

Most of the respondents (63 %) had a change in habits (changes) and most of them were negative represented in sleepless nights, anxiety and oversleeping, while only 35 % had positive changes represented in having more healthy food and be more cautious.

And these results are coping with the results of study of (Sang-hwa, Lee, S. Y., and Han, C., 2020), which demonstrated that using social media is related positively to fear and anger by increasing them and accordingly increasing preventive behaviors.

Conclusion

Results show that Although following social media makes some of the audiences more aware of the virus, updates, and procedures, the majority is expressing negative effects represented in negative feelings and negative changes in daily habits. They also expressed fear and anxiety that a significant percentage tried to avoid social due to all these adverse effects.

limitations of study

This study cannot be generalized as it is limited to the category that the sample represented. It was also conducted to give results in a specific time, as its results are limited to the Corona pandemic time in Egypt during the lockdown.

Recommendation for further studies

It is recommended to study the correlation between the psychological effects caused by following news on social media and the behavior of being more cautious.

References

- 1- Abdulrahman, A., & Farhan, N., (2018) Social Media utilisation among male and female. Social science and humanities journal, Vol-2, Issue 8 , Page no. 589-593.
- 2- Buda, G., Lukoseviciute, J., salciunaite& smigelskas, K., (2020) Possible effects of social media use on adolescent health behaviors and perceptions. Psychological reports. retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/341158184_Possible_Effects_of_Social_Media_Use_on_Adolescent_Health_Behaviors_and_Perceptions
- 3- Chandra Guntuku, S., Buffone, A., Jaidka, K., Eichstaedt, J. C., & Ungar, L. H. (2019). Understanding and Measuring Psychological Stress Using Social Media. Proceedings of the International AAAI

Discussion of the Results

Results demonstrated that social media usage among youth is between three hours, six hours, and more than 6 hours per day, which is an indicator of the growing up of social media addiction. Results showed that lockdown leads to more usage; it affected social media usage in a significant way. Furthermore, this is coping with the study results (Abdulrahman, A., & Farhan, N., 2018), which was confirming that social media addiction is growing bigger among youth.

Pages of the Egyptian Ministry and World Health Organization are the most followed pages regarding corona news. In addition, Facebook is the first platform in usage regarding corona news among other social media platforms.

Exposure to social media regarding COVID 19 during lockdown affected the audiences like the following: they are more aware in the first place. Secondly, social media caused them fear then worry in the third place. These results is confirming on the results of the study of (Perugini, M. L. L. and Solano, A. C., 2020), which identified the motives for using social media and showed that one of most mutual motives was information search.

Results demonstrate that following news on social media regarding COVID-19 brought audiences negative feelings and made them more anxious and nervous. They disagree that it makes them reassured, as they know the latest updates. Also 33% think that statistics and numbers on social media platforms news which is provided about the virus are contributing to negative feelings increase. 33 % as well disagree that designs are making them feel better while they agree that designs are scaring them.

On the other hand, respondents agree that following social media regarding corona news makes them more aware about the situation and designs make the information clearer.

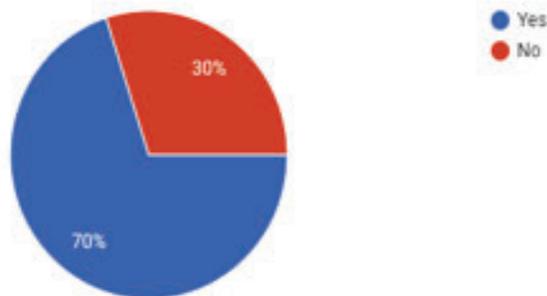
Results revealed as well that 51% of the respondents tried to avoid Facebook to keep their mental health safe from anxiety and fear.

Most of the respondents described the posts in red and black representing death, alarming and danger.

Most of the sample described the posts with the color red with a percentage of 48, and they illustrated that it represents danger, death, and alarming. 29% represent it in black because it reflects depression and sadness like their moods. Only 21% described the posts with green as it represents hope to them.

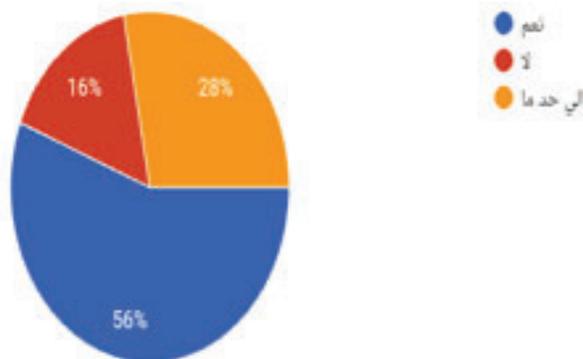
did you feel any changes in your daily habits due to following social media regarding corona news during the corona lockdown ?

50 responses



هل شعرت بتغير في عاداتك اليومية نتيجة متابعة مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي فيما يخص مرض كورونا اثناء الحظر ؟

50 responses



Most of the respondents confirmed that they had changes in their daily habits due to following the news on social media with a percentage of 63 as 42% of these changes is negative represented in anxiety, sleepless nights or oversleeping, worry, less productivity, fear and depression. Only 36% expressed that these changes were positive and represented in doing more sports, eating healthy, and being more cautious and careful to not catch the virus.

Respondent's opinion regarding social media makes them more aware and accordingly have less fear, as 31% agree, 29% is neutral, and 17% disagree.

Most of the sample (54%) agree and strongly agree that Designing corona news on Facebook makes news clearer with percentages of 37 and 17, respectively. Only 25% are neutral about that.

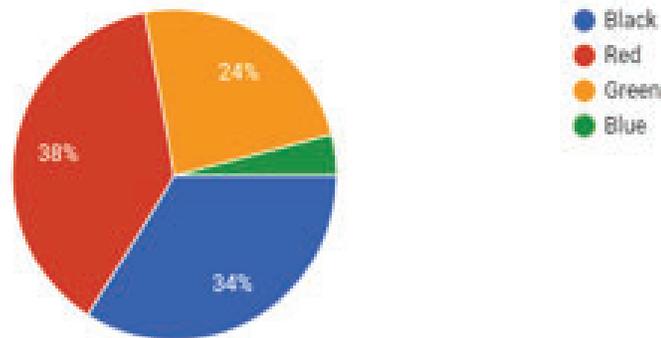
While 35% agree that corona news designs are scaring them, 13% strongly agrees to that, and 31% are neutral.

Respondents agree and strongly agree with 37 percent and 16 percent that they try to avoid social media to keep their mental health safe from anxiety and fear, while only 28% are neutral about that.

On the other hand, 39% disagree and strongly disagree (15% and 24% respectively) that they open Facebook when they feel worried in order to be better, while 20% are neutral to this.

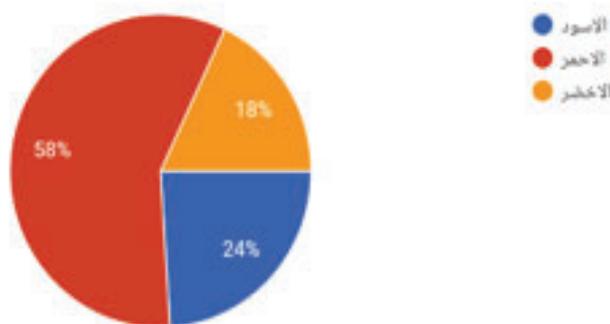
If you will choose a color to describe these posts what will you choose?

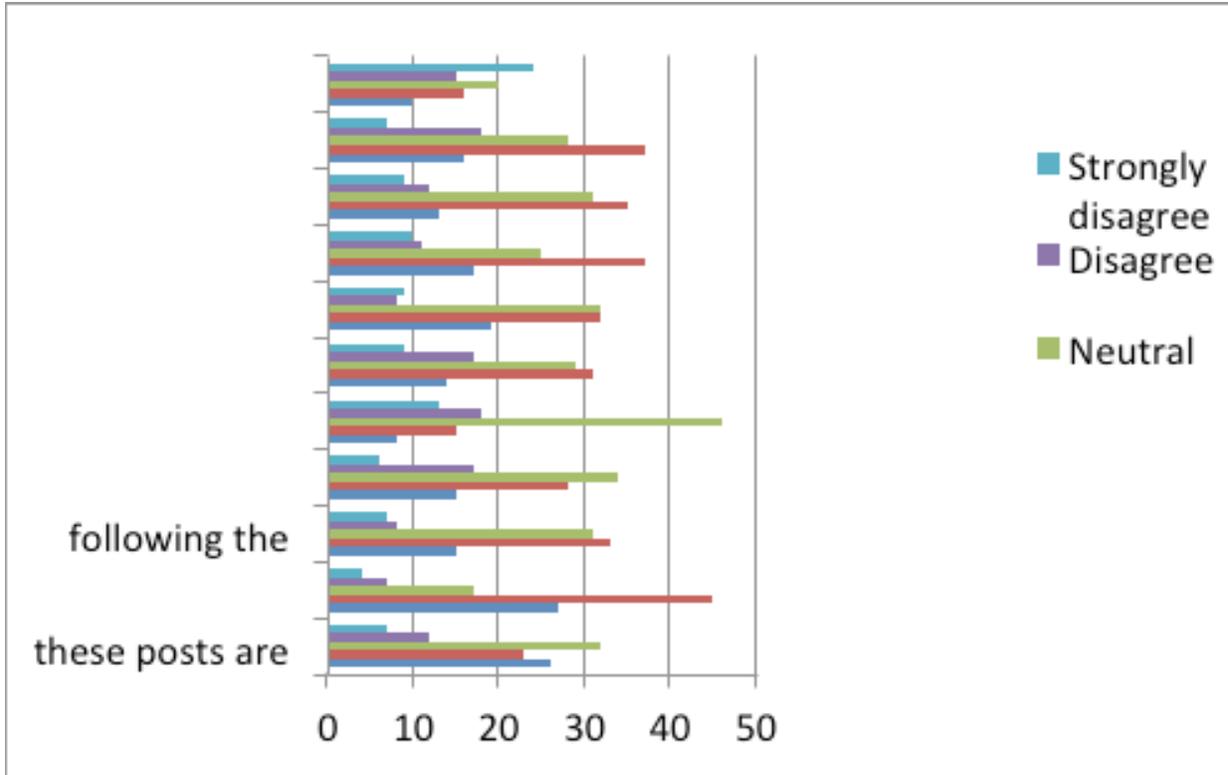
50 responses



إذا اخترت لون لتصف به هذه المنشورات ما هو اللون ؟

50 responses





Most respondents (49%) agree and strongly agree that following these posts on social media brings negative feelings, with 23% and 26%, respectively.

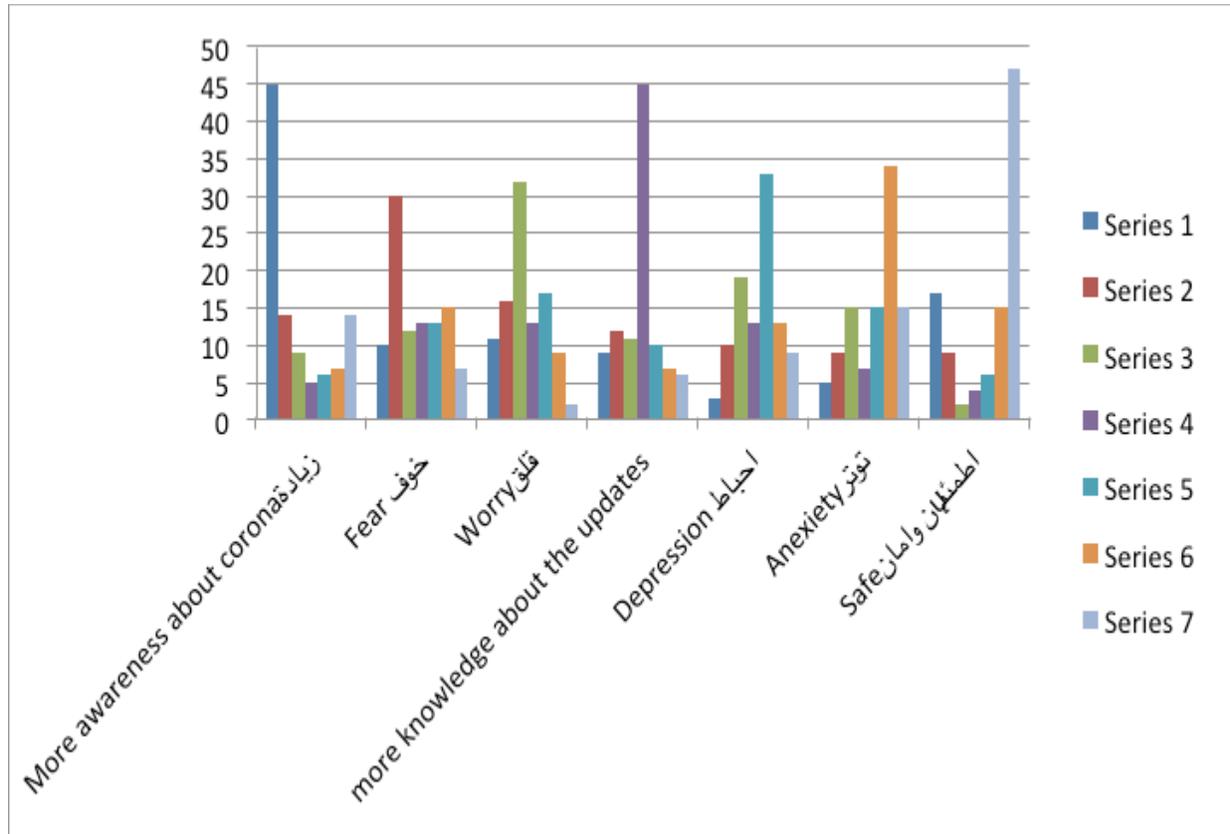
Most of the sample (72%) agree and strongly agree that social media platforms contributed to making them more anxious and nervous, with 45% and 27%, respectively.

On the other hand, regarding the numbers and statistics, 33% agree that numbers and statistics about the coronavirus on social media contribute to the increase of negative feelings. In comparison, 31% are neutral about that.

Respondents with a total percentage of (34) are neutral about that following corona news on social media platforms makes them reassured because they know the latest updates. At the same time, they agree and strongly agree with a percentage of 28 and 15, respectively.

31% of the sample disagree and strongly disagree that designs of posts about Corona news make them feel better about the situation with the percentages 18 and 13%, respectively, while most of the sample with a percentage of 46 is neutral.

Most of the posts that sample subjects were exposed to by the researcher were familiar to 47% of the sample, and all of the posts were familiar to 24%.

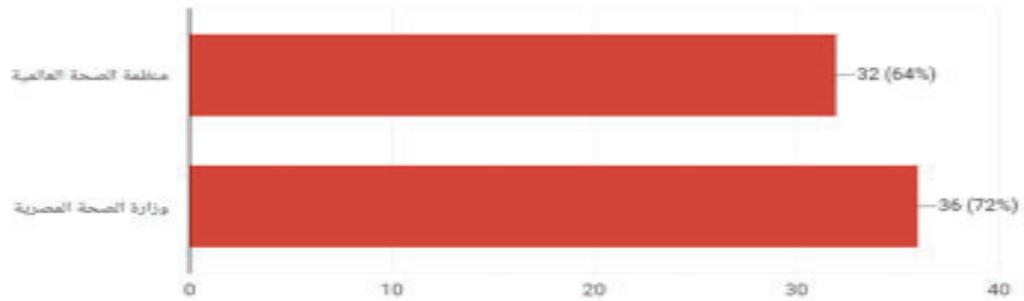


The researcher used the posts to stimulate the sample subjects, so they recall how the posts affected them and their feelings due to these posts during the lockdown. They put in order the effects they had like the following:

- Social media news made them more aware regarding COVID 19 in the first place with 45 %.
- 30 % put «Fear» as a second effect for the posts
- 32 % ranked «Worry» as the third effect of the exposure to news on social media
- «Depression» is number 5 in order with a percentage of 33 %, then anxiety in the 6th order and then feeling «Safe» was the last in order with 47 %

ما هي الصفحات الأكثر متابعة أثناء لحظر لمعرفة اخبار الكورونا؟ (يمكن اختيار أكثر من بديل)

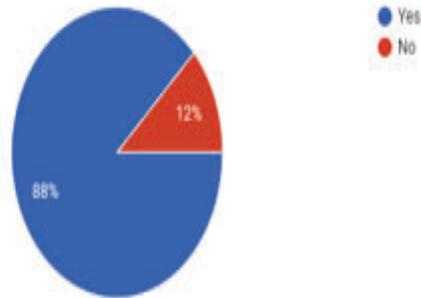
50 responses



Also, the results reveal that the most followed page is the Egyptian Ministry and population official page in the first place and then the World Health Organization page with a percentage of ٦٥ and ٥٣ respectively.

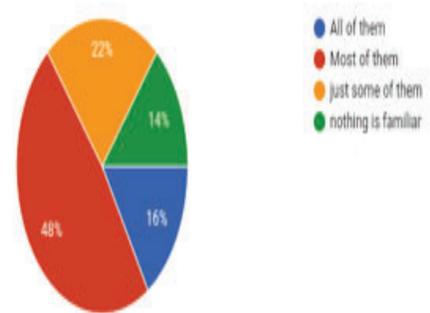
Are there some posts that are familiar to you from these posts?

50 responses



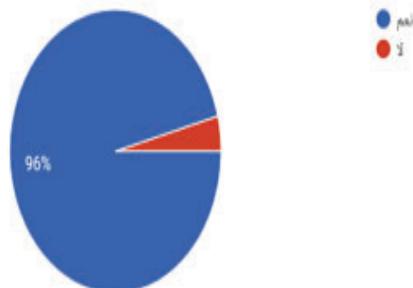
If your answer is yes ..to what extent you find it familiar ?

50 responses



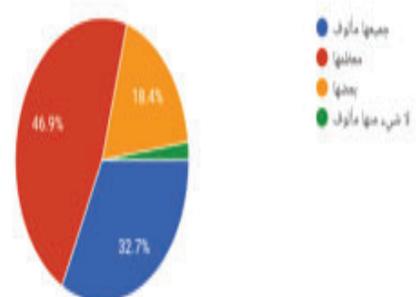
هل هناك نسبة من هذه المنشورات مألوفة لديك ؟

50 responses



إذا كانت الإجابة ب نعم الي اي مدى هذه المنشورات مألوفة لديك؟

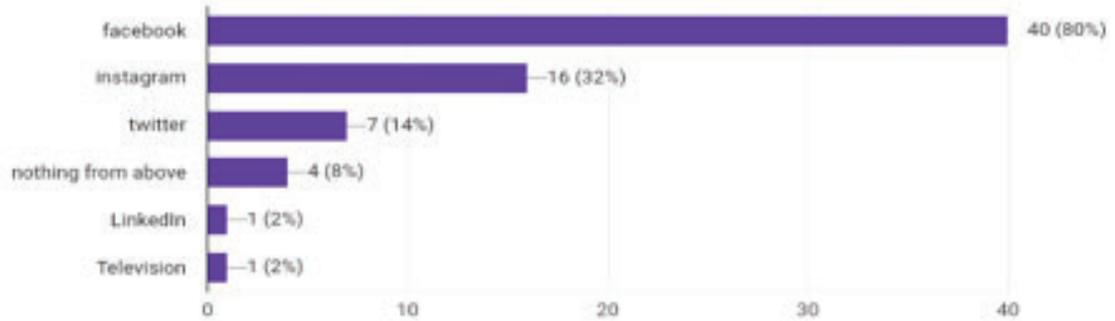
49 responses



The research confirmed that the lockdown affected social media usage as 83% of the answers were yes, my usage of Facebook and Instagram increased during corona lockdown.)

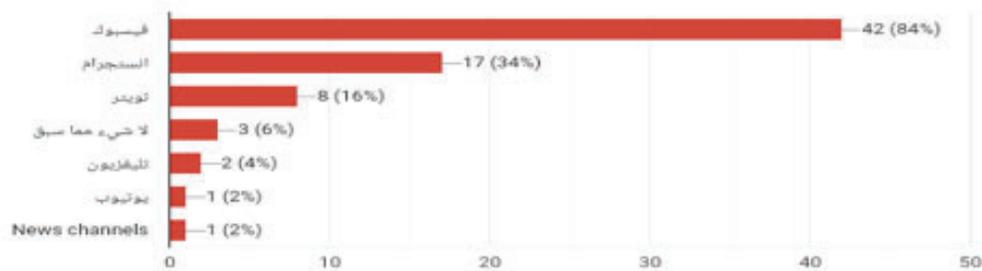
what are the social media platforms you are following to know about the covid 19 news ?

50 responses



ما مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي التي تتابعها لتعرف اخبار الكوفيد (يمكن اختيار اكثر من بديل)

50 responses



For the specific platforms that are followed the most regarding the COVID 19 news, the results show that Facebook and Instagram are the most followed platforms for this purpose, as 80% of the sample follow Facebook and 32% are following Instagram.

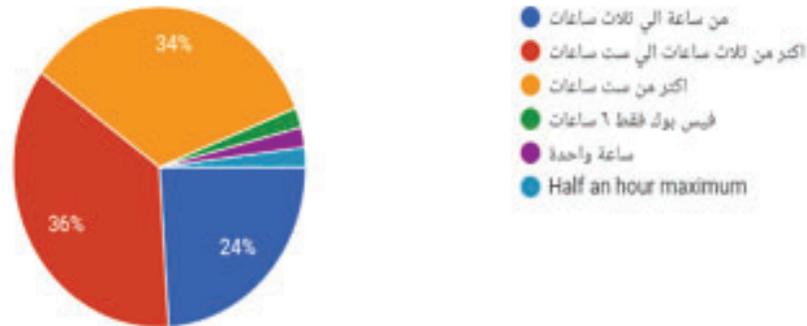
what are the pages you are following the most to know the news of the corona virus during the lockdown?

50 responses



ما هي عدد الساعات التي تستخدم خلالها مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي (فيسبوك وانستجرام) خلال اليوم عادة؟

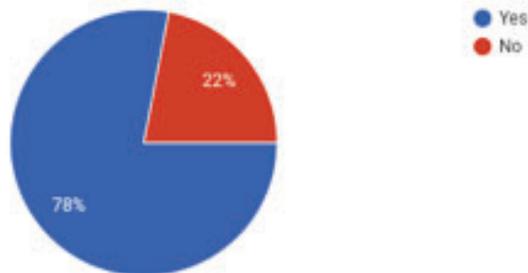
50 responses



The results revealed that a large proportion of 36 % uses social media (Facebook and Instagram) with an average of more than six hours per day, while 31 percent use the same websites with an average of 3 to 6 hours per day.

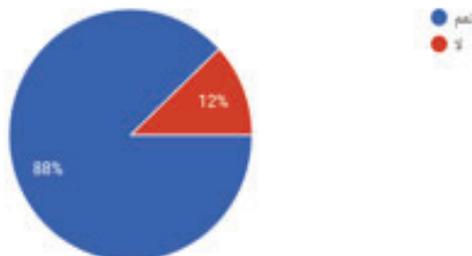
did you have your usage hours increased during the lockdown for the corona virus?

50 responses



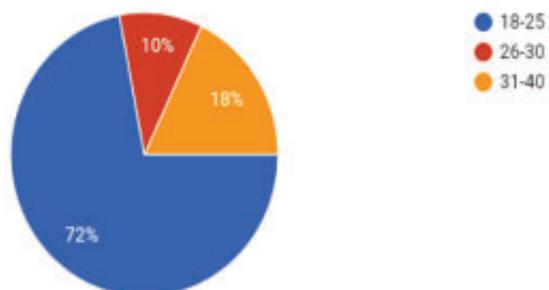
هل ازادت ساعات الاستخدام اثناء الحظر في أزمة كورونا؟

50 responses



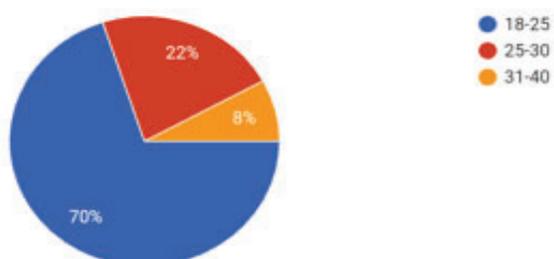
What is your age ?

50 responses



ما هو سنك ؟

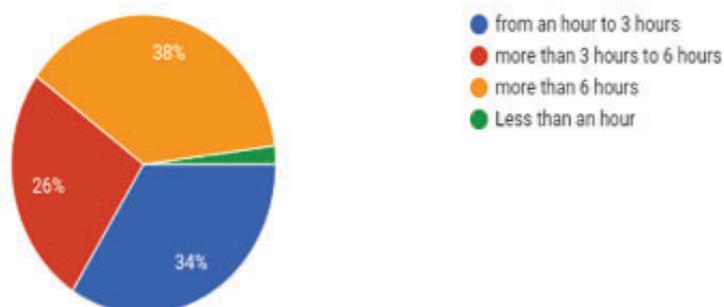
50 responses



Besides, the results were like the following:

How many hours you are using social media (facebook and instagram) per day?

50 responses



Sample

The research was conducted on 100 participants of youth (males and females)

Age range: from 18 to 40 years old

Class: B and B+

The sample is a purposive available sample as participants had to be social media users and following the news on it.

Research Procedures

A Presentation was designed to contain the most liked (seen)posts on official pages of the Ministry of Health and World Health Organization; these posts were published during the specific period (March 2020 to July 2020) and attached with a link to a questionnaire (via google form) were addressed to 250 subjects. The questionnaire was designed* in two languages (Arabic and English), and 100 responses were collected (50 responses for the Arabic version and 50 responses for the English version).

Every subject in the sample was checking the posts first, and then it leads to answering the questionnaire.

A Likert Measurement was designed to measure the effect of the exposure to these posts on the respondents. The researcher analyzed the data and came out with the following results.

Results and statistics

Most of the respondents were between 18 and 25 years old.

*The questionnaire was judge by Mass communication professors:

- Dr. Sayed Bahnasy (Professor-Vice Dean of Mass communication faculty-MTI university)
- Dr. Ragaa el Ghamrawy (Assistant Professor - Mass communication faculty - Head of Radio & TV department, Pharos university)
- Dr. Walaa Yehia (Assistant Professor – Mass communication faculty-MTI university)
- Dr. Labiba Abdelnaby (Professor- Faculty of arts –Masscomm dep. –Ain shams univ.)
- Dr. Aliaa samy (Assistant professor-Mass communication faculty -Cairo university)
- Dr. Salwa Soliman (Professor –Faculty of arts –Masscomm dep. –Ain shams univ.)

Methodology and procedures

Methodology

This study is an exploratory study exploring the psychological effects of following the news of coronavirus on social media platforms concentrating on Facebook and Instagram. The study emphasizes that using social media to follow coronavirus news during the lockdown in Egypt had an impact (i.e., anxiety) on its users.

Research questions

1. Did the lockdown affect the usage of social media?
 - A. Did it lead to more usage?
 - B. Did they try to avoid using it?
2. How the posts of news affected the emotions of the audiences?
3. Did following the news pages on Facebook contributed to negative feelings during lockdown?
4. Did these posts contribute to increasing the awareness and knowledge of audiences about the virus?

Research Design

The study used a semi-experimental method, as it showed the participants specific posts that were shared during lockdown via news pages on Facebook and Instagram to stimuli same feelings they got during the lockdown period. Participants answered a questionnaire* regarding the posts they saw.

Posts of Facebook were chosen on wide interactivity base, and it is classified according to 3 stages :

Beginning of the lockdown (mid-March to mid-April)

The peak (mid-April to mid-June)

The curve is getting down (mid-June to mid-July)

The study concentrated on the official page of the world health organization (WHO) and the Official page of Ministry of health and population, as they are the trusted and formal sources of news about coronavirus during this period. As both pages(WHO and Ministry of health) have many followers in Egypt, around 800 thousand and 8 million respectively), they are also formal sources of information. Besides, other social media pages are referencing them regarding the news they share as a primitive source of information.

tivation for it. The research was conducted on 24 teenagers between 11 and 17 years via focus groups. The study resulted in confirming the effect of bedtime social media (exposure to social media before sleeping on bed) on sleep; as the user passes the specified time and leads to loss of the time track, they forget about time and the did not sleep on time. Besides, it causes anxiety when disconnected because of the fear of missing the updates, as this fear is the primary motive for bedtime social media. Also, study of (Scott, H., 2019) stated a correlation between social media use duration and sleep patterns, particularly late sleep.

Also (Buda, G., Lukoseviciute, J., salciunaite& smigelskas, K., 2020) found in their study, which was conducted on 4191 school children and aimed to examine the effects of using social media on the health and behavior of adolescents, that problematic social media use is related to lower life satisfaction and worse sleep quality and it may lead to worse health perceptions and negative health consequences.

Researches investigated social media during outbreaks. Study of (Do, H., Lim, C. and others, 2016) investigated emotional responses on Twitter during 2015 (MERS) outbreak in South Korea. It demonstrated that fear and anger are the most common emotions between users. Researchers demonstrated that social media could track people's emotions during outbreaks by investigating their social media responses.

The purpose of the study of (Sang-hwa, Lee, S. Y., and Han, C., 2020) was to examine the effect of social media usage during infectious disease outbreaks on preventive behavior and risk perception mediated by the role of two self-relevant emotions: fear and anger. The results demonstrated that using social media is related positively to fear and anger by increasing them and accordingly increasing preventive behaviors.

Purpose of study

The study explores the emotional effects on audiences' emotions regarding Facebook usage -as a social media platform- as a source of information about COVID-19 during the lockdown in Egypt and if using social media during lockdown affects their feelings mental health.

Although this is making the updates faster, this amount of news causes psychological effects due to the continuous exposure because of the fear of missing out. They fear missing any event or update if they are away for a while. This study demonstrates the psychological effects of following COVID-19 news on social media. Most of the studies explore the psychological effect of social media in general, while only a few explored the psychological effects of using social media during crises or pandemics. So This study is contributing to the investigation of the mental effects, especially during outbreaks.

Research Problem

The research investigates the psychological effects of using the social media platforms (Facebook and Instagram) during the coronavirus pandemic crisis to follow the news and updates of the situation among youth.

Literature Review

Using social media among males and females have a significant impact on users, according to the study of (Abdulrahman, A., & Farhan, N., 2018), which was conducted on a sample of 100 youth from 20 to 35 years old, social media addiction is growing more prominent among youth, and it is affecting the social activity as it is reduced in an explicit way besides medical conditions problem that is happening due to using social media like eyesight issue

A study by (Perugini, M. L. L., and Solano, A. C., 2020) identified the motives for using social media and its effects on well-being. The study was conducted on 420 subjects, and the results showed that most mutual motives were Information search, companionship, seeking attention, and finding companions. The study also revealed that the first two are affecting well-being positively and the other motives related negatively to well-being.

Social media can be used to understand and measure psychological stress, and according to the study of (Chandra Guntuku. S ,Buffone A. and others, 2019), which was conducted on 601 social media users, Social media can be used as a new tool for monitoring stress levels of both individuals and countries. On the other hand, Social media is not only used as a tool to measure psychological stress but also it turned into a source of stress for the users. Study of (Scott, H., woods, H. and Biello, S., 2017) highlighted the effect of using social media before sleeping on the sleep of adolescents and mo-

Psychological effects of following social media platforms (facebook and intagram) regarding COVID-19 news during lockdown in Egypt

Mrs. Omnya Abdelwahab *

Abstract

The research investigates the psychological impacts on Egyptian youth resulted from following COVID-19 news on social media platforms, especially Facebook and Instagram, during the lockdown from March 2020 to July 2020 in Egypt. The research is semi-experimental, where the researcher uses a survey on a purposive sample of 100 subjects of youth from 18 to 40 years old, males and females, after exposing them to selected posts from social media related to the COVID-19 in that specific period. The research results demonstrate a significant psychological effect on youth. Other than the impact of making youth aware of the situation because of following news of coronavirus on these platforms, in that period, following news caused them fear, worry, anxiety, and behavior change, as their usage of social media was growing up in a significant way. Not only fear and worry but also this caused them insomnia and less productivity as well, to the extent that some of them tried to avoid social media to keep their mental health safe from anxiety and worry. Most of the respondents described the posts with the colors red and black, as they clarified that it represents their moods in that period, representing alarming, death, and fear. The study highlights why youth should control their usage of social media and have limited hours of social media exposure as it can affect their psychological health.

(psychological effects, social media, youth, social media exposure, COVID-19,)

Introduction

Social Media usage is growing up day after day due to lots of motives and purposes. Nevertheless, as this usage grows, the side effects become more prominent, especially during a crisis like COVID-19 worldwide. During the lockdown, most of the people were following coronavirus news and updates via social media.

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