negative gratifications gained. A correlation test was used to measure this assumption.

**Table (22) The negative gratifications after consuming social media**

		<b>Motivations</b>
<b>H5.1: Lack of Personal Privacy</b>	Pearson Correlation	-.112-
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.008
<b>H5.2: Social Media Addiction</b>	Pearson Correlation	.393
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
<b>H5.3: Distractions from Daily Tasks</b>	Pearson Correlation	.183
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
<b>H5.4: Lack of Social Interactions</b>	Pearson Correlation	.044
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.303

\*\* Significant at  $p < 0.01$

As per table (22), reported data showed that the three constructs of the negative gratifications' variable (lack of personal privacy, social media addiction, and distractions from daily tasks) were significant .000 ( $<0.05$ ), in relation to the motivations behind using social media. Which means that hypothesis H5.1, H5.2, and H5.3 are accepted, while H5.4 is rejected.

## **Chapter Five**

### **Discussion**

In this chapter, we'll present the findings, discuss their roots in the literature and we'll draw the conclusion followed by the limitations and recommendations for future research. Additionally, three in-depth interview were created to support the findings, one interview with an academic professor at The American University in Cairo, and the other two are practical professionals in the field.

Findings showed a significant relationship between social media adoption and media utilities in the form of content creation and content engagement. UGC, also known as User-Generated Content, is a brilliant way to increase engagement and reach (Quicksprout, 2019). It can also be the source of a warm-welcoming feeling for new and existing followers. Through user-generated content, other people will engage with them by sharing their created content. Users may not only be individuals, but also companies with different brands. Brands have seen a rise in UGC due to the success and engagement they receive on social media platforms. When brands share UGC of their audiences, they're not only engaging with them, but also making them feel seen and appreciated. UGC comes in different formats not only through sharing status updates, uploading photos or videos, but also creating online podcasts, livestream videos, or even TV channels. Maged El Hussein, a Digital Media Manager at a reputable multinational company said that in the past, marketing managers used to advertise their content in traditional newspaper, then it was shifted to online news websites for higher online traffic by commercializing the products on online ads, then nowadays most companies shifted to social media platforms. This shift occurred as the reciprocal communication between the company and its consumers or audiences, it became a sort of communicational behavior. Since conversations are now available on social media, companies seek extra

visibility. Another perspective added to the point of content creation and engagement is the rise of social media influencers. Hamed Shamaa, an Associate Professor of Marketing and BP Endowed Chair at the School of Business, at The American University in Cairo (AUC), who also has a wide experience in the field of marketing, said the following:

***“Once someone starts something, other people imitate. As for example travelers share their check-ins when they board on different countries or users sharing their engagement/wedding as life-events...etc.”***

As said by Shamaa, influencers adopt the notion of “me, myself and I”, as a sort of positioning that is not only used for brands but for individuals too. The term ‘social media influencers’ is a newly added term to the field of digital media, as they’re any individuals who have large audience and can persuade others by virtue of their authenticity and reach. The more influencers use social media, the more their interactions with their audiences and the more brands they may adopt as part of their paid partnership together. This explains the relation between social media adoption and media utilities. Heidi El Guindy, the Regional E-Commerce Manager at an FMCG company said that social media users are active users where they can express themselves on these platforms, they are not passive anymore. She added:

***“Using one social media platform in specific rather than the other depends on the platform’s objective and purpose. For example, Instagram might be used more as an inspiration source.”***

El Guindy stated that every platform is used for a reason and it has its own media utilities, however, they don’t exclude each other rather these activities get to be coordinated into their respected media utilities. El Hussein shared a similar notion by saying:

***“It depends on the interests of users and accordingly they use their preferable platforms. Each platform has its own mood.”***

Facebook is being attributed as provoking negative feelings and depressions, Twitter has a more formal attribution since it mainly includes political topics, while Instagram is the platform that provides positive vibes where everyone get to share their happy photos or stories.

Another significant relation was between demographics and social media adoption. In terms of gender, scholars indicated that the interpersonal skills of females were better after the introduction of social media, whereas they use these platforms to develop their existing connections (Fallows, 2005; Muscanell & Guadagno, 2012). Females also tend to engage in family activities or highlight the notion of self-presentation by sharing visuals online (McAndrew & Jeong, 2012; Muscanell & Guadagno, 2012; Tifferet & Vilnai Yavetz, 2014). There previous findings about females having high rates of social media usage is similar to the paper’s findings, but only in Instagram and Snapchat not all the platforms. Shamaa, also commented on the finding by saying that:

**“Females tend to use Instagram and Snapchat more because these platforms are relevant hosts of the fashion industry, where fashion bloggers and models can share their recent photos or videos.”**

Females also tend to use filters or effects to even create better visuals for themselves, a feature that might not be found on other social media platforms. As said by Shamaa that females care more about how they look, but men care about what they own. A research conducted by Stanley (2015) found that females join Facebook and Snapchat to monitor life of friends and family, whereas males join Facebook to network and meet new people. El Guindy also agreed upon the previous notion, whereas social media platforms are now being

more visual than ever. El Husseiny in contrary had a different insight that, in Egypt as an example, the Internet population of females is 38% of Internet users, and the majority of quota is for males. But for sure, he said the focus of females is higher towards Instagram indeed as its direction is more inclined towards beauty.

In terms of age, scholars reported that age plays an important role in differentiating the adoption of social media. Millennials they have easier ability to use social media platforms, as they were born in the era these networks emerged, being their voice, social networks sites are vital tools that makes it easier for this generation to openly share their opinions about daily encounters either in politics, entertainment, culture, or even their own personal topics (Tapscott, 2009). Thus, findings of this paper about age in relation to social media adoption is similar to previous findings of other scholars.

Another valuable insight given by Shamaa, is that peer-pressure has a role in social media adoption whereas the user's circles from the same age affect how they interact within the digital world they have. If for example a teenager doesn't have an account on any of the most popular platforms, he/she feels they're left out. El Guindy added that younger generations are now more on Instagram rather than Facebook, as based on the millennials point of view is that Facebook somehow started to become outdated to this generation, being used of course, but not with great attention such as the other audio-visual specific platforms as they are more fun to them. El Husseiny said:

***“Generally, all generations have been using social media, [perhaps not at the same rate as Millennials], but still it's almost being used by everyone.”***

He also added that there are now a vast rise of new social media platforms such as TikTok, which is being used by those who are aged below 18 years old. It's a platform for engagement with music, where they sing or dance along their favorite music tracks. So, age is sensitive to

age based on each used platform. On the other side, if any of the citizens aged above 60 years used the platforms, Jung and Sundar (2016) found that this age segment used social media, specifically Facebook, for curiosity, social bonding/bridging and as a vehicle for responding to family member requests.

As for marital status, the marital status of social media users differ from one platform than the other. For example, married women tend to intensively use social media, while single men use more social media to find partners (Hoffman, 2008). Single people tend to use social media platforms more than those who are in a relationship for the upcoming motives: to communicate with lost contacts and create new relationships (Lennon et al., 2012). Shamaa supports this notion as he said married women use social media more than single women since they already have plenty of time to spend if they don't work, and if they already work, they'd also use it to save time and efforts. El Guindy added her insight about this point and said that some single people live abroad away from their families, so they tend to share updates about their personal life to keep their families updated with their current status. Referring to a friend of hers, she created a specific online blog to share her travel journals where her family can follow up with her tracks.

Regarding home countries, each zone in the MENA region has its own percentage of active social media users. The Arab Peninsula for instance had a 52% of active social media users, then comes 54% to the North African zone and 47% to Western Asia (International Telecommunication Union, 2018). This notion is similar to the findings of the paper, which support the relation of home countries to social media adoption. El Guindy said in her interview that each country has its own online behavior and social media preferences. El Hussein also agreed to this and stated that using Snapchat in Egypt is very limited which does not exceed 10%, but Facebook is being the number one platform in the country. While Twitter in Saudi Arabia is on top of the social media list, in Kuwait the social platforms order



preferences is Instagram, Twitter then Facebook. Some countries use Twitter for politics and news only, so it's being classified as a dense-material platform with complex topics being raised on the platforms.

While as for urban/rural, previous literature review stated that rural citizens don't adapt to innovations that much, due to the presence of traditional values and beliefs leading to the resistance of cultural and societal ideas proposed to the rural community. Thereby, such resistance hinders the adoption of any information technologies inferred (Dillman, Beck & Allen, 1989). This differs than the findings of the paper as there were no differences between using any of Facebook, Twitter, Instagram or Snapchat between rural and urban areas. The only significance was about not using platforms at all which was in favor of the urban cities as only 0.6% of the respondents did not have accounts on social media sites. To support this notion, Shamma stated that:

***“There's a current stereotype about the Internet infrastructure in rural areas. Many say rural areas are being outdated regarding technological advancements. However, that's not true.”***

Citizens in rural areas have the same bandwidth used by citizens in urban areas and they also use social media platforms. Globalization had helped in narrowing the gap between different geographical areas and all facilities had been equally shared between their citizens. El Guindy said that the Internet penetration in Egypt for instance is one of the lowest penetration rates in the region, however, it's one of the fastest when it comes to Internet adoption. Additionally, smartphones penetration is significant as they're currently being more affordable than ever. A couple of years back, a well-known mobile services provider used to offer an hour of social media usage on the basic Nokia mobile for only EGP 0.5/hour which is relatively cheap. It

means Egyptian citizens in both urban and rural areas can easily access the Internet anywhere and at any time.

Regarding the education level and its relation to media adoption, Brancheau and Wetherbe, (1990) stated that high educational level means high tendency towards the notion of usage generally, and specifically means a greater familiarity with computers and gadgets, thus, more social media consumption. Shamaa said in his interview that education level is related to social media usage. Some schools integrate social media platforms to access study materials on Facebook groups for instance or share any questions about courses in college. El Guindy and El Husseiny both agree that education level is directly related to the adoption of social media.

And as for occupation status, research mentioned in the literature review stated that people with high occupational status have higher skills of online surfing through the Internet (Mossberger, Tolbert, and Stansbury, 2003), and the higher the internet usage, the higher the economic returns on these individuals. Thereby, findings of the paper supports this notion. Shamaa said that everyone now can have digital literacy, but it comes by ‘user experience’ not by knowledge. The more you practice using the platform, the faster you learn how to use it. El Husseiny said:

***“Digital literacy differs based on the basic knowledge and being updated or outdated. The design of the website also helps boost digital literacy and the ease of new waves of mobile technologies.”***

Scholars have argued that the Internet is a mass medium with the ability to fulfill interpersonal and mediated needs (Morris & Ogan, 1996). Besides identifying different motives for this newer technology, Papacharissi and Rubin (2000) related interpersonal and mediated motives to the relation of using social media. This relation was aligned with the

findings of the paper in relation to motivations and media utilities. One of the motives is self-presentation, as Shamma said, the number of likes, comments or shares a person gets give the user the sense of validity that the user is accepted socially amongst others. While El Guindy added:

***“Millennials now may remove content online if the number of likes was limited, which means the ‘net generation’ cares about how they look or appear to the public which is related to the concept of self-validity.***

Whiting and Williams (2013) identified 10 motivations for using social media: passing time, social interaction, information-seeking, enjoyment, relaxation, personal utility, convenience, expression of opinion, information sharing, and surveillance/knowledge about others. People use social media to obtain information about others (Lampe, Ellison, & Steinfield, 2006). The information gained helps them maintain interpersonal relationships, as depicted by Seidman (2013), thus helping them fulfill their need to belong (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Others use social media to meet like-minded individuals as well as to receive companionship and social support (Wellman & Gulia, 1999). Earlier stages of investigating the U&G of social media platforms, have centered on the social value of social media as it relates to interacting and connecting with friends. For example, past studies on Facebook showed that connecting and staying in touch with family, friends, and acquaintances; maintaining social ties; and keeping up with old friends, among other socially related motivations were the principal motives for using a platform like Facebook (Raacke & Bonds-Raacke, 2008; QuanHaase & Young, 2010). However, throughout the previous 12 years, the nature of social media platforms evolved in such a way, where other motivations are advancing in salience. Medium appeal, self-presentation and enjoyment have become predictive of usage patterns, being more prevalent among social media users (Karlis, 2013; Alhabash et al. 2014).

There's a significant relation between the motivations of users with the gained positive gratifications of social media. Researchers Palmgreen and Rayburn (1985) who analyzed traditional media, found significant satisfaction towards the related positive gratifications sought. Additionally, Garramone et al. (1986) found that social presence and personal identity satisfaction related positively. These researchers' findings resemble the findings related to gained positive gratifications in reference to new media. Discussing the construct of online efficiency, an additional insight was given by Shamaa, is that married women use social media in two ways, if they were working and married at the same time, they may not have enough time to search for the things they want due to their limited time, so they use social media as it saves their time efficiently. El Husseiny say that social media became a daily behavior. Everyone can use social media 24/7 because they provide rich content and constant developments.

In the paper's findings, the motivations of users had a significant relation with the negative gratifications gained by social media users. Research articles report that online users feel insecure using social media as they believe their personal privacy had been violated by third parties for advertising where they share their interest, contact information and many other personal details (Brookshire, 2017). As for social media addiction, studies showed that the constant stream of retweets, likes, and shares from these sites have affected the brain's reward area to trigger the same kind of chemical reaction as other drugs, such as cocaine. In fact, neuroscientists have compared social media interaction to a syringe of dopamine being injected straight into the system (Hilliard, 2019). Concerning distractions in daily tasks, articles stated that students for example, get distracted from doing their daily homework when they get glued to their smartphones using social media (Angelaastro, 2015). Shamma also added that the attention span of users is very short, so they get to be distracted very easily.

These notions are classified as negative gratifications and are aligned with the paper's findings. Supporting the approach of lack of personal privacy, Shamaa had an insight about rural women, specifically in Egypt, that they don't get to share their personal photos on social media platforms if they used any, since they're sticking to their cultural beliefs and their community's norms as well as they're afraid their personal photos might be exploited in a threatening way, so for instance they only put pictures of flowers or a green scenery. EL Guindy added that as a personal activity, she only tends to be very selective in terms of users that shall be added on her Instagram account as she would not want to share her personal photos with just all people. If she wanted so, she would have opened her account to public mode for everyone to see what she's posting. That's actually what influencers do. Their accounts are open for anyone to share, like or comments on their content as well as anyone who leaves their account without choosing the private mode. On the other side, El Hussein said that not all platforms have privacy or security breaching. Snapchat for example, has higher privacy as users are notified when a screenshot of their shared content had been taken or not. However, people accept the fact that their personal data might be at risk of being shared with advertisers or third parties, since they already were informed with consent messages or disclaimers before creating an account on these platforms.

## **Chapter Six**

### **Conclusions**

Social media platforms (SMPs) are different from each other. Some are textual or visual, which seems to match ideal point and/or the digital performance of a certain target. This target maybe identified by its demographics, media utilities, gratifications and motivations. These market segments seek and enjoy different positive gratifications and also are exposed to negative gratifications, possibly because of their choices and preferences. In conclusion, one's choices of social media platform(s) will reflect one's references (based on demographics), and motivations determine the positive and negative gratifications one should experience.

SMP managers are responsible to understand the precedence and the consequences of the consumers' choices of SMPs for social media interactions. They're also responsible to perfect the design and mode of operation of their social platforms to meet the expectations of their target segments, effectively and efficiently.

In their search for a competitive edge, the SMP managers should strive for maximizing their positive gratifications and minimizing the negative gratifications of their consumers.

#### **1. Managerial Applications**

In this section, we should address the implications of this research for managers. The question is which managers are we addressing?

##### **First: Marketing/Product/Brand Managers**

These managers need to understand the segments that choose to populate each SMP and they should also thoroughly understand the motivations of each target segment and the positive and negative gratifications they experience in each SMP. To that extent, they should

make that the target segment of their SMP matches the target segment for their product or service. Matching the segment is not only based on the demographics but should also be based on the motivations of this segment for choosing the SMP. Second, they also have to make sure that their marketing communication is compatible with the motivations of the target segment of the SMP and also the expected positive gratifications of this particular SMP. Third, they have to make sure that their approach and appeal to their target segment does not increase the negative gratifications that they may experience because of their choice of SMP.

In all cases and under all circumstances, the marketing/brand/product managers planning to utilize a social media mix that includes one or more SMPs should of course adhere to all the ethical standards of marketing communication. But in this case, there maybe additional ethical standards that they should that pertain specifically to SMPs.

### **Second: Social Media Planners**

Of course, there are some managerial applications for social media planners; responsible for determining the optimum social media mix for marketing campaigns. Social media planners are a new breed of a more general category called media planners. This category of managers are facing a formidable job to choose the optimum social media mix which could literally change by the day. So, they have a dire need to do social media monitoring on a daily basis. But on their sight, is artificial intelligence (AI) which will allow for the monitoring of the viewership and usage of SMPs on real time basis. That does not make their job easier, but it makes it doable. This research implies that the social media planners must be fully aware and well-versed in the motivations and positive and negative gratifications of each SMP. They are not only matching the target segment, but they are also matching the motivations and expected gratifications as they plan their social media mix.

### **Third: Marketing Research Managers**

Another type of managers that may be using SMPs are marketing research managers; those managers are assigned the job of developing a profound understanding of target customers. Many of them use SMPs to look for signals given away by customers using the product category. Customers discuss with their friends and even disclose to the public their opinions about products and services, advertising and communication, and the management of companies and their corporate behavior. Marketing research managers should synthesize these signals and report to top management their findings and recommendations for action. It's important for market research managers to understand such signals in light of the motivations of the participants on each SMP. Without the context of the motivations that drive people to use one of the SMPs vs. another, the marketing research managers may indeed misunderstand the signals on those platforms. For example, on Instagram and sometimes on Facebook, the motivation may be to do self-presentation and social attention using the platforms and for that recommending or criticizing the product or service may be away to open a conversation or to attract attention or to attract social interactions.

Without understanding the concept of such comments, the marketing research managers may overreact or misunderstand the behavior. Finally, we need to forewarn brand managers that the time when brand managers are in full control of the brand image and when their communication about their brands and what it stands for was a one-way communication are far gone. On SMPs, the brand is open for discussion and what the brand stands for is no longer a monologue, but it is a multilogue where brand managers are only one party, but then there are consumers, advocates and those who are unhappy with the brand even may be competitors, all sending different messages and all participating in shaping the brands. Many hands and fingers jointly and continuously shape the brand in different ways. The job of a brand manager today has changed dramatically, and the body of knowledge of brand



management is just about trying to grasp the new concepts, techniques and standards of protecting and preserving the brand image, when everybody has their hands on the steering wheel. Our research may not be the panacea or the final answer, but definitely about the motivations and gratifications of different social media platforms will help managers navigate those uncharted waters.

## **2. Limitations**

The social instability of many countries in the region created variances of number of participants from different MENA countries, although they got the same treatment. As the survey was promoted on the most popular platforms they use, however, at the end it still differed in terms of numbers, that's why eventually the focus was mainly on North Africa and the MENA region's citizens did not respond as we expected. One of the obstacles as well was the internet bandwidth's connection and its speed in some countries. Some participants complained about the instability of internet connection such as a participant from Sudan who said:

***“Due to my bad internet connection, I’m not sure if my questionnaire was successfully submitted or not”***

Another user from Yemen said:

***“I’ve completed the questionnaire, but I don’t know if it was well-received or not.”***

While a user from Iraq asked:

***“If the internet is horrible and we want to participate in the questionnaire what can I do?”***

Since the focus in the data collection section was on the North African region, this research should additionally be globalized to Europe to North/South America, Asia, and Australia to truly understand the new global consumer who is the user of social media platforms. The social media platform has become like a fast moving consumer good (FMCG) in a sense that consumers use it daily and their consumption is fast that their adoption and attrition of SMPs has become very fast as well, loyalty has not been part of consuming SMPs, however there are differences within FMCGs.

- 1- The cost of buying FMCG is real. The cost of buying social media usage is simply the users' time and attention and maybe the cost of bandwidth but its negligible today.
- 2- FMCGs are only accessible where they are sold, but access to SMPs are real-time, everywhere and all the time, through our mobile, tablets, pads, computers and whatever other screens we can get our hands on.
- 3- The competition in FMCGs is according to the 4 Ps, but the competition in the SMP is yet another area waiting for research to come. But unfortunately, research is lagging behind the practice and at best the academic research is simply describing and trying to ground the current practices in theory. This research is certainly a step forward in that direction but must be followed with a stream of research to keep up with the development of SMPs at the social media world.

### **3. Direction for Future Research**

This research holds a great potential to be the launching pad for a major review of the ethical standards and code of conduct on SMPs by marketers who plan to use a social media mix in their marketing communication. At the very least, the ethical standards should include

measures to minimize the negative gratifications and to protect the SMP users from direct and indirect negative gratifications. The negative gratifications mentioned in our research come from the literature, but it is believed that there are more direct and indirect negative gratifications that could develop as the technology develops as the features of the SMP develop and as the speed of the internet and its versatility, in terms of streaming capability and interactive possibilities increase, more negative gratifications may be revealed. Therefore, the dynamic nature of the whole field means that our conceptual model is only a foundation upon which layers of research could be developed to catch up and even possibly lead the development in the uses and gratifications of SMPs. The use of different portable devices such as mobiles, tablets and computers may differ in relation to different media utilities, further research is needed to analyze such relationship. Also the type of users whether if old user consuming social media since their launch or early adopters may differ in the uses and gratifications of SMPs, beside the classification of SMPs to personal or business use, in relation to motivations, media utilities and adoption of these SMPs themselves. There's no support found for the link between demographics and the use of media utilities in the literature. Nevertheless, such link indeed seems plausible and worth testing in future research. Our research cannot predict specific relationship between the demographics and usage of media utilities.

One possible direction could also be to classify the segments using the social media platforms according to their uses and gratifications rather than based on their demographics and/or motivations. This reverse segmentation will shed a new light coming from a different angle towards segmenting the users of SMPs. This new segmentation maybe more useful to marketing/brand/product managers planning to use SMPs as part of their marketing communication mix.

Another proposed direction would be the SMPs in relation to the future of brand management. Social media would be important in spreading information about any brand ‘virally’ thus, increasing brand awareness through allowing WOMs and consumers’ opinions on SMPs that are most relevant to the brands. SMPs create an amplification of reputation to the brands over traditional platforms. SMPs can definitely make or break brands. Thereby getting to know the consumers’ communication about the brand on SMPs is key to understanding and evolving brands in the current digital era. Brand managers should certainly embrace new digital opportunities, be curious about new media channels, experiment with new branding activities, and use those that prove to be most effective.

The model that we presented could also provide a foundation for a stream of research related to marketing research and marketing intelligence in the new age of social media. The data available on social media will usher in a new wave of what’s possible for marketing researchers. Social media intelligence will help firms track brand health and market structure and can even provide a leading indicator of shifts in consumer sentiment. Marketing researchers can use SMPs to observe the products and features that consumers want, identify the pivotal players who will help disseminate a message, see what types of messages are most appealing and track what kind of impact these social activities have on their strategic objectives.

The literature has not given enough attention to studying the challenges facing SMP managers. This is an open area for a stream of research that is guaranteed to capture the attention of one of the most prominent jobs in the coming decades; managing social media platforms.

One final area for future research is innovation in the area of SMPs. Innovation typically is inspired by dissatisfaction with the status quo. Challenging the status quo is

defined as asking “why” and then identifying new and better ways of doing things (Brodo, 2017). To identify ‘dissatisfaction’ with the current state of affairs, we need first to understand this current state of affairs and this is precisely what this research tries to do. The model that we presented is a very good foundation for understanding the current status quo of SMPs and their antecedents and consequences. Applied properly, our model provides opportunities for uncovering innovations in SMP design and management that could add more positive gratifications and could eliminate current or potential negative gratifications. Innovations can also be possible to include other motivations for using SMPs that are currently not addressed or served. Finally, by some innovations in the design of SMPs, could add to the media utilities provided by those SMPs which could attract consumers to use more SMPs and to migrate from one platform to the other. It is clear that SMPs today are competing for the attention and loyalty of their consumers and as more innovative SMPs come into place, such as WhatsApp and Telegram, audiences are drawn from one platform to the other, just like new products draw market share from older products who did not develop or innovate fast enough. So, the next marketing war, would be for the attention of consumers which is said to be the most valuable currency available today.

## Appendices



الجهاز المركزي للتعبئة العامة والإحصاء

الموضوع: .....

المرفقات: .....

القياس: ٨

التاريخ: ٢٠١٩ / ١١ / ٧

السيد الأستاذ الدكتور / مستشار الجامعة الأمريكية بالقاهرة

تحية طيبة وبعد ،،،

بالإشارة لكتاب سيادتكم ومرفقاته الوارد للجهاز في ٢٠١٩/١١/٣ بشأن طلب الموافقة على قيام الباحثة / يسرا أسامة محمد طه محمد - المسجلة لدرجة الماجستير بقسم الصحافة والاعلام كلية الشئون الدولية والسياسات العامة / الجامعة الأمريكية بالقاهرة - بإجراء دراسة ميدانية بعنوان: (استخدامات وامتيازات مواقع التواصل الإجتماعي في منطقة الشرق الأوسط وشمال أفريقيا). وذلك وفقا للإطار المعد لهذا الغرض.

يرجى التكرم بالإحاطة بأن الجهاز المركزي للتعبئة العامة والإحصاء يوافق على قيام الباحثة / يسرا أسامة محمد طه محمد - بإجراء الدراسة الميدانية المشار إليها بعلية وفقا للقرار رقم (٧٤٠) لسنة ٢٠٢٠/٢٠١٩ اللازم في هذا الشأن وعلى إن يوافق الجهاز بنسخة من النتائج النهائية كاملة فور الانتهاء من إعدادها طبقا للمادة رقم (٦) من القرار.

وتفضلوا بقبول فائق الاحترام ،،،

١١١٢  
١١١٢  
مجدى محمد جاد  
القائم بأعمال  
مدير عام الإدارة العامة للأمن







قرار رئيس الجهاز المركزي للتعبئة العامة والإحصاء  
بالتفويض

رقم (٧٤٠) لسنة ٢٠٢٠/٢٠١٩

في شأن قيام الباحثة / يسرا أسامة محمد طه محمد - المسجلة لدرجة الماجستير بقسم الصحافة والاعلام / كلية الشئون الدولية والسياسات العامة / الجامعة الامريكية بالقاهرة - بإجراء دراسة ميدانية بعنوان: (استخدامات وامتيازات مواقع التواصل الإجتماعي في منطقة الشرق الأوسط وشمال أفريقيا).

رئيس الجهاز

- بعد الإطلاع على القرار الجمهوري رقم (٢٩١٥) لسنة ١٩٦٤ بشأن إنشاء الجهاز المركزي للتعبئة العامة والإحصاء.
- وعلى قرار رئيس الجهاز رقم (٢٣١) لسنة ١٩٦٨ في شأن إجراء الإحصاءات والتعدادات والاستفتاءات والإستقصاءات.
- وعلى قرار رئيس الجهاز رقم (١٣١٤) لسنة ٢٠٠٧ بشأن التفويض في بعض الاختصاصات.
- وعلى كتاب الجامعة الامريكية بالقاهرة - الوارد للجهاز في ٢٠١٩/١١/٣.

قرر

مادة ١: تقوم الباحثة / يسرا أسامة محمد طه محمد - المسجلة لدرجة الماجستير بقسم الصحافة والاعلام / كلية الشئون الدولية والسياسات العامة / الجامعة الامريكية بالقاهرة - بإجراء الدراسة الميدانية المشار إليها أعلاه.

مادة ٢: تجري الدراسة على عينة حجمها (٥٠٠) تمثيلية مفردة من الجمهور المصري العام عن طريق "الانترنت" مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي.

مادة ٣: تجمع البيانات اللازمة لهذه الدراسة بموجب الاستمارة المعدة لذلك باللغة العربية وعدد صفحاتها ست صفحات وباللغة الانجليزية وعدد صفحاتها سبع صفحات معتمدة كل صفحة منهما بخاتم الجهاز المركزي للتعبئة العامة والإحصاء.

مادة ٤: يراعى موافقة مفردات العينة - مع مراعاة سرية البيانات الفردية طبقا لقانون الجهاز رقم (٣٥) لسنة ١٩٦٠ والمعدل بالقانون رقم (٢٨) لسنة ١٩٨٢ وعدم استخدام البيانات التي يتم جمعها لأغراض أخرى غير أغراض هذه الدراسة.

مادة ٥: يجري العمل الميداني خلال شهرين من تاريخ صدور هذا القرار.

مادة ٦: يوافي الجهاز المركزي للتعبئة العامة والإحصاء بنسخة من النتائج النهائية لهذه الدراسة.

مادة ٧: تلتزم الباحثة / يسرا أسامة محمد طه محمد - بإبلاغ مديرية الأمن بمحافظة القاهرة بصورة من هذا القرار وقبل البدء في التنفيذ مرفقا بها بيانات القائمين بالدراسة (الاسم - الرقم القومي - تاريخ بدء وانتهاء تنفيذ الدراسة).

مادة ٨: ينفذ هذا القرار من تاريخ صدوره.

صدر في: ٢٠١٩/١١/٤

١١١٤

محمد جاد

مسجدى محمد جاد

القائم بأعمال

مدير عام الإدارة العامة للأمن





1. What is your gender?

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female
- ☐ Prefer not to answer

2. What is your age?

- ☐ 18 – 25 years old
- ☐ 26 – 40 years old
- ☐ 41 – 60 years old
- ☐ 61 and above

3. What is your marital status?

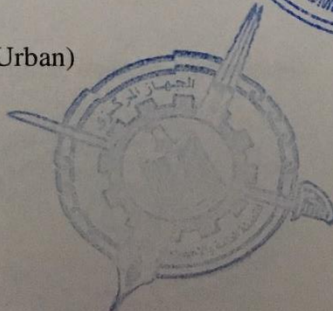
- |                                 |                                |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Single    | <input type="radio"/> Married  |
| <input type="radio"/> Separated | <input type="radio"/> Divorced |
| <input type="radio"/> Widowed   |                                |

4. What is your home country?

- |  |                               |  |
|--|-------------------------------|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Algeria                      | <input type="radio"/> Egypt   | <input type="radio"/> Saudi Arabia         |
| <input type="radio"/> Morocco                      | <input type="radio"/> Bahrain | <input type="radio"/> Tunisia              |
| <input type="radio"/> Iraq                         | <input type="radio"/> Jordan  | <input type="radio"/> United Arab Emirates |
| <input type="radio"/> Kuwait                       | <input type="radio"/> Lebanon | <input type="radio"/> Yemen                |
| <input type="radio"/> Libya                        | <input type="radio"/> Oman    | <input type="radio"/> Sudan                |
| <input type="radio"/> Palestine                    | <input type="radio"/> Qatar   |  |
| <input type="radio"/> Other. Please Specify: ..... |                               |  |

5. Where do you live?

- ☐ In the city (Urban)





- In a village (Rural)
6. What is the highest degree of education you have completed?
- Below High School
  - High School
  - Technical/Vocational College<sup>1</sup>
  - University Degree
  - Postgraduate degree
7. Which occupational position do you currently hold?
- Unemployed
  - Student
  - Self-employed
  - Professional
  - Employee
  - Retired
  - Other. Please specify:
8. Describe the quality of your access to the Internet?
- Uninterrupted broadband<sup>2</sup>
  - Regular bandwidth<sup>3</sup>
  - Weak or interrupted access
9. What is your primary source of information and news?
- Online news sources and websites (ex: CNN, BBC, etc...)
  - Traditional media sources (Newspapers, TV and Radio)
  - Social network sites (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, WhatsApp)
  - Word of mouth (Family and Friends)

<sup>1</sup> Technical College (Specific technical college such as: culinary art, fashion design...etc.)

<sup>2</sup> Uninterrupted Broadband (Continuous internet connection such as: Wi-Fi, DSL... etc.)

<sup>3</sup> Regular Bandwidth (Regular internet connection)



- ☐ Other

10. Do you use social media<sup>4</sup>?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

11. Which of the following social media sites, if any, do you have an account on? (Please check all that apply)

- ☐ Facebook
- ☐ Twitter
- ☐ Instagram
- ☐ Snapchat
- ☐ I don't have any account
- ☐ Others. Please Specify...

12. In an average day, how many total hours do you spend daily using social media?

- ☐ Less than an hour
- ☐ 1-2 hours
- ☐ More than 2 hours but less than 5 hours
- ☐ 5-8 hours
- ☐ More than 8 hours
- ☐ Other. Please specify



<sup>4</sup> Social Media (Social networking sites such as: Facebook, Twitter...etc.)

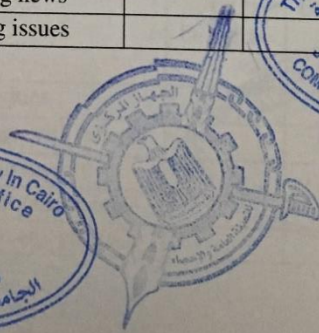


13. How often do you use each of the below social network sites?

	Never	1-2 days/week	3-5 days/week	Once per day	Several times per day
(a) Facebook					
(b) Twitter					
(c) Instagram					
(d) Snapchat					
(e) .....					
(f) .....					

14. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement?

	(1) Strongly Disagree	(2) Disagree	(3) Neutral	(4) Agree	(5) Strongly Agree
(a) I write status updates on social media					
(b) I upload photos on social media					
(c) I upload videos on social media					
(d) I use organic reach to spread content within the circle					
(e) I use organic reach to spread my content within the public					
(f) I use paid ads to expand the reach of my content					
(g) I use "likes" to engage with content on social media					
(h) I use "comments" to engage with content on social media					
(i) I use "share" to engage with content on social media					
(j) I use social media to browse for interesting content					
(k) I use social media to browse for interesting news					
(l) I use social media to browse for interesting issues					



15. To what extent do the following statements describe your social media uses?

	(1) Strongly Disagree	(2) Disagree	(3) Neutral	(4) Agree	(5) Strongly Agree
(a) To pass time when I'm bored					
(b) To feel refreshed					
(c) To escape from daily problems					
(d) To have fun					
(e) To enjoy my time					
(f) To relax					
(g) To share updates of my personal life					
(h) To share my personal opinions about any topic or event					
(i) To shop online					
(j) To stay updated with current topics or events					
(k) To learn about the outside world					
(l) To look for issues I'm not familiar with					
(m) To stay in-touch with my family and friends					
(n) To expand my network					
(o) To give positive support to my friends					
(p) To contribute to my community					
(q) To belong to a group with similar interests					
(r) To network with professionals in my field					
(s) To find jobs, freelancing or consulting opportunities					
(t) To find information about anything I want					
(u) To find better information than Internet search					
(v) To act as a sociable person in front of others					
(w) To act as a fashionable person in front of others					
(x) To act as an opinion leader to others					

16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement?

	(1) Strongly Disagree	(2) Disagree	(3) Neutral	(4) Agree	(5) Strongly Agree
(a) Social media provided better social activity					
(b) Social media improved my networking activities					
(c) Social media allowed me to share my feelings with others					
(d) Social media allowed me to learn more about myself					
(e) Social media allowed me to learn more about other people					
(f) Social media allowed me to learn more about any products					





(g) Social media allowed me to learn more about any services					
(h) Social media allowed me to be an active citizen in the country					
(i) Social media facilitated effective interactions with the government					
(j) Social media allowed me to share my political views about the government					
(k) Social media saved my time by using e-government services					
(l) Social media saved my efforts by finalizing any needed activities online					
(m) Social media saved my money by getting discounts from my favorite brands					

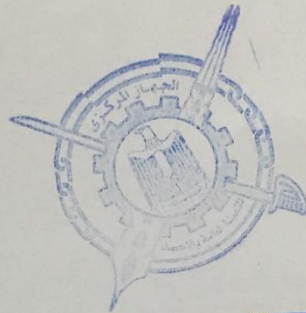
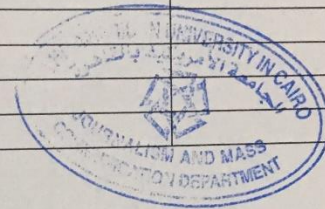
17. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement?

	(1) Strongly Disagree	(2) Disagree	(3) Neutral	(4) Agree	(5) Strongly Agree
(a) Social media threatens my personal privacy					
(b) Social media risks sharing my personal information with third parties					
(c) I feel insecure using social media platforms					
(d) I cannot live without social media					
(e) Social media became an integral part of my daily life					
(f) I feel stressed if I don't use social media every day					
(g) Social media distracts me from performing tasks at my work					
(h) Social media distracts me from performing tasks at home					
(i) Social media distracts me from following up with my to-do list					
(j) Social media interactions replaced physical family contacts					
(k) Social media decreased quality time with friends					
(l) Social media decreased quality time with family					

18. Since you started using social media, did the spent time on the below activities increase, decrease or remains the same?

	Time increased	Time remains the same	Time decreased
(a) Watching TV			

(b) Reading newspaper			
(c) Reading magazines			
(d) Listening to radio			
(e) Making phone calls			
(f) Listening to music (tapes or CDs)			
(g) Watching videos on DVDs			
(h) Watching movies in the cinema			





1- ما هو جنسك؟

- ☐ ذكر
- ☐ أنثى
- ☐ أفضل عدم الإجابة

2- ما هو سنك؟

- ☐ 18 - 25 سنة
- ☐ 26 - 40 سنة
- ☐ 41 - 60 سنة
- ☐ أكثر من 61 سنة

3- ما هي حالتك الاجتماعية؟

- ☐ أعزب
- ☐ متزوج
- ☐ منفصل
- ☐ مطلق
- ☐ أرمل

4- ما هي بلدك الأم؟

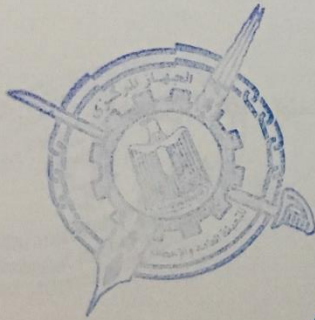
- |                                  |                               |                                |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> الجزائر    | <input type="radio"/> مصر     | <input type="radio"/> السعودية |
| <input type="radio"/> المغرب     | <input type="radio"/> البحرين | <input type="radio"/> تونس     |
| <input type="radio"/> العراق     | <input type="radio"/> الأردن  | <input type="radio"/> الإمارات |
| <input type="radio"/> الكويت     | <input type="radio"/> لبنان   | <input type="radio"/> اليمن    |
| <input type="radio"/> ليبيا      | <input type="radio"/> عمان    | <input type="radio"/> السودان  |
| <input type="radio"/> فلسطين     | <input type="radio"/> قطر     | <input type="radio"/> سوريا    |
| <input type="radio"/> أخرى:..... |                               |                                |

5- أين تسكن؟

- ☐ في مدينة (منطقة حضرية)
- ☐ في قرية (منطقة ريفية)

6- ما هي أعلى درجة علمية حصلت عليها؟

- ☐ تعليم متوسط
- ☐ تعليم ثانوي
- ☐ تعليم تقني/فني
- ☐ تعليم جامعي
- ☐ دراسات عليا



7- ما هي الوظيفة المهنية التي تشغلها حالياً؟

- ☐ عاطل عن العمل
- ☐ طالب
- ☐ عمل حر
- ☐ خبير
- ☐ موظف
- ☐ متقاعد
- ☐ أخرى:.....

8- ما هي جودة الانترنت لديك؟

- ☐ انترنت سريع دون انقطاع
- ☐ انترنت عادي
- ☐ انترنت ضعيف

9- ما هو مصدرك الرئيسي للمعلومات و الأخبار؟

- ☐ مواقع أخبار عبر الانترنت (BBC – CNN .. إلخ)
- ☐ وسائل إعلام تقليدية (الصحف, التلفزيون و الراديو)
- ☐ مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي (فيسبوك, تويتر, يوتيوب, واتساب)
- ☐ الأخبار المتداولة (العائلة و الأصدقاء)
- ☐ أخرى

10- هل تستخدم مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي؟

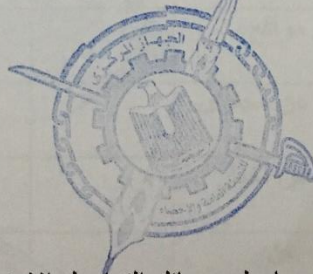
- ☐ نعم
- ☐ لا

11- ما هي مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي التي لديك حساب فيها؟ (يمكنك اختيار أكثر من إجابة)

- ☐ فيسبوك
- ☐ تويتر
- ☐ انستاجرام
- ☐ سناب شات
- ☐ ليس لدي أي حساب
- ☐ أخرى:.....

12- ما هو مجموع الساعات التي تقضيها على وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي في اليوم؟

- ☐ أقل من ساعة
- ☐ 1 – 2 ساعة
- ☐ أكثر من ساعتين لكن أقل من 5 ساعات





- 5 - 8 ساعات
- أكثر من 8 ساعات
- أخرى:.....

13- كم مرة تستخدم كل من مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي التالية؟

لا استخدمه إطلاقاً	1-2 يوم/الاسبوع	3-5 أيام/الاسبوع	مرة في اليوم	عدة مرات في اليوم
(أ) فيسبوك				
(ب) تويتر				
(ت) انستجرام				
(ث) سناب شات				
(ج) ....				
(ح) ....				

14- إلى أي مدى توافق أو لا توافق على العبارات التالية؟

لا اوافق بشدة	لا اوافق	حيادي	أوافق	أوافق بشدة
(أ) أكتب حالي على مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي				
(ب) أشارك صور على مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي				
(ت) أشارك مقاطع فيديو على مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي				
(ث) أنشر المحتوى بشكل تلقائي مع معارفي				
(ج) أنشر المحتوى بشكل تلقائي مع العامة				
(ح) استخدم إعلانات مدفوعة لنشر المحتوى بانتشار أكثر				
(خ) استخدم "اعجبي" للتفاعل مع المحتوى في مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي				
(د) استخدم "تعليقات" للتفاعل مع المحتوى في مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي				
(ذ) استخدم "مشاركة" للتفاعل مع المحتوى في مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي				
(ر) استخدم مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي للبحث عن محتوى مشوق				
(ز) استخدم مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي للبحث عن أخبار مشوقة				
(س) استخدم مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي للبحث عن مواضيع مشوقة				



15- إلى أي مدى تمثل العبارات التالية الهدف من استخدامك لمواقع التواصل الاجتماعي؟

لا أوافق بشدة	لا أوافق	حيادي	أوافق	أوافق بشدة
				(أ) لقضاء الوقت عندما أشعر بالملل
				(ب) للشعور بالانتعاش
				(ت) للهروب من المشاكل اليومية
				(ث) للتسلية
				(ج) لقضاء وقت ممتع
				(ح) للاسترخاء
				(خ) لمشاركة آخر التطورات عن حياتي الشخصية
				(د) لمشاركة آرائي الشخصية عن أي موضوع أو حدث
				(ذ) للتسوق عبر الانترنت
				(ر) للاطلاع على آخر الموضوعات و الأحداث
				(ز) لمعرفة المزيد عن العالم الخارجي
				(س) للبحث عن موضوعات لست على دراية بها
				(ش) للبقاء على اتصال بالعائلة و الأصدقاء
				(ص) لتوسيع شبكة معارفي
				(ض) لتقديم دعم ايجابي لأصدقائي
				(ط) للمساهمة في مجتمعي
				(ظ) للانتماء لمجموعة لديها نفس اهتماماتي
				(ع) للتواصل مع الخبراء في مجالي
				(غ) للعثور على وظائف عمل حرة أو فرص استشارية
				(ف) للعثور على أي معلومات أريدها
				(ق) للعثور على معلومات افضل من البحث على الانترنت
				(ك) لأكون شخص اجتماعي أمام الآخرين
				(ل) لأكون شخص أنيق أمام الآخرين
				(م) لأكون شخص صاحب رأي أمام الآخرين

16- إلى أي مدى توافق أو لا توافق على العبارات التالية؟

لا أوافق بشدة	لا أوافق	حيادي	أوافق	أوافق بشدة
				(أ) وفرت مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي نشاطات اجتماعية بشكل افضل
				(ب) حسنت مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي أنشطة التواصل الخاصة بي





				(ت) سمحت لي مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي بمشاركة مشاعري مع الآخرين
				(ث) سمحت لي مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي بمعرفة نفسي بشكل أفضل
				(ج) سمحت لي مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي بمعرفة الآخرين بشكل أفضل
				(ح) سمحت لي مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي بمعرفة المنتجات بشكل أفضل
				(خ) سمحت لي مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي بمعرفة الخدمات بشكل أفضل
				(د) سمحت لي مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي أن أكون مواطن فعال في المجتمع
				(ذ) ساعدت مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي في التعاملات الفعالة مع الحكومة
				(ر) أتاحت لي مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي بالتعبير عن رأيي السياسية بخصوص الحكومة
				(ز) وفرت مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي وقتي باستخدام خدمات الحكومة الإلكترونية
				(س) وفرت مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي مجهودي عن طريق إنهاء أي أنشطة مطلوبة عبر الإنترنت
				(ش) وفرت مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي مالي بالحصول على خصومات من ماركاتي المفضلة

17 - إلى أي مدى توافق أو لا توافق على العبارات التالية؟

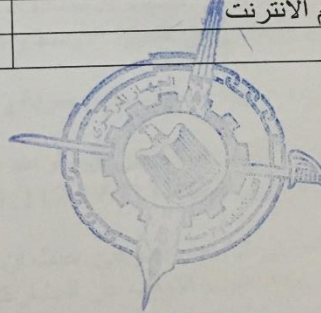
لا أوافق بشدة	لا أوافق	حيادي	أوافق	أوافق بشدة
				(أ) تهدد مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي خصوصيتي الشخصية
				(ب) تخاطر مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي بمشاركة معلوماتي الشخصية مع أطراف أخرى
				(ت) أشعر بعدم الأمان باستخدام مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي
				(ث) لا أستطيع العيش بدون مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي
				(ج) أصبحت مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي جزء أساسي من حياتي اليومية
				(ح) أشعر بالتوتر إذا لم أستخدم مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي كل يوم
				(خ) تصرفني مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي عن أداء مهامتي في عملي



					(د) تصرفني مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي عن ادائ مهامي في المنزل
					(ذ) تصرفني مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي عن إنجاز قائمة مهامي اليومية
					(ر) حلت التفاعلات على مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي مكان الروابط الاسرية الحقيقية
					(ز) أدت مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي الى انخفاض الوقت مع الاصدقاء
					(س) أدت مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي الى انخفاض الوقت مع العائلة

18- منذ بدء استخدام مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي, هل زاد الوقت المستغرق في الأنشطة التالية ، أو نقص أو ظل كما هو؟

الوقت زاد	الوقت كما هو	الوقت انخفض
		(أ) مشاهدة التلفاز
		(ب) قراءة الصحف
		(ت) قراءة المجلات
		(ث) الاستماع للراديو
		(ج) اجراء المكالمات الهاتفية
		(ح) الاستماع للموسيقى بدون استخدام الانترنت
		(خ) مشاهدة فيديو بدون استخدام الانترنت
		(د) مشاهدة الأفلام في السينما



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