Cultural and Social Dimensions Influencing Interaction through Social Media Networks in Saudi Society: A Field Study on a Sample of Social Media Users in Saudi Society

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Abstract

This study aims to explore the cultural and social factors and dimensions identified by social identity theory, public sphere theory, and self-presentation theory that influence interaction through social media platforms in Saudi society. This study is based on several theoretical frameworks that address cultural and social dimensions, as well as audience interaction with media and communication content. Among these frameworks are identity theory and public sphere theory, which help understand the components of identity in the social environment. Public sphere theory, in particular, is based on the fundamental premise that "the public is active" in its ability to dialogue and debate issues of interest, which contributes to shaping public opinion that guides attitudes toward these issues. Despite the public's ability to interact, its interaction is influenced by underlying social and cultural structures, as framed by identity and public sphere theories. These frameworks shape the criteria for audience engagement and interaction with media and communication messages across social media platforms. It also discusses self-presentation theory, whereby individuals seek to manage how they present themselves on social media platforms by engaging with various societal issues. Accordingly, the research examines the impact of these factors on the nature and extent of engagement across different forms of social media engagement, and assesses the degree to which these factors shape the level and nature of user engagement with content posted on social media platforms.

Keywords: *Social Media, Saudi Society, Cultural Dimensions, Social Interaction, Digital Communication.*

Introduction

The massive proliferation and wide-scale integration of social media platforms have fundamentally reshaped how individuals and communities interact, exchange information, and influence societal orientations (Al-Saleh et al., 2019). The relationship between social and cultural dimensions is complex and context-specific in any society, governed by particular mechanisms of interactivity within the social system. These dynamics have, in turn, affected how interaction occurs on social media platforms. Furthermore, these networks have become an integral part of daily life for many societies, particularly due to their creation and reinforcement of a new communication environment that transcends geographic boundaries and local cultural values (GAO & Chen, 2021).

These digital platforms have emerged as powerful catalysts for cultural and social change, enabling the exchange of diverse ideas and practices across societies (Zaw, 2018). This has led to a continued rise in the social adoption of social networking platforms, driven by their unique features that enhance communicative patterns and make them more appealing and accessible to

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users, aligning real-world conditions with user needs. The appeal and spread of social networks are not only attributed to their technical features but also to the nature of the content shared through these platforms. The proximity between the audience and these media is strongly influenced by content characteristics, such as relevance to the audience, emotional appeal—whether positive or negative the timing of publication, the platform used, and the mechanisms of content sharing and interaction. Media and communication studies indicate that individuals are particularly drawn to content that fulfills their needs. The Uses and Gratifications Theory asserts that individuals are not passive recipients of media content; rather, they are goal-oriented users who actively seek content that provides the greatest satisfaction.

Several theories have been applied to explain the cultural and social dimensions of interaction, as well as the audience's engagement with media and communication content. These include Identity Theory, Public Sphere Theory, and Self-Presentation Theory. Identity and public sphere theories explain how social identity is constructed and maintained within a community, with the latter emphasizing the audience's active role in engaging in dialogue and discussions on matters of public interest to shape collective opinion. Despite this active role, audience engagement is still deeply influenced by underlying social and cultural frameworks, which define the patterns and scope of interaction with communicative and media messages through social networks. Additionally, Self-Presentation Theory suggests that individuals consciously select how to present themselves on social platforms based on their engagement with various social issues. Thus, the current study seeks to identify the social and cultural factors (as defined by social identity, public sphere, and self-presentation theories) that influence the nature of interaction (drawing from The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life) through Social Media among members of Saudi society. The study aims to explore the extent to which these factors shape interaction and its forms with content published on social media platforms.

Research Questions

1.   What is the extent of interaction by the study sample with content published through social media platforms?

2.   What is the type of interaction by the study sample with content published through social media?

3.   What are the social factors influencing the study sample's interaction with content through social media?

4.   What are the cultural factors influencing the study sample's interaction with content through social media?

Research Objectives

1.   To examine the extent of interaction by the study sample with content published through social media platforms.

2.   To identify the type of interaction by the study sample with published content.

3.   To identify the social factors influencing the interaction of the study sample with content through social media.

4.   To identify the cultural factors influencing the interaction of the study sample with content through social media.

Research Hypotheses:

1.   H1: There is a statistically significant correlation between the level of social media use by respondents and their level of interaction with published content.

2.   H2: There is a statistically significant correlation between the respondents' awareness of issues discussed through social media and their level of interaction.

3.   H3: There is a statistically significant correlation between the level of interaction and respondents' awareness of the social and cultural factors influencing their engagement.

4.   H4: There are statistically significant differences in respondents' perception of the social factors influencing their interaction through social media platforms based on demographic variables (gender, age, household income, educational level).

5.   H5: There are statistically significant differences in respondents' perception of the cultural factors influencing their interaction through social media platforms based on demographic variables (gender, age, household income, educational level)

Type and Method of the Study:

This study adopts the descriptive research method, which focuses on observing and describing the characteristics of a particular phenomenon. It involves gathering facts, analyzing specific aspects of the phenomenon, and providing an accurate qualitative or quantitative description. The method aims to analyze and evaluate the attributes of a specific group or situation and examine current realities related to the phenomenon under study to gather sufficient and accurate information, without investigating causal relationships or attempting to control the variables. Additionally, it helps estimate the frequency of occurrence of a particular phenomenon and its relationship with other phenomena. The study follows a quantitative research approach using the field survey method, which is one of the specialized forms of data collection concerning individuals' behaviors, perceptions, attitudes, and emotions. In media studies, this approach is considered the primary method for studying audiences of mass communication.

Significance of the Study:

The significance of this study lies in:

1.   Revealing the level of interactivity within social media platforms among Saudi society.

2.   Identifying the factors influencing interaction with content shared through social media in the Saudi context.

3.   Understanding the nature of interactivity exhibited by the Saudi audience through social media networks.

Previous Studies:

After reviewing the existing body of literature and relevant explanatory theories, the researcher categorized prior studies into three main themes based on their geographic scope and academic relevance. One notable study is that of Adel Abdel-Fattah Mohamed et al. (2013), titled "Interactivity as Reflected by Social Networking Sites: A Comparative Analytical Study of Facebook and YouTube within the Framework of Media Richness Theory." This study aimed to understand how social media platforms utilize interactive structural elements offered online. Using the descriptive analytical method, the researchers employed content analysis tools to

examine Facebook and YouTube during the period from June 1 to June 30, 2012. The study found that Facebook outperformed YouTube across all six dimensions of interactivity. This superiority highlights Facebook's effectiveness in utilizing interactive structural features, levels, and indicators of interactivity. The findings also demonstrated that Facebook surpassed YouTube in all aspects related to media richness dimensions

Previous Studies (continued):

1.   The study by Hamed and Shaimaa Mohamed (2018), titled "Interaction Patterns of Smartphone Users: A Qualitative Study," aimed to explore the interactive patterns of Egyptian youth in their use of smartphones. The study investigated the importance, patterns, and contexts (such as activity, location, and timing) of mobile technology exposure, as well as the rate at which Egyptian youth utilized interactive tools and applications provided by these modern technologies. Employing a qualitative methodology, the study focused on Egyptian youth aged between 18 and 35 from various educational, economic, social, and cultural backgrounds. The sample consisted of 15 individuals who used smartphones to document their daily usage over a period of seven days. Findings revealed a general trend toward high daily usage hours of smartphones, with varied usage patterns throughout the day. Most participants indicated that friends from school or work were the main groups they communicated with via smartphones during weekdays, while weekends were primarily reserved for family and close friends. Additionally, the study highlighted diversity in the audience's interaction with communicative content, with "liking" and "commenting" being the most common forms of engagement, whereas "sharing" was comparatively less frequent.

2.   The study titled "Electronic Interaction through Social Media and Its Impact on Face-to-Face Communication" by researchers Abdelkader Kandouz, Salima Ouishet, and Zineb Ahmidatou (2021) aimed to explore how electronic interaction through Social Media platforms affects face-to-face communication. The study population consisted of Algerian university students who had active social media accounts. Using a descriptive analytical approach, data were collected from a purposive sample of 75 students through a questionnaire comprising 20 items. Key findings indicated that all participants maintained social media accounts, with Facebook being the most commonly used platform, accessed via smartphones at home or on campus. Students spent considerable time online to follow university-related updates and to discuss coursework via social platforms. Social media was also used to fill social voids and share news, as students felt more comfortable communicating electronically. The study further found that increased online communication among peers led to heightened interactivity and encouraged greater assertiveness in face-to-face conversations. However, disagreements on some topics occasionally resulted in strained interpersonal relationships.

3.   The study titled "Forms of Interaction with Social Issues among Users of Video Journalism Programs on Social Media: A Field Study" by researcher Mahmoud Mohamed Ahmed Mohamed (2018) aimed to examine how users interact with social issues presented on the social media pages of two video journalism programs: "France24 Arabic Press Forum" and "Cairo Today" on Al-Youm Channel. A survey methodology was used, targeting a sample of 400 students from Cairo and Minya universities who followed these programs. Data were collected via a structured questionnaire. The study concluded that there is a statistically significant relationship between the participants' level of exposure to social issues via the two program pages and their patterns of interaction. Additionally, a correlation was found between the degree of participants' engagement with the social issues presented and the extent to which

they benefited from the content. The study "Social Interaction in the Context of Virtual Communities: An Analytical Study of the Live Streaming Feature on Social Media Platforms" by Nahal Sana and Laamouri Asmaa (2023) examined the issue of social interaction within virtual communities, which are increasingly replacing traditional communities. Through an analytical-descriptive approach, the study investigated the nature of the "Live" streaming feature as a key element of virtual interaction on social media. While such technologies facilitate communication by eliminating spatial and temporal boundaries, they may also diminish individuals' abilities for real, face-to-face interaction. The researchers concluded that virtual interaction via live features is a condensed version of genuine interaction, potentially weakening the strength of social bonds in real communities.

4.   The study "Audience Interaction with Television Presenters via Social Media and Its Impact on Media Performance" by Basant Murad Fahmy (2017) sought to evaluate the influence of television program and presenter pages on social media on audience engagement and the media agenda. The findings showed no significant correlation between interaction levels and feelings of social isolation, but a strong positive correlation was found between interaction levels and the perceived credibility of television presenters.

5.   The study "Youth Interaction with Political Issues via Social Media: A Field Study of Facebook Users in Ain Defla Province, Algeria" by Farida Saghir Abbas (2021) aimed to assess how youth engage with political content on Facebook. Using a survey of 400 young men and women, results revealed frequent usage bordering on addiction, yet political interaction remained relatively cautious. Youth tended to observe political content rather than actively engage with it.

6.   In "Scientific Elites' Interaction with Public Issues in Algeria via Social Media" by Hlitim Elyamine and Hajjam Djemaai (2022), the authors examined how university professors and PhD students interact with public affairs. Based on a survey of 215 participants, results indicated moderate levels of engagement, primarily in the form of writing posts. Many respondents considered peer interaction a motivating factor and assessed their own participation in public discourse as "fair."

7.   The study "Algerian Youth Interaction with Popular Movements on Social Media: A Field Study Using Facebook Archives" by Bouneqta Fatima (2022) explored youth reactions to news related to the Algerian Hirak movement. Based on a survey of 80 responses, results showed that most youth were active participants rather than passive recipients. They selectively consumed media that aligned with their personal beliefs and were not significantly influenced by political orientations.

8.   The research "Post-Interactivity Communication: Toward a Network Model of Communication on Social Media Platforms" by Marlene Oueish Hermiz (2022) aimed to construct a network-based model of communication reflecting the dynamic and hybrid nature of interactivity on social media. Using an analytical survey method, the researcher proposed a medium-level, circular-spiral communication model that blends linear and interactive flows. This model suggests that communication begins linearly (from sender to receiver) and transitions into a circular, spiral-like interaction as users respond and re-encode messages across shared interests, amplifying content circulation.

9.   The study "University Youth Interactivity on Social Media and Its Relationship with Digital Citizenship" by Iman Ashour Sayed and Zeinham Hassan Ali (2018) examined the

correlation between youth social media activity and aspects of digital citizenship. Conducted on a sample of 400 students from Cairo and Minya Universities, the study used a structured survey and digital citizenship scale. Results showed Facebook as the most-used platform, followed by YouTube. Daily usage was high, with primary interaction focused on mixed-topic discussions, academic issues, and, to a lesser extent, political events. A significant positive relationship was found between interactivity and components of digital citizenship (e.g., digital literacy, communication, access, and commerce), with no significant gender-based differences.

10.　　Finally, the cross-cultural study by Hsu et al. (2021), titled "Social Media Users Produce More Affect that Supports Cultural Values, but Are More Influenced by Affect that Violates Cultural Values," published in the Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, explored how emotional content on social media reflects and violates cultural norms. (X platform currently) in the United States (55,867 tweets, 1,888 users) and Japan (63,863 tweets, 1,825 users) the study found that American users predominantly posted positively valence content, while Japanese users showed more subdued emotional tones. Interestingly, Americans were more influenced by negatively charged content (anger), while Japanese users responded more strongly to positive high-arousal posts (excitement). These findings suggest that while users produce content aligned with their cultural emotional values, they are more affected by content that contradicts these norms shedding light on what types of emotional content go viral across cultures

Study Population

The study population includes all individuals who possess the characteristics relevant to the research objectives and questions. The target population comprises individuals from various age and social groups within Saudi society, as the study aims to explore how these individuals interact with social media platforms.

Study Sample:

Due to the large size of the study population and the difficulty in surveying all individuals, the researcher selected an available sample consisting of 516 participants. According to statistical standards, this sample size is classified as "very good" and is considered appropriate for quantitative analysis in social sciences.

Data Collection Tools:

The selection of data collection tools was based on the nature of the data needed and the objectives of the study. The researcher used a structured questionnaire as the primary tool, administered through a field survey, to explore the cultural and social dimensions influencing interaction on social media platforms. The questionnaire was designed to capture the views and perceptions of respondents using several scales to measure the study's variables. It was disseminated via an online link using Google Forms, ensuring accessibility for all sample members. The tool was structured to answer the research questions and test the hypotheses effectively. Statistical Methods:

Data Processing and Analysis:

Once data collection was complete, the responses were coded and entered into a computer system for statistical analysis using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The following statistical techniques were employed: Simple frequencies and percentages to describe categorical variables. Means and standard deviations to describe central tendency and dispersion. Relative weights, calculated by multiplying the mean by 100 and dividing by the

number of scale items. Pearson's correlation coefficient to assess the strength and direction of relationships between interval or ratio-level variables. Correlation values were interpreted as follows: Weak: < 0.30 Moderate: 0.30–0.70 Strong: > 0.70 Independent Samples t-test to determine statistically significant differences between the means of two independent groups based on an interval or ratio variable. One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) to examine statistically significant differences among the means of three or more groups based on an interval or ratio variable. Statistical significance was determined at a confidence level of 95% or higher ($p \leq 0.05$).

Validation of the Research Instrument:

1. Face Validity (Expert Judgment):

The questionnaire was reviewed by a panel of experts in media studies from various universities. Based on their feedback, items with a 90% or higher agreement rate among experts were retained, while others were revised or removed. The final version of the questionnaire contained 8 key items.

2. Internal Consistency Validity:

To verify the internal consistency of the questionnaire, correlation coefficients were calculated between each dimension of the instrument and the total questionnaire score. This helped determine the degree to which each dimension was associated with the overall construct being measured.

Subscale	Correlation Coefficient	Significance Level
Type of interaction of respondents with content published on social media	0.469**	Significant at 0.001
Type of content respondents prefer to follow through social media	0.561**	Significant at 0.001
Respondents' belief in the influence of social media on general cultural values in Saudi society	0.284**	Significant at 0.001
The perceived role of social media in spreading distorted or incorrect cultural concepts about Saudi society	0.206**	Significant at 0.001
Social factors affecting respondents' interaction through social media	0.422**	Significant at 0.001
Cultural factors affecting respondents' interaction through social media	0.534**	Significant at 0.001

Table (1): Pearson Correlation Coefficients between Each Subscale Score and the Total Questionnaire Score

The results in Table (1) show that all subscales of the questionnaire exhibit statistically

significant correlations with the total score at a significance level less than 0.05. The correlation coefficients ranged from 0.206 to 0.561, indicating that the questionnaire possesses a high degree of construct validity .Second: Instrument Reliability to ensure the reliability of the study tool (the questionnaire), the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was calculated using a pilot sample of (50) individuals. The Cronbach's Alpha formula, which depends on the internal variance of the scale items, assumes that all items measure a single underlying construct. The reliability coefficient was calculated for each subscale separately, and for the overall questionnaire using SPSS software. The overall reliability coefficient was 0.740, which is considered a strong indicator of the internal consistency and reliability of the questionnaire.

Subscale	Cronbach's Alpha
Type of interaction with content through social media	0.739
Type of content followed through social media	0.714
Social factors influencing interaction through social media	0.775
Cultural factors influencing interaction through social media	0.782
Total questionnaire score	0.740

Table (2): Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient for Questionnaire Subscales and Total Score

The values shown in Table (2) demonstrate that the Cronbach's Alpha coefficients for the questionnaire subscale range between 0.714 and 0.782, indicating high internal consistency. The total reliability coefficient (0.740) affirms that the questionnaire is sufficiently stable and capable of accurately measuring the intended constructs. Study Boundaries this study is defined within several scopes as follows:

1.   Topical Boundaries focused on exploring the cultural and social dimensions influencing interaction through social networking platforms.

2.   Geographical Boundaries the study is limited to various regions within the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

3.   Human Boundaries the study targets an available sample from the Saudi community across different age groups, social, and cultural categories.

4.   Temporal Boundaries the timeframe of the study spans from January 1, 2024, to March 1, 2024.

Study Terminology

1.   Cultural and Social Dimensions these refer to the factors shaping individuals in urban societies, contributing to the identity, structure, and regulation of those communities. These include religion, customs, traditions, and demographic variables such as gender, age, educational level, and the individual's or family's monthly income.

2.   Interaction Refers to the ability of individuals involved in the communication process via social networking platforms to express their opinions about published content through available interaction tools, including comments, private messages, reposts, likes/dislikes, content saving, and sharing on personal profiles.

3.   Social Networking Platforms:

4.   These are internet-based platforms that allow users to interact and communicate flexibly with published content. They enable users to create personal profiles containing information, interests, and opinions, and to share text, images, and videos; comment on others' content; create friendships; and follow updates. These platforms form virtual spaces that bring together people of different ages and cultures and facilitate the exchange of ideas, opinions, and experiences.

Theoretical Framework

The study draws upon several theories that explain social changes resulting from individuals' interaction with social media platforms. Notably:

1. Goffman's Theory of Self-Presentation

In his book "The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life", Erving Goffman proposed that individuals engage in a kind of "theatrical performance" in their daily interactions to manage the impressions they convey to others. He differentiates between the "front stage" persona presented to the public and the "backstage" aspects that individuals prefer to keep private. Goffman identified six core concepts to understand social interaction, similar to theatrical performance:

1.   Performances

2.   Regions and Region Behavior

3.   Teams

4.   Diverse Roles

5.   Communication Out of Character

6.   Impression Management

This theory is crucial for studying how individuals manage their identities online, as social media offers more control over how people present themselves publicly.

2. Jürgen Habermas' Public Sphere Theory

Habermas introduced the concept of the "public sphere" as a discursive space where individuals engage in dialogue about issues of public concern, ultimately shaping public opinion and influencing political decision-making. However, this concept has faced substantial criticism, including:

1.   Its failure to address the complexities of modern, media-driven societies (Fraser, 1995; Kleinstüber, 2001).

2.   Its assumption of a singular unified public sphere, which overlooks the existence of multiple, overlapping, and often conflicting "counter-publics" (Fraser, 1995; Seeliger & Sevignani, 2022).

3.   The distortion of the public sphere by commercial interests and media monopolies, which may compromise democratic dialogue.

Despite these criticisms, the public sphere remains a valuable analytical tool for understanding the complex dynamics between media and civil society, especially with the rise of social media platforms that are shaped and utilized directly by communities. As media technologies evolve

and reshape how people engage in public discourse, the theory of the public sphere provides a useful framework to examine how society and media can either facilitate or hinder democratic participation and deliberation. (Habermas et al., 1974; Fraser, 1995; Duvenage, 2005; Jessop & Calhoun, 1993; Marcinkowski, 2008)

Application of Theories to the Current Study

Behavior (Interaction)

On social media platforms, each user performs like an actor from Goffman's perspective, presenting their social identity as per Tajfel and Turner, while engaging in social dialogue that shapes the public sphere, according to Habermas. Users carefully choose how they interact, in a way that reflects the image they want to portray to others leveraging strategies of self-presentation in the context of social networks.

Perception (Influencing Factors)

Interactions and behaviors on social media are shaped by strategic decisions made by users based on how they perceive themselves and their group affiliations. These reflect the users' social identity in a public sphere, sometimes with roles that may not align with their real identity as per Goffman's notion of performance and impression management.

Applied Study

1. Sample Characteristics

Variable	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Males	356	69.0%
	Females	160	31.0%
	Total	516	100.0%
Age	26–35	182	35.3%
	Above 45	148	28.7%
	36–45	147	28.5%
	15–25	39	7.6%
	Total	516	100.0%
Household Income	More than 15,000 SAR	230	44.6%
	Between 10,000 and <15,000 SAR	128	24.8%
	Between 5,000 and <10,000 SAR	81	15.7%
	Less than 5,000 SAR	77	14.9%
	Total	516	100.0%
Educational Level	University	284	55.0%
	Postgraduate	144	27.9%
	High school or equivalent	78	15.1%
	Below high school	10	1.9%

Variable	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
	Total	516	100.0%

Table 3: Distribution of the Sample According to Demographic Characteristics

The data in Table 3 indicates that 99% of the sample participants use social media platforms regularly, which the data reflects the widespread use of these platforms. Male participants represented the majority of the sample at 69%, while females constituted 31%. Regarding educational level, the majority held a university degree at 55%, followed by postgraduates at 27.9%, then high school graduates or equivalent at 15.1%, and finally those with less than a high school education at 1.9%. In terms of household income, the group with an income above 15,000 SAR per month ranked first at 44.6%, followed by those earning between 10,000 and less than 15,000 SAR at 24.8%, then those earning between 5,000 and less than 10,000 SAR at 15.7%, and finally those with less than 5,000 SAR at 14.9%. As for age groups, the 26–35 age group was the most represented at 35.3%, followed by those over 45 years old at 28.7%, the 36–45 age group at 28.5%, and lastly the 15–25 age group at 7.6%.

Second: General Results (Descriptive Statistics of Study Variables)

1. Frequency of Social Media Use among Participants

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	511	99.0%
No	5	1.0%
Total	516	100.0%

Table 4

Regular Use of Social Media Platforms by Sample Members

The data in Table 4 shows that 99% of the sample use social media platforms regularly, indicating that these platforms have become an integral part of individuals' lives. In contrast, only 1% does not use these platforms, reflecting the rarity of individuals unaffected by the broader trend of reliance on digital communication.

This high frequency of use may be associated with several factors, such as:

1.   Technological advancement and easy access to the internet.

2.   Social integration, as social media has become a primary means of communication with family and friends.

3.   Professional and educational requirements, where social platforms are used for academic and work-related interactions.

4.   Entertainment and leisure, offering diverse content for recreation and learning.

This widespread use also suggests that social media has a strong impact on individuals, influencing relationship-building, opinion formation, and even daily behaviors. Level of Interaction with Published Content on Social Media

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	347	67.9%
No	164	32.1%
Total	511	100.0%

Table 5. Participant Engagement with Social Media Content

According to Table 5, 67.9% of the participants interact with content published on social media, while 32.1% do not. This indicates a high level of interaction, yet it also reveals that nearly a third of the sample remain passive, possibly due to personal preferences, privacy concerns, or time constraints favoring observation over participation. This engagement level is a significant indicator that the majority of users are not merely content consumers, but active participants in the social media environment. Such engagement plays a key role in:

1. Shaping public opinion,

2. Disseminating information,

3. Influencing social behaviors.

Type of Interaction by Participants with Content on Social Media

Statement	No	Sometimes	Always	Weighted Mean	Std. Deviation	Relative Weight (%)
Like	35	222	90	2.16	0.580	72.0%
	10.1%	64.0%	25.9%			
Add to favorites	80	174	93	2.04	0.706	67.9%
	23.1%	50.1%	26.8%			
Follow account	60	228	59	2.00	0.586	66.6%
	17.3%	65.7%	17.0%			
Save the post on your device	91	199	57	1.90	0.647	63.4%
	26.2%	57.3%	16.4%			
Repost (Retweet)	83	216	48	1.90	0.607	63.3%
	23.9%	62.2%	13.8%			
Comment	123	199	25	1.72	0.590	57.3%
	35.4%	57.3%	7.2%			
Quote	138	168	41	1.72	0.663	57.3%
	39.8%	48.4%	11.8%			
Mention (@)	162	153	32	1.63	0.648	54.2%
	46.7%	44.1%	9.2%			

Statement	No	Sometimes	Always	Weighted Mean	Std. Deviation	Relative Weight (%)
Share the link via your account	164	151	32	1.62	0.649	54.0%
	47.3%	43.5%	9.2%			
Participate in a hashtag	227	99	21	1.41	0.603	46.9%
	65.4%	28.5%	6.1%			
Send a private message to the post owner	237	92	18	1.37	0.581	45.6%
	68.3%	26.5%	5.2%			
Total Sample						511

Table 6: Types of Interaction with Published Content on Social Media

The data in Table 6 reveals that "liking" content is the most common form of interaction on social media platforms, with a relative weight of 72%. This is followed by adding posts to favorites at 67.9%, suggesting that many users prefer to save content for later viewing rather than engaging with it immediately. Following accounts based on posted content ranked third at 66.6%, indicating that users often choose to follow content sources that consistently align with their interests instead of reacting to individual posts. The act of saving posts to devices scored 63.4%, showing user interest in keeping content for private access without immediate interaction. Reposting came in close at 63.3%, suggesting that many users are willing to share content they like with others without necessarily commenting on it. Commenting showed a lower engagement level at 57.3%, pointing to a preference for passive interaction (e.g., liking or saving) over active participation in conversations. The quote function also scored 57.3%, indicating that fewer users prefer to engage by rephrasing and adding commentary to existing content. Mentions (tagging others) had a relative weight of 54.2%, suggesting that while users do refer content to others, this is not as common as liking or reposting. Similarly, sharing links through personal accounts scored 54.0%, making it a less frequent behavior. Participation in hash tags was relatively limited at 46.9%, reflecting that only a minority of users actively contribute to trending discussions or campaigns. Finally, sending private messages to content creators was the least common interaction at 45.6%, indicating that direct communication remains relatively rare among users.

Ranking of Content Types Participants Prefer to Follow through Social Media

Rank	Content Type	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	Weighted Score	Percent Weight (%)
1	Religious	1274	504	445	260	129	54	21	2687	16.0%
2	Educational	896	828	475	284	108	40	23	2654	15.8%
3	Social	917	606	610	360	105	46	9	2653	15.8%
4	Entertainment	1029	528	385	268	111	62	64	2447	14.5%

Rank	Content Type	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	Weighted Score	Percent Weight (%)
5	Economic	518	396	550	344	228	114	42	2192	13.0%
6	Sports	868	468	230	224	99	104	122	2115	12.6%
7	Political	574	372	395	372	168	126	76	2083	12.4%
	Total Weights								16831	100%

Table 7: Ranking of the Types of Content Followed through Social Media

The data from Table 7 indicates that religious content ranks highest among participants' interests, with a weighted percentage of 16%. This is closely followed by educational and social content, each with a 15.8% weight. These findings show a strong inclination toward meaningful and enriching content. Entertainment content ranks third at 14.5%, showing significant interest, though slightly less than the top three categories. Economic content comes in next at 13%, followed by sports content at 12.6%. The least followed type of content is political, with a weighted score of 12.4%, indicating relatively lower engagement with political discourse on social media platforms. These results suggest that the sample group prioritizes content that provides spiritual, educational, and social value, while content related to politics or economics holds relatively less appeal.

Perceived Impact of Social Media on General Culture in Saudi Society

Degree of Impact	Frequency	Percentage
Strong Impact	400	78.3%
Moderate Impact	104	20.4%
Weak Impact	4	0.8%
Don't Know	2	0.4%
No Impact	1	0.2%
Total	511	100%

Table 8: Participants' Perceptions of Social Media's Impact on General Culture

The data reveals that 78.3% of participants believe that social media has a strong impact on the general culture in Saudi society. This suggests a high level of awareness among users regarding the cultural influence of these platforms, particularly in shaping values, norms, and social habits Another 20.4% believe the impact is moderate, possibly reflecting the view that social media influences specific groups or topics more than others. Only 0.8% believe the impact is weak, and even fewer (0.2%) see no impact at all. These figures indicate an overwhelming consensus that social media plays a major role in cultural transformation and public discourse in the Saudi context.

Extent	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Large	235	46.0
Medium	125	24.5
To some extent	108	21.1
Does not reflect	29	5.7
Don't know	14	2.7
Total	511	100.0

Table (9) The Extent to Which Social Media Contributes to Spreading False or Distorted Cultural Concepts About Saudi Society (From the Sample's Perspective)

The data shows that 46% of respondents believe social media largely contributes to spreading false or distorted cultural concepts about Saudi society, reflecting widespread concerns about media distortion or misinformation. Meanwhile, 24.5% see this impact as moderate, indicating some believe social media contains both accurate and inaccurate information depending on how users select and use sources. Additionally, 21.1% think the contribution to spreading false information is "to some extent," reflecting awareness of the importance of verifying information before believing or sharing it. On the other hand, only a small percentage (5.7%) believe social media does not or minimally contributes to spreading false concepts, indicating that most users are somewhat skeptical about the reliability of published content.

Statement	No (freq)	Sometimes (freq)	Always (freq)	Weighted Mean	Std. Deviation	Relative Weight (%)
I consider my social relationships (friends, neighbors, colleagues) in how I interact with content on social media	113	240	158	2.09	0.724	69.6
My emotions and feelings (satisfaction, anger, mood, etc.) affect how I interact with content on social media	134	255	122	1.98	0.708	65.9
My relationship with my tribe affects how I interact with content on social media	233	186	92	1.72	0.749	57.5
When I interact with social media content, I try to appear materially distinguished	252	161	98	1.70	0.772	56.6

Statement	No (freq)	Sometimes (freq)	Always (freq)	Weighted Mean	Std. Deviation	Relative Weight (%)
Keeping information to myself and not wanting to interact with or share it affects my interaction on social media	222	227	62	1.69	0.677	56.2
Total sample 511						

Table (10) Social Factors Affecting The Interaction Of The Sample Individuals Through Social Media

The results indicate that social relationships such as friends, neighbors, and colleagues are the most influential social factor in interaction on social media, with a high relative weight of 69.6%. This highlights the importance of immediate social environments in shaping users' behavior online. Next come emotional factors and personal feelings such as satisfaction, anger, or mood with a relative weight of 65.9%, reflecting how an individual's psychological state impacts their interaction style. Tribal affiliation has a somewhat lower influence (57.5%), suggesting that tribal identity is less dominant in shaping social media interactions compared to modern civic relationships. The desire to appear materially distinguished (56.6%) and the tendency to keep information private without sharing (56.2%) also have similar moderate influence, indicating that interaction does not always aim to showcase social status, and some users prefer to consume content passively. Overall, these findings show that social and civic relationships play a central role in social media interaction, with a relative decline in the importance of tribal affiliations. Cultural factors affecting the interaction of sample individuals on social media

Statement	No (freq)	Sometimes (freq)	Always (freq)	Weighted Mean	Std. Deviation	Relative Weight (%)
My expertise on the topic affects my interaction with what is published through social media	62	231	218	2.31	0.675	76.8
My knowledge richness about the topic affects my interaction with what is published on social media	93	258	160	2.13	0.692	71.0
My educational level affects my interaction with what is published through social media	120	213	178	2.11	0.756	70.5
My knowledge of legal regulations regarding social media affects my	119	218	174	2.11	0.750	70.3

Statement	No (freq)	Sometimes (freq)	Always (freq)	Weighted Mean	Std. Deviation	Relative Weight (%)
interaction with what is published						
Religious dimension affects my interaction with what is published through social media	144	178	189	2.09	0.803	69.6
My linguistic richness affects my interaction with what is published through social media	142	249	120	1.96	0.715	65.2
Political system orientations affect my interaction with what is published on social media	183	211	117	1.87	0.756	62.4
Sample size: 511						

Table (11) Cultural Factors That Influence Sample Members' Interaction Across Social Networks

Data from Table (11) indicate that expertise in the topic tops the cultural factors influencing social media interaction, with a relative weight of 76.8%, confirming that specialized knowledge plays a crucial role in participation behavior. This is followed by knowledge richness about the topic at 71%, showing that general knowledge level strongly affects interaction with content. Next is the educational level with a relative weight of 70.5%, reflecting education's role in shaping digital interaction behavior. Knowledge of legal regulations on social media follows closely at 70.3%, indicating that familiarity with laws influences the degree of digital engagement. The religious dimension has a relative weight of 69.6%, reflecting the influence of religious values on content participation. Linguistic richness scored 65.2%, suggesting that language proficiency and ability to express ideas play a role in interaction. Lastly, political system orientations had the lowest influence among the cultural factors, at 62.4%, reflecting the sensitivity of political content in certain contexts. Overall, these results show that audiences interact more with topics they find relevant and where they have expertise, which gives them a higher ability to articulate their ideas.

Third: Hypothesis Testing Results

Hypothesis 1: There is a statistically significant correlation between the level of social media use among the sample individuals and the level of interaction with what is published.

Variables	Correlation Coefficient	Direction	Strength	Significance Level	p-value
Social media usage level of sample individuals	0.376*	Positive	Moderate	0.05	0.031

Table (12)

Pearson's correlation coefficient to measure the relationship between the sample's level of social media use and their level of engagement with what is published.

Table (12) results indicate a statistically significant positive correlation between the level of social media use and the level of interaction with published content. The Pearson correlation coefficient is 0.376, significant at the 0.05 level.

Hypothesis 2: There is a statistically significant correlation between the degree of knowledge of the sample individuals about issues raised on social media and the level of interaction with published content. Pearson Correlation Coefficient Measuring the Relationship Between Degrees of Knowledge of Sample Individuals on Issues Rose on Social Media and the Level of Interaction with Published Content.

Variables	Correlation Coefficient	Direction	Strength	Significance Level	Significance
Religious issues	0.122**	Positive	Weak	0.006	0.01
Educational issues	0.045	-	-	0.309	Not significant
Social issues	0.117**	Positive	Weak	0.008	0.01
Entertainment issues	0.047	-	-	0.289	Not significant
Economic issues	0.080	-	-	0.072	Not significant
Sports issues	0.000	-	-	0.993	Not significant
Political issues	0.019	-	-	0.668	Not significant

Table (13)

Pearson's correlation coefficient to measure the relationship between the degrees of knowledge of the sample members regarding the issues rose via social media and the level of interaction with what is published.

Table (13) results indicate a statistically significant correlation between the degree of knowledge of sample individuals about issues raised on social media and the level of interaction with published content, detailed as follows:

1.   There is a statistically significant positive correlation between knowledge of religious issues and interaction level, with a Pearson correlation of 0.122, significant at 0.01.

2.   There is a statistically significant positive correlation between knowledge of social issues and interaction level, with a Pearson correlation of 0.117, significant at 0.01.

3.   There is no statistically significant correlation between knowledge of educational, entertainment, economic, political, and sports issues and interaction level, as their Pearson

correlation values were not significant at the 0.05 level.

Hypothesis 3:

There is a statistically significant correlation between the degree of interaction of sample individuals with published content on social media and their awareness of social and cultural factors influencing their interaction.

Variables	Correlation Coefficient	Direction	Strength	Significance Level	Significance
Awareness of social factors	0.135**	Positive	Moderate	0.002	0.01
Awareness of cultural factors	0.112*	Positive	Moderate	0.011	0.05

Table (14)

Pearson correlation measuring the relationship between the degree of interaction and awareness of social and cultural factors influencing interaction

Table (14) results show A statistically significant positive correlation between interaction level and awareness of social factors affecting interaction, with a Pearson correlation of 0.135, significant at 0.01 A statistically significant positive correlation between interaction level and awareness of cultural factors affecting interaction, with a Pearson correlation of 0.112, significant at 0.05.

Hypothesis 4:

There are statistically significant differences in sample individuals' awareness of social factors affecting their interaction on social media due to demographic variables (gender, age, family income level, educational level). (A) Differences According to Gender Differences in Perception of Social Factors Affecting Interaction on Social Networks by Gender.

Social Factors Perception	Gender	Sample Size	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-value	Significance Level	Significance
Males	352	9.26	2.537	1.129	0.259	Not significant	
Females	159	8.99	2.457				

Table (15)

Results of the (T-Test) examining the significance of differences between the mean scores of sample individuals regarding awareness of social factors.

Results from Table (15) indicate no statistically significant differences between the average scores of sample individuals on the scale measuring perception of social factors affecting their interaction on social networks according to gender. The t-test value was 1.129, which is not statistically significant at the 0.05 level.

(B) Differences According to Age, Family Income Level, and Educational Level

Variables	Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Squares	F-value	Significance
Perception of social factors by Age	Between Groups	17.803	3	5.934	0.939	Not significant (0.421)
	Within Groups	3203.696	507	6.319		
	Total	3221.499	510			
Perception of social factors by Income Level	Between Groups	41.630	3	13.877	2.212	Not significant (0.086)
	Within Groups	3179.869	507	6.272		
	Total	3221.499	510			
Perception of social factors by Educational Level	Between Groups	80.513	3	26.838	4.332	Significant at 0.01 level
	Within Groups	3140.986	507	6.195		
	Total	3221.499	510			

Table (16)

Results of One-Way ANOVA to Measure the Significance of Differences Between the Mean Scores of the Sample on the Scale of Perception of Social Factors Affecting Interaction through Social Networks According to Age, Family Income Level, and Educational Level:

1. No statistically significant differences between mean perception scores by age (F = 0.939, p > 0.05).

2. No statistically significant differences between mean perception scores by family income level (F = 2.212, p > 0.05).

3. Statistically significant differences between mean perception scores by educational level (F = 4.332, p < 0.01).

Variable	Groups	Less than Secondary	Secondary or Equivalent	University	Postgraduate
Perception of social factors	Less than Secondary	-	-	1.757*	2.308*
	Secondary or Equivalent	-	-	-	0.885*
	University	-	-	-	-

Variable	Groups	Less than Secondary	Secondary or Equivalent	University	Postgraduate
	Postgraduate	-	-	-	-

Table (17)

Results of LSD analysis to determine the source of the differences between the average scores of sample members on the scale of awareness of social factors that affect their interaction via social networks according to educational level.

1. Significant difference between those with less than secondary education and university graduates in favor of university graduates (difference = 1.757*).

2. Significant difference between those with less than secondary education and postgraduates in favor of postgraduates (difference = 2.308*).

3. Significant difference between secondary/equivalent group and postgraduates in favor of postgraduates (difference = 0.885*). Hypothesis Five: Statistically Significant Differences in Perception of Cultural Factors Affecting Interaction on Social Networks Attributed to Demographic Variables (Gender, Age, Family Income, And Educational Level) (A) Differences by Gender.

Perception of Cultural Factors	Gender	Sample Size	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-value	Significance Level	Significance
Males	352	14.64	3.863	0.558	0.577	Not significant	
Females	159	14.43	3.634				

Table 18

Results of the T-test for the significance of differences between the average scores of sample members on the perception scale of cultural factors that affect their interaction across social networks according to gender.

Results in Table (18) indicate no statistically significant differences between average perception scores of cultural factors by gender (t = 0.558, p > 0.05).

Variables	Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Squares	F-value	Significance
Perception of cultural factors by age	Between groups	160.577	3	53.526	3.786	Significant at 0.05
	Within groups	7168.421	507	14.139		
	Total	7328.998	510			
Perception of cultural factors by	Between groups	94.578	3	31.526	2.209	Not significant

Variables	Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Squares	F-value	Significance
family income level						
	Within groups	7234.420	507	14.269		
	Total	7328.998	510			
Perception of cultural factors by educational level	Between groups	57.676	3	19.225	1.340	Not significant
	Within groups	7271.322	507	14.342		
	Total	7328.998	510			

Table 19

Results of the one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) test to measure the significance of the differences between the average scores of sample members on the scale of awareness of cultural factors that affect their interaction across social networks according to the variables (age, family income level, educational level).

Table 19 shows the results of the one-way ANOVA test measuring the significance of differences between the mean scores of sample individuals on the scale of perception of cultural factors affecting their interaction through social networks, according to variables (age, family income level, educational level). The results were as follows: There are statistically significant differences between the mean scores of sample individuals on the perception scale of cultural factors affecting their interaction through social networks according to the variable (age), where the F-value was (3.786), and this value is significant at a significance level of 0.05. There are no statistically significant differences between the mean scores of sample individuals on the perception scale of cultural factors affecting their interaction through social networks according to the variable (family income level), where the F-value was (2.209), which is not significant at 0.05. There are no statistically significant differences between the mean scores of sample individuals on the perception scale of cultural factors affecting their interaction through social networks according to the variable (educational level), where the F-value was (1.340), which is not significant at 0.05. To determine the source and significance of differences between means, a post hoc test using the Least Significant Difference (LSD) method was used. Table 20: Results of LSD analysis to determine the source of differences between mean scores of sample individuals on the perception scale of cultural factors affecting their interaction through social networks according to age.

Variable	Groups	15-25	26-35	36-45	Over 45
Perception of cultural factors	15-25	-	-	-	-
	26-35	-	-	0.866*	1.362*
	36-45	-	-	-	-

Variable	Groups	15-25	26-35	36-45	Over 45
	Over 45	-	-	-	-

Table (20)

Results of LSD analysis to determine the source of the differences between the average scores of sample members on the scale of awareness of cultural factors that affect their interaction via social media networks according to age.

Table 20 shows the difference in mean scores among groups representing different age levels. To identify the source of variance in differences between group means, the LSD test was conducted to assess the significance of these differences and which groups they favor.

1.   LSD test results confirmed a significant difference between the mean scores of sample individuals aged 26-35 years and those aged 36-45 years on the perception scale of cultural factors affecting their interaction through social networks, with a mean difference of 0.866*, favoring the 36-45 age group.

2.   LSD test results also confirmed a significant difference between the mean scores of sample individuals aged 26-35 years and those aged over 45 years on the same scale, with a mean difference of 1.362*, favoring the over 45 age group.

Discussion of Study Results:

The study aimed to identify the cultural and social dimensions influencing interaction through social networks in Saudi society. It was a field study on a sample of social network users in Saudi society, and it reached several key findings:

1.   There is significant interest among Saudi society members in exposure to and use of social networks, which are part of their daily lives. This is supported by Habermas's theory of the public sphere, where individuals engage in intellectual discussions via social networks, helping shape public opinion.

2.   A large proportion (67.9%) of the sample actively interacts with content posted on social networks, which also aligns with the public sphere theory.

3.   Despite most of the sample interacting with posts, about one-third do not interact. This suggests social or cultural motives influence their level of interaction. This conservative third is cautious about presenting themselves on social networks in a way they consider appropriate, which aligns with Erving Goffman's theory that people manage how they present themselves in daily life, often different from their true reality, leading to reluctance to interact publicly for fear of unwanted self-exposure.

4.   The study found that "liking" is the most common form of interaction, followed by favoriting posts, following accounts, saving posts, sharing posts, then commenting and quoting. This shows that community members do not prefer commenting much and may use emojis as a different way to express interest. "Mentioning" others, sharing links, interacting with hash tags, and sending private messages to post owners were less common. This supports the earlier point about the community's caution in revealing their true opinions.

5.   Religious content topped the list of interests among participants, followed by educational and social content, then entertainment, economic, sports, and lastly political content. This indicates social networks are used more for entertainment than for serious news, supporting theories by Henri Tajfel and John Turner about identity expression on social networks and Habermas's public sphere theory where communities discuss issues freely, away from prevailing political currents.

6.   Participants are fully aware of the risks and strong influence of social networks, affecting how they interact. They see these networks as not truly representing Saudi society but rather spreading content aimed at distorting it. This also aligns with Tajfel and Turner's cultural identity theory and Goffman's self-presentation theory, emphasizing the community's effort to preserve a positive identity.

7.   The study showed that the dominant tribal dimension in Saudi society has less influence compared to social dimensions like neighbors and friends, especially regarding interaction with content on social networks. This reflects a new civil dimension where tribes have integrated and lost much of their earlier influence. This supports Goffman's view that society now focuses on self-presentation, regardless of tribal affiliation that previously shaped identity and nature. Today, individuals present themselves as their acquaintances or neighbors know them, rather than reflecting the tribe's nature.

8.   Experience and knowledge about posted topics are crucial variables influencing interaction, indicating a more aware audience that provides deeper ideas and opinions in their interactions. This aligns with Habermas's theory of the public sphere, where individuals engage in discussions on topics they know well and understand thoroughly.

Study Hypotheses Results:

Hypothesis 1:

The study confirmed a statistically significant correlational relationship between the level of social media use by sample individuals and the level of interaction with published content. Thus, the variable of frequent use and exposure is a factor that facilitates interaction between community members and posts on these accounts. This aligns with Habermas's theory of the public sphere, where individuals are keen to interact within their social sphere.

Hypothesis 2:

The study confirmed a statistically significant correlational relationship between the degree of knowledge sample individuals have about issues raised on social media and their level of interaction with published content. Specifically, there is a significant relationship between knowledge of religious issues and interaction levels, as well as between knowledge of social issues and interaction. Additionally, significant correlations were found between knowledge of educational, entertainment, economic, political, and sports issues and interaction levels. This confirms that knowledge of societal issues is an important variable influencing interaction, consistent with the theories of Habermas (public sphere) and Henri Tajfel and John Turner (cultural identity theory).

Hypothesis 3:

The study confirmed a statistically significant correlation between the degree of interaction with social media content and the perception of social and cultural factors influencing this interaction.

This indicates that the sample individuals are aware of and understand the social and cultural factors that influence their interactions or exposure to social media, reinforcing Habermas's public sphere theory.

Hypothesis 4:

The results showed no significant differences between the mean scores of sample individuals' perception of social factors affecting their interaction on social media according to gender, age, or family income level. However, statistically significant differences were found according to educational level, which is expected because higher education tends to increase awareness of social and cultural factors. Specifically, differences were found between individuals with less than secondary education and those with university education (mean difference = 1.757, favoring university education), between less than secondary and postgraduate education (mean difference = 2.308, favoring postgraduates), and between secondary education and postgraduate education (mean difference = 0.885, favoring postgraduates). Overall, this supports Habermas's public sphere theory and Erving Goffman's theory of self-presentation, where individuals strive to maintain the image the surrounding society holds of them.

Hypothesis 5:

The study indicated no statistically significant differences between mean scores of perception of cultural factors influencing interaction on social media by gender, family income, or educational level. However, significant differences were found by age. Specifically, there was a significant difference between the 26–35 age group and the 36–45 age group (mean difference = 0.866, favoring 36–45), and between the 26–35 group and the over 45 group (mean difference = 1.362, favoring over 45). This confirms that age is an important variable affecting interaction levels. These findings are consistent with those of Hypothesis 4 and align with Habermas's public sphere theory and Goffman's theory on individuals' efforts to maintain their social image.

Recommendations

The study concluded that individuals' perception of the risks of social media is an important variable in identifying the cultural and social dimensions influencing interaction through social networks. Therefore, the researcher recommends: Conducting experimental studies on this type of research, aiming to isolate sample individuals as much as possible to identify social and cultural factors influencing their interaction with social media content. Considering the community's awareness and understanding of the nature of social media. The researcher recommends studies focusing on this awareness, through analyzing social media content and exploring negative topics that audiences avoid interacting with due to social constraints limiting such interaction. Paying special attention to younger individuals and those with lower educational levels in exposure to social networks by providing targeted media and communication awareness messages for these groups when they use social media.

Study Hypotheses Results:

1.   **Hypothesis**

The study confirmed a statistically significant correlation between the level of social media usage by the sample individuals and their level of interaction with published content. Thus, frequent use and exposure are factors that facilitate interaction among community members with posts on these platforms. This aligns with Habermas's theory of the public sphere, which

emphasizes individuals' constant engagement within their social realm.

2.   Hypothesis

The study showed a statistically significant correlation between the degree of knowledge individuals have about issues raised on social media and their level of interaction with the content. This applies to religious, social, educational, entertainment, economic, political, and sports-related issues. These results support Habermas's public sphere theory and the cultural identity theory by Henri Tajfel and John Turner.

3.   Hypothesis

There is a statistically significant correlation between individuals' interaction with social media content and their awareness of the social and cultural factors affecting their engagement. This indicates that participants understand these factors while interacting or being exposed to social media, consistent with Habermas's public sphere theory.

4.   Hypothesis

No statistically significant differences were found in the perception of social factors affecting interaction across gender, age, or family income. However, significant differences were noted according to educational level, with university and postgraduate educated individuals demonstrating higher awareness than those with lower education levels. This supports both Habermas's theory and Erving Goffman's theory on individuals maintaining their social image.

5.   Hypothesis

No significant differences were found in the perception of cultural factors affecting interaction according to gender, family income, or education level. However, significant differences were observed based on age, with older age groups (36-45 and above 45) showing higher cultural awareness than the 26-35 age group. This result also aligns with the theories of Habermas and Goffman.

Conclusion

The study aims to employ these theoretical frameworks particularly Goffman's performance theory and Habermas' public sphere to analyze the social and cultural dimensions influencing interaction across social media platforms in the Saudi context. Social Identity Theory The study also discusses Social Identity Theory, developed by Henri Tajfel and John Turner in the 1970s. This theory is based on the idea that individuals derive a significant part of their self-understanding and self-worth from their membership in social groups. It plays a major role in understanding how group dynamics and categorization influence both individual and collective behavior. The theory suggests that people tend to categorize themselves into distinct social groups such as religious, ethnic, or professional groups and that belonging to these groups shapes a person's sense of identity and belonging. Through this group membership, individuals can enhance their self-esteem and perceived social status, which often results in a stronger attachment to the group and more positive attitudes toward its members. The central hypothesis of Social Identity Theory is that people strive to maintain a positive self-image, which they often achieve by making favorable comparisons between their in-group (the group they belong to and relevant out-groups (those they do not belong to (Haslam & Ellemers, 2005; Reid & Giles, 2008). This social comparison process may lead to in-group bias, where individuals display more favorable attitudes and behaviors toward members of their own group, and out-group derogation,

where members of other groups are perceived and treated less positively (Bar-Tal & Teichman, 2005). According to the theory, there are three main positive strategies that individuals may adopt when their group identity is not positively evaluated:

1.   Individual Mobility: If a person does not value their social group positively, they may attempt to leave that group and join a more socially esteemed one. The individual's personal status changes significantly, but their overall identity remains intact.

2.   Social Creativity: Members of a social group may attempt to enhance their group's standing by shifting the basis of comparison or comparing their group to one of lower status. This redefines the context of comparison to improve the perceived value of the in-group.

3.   Social Competition: Members work collectively to improve their group's status by directly competing with out-groups to achieve social change across one or more dimensions.

Recommendations

1.   It is important to conduct experimental studies that can isolate sample individuals as much as possible to better understand the social and cultural factors influencing their interaction with social media content.

2.   The study highlights the community's awareness and understanding of the nature of social media, recommending further research focusing on negative topics that audiences avoid interacting with due to social constraints.

3.   Special attention should be given to individuals with lower educational levels and younger age groups exposed to social media by providing tailored media and communication awareness messages for these groups.

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