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The Attitudes of Communication Practitioners in Saudi Newspapers toward Their Professional Practices on Social Media: A Field Study on a Sample of Saudi Journalists

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Abstract

This study seeks to examine the attitudes of communication agents, specifically journalists working for Saudi newspapers, toward their professional engagement on social media platforms in light of the diverse challenges and opportunities shaping the professional practices of Saudi journalists. The study aims to provide a framework for evaluating journalistic performance and assessing the extent to which these journalists adhere to professional standards when working within social media environments. This is particularly important given that the content published on personal accounts typically represents the individual views of journalists, rather than reflecting the editorial orientations of their affiliated news organizations. To achieve these objectives, the study adopted a field survey methodology targeting a sample of practicing Saudi journalists. Descriptive and analytical approaches were used to test the study's hypotheses and answer its research questions. Furthermore, a correlational research design was employed to examine the relationships between the main variables. The study results revealed several important insights, most notably the relatively high educational, age, and socioeconomic levels among the journalists surveyed, indicating an advanced academic orientation and general professional maturity. This research indicates a tendency toward professional behavior based on extensive experience and high journalistic ethical standards. One of the most prominent trends observed was the prevalence of social content on journalists' personal social media accounts, reflecting a strong tendency toward community engagement and responsiveness to public issues. The study also found a high level of professional awareness among Saudi journalists regarding the legal and regulatory frameworks governing the use of social media. Importantly, journalists demonstrated a clear distinction between journalistic reporting and opinion, demonstrating a strong commitment to ethical standards and professional objectivity aimed at serving the public interest and promoting societal and cultural development. Despite these positive indicators, the study found weak coordination between journalists and media institutions regarding the dissemination of news on personal social media accounts. This gap was interpreted as evidence of journalists' professional and editorial independence, free from external influences or institutional restrictions. Furthermore, the study highlighted journalists' commitment to engaging with their audiences and ensuring that published content respects societal values and norms. Journalists demonstrated professional integrity in their practices, such as accurately attributing sources, maintaining objectivity and neutrality in media coverage, and avoiding bias and discriminatory content. Statistical analysis confirmed a close correlation between journalists' adherence to their newspapers' editorial policies and the clarity of the content published on their personal accounts. Furthermore, no significant differences were observed in journalists' engagement with official newspaper accounts across age groups or income levels.

Keywords: Saudi journalists, social media networks, professional practice approach, professional practice.

Introduction

Studies conducted in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia indicate that 99% of participants report using social media platforms (Hamasha et al., 2019). This statistic highlights the widespread adoption

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of social networks across the Saudi population. Another study further revealed that the number of Twitter users in Saudi Arabia increased by approximately three million between 2019 and 2020. The same study also noted that internet penetration in the Kingdom has reached 91%, ranking among the highest globally (Shaheen et al., 2020). This significant rise in internet and social media usage reflects the deep integration of these platforms into the daily lives of Saudi citizens. As a result, social media has become a powerful tool for disseminating media messages and enhancing interaction between journalists and audiences. However, maintaining professional standards and objectivity presents a considerable challenge for Saudi journalists. The rapid pace of content dissemination and the immediacy of audience feedback may lead to the premature publication of unverified information (Hamasha et al., 2019).

Moreover, the absence of clear policies within Saudi media institutions regulating the use of these platforms complicates efforts to uphold ethical and professional standards. This includes ambiguity in defining acceptable publishing practices, protecting user privacy, and ensuring compliance with existing laws and regulations. The publication of inaccurate news or offensive content without proper verification, as well as violations of ethical or legal codes by journalists on social media, can be more consequential than such actions within traditional journalistic settings (Safari, 2018). The responsibility in this regard lies not only with individual journalists but also with media institutions, which must establish clear guidelines to ensure professional conduct. Several studies have underscored the challenges and risks associated with professional journalism in Saudi Arabia particularly those related to ethical and legal issues in social media usage. These include concerns over user privacy violations, the rush to publish unverified content, and the resulting erosion of trust and credibility in journalistic outputs (Ahmed et al., 2017).

Despite these challenges, research suggests that most Saudi journalist's exhibit a strong awareness of the professional characteristics required for responsible social media use. Many view these platforms as opportunities to enhance their knowledge and professional skills. Social media allows them to access diverse news sources, receive immediate audience feedback, and improve their writing and editing capabilities. Furthermore, these platforms enable more direct engagement with the public, opinion leaders, and community sources (The Role of Social Media in Journalism, 2022).

Given these complex dynamics both the opportunities and challenges this study seeks to examine the attitudes of communication agents, specifically Saudi newspaper journalists, towards their professional practices on social media networks. The study provides a framework for assessing journalists' performance and evaluating the extent to which they adhere to professional standards when using personal accounts that reflect their individual perspectives rather than institutional editorial policies.

Problem Statement

Rapid developments in communication technologies have introduced new methods in journalistic professional practice, especially after Saudi journalists began utilizing social media networks, which have seen tremendous growth in recent years. These networks have become important sources of news and have provided opportunities to disseminate information widely. However, this widespread use faces many legal, professional, and ethical challenges, especially considering journalists' focus on sensationalism and exclusivity, which in some practices override

professional values and journalistic ethics. Therefore, this study aims to explore the attitudes of communication practitioner's journalists in Saudi newspapers towards their professional practices on social media, through a sample of Saudi journalists who have social media accounts.

Research Objectives

The main objective of this study is to examine the attitudes of communication practitioners in Saudi newspapers toward their professional practices on social media, from the perspective of professional media practice. The sub-objectives include:

1. Identifying the extent of journalists' adherence to editorial policies in Saudi newspapers.
2. Revealing the most important social media accounts that Saudi journalists use to engage with their target audience.
3. Measuring journalists' responsiveness to what is published in their newspapers and their efforts to highlight it on their personal social media accounts.
4. Understanding how clear the media messages journalists post on their personal social media accounts are, from their own perspective.
5. Identifying the diversity of media message content on journalists' personal social media accounts, from their perspective.
6. Exploring the level of audience interaction with what journalists publish via their personal social media accounts, from the journalists' viewpoint.

Research Questions

The study seeks to answer the following questions:

1. To what extent do journalists in Saudi newspapers adhere to their newspapers' editorial policies?
2. What are the most important social media accounts that Saudi journalists maintain to communicate with their target audience?
3. How responsive are journalists to what is published in their newspapers, and how do they highlight this on their personal social media accounts?
4. How clear is the media messages journalists post on their personal social media accounts, according to their own views?
5. How diverse is the content of media messages on journalists' personal social media accounts, from their perspective?
6. How much interaction does the audience have with what journalists publish on their personal social media accounts, according to the journalists?

Significance of the Study

The significance of this study lies in the following points

1. To understand the awareness of Saudi newspaper journalists regarding the nature of professional journalistic practices on social media networks based on their own perspectives and the ways they utilize their personal social media accounts for

2. To explore the relationship between Saudi journalists' professional practices on their personal social media accounts and the official accounts of the newspapers in which they are employed.
3. To identify the extent to which clear policies and procedures exist among journalists working in Saudi newspapers regarding professional conduct on their personal social media platforms.

Hypotheses

The study also aims to verify the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: There is a statistically significant correlation between journalists' adherence to editorial policies in Saudi newspapers and the clarity of media content on their social media accounts.

Hypothesis 2: There are statistically significant differences in journalists' interaction with what is published on their newspapers' official accounts due to demographic variables (income level, age).

Literature Review

Previous studies have addressed the media-related activities of journalists on social media networks. The researcher presents the following studies:

1. **The study by Hussein Mohamed Rabie (2021). Titled "Personal and Professional Practices of Journalists on Social Media"** Focused on monitoring and analyzing the personal and professional practices of Egyptian journalists on social media, specifically Facebook. This field study was conducted on a sample of 150 male and female journalists working in Egyptian newspapers who use Facebook. The results revealed several findings, most notably that journalists tend to use their real names on the platform. However, some use nicknames, and others combine their real names with pseudonyms.
2. **The study by Wael Al-Ashry (2020). titled "Egyptian Journalists' Perceptions of Professional and Ethical Guidelines Governing the Use of Social Media in Journalism and Their Relation to Prevailing Practice Styles"** examined the global communication and informational revolution that has enabled dynamic interaction with citizens through the use of social media as a tool in journalistic work. While these networks play a positive role, the study noted that they pose significant professional challenges for journalists particularly in terms of the accuracy of what is published, the proliferation of rumors, and issues such as defamation, fraud, blackmail, impersonation, and violations of personal privacy. The study emphasized that these platforms, being relatively resistant to state censorship and easily accessible for launching online campaigns, have been exploited to disseminate biased visual content aimed at manipulating public opinion. Such content is often fabricated or repurposed to influence events, wage psychological warfare, or spread misinformation that may harm national interests. The study concludes that these emerging challenges necessitate a balance between the right to use social media and the imperative to avoid threatening social stability. It also underscores the urgent need for regulatory frameworks to govern such usage in light of the unique risks involved. Represent a threat to national security, thus

emphasizing the importance of establishing regulatory frameworks to govern and guide the use of these platforms, and to address the associated risks based on their distinct characteristics.

3. The study by Zablawi, A. R., & Fawzi, (2017). titled "Professional Orientations of Media Practitioners Toward Online Journalism Publishing Guidelines in Egypt" by researcher Abdurrahman Al-Zaabalawi highlighted that online journalism in Egypt faces numerous legal, professional, and ethical challenges particularly due to the lack of comprehensive legal regulations governing electronic journalism. The dominance of sensationalism and the race for breaking news often overshadows professional values and journalistic ethics. The study's findings indicate that practitioners at electronic newspapers and news websites are aware of the dangers of spreading rumors and fake news, which may threaten national security and harm public interests. Approximately 60% of media professionals reported compliance with legal regulations governing electronic journalism, though to varying degrees. Furthermore, the respondents emphasized the importance of adhering to objectivity when publishing news and information, identifying it as one of the most critical professional standards in electronic journalism. The study also revealed that 65.4% of the participants adhere to professional standards in their journalistic work, and 90% support publishing journalistic content on social media platforms. Additionally, 64.7% believe that internal editorial oversight within media institutions is necessary, and 86.7% valued the accuracy and credibility of published news as essential features of online journalism. Speed and immediacy in news dissemination were highlighted by 58% as key strengths of digital platforms. Notably, 54.3% of the sample advocated for unrestricted freedom for journalists to publish their content online. However, a significant proportion of media practitioners identified the lack of clear editorial policies as a major challenge in electronic journalism. It was also noted that practitioners at news websites face greater challenges than those working for online newspapers.
4. The study by Khadeem, K. (2017). Titled "Journalists' Use of Facebook as a News Source: Investment Opportunities and the Challenge of Content Verification" by researcher Khadim Khira focused on the rapid technological advancements in media and communication and their impact on the professional practices of journalism. The study underscored that one of the most notable gains from such technological developments is the strategic utilization of social media platforms by journalists, particularly Facebook, which has emerged as a crucial news source. These platforms provide journalists with opportunities for widespread content dissemination among a large user base. The study explored patterns in how journalists use Facebook for news purposes, and it proposed a set of verification steps for dealing with videos. Finally, it offered practical guidelines to journalists for handling news content sourced from Facebook. About by technological development for journalists is their utilization of social media platforms, particularly **Facebook**, which has witnessed massive growth and become a significant source of news. It has also allowed for widespread news dissemination by a broad range of users. The study identified the various ways journalists use Facebook and outlined specific steps for verifying video content. It concluded by offering practical guidelines for journalists when handling Facebook-sourced news the study emphasized that one of the key benefits brought about by technological development for journalists is their

utilization of social media platforms, particularly Facebook, which has witnessed massive growth and become a significant source of news. It has also allowed for widespread news dissemination by a broad range of users. The study identified the various ways journalists use Facebook and outlined specific steps for verifying video content. It concluded by offering practical guidelines for journalists when handling Facebook-sourced news.

5. **The study by Tafarganeet, A. K. (2019). Titled "Freedom of Expression through New Communication Media in Algeria: A Survey Study of Algerian Journalists Using Facebook"** primarily explored the issue of freedom of expression in Algeria's new media environment, focusing specifically on Facebook. The study utilized a questionnaire distributed to a sample of **400 Algerian journalists** who had used Facebook during the year 2017. The questionnaire was centered around the extent of expressive freedom available to these journalists based on the content they post including writings, comments, images, and videos and aimed to identify the obstacles they face and the types of censorship imposed on them. The results showed that nearly half of the sampled journalists had been using Facebook for over **seven years**, and most of them used the platform **daily**. About two-thirds used Facebook under **anonymous identities**, and usage was relatively higher among **female journalists** and those working in the **public (government) sector**. Facebook was primarily used to follow news, communicate and interact, and express opinions. A majority of respondents were **reluctant to use Facebook as a reliable news source**, and **most Algerian journalists refrained from posting content on Facebook that had been rejected by their media organizations**. The study also revealed a **lack of alignment** between what journalists post on Facebook and what they publish through official media outlets.
6. **The study by Abdel-Baqi, O. F. (2021). titled "Motivations Behind Egyptian Journalists' Construction of Personal and Professional Identities on Social Media Platforms"** aimed to explore both personal and professional motivations that led a sample of Egyptian journalists to create and manage social media accounts, and to understand how these accounts relate to the processes of identity construction and self-promotion, as well as the role played by media institutions in this context. The researcher employed several theoretical frameworks relevant to the topic most notably, **Self-Presentation Theory** and **Uses and Gratifications Theory** to shed light on the role of social media as a component of new media that enables self-promotion and identity construction. The study proposed a model of identity-building motivations based on two main categories: **personal motivations** and **professional (occupational) motivations**, each broken down into three levels: individual, organizational, and institutional. Data were collected using two methods: a structured questionnaire created through **Google Forms** and distributed to **109 journalists** via Facebook and WhatsApp, and **in-depth phone interviews** conducted with **7 senior editors** at various newspapers and news websites to gain deeper insights. Key findings included that journalists actively engaged in **self-marketing** on social media, primarily at the **individual level**, to promote themselves and their journalistic output. The results also indicated that the concept of **professional identity-building** on social media was not fully developed among some journalists, with their use of these platforms often limited to following news sources or accessing organizational content. Moreover, the study found that **media institutions in**

Egypt lacked awareness of the potential benefits of leveraging journalists' personal accounts for institutional promotion and marketing, relying instead solely on **official institutional accounts**. The researcher based this study on several theoretical frameworks related to the topic, primarily the **self-marketing** approach and the **uses and gratifications** theory, highlighting the role of social media platforms as one of the new media channels in **self-marketing** and identity construction for journalists.

Institutional Level

1. For data collection, the researcher relied on two tools: a structured questionnaire designed via **Google Forms**, which was sent to the accounts of 109 journalists on Facebook and WhatsApp, and conducted phone interviews with 7 senior editors and managers in several newspapers and websites to obtain more detailed and in depth information. The study concluded several key findings, including: Journalists engage in marketing activities on social media platforms primarily at the **individual level**, meaning they mainly market themselves and their journalistic products. The concept of building a professional identity through social media platforms is unclear or underdeveloped among some journalists, with their use of these platforms largely limited to information gathering and following their newspapers' or sources' accounts. Egyptian media institutions show insufficient awareness of the importance of leveraging journalists' personal accounts for promoting and marketing the institution, relying instead solely on their official accounts.
2. Political journalists and their social media audiences: new power relations (Bruns, et al., 2019). Social media use is now commonplace across journalism, in spite of lingering unease about the impact the networked, real-time logic of leading social media platforms may have on the quality of journalistic coverage. As a result, distinct journalistic voices are forced to compete more directly with experts, commentators, sources, and other stakeholders within the same space. Such shifting power relations may be observed also in the interactions between political journalists and their audiences on major social media platforms. This article therefore pursues a cross-national comparison of interactions between political journalists and their audiences on Twitter in Germany and Australia, documenting how the differences in the status of Twitter in each country's media environment manifest in activities and network interactions. In each country, we observed Twitter interactions around the national parliamentary press corps (the Bundespressekonferenz and the Federal Press Gallery), gathering all public tweets by and directed at the journalists' accounts during 2017. We examine overall activity and engagement patterns and highlight significant differences between the two national groups; and we conduct further network analysis to examine the prevalent connections and engagement between press corps journalists themselves, and between journalists, their audiences, and other interlocutors on Twitter. New structures of information flow, of influence, and thus ultimately of power relations become evident in this analysis.
3. From "Selfies" to Breaking Tweets, How journalists negotiate personal and professional identity on social media. (Bossio, et al., 2017). The aim of this paper is to analyse the different ways in which journalists negotiate representations of their professional and personal identity on social media platforms. We argue that the differing representations of personal and professional identity on social media correspond to the professional,

organisational and institutional tensions that have emerged in this new space. Using qualitative interviews with various journalists and editorial staff from Australian media organisations across television, radio, print and online publications, we indicate that journalists present their personal and professional identity on social media in three different ways. The first group creates public, professional social media accounts, but also creates secondary, private accounts that are only accessible to personal networks. The second group either choose, or are required by their media organisation, to only have a professional presence on social media; that is, they have public accounts that are only associated with their media organisation and display only their professional activities. The last group merges a professional and personal identity on their social media sites, showing aspects of their personal and their professional lives on publically available accounts.

4. From Social Media with News: Journalists' Social Media Use for Sourcing and Verification, (Zhang, et al., 2020). Social media is widely used by journalists for sourcing and verification. While social media may either serve as supplementary to existing sources or replace traditional channels, it nevertheless poses challenges to the news professionalism. The present study examines the relationship between journalists' use of social media and other channels for news sourcing and verification. It also examines how attitudes towards social media affect the use of social media for sourcing and verification. An online survey of journalists (n = 255) in local news organizations in Hong Kong a society with a high social media penetration rate and a highly competitive media market revealed that journalists rely on offline, elite, and ready-made sources (such as information released by public relations companies or governmental officials). Social media both replaces and complements existing channels for sourcing and verification. The perception that social media is a credible source for information was positively related to using social media for news production. The present paper is a modest first study to examine how social media is included in news production in a non-Western context. It offers a better understanding of how emerging technologies change the information repertoire during news production in a post-truth era.
5. Cultural journalists on social media, (Kristensen, et al., 2018). This article investigates the use of social media among a particular group of journalists: cultural journalists. Combining research on social media journalism with research on cultural journalism and applying a mix-method approach, the study shows that use of social media is still a fairly random practice in cultural newsrooms. It also shows that cultural journalists use their Twitter and Facebook accounts interchangeably as tools for professional communication in their daily work and for personal communication in their daily lives. In other words, their social media practices blur the boundaries between institutional interests and professional identities, and more private interests and personal identities. While this may be a challenge to most journalists, it resonates well with the professional logics of cultural journalists. They have long practiced their work in a grey-zone between the public and the private, and the objective and subjective. Through their social media practices, they promote the media institution they work for and their own 'personalised' professional brand.
6. The journalist is marketing the news, this study, based on case studies of three online newsrooms, (Tandoc, et al., 2016). Seeks to understand the patterns of how journalists

use social media in their news work. Through 150 hours of observations and interviews with 31 journalists, the study found that journalists are normalizing social media while also reworking some of their norms and routines around it, a process of journalistic negotiation. They are balancing editorial autonomy and the other norms that have institutionalized journalism, on one hand, and the increasing influence exerted by the audience perceived to be the key for journalism's survival on the other. In doing so, journalists are also seeing a reworking of their traditional gatekeeping role, finding themselves having to also market the news.

7. *Journalists' Use of Social Media to Infer Public Opinion: The Citizens' Perspective*, Journalists increasingly use social media (Dubois, et al., 2020). data to infer and report public opinion by quoting social media posts, identifying trending topics, and reporting general sentiment. In contrast to traditional approaches of inferring public opinion, citizens are often unaware of how their publicly available social media data are being used and how public opinion is constructed using social media analytics. In this exploratory study based on a census-weighted online survey of Canadian adults (N = 1,500), we examine citizens' perceptions of journalistic use of social media data. We demonstrate that (1) people find it more appropriate for journalists to use aggregate social media data rather than personally identifiable data, (2) people who use more social media are more likely to positively perceive journalistic use of social media data to infer public opinion, and (3) the frequency of political posting is positively related to acceptance of this emerging journalistic practice, which suggests some citizens want to be heard publicly on social media while others do not. We provide recommendations for journalists on the ethical use of social media data and social media platforms on opt-in functionality.
8. *Journalists on Instagram: Presenting Professional Identity and Role on Image-focused Social Media*, (Bossio, et al., 2023). Research on journalists' social media practices has not yet developed clear platform specificity; that is, how these practices might differ according to a platform's unique culture and vernacular affordances. This paper explores how journalists have mediated aspects of Instagram's unique visual cultures within their professional journalism practices. It argues journalists develop representations of their professional identity and role using mediated journalistic practices that also adhere to Instagram's culture and "vernacular" social practices. Using a visual content analysis and semi-structured interviews with Australian journalists, this paper shows that journalistic practices on Instagram are context-specific and dynamic. Unique journalistic practices develop and change according to the journalist's perception of professional need for, and personal satisfaction with, Instagram's specific culture of interaction, its vernacular communication practices, and professional and personal communication outcomes. This is important to establish how journalistic practices are negotiated within Instagram's visual cultures, and the consequences for changing practices on production, distribution, and audience reception of news on the site.
9. *How journalists use social media in France and the United States: Analyzing technology use across journalistic fields*, (Powers, et al., 2018). This article examines journalists' use of social media in France and the United States. Through in-depth interviews, we show that shared practical sensibilities lead journalists in both countries to use social media to accomplish routine tasks (e.g. gather information, monitor sources, and develop

story ideas). At the same time, we argue that the incorporation of social media into daily practice also creates opportunities for journalists to garner peer recognition and that these opportunities vary according to the distinctive national fields in which journalists are embedded. Where American journalism incentivizes individual journalists to orient social media use toward audiences, French journalism motivates news organizations to use social media for these purposes, while leaving individual journalists to focus primarily on engaging with their peers. We position these findings in relation to debates on the uses of technologies across national settings.

10. *Political News Journalists in Social Media*, (Rogstad, et al., 2014). Social media allow everyone to show off their personalities and to publicly express opinions and engage in discussions on politicised matters, and as political news journalists engage in social media practices, one might ask if all political news journalists will finally end up as self-promoting political pundits. This study examines the way political news journalists use social media and how these practices might challenge journalistic norms related to professional distance and neutrality. The study uses cluster analysis and detects five user types among political news journalists: the sceptics, the networkers, the two-faced, the openers, and the sparks. The study finds, among other things, a sharp divide between the way political reporters and political commentators use social media. Very few reporters are comfortable sharing political opinions or blurring the boundaries between the personal and the professional, indicating that traditional journalistic norms still stand in political news journalism.
11. *Influx. Journalists' adoption of social media and journalists' social roles*, (Hedman et al., 2019). *Influx* investigates journalists' adoption of social media and social network sites (SNS) from the theoretical perspective of journalistic roles. It shows how the social roles of journalists are situated along the axes of formal personal and news media logic–social media logic: skeptical shunners and activists, lurkers and networkers, news hubs and celebrity's marketers, coordinators and ambassadors, professional marketers and pragmatics, entrepreneurs and journalists in incognito mode. The emergence of social news media logic has implications for journalistic ethics and possibly brings a de-professionalization of journalists. This thesis also shows that social media and SNS had an immediate impact among Swedish journalists and are now regarded as highly valued professional tools. Over time, the initial hype has faded – the general use can now best be described as pragmatic, while the high-end users use social media and SNS strategically for networking, audience dialogue, and personal branding. Journalists' core professional ideals are not affected by the adoption of social media and SNS. The statistical methodological approach applied a mixed design with surveys (cross-sectional and panel data) and content analysis of Twitter data allows for a generalization of the findings to the national population of journalists in Sweden as well as for comparisons between groups of journalists, and shows a way of how to find a representative sample of journalists on Twitter and other SNS and how to make best use of the data collected.
12. *The Journalist on Social Media: Mapping the Promoter, Celebrity and Joker Roles on Twitter and Instagram*, (Mellado, et al., 2024). This study takes an empirical approach to analyze how journalists perform the roles of promoter, celebrity, and joker on social media. These roles already play out in print and broadcast, but much less are known about how they are performed outside of traditional media contexts. This study addresses

this gap in the literature through a content analysis of 4,100 posts by 23 Chilean journalists in 2020 on Twitter and Instagram. The analysis draws on key variables derived from the literature, including front stage and backstage performance, personal context, platform, follower count, gender, and type of parent media organization. Results suggest that Twitter tends to serve as a space for professional performance bounded by established norms and practices, while Instagram tends to offer a space for a more fluid performance beyond the institutional boundaries of the news media. Findings indicate that professional social media contexts are more suited spaces to perform the promoter role, while personal or backstage contexts are more suited for the celebrity and joker roles. Results indicate how journalists take on specific roles on Twitter and Instagram, considering the affordances of these platforms.

13. Don't Tweet This! How journalists and media organizations negotiate tensions emerging from the implementation of social media policy in newsrooms, (Sacco, et al., 2017). Journalistic use of social media for sourcing, distribution and promotion of news comes at a time when the newsroom itself can be said to be in a state of "transition". Previous research about social media and journalism has focused on the transition of journalistic practices to the "social media age", but less attention has been given to the ways in which new workplace relationships might contribute to a social media-enabled newsroom. It is thus important to analyse the policies and procedures different media organizations have implemented to integrate and regulate the use of social media in their newsrooms and how this might impact on news production and dissemination overall. The aim of this paper is to compare and critically analyse social media management policies and procedures in Australian newsrooms, as well as the relations between various editorial staff, to manage its introduction into journalistic practice. Based on 25 qualitative research interviews with editors, social media managers and news media staff from major Australian media companies, this study also reflects more broadly on the potential conflicts created by the regulation of social media use in newsrooms and how various personnel respond to them.
14. Reclaiming Control: How Journalists Embrace Social Media Logics While Defending Journalistic Values, (Walters, et al., 2022). This article uses semi-structured, in-depth qualitative interviews with journalists at 16 US newspapers to examine how strategies for sharing news content and interacting with audiences on platforms have evolved over the past decade. Using a lens of Gatekeeping Theory, the study analyzes the approaches and techniques used by journalists to distribute content and engage with audiences on platforms and how those approaches have changed since the beginning of the social media era. Its findings show journalists initially relied on traditional journalistic instincts and used somewhat haphazard approaches when sharing and interacting on platforms. Over time, the findings show, journalists' approaches became more strategic based much more on social media logics than just journalistic instinct, with heavy emphasis on algorithms and audience metrics. The study also provides evidence that, even as they have ceded some gatekeeping authority to platforms and adjusted to social media logics, journalists continue to defend traditional journalistic values of speed, objectivity and fairness. It also shows newspapers trying to regain some control over their content, through the implementation of pay walls and prioritization of their own websites. But, overall, the study offers evidence that US newspapers have embraced platforms in their

15. Emerging Journalistic Verification Practices Concerning Social Media, (Brandtzaeg, et al., 2016). The verification of social media content and sources are increasingly critical to journalists and news organisations. In this study, we report on findings from qualitative interviews conducted with 24 journalists working with social media in major news organisations in Europe. Our findings contribute to new knowledge on journalists' social media working practices. We find that social media content are often used as the primary news source, and journalists use several different verification strategies to verify social media content and sources. Journalists are also found to have various competences in verifying social media content, in particular visual content. Moreover, our study suggests user requirements for future innovations in tools to support the verification of social media content. To avoid trade-offs between verification and fast-paced publishing, journalists will need efficient and easy-to-use support both in the verification process and in structuring and organizing an overwhelming amount of social media content.
16. Journalist social media practice in China: A review and synthesis, (Jian, et al., 2018). The growing influence of social media on journalistic work has attracted scholarly attention worldwide in recent years. However, due to cultural and language barriers, we lack comprehensive understanding of the journalist social media practice in non-Western countries. To help fill this gap, this study offers a review and synthesis of existing scholarship on journalist social media practice in China. The authors systematically analyzed recent research studies published in both English-language journals in the West and Chinese-language journals in Mainland China. Drawing on Bourdieu's field theory, the synthesis provided a comprehensive review of the patterns of practice as well as key tensions that social media use helped amplify and with which Chinese journalists had to contend.
17. When Journalists Tweet: Disclosure, Participatory, and Personal Transparency, (Hedman, et al., 2016). This article analyses transparency among groups of journalists by examining journalists' tweets. It also answers a call from previous researchers on transparency on Twitter for further studies based on more representative samples of journalists. The study draws on a quantitative content analysis of Swedish journalists' tweets during 1 week in spring 2014. The total number of tweets analyzed (N) is 1,500. A total of 24% of the journalists' tweets can be described as being explicitly transparent. However, the findings indicate that while journalists on Twitter indeed discuss how the news are produced (disclosure transparency), they show less personal transparency, and hardly ever invite the audiences to interact or take part in the process of making news (participatory transparency)
18. How source-level and message-level factors influence journalists' social media visibility during a public health crisis (Zhang, et al., 2022). Social media has become a channel through which journalists distribute their work, reach audiences and gain visibility. Informed by the frameworks of journalistic branding, the heuristic-systematic model, and hyper textual elements, the present study examines the extent to which the source factor (journalists' branding on social media profiles) and message factors (communication styles and hyper textual elements) influence visibility (i.e. the popularity of the account and the number of favorites and retweets of the posts). We

analyzed the Twitter profiles of 98 health journalists from seven major media organizations in the US and conducted a manual content analysis of a representative sample of their public tweets (n = 3982) published during the Covid-19 pandemic. In contrast to expectations, branding contributed little to any indicators of visibility, and profiles with institutional branding had fewer followers. Both affective messages and rational messages received more likes and retweets than messages without these elements. Tweets containing images or news-related hyperlinks received more retweets, whereas the number of @mentions in a tweet was negatively related to visibility. Journalists from traditional media, those who tweeted more often, and those with more followers had higher levels of visibility.

19. How Journalists and Social Media Users Perceive Online Fact-Checking and Verification Services, (Brandtzaeg, et al., 2018) While services for fact-checking and verification to counter fake news in social media have increased, little research has investigated how journalists and the public perceive such services. This study reflects the outcomes of REVEAL, a three-year European Union research project investigating the use and impact of services for fact-checking and verification. Based on interviews with 32 young journalists and content analysis of social media users' online conversations, we contribute new knowledge about the ways that journalists and social media users perceive online fact-checking and verification services. The findings suggest that, while young journalists were largely unfamiliar with or ambivalent about such services, they judged them as potentially useful in the investigative journalistic process. Yet, they were unwilling to rely exclusively on these tools for fact-checking and verification. A comparison of journalists' perceptions with those of social media users reveals social media users are similarly ambivalent. Some accentuated the usefulness of such services, while others expressed strong distrust. However, the journalists displayed a more nuanced perspective, both seeing these services as potentially useful and being reluctant to blindly trust a single service. Design strategies to make online fact-checking and verification services more useful and trustworthy are suggested.
20. 'I don't engage': Online communication and social media use among New Zealand journalists (Neilson, et al., 2018). Social media, comment threads, and other means of online communication are important to journalists' work processes, but expand their workload and pose challenges to their professional identity. The concept of 'engagement' is used by news workers in New Zealand to describe the role of digitally mediated communication in their work. Engagement deserves scholarly treatment akin to concepts such as 'participatory journalism' because it is employed by journalists to place professional and practical limits on online interaction. Their decisions about engagement are based on professional commitments, past experiences, and the allocation of time and resources. Journalists in newsrooms that are already understaffed and under-resourced are expected to take on new tasks; like other digital laborers, journalists experience the interpenetration of work and leisure and the incorporation of affective and unpaid work. News workers have an opportunity to develop best practices for engagement and determine how and when they should engage online.
21. How Journalists Source Trending Social Media Feeds, (Bouvier, et al., 2019). Media scholars have called for more research to understand the consequences of news outlets becoming increasingly reliant on social media for sourcing stories, and how this is

changing the nature of news and the role of the journalist. This also has high relevance for the Critical Discourse Analyst as regards processes of attributing the nature of ideology, where there is a shift away from stories derived from elite sources and official organizations. Using a sample of 26 news stories and a corpus of 40,000 tweets from a feed called #twowomentravel, which dealt with the journey of two women travelling from Ireland to the United Kingdom for an abortion, this paper uses Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis to investigate how the discourses from the feed are taken up by the journalists. Findings show an erosion of some of the basic former aspects of journalistic practice related to verification and provision of context as what is “trending” becomes a news definer. Yet those with the skills to understand how it is integrated into news production may use this to disseminate their own ideology.

22. Digital Gumshoes, Investigative journalists’ use of social media in television news reporting, (Abdenour, et al., 2017). Investigative reporting is valued by consumers and journalists and is vital to a healthy democracy. However, it is a resource- and time-intensive practice that is often seen as financially inefficient. With resources dwindling at local US television stations, investigative news may be suffering. This article analyzes empirically whether social media websites help investigative reporters to do their jobs more efficiently, as has been suggested by critics and researchers. A survey (N = 165) indicated that a large majority of local television investigative journalists use social media as part of their regular newsgathering routine. When this project’s results were compared to similar surveys, data revealed that a significantly greater proportion of television investigative reporters were using social media to interact with the public, to generate story ideas, and to help produce stories, compared to other types of reporters. Yet this high rate of usage did not translate into increased investigative productivity. There was no association between greater social media use and greater investigative production, and investigative reporters at resource-poor stations mostly did not report higher levels of social networking. The findings suggest that social media practices have become common among television investigative journalists, but that traditional newsgathering methods still persist.
23. Routinizing Facebook: How Journalists’ Role Conceptions Influence their Social Media Use for Professional Purposes in a Socialist-Communist Country (Vu, et al., 2020)., Surveying journalists in Vietnam, a socialist-communist country, this study attempts to bring insights into the effects of digital platforms on newsroom practices. Specifically, it looks at how journalists from mainstream news media organizations routinize the use of Facebook for various professional purposes. Additionally, this research examines journalists’ role conceptions and how these values influence news workers’ use of Facebook. Its findings show that journalists in this Southeast Asian country are embracing Facebook in their reporting, understanding audience, and branding. Results also indicate that the two important predictors of journalists’ Facebook use for work are the interpretive and populist-mobilizer functions of the news media. Theoretical implications of those findings are discussed in the context of a socialist-communist media system.
24. Journalists on Twitter: self-branding, audiences, and involvement of bots, (Varol, et al., 2020) Spread of news and misinformation on social networks has been a topic of extensive study in the recent years. There are concerns about the possibility of ongoing

information operations, which has led to studies on a wide scope including the truthfulness of content and the participation of social bots in the process. Studying how online entities of journalists is embedded in the Twitter network is crucial for understanding the core of this problem, since they hold a valuable broadcast platform in informing the public. In this work, we collected over 290,000 accounts that self-identify as a journalist or a reporter and analyzed their professional and follower networks on the platform. Twitter follower composition of journalists reflects their potential audiences and who disseminates their messages further on the network. It is essential for a journalist to reach a broad, organic readership as opposed to a following of bots and bot-assisted accounts. We looked at the followers of journalists for an analysis of the composition and evolution of their audiences, particularly looking out for social bot involvement. We found the trends for verified and non-verified accounts to be opposite of each other; among verified accounts bot follower tend to target more popular ones, whereas unverified accounts have a higher fraction of bot followers early on when they have fewer followers, possibly indicating attempts at boosting apparent popularity artificially. Outcomes of this research emphasize the importance of editorial oversight and that the prestige of journalists should not be confused with their apparent popularity online.

25. Views from Journalists: Social Media Practice in Malaysian Newsrooms, (Kumar, et al., 2025). Social media has transformed the world of journalism and opened up channels for greater communication between journalists and news organisations with the public. This research aims to identify the perception of Malaysian journalists on the use of social media in the newsrooms. In addition, the research discusses the use of social media in the journalistic practice of Malaysian newsrooms. Snowball sampling was adopted for in-depth interviews with journalists from various Malaysian news organisations. Findings suggest that the majority of Malaysian journalists view the adoption of social media positively as a medium to engage with the audience of the news organisation. While social media algorithm has their benefits, journalists expressed concerns over its technology that could lead to an invasion of privacy and confirmation bias. Finally, findings suggest that though social media adoption in newsrooms is seen as beneficial in many aspects of journalistic work, journalists are cautious about adopting its technology due to ethical concerns. This signifies the awareness of media literacy among journalists interviewed. This study addresses the lack of non-Western literature on social media newsroom practices. It contributes to the literature on newsroom practice in Malaysia and social media practice among journalists in nations of the South.
26. Is Twitter a useful tool for journalists? (Ahmad, et al., 2010). This article is a critical reflection on the question of whether Twitter is a useful tool for journalists, based on close observation of The Guardian. It begins with a practice-based anthropology. Focusing on coverage of the G20 protests and other activities in 2009, it demonstrates that Twitter is a useful marketing and research tool for newspaper websites one that supplements the traditional role of journalists as investigators and providers of timely information on news events. The article then adopts a cultural materialist or Gramsci an framework in which journalism's role in relation to the dominant ideology of contemporary capitalism is considered. In particular, it scrutinizes the hegemonic construction of Twitter within media discourse using close textual analysis of journalistic reports and features. Perhaps an equally important question to the one posed in the title,

the article concludes, is whether or not journalism will become a useful 'tool' for Twitter.

Commentary on Previous Studies:

Previous studies focused on journalists' reliance on Facebook or Twitter, generally highlighting the nature of journalistic practices on these networks. Some studies aimed to assess journalists' awareness of regulations, policies, and procedures related to publishing their content on social media through their personal accounts. However, most prior studies did not differentiate between specific social networks but rather discussed social media platforms in general, despite the fact that these networks vary in their characteristics for presenting and delivering content to the public. (Paul et al., 1993), the researcher benefited from previous studies in selecting the most suitable methodology for this study, and in precisely defining the study problem, objectives, questions, and hypotheses.

Type of Research

This study belongs to the descriptive research category, which goes beyond merely collecting data about the studied phenomenon. It also involves classifying, interpreting, analyzing, and extracting useful conclusions and implications. The study aims to describe and analyze current facts related to a phenomenon or a set of events to obtain accurate information and data. This type of research allows for quantitative measurement and thus generalization and prediction. It does so by monitoring the attitudes of communication practitioners in Saudi newspapers toward their professional practices on social media, attempting to scientifically interpret these facts accurately.

Methodology

The study relied on the survey method, considered an organized scientific effort that helps obtain data and information about the studied phenomenon. The researcher used the field survey approach on a sample of Saudi journalists, employing both descriptive and analytical approaches to test the study's questions and hypotheses. Additionally, the study used the correlational research method to identify the strength and dimensions of the relationships between research variables. The researcher utilized this method to collect the necessary data for organizing, describing, and analyzing the facts related to monitoring the attitudes of communication practitioners in Saudi newspapers toward their professional practices on social media, from the journalists' perspective.

Study Population and Sample:

The study population consists of Saudi journalists working in Saudi newspapers, whether electronic or print, or other media outlets such as Saudi television or radio stations.

Data Collection Tool: In light of the study problem and its questions, an electronic questionnaire was used as the main tool to collect the necessary information from the respondents. The questionnaire was designed via Google Forms, and the link was distributed and responses collected during April 2024 to reach the largest possible segment of journalists across all regions of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The questionnaire consisted of the following sections:

1. **Section One:** Measures the level of interest of the study sample in social media accounts.
2. **Section Two:** Measures the professional practice of journalists on their accounts through their evaluation of overall professional performance on journalists' social media

accounts.

3. **Section Three:** Dedicated to identifying the perceptions of the study sample regarding the organizational dimensions, policies, and procedures followed by their newspapers and other media outlets.
4. **Section Five:** Included questions on general information (demographic data of respondents) such as gender, age, marital status, educational level, occupation, and income level.

First: Validity and Reliability:

Validity Test: To verify the validity of the tool, ensuring it indeed measures what it was designed for, the researcher used face validity (expert validation). The questionnaire, along with the research problem, objectives, and questions, was presented to a number of specialized judges and experts in the field of media and communication. Items with at least 90% agreement among the judges were retained. The researcher then revised and reconstructed some main and sub-categories of the questionnaire according to the feedback from the judges and finalized the wording. The number of questionnaire questions was reduced to seven. Then, the researcher designed the questionnaire on Google Forms and distributed it electronically to the sample members.

Internal Consistency Validity: Correlation coefficients were calculated between the score of each dimension of the questionnaire and the total questionnaire score to assess the degree of correlation of each dimension with the total score, thus verifying the questionnaire's validity. This is shown in the following table.

Subscales Constituting the Questionnaire	Correlation Coefficient	Significance Level
Legal and Regulatory Framework in Professional Practice on Social Media Accounts	0.814**	Significant at 0.001
Values in Professional Practice on Social Media Accounts	0.591**	Significant at 0.001
Loyalty in Professional Practice on Social Media Accounts	0.800**	Significant at 0.001
Interactivity with Readers on Social Media Accounts	0.717**	Significant at 0.001
Sample Members' Evaluation of Journalists' Accounts on Social Media Networks	0.595**	Significant at 0.001

Table (1) Correlation coefficients between the total score for each subscale and the overall questionnaire score

It is evident from the previous table that the dimensions of the questionnaire have strong and statistically significant correlation coefficients at a significance level less than 0.05. The correlation coefficients for the questionnaire domains ranged between (0.591 and 0.814), which is sufficient evidence that the questionnaire enjoys a high validity coefficient.

Secondly: Reliability of the Instruments

The reliability coefficient of the questionnaire (the study tool) was calculated on a sample consisting of (5) items using Cronbach's Alpha method for reliability estimation. The Cronbach's Alpha equation relies on the variances of the scale items and requires that the test items measure only one characteristic. Therefore, the reliability coefficient was calculated separately for each dimension, then the overall reliability coefficient for the entire questionnaire was calculated. The SPSS statistical program was used to compute the reliability coefficients, and it was found that the Cronbach's Alpha value for the entire scale is (0.841), which is sufficient evidence of the reliability of the questionnaire form and its suitability for application.

Domain	Alpha Value
Legal and Regulatory Framework in Professional Practice on Social Media Accounts	0.710
Values in Professional Practice on Social Media Accounts	0.645
Loyalty in Professional Practice on Social Media Accounts	0.697
Interactivity with Readers on Social Media Accounts	0.718
Sample Members' Evaluation of Journalists' Accounts on Social Media Networks	0.704
Overall Questionnaire Score	0.841

Table (2): Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Coefficient for the Questionnaire Dimensions and the Total Score

Reliability of the Questionnaire:

The data in the previous table indicate the reliability coefficients (Cronbach's alpha) for the responses of the sample members, ranging between 0.645 and 0.718, which suggests that the questionnaire is reliable. Additionally, the overall Cronbach's alpha value for the entire questionnaire confirms its stability and its ability to measure what it was designed to measure.

Statistical Data Analysis:

After completing the data collection for the study, the data were coded and entered into a computer. The data were then processed, analyzed, and statistical results were extracted using the SPSS program (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences). The following statistical methods and tests were employed:

1. Simple frequencies and percentages.
2. Arithmetic mean and standard deviation.
3. Relative weight, which can be calculated by multiplying the mean by 100 and dividing by the number of scale items.

Spearman Rank Correlation Coefficient: This coefficient is used to measure the strength and direction of the correlation between two ordinal variables or between two categorical/interval variables that do not meet the assumptions of normal distribution or linear relationship. This measure is appropriate when data are not normally distributed or contain outliers. The relationship is considered weak if the coefficient is less than 0.30, moderate if between 0.30 and

0.70, and strong if above 0.70, regardless of positive or negative direction.

Kruskal-Wallis Test: This is a non-parametric statistical test used to compare more than two independent groups when the assumptions of normal distribution or homogeneity of variance are not met. It relies on rank analysis instead of raw data and is used to determine if there are statistically significant differences between the mean ranks of the groups. The results of statistical tests were accepted at a confidence level of 95% or higher, at a significance level of 0.05 or less.

Theoretical Framework of the Study

Professional practices in the media field emphasize the media's duty towards social responsibility by highlighting the importance of media work based on its ethics in shaping public opinion, reinforcing social values, and prevailing community attitudes. This is embodied in the theoretical determinants of professional media practice, whereby media professionals commit to professional and ethical standards in their work, providing objective and accurate information that serves the public interest and contributes to community development. This theory also stresses the importance of professional independence, objectivity, and credibility in media coverage while avoiding bias, discrimination, and respecting the rights of individuals and groups (Al-Laithi, 2021).

The concept of social responsibility of the media is among the most important principles underlying the theory of professional practice. From this perspective, media is a social institution responsible for serving society and fulfilling its informational, cultural, and entertainment needs (Negm, 2020), according to specific standards ensuring credibility, accuracy in transmitting, criticizing, and analyzing information and news, alongside respecting individuals' rights and privacy. It requires objectivity and neutrality in media coverage, avoiding bias and discrimination, adherence to ethical professional standards such as maintaining confidentiality, integrity, avoiding conflicts of interest, and contributing to spreading knowledge, culture, and positive values in society. These standards also emphasize the importance of professional independence of journalists from external political, economic, or other pressures that might limit their ability to perform their role freely and responsibly. Additionally, achieving balance and neutrality in covering various events and issues through accuracy and objectivity by providing confirmed information from reliable sources and contributing to community development and reinforcing positive values (Final Journalist Pact for Strengthening Civil Peace, 2024; Negm, 2020; Shahid, 2023).

A study conducted by the University of Cambridge confirmed the importance of these professional and ethical standards in the media for enhancing public trust and contributing to the social and cultural development of media (Negm, 2020). This is achieved through the social role of the media and its responsibility towards the audience, based on the premise that media is not merely a source of entertainment but a social institution with a fundamental role in shaping public opinion and promoting prevalent values and attitudes in society (Al-Tayea, 2022).

Summary of the Key Components of the Theory of Professional Practice in Media

The theory emphasizes journalists' commitment to professional standards, which include professional independence, social responsibility, and self-regulation, alongside adherence to ethical and professional standards such as credibility and objectivity in free media coverage without any pressures or practices that limit the freedom of information transmission to the audience. It also requires avoiding bias and discrimination and respecting the rights of individuals

This theory has attracted significant attention from researchers and scholars in media and communication. In 1956, Devlin Code presented a report on the social responsibility of media, highlighting the importance of professional practice in media towards society and the necessity of commitment to professional and ethical standards. Later, in 1980, Bernard Cohen developed the theory of professional practice in media, emphasizing that journalists are responsible for providing accurate and objective information to the public. According to Cohen, the role of journalists is not limited to merely transmitting information but also includes crafting the necessary interpretations and analyses to understand various issues and events, contributing to community development and reinforcing positive values (Shahid, 2023). In light of this discussion, it can be said that the theory of professional practice in media rests on the importance of journalists adhering to ethical and professional standards in their duties to serve the public interest and support social and cultural development.

The media practice of journalists on their social media accounts is generally freer and more spontaneous compared to the official accounts of the media institutions they work for. Studies indicate that this freedom has granted greater liberty in professional media practice. However, this freedom sometimes exceeds limits, leading journalists to practices that deviate from their social and professional roles and from journalistic ethics. This is especially true in spaces where full regulation through laws and professional codes remains a challenge and is subject to interpretation.

Some studies also indicate that, although the theory of professional practice emphasizes the responsibility of media professionals.

Continuation of the Theory of Professional Practice in Media

Despite emphasizing the responsibility of media professionals towards society and their contribution to developing positive values and advancing cultural and social progress, the theory has faced some criticisms. It is argued that it places large social and ethical responsibilities on the media, which may conflict with market demands and profitability. Some critics say this theory restricts freedom of expression and imposes constraints on the media, limiting its ability to perform its critical role in certain social practices (Negm, 2020).

Some critics also believe that the theory focuses too much on the role of individual journalists, neglecting the role of media institutions in shaping media practices. Others argue that the theory overlooks the influence of economic and political factors on media practice and ignores the fact that media institutions ultimately face market pressures that heavily rely on influence and delivering attractive content. Additionally, it underestimates the significant role of political power in any country, especially developing nations (Alghamdi & Plunkett, 2021).

Moreover, some argue that the theory assumes the existence of universal and unified professional and ethical standards, while these standards vary across societies and cultures. Media institutions may adopt different standards depending on the context they operate in and the audience they target (Obong & SENAM, 2024).

Despite these criticisms, the theory of professional practice in media remains crucial for understanding the media's role in society. It highlights the importance of journalists' adherence to professional and ethical standards and their accountability to the public for the information they provide, especially that which is significant for shaping public opinion on important issues

(Oso et al., 2024). The theory also stresses the importance of journalists' independence and freedom to express their views and the necessity of providing a healthy media work environment that respects their rights and protects their interests. This environment contributes to enhancing the media's role in community development and reinforcing positive values (Shahid, 2023).

Based on this, it can be said that the theory of professional practice in media represents an important theoretical framework for understanding the role of media and professional media practice in society. However, it requires further development and updating to account for the changes witnessed in today's media landscape, the emergence of new media, and the increasing influence of economic and political factors on media practice (Sobaih et al., 2022)

Study Results

First: Characteristics of the Study Sample

Variables	Categories	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Female	16	16.0
	Male	84	84.0
	Total	100	100.0
Age	25-36	14	14.0
	36-45	44	44.0
	45 and above	42	42.0
	Total	100	100.0
Household Income Level	5,000 – less than 10,000 SAR	14	14.0
	10,000 – less than 15,000 SAR	32	32.0
	More than 15,000 SAR	54	54.0
	Total	100	100.0
Educational Level	High School or Equivalent	8	8.0
	Diploma	14	14.0
	Bachelor's Degree	54	54.0
	Postgraduate Studies	24	24.0
	Total	100	100.0
Type of Media Institution	Radio Station	4	4.0
	Television Station	14	14.0
	Online-only Media (No Print)	37	37.0
	Print or Print-Origin Media	45	45.0
	Total	100	100.0
Nature of Journalistic Work	Photographer	8	8.0
	Deputy Editor	10	10.0
	Editor-in-Chief	13	13.0

	Managing Editor	16	16.0
	Desk Editor	20	20.0
	Reporter	33	33.0
	Total	100	100.0

The sample distribution according to demographic characteristics is shown in Table (3)

Data from Table (3) indicates that the majority of the sample are males at 84%, while females represent only 16%. The age groups are distributed as follows: 36–45 years at 44%, followed by the 45 years and above group at 42%, while the 25–36 years group comes last at 14%. This reflects the predominance of middle-aged and older age groups in the field of journalistic practice within the sample.

Regarding income levels, the highest proportion was for the income category of more than 15,000 Saudi Riyals, which accounted for 54%, followed by the 10,000 to less than 15,000 Riyals category at 32%, and then the 5,000 to less than 10,000 Riyals category at 14%. This indicates a relatively high economic status among most of the journalists participating in the study. Concerning educational level, university education was the most common at 54%, followed by postgraduate studies at 24%, then diplomas at 14%, and finally high school or equivalent at 8%. This reflects a high academic orientation among most respondents.

As for the nature of the media institution, printed or print-origin electronic newspapers led with 45%, followed by electronic platforms without a print origin at 37%, then television stations at 14%, and finally radio stations at 4%. This indicates diversity in the institutions employing the journalists, with traditional press institutions being dominant.

Regarding the nature of journalistic work, the category of reporters ranked first at 33%, followed by desk editors at 20%, then editors-in-chief at 16%. The categories of editors-in-chief, deputy editors-in-chief, and photographers came in lower proportions of 13%, 10%, and 8% respectively. This reflects the diversity of roles among communication professionals in the sample, with a focus on field and editorial tasks.

Second: General Results (Descriptive Statistics of Study Variables):

1. Type of content that the sample members are keen to cover and publish on their personal social media accounts:

Content Type	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Social	53	53.0
Educational	13	13.0
Political	10	10.0
Sports	8	8.0
Entertainment	6	6.0
Economic	6	6.0
Cultural	4	4.0
Total	100	100.0

Table (4) Type of content that sample members are keen to cover and publish on their personal social media accounts

This reflects a prominent orientation towards engaging with societal issues and problems, and perhaps indicates the respondents' awareness of their professional role in building bridges of communication with the public regarding public affairs. Educational content ranked second with 13%, indicating a decent interest in spreading knowledge and contributing to community awareness through personal channels, especially in light of the modern media's trends toward educational and digital literacy functions.

Political content received 10% interest, surpassing sports content, which accounted for only 8%. This may reflect a relative lack of interest among some journalists in engaging politically on digital platforms or their preoccupation with issues more related to the social function of the media. In contrast, economic and entertainment content each received only 6%, which is a modest percentage considering their popularity among general users. This might suggest that communication professionals prefer to focus their efforts on areas with more professional or societal impact, or that entertainment aspects in Saudi society are available on digital platforms different from those on which journalists operate in Saudi media institutions.

Cultural content ranked lowest with only 4%, raising questions about the decline in interest in highlighting cultural components in personal media accounts, despite their role in preserving identity and enhancing belonging.

Statement	Never	Sometimes	Always	Weighted Mean	Standard Deviation	Relative Weight (%)
I am familiar with the publishing rules (terms and conditions) of social media platforms	0	23	77	2.77	0.423	92.3
I make sure not to show my personal biases in the news I publish on my personal social media accounts	14	27	59	2.45	0.730	81.7
I receive instructions from my workplace regarding my media coverage on my personal social media accounts	27	42	31	2.04	0.764	68
I use the journalistic archive of the institution I work for to publish news content on my personal account without prior permission	46	32	22	1.76	0.793	58.7

I sometimes interact with the audience through an anonymous personal account	54	18	28	1.74	0.872	58
Sample Size	100					

The data in Table 5 reflect a high level of professional awareness among Saudi journalists regarding the legal rules related to the use of social media networks. The results showed that the statement “I am familiar with the publishing rules (terms and conditions) of social media platforms” recorded the highest weighted mean of 2.77 with a standard deviation of 0.432 and a high relative weight of 92.3%, indicating a strong awareness among journalists of the importance of adhering to the laws regulating digital content.

The statement “I make sure not to show my personal biases in the news I publish on my personal account” also showed a good degree of professional commitment, with a weighted mean of 2.45 and a relative weight of 81.7%. This reflects a general tendency to maintain professional neutrality in media presentation within the digital space, avoiding the inclusion of personal opinions in the professional practice of news reporting via journalists’ personal accounts.

Conversely, the statement “I receive instructions from my workplace regarding my media coverage on my personal account” ranked lower, with a weighted mean of 2.04 and a relative weight of 68%. This may indicate variability in regulatory policies among media institutions or weakness in the institutional framework guiding journalists’ behavior on digital platforms. This reduces the likelihood of institutional affiliation among journalists, making their personal account work quite separate from official institutional work, thereby decreasing loyalty and affiliation to their media organizations. However, this may also signal professional independence of journalists from external political, economic, or other pressures that could limit their ability to perform their role freely and responsibly. This independence helps achieve balance and neutrality in covering events and issues through accuracy and objectivity in information delivery, providing verified information from reliable sources, and contributing to community development and the promotion of positive values.

The statements “I use the journalistic archive of the institution I work for to publish news content on my personal account without prior permission” and “I sometimes interact with the audience through an anonymous personal account” recorded the lowest weighted means (1.76 and 1.74, respectively) with relatively low weights of 58.7% and 58%. This reflects implicit rejection of such practices that may be considered violations of professional rules or ethical breaches in journalistic work. Conversely, the lack of use of the institutional archive, especially without official approvals, confirms the previous result of weak affiliation and loyalty to the newspapers or media institutions they work for.

Statements	Never	Sometimes	Always	Weighted Mean	Standard Deviation	Relative Weight (%)
I make sure to deliver information with high credibility even if it costs me losing the scoop	0	6	94	2.94	0.239	98
I make sure not to show my personal biases in the news I publish on my personal social media accounts	7	21	72	2.65	0.609	88.3
I include my personal opinion in the news I publish on my personal social media accounts	28	46	26	1.98	0.738	66
Total sample	100					

Table (6) Values in Professional Practice on Social Media Accounts from the Perspective of the Sample Individuals

The data in Table 6 reflect a strong commitment by Saudi journalists to professional values in the context of using their personal social media accounts. The statement “I make sure to deliver information with high credibility even if it costs me losing the scoop” recorded the highest weighted mean of 2.94, with a low standard deviation of 0.239 and a very high relative weight of 98%. This clearly expresses the majority of respondents’ adherence to the highest standards of professional honesty, even at the expense of breaking news first, reflecting a high level of ethical awareness.

Similarly, the statement “I make sure not to show my personal biases in the news I publish on my personal account” showed a professional tendency to maintain neutrality and objectivity, with a weighted mean of 2.65, a standard deviation of 0.609, and a relative weight of 88.3%. This indicates that a large proportion of journalists strive to separate personal opinion from professional content. On the other hand, the statement “I include my personal opinion in the news I publish on my personal account” recorded a relatively low weighted mean of 1.98, a standard deviation of 0.738, and a relative weight of 66%, suggesting that more than half of the sample tend not to include their personal opinions in published news, preferring to maintain professional distance from the content they present. However, a considerable portion (46%) indicated that they do so sometimes, suggesting some room for personal judgment in practice.

Overall, the results confirm that professional values related to credibility and neutrality still hold a prominent place among Saudi journalists in the digital publishing environment. However, some practices related to personal opinion show relative variation, which may require strengthening

digital editorial policies and training media professionals to balance individual freedom with professional responsibility.

Statements	Never	Sometimes	Always	Weighted Mean	Standard Deviation	Relative Weight
I make sure to publish media content on my account that aligns with my journalistic interests in the media institution I work for	8	23	69	2.61	0.634	87.0%
%	8.0	23.0	69.0			
I interact with posts on the media institution's account I work for (reposting, liking, sharing links, quoting...)	12	23	65	2.53	0.703	84.3%
%	12.0	23.0	65.0			
I reflect the instructions and editorial policy of the institution I work for on my personal social media account	18	22	60	2.42	0.781	80.7%
%	18.0	22.0	60.0			
I rely on my personal social media account to market the content published under my name on the media institution's website	12	39	49	2.37	0.691	79.0%
%	12.0	39.0	49.0			
I make sure to coordinate with my workplace when I obtain information from my own sources before publishing it on my personal account	23	28	49	2.26	0.812	75.3%
%	23.0	28.0	49.0			
I rush to publish content obtained from my private sources on my	39	30	31	1.92	0.837	64.0%

personal account before my media institution						
%	39.0	30.0	31.0			

Table (7) Loyalty in Professional Practice on Social Media Accounts from the Perspective of the Sample Individuals

The data in Table (7) reflect a relatively high level of professional loyalty among Saudi journalists to their media institutions when using their personal social media accounts. The statement "I make sure to publish media content on my account that aligns with my journalistic interests in the media institution I work for" ranked highest, with a weighted mean of 2.61, a standard deviation of 0.634, and a relative weight of 87%, indicating a strong alignment between journalists' professional orientations and what they publish on their personal accounts. This is a positive indicator of consistency between personal journalistic identity and the editorial line of the institution.

The statement "I interact with posts on the media institution's account I work for (reposting, liking, sharing links, quoting...)" showed clear loyalty, with a mean of 2.53 and a relative weight of 84.3%, suggesting that most journalists actively support their institutions' content through their personal accounts, reflecting a form of professional integration. Similarly, the statement "I reflect the instructions and editorial policy of the institution I work for on my personal social media account" scored a mean of 2.42 and a relative weight of 80.7%, indicating a notable commitment to applying editorial policy, despite slight variations among journalists in the degree of adherence.

The statement "I rely on my personal social media account to market the content published under my name on the media institution's website" received a mean of 2.37 and a relative weight of 79%, showing a strong tendency among journalists to use their accounts as professional tools to enhance the reach of their journalistic output.

On the other hand, the statement "I coordinate with my workplace when I obtain information from my own sources before publishing it on my personal account" had a lower mean of 2.26 and a relative weight of 75.3%, suggesting a possible organizational gap between individual work and institutional work, or perhaps a lack of clear coordination mechanisms in some institutions.

The statement with the lowest loyalty score was "I rush to publish content obtained from my private sources on my personal account before my media institution," with a low mean of 1.92, a standard deviation of 0.837, and a relative weight of 64%. This reflects a tendency among some journalists to prioritize personal gains over the institution, which may represent an organizational weakness or competition for exclusive scoops, potentially disrupting professional balance.

These results indicate that professional loyalty among journalists on social media generally aligns to some extent with their institutions, especially when the relationship between the journalist and the media institution is strong. Conversely, the reciprocal loyalty from the institution towards journalists was less apparent in professional practice. This suggests that media institutions have not significantly sought to earn journalists' loyalty, with some individual behaviors emerging that may require further institutional regulation and guidance, particularly in situations involving exclusive publishing and coordination with editorial management.

Statements	Never	Sometimes	Always	Weighted Mean	Standard Deviation	Relative Weight (%)
I interact with readers on my personal social media account.	4	40	56	2.52	0.577	84.0
I interact with readers when they comment on content published on my institution's account.	8	54	38	2.30	0.611	76.7
I receive clarifications from readers about the content published on my personal account.	8	72	20	2.12	0.518	70.7
I make sure to interact with the audience through an anonymous/pseudonymous personal account.	49	26	25	1.76	0.830	58.7

Table (8) Interactivity with Readers on Social Media Accounts from the Perspective of the Sample Individuals

The data in Table (8) indicates that interaction with the audience represents an important aspect of Saudi journalists' professional practice through their personal social media accounts, although the forms and levels of this interaction vary. The statement "I interact with readers on my personal social media account" received the highest weighted mean of 2.52, with a standard deviation of 0.577 and a relative weight of 84%, reflecting a strong commitment by the majority of journalists to direct communication with the public via their own platforms, enhancing the building of personal and professional interactive relationships.

The statement "I interact with readers when they comment on content published on my institution's account" ranked second, with a mean of 2.30 and a relative weight of 76.7%, indicating noticeable interest in engaging with institutional content, though to a lesser degree than interaction on personal accounts. This may reflect journalists' greater sense of freedom in engaging on their personal platforms.

The statement "I receive clarifications from readers about the content published on my personal account" scored a weighted mean of 2.12 and a relative weight of 70.7%, demonstrating an ongoing communication based on feedback and critical interaction, although less regularly, as 72% of responses were "sometimes." Conversely, the statement "I make sure to interact with the audience through an anonymous/pseudonymous personal account" ranked lowest, with a weighted mean of 1.76, a relatively high standard deviation of 0.830, and a relative weight of 58.7%. This indicates that most journalists prefer not to interact through anonymous or pseudonymous identities, underscoring a general commitment to professional transparency and authentic identity in communication. Overall, the results confirm that audience interaction is a firmly established part of the digital media practice among the sample individuals, with engagement concentrated more on personal accounts than institutional ones, and conducted within a framework of transparency eschewing the use of anonymous accounts. This fosters greater audience trust in the source and supports building a professional relationship based on

direct dialogue.

Statements	Never	Sometimes	Always	Weighted Mean	Std. Dev.	Relative Weight (%)
The published content considers commitment to societal values	4	45	51	2.47	0.577	82.3
My fellow journalists respect individuals' privacy in reporting	5	48	47	2.42	0.589	80.7
They publish news content including their personal opinions	8	70	22	2.14	0.532	71.3
My fellow journalists focus on breaking news regardless of credibility	21	49	30	2.09	0.712	69.7
I notice inaccuracy in the information shared on journalists' accounts	22	64	14	1.92	0.598	64.0
I notice a lack of neutrality and objectivity in my fellow journalists' presentations	16	76	8	1.92	0.486	64.0

Table (9): Evaluation of Journalists' Social Media Accounts from the Perspective of the Sample Individuals

The data from Table (9) reveals a generally positive yet somewhat critical perception of Saudi journalists' social media practices by their peers.

1. The highest-rated statement, **“The published content considers commitment to societal values,”** received a weighted mean of 2.47 and a relative weight of 82.3%, suggesting that most respondents perceive their colleagues as respectful of social norms and values in their posts.
2. Similarly, the statement **“My fellow journalists respect individuals' privacy in reporting”** garnered a favorable average of 2.42 (80.7%), indicating a general sense of ethical awareness regarding privacy.
3. However, the statement **“They publish news content including their personal opinions”** had a moderate score of 2.14 (71.3%), reflecting a tendency among journalists to sometimes blend personal views with news, which could be seen as controversial given professional norms about objectivity.
4. The perception that **“My fellow journalists focus on breaking news regardless of credibility”** scored 2.09 (69.7%), highlighting a concern that the race for scoops may

occasionally override accuracy, suggesting pressure to prioritize speed over reliability.

5. More critical observations appear in the last two statements. Both **“I notice inaccuracy in the information shared on journalists’ accounts”** and **“I notice a lack of neutrality and objectivity in my fellow journalists’ presentations”** scored equally low at 1.92 (64%). This indicates that a notable portion of the sample perceives deficiencies in accuracy and impartiality in their peers’ social media content. Overall, while there is a commendable commitment to social values and privacy, there remains room for improvement regarding the balance between speed and accuracy, as well as maintaining objectivity in digital journalism among Saudi journalists on social media. The results of Table 9 reflect a relatively balanced evaluation by the sample members regarding the practices of their fellow journalists on social media platforms, highlighting some positive indicators related to respecting societal values, alongside critical observations about neutrality, accuracy, and credibility. The statement “The content they publish respects societal values” ranked highest among positive evaluations, with a weighted average of 2.47, a standard deviation of 0.577, and a relative weight of 82.2%. This indicates a clear awareness among most respondents of a relative commitment by journalists to uphold ethical and cultural values when publishing on digital platforms. Similarly, the statement “My fellow journalists respect individuals’ privacy in reporting” achieved a good average of 2.42 and a relative weight of 80.7%, reflecting a noticeable adherence to professional privacy aspects, despite a significant portion viewing this commitment as not consistent. The statement “They publish news content with their personal opinion added” recorded a weighted average of 2.14 and a relative weight of 71.3%, indicating that most respondents notice a tendency to insert personal opinions into news coverage. This is considered a relative deviation from the standards of professional neutrality, especially as 70% of participants chose “sometimes,” reflecting a recurring but irregular phenomenon. On the other hand, some statements received relatively negative evaluations. Notably, the statement “My fellow journalists care about breaking news regardless of credibility” scored a lower average of 2.09 and a relative weight of 69.7%, revealing a notable concern among respondents about some journalists prioritizing speed over verification and accuracy. The statements “I notice inaccuracies in the information published on journalists’ accounts” and “I notice a lack of neutrality and objectivity in my fellow journalists’ reporting” were at the bottom of the evaluations, both with a weighted average of 1.92 and a relative weight of 64%. This reflects critical perceptions about the absence of some fundamental professional values, such as objectivity and accuracy in digital media performance, possibly indicating a need to review professional standards in interactive environments. Overall, the evaluation shows a balance between apparent adherence to societal and professional values and the existence of individual or systematic practices that are criticized by the journalists themselves, especially regarding neutrality and credibility. This calls for strengthening professional oversight mechanisms and continuous training amid digital transformations.

Platform	1st Place	2nd Place	3rd Place	4th Place	5th Place	6th Place	7th Place	8th Place	9th Place	Weighted Score	Percentage (%)
X (formerly Twitter)	666	80	42	0	10	0	0	8	4	810	18.0
Snapchat	126	264	112	114	20	8	24	8	0	676	15.1
Instagram	18	184	126	132	30	40	18	4	11	563	12.5

TikTok	18	128	126	78	50	76	57	2	2	537	11.9
Telegram	0	32	70	96	165	88	18	16	1	486	10.8
Facebook	18	32	133	96	80	40	6	30	16	451	10.1
LinkedIn	0	48	49	12	90	92	60	32	8	391	8.6
Threads	18	16	0	60	35	24	75	70	13	311	6.9
Blogs	36	16	42	12	20	32	42	30	45	275	6.1
Total		Total weighted score (100)									4500

Table (10) Ranking of Social Media Networks by Sample Individuals Based on Their Commitment to Personal Journalistic Posting

Table (10) reflects the preferential distribution of social media platforms that Saudi journalists tend to use for journalistic publishing through their personal accounts. This is based on the ranking given by the sample individuals for each platform from first to ninth place, along with the calculation of the weighted score for each platform. The platform X (formerly Twitter) clearly topped the rankings, recording the highest weighted percentage of 18%, indicating its dominant position in personal journalistic use, due to the immediate and fast-paced environment it offers for interacting with news. Following X, Snap chat came in second place with a weighted percentage of 15.1%, reflecting its wide daily use, especially among journalists involved in visual reports or informal live coverage. Instagram ranked third with a weighted percentage of 12.5%, indicating journalists' tendency to use it as visual support for content, particularly in reports and photo stories. Ticktack followed in fourth place with a weighted percentage of 11.9%, signaling an increasing reliance by journalists on short visual content to engage audiences, especially among younger or more digitally active groups.

Text-based or institutional platforms ranked lower. Telegram took fifth place (10.8%), ahead of Facebook in sixth place (10.1%), indicating a notable decline in the status of traditional platforms in favor of visual or real-time platforms. LinkedIn fell to seventh place (8.6%), despite its professional importance, showing limited use for daily journalistic publishing. Threads ranked eighth (6.9%) with more appearances in lower ranks, reflecting the platform's novelty and its still limited professional establishment. Lastly, blogs came in ninth and last (6.1%), reflecting a clear decline in the use of this traditional platform type in a journalistic environment dominated by speed and immediate interaction. The results confirm that Saudi journalists prefer platforms that allow rapid interaction and live content broadcasting such as X and Snap chat, while reliance on more stable or formal platforms like blogs and LinkedIn has declined, reflecting fundamental shifts in journalistic publishing behavior within the digital environment.

Third: Hypothesis Test Results

Hypothesis One

There is a statistically significant correlation between the commitment of journalists in Saudi newspapers to their editorial policy and the clarity of media content on those accounts.

Variable	Correlation Coefficient	Direction	Strength	Significance Level	Statistical Significance
Commitment of journalists in Saudi newspapers to their newspapers' editorial policy	0.376*	Positive	Moderate	0.031	0.05

Table (11): Spearman correlation coefficient measuring the relationship between Saudi journalists' commitment to their newspapers' editorial policies and the clarity of media content on their accounts.

The results of Table 11 indicate a statistically significant correlation between Saudi newspaper journalists' commitment to the editorial policy of their newspapers and the clarity of the media content in their accounts. The Spearman correlation coefficient was 0.376, which is significant at the 0.05 level.

Hypothesis Two: There are statistically significant differences in the interaction of Saudi newspaper journalists with what is published on their newspapers' official accounts, attributed to differences in their demographic variables (income level and age).

Variable	N	Kruskal-Wallis Test	Average Rank	Chi-Square (χ^2)	Degrees of Freedom	Significance Level	Significance
Age							
25 to 36	14		40.64	2.996	2	0.224	Not significant
36 to 45	44		49.05				
45 and above	42		55.31				
Family Income							
5,000 – less than 10,000 SAR	14		47.57	0.175	2	0.916	Not significant
10,000 – less than 15,000 SAR	32		51.16				
More than 15,000 SAR	54		50.87				

Table (12) Differences in Saudi Newspaper Journalists' Interaction with Content Published on Their Newspapers' Official Social Media Accounts Attributed to Variations in Their Demographic Variables (Income Level – Age).

The data in Table 12 indicate the following:

1. **There are no statistically significant differences in the interaction of journalists in Saudi newspapers with the content published on their newspapers' official accounts attributed to the age variable.** The Chi-square value was 2.996, which is not statistically significant, as the significance level exceeded the accepted error margin of 0.05 ($p = 0.224$). This means there are no differences between age groups in how journalists interact with the content posted on official newspaper accounts.
2. **There are no statistically significant differences in the interaction of journalists in Saudi newspapers with the content published on their newspapers' official accounts attributed to the family income level variable.** The Chi-square value was 0.175, which is also not statistically significant, with the significance level exceeding the accepted error margin of 0.05 ($p = 0.916$). This means there are no differences between different income levels of the sample members in their interaction with the content published on official newspaper accounts. Therefore, it can be concluded that the variables of age and income level do not significantly affect the interaction of journalists in Saudi newspapers with the content published on their newspapers' official accounts.

Summary of Results and Discussion:

The study aimed to explore the attitudes of communication professionals in Saudi newspapers toward their professional practices on social media platforms. The study sample consisted of 100 Saudi journalists working in various Saudi newspapers and media outlets. A survey methodology was employed, and data were collected through an electronic questionnaire distributed via social media. The study reached several key findings, as outlined below:

1. The majority of the sample consists of middle-aged and older journalists, along with a relatively high economic level among most participants. This reflects a high level of professionalism expected from this group due to their long experience in the field, their advanced educational background, and stable economic conditions, which likely protect them from external political, economic, or other pressures that might limit their ability to perform their roles freely and responsibly.
2. Printed or digital newspapers with a print origin were the primary institutions employing the sample members, followed by digital-only platforms, television stations, and lastly, radio stations. The sample mainly included correspondents first, then desk editors, and editors-in-chief, while chief editors, deputy chief editors, and photographers were fewer. This diversity reflects the varied roles of communication professionals, with a focus on field and editorial tasks. Most participants work in electronic newspapers with print origins, indicating long-standing experience in Saudi journalism. This reflects the ongoing transition from traditional print journalism to digital media, consistent with the first finding.
3. Social content ranked highest among Saudi journalists' interests on social media platforms, reflecting their strong engagement with societal issues and problems. This was followed by educational, political, and lastly, cultural content. This highlights the importance of professional journalistic practices in Saudi Arabia based on social responsibility, as journalists emphasize the ethical role of media in shaping public opinion, reinforcing social values, and reflecting prevailing societal attitudes. This aligns

with the professional practice theory, which emphasizes journalists' adherence to ethical and professional standards by providing objective, accurate information that serves the public interest and contributes to societal development. The theory also stresses independence, objectivity, credibility, and respect for individual and group rights while avoiding bias and discrimination.

4. Saudi journalists demonstrate a high level of professional awareness regarding the legal regulations related to social media use. They generally avoid mixing news with personal opinions, despite some acknowledging they occasionally include opinions in their posts, especially since personal accounts do not represent the media institution. Journalists respect their sources and refrain from exceeding boundaries in sharing information from their newspapers on personal accounts. They show strong commitment to credible news reporting, even if it means sacrificing exclusivity (scoop). These values align with the professional practice theory, which calls for ethical adherence to serve the public good and support social and cultural development. Journalists enjoy greater freedom and flexibility in their personal social media accounts compared to official institutional accounts, yet this study's sample affirms their commitment to ethical professional standards.
5. The results indicate weak coordination between media institutions and journalists regarding news published on personal accounts, leading to weaker loyalty and affiliation with their institutions. Despite this, professional practice theory highlights the importance of journalists' independence from external political, economic, or other pressures that limit their ability to act freely and responsibly. It also stresses the need for balance and neutrality in covering events through accuracy, objectivity, and providing confirmed information from reliable sources, thereby contributing to societal development and reinforcing positive values.
6. Journalists actively post content aligned with their journalistic interests within their media institutions and engage actively with topics published by their institutions. This reflects their commitment to professional practice and social responsibility in all messages directed to the audience.
7. Journalists interact with the public, and some of this interaction involves clarifying content they publish on their accounts. This suggests some shortcomings in professional practice in directly explaining published content, possibly due to the fast-paced nature of the media that limits detail in posts, opening space for questions and requests for clarification. However, this also demonstrates their dedication to their professional responsibilities and mission toward society.
8. The study confirmed that journalists ensure their published content respects community values and the rights of colleagues by verifying sources. According to professional practice theory, these standards ensure social responsibility by respecting individual rights, maintaining privacy, being objective and neutral, avoiding bias and discrimination, and adhering to ethical rules such as confidentiality, integrity, avoiding conflicts of interest, and promoting knowledge, culture, and positive societal values.
9. The platform X (formerly Twitter) ranked first in usage among Saudi journalists due to its widespread presence in Saudi society and its communication and media

characteristics, offering relative freedom and proximity to societal issues, making it a prominent social network for discussing general community topics.

10. A statistically significant positive correlation was found between Saudi journalists' adherence to their newspapers' editorial policies and the clarity of media content on their accounts. The closer journalists adhere to their paper's editorial policy, the better their professional media practice skills. This relationship positively reflects their personal professional practices on social media, highlighting a high level of professionalism aligned with institutional frameworks that serve public interest and community development. This confirms professional practice theory's emphasis on ethical and professional standards credibility, objectivity, free coverage without pressures, avoiding bias and discrimination, and respecting rights. This ensures effective professional practice rather than institutional control.
11. No significant differences were found between different age groups in journalists' interaction with their newspapers' official social media accounts. This reflects journalists' commitment to professional practice and representing themselves responsibly to society, contributing to positive values and cultural and social advancement.
12. Similarly, no significant differences were found related to family income levels regarding interaction with official accounts. This confirms journalists' professional independence from external political, economic, or other pressures, ensuring free, responsible, balanced, and objective reporting, contributing to community development and promoting positive values.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher recommends the following:

1. The Theory of Professional Practice in Media serves as an important theoretical framework for understanding the role of media and professional media practices in society. However, it requires further development and updates to keep pace with the changes in today's media landscape, including the emergence of new media platforms and the increasing influence of economic and political factors on media practice.
2. As a key determinant of any professional media practice, the Theory of Professional Practice should not be limited to traditional journalists. This study encourages applying the theory to analyze the practices of social media influencers and the extent of their adherence to professional media standards. It is essential to study the cultural and social reference frameworks, including traditions and customs, and their influence on media practices especially in the personal accounts of Saudi journalists.
3. There is a pressing need to explore the impact of artificial intelligence (AI) on professional media practice, particularly through the analysis of how algorithms are used in content creation, fact-checking, fake news detection, and the overall influence on journalism quality and credibility.
4. Investigating the challenges journalists face in combating misinformation and media disinformation is crucial. Emphasis should be placed on effective strategies for fact-

checking and promoting media literacy to uphold the integrity of journalism.

5. Greater attention should be given to studies examining the impact of social media on professional media practices, especially due to the ease of access and the ability of individuals to instantly share news, which has blurred the traditional roles of sender and receiver.
6. Studies should focus on public perceptions of various media platforms and their credibility, including the factors that influence audience trust in news and information. Such insights can help media institutions improve practices and regain public trust.
7. The researcher emphasizes the importance of gaining a deeper understanding of how journalists engage with social media to shape their personal brands and enhance audience engagement.
8. A comprehensive study is needed on professional media practices during crises and disasters, examining how such events affect the nature and integrity of journalistic work.

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