SCIENTIFIC CULTURE

www.sci-cult.com

SCIENTIFIC CULTURE, Vol. 12, No. 2.1, (2026), pp. 12284-12300
Open Access. Online & Print

DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.20327971

PATTERNS OF MEDIA ENGAGEMENT AMONG YOUNG ADULTS AMID PANDEMIC DISRUPTION IN THE UAE

Najia Alketbi[1] and Badreya Al-Jenaibi[2]

[1]Assistant Professor, Mohamed Bin Zayed University for Humanities
[2]Professor, UAEU

Received: 07/04/2026
Accepted: 08/05/2026

Corresponding Author: Badreya Al-Jenaibi (al_jenaibi@hotmail.com)

ABSTRACT

The Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic has engendered a global health crisis that has profoundly affected our perceptions of the world and our daily lives. The rate of contagion and the patterns of transmission have not only endangered our sense of security, but the safety measures implemented to mitigate the spread of the virus necessitate social distancing. In this context of physical threat and social distancing, the significance of various mass media channels and social media on individual, social, and societal levels cannot be overstated. The objective of this paper is to investigate the sources of news accessed by youth during the COVID-19 period. The research questions posed are as follows: What are the sources of news among youth during the COVID-19 period? Data was collected from youth through an online questionnaire completed by 407 participants. The findings indicate that WhatsApp and Instagram were the most utilized platforms by respondents, with 38% and 34% respectively. These platforms serve as valuable tools for disseminating accurate information regarding diseases during pandemics. Furthermore, medical professionals are prominently featured during pandemics and are widely regarded as trusted sources for the effective dissemination of information in such crises.

KEYWORDS: COVID 2019, UAE, News, Social Media.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary era, social media has facilitated the seamless and effortless sharing of information among individuals. Furthermore, it is rapidly becoming a common medium for both interpersonal and public communication globally. Over time, social media has integrated itself into the fabric of human life, enabling the remote creation of content that both entertains and informs the populace. The advent of social media has significantly simplified and accelerated the process of information sharing, leading many individuals to increasingly rely on the information disseminated through these platforms (Sulaiman, Adeyemi & Ayegun, 2020). Social media has also afforded young people myriad opportunities to access information (UNESCO, 2020). Consequently, youths are often regarded as active users of social media, a trend attributed to their inherent exuberance and exposure to information and communication technologies (ICTs). Ocansey, Ametepe, and Oduro (2016) posited that young individuals utilize social media on a substantial scale primarily for communication purposes.

Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, social media has rapidly become a crucial communication tool for information generation, dissemination, and consumption. Since then, there has been observed increased in the exploitation of various social media platforms to share information about the disease. However, this same tool has been used to misinform the populace and to circulate unverifiable and deceptive messages to citizens (Bukhari, 2020).

The spread of fake news among people has created unnecessary panic, fear, distraction and tension, especially during the period of COVID-19 pandemic. In this troubling time, information and news are being spread to enlighten and keep people abreast of the latest about the disease. Conversely, it was observed that many people share fake information and news which are inaccurate and unverifiable. Meanwhile, identification, searching, and evaluation are essential in the application or use of information by people. (Kabir & Sulaimon 2020). Ultimately, this information behaviour is a hallmark that might have influenced the spread of fake news and misinformation. David (2017) notes that effective information behavior enables people to make use of information sources and these skills are cognitive, affective and physical. In addition, the global policies put in place to manage the COVID-19 crisis, including those that restrict movement, have resulted in more time spent online by young people. This has also increasingly exacerbated the spread of hate speech, cyber bullying, racism, and incitement to violence during the pandemic (UNESCO 2020).

Meanwhile, the use of social media to share information during the COVID-19 pandemic disease has become a concern as it has been observed that there is increased misinformation and fake news perpetrated through the media. Nielsen (2017) defines social media as computer-mediated technology facilitating the growth and sharing of ideas, awareness, career interest, information and other ways of expression through social network and virtual communities. Greg, Chika, and Edogor (2013) observed that social media by their nature have the power of educating, informing, entertaining and inflaming the audience and they create a contagious and outreaching influence, which the conventional media find difficult to provide. With all these benefits, however, there is still obvious misuse of social media. Ford and Ravansar (2017) stated that social media information sharing denoted web-based tools that permit people to interact with each other in some way of sharing information, opinion, knowledge and facts. This means that information sharing on social media deals with sharing of opinion, knowledge and facts about a particular event. Information behaviour evaluation is becoming important in the use of social media (Hashim, & Kutbi, 2015; Chukwuere & Chukwuere, 2017). Social media is primarily built for the benefits of information sharing and behaviour evaluation is essential during such an event (Zhang & Kizilcec, 2014). Lee and Ma (2012) averred that prior research suggested that people share information using social media to receive attention and enhance their reputation and popularity among peers especially during the time of the serious situation. However, the social needs of people suppress the privacy that accompanies the content, as social media is witnessed by a large audience (Bernstein et al., 2011).

In Yemeni, when government banned Al Jazeera from covering events in the country, social media became an easy outlet used for several activities (AlSayyad & Guvenc, 2015, p. 2027). The Arab Spring uprising introduced social media to Yemen as online meetings were organized in close Facebook groups and news spread through blog and YouTube channels (AlSayyad & Guvenc, 2015, p. 2027). In view of the above assertions, the advantages of social media cannot be too stressed as it crippled unpopular regimes and opened spaces for people to express their grievances albeit via virtual public spaces. However, when social media is negatively deployed, the uninformed easily fall prey to misinformation which at times brings mishap and confusion to the

populace. (Ngozika A et al).

As indicated by Makani, the role of the social media in the current pandemic climate mirrors that of the radio during both World Wars. It can provide information for health, connect us with family and friends and even allow us to change the world, if we are so inclined, by creating and participating in campaigns that aim to inform or solicit help. It's no surprise then that Whatsapp use surged 40 per cent and other platforms have had millions of new and additional users during the COVID-19 crisis. (Devika Singh Mankani)

1.1. Aim Of the Study

The aim of this paper is to examine the several sources of news among youths during covid-19 period. This paper is aimed to provide insight at the contribution of social media to youths during covid-19 period in different emirates at the UAE. This paper also aimed at assessing the prevalence of misinformation about covid-19 through social media platforms and strategies to curb such misinformation. This paper is also aimed at suggesting appropriate strategies to curb/reduce the rate of abuse of social media in disseminating misinformation about covid-19. The paper aims to discover the use of Mobile social media and users' access of social media through their mobile devices. By discovering technologies and their use, this allows researcher to search about how technology affects society and shapes.

1.2. Research Objectives

1. Assessing youth awareness of COVID-19 in the UAE.
2. Determine the prevalence and scope of social media use among youths during the Covid-19 period.
3. Evaluate the spread of misinformation about Covid-19 during the outbreak period.
4. Suggest methods to reduce the spread of disinformation about covid-19.

1.3. Research Question

1. What is the level of awareness of covid-19 among UAE youths?
2. How wide is information about covid-19 shared on social media?
3. What is the level of disinformation about Covid-19?

1.4. Research Hypothesis

1. There is no significant difference in the level of awareness of covid-19 among the youths.
2. There is no significant difference in the awareness level about covid-19 between those who use social media and those who did not.
3. There is no significant difference in the level of awareness of covid-19 among several social media platforms users.
4. There is no significant difference in the level of awareness of covid-19 among youths from different emirates.
5. There is no significant relationship between the level of awareness of covid-19 and social media use.
6. There is no significant difference in the level of awareness of covid-19 between male and female social media users.
7. There is no significant correlation between socio-demographic characteristics and usage of social media among youths.
8. There is no significant correlation between socio-demographic characteristics and youth's trust and believe in social media.
9. There is no significant difference in the level of trust in social media among male and female respondents.
10. There is no significant difference in the level of trust in social media among younger and older respondents.
11. There is no significant effect of respondent's socio demographic characteristics on usage of social media during covid-19

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

According to the Pew Research Center (2013), 13% of American Internet users indicated that sharing content online caused problems in their relationships. Haynes (2001) noticed that evaluating an individual's behavior in a given context based on behavioural change necessitates manipulation and assessment. The fast-developing study topic concerns the use of social media to disseminate information. Social media feeds are flooded with COVID19 posts from a variety of sources that have been proved to be erroneous, misleading, and fraudulent. This type of material not only confuses but also instills anxiety among the public. Before sharing any information, it is recommended that one examine and consider its veracity (Yates, 2020). Spending time in a media environment that contains misinformation is likely to change attitudes and behaviors. Even if users are not nested in networks that propagate misinformation, they are likely to be incidentally exposed to information from a variety of perspectives (Feezell, 2018; Fletcher & Nielsen, 2018; Weeks et al., 2017). Even a highly curated social

media feed is thus still likely to contain misinformation. As cumulative exposure to misinformation increases, users are likely to experience a reinforcement effect whereby familiarity leads to stronger belief (Dechêne et al., 2010).

Social media is primarily for sharing information in order to exchange ideas, opinions, and knowledge. It has been observed that some people share fake information through social media to stir panic especially information relating to COVID-19 pandemic. In the fight against the dastardly virus, the fake information being shared has been observed to undermine the effort of various government and health agencies/bodies that are involved in the fight against the virus. An illustration of fake news that was peddled during the pandemic crises has widely shared the news on the efficacies of Chloroquine to cure COVID-19 without recourse to experts and specialists in the field. Many Nigerian youths, and all ages alike, as observed shared this information with so much enthusiasm. This was later discovered to have led to the abuse of Chloroquine where many were diagnosed to have abused the drug in a Lagos hospital. Soto (2020) indicated that two people were hospitalized in Lagos for Chloroquine overdoses; this was reported after U. S. Presidents Donald Trump praised the anti-malaria drug as a treatment for the COVID 19 and was spreading on social media. The purveyors of fake news or information do so possibly for their gain and people. Without being aware, the receivers of the information tend to take the fake news as genuine.

2.1. Social Media Usage in the UAE

Mobile social media usage has been booming in the country. 9.7 million users access social media through their mobile devices. That is 99% of the population of the country. The 2020 usage statistics show that the number of mobile social media users in the country recorded a 10.6% growth with more than 932,000 new users added last year. Falling smartphone costs and easy availability of cutting-edge technology are the major reasons for this boom. Youtube is the most popular social media platform in 2020 with 8.65 million users. Almost 79% of the UAE's population has profiles on Facebook while YouTube's penetration also stands at 88% (UAE Social Media Statistics 2020).

Moreover, Emiratis on average, spend 2.57 hours on social media daily. Much like in the rest of the world, social media has become one of the most essential parts of daily internet usage in the UAE. In fact, more than 59% of United Arab Emirates families' youths have access to social media and are literate in its use, whether positive or negative (Norman, 2008). It's been statistically established that youths spend more time in the social media watching news, commercial advertisements, blogging, and getting entertained than any activity, averagely taking a quarter of youth's daily time. Social media communication has become affordable and very efficient in youth group interaction. It has given a voice to the ignored and served as a melting pot of ideas of all kinds. Dropping smartphone prices, have driven the massive increase in the usage of mobile phones across the UAE. The large-scale rise in the adoption of social media can be attributed to the easy availability of super-fast internet at very low prices. The explosion in YouTube usage is due to the increased prevalence of fast internet connectivity. Whatsapp's willingness to keep reinventing its product and keep offering novel experiences to its customers is the reason that it has surged past all other competitors and established a unique niche of its own among chatapps. (UAE Social Media Statistics 2020).

However, according to the UAE Library of Congress Law, there are three legislative instruments governing the issue of transparency and spreading of misinformation on social media: Federal Law No. 5 of 2012, Federal Law No. 12 of 2016, and the Electronic Media Regulation of 2018. A number of individuals have been brought before the courts of the United Arab Emirates for violating provisions of Federal Law No. 5 of 2012. In addition to issuing legislative tools and referring violators to court, the Emeriti authorities have adopted a number of measures to combat the phenomenon of posting false information online or through social media. These measures include the blocking of misinformation, a public awareness campaign, and the creation of a course curriculum for the purpose of educating students about false news in the digital age. The government of the Emirate of Dubai publicized a June 2019 dialogue between local journalists and Facebook addressing false news on social media.

The social media usage policy introduced by the United Arab Emirates Ministry of Health and Prevention is targeted towards welcoming participation of the public across all channels as this will provide an opportunity for effective intention. The government no longer has total power over what and when information is shared, and audiences are no longer passive; they actively participate in creating and disseminating news. Rizwan & Sara (2020). For example, Hopkyns (2020) describes how in the UAE, an Indian expatriate teenager, Suchetha

Satish, has been spreading COVID-19 awareness online through composing songs in 21 different Indian languages.

2.2. Government And Quarantine and Social Media in The UAE

Since the outbreak of coronavirus, all nations of the world have taken giant steps to curb the spread of the disease. The UAE government was proactive in dealing with dreaded coronavirus particularly in September 2020 after a surge in Covid-19 cases which led to the UAE hitting a high on Saturday with a record 1,007 new cases in a single day. This prompt the government to update list of fines for covid-19 rule breakers. Such fines may be up to Dh500 depending on the offence. (Department of Foreign Affairs, 2020).

The Dubai Health Authority (2020) as modified in March 2021 prescribed list of conditions for home quarantine on its website including home or hotel quarantine and avoiding contact with others for a certain period of time usually 14 among others.

In April 2020, The UAE Cabinet passed a resolution on publishing and sharing health information related to communicable diseases. The resolution provides information and guidelines on the correct procedure which would be through spokespersons, experts and government officials authorised to do so. The resolution is aimed at quelling the act of spreading rumours and fake news. Under the resolution, it is prohibited to publish, republish or circulate false and misleading health-related information or guidelines any information that is not announced officially or is not approved by MoHaP or other health authorities, or the information contradicts with what has been announced through print, audio, visual media or through social media, websites, IT tools or other types of media.

2.3. The Social Impact Theory

Bibb Latane, a psychologist at Ohio State University, coined the social impact theory in 1981 after completing a series of tests to confirm his concept about how influence works. Social impact theory is based on three factors: strength, immediacy, and number. The fundamental message of his theory focuses on the influence group, the target of the influence, the proximity in time, and the number of persons in the influencing group. Lateen theory proposed that there is an influence group and a targeted group for influence. His theory quickly gained traction in the field of social media and impact. Millions of social media users throughout the world are influenced on a regular basis to make purchasing decisions, and the turnaround time for conducting business is shortened. Lateen theory became more powerful in the context of social media as highlighted below:

- Social media provides strength in the form of friends, colleagues, and family: the people you have relationships with and whose opinions matter to you.
- Social media provides immediacy–both temporally and virtually: the people you are connected to are never more than a mobile device away.
- Social media provides enormous opportunity for the number of people in the influencing group.

The social impact theory is related to some of the context in this study. Social media being a platform for wider coverage has helped in disseminating/sensitizing the populace about the concept of covid-19 and various steps to curb its spread.

Social media has changed the landscape of communication. It continues in imitation of stand a "gamechanger" of communication. Social media is an extensive umbrella on instant online verbal exchange channels. It enabled the people whole over the world in imitation of have interaction or share production then manufacturer related records together with each other. The social impact theory believes with social media, manufacturers can influence millions of targeted prospects/customers. Same way governments/WHO and other key stakeholders have been able to reach millions of people on the subject of covid-19. The different attribute concerning conventional media is as such is a customized person generated media. Users exercise higher rule upon its utilizes then content material technology (Dickey and Lewis, 2011). Consumers are no more inclined according to listen what business agencies necessity to them in imitation of pay attention instead it wants enterprise businesses in accordance with listen as it says. This attitudinal and behavioral change of state among buyers is the have an effect on on neighborly media manifestation yet such is a sizeable project for business firms after bear together with that (Kietzmann et al., 2011). This state of affairs alerts to that amount enterprise corporations ought to identify those elements over communal media as affect the consumer mindset towards the product associated information embedded among social media content. This might also allow corporations to increase the violent associative media promotional strategies. The social

impact theory is particularly related and useful to the subject of covid-19 because it gives opportunity to meet a wider coverage of people and people can be influenced to take precautionary measures against the spread of the virus.

In today's world of social media, the social media theory which emphasizes so much on influence can be likened to:

1. Strength: Youth rely heavily on information sharing via social media whether verified or not.
2. Immediacy: This talks about proximity in time is the influencing group to the target of the influence. Infact, there has never been a time in human history like now that millions of information can be shared among people across the world. Social media bring the influence group and the target group to a close proximity.
3. Number revealed how many people are in the influence group. In today's world of social media, there is no end to the number of the influence group.

Research Method: This section accounts for the systematic procedures that will be adopted in the collection of data for this research. It is sequentially organized along the following themes: research design description of study area, study population of the study, sample size and sampling procedure, research instruments, data analysis and management, and ethical considerations. These will be harnessed towards the realization of the objectives of the research. Quantitative method of research was selected over qualitative so as to obtain.

Research design: According to Asika (2009), research designs are often referred to as the structuring of investigation aimed at identifying variables and their relationships to one another. In this study, questionnaire serves as useful guide to the effort of generating data for this study. The design of this study will involve quantitative method of data collection. The survey research design through the administration of questionnaires was used for the study.

Area of the study: The study was conducted in UAE. The study covered seven (7) Emirates in UAE. The emirates are Abu Dhabi, Ajman, Dubai, Fujairah, Ras Alkaimah, Sharjah and Umm Alquwain.

Sample Size: Sample size is defined as a limited number of elements selected from a populating which is a representative of that population (Ogbechi. 2002). The sample size for this study is 407.

Instrument for data collection: Questionnaire is the main research instrument used for the study to gather necessary data from the sample respondents. The questionnaire is structured type and provides answers to the research questions and hypotheses therein. This instrument is divided and limited into two sections; Section A and B. Section A deals with the personal data of the respondents while Section B contains research statement postulated in line with the research question and hypothesis in chapter one. Options or alternatives are provided for each respondent to pick or tick one of the options.

Reliability and Validity of Instrument: the Survey was reviewed by two media experts and there was a pilot survey distributed to 50 participants, all the complicated questions were modified. Cronbach's alpha was used to test for reliability. This technique that requires only a single test administration to provide a unique estimate of the reliability for a given test. Cronbach's alpha is the average value of the reliability coefficients one would obtain for all possible combinations of items when split into two half-tests.

Method of Data Processing and Analysis: Having gathered the data through the administration of questionnaire, the collected data was coded, tabulated, and analyzed according to the research question and hypothesis. In order to analyze the data collected effectively and efficiently for easy management and accuracy, the simple percentage method was the analytical tools used for this research project. Also, t-test was used to check for difference in means while correlation was used to check for relationship between social media usage and awareness. The data will be analyzed with SPSS version 21. Microsoft Excel will be used for data processing and transformation. Frequency distribution table was presented to describe basic demographic characteristics of respondents. Also, bivariate analysis was carried out including including t-test, Anova and correlation. This is to give the study a robust finding. Findings from t-test and Anova shall be used to examine differences in social media use and its importance across several emirates. The correlation analysis was carried out to assess relationship between social media use and other explanatory variables/predictors. Advanced analysis such as multiple comparison using Anova and correlational matrix shall also be engaged at the multivariate level.

3. DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

Table 1: Percentage Distribution of Respondents by Background Characteristics.

S/N	Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1.	**Gender**		
	Male	59	15.1
	Female	332	84.9
2.	**Age**		
	12-19 years	103	26.6
	20-30 years	167	43.2
	30 and above	117	30.2
3.	**Emirate**		
	Abu Dhabi	110	28.1
	Ajman	53	13.6
	Dubai	77	19.7
	Fujairah	27	6.9
	Ras Alkaimah	63	16.1
	Sharjah	24	6.1
	Umm Alquwain	37	9.5
4.	**Working Place**		
	Not Employee	175	45.0
	Private Sectors	62	15.9
	Public Sectors	152	39.1

Table 1 shows the distribution of respondents by background characteristics. The result shows that more than two third of the respondents (85%) are female respondents, while the remaining 15% are their male counterparts, however the survey was distributed equality between genders, but more females were willing to participate than males. Distribution by age revealed that those in the youngest age group (12-19 years) account for 27% of the respondent, while the oldest age group accounted for about 30%. Those in the age group 20-30 years were reported to account for 43% of the total respondents. The distribution by emirates revealed the highest percentage of respondents (28%) resides in Abu Dhabi, followed by those who resides in Dubai (20%). Those who resides in Ras Alkaimah accounted for 16%, followed by those at Ajman 14%. Those residing at Umm Alquwain accounted about 10% while the lowest percentage (6%) are those from Sharjah. Also, the distribution of respondents by working place revealed that about 45% are not employees, about 39% were reported working in public sectors with 16% in the private sector.

Table 2: Distribution Of Respondents by Use of Social Media.

S/N	Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1.	**How often do you use social media?**		
	1-2 hours	117	30.3
	3-4 hours	113	29.3
	More than 4 hours	156	40.4
2.	**What kind of social media do you use?**		
	Instagram	121	31.7
	Snapchat	109	28.5
	Ticktock	1	0.3
	Twitter	4	1.0
	Whatsapp	144	37.7
	Youtube	1	0.3
	All of the above and more	2	0.5

The result revealed that 30% of the respondents use social media for 1-2 hours while about 29% were reported to use social media 3-4 hours daily. The highest daily users (more than 4 hours) accounted for the highest percentage of the respondents (40%). The distribution of respondents by the kind of social media they use revealed that majority of the respondents (38%) use whatsapp, followed by those who revealed they use instagram (34%). Those using snapchat accounted for about 29% of the respondents, ticktok 0.3%, twitter 1%, youtube 0.3%, and others 0.5%.

Table 3: Distribution Of Respondents by Use of Social Media.

1.	**What kind of tool do you use to follow news on social media?**		

	Personal Computer	27	6.9
	Smartphone	294	75.2
	Tablet	30	7.7
	Others	40	10.2
2.	**What kind of news do you follow during Covid-19?**		
	Covid-19 news	85	22.0
	Economic news	49	12.7
	Health news	112	29.0
	Political News	59	15.3
	Others	81	21.0
3.	**When do you use social media?**		
	Afternoon	140	36.1
	Evening	130	33.5
	Morning	118	30.4

The distribution of respondents by the kind of tool they use to follow news on social media revealed that more than two third of the respondents (75%) use their smartphone to follow news on social media, followed by those who use tablets with about 8%. Those use their personal computer to follow news are just 7%, while those using other tools aside personal computer, tablets and smartphone accounted for 10% of the total respondents. Also, the distribution of respondents by the kind of news they follow during covid-19 period revealed that 29% followed health news, 22% followed covid-19 news, only 13% followed economic news, while 15% followed political news and the remaining 21% followed other news. The distribution of respondents by when they use social media revealed morning users 30.4%, afternoon users 36.1% and evening users 33.5%

Table 4: Distribution Of Respondents by Use of Social Media.

S/N	Variable	Strongly Agree	Agree	Indifferent	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1.	Social media has been a very active medium for disseminating false information and myth about COVID-19 in UAE?	77(20.6)	181(48.4)	70(18.7)	25(6.7)	21(5.6)
2.	I believe most UAE are ignorant of the right medium of getting information about COVID-19?	75(20.5)	147(40.2)	104(28.4)	31(8.5)	9(2.5)
3.	Social media has been a very active medium of spreading false information and myth about the virus?	91(24.6)	148(40.0)	91(24.6)	21(5.7)	19(5.1)
4.	Low knowledge of technicality involved affect my use of social for the dissemination of information about a pandemic?	83(22.3)	156(41.8)	103(27.6)	18(4.8)	13(3.5)

The result shows that majority of the respondents (69%) revealed that social media has been a very active medium for disseminating false information and myth about covid-19 in UAE. Also, further analysis revealed that not less than 60% of the total respondents believe most UAE are ignorant of the right medium of getting information about covid-19. In another analysis, about 65% revealed that social media has been a very active medium of spreading false information and myth about the virus. Also, it was reported by a vast majority of the respondents that low knowledge of technicality involved affect their use of social media for the dissemination of information about a pandemic.

Table 5: Percentage Distribution of Respondents by Use of Social Media.

1.	I believe there is a synergy between government and social media in disseminating information about COVID-19?	73(19.7)	161(43.4)	93(25.1)	23(6.2)	21(5.7)
2.	I use social media platforms to spread information about COVID-19 more than any other professional?	84(22.8)	145(39.3)	93(25.2)	27(7.3)	20(5.4)
3.	Do more rumors spread in social media during COVID-19?	101(27.4)	132(35.8)	98(26.6)	23(6.2)	15(4.1)

4.	I know how to distinguish between rumors and facts in social media?	74(20.2)	165(45.0)	83(22.6)	26(7.1)	19(5.2)

The table above revealed the distribution of respondents by use of social media. About 63% of the respondents believe there is a synergy between government and social media in disseminating information about covid-19. Further analysis revealed that not less than 62% of the total respondents were reported to use social media platforms to spread information about covid-19 more than any other professional. Also, analysis revealed that not less than 60% of the respondents agreed to spread rumors on social media during covid-19 period. Also, not less than 65% were indicated they knew how to distinguish between rumor and facts on social media.

Table 6: Distribution Of Respondents by Use of Social Media.

1.	Always I double-check the news through social media during COVID 19?	106(29.0)	134(36.6)	72(19.7)	30(8.2)	24(6.6)
2.	I pass the news through social media without checking the news?	75(20.4)	151(41.1)	77(21.0)	37(10.1)	27(7.4)
3.	I believe social media more than other news sources	102(27.6)	140(37.9)	82(22.2)	27(7.3)	18(4.9)
4.	Social media use as an immediate mechanism for accessing and sharing information on COVID-19 in UAE?	78(21.4)	153(41.9)	88(24.1)	28(7.7)	18(4.9)

About 66% of the respondents indicated to always double check the news through social media during covid-19. Also, further analysis revealed that 61% of the respondents indicated that they pass the news through social media without checking the news. Also, findings from the table of analysis revealed that about 65% of the respondents believe social media more than other news sources. In another analysis, 63% of respondents sees social media use as any immediate mechanism for accessing and sharing information on covid-19 in UAE.

Table 7: Distribution Of Respondents by Use of Social Media.

1.	Social media is my main source to reach and obtain information from places on pandemic such as COVID-19?	96(26.1)	155(42.1)	63(17.1)	33(9.0)	21(5.7)
2.	Social media use has enhanced government services and improves knowledge about COVID-19?	83(22.6)	157(42.7)	85(23.1)	26(7.1)	17(4.6)
3.	I am aware of the spread of news on social media during COVID 19?	115(31.2)	132(35.8)	83(22.5)	25(69.4)	14(3.8)
4.	The government used social media in the right way to aware people about COVID-19?	88(23.8)	165(44.6)	67(18.1)	31(8.4)	19(5.1)

About 68% were reported to believe social media is their main source to reach and obtain information from places on pandemic such as covid-19. Analysis revealed that not less than 63% of the respondents believed social media use has enhanced government services and improve knowledge about covid-19. Another analysis revealed that 66% of respondents agreed to be aware of the spread of news on social media during covid-19. Majority of the respondents (70%) revealed that the government used social media in the right way to sensitize people about covid-19.

Table 8: Percentage Distribution of Respondents by Use of Social Media.

1.	I am very satisfied with the government regulations through social media?	117(31.8)	146(39.7)	69(18.8)	21(5.7)	15(4.1)
2.	Police use social media in a strong way to aware people about COVID-19?	93(25.1)	151(40.8)	78(21.1)	31(8.4)	17(4.6)
3.	Doctors use social media in a strong way to aware people about COVID-19?	119(32.2)	126(34.1)	77(20.9)	29(7.9)	18(4.9)
4.	I believe all doctors through social media during COVID-19?	96(26.2)	145(39.5)	70(19.1)	42(11.4)	14(3.8)
5.	I followed many doctors during COVID 19?	110(29.7)	142(38.4)	69(18.6)	26(7.0)	23(6.2)

6.	I chat with doctors through social media during COVID-19?	105(27.9)	155(41.2)	60(16.0)	25(6.6)	31(8.2)

Majority of the respondents also suggested that they are satisfied with the government regulations through social media. Further analysis revealed that 66% of respondents believed police use social media in a strong way to sensitize people about covid-19. Also, the result shows that majority of the respondents believed doctors use social media in a strong way to ensure people are aware of covid-19. Similarly, 66% of respondents believed that all doctors through social media during covid-19, while majority indicated they followed many doctors during covid-19. Also, about 69% of respondents indicated they chat with doctors through social media during covid-19.

Test of Hypothesis.

Hypothesis 1

Ho: There is no significant difference in the level of awareness of covid-19 among youths in UAE.

Hi: There is a significant difference in the level of awareness of covid-19 among youths in UAE.

Significance level=0.05

Critical Region: Accept Ho, if p-value is greater than the significance value, otherwise reject Ho.

ANOVA

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	46.115	6	7.686	9.190	.001
Within Groups	295.208	353	.836		
Total	341.322	359			

The table of analysis above revealed that the p-value (0.001) is less than the significant value (0.05) We therefore reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is a significant difference in the level of awareness of covid-19 among youths.

The result suggests the awareness level differs from emirate to emirate.

Hypothesis 2

Ho: There is no significant difference in the awareness level about covid-19 between high and low users of social media.

Hi: There is a significant difference in the awareness level about covid-19 between high and low users of social media.

Significance level=0.05

Critical Region: Accept Ho, if p-value is greater than the significance value, otherwise reject Ho.

ANOVA

Social media has been a very active medium for disseminating false information and myth about COVID-19 in UAE?

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	11.225	2	5.613	5.211	.006
Within Groups	383.454	356	1.077		
Total	394.680	358			

The table of analysis above revealed that the p-value (0.006) is less than the significant value (0.05). We can therefore reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is a significant difference in the awareness level about covid-19 between high and low users of social media among the youths. The result shows that high users have more awareness about covid-19 than the low users.

Hypothesis 3:

Ho: There is no significant difference in the level of awareness of covid-19 among several social media platforms users.

Hi: There is a significant difference in the level of awareness of covid-19 among several social media platforms users.

Significance level=0.05

Critical Region: Accept Ho, if p-value is greater than the significance value, otherwise reject Ho

ANOVA

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.279	1	.279	.496	.483
Within Groups	61.713	110	.561		
Total	61.991	111			

From the table of analysis above, the p-value shows a value of 0.483 which is greater than the significance value (0.05). We therefore accept the null hypothesis and conclude that there is no significant difference in the level of awareness of covid-19 among several social media platform users. In other

words, the level of awareness about covid-19 among twitter users is not significantly different from the level of awareness among snapchat and you tube users.

Hypothesis 4

There is no significant difference in the level of awareness of covid-19 among respondents from different emirates

Hi: There is a significant difference in the level of awareness of covid-19 among respondents from different emirates.

Significance level=0.05

Critical Region: Accept Ho, if p-value is greater than the significance value, otherwise reject Ho

ANOVA					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	24.695	6	4.116	6.413	.000
Within Groups	240.687	375	.642		
Total	265.382	381			

The table of analysis above shows the difference in the level of awareness among several emirates. The result shows a p-value of 0.000 which is less than the significant value (0.05). We can therefore reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is a significant difference in the level of awareness of covid-19 among youths at different emirates.

Hypothesis 5

There is no significant relationship between the level of awareness of covid-19 and social media use.

Hi: There is a significant relationship between the level of awareness of covid-19 and social media use.

Significance level=0.05

Critical Region: Accept Ho, if p-value is greater than the significance value, otherwise reject Ho

Correlations						
		Level of awareness about covid-19	Awareness about covid-19	Social media usage	No of hours used daily on social media	Use of social media for covid-19 news
Level of awareness about covid-19	Pearson Correlation	1	.418**	.506**	.301**	.356**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	374	362	368	363	367
Awareness about covid-19	Pearson Correlation	.418**	1	.515**	.420**	.445**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	362	366	363	362	360
Social media usage	Pearson Correlation	.506**	.515**	1	.355**	.375**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000
	N	368	363	370	365	365
No of hours used daily on social media	Pearson Correlation	.301**	.420**	.355**	1	.575**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	363	362	365	367	365
Use of social media for covid-19 news	Pearson Correlation	.356**	.445**	.375**	.575**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	367	360	365	365	370
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).						

The table above shows the correlation between level of awareness of covid-19 and social media use. The result revealed a fairly strong correlation between social media usage and level of awareness (R=0.506). Also, social media usage is correlated with awareness with covid-19. No of hours spend on social media and use of social media for covid-19 news are also fairly correlated. We can therefore reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is a significant relationship between level of awareness of covid-19 and social media use. However, the Pearson correlation values suggest positive correlation between level of awareness about covid-19 and social media usage.

Hypothesis 6

There is no significant difference in the level of awareness of covid-19 between male and female social media users

Hi: There is a significant difference in the level of awareness of covid-19 between male and female social media users.

Significance level=0.05

Critical Region: Accept Ho, if p-value is greater than the significance value, otherwise reject Ho

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances					
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference

Social media use		3.629	.058	.289	377	.772	.035
				.311	82.191	.757	.035

From the t-test analysis above, the p-value shows a value of 0.058 which is greater than the significant value (0.05). We can therefore accept the null hypothesis and conclude that there is no significant difference in the level of awareness of covid-19 between male and female social media users.

Hypothesis 7

Ho: There is no significant correlation between socio-demographic characteristics and usage of social media among youths.

Hi: There is significant correlation between socio-demographic characteristics and usage of social media among youths.

Significance level=0.05

Critical Region: Accept Ho, if p-value is greater than the significance value, otherwise reject Ho

Correlations

		Age	Gender	Working Place	Social Media Use	Length of Social Media Use
Age	Pearson Correlation	1	.418**	.506**	.431**	.479**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	374	362	368	369	367
Gender	Pearson Correlation	.418**	1	.515**	.533**	.423**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	362	366	363	366	366
Working Place	Pearson Correlation	.506**	.515**	1	.453**	.543**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000
	N	368	363	370	368	366
Social Media Use	Pearson Correlation	.431**	.533**	.453**	1	.464**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	369	366	368	373	367
Length of Social Media Use	Pearson Correlation	.479**	.423**	.543**	.464**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	367	366	366	367	371

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The table above shows the correlation between the socio-demographic characteristics and social media usage. The result shows that there is a significant correlation between social media use and age, gender, working place, and length of social media usage. Further analysis also revealed significant correlations between age and working place. Gender and working place also revealed significant correlations (0.515). working place is also significantly correlated with length of social media usage while the length of social media usage is also correlated with social media use.

Hypothesis 8

Ho: There is no significant correlation between socio-demographic characteristics and youth's trust and believe in social media.

Hi: There is a significant correlation between socio-demographic characteristics and youth's trust and believe in social media.

Significance level=0.05

Critical Region: Accept Ho, if p-value is greater than the significance value, otherwise reject Ho

Correlations

		Age	Gender	Working Place	Social Media Use	Trust and believe in social media
Age	Pearson Correlation	1	.482**	.490**	.433**	.432**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	370	365	365	367	370
Gender	Pearson Correlation	.482**	1	.394**	.536**	.422**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	365	369	365	363	368
Working Place	Pearson Correlation	.490**	.394**	1	.575**	.548**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000
	N	365	365	367	365	367
Social Media Use	Pearson Correlation	.433**	.536**	.575**	1	.527**

	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	367	363	365	370	370
Trust and believe in social media	Pearson Correlation	.432**	.422**	.548**	.527**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	370	368	367	370	376
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).						

The table above shows the correlations between socio-demographic characteristics and youth's trust and believe in social media. The result shows that age and gender show fairly strong correlations with trust and believe in social media. In other words, the gender of the youths does not necessarily determine their trust and believe in social media. Working place also a strong correlation (0.548) with youth's trust and believe in social media, while working place shows a fairly strong correlation (0.527) with trust and believe in social media.

Hypothesis 9

Ho: There is no significant difference in the level of trust in social media among male and female respondents.

Hi: There is a significant difference in the level of trust in social media among male and female respondents

Significance level=0.05

Critical Region: Accept Ho, if p-value is greater than the significance value, otherwise reject Ho

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Level of trust in social media	Equal variances assumed	15.790	.000	6.881	380	.000	4.097	.595	2.927	5.268
	Equal variances not assumed			7.310	356.517	.000	4.097	.561	2.995	5.200

The table above shows the independent sample t-test to test the difference in the level of trust in social media among male and female respondents. The result shows that a significant value of 0.001 which indicates a significant difference in the level of trust and believe between male and female youths.

Hypothesis 10

Ho: There is no significant difference in the level of trust in social media among younger and older respondents.

Hi: There is a significant difference in the level of trust in social media among younger and older respondents.

Significance level=0.05

Critical Region: Accept Ho, if p-value is greater than the significance value, otherwise reject Ho

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
12-19 years	Between Groups	3.124	2	1.562	2.487	.090
	Within Groups	45.222	388	.628		
	Total	48.347	390			
20-30 years	Between Groups	1.717	2	.859	1.271	.287
	Within Groups	48.630	388	.675		
	Total	50.347	390			
30 years and above	Between Groups	1.507	2	.754	.663	.004
	Within Groups	81.880	388	1.137		
	Total	83.387	390			

The table above shows the significant difference in trust and believes in social media by age group. The result shows no significant difference among the younger age groups (12-19 years and 20-30 years). However, the oldest age group (30 years and above) shows a significant difference (0.004) in the level and trust and believe in social media. Therefore, there exist a significant difference in the level of trust and believe in social media among the older age group than the younger age groups.

Hypothesis 11

Ho: There is no significant effect of respondent's socio demographic characteristics on usage of social media during covid-19

Hi: There is a significant effect of respondent's socio demographic characteristics on usage of social media during covid-19

Significance level=0.05

Critical Region: Accept Ho, if p-value is greater than the significance value, otherwise reject Ho

Dependent Variable: Social Media Use During Covid-19						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	45.947	3.684		12.472	.000
	Age	.591	.039	.607	15.222	.000
	Gender	-8.484	.547	-.798	-15.524	.000
	Working Place	.033	.004	.406	7.858	.000
	Emirate	.459	.031	.551	10.522	.000
a. R-Squared = .877 (Adjusted R Squared-.769)						

The table above shows the multiple regression model revealing the impact of socio-demographic characteristics on social media use during covid-19. The result revealed that all the socio-demographic factors have significant impact on social media use during covid-19 period in UAE.

4. FINDINGS

Findings from this research work revealed that majority of the respondents in this study are high social media users. The report revealed that not less than 70% of the respondents use social media daily for at least 3 hours. Findings from this study also revealed that nearly all the respondents (98%) use three social media platforms namely instagram, snapchat and whatsapp. Further analysis revealed that not less than 22% follow news on covid-19 daily throughout the covid-19 period. Reports also revealed an evenly distributed of the time respondents use social media to access news on covid-19. (Morning, afternoon and evening). Reports also revealed that more than half of the respondents have good knowledge of use of social media in disseminating information during covid-19 period. A large percentage (at least 68%) can differentiate between real and fake news on social media. Also, majority of the respondents (68%) believe that social media has enhanced government services and improve knowledge about covid-19. Test of analysis also revealed that there is a significant difference in the level of awareness about covid-19 among social media users. The difference among the emirates was also discovered to be significant. Further test of difference also suggests that high social media users among the youths have higher level of awareness about covid-19 than the lower users. Also, male respondents are believed to have higher awareness level than female respondents. Result from correlational matrix analysis also revealed that socio-demographic characteristics such as age, gender, emirates and workplace have significant correlation with usage, trust and belief in social media.

5. DISCUSSION

The purpose of this research is to investigate social media use during covid-19 among the youths in UAE. Findings from this study revealed an average youth in UAE during covid-19 is a high social media user.

The result revealed that at least 22% of the respondents follow news on covid-19 daily throughout the covid-19 period. Also in table 5, it was reported that not less than 62% of the respondents use social media platforms to spread information about covid-19 more than any other professional. Also, the result revealed that not less than 70% of the respondents are high users/subscribers of several social media platforms. The result from table 5 also revealed that not less than 61% of the respondent's spread information about covid-19 more than any other professional. Analysis from table 4 indicated that about 69% of the respondents suggested that social media has been a very active medium for disseminating false information and myth about covid-19 in the UAE. Findings from tables 6 revealed that majority of the respondents (66%) indicated to always double check the news through social media during covid-19 which proved to be an effective way of minimizing the spread of misinformation about covid-19.

In answering research questions: The findings from this research work revealed that not less than three quarters of the respondents (70%) are ware of covid-19 in the UAE according to the findings in table 4.

1. What is the extent of social media use to circulate information about covid-19 among youths.

Also, findings from table 5 revealed that 62% of the respondents revealed they use social media to spread information about covid-19.

2. What is the rate of misinformation about covid-19?

Findings from table 4 revealed that at least 69% of the respondents believed that social media has been

a very active medium for disseminating false information and myths about covid-19 in the UAE.

Pew Research Center (2013) found that 13% of American Internet users reported posting content online had caused trouble in their relationship. Findings from this research revealed at least 27% of respondents sending rumors via social media during covid 19.

Ocansey, Ametepe, and Oduro (2016) argued that youths use social media on an enormous scale mainly for communication purposes. This corroborates findings in table 7 that revealed that almost 70% of the respondents use social media as their main source to reach and obtain information from places during the pandemic.

Figueiras, et al. (2021) did a study about "Levels of trust in information sources as a predictor of protective health behaviors during COVID-19 pandemic: a UAE cross-sectional study. They find that "the levels of trust in sources of information were associated with the adoption of protective behaviors, significantly so for citizens of the UAE. These findings may help inform the improvement of pandemic–related health messaging in multicultural contexts" (p.1)

Another study was collected by Tahat, K., et al. (2023) about "Role of social media in Changing the Social Life Patterns of Youth at UAE. They found that "Participants say connected with their family, take more interest in their domestic matters, and also interact more with their parents and relatives" (p.1)

In comparing the previous studies in the UAE and this study the researcher finds that the social impact theory focusses on influence groups, target of the influence, proximity in time and how many people are in the influencing group. The findings from this research revealed that not less than 70% of youths (in the influence group) suggested using social media as their main source of gathering information during covid-19 period.

From the collected data the researcher finds that the correlations between socio-demographic characteristics and youth's trust and believe in social media. The result shows that age and gender show fairly strong correlations with trust and believe in social media. In other words, the gender of the youths does not necessarily determine their trust and believe in social media.

So, the researcher suggested two future topics:

1. The role of social media and gender in disseminating false information about covid-19 in the UAE.
2. Positive and Negative impact of social media and gender during covid-19 period.

REFERENCES

Ahmead, R., & Hillman, S. (2020). *Labouring to communicate: Use of migrant languages in COVID-19 awareness campaign in Qatar*. De Gruyter.

Alabi, K., Olatunji, I., & Ayegun, I. (2020). Information sharing and evaluation as determinants of spread of fake news on social media among Nigerian youths: Experience from COVID-19 pandemic. *International Journal of Knowledge Content Development & Technology, 10*(4), 65–82. https://doi.org/10.5865/IJKCT.2020.10.4.065

AlSayyad, N., & Guvenc, M. (2015). Virtual uprisings: On the interaction of new social media, traditional media coverage and urban space during the 'Arab Spring'. *Urban Studies, 52*(11), 2018–2034. https://doi.org/10.1177/0042098013505881

Asika, L. K. (2009). *Essentials of research methodology*. Spring Publishers.

Bastani, P., & Bahrami, M. A. (2020). COVID-19 related misinformation on social media: A qualitative study from Iran. *Journal of Medical Internet Research, 22*(4), e18932. https://doi.org/10.2196/18932

Bukhari, W. (2020). Role of social media in COVID-19 pandemic. *International Journal of Frontier Sciences, 4*(2), 59–60. https://doi.org/10.37978/tijfs.v4i2.144

Charles-Smith, L. E., Reynolds, T. L., Cameron, M. A., Conway, M., Lau, E. H., Olsen, J. M., et al. (2015). Using social media for actionable disease surveillance and outbreak management: A systematic literature review. *PLoS ONE, 10*(10), e0139701. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0139701

Cheong, H. J., & Morrison, M. A. (2008). Consumers' reliance on product information and recommendations found in user-generated content. *Journal of Interactive Advertising, 8*(2), 38–49. https://doi.org/10.1080/15252019.2008.10722141

Cheung, C. M. K., Lee, M. K. O., & Rabjohn, N. (2008). The impact of electronic word-of-mouth: The adoption of online opinions in online customer communities. *Internet Research, 18*(3), 229–247. https://doi.org/10.1108/10662240810883290

Chukwuere, J. E., & Chukwuere, P. C. (2017). The impact of social media on social lifestyle: A case study of university female students. *Gender and Behaviour, 15*(4), 9966–9981. https://hdl.handle.net/10520/EJC-

c7f0f1d66

David, T. O. (2017). Undergraduates' information literacy skills and the use of electronic resources in Delta State University, Abraka, Nigeria. *International Journal of Education and Evaluation, 3*(1), 27–36.

Dechêne, A., Stahl, C., Hansen, J., & Wänke, M. (2010). The truth about the truth: A meta-analytic review of the truth effect. *Personality and Social Psychology Review, 14*(2), 238–257. https://doi.org/10.1177/1088868309352251

Dickey, I. J., & Lewis, W. F. (2011). An overview of digital media and advertising. In M. Eastin, T. Daugherty, & N. Burns (Eds.), *Digital media and advertising: User-generated content consumption* (pp. 1–24). Information Science Reference. https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-60960-153-5.ch001

Dubai Health Authority. (2020). *Home quarantine guide*. Government of Dubai. https://www.dha.gov.ae/

Feezell, J. T. (2018). Agenda setting through social media: The importance of incidental news exposure and social filtering in the digital era. *Political Research Quarterly, 71*(2), 482–494. https://doi.org/10.1177/1065912917744895

Fernandez-Guerrero, I. M. (2014). "WhatsAppitis". *The Lancet, 383*(9922), 1040. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(14)60445-9

Figueiras, M. J., Ghorayeb, J., Coutinho, M. V., Marôco, J., & Thomas, J. (2021). Levels of trust in information sources as a predictor of protective health behaviors during COVID-19 pandemic: A UAE cross-sectional study. *Frontiers in Psychology, 12*, 633550. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.633550

Fletcher, R., & Nielsen, R. K. (2018). Are people incidentally exposed to news on social media? A comparative analysis. *New Media & Society, 20*(7), 2450–2468. https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444817724170

Ford, R., & Ravansar, H. (2017). *CPD 12 impact skills 3 – Social media for academics: Research dissemination*. The University of Manchester. https://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/employment/training/personal-development/academicstaff/

Global Media Insight. (2020). *UAE social media statistics 2020*. https://www.globalmediainsight.com/blog/uae-social-media-statistics/

Greg, H. E., Chika, E. A., & Edogor, I. O. (2013). Social media use among students of universities in South-East Nigeria. *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science, 16*(3), 23–32. https://doi.org/10.9790/0837-1632332

Hashim, K., & Kutbi, I. (2015). Perceptions of social media impact on students' social behavior: A comparison between arts and science students. *Online Journal of Communication and Media Technologies, 5*(2), 81–90. https://doi.org/10.29333/ojcmt/2538

Haynes, S. (2001). *Handbook of psychological assessment* (3rd ed.). Pergamon Press.

Hopkyns, S. (2020). Linguistic diversity and inclusion in the era of COVID-19. *Language on the Move*. https://www.languageonthemove.com/linguistic-diversity-and-inclusion-in-the-era-of-covid-19/

International Telecommunication Union. (2019). *Measuring the information society report 2019*. International Telecommunication Union. https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Statistics/Pages/publications/misr2019.aspx

Library of Congress Law. (2020). *Social media and disinformation: United Arab Emirates*. https://www.loc.gov/law/help/social-media-disinformation/uae.php

Nielsen, M. (2017). Computer-mediated communication and self-awareness—A selective review. *Computers in Human Behavior, 76*, 554–560. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2017.08.015

Norman, K. L. (2008). *Cyberpsychology: An introduction to human–computer interaction*. Cambridge University Press.

Obi-Ani, N. A., Anikwenze, C., & Isiani, M. C. (2020). Social media and the COVID-19 pandemic: Observations from Nigeria. *Cogent Arts & Humanities, 7*(1), 1799483. https://doi.org/10.1080/23311983.2020.1799483

Ocansey, S. K., Ametepe, W., & Oduro, C. F. (2016). The impact of social media on the youth: The Ghanaian perspective. *International Journal of Engineering Technology and Sciences (IJETS), 6*(1), 87–97.

Sulaiman, K. A., Adeyemi, I. O., & Ayegun, I. (2020). Information sharing and evaluation as determinants of spread of fake news on social media among Nigerian youths: Experience from COVID-19 pandemic. *International Journal of Knowledge Content Development & Technology, 10*(4), 65–82. https://doi.org/10.5865/IJKCT.2020.10.4.065

Tahat, K., Tahat, D. N., Masoori, A., Habes, M., Alghazo, E., & Ketbi, N. (2023). Role of social media in changing the social life patterns of youth at UAE. In *Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Finance* (pp. 152–163). Springer Nature Switzerland. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-37776-6_11

UNESCO. (2020). *Experts discuss youth exploitation of media and digital spaces in the Africa region during the COVID-19 pandemic*. https://en.unesco.org/news/experts-discuss-youth-exploitation-media-and-digital-spaces-africa-region-during-covid-19

Weeks, B. E., Lane, D. S., Kim, D. H., Lee, S. S., & Kwak, N. (2017). Incidental exposure, selective exposure, and political information sharing: Integrating online exposure patterns and expression on social media. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication, 22*(6), 363–379. https://doi.org/10.1111/jcc4.12199

Yates, J. (2020, March 14). COVID-19 and social media: Limit the spread of fear by changing online behavior. *CBC News*. https://www.cbc.ca/news/technology/coronavirus-avoid-sharing-social-media-disinformation-1.5497000