The Role of the Social Media in Raising the Level of Health Awareness among University Youth

Analytical Descriptive Study

Prof. Maha El Tarabishi

Professor of Mass Communication, MSA University.

Prof. Salwa Soliman Elguindy

Professor of Public Relations and Advertising, Ain Shams University.

Radwa Ahmed Manie

Teaching assistant, MSA University

Abstract

This study aims to analyse the role of the social media in raising the level of health awareness among university youth, the degree of source credibility of the social media in providing accurate and sufficient health information and which social media platforms raises the level of health information among them. Using online questionnaire, the study was conducted on 255 University youth. The study shows that the greater the degree of dependence on social media as a source of information, the higher the exposure to social media sites related to the health information, while the results showed that the degree of dependence on social media as a source of information and the credibility of social media sites related to the health information are not correlated.

Introduction

Today there is more information, technology and knowledge available than ever before. The social media is used in health communication by individuals, health professionals, disease centers and other health regulatory bodies. However, varying degrees of information quality are churned out daily on social media.

Today the media in general, and the social media in particular, plays a very constructive role in today's society, mainly in increasing public health awareness and collect the views, information and attitudes toward daily major issue, including health issues. The social media recently became the most powerful tool of communication contributing much in conveying information and health awareness messages among its users. **(Pradeep Kumar Dwivedi, 2013).**

Actually with the spreading of many physical health problems, related to many epidemics such as Ebola, Bird Flu, Covid 19 and others epidemics **(Nagpal et al., 2015)**, the social media platforms have been used tremendously for physical health issues , and many other mental health problems, such as anxiety, isolation, frustration and depression, which became a major important subject of concern to many segment of the society, among which are the young generation.

The social media is actually facilitating the search, and share information among its users, as the social media is described as a group of Internet-based application that build on the foundations of Web 2.0 to allow for the creation and exchange of user-generated content, different forms of social media such as social networking sites, blogs, content communities, collaborative projects, virtual game worlds and virtual social worlds have been created to idealize the engagement, immediacy and interactivity that Web 2.0 offers **(Kaplan haenlein, 2010; Smailhodzic et al., 2016).**

This diverse range of social media tools impact the way people create, seek and share information. People of diverse ages, backgrounds and cultures freely share all manner of information on social media, including health contents, ranging from benign to malignant health issues.

Social media users, and in particular the young generation users, search the web for information on symptoms, and conditions of ailments, communicate in real time with health experts, learn to administer drugs and complete online personal health assessment

questionnaires **(Doherty-Torstrick et al., 2016; Finney Rutten et al., 2019; Fox and Duggan, 2013; Zhang et al., 2019).**

Similar to other information shared on social medical, health information, also comes from varied sources and channels including generalist information platform, lay users, healthcare professionals, and institutions (Crook et al., 2016; University of Ghana Business School, Ghana. 2021.

The Importance and aims of the study

The importance of the study highlight the fact that since the emergence of the social media in 2004, a growing percentage of the young generation use this technology for health related reasons, as the social media became the main source of information for the youth, as identify by **(Lenhart, Smith, Anderson, Duggan, and Perrin, (2015)** that from the age of 13-17 age group are heavy users of social media users.

According to the Pew Research Centre (2015), at least 92% of teenagers are active on social media. Lenhart, Smith, Anderson, Duggan, and Perrin (2015) identified the 13–17 age group as particularly heavy users of social media users, with 87% having access to a computer, and 58% to a tablet device. Almost three-quarters of adolescents aged 15 to17 use a smartphone, and 68% of those aged 13 to 14 **(Pew Research Centre, 2015).**

Although the young generation rely on the social media for health issues, unfortunately, many users of the social media have many concern about the source health information credibility posted in the social media platforms, which topics in social media raises the level of health information among them, and which social media platforms raise the level of their health awareness.

Reasons for using the social media for health issues

The social media can serve as an aid to its users in the health information provider, for example, it fosters their autonomy by complementing the information provided by the different healthcare professionals, and by providing psychosocial support to them.

The social media allows the youth to receive support, and to complement offline information, which may lead to enhancing the empowerment of patients. However, social media use by the youth does not only support them with information, but also provide to

everybody with access to the social media can post "advice" on how to deal with a certain health condition, it is important to create reliable online communication channels to prevent health problems being exacerbated, but on the other hand the social media use by the youth for health related purposes often spreads misinformation among them.

Also, soci**(liette Lapointe,   Jui Rama Prasad, Isabelle Vedel, 2014).**al media provide the potential to allow the youth to open up and reduce the inhibitions felt in sharing experiences in face to face situations", e.g. hurting other people's feelings. Therefore, the youth can use social media as a place to express their emotions freely, like, releasing negative emotions. In contrast to emotional support, which is defined as the youth interacting in and receiving communication to meet their affective needs, emotional expression refers to the youth expressing their emotions regardless of whether someone will respond.

Actually, not all the youth that make use of social media use it actively and positively. Sometimes youth only use social media to read about other people's stories, without actively contributing themselves. **(liette Lapointe, Jui Rama Prasad, Isabelle Vedel, 2014).**

Operational Definitions

Credibility: Credibility as information quality criterion mainly checks for the source and authority of the information. Other characteristics require that the information be relevant, justifiable, transparent, and authored by a person, or an organization of repute. The criterion, content, requires that the health information published is accurate and reliable, provides balance and clarity, and comes with appropriate   disclaimer.

Health: Health is the term for describing the state of being free from any kind of illness, or diseases. Health is a form that assures the harmony between all the systems, organs and parts of the body. The state of being bodily and mentally vigorous, and free from disease, the general condition of the body and mind. (**Wall, 2009**)

Health Awareness: The main objective of Health Awareness is to provide health related knowledge to the people for preventing, and curing disease. The definition of health possesses many variances as it depends on every individual.   Health seems to include the three main sections, physical health, mental

health and emotional health (**Wall, 2009, pp.120-133**).
Physical Health: Physical health is a term that defines a form of the body that includes perfect and harmonious physiological functions of all the body parts that are anatomically intact with each other. (**Wall, 2009**).
Mental Health: Mental health is based on the positive thoughts and ideas. Brain is a body part that deals with both emotional and mental aspects. (**Wall, 2009**).

Emotional support: Emotional support is defined as "communication that meets an individual's emotional or affective needs". It refers to support gained through expressions of care and concern, which serve to improve an individual's mood. Emotional support helps patients to meet their emotional or affective needs.

Information support: Information support is "communication that provides useful or needed information". In particular, newly diagnosed patients are in a need for a lot of information about their condition and treatment options, which can be provided by the social media.

Network support: Network support is defined as "communication that affirms an individual's belonging to a network or reminds him/her of support available from the network". Hence, network support is support that reminds people that no matter what situation they are facing, they are not alone. The social media users use the social media for network support. (Wall, 2009).

Literature Review of the previous study

Initially, a total of 1,743 articles were identified related to the health awareness. From these articles many of them were posted in the social media were identified, namely as emotional, information, esteem, network support, social comparison and emotional expression, and many others were identified as types of effects on their users, namely improved self-management and control, enhanced psychological well-being, and enhanced subjective well-being, diminished subjective well-being, addiction to social media, loss of privacy.

For instance, several studies in the United States report of a growing use of social media in health communication among adults (**Chou et al., 2009; Jacob 2015**).

In the United Kingdom, social media has become one of the popular sources of health information among young people (**Fergie eta al., 2016b**). Social communication media is also used in health communi-

cation by hospitals clinics, disease centers and other health regulatory bodies **(Moorhead et al., 2013).**

During and after recent pandemics such as Covid-19 (Chan et al., 2020) and H1N1 (Ding and Zhang, 2010) or epidemics such as Ebola **(Nagpal et al., 2015),** social media platforms have been used as timely information dissemination sources by the World Health Organization, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and national health agencies **(Househ, 2016).** Motivated by reasons such as public safety (Antonius and Rich, 2013), well-being and wellness of people **(Zhang et al., 2020)**, financial consideration as well as fame **(Eysenbach, 2008)**, these information sources (actors) capitalize on the network effect of social media to share and reshare health information. In the end, ascertaining information quality becomes a challenge especially for health anxious individual who are often nervous and fretful, and therefore rarely question the credibility and accuracy of the information **(McManus et al., 2014; Te Poel et al., 2016).**

According to Baumgartner and Hartmann (2011), health anxious People tend to have a negative response towards trustworthy health information   Sources such as from government health agencies. Because these organizations present more factual information, they may increase anxiety about health conditions for individuals who undertake researches for reassurance.

Perhaps one critical source of health misinformation on social media is through self-disclosure. According to **Lin et al. (2016)** when individuals self-disclose medical information on digital platforms such as social media, it creates a reciprocal tendency to compel recipients to also share their health information or reshare other related information within their friend network. This creates a cycle of misinformation sharing among friend networks if such medical information is fake or miscommunicated. Note that unlike information obtained from traditional health media outlets such as books, journals and health magazines which not only are produced by recognized institutions and individuals

but also come with metadata such as disclaimers, author information, year of publication, the publisher and the target audience.

Social Media Health Information (SMHI) is often informal and largely authored by non-health professionals and, therefore raises quality concerns. The casual, unregulated nature of social media poses risks

especially to online health Information seekers who are often novices and anxious in seeking answers **(Deng and Liu, 2017; Li et al., 2018; Strekalova, 2016). Moorhead et al., (2013),**

Orizio et al.(2010) and Adams (2010) affirm that while social media present a potent means of disseminating health information, quality of the content, its reliability and misapplication are real concerns.

We define information quality in this research paper as "the fitness to use or the sufficient value provided to the user of that information" **(Miller, 1996; Naumann and Rolker, 2005).** While several literature review have been conducted on social media health communication, none so far has been dedicated to social media health information (SMHI) quality.

For instance, **Moorhead et al. (2013)** provided a review of the uses, benefits and limitations of social media for health communication, and **Ventola (2014)** conducted a review of the benefits, risks and best practices of social media use for healthcare professionals. The review by **Grajales et al., 2014** focused on social media applications in medicine and healthcare. Others such as **Best et al. (2014)**

and **Yonker et al. (2015)** focused on adolescents' use of social media their health and well-being, while **Charles-Smith et al., (2015)** conducted a literature review of the role of social media in disease surveillance and outbreak management.

Theoretical Framework of the study

In this study the researchers will apply two theories. The Media Dependency theory, and Uses and Gratifications theory to guide them throughout this research.

Media Dependency:

The first theory is Media system dependency theory (MSD), or simply Media Dependency, was developed by Sandra Ball-Rokeach and Melvin Defleur in 1976. The theory is grounded in classical sociological literature positing that media and their audiences should be suited in the context of larger social systems.

MSD ties together the interrelations of broad social systems, mass media, and the individual into a comprehensive explanation of media effects. At its core, the basic dependency hypothesis states that the more a person depends on media to meet needs, the more important

media will be in a person's life, and therefore the more effects media will have on a person.

According to this theory, there is an internal link between media, audience and large social system. The audience larding from the real life is limited, or they can use media to get more information to fulfil their needs. An extensive use of media generates dependent relation in audience and also media can able to creating dependence relationship with target audiences to achieve their goals by using media power.

This theory is based on the Uses and Gratification Theory and ties into the agenda setting theory. Uses and gratification how people use and become dependent upon the media. People use the media for many reasons, information, education, entertainment, and parasocial relationships are just a few of them.

The Dependency theory says that, the more a person becomes dependent on the media to fulfil theses needs; the media will become more important to that individual. The media will also have much more influence, and power over that individual. If someone is so dependent on the media for information, and the media is that person's only source for information, then it is easy to set his/her agenda. The individual falls victim to Agenda setting. **(Severin & Tankards, 2010)**

Uses and Gratification Theory

The second theory is the Uses and Gratification Theory.   It involves a shift of focus from the purposes of the communicator to the purpose of the receiver. It attempts to determine what functions mass communication is serving for the audience members. The uses and Gratification theory tries to answer questions such as the reason behind using the Internet and other forms of media as the theory has been used to answer the same questions regarding the traditional media (**Severin &Tankards, 2010)**

The uses and Gratifications theory was developed by Elihu Katz (1959). The theory is more concerned with what people do with their use of media and less concerned with what the media do to people. It challenges the notion of audience passivity and assumes that audiences are active. Audience activity: can be defined as the deliberate choice by users of media content to satisfy their needs. People use the media according to their individuals needs whether social or psychological.

The essential use of this theory in this research study is that it help

the researcher in having an understanding of how people use social media and the purposes for such usage. Taking into consideration, the Internet and World Wide Web grew at a more rapid rate than any other previous mass medium, encourages different age groups to access social media. (Severin & Tankard. 2010).

Thus, as mentioned earlier in this research paper through the uses and gratifications theory will clarify why and how people are using social media to make them aware of any issues of their interest among them health information issues.

Elaboration Likelihood Model

The core of the **Elaboration Likelihood Model** ELM is based on a person's motivation and ability to think about and assess qualities of the issue-relevant information in the persuasion context. The Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) is a multi-process theory of persuasion about the processes underlying changes in attitudes. **(Shu-Fei Yang, 2015)** . Motivation refers to the individual's personal relevance to the persuasive message while ability is manifest in the individual's cognitive competence or prior expertise with the attitude object. Individuals vary in their ability and motivation to elaborate. **(Peter J. Sher and Sheng-Hsien Lee, 2009)**. In the information systems discipline, ELM has been used to examine user behavior, and it has been proposed that two factors including argument quality and source credibility affect user attitude towards document management systems. **(Tao Zhou. 2012).** The basic principle of the ELM is the presence of two routes to persuasion: the central and peripheral routes. These are attached to two opposite points, which represents the likelihood of cognitive effort being expended to process a message. Depending on a person's motivation and ability, their elaboration likelihood will be either high or low, which will, in turn, determine the route through which persuasion may occur. **(Philip J. Kitchen &al., 2014).** Based on ELM model, the information will show two effect routes in the process of persuading the audience, the first is central route and the other is peripheral route, as shown in Fig. 1.**(Xiaowei Hu & al.,2021)**
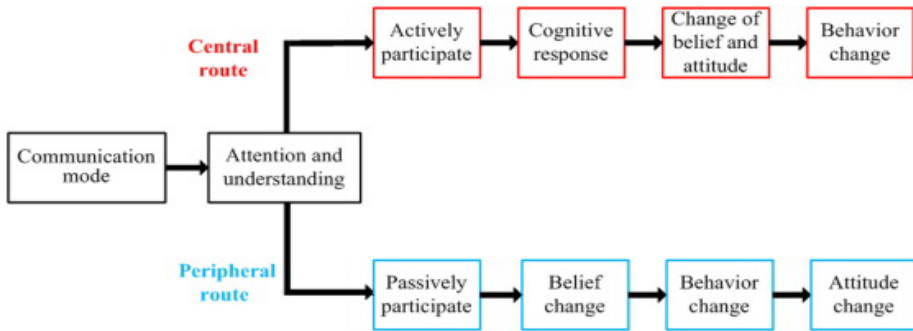
**Fig. 1. Two effect routes in Elaboration Likelihood Model.
Problem Statement**

The main challenges of using social media as a tool to raise the level of health awareness among university youth is the degree of source credibility of health information provided through the social media, which social media platforms raise the level of health information awareness, and whether the social media can actually raises the level of health information awareness among them.

Research Question
Three main research questions were addressed in this study:
Research Question 1: Which social media platforms raise the level of health information issues?
Research Question 2: what is the degree of source credibility of the social media in providing accurate, sufficient health information?
Research question 3: can the social media actually raise the level of health information awareness among university youth?

Objective: To analyse the role of the social media in raising the level of health awareness among university youth, the degree of source credibility of the social media in providing accurate and sufficient health information and which social media platforms raises the level of health information among them.

The Methodology of the Study: This study used the quantitative and qualitative approach. Sampling size is 255 University youth. An online survey was conducted in order to target age bracket (18-24). The sample has been taken mainly from diverse university youth.
The sampling method and size: In this context of this study,

the researchers use convenient sample. As the questionnaires was conducted online on MSA university youth, (October University for Modern and Sciences and Arts), the sample size of the study is 255 students, both male and female.

Collecting research data: The researchers designed the method for collecting the research data in the form of questionnaires. The questionnaires have been designed to assure the gathering of information that correlate to the study variables such as the social media usage, frequency, and media credibility.

Validity and verification of the Questionnaires: The questionnaires have been validated through many external professional academic Mass Communication staff members who recommended some changes, and modification that the researchers took into considerations.

Results:
Main Research Questions
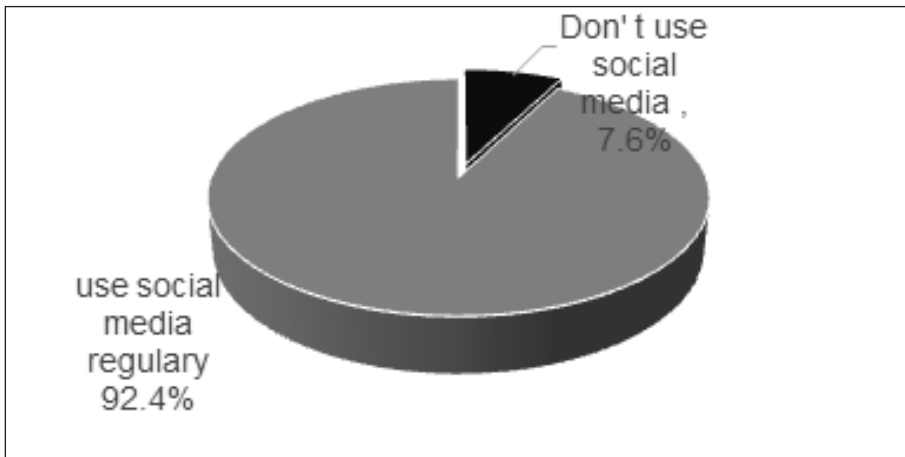1 . Usage of social media daily by youth :

Figure (1): Usage of social media daily bases

Figure no (1) showed that 92.4% from the participants using social media on daily bases and this percentage proves that the social media play an important role among youth and totally depend on it in their daily life.
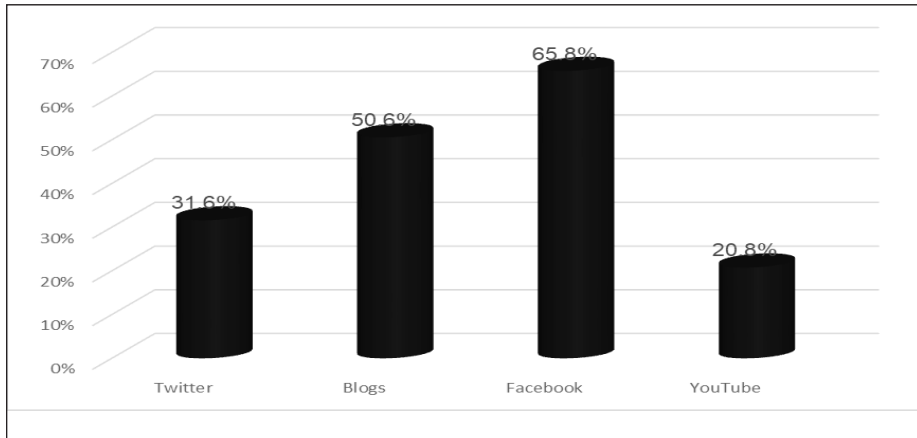
2 . Social media platforms most used by youth:

Figure (2): Social media platforms used by the youth

Diagram no (2) showed that Facebook came as the first choice 65.8%, while Blogs 50.6%, Twitter 31.6% , and YouTube was 20.8%, this shows that almost all of the participants are exposed to social media platforms with different degree according to their uses and gratification.
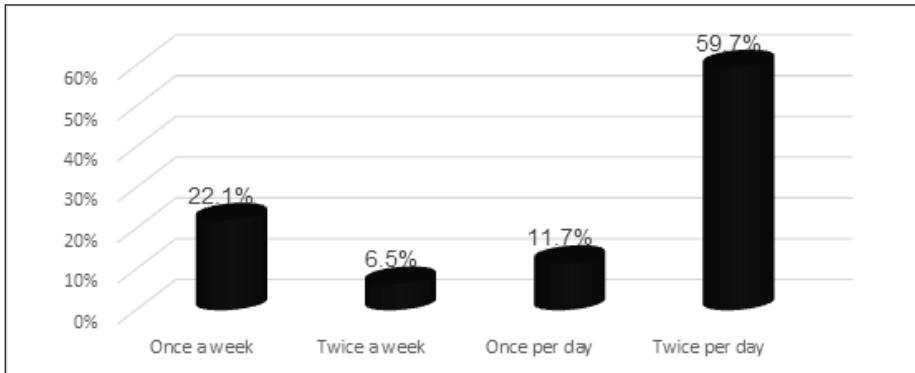
3 . Usage of the social media sites per day?

Figure (3): Social media usage per day

Diagram no (3) showed that 59.7% use social media twice per day, while 22.1% use it once a week, and 11.7% use it once per day, 6.5% use it twice a week. This shows that all the participants exposed to the

social media sites consider it as an important part of their daily time and consume a lot of time using it.

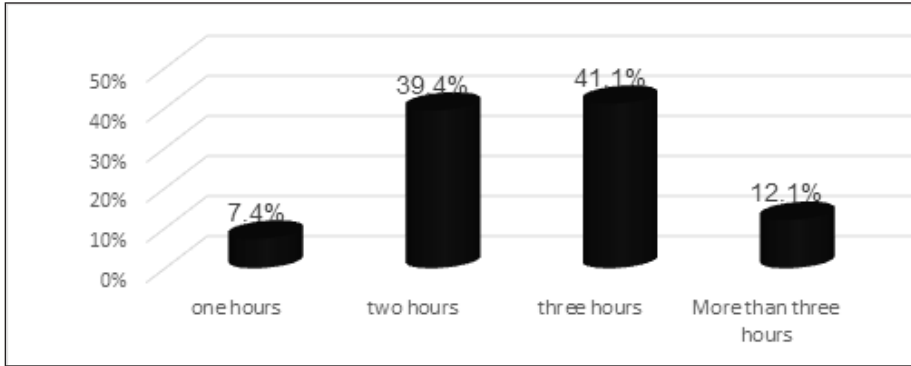4 . Duration spent on the social media daily:

Figure (4): Social media usage daily.

Diagram no (4) showed that 41.1 % use social media three hours daily, while 39.4% use social media two hours daily. While 12.1% use the social media more than three hours daily. This reflect the heavy users of the social media are among the youth and the high level of dependency on the social media.

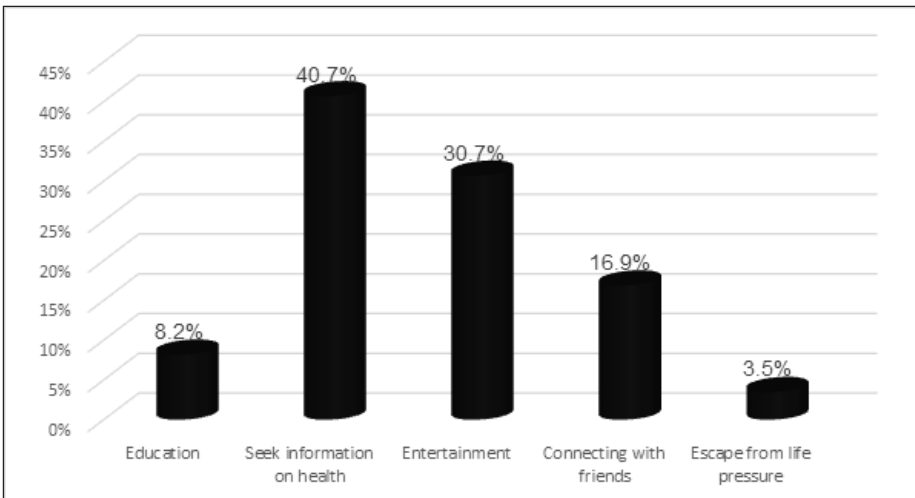5 . Reason for using the social media (you may chose more than one)

Figure (5): Reason for social media usage.

Diagram no (5) showed that 40.7% seek information on health, and 30.7% for entertainment, while 16.9% connecting with friends, and 8.2% education. This reflect the high rate of interest among the youth for seeking health information throughout the social media.

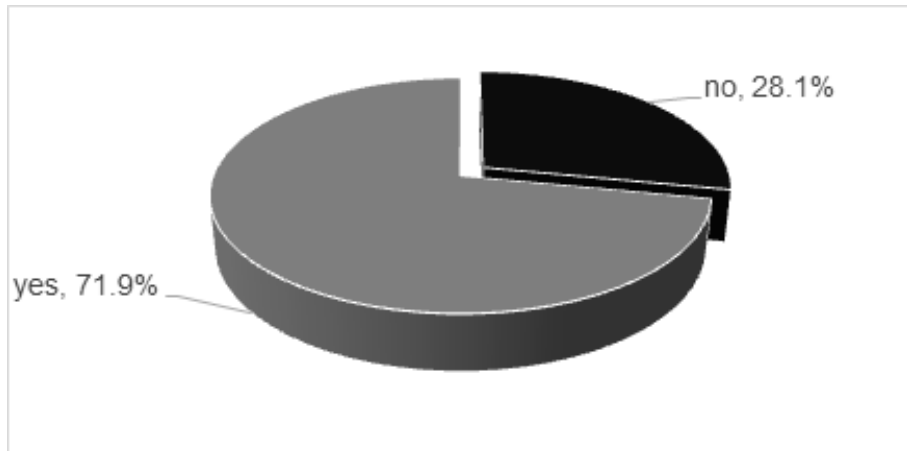6 . Frequency of visit of social media sites related to health information:

no, 28.1%

yes, 71.9%

Figure (6): Frequency of visit the social media sites related to the health information.

Diagram no(6) showed that 71.9 % visited the social media sites related to health information, while only 28.1% do not visit the social media sites for health information, this reflect the important of the social media as a source for providing the youth with health information issues.

7 . Frequency of visit of the official website of the Egyptian Ministry of Health.
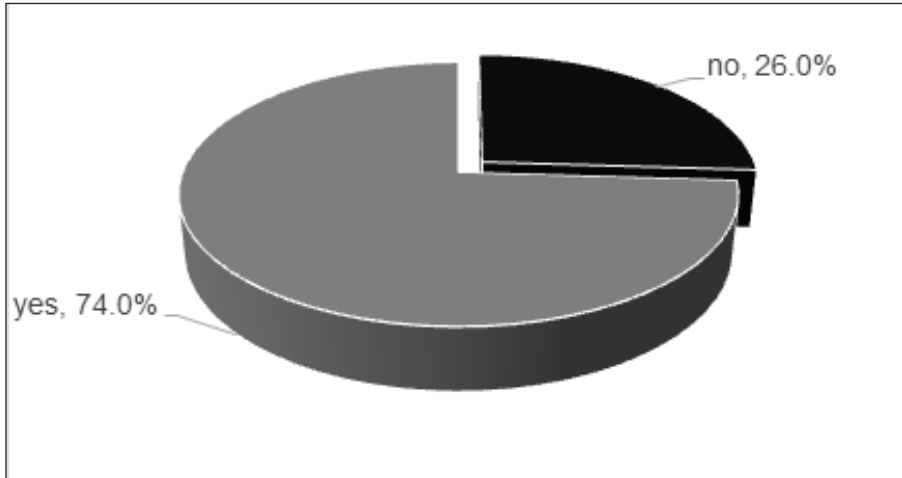

Figure (7): frequency of visit of social media sites related to the health information.

Diagram no (7) showed that 74% visited the official website of the Egyptian Ministry of health recently, while 26% did not. This reflect the important of the Egyptian Ministry of Health as a source of health information for the youth.

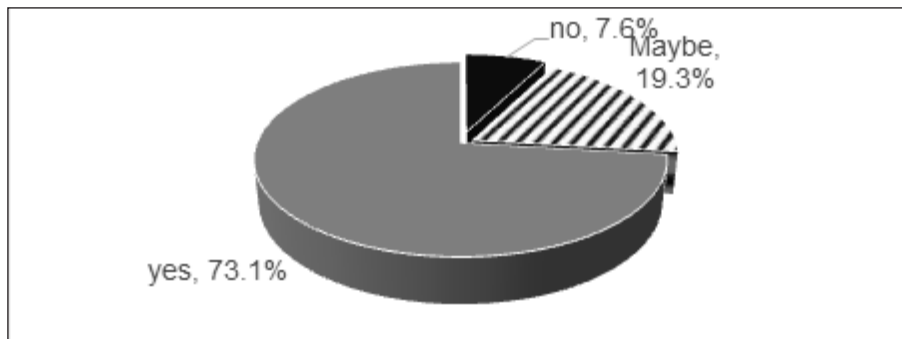8 . Credibility of the Egyptian Ministry of Health page on Facebook :

Figure (8): Credibility of the Egyptian Ministry of Health page on facebook

Diagram no (8) showed that 73.1% find the Egyptian Ministry of

Health a credible source providing sufficient health information ,while 19.3% said maybe, and 7.6% said no.

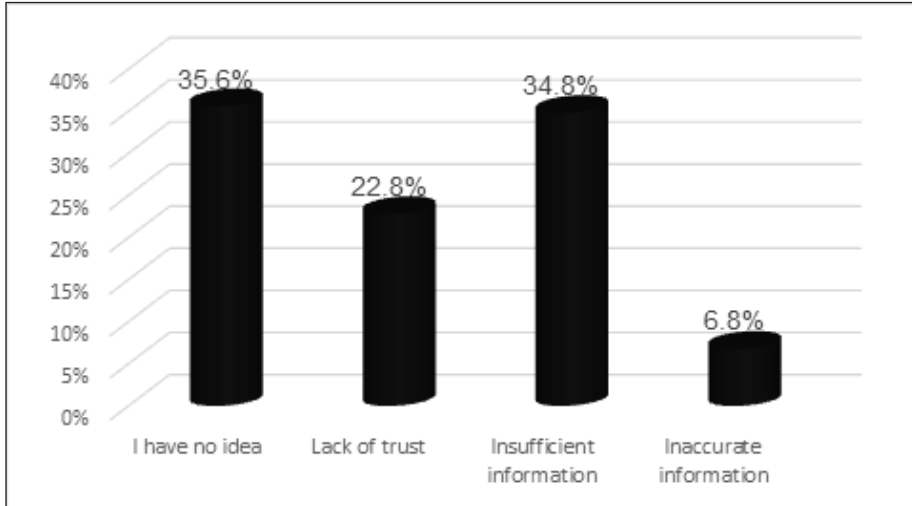9. Reason of incredibility of the Egyptian Ministry of Health page on facebook:

Figure (9): Reason of incredibility of the Egyptian Ministry of Health page on facebook

Diagram no (9) showed that 34.8% said that insufficient information came as a reason for not finding the Egyptian Ministry of Health a credible source providing health information, while 22.8% lack of trust, and 6.8% as inaccurate information.

10. Sources of information for health information used by youth.

Table no (1): sources of information for health information

sources of information	Frequency	Percent
I have no idea	89	35.6
Private doctors	69	27.6
Friends	34	13.6
Egyptian Ministry of health	30	12.0
World health Organization	26	10.4
Others, please indicate	2	0.8
Total	250	100.0

Table no (1) showed that private doctors websites 27.6% , and 13.6% friends, while 12% the Egyptian Ministry of Health, and 10.4% World Health Organization. This reflect that the youth depend to a certain degree on the private doctor's websites for health information as a priority as they may feel more comfort ,privacy and get more accurate health information, While they feel somehow confident with their friends to share intimate health issues.

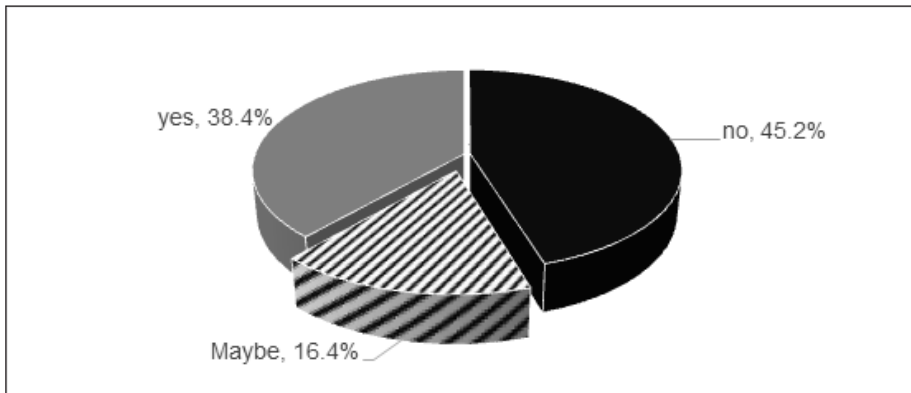**11.** Social media platforms credibility for health information:

Figure (10): Social media credibility for health information (n=171 visitors of social media sites related to the health information).

Diagram no (10) showed that 38.4% think that the social media platforms in general can be a credible source of health information , while 16.4% said maybe while 45.2% said no.

12. Role of Social media platforms to increase the level of awareness on health issues.
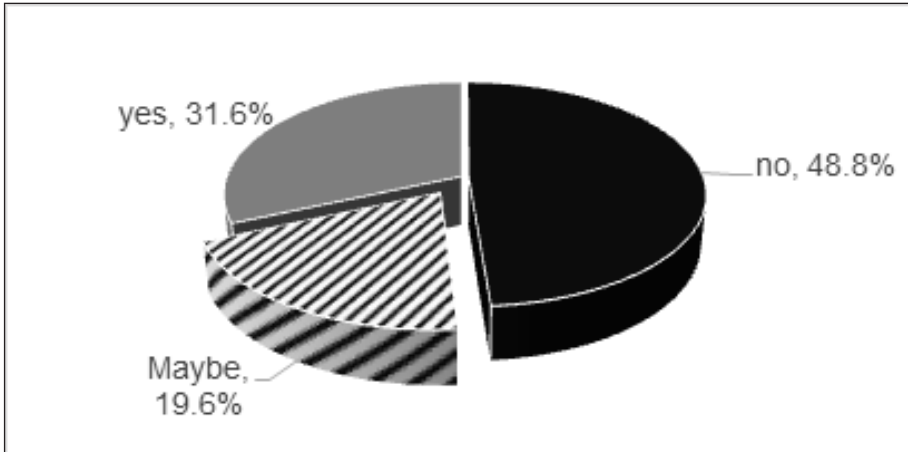

Diagram no (11) showed that 31.6% agreed that the social media platform can help increase the level of awareness on health issues, while 19.6% maybe, and 48.8% said no.

Research hypothesis:

▶ H1: The degree of dependence on social media as a source of information and the exposure to social media sites related to the health information are positively correlated.

the exposure to social media sites related to the health information		The degree of dependence on social media			Total
		Low	mid	high	
no	Count	12	18	35	65
	%	52.2%	33.3%	22.7%	28.1%
yes	Count	11	36	119	166
	%	47.8%	66.7%	77.3%	71.9%
	Count	23	54	154	231
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
chi²	df	Asymp. Sig. ((2-sided	Pearson's R		
9.522ª	2	0.009	0.200		

From the previous table we can conclude that the greater the degree of dependence on social media as a source of information, the higher the exposure to social media sites related to the health information (sig. 0.009)

▶ H2: The degree of dependence on social media as a source of information and the credibility of social media sites related to the health information are not correlated.

credibility of social media sites related to the health information		The degree of dependence on social media			Total
		low	mid	high	
no	Count	14	28	56	98
	%	60.9%	51.9%	36.4%	42.4%
maybe	Count	2	8	27	37
	%	8.7%	14.8%	17.5%	16.0%
yes	Count	7	18	71	96
	%	30.4%	33.3%	46.1%	41.6%
	Count	23	54	154	231
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

chi²	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Pearson's R
7.678ᵃ	4	0.1041	0.1639

From the previous table we can conclude the degree of dependence on social media as a source of information and the credibility of social media sites related to the health information are not correlated. (sig. 0.104)

Discussion:
- The majority of participants use social media on daily bases which proves that social media play an important role among youth and totally depend on it in their daily life. The results reflect that university young are heavy users of the social media and deeply depend on it on regular basis.
- Facebook came as the first choice from social media platform, followed by Blogs, Twitter, and YouTube, this shows that almost all of the participants are exposed to social media platforms with different

degree according to their uses and gratification.

- Reason for using the social media: seek information on health comes first, entertainment second, while connecting with friends comes as third in their choices, finally education came at the end. This reflect the high rate of interest among the youth for seeking health information throughout the social media. According to **(Eva A. Pedersen &al.,2020)**, as a part of the social media strategy, clear Call To Actions (CTA) were defined describing the actions that we wanted from the target group, like for example clicking on a link, or liking, sharing, and commenting. These, in turn, directed the production of content. A Call To Action reproduces the specific goal for the type of engagement that a post should generate. Moreover, According to the **Elaboration Likelihood Model**, When message recipients have both the motivation and the ability to consider detailed information in a given message, persuasion occurs via the central route. When central route takes place, recipients use critical thinking and consideration to process information, which needs more cognitive effort and careful observation. In this route, recipients change their attitude due to comprehensive consideration of relevant arguments supporting the advocated view. **(Lin Liao & Tao Huang, 2021).**

- 74% of participants visited the official website of the Egyptian Ministry of health recently. This reflects the important of the Egyptian Ministry of Health as a source of health information for the youth. According to (**Siyu Liu, 2021**) most studies which have employed the uses and gratifications theory explored why users choose to consume information from different media platforms and news sources and assign them different credibility levels, and in the online environment, users have greater control over what they would like to see, so that their motivations are important for understanding their using behaviors. Compared with general media use, which is measured in terms of time and frequency, media dependency level can also be a strong predictor of perceived credibility levels.

- 73.1% find the Egyptian Ministry of Health a credible source providing sufficient health information, while 19.3% said maybe, and 7.6% said no.

- Sources of information for health information used by youth: the results showed that private doctor's websites come in priority for privacy and confidentiality reason, followed by friends as friends have

almost similar health issues and problems, followed by the Egyptian Ministry of Health, and World Health Organization. This reflects that the Egyptian youth depend to a certain degree on the private doctor's websites for health information as a priority, while (**Siyu Liu, 2021),** found in his study that Chinese students depend most heavily on the Chinese government and mainstream news media sources on social media than on other sources to consume Chinese COVID-19 information .However (**Najma Akhther,2021)** found that The span of seeking information as measured in his study also includes information and advice that people can receive through social media, such as occurrence and symptoms of conditions, treatment options, medication use, online resources, and local services or clinics. According to **(Tao Zhou & al.,2016) The Elaboration Likelihood Model** propose that argument quality and source credibility represent two key variables affecting user attitude change.

 - 38.4% think that the social media platforms in general can be a credible source of health information, while 16.4% said maybe while 45.2% said no. However in Saudi Arabia (**Wadd Mohamaed** & al., 2021) showed that the use of social media by health educators and students revealed that more than half of the participants used social media for health awareness purposes. They believed that these platforms were important tools to spread knowledge, raise awareness, and improve health habits. Furthermore, **(Cheng Zhou & al, 2021)** indicates that health advice and caution misinformation is more likely to be disseminated on social media for misinformation written with more ambiguous words, and this is also consistent with the finding that ambiguity is an important feature of rumor spreading.

 - 31.6% agreed that the social media platform can help increase the level of awareness on health issues, while 19.6% maybe and 48.8% said no, this reflect that still many youth do not rely on the health information provided by the social media.

 - We can furthermore conclude that the greater the degree of dependence on social media as a source of information, the higher the exposure to social media sites related to the health information, while the results showed that the degree of dependence on social media as a source of information and the credibility of social media sites related to the health information are not correlated.

Recommendations for future study

Social media should have a greater role in increasing the level of raising the level of health information among the youth in general.

1. The study provides insights into the emerging utilization of social media in healthcare. In particular, it identifies types of use by the youth as well as the effects of such use.

2. Accordingly, our results framework and propositions can serve to guide future research.

3. Moreover, one of the main reasons for youth to join online health communities is their dissatisfaction with their healthcare professional's inability to meet the patients' emotional and informational needs

4. Another reason for youth to use social media was to bridge the gap between traditional health information source about their health condition and everyday life health problem and the new digital media as a media source provider for health information. In particular, Facebook as a social media platform is seen as an important source of health information beside and in addition to traditional in-office counselling in improving youth health knowledge and information.

5. Moreover, one of the main reasons for the youth to join online health communities is their dissatisfaction with their healthcare professional's inability to meet the patients' emotional and informational needs.

6. Therefore, the types of social media platforms use by the youth as identified in this study refer to the way in which the youth use social media intended to meet an unfulfilled need.

7. The most common important reason for the youth users of the social media for health related reasons was the social support provided by the social media. The Social support is defined as "the process of interaction in relationships which is intended to improve coping, esteem, belonging, and competence through actual or perceived exchanges of psychosocial resources". Social support is represented through five different categories and four of these categories were found to be common types of social media use by the youth for health related purposes. These four types, namely emotional support, esteem support, information support, and network support are explained below.

References

 - Aboelmaged Mohamad Gamal (2018), Predicting the success of Twitter in Healthcare: a synthesis of perceived quality, usefulness and flow experience by healthcare professionals. Online Information Review 42.

 - Adams SA (2010), Revisiting the online health information reliability debate in the wake of "web 2.0": an inter-disciplinary literature and website review. International Journal of Medical information.

 - Alhaddad MS (2018), The use of social media among Saudi residents for medicines related information, Saudi Pharmaceutical journal 26(8).

 - Alsyouf M, Stokes P, Hur D, et al. (2019) "Fake news" in urology: Evaluating the accuracy of articles shared on social media in genitourinary malignancies. BJU International

 - Ambre J, Guard R, Perveiler FM, et al. (1997), Criteria for assessing the quality of health information on the Internet. Health information Technology Institute, Agency for Health Care policy and Research.

 - Antheunis ML, Tates K and Nieboer TE (2013) Patients' and Health professionals' use of social media in health care: motives, barriers and expectations. Patient Education and Counseling.

 - Aydin MA and Akyol H (2019) Quality of information available on YouTube videos pertaining to thyroid cancer. Journal of Cancer Education 35: 599–605.

 - Azer SA, AlGrain HA, AlKhelaif RA, et al. (2013) Evaluation of the educational value of YouTube videos about physical examination of the cardiovascular and respiratory systems. Journal of Medical Internet Research 15(11): e241.

 - Baumgartner SE and Hartmann T (2011) The role of health anxiety in online health information search. Cyber psychology, Behavior, and Social Networking 14(10): 613–618.

 - Bauer R, Bauer M, Spiessl H, Kagerbauer T. Cyber-support: An analysis of online self-help forums (online self-help forums in bipolar disorder). Nordic J Psychiatry. 2013.

 - Best P, Manktelow R and Taylor B (2014) Online communication, Social media and adolescent wellbeing: a systematic narrative review. Children and Youth Services Review 41: 27–36.

 - Boniel-Nissim M, Barak A. The therapeutic value of adolescents' blogging about social–emotional difficulties. Psychol Serv. 2013.

 - Booth A (2008) Unpacking your literature search toolbox: on search

styles and tactics. Health Information & Libraries Journal, 25(4): 313–317.

- Bora K, Das D, Barman B, et al. (2018) Are internet videos useful sources of information during global public health emergencies? A case study of YouTube videos during the 2015–16.

- Boyer C, Gaudinat A, Baujard V, et al. (2007) Health on the Net Foundation: assessing the quality of health web pages all over the World.

- Bryan MA, Gunningham H and Moreno MA (2018) Content and accuracy of vaccine information on pediatrician blogs. Vaccine36(5)

- Butler DP, Perry F, Shah Z, et al. (2013) The quality of video information on burn first aid available on YouTube. Burns 39(5).

- Bartlett YK, Coulson NS.(2011) An investigation into the empowerment effects of using online support groups and how this affects health professional/patient communication. Patient Educ Couns.

- Byron P (2015) Troubling expertise: social media and young people's sexual health. Communication Research and Practice.

- Camm CF, Russell E, Xu AJ, et al. (2018) Does YouTube provide high-quality resources for patient education on atrial fibrillation ablation? International Journal of Cardiology.

- Chan AKM, Nickson CP, Rudolph JW, et al. (2020) Social media for rapid knowledge dissemination: early experience from the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Charnock D, Shepperd S, Needham G, et al. (1999) DISCERN: an instrument for judging the quality of written consumer health information on treatment choices. Journal of Epidemiology & Community Health. 53(2): 105–111.

- Cohen S, Underwood LG, Gottlieb BH. Social support measurement and intervention: a guide for health and social scientists. New York: Oxford; 2000.

- Cheng Zhou & al, (2021), Characterizing the dissemination of misinformation on social media in health emergencies: An empirical study based on COVID-19, Information Processing and Management.

- Chou WYS, Hunt YM, Beckjord EB, et al. (2009) Social media use in the United States: implications for health communication. Journal of Medical Internet Research 11(4): e48.

- Chou WYS, Oh A and Klein WM (2018) Addressing health related

misinformation on social media. JAMA 320(23).

- Chung JE (2017) Retweeting in health promotion: analysis of tweets about Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Computers in Human Behavior 74.

- Crook B, Stephens KK, Pastorek AE, et al. (2016) Sharing health information and influencing behavioral intentions: the role of health literacy, information overload, and the Internet in the diffusion of healthy heart information. Health Communication.

- Da Silva MAD and Walmsley AD (2019) Fake news and dental education. British Dental Journal 226(6): 397.

- Delli K, Livas C, Vissink A, et al. (2016) Is YouTube useful as a source of information for Sjö¨gren's syndrome? Oral Diseases 22(3).

- Deng Z and Liu S (2017) Understanding consumer health information-seeking behavior from the perspective of the risk perception attitude framework and social support in mobile social media websites. International Journal of Medical Informatics.

- Doherty-Torstrick ER, Walton KE and Fallon BA (2016) Cyberchondria: parsing health anxiety from online behavior. Psychosomatics.

- Dunn AG, Surian D, Leask J, et al. (2017) Mapping information exposure on social media to explain differences in HPV vaccine coverage in the United States.

- Erdem MN and Karaca S (2018) Evaluating the accuracy and quality of the information in kyphosis videos shared on You- Tube. Spine 43(22): E1334–E1339.

- Esquivel A, Meric-Bernstam F and Bernstam EV (2006) Accuracy and self-correction of information received from an internet breast cancer list: content analysis. BMJ 332(7547).

- Eysenbach G (2008) Credibility of health information and digital media: new perspectives and implications for youth. In: Metzger MJ and Flanagin AJ (eds) Digital Media, Youth, and Credibility.

- Eva A. Pedersen &al.(2020), Strategic health communication on social media: Insights from a Danish social media campaign to address HPV vaccination hesitancy, Vaccine 38, pp.4909–4915.

- Farber BA, Nitzburg GC. Young adult self-disclosures in sychotherapy and on Facebook. Couns Psychology Q. 2015.

- Fergie G, Hilton S and Hunt K (2016a) Young adults' experiences of seeking online information about diabetes and mental health in the

age of social media. Health Expectations 19(6), 1324–1335.

- Fergie G, Hunt K and Hilton S (2016b) Social media as a space for support: young adults' perspectives on producing and consuming user-generated content about diabetes and mental health. Social Science & Medicine.

- Fernandez-Luque L, Karlsen R and Melton GB (2012) Health-Trust: a social network approach for retrieving online health videos. Journal of Medical Internet Research 14(1): e22.

- Finney Rutten LJ, Blake KD, Greenberg-Worisek AJ, et al. (2019) Online health information seeking among US adults: measuring progress toward a Healthy People 2020 objective. Public Health Reports.

- Gage-Bouchard EA, LaValley S and Devonish JA (2019) Deciphering the signal from the noise: caregivers' information appraisal and credibility assessment of cancer-related information exchanged on social networking sites. Control 26(1): 1073274819841609.

- Gage-Bouchard EA, LaValley S, Warunek M, et al. (2018) Is cancer information exchanged on social media scientifically accurate? Journal of Cancer Education 33(6): 1328–1332.

- Ghenai A and Mejova Y (2018) Fake cures: user-centric modeling of health misinformation in social media. Proceedings of the ACM on Human-Computer Interaction 2(CSCW): 58.

- Gittelman S, Lange V, Crawford CA, et al. (2015) A new source of data for public health surveillance: Facebook likes. Journal of Medical Internet Research 17(4): e98.

- Goobie GC, Guler SA, Johannson KA, et al. (2019) YouTube videos as a source of misinformation on idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis. Annals of the American Thoracic Society 16(5).

- Lin Liao & Tao Huang (2021), The effect of different social media marketing channels and events on movie box office: An elaboration likelihood model perspective, Information & Management, p.2.

- Kaplan AM, Haenlein M.(2010), Users of the world, unite! The challenges and opportunities of Social Media. Bus Horiz, Business horizons.

- Menon IS, Sharma MK, Chandra PS, Thennarasu K.(2014), Social networking sites: An adjunctive treatment modality for psychological problems. Indian J Psychology Med.

- Wadd Mohamaed & al, (2021), Usage of social media for health

awareness purposes among health educators and students in Saudi Arabia, Informatics in Medicine Unlocked, p.100553.

- Najma Akhther (2021), Information-seeking and information-Sharing about mental health on social media: role of depression and anxiety ratings, perceived health- related social media peer support and perceived health benefits of social media, Master thesis, Wayne State University.

- Oh HJ, Lee B , (2012), The effect of computer-mediated social support in online communities on patient empowerment and doctor–patient communication. Health Communications.

- Peter J. Sher and Sheng-Hsien Lee (2009), Consumer Skepticism and Online Reviews: An Elaboration Likelihood Model Perspective, p.139.

- Philip J. Kitchen &al.(2014), The elaboration likelihood model: review, critique and research agenda, European Journal of Marketing, p.2035.

- Tao Zhou (2012), Understanding users' initial trust in mobile banking: An elaboration likelihood perspective, Computers in Human Behavior, P.1519.

- Tao Zhou & al. (2016), Examining online consumers' initial trust building from an elaboration likelihood model perspective, Inf Syst Front, pp.265–275.

- Tobin SJ, Vanman EJ, Verreynne M, Saeri AK. (2013), Threats to belonging on Facebook: Lurking and ostracism. Social Influence.

- Siyu Liu(2021), How in- U.S. Chinese college students consume covid- 19 information on social media: examining the relationship between media credibility and media dependency, Master thesis, Nanjing University, p.57.

- Setoyama Y, Yamazaki Y, Namayama K. (2011), Benefits of peer support in online Japanese breast cancer communities: Differences between lurkers and posters. Journal of Medical Internet Research.

- Severin & Tankards (January 1, 2000), Communication Theories, Addison Wesley Longman, Inc.; 5th edition .

- Shu-Fei Yang (2015), An eye-tracking study of the Elaboration Likelihood Model in online shopping, Electronic Commerce Research and Applications.

- Steinfeld C, Ellison NB, Lampe C.(2008), Social capital, self-esteem, and use of online social network sites: A longitudinal analysis, journal

of Applied Developmental Psychology.

 - Osatuyi B.(2015), Is lurking an anxiety-masking strategy on social media sites? The effects of lurking and computer anxiety on explaining information privacy concern on social media platforms. Computers in Human Behavior.

 - Xiaowei Hu & al. (2021), Analysis of shared parking demander' choice behavior based on elaboration likelihood model, Transportation Research Interdisciplinary Perspectives, p.4.