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An Examination of Trust in News Mediums by College Students: A Comparison of Egypt and the USA

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AN EXAMINATION OF TRUST IN NEWS MEDIUMS BY COLLEGE STUDENTS:

A COMPARISON OF EGYPT AND THE USA

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THESIS ACCEPTANCE PAGE

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This thesis is approved as a creditable and independent investigation by a candidate for

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ABSTRACT

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Polls have shown a decline in trust in the USA when it comes to trust in Media. This study looks at if trust in news mediums really does matter. The study also compares a sample from USA to Egypt. The study finds that American college students have more trust in traditional news media but use it less than newer forms such as social media. The Egyptian sample has high trust in social media and low trust in traditional news media that are normally under the influence of the Egyptian government. The frame works used are the uses and gratification theory, hostile media effect and the Vanacker and Belmas Model. The study concludes that trust plays a non significant role in where college students choose to get their news from.

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

According to Holbert (2005), media is an essential aspect of democracies as they allow people to remain informed. News media establishes its importance in society by providing people with information on being accessible and self-governing (Strömbäck, 2005). Having free media on its own in a community is not enough. Society must trust this media to fulfill its goals and objectives (Strömbäck et al., 2020). After all, why would a society actively consume information from a source they do not trust?

When attempting to answer the question as to why people engage with news they do not trust, Tsfati and Cappella (2005) found that trust is not the only factor that affects people's news consumption choices. They concluded "that people consume news they do not trust when their media skepticism is irrelevant to their motivation for news exposure" (Tsfati & Cappella, 2005, p. 251). Lee (2011) found that media is sometimes consumed in a way that is more convenient for the consumer. Convenience is more important for some than their trust levels. For example, Lee suggested that college students "are more likely to seek out a future news event from online news sources, despite having less trust in them" (Lee, 2011, p. 3).

Tsfati and Cappella's (2005) and Lee's (2011) studies found that younger people do not generally trust the news they consume. Moreover, according to Cook and Gronke (2001), 18 to 29-year-old Americans have more trust in traditional news sources such as newspapers but utilize that news medium the least. The reason for this could be 'convenience' as mentioned before. Is the matter of convenience a universal reason for overlooking trust when choosing news mediums, or is it more localized to American

news consumers? Are there societies outside the USA combining trust and convenience when selecting news mediums to utilize? These are questions that this study seeks to answer.

This study examines the relationship between trust and news mediums chosen by college students in two countries. One country will be a developed country, while the second will be a developing country. The goal is to compare the results from both countries and examine if trust in media directly affects the news mediums college students choose to get information from. Fundamentally, the study seeks to answer if trust really matters. Several studies have sought to answer these questions; however, those studies primarily focused on college students in the United States and did not compare results between college students in other countries.

Background of the problem

Media is an essential means of influencing society in terms of its ability to form individual attitudes and opinions (Arias, 2019). These attitudes and beliefs manifest in the minds of individuals, which inevitably reflect on their current and future behavioral patterns. Media interest is due to the significant influence it has on its followers. In contemporary societies, media, both traditional and modern, plays an essential and wide-ranging role in all aspects and activities of the community and the various institutions associated with it, from the social, cultural, and recreational elements to the various political, economic, and religious ones (Buckingham, 1997; Howley, 2013; Turow, 2011).

Despite many accusations against the media, such as the falsification of facts, absence of professionalism, lack of integrity, and other adverse claims, it is indisputable

that news media still plays an essential role and will continue to do so and that millions of people are still actively receiving information from it, day and night, around the world (Davis & Owen, 1998; Donohue et al., 1975; Gentzkow & Shapiro, 2006; Gunther, 1992; Tsfati, 2003). Many examples of these accusations are recorded in both domestic and international media (Groseclose & Milyo, 2005). In addition to these problems, the general decline in trust in news media has made it more challenging to deliver credible news to the public as consumers may not accept it (Strömbäck et al., 2020).

The fields of journalism, economics, politics, and religion have become some of society's most critical and influential pillars (Hopmann et al., 2015). People's dependence on news media changes the discussion from the existence of media and its importance to examining how to improve it (Johnson & Wiedenbeck, 2009). Specifically, how to allow news media to acquire and maintain a higher degree of credibility, professionalism, and trust (Jackob, 2010; Johnson & Kaye, 1998; Kohring & Matthes, 2007; Otto & Köhler, 2018).

News media has become a determining factor for our behaviors in modern societies. Even though news media is constantly criticized, we still interact with it and utilize it daily, especially after the emergence of the internet and the multiple means related to it, such as social media (DiMaggio & Hargittai, 2001). This interest and fascination with news media are due to the considerable impact on its followers (Johnson & Kaye, 1998; Lee, 2006; Morales, 2008; Ono & Zavodny, 2003; Parker & Plank, 2000). Part of this impact can be attributed to society's trust in or lack of trust in news media. Other factors can affect this relationship. For example, Jones (2002) suggested that trust levels in the government can affect the relationship between the media and its consumers.

Fernández-Planells (2015) also noted that political inclination and exposure to social media are associated with trust in media.

Trust

The question of trust is a fundamental issue in how people communicate. Whether it is a traditional means of communication, such as radio and television, or modern methods, such as social media, the media needs to gain confidence and credibility among followers and users (Ceron, 2015). Media plays an active and influential role in individuals' levels of trust, shaping their social capital and the degree of their political participation in their communities (Katz & Rice, 2002). Different forms of news media have become a necessary part of human life and an essential mechanism for people to continue with their lives and communicate with those around them. This new and improved societal role requires news media to have some degree of credibility (Pjesivac, 2017).

Trust is one of the highest levels of human interaction and communication. Hence, it is forced upon the 'means of communication' to have some credibility. This credibility varies from mean to mean and from time to time (Ariely, 2015; Avery, 2009; Pjesivac, 2017; Tsfati, 2010). Many factors affect trust in media, such as demographics and socioeconomic status. Other factors can depend more on personal beliefs and ideology (Lee, 2010). Lee (2010) also identified factors that may impact trust, such as political ideology and partisanship, trust in government, trust in fellow citizens, and economic views.

A study published by the American Press Institute in 2016 showed a few main factors that news media can implement to gain the trust of American news consumers.

The most critical factors for building trust are accuracy, timeliness, and clarity. Accuracy, the most listed factor by the study, is a trait deemed necessary by journalists as well (Strömbäck et al., 2020). Rosenstiel and Kovach (2001) add that part of a journalist's duty is to correct manipulation and disinformation.

On many occasions, professionalism can be challenging to achieve. This challenge is due to different reasons, such as promptly covering events, sometimes at the cost of the correct information and biased analysis. Media suffers permanently from a lack of professionalism and honesty due to the desire to publish news, regardless of the consequences, actively (Tsfati et al., 2020). In this context, false and unsound information is posted (Tsfati et al., 2020). Due to this pattern, the media loses the confidence of its followers over time. Addressing the question of trust in media is essential for the relationship between it and the consumers due to the perilous consequences resulting from a lack of verification.

Mass Media and Trust

Bennett et al. (1999) suggested that news media trust in the United States has been in decline for over 40 years. According to a Gallup poll on Americans' trust in mass media, mass media trust was 45% in 2018, making it higher than the all-time low of 32% in 2016 yet, much lower than the all-time high of 72% in 1976. Although the past few years have seen an increase in trust levels, this is not reflective of the population. 53% of American adults over the age of 65 trust mass media, compared to 33% of those under 30 years old (Jones, 2018).

The Gallup poll shows that the age gap in trust levels started to emerge in 2007. Although trust levels for news media for all age groups steadily fell between 1997 and

2018, the fall was much steeper for those between 18 and 29 years old. With the younger generations growing up in an era of fake news and a highly politicized attitude towards media, the importance of trust is sure to be impacted. This change warrants the need to explore news media trust within this demographic group.

The decline in trust can be attributed to many factors. As mentioned before, some of this decline can be attributed to the lack of transparency and mistakes news media has suffered from. Forde (2018) suggested that the notions of post-truth and fake news have added to this lack of trust by consumers more recently. Lee and Li (2021) posited that the lack of transparency by news media was a concern for the public, affecting the level of trust in the information we consume.

In addition to the factors mentioned above, some studies have suggested that having many choices of where to get news from is impacting our trust in news media as a whole, explicitly creating problems for what is deemed more traditional news media (Van Aelst et al., 2017). Strömbäck et al. (2020) listed several reasons for a change in trust levels and the factors that affect them. These include an unprecedented increase in competition from different news media sources, consistent attacks on media's trustworthiness (Ladd, 2012), and social media making political actors less dependent on traditional news outlets to get their messages to the masses (Groshek & Koc-Michalska, 2017) and finally, more misinformation and fake news circulating than ever before (Kavanagh & Rich, 2018).

In studies associated with trust in media, the news consumption habits of the sample do not automatically coincide with the trust levels of or time spent using each news medium. Tsfati and Capella (2005) showed that media consumers do not

necessarily trust the media they consume. Lee (2011) discovered that trust does not translate to time spent using a news medium among college students. Although the study revealed that traditional news media forms are the most trustworthy, the sample showed they are more likely to get further information from online news sources.

Uses and gratification

This study utilizes several theoretical frameworks and concepts. The relevant assumption of the uses and gratification theory (UGT) is that the audience is active, meaning that their media consumption is intentional to satisfy their needs (Katz et al., 1974). Considering this, the audience chooses from the different news sources available to them, which differ in both mediums and ideology, and the content that suits them. UGT dates to the 1940s, but it wasn't until the 1970s that it began to be used more widely as it examined not only what type of gratification consumers seek but what they obtain from it (Ruggiero, 2000). Ruggiero (2000) argued that UGT had become one of the more essential communication theories, especially since the introduction of new media such as the internet.

UGT offers five assumptions (Rubin, 2009). The first is that media use and consumption are goal oriented. The second is that people select media based on a need that needs satisfying. The third is that media consumption by an individual is based on social and psychological factors. The fourth is news media competes with other sources for our satisfaction. The fifth is that since most people are active listeners, they are not generally affected by it.

Hostile Media Effect

This study also touches upon the hostile media effect regarding intention in media consumption. The hostile media effect is when individuals with a preexisting attitude perceive balanced news coverage as biased against their side or in favor of the other side (Vallone et al., 1985). The hostile media effect demonstrates an active media audience. This means that audiences do not passively consume media but also decide how they interpret it (Vallone et al., 1985). This interpretation then affects what type of media is consumed. The hostile media effect was initially utilized in studies relating to wars and armed conflicts such as the Palestinian-Israeli conflict (Vallone et al., 1985) or the Bosnian-Serbian war (Matheson et al., 2001). It has since been used for other controversial topics such as immigration (Tsang, 2018), South Korean National Security Act (Choi et al., 2011), and sports (Arpan & Raney, 2003).

One of the consequences of the hostile media effect is its influence on political behavior (Feldman, 2014). Part of this behavior is the feelings of hostility toward the media (Hwang et al., 2008). The hostile media effect has also been used in studies to illustrate a lack of trust in media (Tsfati & Cohen, 2008). Some studies have utilized the hostile media effect to show hostility toward television shows and news media and how this is causing an erosion of trust in media as a whole (Coe et al., 2008; Feldman, 2011). As mentioned previously, trust in news media in the United States is at a historic low. Trust levels are also divided across political ideologies (Pew Research Center, 2014), making understanding the reasons for this hostility toward media essential.

Value of the Study

  The issue of trust differs from one society to another due to the different social, political, and economic conditions. Hence, it is crucial to study the issue of trust in the media, taking into consideration the importance of comparing the level of trust in the media between one society and another and identifying the reasons for the differences (Brogan & Smith, 2020; Osburg & Heinecke, 2017). This study examines the relationship of trust with different news mediums among college students in two countries.

  This study's significance is examining the varying degrees of trust in different news mediums and how the trust levels impact the usage of these news mediums. This information is also compared between two societies with socioeconomic differences. This is a topic that is overlooked in studies of a similar nature. This study will compare college students from a state university in the United States of America (USA) and a public university in the Arab Republic of Egypt.

  Societies undoubtedly vary significantly in the extent to which individuals trust each other. The social institutions that make up these societies also vary in their trust level. Hence, the strength of social institutions depends on the level of trust among their primary stakeholders (Bartkus & Davis, 2009; Berggren & Jordahl, 2006; Costa et al., 2018; Kramer, 1999; Mishler & Richard, 1994).

CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

This chapter aims to establish familiarity with research conducted on trust and media. This chapter will explain the meaning of trust, examine how to measure trust, and offer a theoretical basis for trust in media. It will also investigate how trust correlates with different theories and concepts, such as uses and gratification theory (UGT), hostile media effect, and the Vanacker and Belmas Model.

The Meaning of Trust

Some concepts cannot be linked to a particular discipline or understood through one field. Examples of this include the concepts of social capital, symbolic capital, and social class. Trust, being a broad concept, involves aspects taken from psychology, sociology, and economics. The notion of trust encompasses concepts that include various angles and approaches from several disciplines (Dwyer, 2007; Marková, 2004).

Different definitions of trust have been developed over the last century. These definitions also sometimes differ from discipline to discipline. Consequently, the concept of trust encompasses many disciplines and topics such as political science (Fukuyama, 1995; Sztompka, 1996.), economics (Berggren & Jordahl, 2006; Lee & Turban, 2001; Williamson & Carswell, 1993), organizational theory and strategy (Rousseau et al., 1998), social psychology (Couch & Jones, 1997; Tsfati & Cappella, 2005), sociology (Sztompka, 1996), and media and the Internet (Abdulla et al., 2002; Dutton & shepherd, 2006).

In psychology, for example, trust can be defined as "a psychological state comprising the intention to accept vulnerability based upon positive expectations of the

intentions or behavior of another" (Rousseau et al., 1998, p. 395). Trust is a mental

process in sociology that encompasses three components: expectation, interpretation, and

suspension (Simmel, 2004). Another definition used in sociology can be attributed to

Giddens (1990), who stated that trust is "the vesting of confidence in persons or in

abstract systems, made on the basis of a leap of faith which brackets ignorance or lack of

information." Trust was also defined in the field of economics by Lewicki & Bunker

(1995, p. 106), who stated that "trust is an ongoing, market-oriented, economic

calculation." In the political field, Williamson updated his definition of trust from his

initial one in 1975 to a different one in 1996. He stated that trust is characterized by the

absence of monitoring, favorable forgiving predilections, and discreteness (Williamson,

1993).

As shown in the examples provided, each discipline defines trust differently.

However, each discipline defines it along with specific parameters accepted in their field.

For example, in psychology, trust occurs between two parties, the trustor and the trustee

(Mayer et al., 1995). Meanwhile, economists view trust as a function of institutions and

policies (Berggren & Jordahl, 2005). Lee (2011) suggested that "sociologists see trust as

a multidimensional construct (Barber, 1985) and a foundation for interpersonal

relationships (Granovetter, 1985) and social institutions (Zucker, 1986)" (p. 5).

In this study, trust will abide by the sociological definitions. Trust is considered a

multidimensional construct critical for society's functioning. In this context, trust refers

to interpersonal relationships rather than individual relationships within a social structure.

Trust can also be identified as people's confidence in their assumptions of what other

people will do based on prior experiences (Gefen et al., 2003). Because trust relies on the

acts of others rather than the person who trusts, it is a crucial variable to research, particularly in mass communication. The media provide news to the general audience. As a result, media users trust and pick news based on their prior encounters with the news media as well as future expectations.

Expanding the concept of trust

Influences that impact trust levels include the first years of an individual, the nature of the individual's family, and the extent of exposure to various ideologies, politically and religiously (Baumgaertner et al., 2018). Perhaps this is what inevitably links the issue of trust to psychology (Miller & Mitamura, 2003; Mishler & Rose, 2001). What prompts us to accept and trust government sources while another would take a hostile approach? Here, human tendencies, self-motivation, and psychological structures go beyond other forms of interpretations that are equally important to subjective interpretations. This may confirm the interconnectivity linked to the concept of trust and its various difficulties and attempts to measure it (Daniller et al., 2017; Paliszkiewicz & Koohang, 2016).

Trust is also under the umbrella of the concept of social capital. There is no social capital without the element of trust among the members of society. This has been seen in studies conducted since the 1990s, and its use has dramatically increased in the social sciences. (Paxton, 1999; Portes, 1998; Putnam, 1993).

Trust dictates the amount and quality of communication between individuals in a community. The importance of trust stems from both the individual and the collective. It promotes the creation of safe and secure individuals and helps maximize their relations in an atmosphere of constructive social communication. Trust allows individuals to predict

the social context surrounding them and the nature of their transactions (Mishler & Rose, 1994; Rudolph & Evans, 2005).

Trust includes two aspects, one emotional and the other logical. Lewis & Weigert (1985, p. 972) define emotional trust as "trusting behavior motivated primarily by strong positive affect for the object of trust." Logical trust is the calculation of loss and gains towards objects. Both emotional and rational elements depend on the social interaction between us and others (Belli & Broncano, 2017; Sztompka, 1996; Tsfati & Cappella, 2003). Social interaction among individuals in a society creates a space of experience that becomes the determinant of the state of trust among them. The positive and negative social experiences determine our trust level towards each other as individuals and as groups.

We can know the meaning of trust and its dimensions through various means. Lewis and Weigert (1985) identified four aspects in which the concept of trust can be defined: predictability, value exchange, delayed reciprocity, and exposed vulnerabilities. Despite the difficulties associated with defining trust, the most significant challenges are not related to the definition and conceptual relational network as they emerge but in attempting to recognize and procedurally identify them (Kramer, 1999; Lagerspetz, 2015).

Trust is a critical issue for human societies in general, determining the degree and level of communication between its members and the level of homogeneity among them. It is essential because it is linked to both individual and collective aspects. It pushes for the reassuring of individuals and helps maximize relationships in an atmosphere of constructive social communication (Lewis & Weigert, 1985). Trust is important because

it allows individuals to predict the social context around them and the nature of the associated transactions (Newport & Saad, 1998).

Many studies have addressed the concept and meaning of trust, both through the implications associated with different dictionaries and encyclopedias or through modern forms of definitions (Tsfati & Ariely, 2014; Yang & Tang, 2010). As mentioned, many disciplines have dealt with the concept of trust, such as sociology, psychology, politics, and media studies. This concept is linked to many fields and not just one (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000). Also, this concept is associated with different analytical levels, beginning with the interpersonal level, which represents the initial level of interpersonal relationships and communication between each other, and ends with the broader social level. This means that trust is linked to long-established relationships associated with family, relatives, friends, and neighbors, and even relationships between people through community institutions, such as governmental institutions. There is a third level of informal institutions between the family and formal institutions established by individuals in civil society (Earle & Cvetkovich, 1995).

The definition of trust differs depending on the chosen unit of analysis. Analyzing the level of trust between individuals in their daily lives differs from analyzing it in larger community organizations. Attempting to reach a specific definition varies from society to society, depending on the level of progress it has reached. Trust in more traditional and conservative societies differs from modern and progressive societies (Johnson & Kaye, 2004). Some studies have looked at how trust changes across different cultures, "these results illustrate the risks of assuming that other cultures make judgments such as trust assessments the way that Western cultures do" (Klien et al., 2019, p. 10). It is important

to maintain that trust differs in meaning, context, and execution from culture to culture and person to person.

This adds to the complication of defining trust. There is a difference between the philosophical, sociological, psychological, economic, and political perspectives. Each discipline has its theoretical principles through which it deals with this concept and governs the definitions it ends with. DuBose (1995) clarifies that "the difficulty in defining trust illustrates the highly personal and social nature of the concept. Words contain an archeological stratigraphy representing the continuing evolution of meaning and usage. The connotation of trust changes over time and from culture to culture (p. 66)."

Giddens (1990) defined trust as "confidence in the reliability of a person or system, regarding a given set of outcomes or events, where that confidence expresses a faith in the probity or love of another, or in the correctness of abstract principles (p.34)." Giddens not only links trust with individuals and their relationships but also with the general societal context. Giddens' concept of trust is linked to the modernity of society and the resulting problems. Despite the modernity of society, the emergence of many issues has made the daily lives of individuals more complex, in addition to the many risks they face. These transformations have changed the status of trust in modern societies and made them, in the light of Giddens' interpretations, a kind of faith aimed at reducing the complexities of modern societies. Giddens emphasizes that individuals within society constantly need to develop confidence at all levels to cope with such many complexities and risks (Giddens, 1990).

Woolcock (1998) continued Giddens' attempts to explain trust in light of the complexities associated with modern societies. He believes that trust is necessarily involved in existing social relationships among individuals, organizations, and civic structures in society. According to Woolcock (1998), trust includes many elements, such as confidence, motivation, different forms of cooperation, and interpersonal interactions in a complex social milieu.

Fukuyama (1995) defined trust as expectations that arise through interaction among individuals in their community based on commonly shared norms. Also, Fukuyama sees trust as beliefs in which individuals behave in mutually supportive ways. The question of beliefs is similar to the idea of faith that Giddens has emphasized as an essential factor in countering the complexities of modernity. Fukuyama's attempt to define trust is exemplary in asserting that it represents common expectations among individuals that one side should not exploit another's vulnerability. Fukuyama's definition is similar to that of Misztal (1996), who sees trust as more than a cognitive understanding. Misztal sees it as the result of individual behaviors and associated expectations of the reactions of others.

Trust is crucial in the social sciences, where it has received considerable attention in many studies. Trust plays an essential role in the existing social reality by emphasizing a set of principles and mechanisms upon which society is based and determining the nature of communication between its members. Because of this, trust is highly influential in exigent societal issues such as stability, social peace, and civic engagement (Cohen & Prusak, 2001; Fukuyama, 2000; Latham, 2000; Pjesivac, 2017; Putnam, 2000; Rubenson, 2000).

Although many academics are interested in social capital due to the vast network of individuals' relationships, they turned trust into one of the most important pillars of social capital (Sobel, 2002; Stamm, 1994; Sutter & Kocher, 2007). This acknowledges trust's importance in human societies and distinguishes between what social capital means and what trust means more obscured. Instead, it is more challenging to turn trust into a factor of social capital, even though it is better to treat it as an independent and essential community process (Fukuyama, 1995; Fukuyama, 2000; Sztompka, 2000).

Stone and Hughes (2002) emphasized that the essence of social capital is social relations. Without social ties, social capital cannot be conceived. The incubation of social capital in any society is the communication, cooperation, and trust that exists among its members. The concept dates to the 1970s when Bourdieu referred to the benefits individuals receive through membership in specific communities (Bourdieu, 1986).

Another concept associated with trust is collective work. Collective work is that it constitutes social networks that also have acceptable values among their members. Putnam asserted that social capital refers to the collective values of social networks that people know. It also refers to the tendencies that arise from these networks, which lead to joint efforts among members of these different social networks (Putnam, 1995; Putnam, 2000). The foundation and prosperity of social capital are collective actions through social networks created by individuals while working through them.

To expand on the meaning of trust, we need not look further than driving. Even though it is an everyday and global activity, society accepted driving due to our trust in it. When driving, we trust the car we are driving, the road network designed and built by others, and the traffic signals present. When we drive, we also must trust ourselves and

the other drivers, including their vehicles, who share the roads with us. When we introduce passengers to the equation, it becomes even more complicated. We trust our passengers not to distract us; if we get distracted, we trust them to point it out to us. In return, they trust us to take them safely from point A to point B. There are many variables to consider when driving, and many of them are beyond our control. Considering all that could go wrong, it may seem remarkable how popular driving is and how dependent we have become on driving. The odds of being killed in a car accident are one in 5000 compared to the odds of being in a plane accident, which is one in 11 million (Ropeik, 2006). However, about a quarter of the flyers express some fear of flying. We sometimes put our trust in what is irrational. Trust is emotional yet logical. Trust is a labyrinth of many layers and levels of interaction that come together to create a functioning society within its given norms. It can also be defined as a communicative process that is integral to the successful functioning of society. We show our trust in others through different means of communication ranging from simple interactions such as speaking and listening to more complex behaviors such as accepting and adapting to societal norms and behaviors.

Theoretical Frameworks

Uses and Gratification Theory

The uses and gratifications theory is defined as a theoretical approach that clarifies and explains the fundamental role of the audience in the communicative process (Katz et al., 1974). This is done by viewing the audience as an active audience, and its activity is represented before, after, and during exposure. The audience chooses, before exposure, the content that meets their needs and achieves certain gratifications (Rubin,

2009). During exposure, the audience pays attention to specific messages, realizes them, and distinguishes between what is essential and unnecessary. After exposure, the audience chooses to retrieve the information it is exposed to. In other words, the public has a specific goal from its exposure to the media and seeks to achieve it through voluntary exposure dictated by its needs and desires (Saud Al-Bishr, Mahmoud, 1997).

The central assumption of the uses and gratification approach is that the audience is active (Rubin, 2009; Menon, 2022). Their use of means of communication is directed to satisfy their needs, and they choose the means that satisfy them. The audience chooses from among the content presented in the media outlet the content that suits them. The reason for the choices made is impacted by many variables and differs from one demographic to another (Katz et al., 1974).

The first practical application of the uses and gratifications approach in media studies came from Bauer in the 1960s; his article published in 1964 discussed his idea that mass media audiences are active and goal-oriented in their media use behavior. Bauer also opposed the concept of acceptable direct effects and proposed that people use mass media and its content to satisfy their specific desires (Severin & Tankard, 1992).

The uses and gratification theory has been applied to traditional media several times. For example, Leung and Wei (2000) examined telephone use. They were able to show people's different motives, whether task-oriented or social. Their results show that people used the telephone for task-oriented reasons such as setting up appointments. They also showed that the telephone was used to communicate with friends and family to reduce loneliness and maintain relationships. Towers (1985) showed that people at the

time used the radio more than other media sources to get news immediately and for entertainment purposes.

The uses and gratification theory has also been used to research the use of television when it comes to television shopping. Cortese and Rubin (2010) illustrated how watching television satisfied the needs of consumers for relaxation, entertainment, and escape from their worries and life. Television shopping provided consumers with brand information and helped people avoid malls. Studies have also utilized the uses and gratification theory when analyzing younger adults and their use of technology as a means of entertainment and escape (Ferguson et al., 2007). Bodine stated that "prior conditions led to individual needs, motives, and behaviors, which produced outcomes. By using the uses and gratifications theory to depict how individuals used traditional media to satisfy their motives, these results can provide insight to present-day digital media use" (2018, p. 8.).

The uses and gratification theory accepts that personal social and psychological components intercede with client behavior (Rubin, 2009). This is typically why, based on utilization habits alone, internet users cannot be categorized into specific groups (Vermass & Van de Wijngaert, 2004). Lee (2009) argued that it is critical to consider psychological and social differences as they impact the importance of the internet for its consumers. Due to this factor, researchers have not been able to establish user needs based on a person's internet usage on its own.

The theory also expects that individuals have the ability to understand and identify their motives for using media. Although study participants have demonstrated confidence in telling researchers their motives for using media, they have demonstrated a

higher ability to identify motives for specific uses and consumption of certain media types compared to general use. An example would be that people are more likely to identify their motives for watching a specific show on television compared to watching television as a news medium. Individuals are more mindful of their motives for using the internet compared to using the television (Strizhakova & Kramar, 2003). The theory explains why certain news mediums with lower trust levels could be used more than other news mediums with higher trust levels.

Hostile Media Effect

The theory of hostile media effect refers to the tendency of individuals most involved in a controversial issue to perceive media messages around it as hostile or biased against the direction they adopt (Feldman, 2019). Studies have shown that comments made by others affect individuals' attitudes about the opinion and media climate. Those aware of the bias of messages and who read information contrary to their existing tendencies realize that those messages are more aggressive and biased. This is related to the level of absorption of the issue (Vallone et al., 1985).

Al-Sharif & Hovland (1961) pointed out that the public sometimes abuses media content in its judgments, and this phenomenon has been called the hostile media effect. Some audiences view media content as non-neutral, even if it is deemed neutral, and it expresses the various angles of the news fairly. Researchers have studied this phenomenon empirically, verified its validity, and noted the existence of this state of hostility among the partisan public or those who hold specific political orientations.

The hostile media effect was first properly demonstrated in the study conducted by Vallone et al. (1985). It was also one of the earliest, if not the earliest hostile media

effect study to be conducted on college students. In the study, the researchers showed undergraduate students a collection of news reals from United States media coverage of a 1982 massacre of Palestinians by a Lebanese militia group. Viewers who identified as pro-Israel saw the coverage as against Israel, while viewers who identified as pro-Palestine saw the coverage as biased in Israel's favor. Those who were neutral saw the coverage as balanced.

Several studies show that hostile media perceptions are lowered when a media source is considered to agree with one's group and are heightened when the source is presumed to be unpleasant, which is consistent with a heuristic processing mechanism. For example, Arpan and Raney (2003) discovered that when a balanced news piece about their town's sports team came from their hometown daily, it was regarded as less antagonistic than when it came from a neutral-town or rival-town publication.

Similarly, Baum and Gussin (2007) found that the cable news stations Fox and CNN elicited biased judgments depending on their presumed partisan leanings. For example, liberals viewed election news credited to Fox as more hostile than conservatives, but the opposite was true for an identical article from CNN. In a study on audience perceptions of bias in partisan news sources, Kim (2015) found comparable results. Ariyanto et al. (2007) found that a media source's perceived alignment influences people's biased assessments. When an article appeared in a Muslim newspaper, Indonesian students thought it was biased against Christians. Still, when it was published in a Christian newspaper, they felt it was biased against Muslims.

As discussed earlier, one of the main consequences of the hostile media effect is its influence on political behavior. Feldman (2014) stated that "The hostile media effect

has been linked to feelings of indignation toward the media (Hwang et al., 2008),

generalized distrust of media and government institutions (Tsfati & Cohen, 2005), social

and political alienation (Tsfati, 2007), and greater willingness to engage in "corrective

actions" (Rojas, 2010), ranging from political discussion (Hwang et al., 2008; Rojas,

2010) and activism (Barnidge et al., 2015; Feldman et al., 2015) to violent protest (Tsfati

and Cohen, 2005)" (p. 8).

The hostile media effect is generally used to explain media bias as perceived by

news consumers. It helps answer the question, "how do people interpret the news?" This

study uses this theory to answer the question, "how does this interpretation affect where

people choose to get their news from?" Although there might be some studies that

utilized the hostile media effect in this manner before, they were not found by the

researcher.

Vanacker and Belmas Model

Trust in different news mediums can also be explained using a model proposed by

Vanacker and Belmas in 2009. Vanacker and Belmas' (2009) proposed a model that

shows trust exists on a spectrum. This model looks at the differences between trusting a

specific news entity to the medium as a whole. The smaller the scope, the lower the trust;

the broader the range, the more trust is perceived. These scopes could be anything from a

news entity such as Fox News to a news medium such as newspapers. The model also

shows that trust exists on a time continuum as well. "A decision to trust involves

assessing to what extent a party can be expected to fulfill a certain expectation in the

future" (Vanacker & Belmas, 2009, p. 112). This model is relatively new and has been

used in very few studies, such as Lee (2011). It relates to this study in its ability to allow

for the analysis of news mediums as a whole.

Figure 1

Vanacker and Belmas Model

A SUGGESTED MODEL FOR NEWS MEDIA TRUST
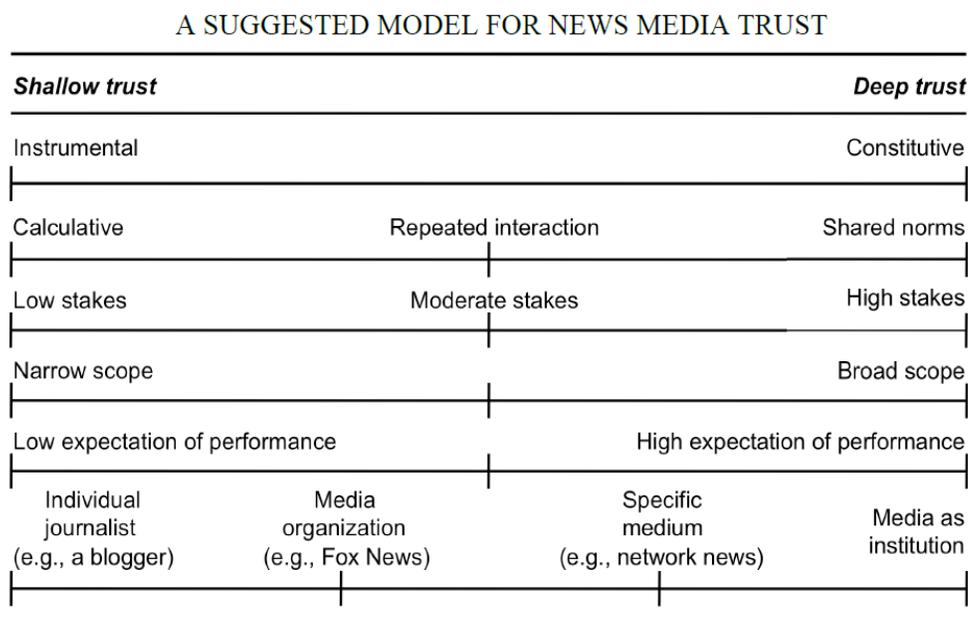
Source: Vanacker & Belmas, 2009

The Vanacker and Belmas Model shows how different levels or sizes of

journalistic organizations can affect the level of trust. The bottom row shows the different

levels a news source can be, from an individual journalist to a specific news medium to

media as an institution. It shows that trust exists on a spectrum. This row is what the

study focuses on. Vanacker and Belmas (2009) also discussed that future behavior could

be how the experience of trust was in the past.

Measuring Trust

Trust can be measured at different levels of society, such as at the individual,

community, or governmental organizations. Due to this, many methods of trust

measurement have been developed and utilized. For example, Edelman has developed

one of the most popular measures of trust in governments. It monitors citizens' trust in

institutions through four areas: government, non-government organizations, business, and

the media. This measure is based on asking individuals how much trust they have in each

institution by evaluating them from 1 to 9, where one means no trust and nine means

complete trust. The measure calculates the average confidence in the four domains,

dividing countries from 1 to 100, and countries at levels 60 to 100 having the trust of

their citizens, 50 to 59 with neutral trust, and 1 to 49 being low trust (Edelman, 2020).

Measuring trust also includes determining and quantifying how people receive

any brand or institution operating in the market and producing specific goods for

consumers (Champniss & Vila, 2011; Corbae et al., 2003; Paine, 2013). This type of

research is related to the relationships between consumers and the brand they accept. This

does not mean that this type of research begins after the product is released in the market,

but it is done before the product is launched, as the institutions try to identify the extent

of trust that consumers have in their brand.

In this situation, the measurement of trust is a method by which results can give

an accurate depiction through comparison according to predetermined criteria or bases,

usually done in quantitative or numerical form. It is pretty similar to the behavior of

individuals in their daily lives. When purchasing goods or trying to obtain services, we

have a pre-established standard by which we measure the quality of goods or services

(Uslaner, 2018).

Considering this, measuring trust helps institutions identify whether the

behaviors, programs, and activities that have been imposed have changed what people

know, think, and feel about the institutions. It also helps in identifying how they behave

towards these institutions through the forms of protests, votes, and purchases. Trust measurement helps determine whether the policies and programs adopted by institutions have impacted the levels of trust individuals have towards these institutions (Paine, 2013).

Trust, Media, and Credibility

Because it affects practically every element of social life, trust is essential to comprehending diverse human actions (Tsfati & Capella, 2003). For example, if an ill person believes that a doctor will provide them with the proper and correct treatment for a patient's well-being, they will be more inclined to seek medical advice or assistance from that doctor again. Similarly, media trust is essential since it influences which media people use and how often they use them (Strömbäck et al., 2020).

A person's conviction in the professionalism of journalistic activity may be the basis for their trust in the media (Liebes, 2000). Some media experts claim that if viewers do not trust the journalists and the institutions they belong to, the journalists will be less dedicated to journalistic standards. The higher level of trust viewers have in the news media, the more journalists' identification with professional standards pertaining to trust, such as being unbiased, getting the facts straight, and reporting both sides of the story, increases (Newport & Saad, 1998; Tsfati, 2004). This means when people have more confidence in news media; it helps to improve both the user experience and the continuation of journalistic standards.

The term "media credibility" has been used to describe practically all the research on public confidence in the news media. Despite academics conducting research pertaining to media credibility, they still use the term 'trust' (Johnson & Kaye, 2009;

Kiousis, 2001). Credibility is widely portrayed as both an ideal objective for journalism as a profession (Vultree, 2010) and an essential component of the news 'industry's survival strategy (Meyer, 2004). However, no universally acknowledged operationalization of the notion exists (Blach-Ørsten & Burkal, 2020). Trust is a broader concept (Lee, 2011). For example, news consumers would more likely trust a newspaper to get published daily and keep the government in check (Vanacker & Belmas, 2009).

Demographics and Trust

Previous research has found a correlating relationship between trust and socioeconomic variables (Bellemare & Kroeger, 2007). These variables include age, gender, education, and income. Gallup (2009) conducted a study that demonstrated the correlation between demographics and trust. For example, only 38% of males say they have a great deal or fair amount of trust in the media, compared to 51% of women. Furthermore, individuals aged 18 to 29 had the highest level of trust in the media, followed by those aged 65 and up. Among all age categories, people aged 50 to 64 have the least trust in the media.

According to Cook and Gronke (2005), education, age, and income all show confidence in media in a negative relationship. The news is consumed most heavily by older and better-educated people. The study also shows that actively consuming news media from the same source, or in this case, the product, can lead to a reduction of trust in it. This means that the more time people spend consuming news media from a source, the less trust they might have in it.

Mellman (2015), Patterson (2007), and Poindexter (2012) have all claimed that young Americans do not pay attention to daily news. Some studies show that this may not

be the case. A study by the American Press Institute (2015) found that most of the respondents found it at least "somewhat" important to them to keep up with the news. Head (2019) stated that young consumers relied on a "mix of strategies" to consume news media. This includes utilizing different types of social media, freelance sources, and news organizations. College students also do not have the same level of trust in the news as other age groups (Head et al., 2019). Some studies have shown that older consumers have a higher trust in the news compared to younger ones (Jones, 2018; Knight, 2018).

According to previous studies, a person's media usage during college might influence their future political awareness, knowledge, and activity (Buckingham, 1997; Lee, 2006). The process of socialization in news media habits takes place throughout this time. Graduation from college marks a significant and predictable shift in one's life cycle, which includes the creation of future media habits (Henke, 1985). O'Keefe & Spetnagel (1973) show that news media usage among college students may predict how they utilize it in the future.

Some studies show that there is a relationship between trust and the consumption of news media. Other studies show that this isn't the case. There have been many theories and tools used to conduct these studies. This study examines the importance of trust and its relation to news media consumption using the tools outlined in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 3

Methodology

Introduction

This study aimed to investigate the trust levels of college students in different news mediums and how it correlates to the amount of time spent using each news medium. Since there is a paucity of studies comparing data from college students in the USA to other countries, the study conducted the same survey in the USA and Egypt and compared the results. This chapter outlines the proposed research questions and study design.

Based on the review of related literature, the following research questions are posed. Research Question 1 (RQ1): What is the correlation between trust and the use of news mediums among college students in both Egypt and the USA? The following questions can be ascertained from RQ1. Its purpose is to examine the correlation between trust and different news mediums. The word "usage" in the question indicates the amount of time spent using the news medium. There are two sets of sub-questions for RQ1. The first set focuses on the Egyptian sample, while the second focuses on the United States sample.

RQ1a: Is there a correlation between trust and the use of newspapers in Egypt?

RQ1b: Is there a correlation between trust and the use of newspaper websites in Egypt?

RQ1c: Is there a correlation between trust and the use of television in Egypt?

RQ1d: Is there a correlation between trust and the use of tv channel websites in Egypt?

RQ1e: Is there a correlation between trust and the use of radio and podcasts in Egypt?

RQ1f: Is there a correlation between trust and the use of news websites in Egypt?

RQ1g: Is there a correlation between trust and the use of social media in Egypt?

RQ1h: Is there a correlation between trust and the use of blogs and vlogs in Egypt?

RQ1i: Is there a correlation between trust and the use of newspapers in the USA?

RQ1j: Is there a correlation between trust and the use of newspaper websites in the USA?

RQ1k: Is there a correlation between trust and the use of television in the USA?

RQ1l: Is there a correlation between trust and the use of television channel websites in the USA?

RQ1m: Is there a correlation between trust and the use of radio and podcasts in the USA?

RQ1n: Is there a correlation between trust and the use of news websites in the USA?

RQ1o: Is there a correlation between trust and the use of social media in the USA?

RQ1p: Is there a correlation between trust and the use of blogs & vlogs in the USA?

The literature review showcases the complex nature of trust and the constant evolution of both the term and society. Trust in news media has continuously changed since Gallup's first "American trust in mass media" poll in 1973 (Jones, 2018). Albeit,

the general trend has been a decrease in trust levels, there were some moments where there was an increase in it. The poll also reveals a difference in trust levels between generations and political affiliations. These changes have been slowly happening for decades.

The Gallup Poll shows that the older the person is, the more likely they trust the news. "Younger adults have come of an age in an era marked by partisan media and fake news, while older Americans' trust may have been established long ago in an era of widely-read daily newspapers and trusted television news anchors" (Jones, 2018, p. 186). Understanding current news media consumption habits and trust levels of younger generations could predict future patterns and trust.

As people growing up in different socioeconomic statuses are affected by different variables in various manners (Conger et al., 2010), there is a reason to compare different groups together to further the understanding of the data gathered. A comparison becomes possible by selecting two groups of college students who go to the same faculty in public universities. This brings us to Research Question 2 (RQ2): What are the differences in usage of news mediums and trust per news medium between Egypt and the USA? This question has three goals. The question aims to compare the time spent using each news medium between the Egyptian and American samples. The question will also compare the trust levels in each news medium and overall trust in news media between the Egyptian and American samples. Finally, the question will compare any correlations between usage of news media and trust in each news medium as well as overall trust in news media between the two samples.

Study Design

This quantitative study measured college students' trust in media and different news mediums and showed the amount of time students spend consuming each news medium. An eight-question survey was administered to the sample to answer the research question. The survey gathered information regarding the students' level of trust in media, different news mediums, and the amount of time spent using each news medium.

Different socioeconomic variables have been shown to directly correlate with the trust level and amount of news media consumption (Bellemare & Kroeger, 2007; Cook & Gronke, 2005). Therefore, the survey includes demographical questions, including age, gender, and major.

The consumption of media was measured using two methods. The first method focuses on where students have received the last major news they recall, and the second is where they will go for more information in the future. The amount of media consumed was measured by asking the amount of time spent using each type of news medium per day.

The survey included questions focused on measuring trust and the usage of eight different news mediums: newspapers, newspaper websites, television, television channel websites, radio & podcasts, news websites, social media, and blogs & vlogs. The trust level for each news medium was measured using a 6-point Likert scale from 0 to 5, with 0 being 'no trust at all' and 5 being 'complete trust.' The overall trust in media was measured using a 6-point Likert scale from 0 to 5.

Sample

This study compared news media trust and the consumption of news media between a developed country and a developing country. The two countries chosen for this study are the USA and Egypt. The USA is considered a developed country, while Egypt is a developing country (United Nations, 2014). A public university was chosen from each country to have the survey conducted. The university selected in the USA is a medium-sized, public (state) Midwestern university. The university chosen in Egypt is the second-largest public university in terms of student enrollment in Egypt.

The survey was administered to students in similar disciplines. This is because students in different faculties tend to have different habits. This will reduce the chance of skewed data as students in different majors could potentially have different habits (Feldman & Newcomb, 2019; Gao et al., 2011). The survey was administered to a combined sample of approximately 400 undergraduate students in the United States and Egypt. To reflect the size differences in the universities, the goal is to survey one hundred seventy students at the United States university and two hundred and thirty students at the university in Egypt.

Convenience sampling was used to recruit university students. The recruitment method is different in each university. In the university in the USA, recruitment was done by approaching larger classes and requesting permission from the faculty to survey the students during class time. This allowed the researcher to survey the largest number of students simultaneously. Recruitment in Egypt was more straightforward as the researcher only approached classes with students who are only enrolled in the College of Arts, as campuses in public universities in Egypt are usually college oriented. This means

that students in the College of Arts are all in the same location and do not mix with students from other colleges. All the College of Arts students are on one campus, not shared by other faculties. Eight different small to medium-sized classes (15 to 40 students) were surveyed.

Procedures

After classes were selected, instructors were contacted either in person or through email to ask permission to conduct the surveys during class time. Two instructors were contacted at the university in the United States. If either instructor had declined, more instructors would have been contacted for permission. Five instructors were contacted at the Egyptian University. Before contacting the instructors in Egypt, the researcher will contact the dean of the college to get permission to conduct research. The date and time of the survey were agreed upon with the instructors, and an email reminder was sent a day or two before the confirmed time approached. The survey was shared beforehand with instructors who requested it. An estimate of the time was also shared with the instructors.

A brief introduction to the survey was given to the students before the surveys were handed out. The introduction explained the purpose of the study, that participation is optional and that the minimum age to participate is 18. The participants were asked to return the survey to the researcher upon completion. The survey can be completed in approximately 15 minutes. The majority of the surveys were completed within 10 minutes.

The researcher assisted the participants in completing the survey when needed. This included answering any questions that the participants had. Surveys were available

in English in the United States and Arabic and English in Egypt. As most students in public universities in Egypt have a working knowledge of English, no student requested the Arabic version.

Measurement and Analysis

Surveys with two or more unanswered questions, excluding question 6, voided the survey. Question 6 will measure the amount of media consumed. This is measured in time spent using and consuming news media. The surveys were considered valid if there was sufficient evidence that parts of the question are left blank to indicate 0. Sufficient evidence could be that some of the answers provided show thought was put in and that the answer mathematically makes sense. Saying that social media, for example, was used for 30 hours a day would not constitute a valid answer. Surveys with participants choosing an age lower than 18 will also be voided. Surveys were omitted if the major written down does not relate to the College of Arts in either university.

If there were noticeable outliers, the researcher used their best judgment to determine if the survey was valid or not. An example of this could be that one of the respondents indicates that they spent an unreasonable amount of time using news mediums, such as spending 20 hours a day listening to the radio. "An outlier is an observation in the data that differs noticeably from other observations" (Ismail, 2008, p. 21).

Questions four, five, and six will help to determine the amount of media consumed. Participants were asked where they learned about the last major news event and where they will go to learn more about a major news event in the future. Participants were also asked to estimate the time they spent consuming media from different news

mediums per day. Operational definitions and examples were provided for most of the different news mediums in the survey to assist students in understanding them. The amount of media consumed is recorded using hours and minutes.

To answer the research questions, participants were asked to answer questions that utilize a Likert scale to measure trust. The scale used is a 6-point scale from 0 to 5. As shown in Chapter 2, there are many ways to measure trust, including the Likert scale, known for its simplicity and versatility in measuring attitudes and opinions correlating to trust (McCall, 2001). Likert scales have a history of being adapted and utilized in studies where trust was measured (Bijlsma-Frankema & Woolthuis, 2005; McClean, 2012; Nooteboom & Six, 2003).

Trust was measured using questions seven and question eight. Question seven measures the overall trust in news media, while question 8 measures trust in each news medium separately. Both answers were used to answer the research questions.

Data analysis was performed using SPSS. The significance levels reported are $p <$ .05 and $p < .01$. There are also tables and figures that compare results to help answer the research questions.

Limitations

Using the sample discussed above will create several limitations for this methodology. The main issue is that the study's sample is small and limited to specific colleges; hence, it can't be used to generalize college students as a whole. A problem with using this sample is that people from across the countries, and in some cases, the world, will travel to enroll in universities. This means that the sample is not specific to a group of people from a particular geographic location but to those who happen to find

themselves in that specific location. Another limitation of this sample is that it intentionally samples a group of people with the knowledge that some of the surveys will be omitted. This is specific to the application of the survey in the university in the USA. Another weakness of the survey is that there is no exact definition of what constitutes a major news event. This is left for the interpretation of the participant.

Conclusion

This quantitative study utilized a survey conducted in two different universities in two different countries to achieve its goals. The sample was a convenience sample specifically looking at students who study in similar fields. The study utilized several statistical analysis methods to answer the research questions.

CHAPTER 4

Results

This study examined the trust levels of college students in different news mediums and how it correlates to the amount of time spent using each news medium. The study also looked at how these habits differ between Egyptian college students and college students from the USA. This chapter presents the survey results for each group of college students. The chapter looks at the demographics of each group, trust levels in media in general, news medium, and time spent using each medium. A survey was provided to the college students participating in the study. In total, 221 participants completed the survey in Egypt, while 171 completed it in the USA. This makes the total sample size 392 participants.

Demographic Information

The total number of participants was 392, which represents two different groups. The first group is the Egyptian sample comprising 221 participants, of which 44.79% (n = 99) were male while 55.20% (n = 122) were female. The ages of the Egyptian sample ranged from 18 to 28 years old, of which 81% (n = 179) were between the ages of 18 and 22. The American sample comprised of 171 participants, of which 49.1% (n = 84) were male while 50.9% (n = 87) were female. The ages of the American sample ranged from 18 to 28 years old, of which 75.11% (n = 166) were between the ages of 18 and 22.

Survey questions seven and eight attempted to measure the amount of trust college students have in news media as a whole and trust in the eight news mediums the study looks at. Question seven examined the average overall trust in news media. This was measured on a scale of 0 to 5. The overall trust in news media in Egypt was 2.64 (n = 217), while the average for the USA sample was 2.89 (n = 171).

Research Question 1

Research question 1 examined the relationship between trust and the use of news mediums among college students in both Egypt and the USA. The purpose of the question is to investigate the correlation between using a news medium (amount of time spent using it) and the amount of trust a participant has in it. There are 16 sub-questions for RQ1. The first eight focus on the Egyptian sample, while the second 8 focus on the United States sample.

Research question 1a examined the relationship between trust and the use of newspapers in Egypt. A Pearson correlation was calculated to determine the relationship between participants' time spent using newspapers and the amount of trust they have in using newspapers. A significant relationship was not found (r (217) = .005, p > .05) between time using newspapers and the amount of trust they have in using newspapers.

Research question 1b looked at the relationship between trust and the use of newspaper websites in Egypt. A Pearson correlation was calculated to determine the relationship between participants' time spent using newspaper websites and the amount of trust they have in newspaper websites. A significant relationship was not found (r (217) = .102, p > .05).

To answer research question 1c, which examined the relationship between trust and the use of television in Egypt, a Pearson correlation was calculated to explore the relationship between participants' time spent using television and the amount of trust they have in television. A positive relationship was found (r (217) = .138, p < .05), indicating a relationship between trust and the use of television in Egypt.

Research question 1d looked at the relationship between trust and the use of TV channel websites in Egypt. A Pearson correlation was calculated to determine the relationship between participants' time spent using TV channel websites and the amount of trust they have in tv channel websites. A significant relationship was not found (r (217) = .092, p > .05).

Research question 1e examined the relationship between the use of radio and podcasts and trust in Egypt. A Pearson correlation was calculated to examine the relationship between participants' time spent using radio and podcasts and the amount of trust they have in radio and podcasts. A significant relationship was not found (r (217) = .122, p > .05).

To answer research question 1f, which examined the relationship between trust and the use of news websites in Egypt, a Pearson correlation was calculated to determine the relationship between participants' time spent using news websites and the amount of trust they have in news websites. A positive relationship was found (r (217) = .176, p < .01), indicating a relationship between trust and the use of news websites in Egypt.

Research question 1g looked at the relationship between trust and the use of social media in Egypt. A Pearson correlation was calculated to examine the relationship between participants' time spent using social media and the amount of trust they have in social media. A significant relationship was not found (r (217) = .096, p > .05).

To answer research question 1f, which examined the relationship between trust and the use of blogs and vlogs in Egypt, a Pearson correlation was calculated to investigate the relationship between participants' time spent using blogs and vlogs and the amount of trust they have in blogs and vlogs. A positive relationship was found (r

(217) = .300, $p < .01$), indicating a relationship between trust and the use of blogs and

vlogs in Egypt.

Table 1 illustrates correlations between trust in news mediums and time spent

using news mediums for Egyptian college students.

Table 1

*Correlations Between Trust in News Mediums and Time Spent Using News Mediums
(Egypt)*

Trust in:		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Time spent using news medium:									
Newspaper (1)	Pearson Correlation	0.005	-0.021	.156*	0.101	0.033	0.057	0.087	.214**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.947	0.762	0.022	0.136	0.633	0.405	0.204	0.002
	N	217	217	217	217	215	216	217	217
Newspaper Websites (2)	Pearson Correlation	-0.052	0.102	0.106	0.044	-0.053	0.099	0.075	-0.008
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.442	0.134	0.119	0.523	0.439	0.146	0.269	0.902
	N	217	217	217	217	215	216	217	217
Television (3)	Pearson Correlation	-0.049	-0.034	.138*	0.03	-0.036	0.129	.169*	0.124
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.469	0.621	0.043	0.662	0.601	0.059	0.012	0.069
	N	217	217	217	217	215	216	217	217
Television Channel Website (4)	Pearson Correlation	-0.027	-0.055	0.063	0.092	0.049	0.119	.238**	0.062
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.696	0.424	0.355	0.177	0.472	0.08	0	0.36
	N	217	217	217	217	215	216	217	217
Radio & Podcasts (5)	Pearson Correlation	-0.043	-0.068	0.012	-0.028	0.122	0.13	.156*	.192**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.531	0.32	0.866	0.683	0.075	0.056	0.021	0.005
	N	217	217	217	217	215	216	217	217
News Websites (6)	Pearson Correlation	-0.061	0.021	.137*	-0.025	0.028	.176**	0.039	0.073
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.372	0.761	0.043	0.719	0.688	0.01	0.567	0.284
	N	217	217	217	217	215	216	217	217
Social Media (7)	Pearson Correlation	-0.008	0.042	-0.025	-0.111	-0.047	0.079	0.096	0.103
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.902	0.541	0.717	0.105	0.491	0.247	0.159	0.131
	N	216	216	216	216	214	215	216	216
Blogs and Vlogs (8)	Pearson Correlation	0.121	0.131	-0.039	-0.075	0.072	0.05	0.113	.300**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.076	0.054	0.567	0.273	0.29	0.469	0.096	0
	N	217	217	217	217	215	216	217	217

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Shifting focus to the USA sample, research question 1i looked at the relationship between trust and the use of newspapers in the USA. A Pearson correlation was calculated to determine the relationship between participants' time spent using newspapers and the amount of trust they have in using newspapers. A significant relationship was not found (r (217) = - .025, p > .05).

Research question 1j looked at the relationship between trust and the use of newspaper websites in the USA. A Pearson correlation was calculated to determine the relationship between participants' time spent using newspaper websites and the amount of trust they have in newspaper websites. A significant relationship was not found (r (217) = - .033, p > .05).

Research question 1k analyzed the relationship between trust and the use of television in the USA. A Pearson correlation was calculated to determine the relationship between participants' time spent using television and the amount of trust they have in television. A significant relationship was not found (r (217) = .130, p > .05).

Research question 1l examined the relationship between trust and the use of television channel websites in the USA. A Pearson correlation was calculated to determine the relationship between participants' time spent using television channel websites and the amount of trust they have in television channel websites. A significant relationship was not found (r (217) = -.023, p > .05).

To answer research question 1m, which examined the relationship between trust and the use of radio and podcasts in the USA, a Pearson correlation was calculated to explore the relationship between participants' time spent using radio and podcasts and the amount of trust they have in radio and podcasts. A positive relationship was found (r

(217) = .224, *p* < .01), indicating a relationship between trust and the use of radio and podcasts in the USA.

Research question 1n examined the relationship between trust and the use of news websites in the USA. A Pearson correlation was calculated to determine the relationship between participants' time spent using news websites and the amount of trust they have in news websites. A significant relationship was not found (*r* (217) = .069, *p* > .05).

Research question 1o looked at the relationship between trust and the use of social media in the USA. A Pearson correlation was calculated to determine the relationship between participants' time spent using social media and the amount of trust they have in social media. A positive relationship was found (*r* (217) = .192, *p* = .01), indicating a relationship between trust and the use of social media in the USA.

Research question 1p examined the relationship between trust and the use of blogs and vlogs in the USA. A Pearson correlation was calculated to determine the relationship between participants' time spent using blogs and vlogs and the amount of trust they have in blogs and vlogs. A positive relationship was found (*r* (217) = .273, *p* < .01), indicating a relationship between trust and the use of blogs and vlogs in the USA.

Table 2 illustrates correlations between trust in news mediums and time spent using news mediums for American college students.

Table 2

Correlations Between Trust in News Mediums and Time Spent Using News Mediums (USA)

	Trust in:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Time spent using news medium:									
Newspaper (1)	Pearson Correlation	-0.025	-0.058	-0.016	0.032	0.108	-0.007	0.044	0.087
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.747	0.451	0.84	0.683	0.162	0.928	0.574	0.262
	N	170	169	169	170	170	170	169	170
Newspaper Websites (2)	Pearson Correlation	-0.103	-0.033	-.139*	-0.032	0.016	-0.029	-0.09	-0.076
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.183	0.673	0.042	0.676	0.838	0.708	0.247	0.326
	N	170	169	169	170	170	170	169	170
Television (3)	Pearson Correlation	0.122	-0.015	0.13	0.094	0.115	0.031	0.033	0.123
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.113	0.845	0.092	0.219	0.134	0.686	0.671	0.11
	N	171	170	170	171	171	171	170	171
Television Channel Website (4)	Pearson Correlation	-0.04	-0.088	-0.065	-0.023	0.061	0.063	-0.035	0.115
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.604	0.257	0.402	0.762	0.426	0.413	0.652	0.136
	N	170	169	169	170	170	170	169	170
Radio & Podcasts (5)	Pearson Correlation	0.027	-0.07	0.079	-0.049	.224**	0.085	-0.007	0.022
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.729	0.368	0.305	0.521	0.003	0.27	0.928	0.774
	N	171	170	170	171	171	171	170	171
News Websites (6)	Pearson Correlation	-.200**	-0.132	-0.096	0.007	-0.053	0.069	-0.035	0.074
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.009	0.088	0.216	0.923	0.491	0.37	0.653	0.336
	N	170	169	169	170	170	170	169	170
Social Media (7)	Pearson Correlation	0.105	0.122	.179*	0.098	0.117	.175*	.192**	.172*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.173	0.113	0.019	0.2	0.129	0.022	0.01	0.024
	N	171	170	170	171	171	171	170	171
Blogs and Vlogs (8)	Pearson Correlation	-0.032	-0.03	.197**	.194**	.147*	0.089	0.034	.273**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.674	0.697	0.01	0.01	0.048	0.249	0.663	0
	N	171	170	170	171	171	171	170	171

$* p < .05, ** p < .01$

Tables 1 and 2 also revealed other correlations between trust in certain news mediums and time spent using other news mediums. This is especially relevant, as shown in Table 2, where the time spent using social media and blogs and vlogs revealed a positive correlation with trust in other news mediums such as television, television

channel websites, and radio and podcasts. Although these correlations illustrate significance, they are outside the scope of the study and will not be discussed further.

Research question 2

Research question two focused on the differences in the usage of news mediums and trust per news medium between Egyptian and American college students. This question has three goals. The first goal of the question is to compare the time spent using each news medium between the Egyptian and American samples. The second goal of the question is to compare the trust in each news medium as well as overall trust in news media between the Egyptian sample and the American sample. Finally, the third goal is to compare any correlations between usage of news media and trust in each news medium as well as overall trust in news media between the two samples, as seen in tables 1, 2, 3, and 4.

Time Spent Using and Trust in News Mediums

Table 3 illustrates the time spent using different news mediums for Egypt and the USA. For Egypt, the most-used news medium per day is social media, amounting to 6.53 hours. Following this is television channel websites at 2.36 hours. The least used news medium was newspapers, with 0.48 hours per day. For the USA sample, the most-used news medium was social media at 4.27 hours per day. This is followed by television at 1.80 hours per day. The least used news medium is the newspaper, accounting for only 0.19 hours per day.

Table 3

Time Spent Using Each News Medium by Country

	Egypt Mean (hours/day)	USA Mean (hours/day)
Newspaper	0.48	0.19
Newspaper Websites	1.12	0.78
Television	2.00	1.80
Television Channel Website	2.36	0.76
Radio & Podcasts	1.24	1.09
News Websites	1.24	0.65
Social Media	6.53	4.27
Blogs & Vlogs	1.91	0.39
Average	2.11	1.24

The overall trust in news media in Egypt was 2.64 ($n = 217$), while the average for the USA sample was 2.89 ($n = 171$). Additional information regarding the trust of each news medium by country is shown in figure 1. Further, Table 4 illustrates the correlation between the overall trust in news media and time spent using each medium.

Figure 2

Average Trust of News Mediums Per Country
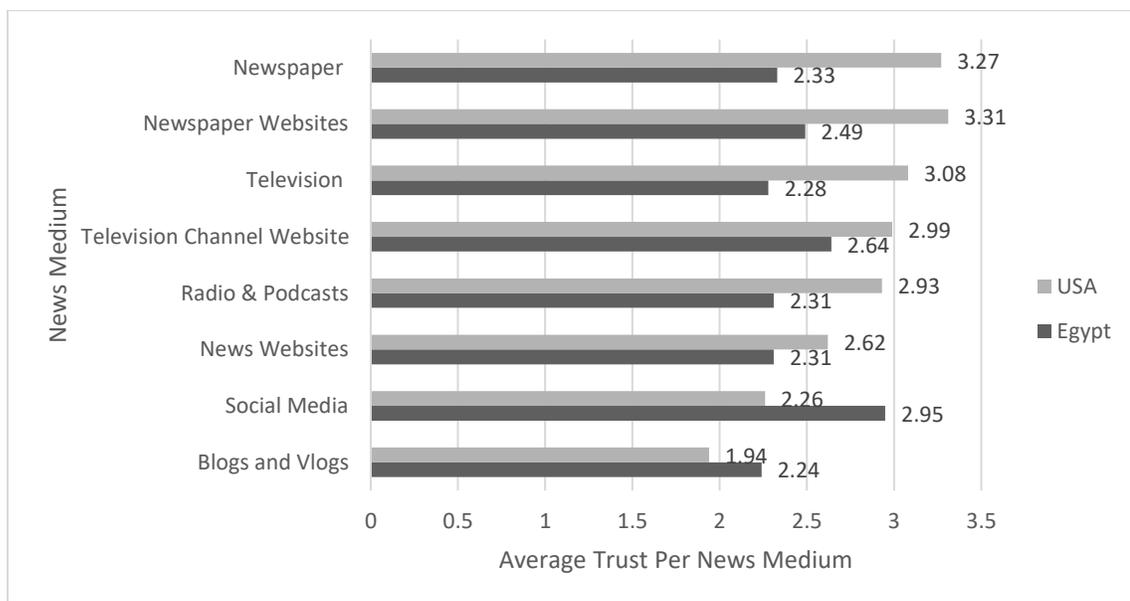
Figure 1 shows the average trust of each news medium for Egypt and the USA based on the participants' responses. For Egypt, the most trustworthy news medium is social media at 2.95. This is followed by television channel websites and newspaper websites. The least trusted news mediums are blogs and vlogs at 2.24 and television at 2.28. For the USA sample, figure 1 shows that the most trustworthy news medium for the participants is newspaper websites at 3.31, closely followed by newspapers at 3.27. The least trusted news mediums are blogs & vlogs at 1.94 and social media at 2.26.

Table 4 shows the correlation between overall trust in news media and the time spent using each news medium for Egypt and the USA. The following section highlights the significant correlations that were found.

Table 4

Correlation Between Overall Trust in News Media and Time Spent Using News Mediums by Country

	Egypt Pearson Correlation	Sig. (2-tailed)	N	USA Pearson Correlation	Sig. (2-tailed)	N
Newspaper	.146*	0.32	216	.057	.462	170
Newspaper Websites	.235**	.001	216	.526	.526	170
Television	.088	.200	216	.136*	.046	171
Television Channel Website	.075	.275	216	-.012	.881	170
Radio & Podcasts	.134*	.050	216	.134*	.050	171
News Websites	.110	.109	216	.038	.619	170
Social Media	-.025	.713	215	.149*	.049	171
Blogs and Vlogs	.107	.116	216	.120	.119	171

* p < .05, ** p < .01

A Pearson correlation was calculated to determine the relationship between participants' overall trust in news media and the amount of time spent using the newspaper in Egypt. A positive relationship was found (r (216) = .146, $p < .05$), indicating a relationship between overall trust and the use of newspapers in Egypt.

A Pearson correlation was calculated to determine the relationship between participants' overall trust in news media and the amount of time spent using newspaper websites in Egypt. A positive relationship was found (r (216) = .235, $p < .01$), indicating a relationship between overall trust and the use of newspaper websites in Egypt.

A Pearson correlation was calculated to determine the relationship between participants' overall trust in news media and the amount of time spent using television in

the USA. A positive relationship was found (r (171) = .136, $p < .05$), indicating a relationship between overall trust and the use of television in the USA.

A Pearson correlation was calculated to determine the relationship between participants' overall trust in news media and the amount of time spent using radio and podcasts in Egypt. A positive relationship was found (r (216) = .134, $p = .05$), indicating a relationship between overall trust and the use of radio and podcasts in Egypt.

A Pearson correlation was calculated to determine the relationship between participants' overall trust in news media and the amount of time spent using radio and podcasts in the USA. A positive relationship was found (r (171) = .134, $p = .05$), indicating a relationship between overall trust and the use of radio and podcasts websites in the USA.

A Pearson correlation was calculated to determine the relationship between participants' overall trust in news media and the amount of time spent using social media in the USA. A positive relationship was found (r (171) = .149, $p < .05$), indicating a relationship between overall trust and the use of social media in the USA.

Based on a cursory review of Table 4, it appears that there are differences between the Egyptian sample and the American sample. For the Egyptian sample, there is a positive correlation between overall trust in news media and time spent using news mediums for newspapers, newspaper websites, and radio and podcasts. For the American sample, there are positive correlations for television, radio and podcasts, and social media. The only overlap between the two samples for a positive correlation is radio and podcasts.

Conclusion

   Chapter 4 showcased the results collected from the survey. The first section of the chapter showed the demographic information of the sample. The second section showed information relevant to RQ1 and RQ2, while the third part of the chapter showed information relevant to RQ2. The following chapter will summarize the study, discuss the results shown in this chapter and provide recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER 5

Discussion

This study examined the relationship between the usage of different news mediums and the amount of trust in each news medium. The study collected information from two different groups of college students. The first group attended a public university in Egypt, while the second group attended a state university in the United States. Previous studies have investigated the change in trust and news consumption patterns for young Americans, such as Tsfati and Cappella (2005). More recent studies focused on social media usage and how it correlates with trust (Karlsen & Aalberg, 2021; Singh et al., 2020). However, only a few studies have examined the relationship between trust and the usage of news mediums. Some recent examples include Lee (2011) and Nelson and Kim (2021). The study also compared results between the two groups on the basis that they are of different socioeconomic statuses as they are from different countries of different stages of development. No studies were found that show this has been done before. A survey was used to collect data to allow the researcher to answer the following research questions.

Research Question 1 (RQ1): What is the correlation between trust and the use of news mediums among college students in both Egypt and the USA?

RQ1a: Is there a correlation between trust and the use of newspapers in Egypt?

RQ1b: Is there a correlation between trust and the use of newspaper websites in Egypt?

RQ1c: Is there a correlation between trust and the use of television in Egypt?

RQ1d: Is there a correlation between trust and the use of tv channel websites in Egypt?

RQ1e: Is there a correlation between trust and the use of radio and podcasts in Egypt?

RQ1f: Is there a correlation between trust and the use of news websites in Egypt?

RQ1g: Is there a correlation between trust and the use of social media in Egypt?

RQ1h: Is there a correlation between trust and the use of blogs and vlogs in Egypt?

RQ1i: Is there a correlation between trust and the use of newspapers in the USA?

RQ1j: Is there a correlation between trust and the use of newspaper websites in the USA?

RQ1k: Is there a correlation between trust and the use of television in the USA?

RQ1l: Is there a correlation between trust and the use of television channel websites in the USA?

RQ1m: Is there a correlation between trust and the use of radio and podcasts in the USA?

RQ1n: Is there a correlation between trust and the use of news websites in the USA?

RQ1o: Is there a correlation between trust and the use of social media in the USA?

RQ1p: Is there a correlation between trust and the use of blogs & vlogs in the USA?

Research Question 2 (RQ2): What are the differences in usage of news mediums and trust per news medium between Egypt and the USA?

Relationship Between Trust and the Use of News Mediums

The first research question sought correlations between trust and the usage or amount of time spent using each news medium. Sixteen sub-questions were proposed; the first eight examined the correlation for the Egyptian sample, while the second eight examined the correlation for the American sample. For the Egyptian student population, positive correlations were found between the amount of time spent using television, news websites, and blogs and vlogs and the amount of trust the participants have in them. The rest of the news mediums had no significant correlation between trust in the news medium and time spent using it. For the American student population, positive correlations between the amount of time spent using radio and podcasts, social media, and blogs and vlogs and the amount of trust participants have in them. The rest of the news mediums had no significant correlation between news medium and time spent using it.

A study conducted by the American Press Institute (2016) proposed that trust components differ by news source and topic. For example, the study broke down trust to reflect concise information and entertainment value. They found that 80% of the respondents valued concise information when it comes to national politics, compared to 30% who valued the entertainment aspect of the news report or news source. This study does not measure trust in different ways; hence there might be more correlation established if trust is broken down into smaller pieces.

Blogs and vlogs are the only news medium that has shown a significant correlation when it comes to the relationship between time spent using it and the amount of trust a participant has in it for both the Egyptian sample and the American sample. No other news mediums had a significant correlation for both samples. Lee (2011) had a correlation between trust and the use of online news sources that also include blogs and vlogs. Dutton and Shepherd (2006) showed that people who use the internet actively are generally more trustworthy of sources on the internet.

Only six of the 16 sub-questions showed any correlation. The lack of correlations between trust and specific news mediums could indicate that trust is insignificant when choosing which news mediums to use. It is also consistent with the uses and gratification theory, where the audience is active. In this case, it could indicate that the audience does not seek out news mediums that they find most trustworthy, but news mediums that allow the consumer to be validated or satisfy their need for validation of their conceptions and opinions. News does not necessarily shape a person's views. A person with set views seeks out specific news sources and mediums to confirm their views. The uses and gratification theory would also assume that the use of certain news mediums is linked to ease of use.

Differences in the Usage of News Mediums and Trust per News Medium

Research Question 2 compared the results from the Egyptian sample to the American sample. What are the differences in usage of news mediums and trust per news medium between Egypt and the USA? This question has three goals. The first goal is to compare the time spent using each news medium between the Egyptian sample and the American sample (see Table 3).

For the Egyptian and USA samples, social media is the most used news medium by the participants. For Egypt, it accounts for 6.53 hours per day, while for the USA, it accounts for 4.27 hours per day. Online news mediums account for the majority of news media consumption for both groups. For Egypt, online news medium usage is 75.13% of the time spent using news mediums, while for the USA, it is 69.05% of the time spent using news mediums. This shows that regardless of the average income disparity between Egyptian and American students, there is no notable gap regarding technological usage, reliance, and advancement.

For the US, the time spent using social media is not surprising as 93% of Millennials (ages 23 to 38 in 2019) in the USA own smartphones, and nearly 100% say they use the internet (Schaeffer, 2019). In 2019, 86% of millennials in the USA said they used social media (Vogels, 2019). In 2018, 89% of college students in the USA said they received news from social media weekly and 72% daily. This is compared to 45% weekly and 15% daily for television (Head et al., 2018). This shows a unique aspect of the US university student community, as when looking at the primary news source of American adults aged 18 and older in 2018, it was television, of which 49% of the sample got their news (Shearer, 2018).

Many studies revealed a similar amount of time spent browsing social media by Americans in a similar age group as the sample. 74.4% of survey respondents ($n = 162$) in Liu (2016) "reported spending 1-4 hours on social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.) during a typical day" (p. 27). For the Egyptian sample, social media usage is higher than in the US sample. This could come as a surprise as internet usage in

Egypt is not close to the rate it is used in the US. 90% of US adults use the internet compared to 48.1% in Egypt (Pew Research Center, 2019).

RQ2 also compared the trust levels in each news medium as well as overall trust in news media between the Egyptian sample and the American sample. The overall trust in news media in Egypt was 2.64 ($n = 217$), while the average for the USA sample was 2.89 ($n = 171$) (see Figure 2).

People's trust or mistrust of the media can be explained by their biases (Gunther, 1988). There is always a mix of variables that affect trust levels. Even political orientation can be impactful, as shown in previous studies. Studies have shown that those who distrust the news media in the US tend to be conservatives who engage with like-minded people (Jones, 2004; Eveland & Shah, 2003). A 2019 study by Gallup showed that American trust in mass media is down to 41%. What is worth noting about this study is that there are clear partisan lines regarding the level of trust. Trust levels in news media for Democrats, Independents, and Republicans are 69%, 36%, and 15%, respectively. Annual surveys done by Gallup and Pew show that political affiliations do matter when it comes to trust in media.

This could be linked to the hostile media effect where a person is likely to deem news mediums as biased if they are not seen from a source that the person generally associates as trustworthy. Although this level of trustworthiness might not play as significant of a role as the uses and gratification theory has shown, people will seek out news that validates their opinion. Anything else might be ignored as biased or non-trustworthy. Past and current habits also affect future habits. Vanacker and Belmas (2009) suggest that past habits affect trust levels in the future.

The results for the trust levels in each news medium are shown in Figure 2. Here we can generally see that the Egyptian sample has a higher trust in social media and less trust in more traditional news sources. This could be because the traditional news sources are either publicly owned or are subject to more government restrictions and supervision. This could take away from the credibility of the news sources. The American sample has more trust in traditional news sources. This is consistent with the Vanacker and Belmas model, where a news medium will have more trust than an individual or even a news organization. The model proposes that the larger the entity, the more trust the entity would have. Traditional news sources such as newspapers and radio stations are usually seen as larger institutions or part of large institutions and more established. This leads to a larger amount of trust.

The final goal of research question 2 is to compare any correlations between the trust in each news medium and the usage of the news medium, as well as overall trust in news media and the usage of news mediums between the two samples. Table 4 shows correlations between the overall trust in news media and the time spent using specific news mediums. The results showed that for the Egyptian sample, a correlation was found between overall trust in news media and the usage of newspapers, newspaper websites, and radio and podcasts. For the USA sample, correlations were found for television, radio and podcasts, and social media. The study shows that only a few correlations have been found. This can be expected, as shown in other studies. For example, Lee (2011) found no significant correlation between the overall trust in news media and the use of news mediums.

The results from Egypt show an interesting trend. All three significant correlations relate to organizations that are generally owned, run, or heavily influenced by the government. This could be seen that the trust in certain news mediums could be directly related to the trust in the government. Reporters Sans Frontières (RSF) reported that in the last decade, freedom of the press in Egypt has been declining rapidly (RSF, 2021). They show that over a hundred journalists have been arrested. RSF's Media Ownership Monitor project was able to conclude that half the media in Egypt is controlled by the state. Furthermore, the current imprisonment of 32 journalists and the blockage of over 500 news websites, Egypt finds itself ranking 166 out of 180 countries on the World Press Freedom Index.

Social media in Egypt has had a unique impact on the Egyptian youth over the last 15 years. The culmination of this impact can be seen in 2011, when it played a pivotal role in Arab Spring, specifically in the Egyptian revolution. The role social media played, for example, was so vast that the Egyptian revolution was given the epithet of the Facebook Revolution. In 2018, Egypt's official statistics agency estimated that about 21% of the country's population are youth aged 18 to 29 (Mena, 2018). Although half the country uses Facebook, most of the users are aged 18 to 34, meaning that youth have an important relationship with Facebook (Ezzat, 2020). The importance of Facebook in Egypt has led to many studies being conducted to showcase and analyze the influence social media has on the Egyptian youth. For example, Saleh (2020) looked at how Facebook's "crush page" have impacted localized communities such as schools and universities in Egypt. The study showed that these pages have created "new contested and uncertain but delightful moral normative rules around love and in-relations romances that

are the results of compatible expectations simultaneously fulfilled desires" (p. 78).

Another report by Lotfi (2018) shows how the Egyptian Youth begin utilizing social

media, specifically Facebook, for their own careers. One interviewee, highlighting the

importance of social media in their success story stated, "We came from social media" (p.

1).

Other socially impactful uses for social media were found. As mentioned before,

Facebook was instrumental in the success of the Egyptian revolution in 2011, where the

first major protests were organized and shared on the platform. Tohamy (2017)

mentioned that certain political protests "were triggered by the marriage between online

and offline activism, particularly when activists moved smartly between online and

offline activities to create real challenges to the regime and to escape from police

repression (p 86). However, in a study by Clarke and Kocak (2018), they argue that social

media, specifically Twitter and Facebook's roles, were exaggerated by the media

coverage from the time of the 2011 Egyptian Revolution. They add that social media

impacted the revolution by adding to the protests' considerable turnout, its national

scope, and its grass-roots appeal.

Although social media has been impactful politically, some research shows that

its use for that purpose was more time appropriate and not a demonstration of a lasting

shift in its use. Elsayed (2016) argues that within five years of the 2011 Egyptian

revolution, youth were using the internet as a means of escapism and not political

participation. All these dynamics show that social media has a complicated relationship

with the Egyptian population, specifically its youth. The use of social media for political

discourse has led to the monitoring of social media by the Egyptian Police Kingsley (2014).

The three significant news mediums from the USA sample also happen to be the most utilized news mediums. This could mean that the trust levels in news media as a whole could have a more significant impact on where the American sample gets their news from than the trust levels in specific news mediums. This is also consistent with the Vanacker and Belmas model, where one can expect more trust in media as an institution than in specific news mediums.

The Vanacker and Belmas model has been consistent with the American sample twice. The first is the higher level of trust in more established news mediums such as newspapers and the lower level of trust in news mediums that could be associated with individuals, such as social media. The second example is the overall trust in news media and how it translates to time spent using news mediums. These consistencies have not been observed with the Egyptian sample.

Limitations

This study has several limitations that must be considered when interpreting the findings and results. A primary limitation of the study can be seen in Table 3, where students were asked to estimate the amount of time they spent using each news medium per day. Although the order of the most used news mediums is not surprising and is consistent with other studies, what is surprising is the amount of time the participants stated they spent using each news medium. The American sample stated they spent 9.92 hours per day utilizing the eight news mediums. This could be seen as an exaggeration, as spending almost 10 hours a day using news mediums is above the average shown in other

studies. Even more bewildering, the Egyptian sample stated they spent, on average, 16.88 hours per day utilizing news mediums. This is highly unlikely as it doesn't even leave a person with 8 hours in the day for sleep. Simply asking the participants to estimate the amount of time they spend utilizing news mediums in this study is not an accurate method of measuring time. A reason for these results, however, is that people could be consuming news media from multiple news mediums at the same time. For example, a student could have the tv running in the background, watching a show on their laptop, and reading something off their phone simultaneously.

As mentioned before, annual surveys done by Gallup and Pew show that political affiliations do matter when it comes to trust in media. This is a limitation of the study where political affiliation is not asked by the survey. This also opens the potential for future research where the results can be further broken down by political affiliation.

Another limitation of the study is that no statistical analysis was used to compare data points specifically for Research Question 2. By doing statistical analysis, it allows the researcher to determine specific statistical differences between the two samples. The researcher relies on a narrative comparison and a cursory review of the data points instead.

An additional limitation of the study is that demographics are not considered during the analysis section. For example, the data could have been further broken down to show if there are any differences between genders. Gender also plays an impact on trust. This can be seen in multiple studies conducted over the previous decades. (Balon et al., 1978). The data could also be broken down to showcase the impact of age on the utilization of news mediums.

The study also fails to present a working definition of trust to the participants. This is a major failing as trust can have different meanings from person to person, yet alone culture to culture. By presenting guidelines that explain and illustrate trust to the participants, the participants would have a more aligned definition that should yield more accurate results.

Future Research

Future research could focus on the data points in Tables 1 and 2 that have not been examined under the scope of this study. By doing so, more behavioral patterns could be revealed that may further explain media consumption habits for the sample. An example of this can be seen in Table 2. There is a correlation between time spent using social media and the amount of trust in it. This data point falls within the scope of the study. However, what doesn't fall within the scope of the study is that the table shows there is a correlation between time spent using social media and the amount of trust in television, news websites, and blogs and vlogs.

An aspect that could be examined in the future is the importance of social media in Egypt. This could investigate correlations between trust and the use of social media in a different sample. It could also include the reasoning behind why social media is the most used and also the most trusted news medium by the Egyptian sample. Although no statistically significant correlations were found linking trust in social media to its usage and linking trust in news media to the use of social media for the Egyptian sample, there is still noteworthy how social media in Egypt is both the most used and the most trusted.

Further research opportunities could also include analyzing how age and gender affect the results. Political affiliation has been shown to affect trust levels in media. This

is also an area that can be utilized in future surveys. This could also be supplemented by expanding the sample to include different majors from different colleges and faculties. It may also be worth investigating how having different majors could impact new media consumption habits.

As has been done in some other studies, social media can be broken down into different parts. For example, instead of using the umbrella term social media, it can be broken down into the most popular social media such as Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and Snapchat. This would allow for a better understanding of social media usage along with the type of sources people look for. This could also be done for other news mediums. For example, blogs and vlogs could be separated, and more importantly, radio and podcasts could also be separated.

Conclusion

This study showed that trust is not the most crucial factor when it comes to the consumption of news media. As the general trend of news consumption moves toward online mediums, it would be necessary for news organizations to diversify their outlets, making their content more accessible to everyone. The study shows that this diversification should be geared toward online news mediums.

For the Egyptian sample, the high level of trust in social media showed a general mistrust in news organizations. Many Egyptians, including youth, follow social media pages run by regular people who share news and articles from different sources. It is news made by the youth, for the youth. Even though the accuracy of this user-generated news can be questionable compared to more established, global news agencies, there is still some appeal to it. Having these content creators share news sources from a specific

news organization could create a level of trust between the social media user and that organization. Regardless, more established media in Egypt will have to change the way the youth perceive them if they want to survive in the future.

For the USA, since traditional news mediums still retain a high level of trust, it would be understandable if news organizations maintained the availability of these mediums to influence the trust levels of their consumers. Having traditional news mediums to appeal to those in need of a trustworthy source while developing online sources to appeal to those who prefer speed and availability over trust could be the right mix.

There is a minor, almost negligible, association between trust and the use of news mediums. The results showed that there is no significant link, in general, between the amount of trust a person has in a news medium and the amount of time spent using the said news medium. The results showed that, in most cases, sources with higher trust levels are used less than sources with a lower trust level.

The results from both groups showed that social media is their most-used news source. Social media is also one of the online news medium options provided in the survey, which is the method used the most by the samples. The Egyptian sample said that social media is their most trusted news medium, but no statistically significant correlation was found to support this.

Trust in news sources depends on the country. Egypt has a higher trust rate in social media compared to the American sample. The USA had a lower trust rate in content more likely produced by individuals, such as social media and blogs and vlogs. The data collected on trust level per news medium for the Egyptian sample, when

compared to the USA sample, shows that the Egyptian sample's trust in social media is not as high as news mediums with the highest trust levels in the USA sample. This means that, compared to the USA results, it is not necessarily that Egyptians have a high trust level in social media but a lower-than-average trust level in the rest of the news sources.

APPENDIX A

Cover Letter

South Dakota State University

Consent to Participate in Research

Study Title: Measuring the impact of trust on college students' news medium choices

Principal Investigator: Karim Soliman

You are invited to participate in a research study. Your participation in this research study is voluntary, and you do not have to participate. Refusal to participate will involve no penalty, and you may discontinue participation at any time without penalty.

The purpose of this study is to gather information about college students' trust in different news mediums as well as their news consumption habits. The survey is eight questions long and should take approximately 10 minutes to complete. You will have 15 minutes to complete the survey. The information that you give in the study will be anonymous.

You must be 18 years old or older to participate. Your consent is implied by participating.

If you have any questions, you can contact the researcher at 605 888 5366 or at karim.abdelazim@jacks.sdstate.edu.

Thank you for your participation.

APPENDIX B

Survey

1) Age: _____

2) Gender: _____

3) Major: _____

4) Thinking back to the **last major news event** that you recall, where did you first learn about it? Choose the appropriate news medium:

o Newspaper (Print Only)
o Newspaper Websites (Online)
o Television (Includes Streaming & Cable)
o Television Channel Website (i.e., websites for televised news stations; e.g., CNN, Fox News, NBC)
o Radio & Podcasts (Includes Online Streaming)
o News Websites (i.e., website that does not have a print publication & does not have a tv or radio station, e.g., MSN, Huffington Post, Vox)
o Social Media (e.g., Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram)
o Blogs & Vlogs
o Other News Media Sources (Please Specify): _____

5) The **next** time there is a **major news event**, where will you choose to go to get more information? Choose the appropriate news medium:

o Newspaper (Print Only)
o Newspaper Websites (Online)
o Television (Includes Streaming & Cable)
o Television Channel Website (i.e., websites for televised news stations; e.g., CNN, Fox News, NBC)
o Radio & Podcasts (Includes Online Streaming)
o News Websites (i.e., website that does not have a print publication & does not have a tv or radio station, e.g., MSN, Huffington Post, Vox)
o Social Media (e.g., Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram)
o Blogs & Vlogs
o Other News Media Sources (Please Specify): _____

6) How much **time** do you spend using each news medium **per week**? Enter the number of hours (hr) and minutes (min) per news medium. For example, fifteen minutes would be *hr:0 min:15*; two and a half hours would be *hr:2 min:30*; no time at all would *be hr:0 min:0*.

NEWS MEDIUM	TIME SPENT PER DAY
NEWSPAPER (PRINT ONLY)	hr: min:
NEWSPAPER WEBSITES (ONLINE)	hr: min:
TELEVISION (INCLUDES STREAMING & CABLE)	hr: min:
TELEVISION CHANNEL WEBSITES (I.E., WEBSITES FOR TELEVISED NEWS STATIONS; E.G., CNN, FOX, NBC)	hr: min:
RADIO & PODCASTS (INCLUDES ONLINE STREAMING)	hr: min:
NEWS WEBSITES (I.E., WEBSITE THAT DOES NOT HAVE A PRINT PUBLICATION & DOES NOT HAVE A TV OR RADIO STATION, E.G., MSN, HUFFINGTON POST, VOX)	hr: min:
SOCIAL MEDIA (E.G., FACEBOOK, SNAPCHAT, INSTAGRAM)	hr: min:
BLOGS & VLOGS	hr: min:

7) **Generally speaking**, how much **trust** do you have in news media, including all its forms? Your answer should be based on a scale from 0 to 5**. 0 means no trust at all, while 5 means complete trust**. The higher the number, the more trust you have.

No Trust   Complete Trust

0   1   2   3   4   5

8) How much **trust** do you have in each news medium? Your answer should be based on a scale from 0 to 5**. 0 means no trust at all, while 5 means complete trust**. The higher the number, the more trust you have.

NEWS MEDIUM   **TRUST PER MEDIUM**

	No Trust					Complete trust
NEWSPAPER (PRINT ONLY)	0	1	2	3	4	5
NEWSPAPER WEBSITES (ONLINE)	0	1	2	3	4	5
TELEVISION (INCLUDES STREAMING & CABLE)	0	1	2	3	4	5
TELEVISION CHANNEL WEBSITES (I.E., WEBSITES FOR TELEVISED NEWS STATIONS; E.G., CNN, FOX, NBC)	0	1	2	3	4	5
RADIO & PODCASTS (INCLUDES ONLINE STREAMING)	0	1	2	3	4	5
NEWS WEBSITES (I.E., WEBSITE THAT DOES NOT HAVE A PRINT PUBLICATION & DOES NOT HAVE A TV OR RADIO STATION, E.G., MSN, HUFFINGTON POST, VOX)	0	1	2	3	4	5
SOCIAL MEDIA (E.G., FACEBOOK, SNAPCHAT, INSTAGRAM)	0	1	2	3	4	5
BLOGS & VLOGS	0	1	2	3	4	5

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