

The Challenges of a Changing Communication Landscape: An Examination of Saudi Arabian Media

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Abstract

The purpose of this thesis research was to gain a better understanding of the forces shaping the Saudi newspapers and to identify possible strategies to preserve their readership and generate revenue from the online stream. The research focused on two aspects of the newspaper business—the reader and the newspaper side. This research used analytical research to compare similarities and differences between strategies implemented by Western with those in Saudi newspaper organizations. The research also used an exploratory mixed-method approach to gain in-depth knowledge about the current situation in the Saudi Arabian newspaper industry. The second approach expanded to include two stages: qualitative research focused on *Okaz* newspaper as a case study and quantitative research carried out through a questionnaire survey. The data collection methods consisted of 11 in-depth, one-on-one interviews with employees of the *Okaz* daily newspaper, along with statistical data and reports gathered from the organization. Quantitative research was carried out through a questionnaire surveying 212 newsreaders. The findings revealed many similarities between Western and Saudi newspapers regarding the adopted business strategies and some differences in the considered practices to overcome the financial challenges in the business. Moreover, the use of the Latent Class Model revealed four clusters of readers in which only three showed future intention to pay for online news. This research contributes unique knowledge and adds to the overall literature about the state of the newspaper business in Saudi Arabia. It also shed light on *Okaz* as a case of a local Saudi newspaper facing such challenges. This research also adds value by understanding Saudi newsreaders' characteristics, reading consumption patterns, different motivations, and their intentions toward paying for news online.

Keywords: Saudi Arabia, Newspaper business, The West, Marketing strategies, 2008/2009 Crisis, Latent Class Model, Uses and Gratification, Attention economy, Ansoff's Matrix.

Executive Summary

This summary provides the main key findings of this study.

General key findings:

- Newspaper business in Saudi Arabia faces the same three main challenges that have been observed all over the world, namely: economical, technological, and change in readers' consumption habits, with varying degrees.
- News media in the West and in Saudi Arabia share similarities regarding some of the adopted business strategies (i.e. Self-promotion and allied-promotions) while they differ in regards some of the practices and in the ability to harness the full potential of the Internet (i.e. the implementation of the online subscription/paywall model).
- Laying off employees and reducing the size of the printed newspaper were the most common strategies implemented in the West and in Saudi Arabia.
- A shifting trend to focus more on readers' needs, to a more reader-centric approach is observed in the West as well as in Saudi Arabia.
- Lack of formal journalist training is observed in the Arab countries.
- A shifting trend is observed all over the world to consume news from social media applications.
- Younger readers in Saudi Arabia prefer to get news online as it is the case in the US.

Quantitative key findings:

- *Okaz* newspaper started to witness the financial impact after the year 2011.
- Additional challenges faced the newspaper that is affecting its governmental advertising-income most notably the change in the governmental regulations.
- The type of the product plays a role in advertisers' decisions to choose between online or the traditional print newspaper as a means to place their advertisement.
- The newspaper business in Saudi Arabia is based on regionalization, yet competitions exist between newspapers within the same region and also between different regions.
- There is a cooperation relation between *Okaz* traditional print newspaper and its different accounts online.
- Social media is considered as a supporting tool to distribute content, promoting the newspaper brand name, and generate traffic to *Okaz* online website and sometimes to the traditional print format.
- Promotions, discounts, and special offers are still considered as practices that the newspaper has been adopting to attract readers to its traditional print format as well as it is a strategy used on its Twitter account.
- *Okaz* promotes its print newspaper on social media, its online account, and on different physical places.
- Collaborations between all Saudi newspapers and social acceptance are considered as the two main reasons to guarantee the success of the online paywall model.
- The newspaper diversifies its source of income, yet it did not charge readers any online subscription thus fails to harness the full potential of the Internet.
- *Okaz* newspaper promotes its brand name and stories on non-allied media, yet no monetary return is required but only an exchange of benefits.
- *Okaz* follows similar strategies that can be found in the West to overcome some of their financial losses (e.g. reducing the number of the printed pages), while other strategies include replacing older employees with new ones.

- *Okaz* does not promote its content on other newspapers owned by the same organization, yet it promotes its name on other competing newspapers.
- Twitter is considered as the most important platform to generate traffic to the electronic online and traditional print newspaper.
- *Okaz* allows readers to comment on its online website after carefully filtering and monitoring these comments.
- Journalists do not engage with readers in the comment section.
- *Okaz* provides exclusive news stories in its traditional print format and on its online website.

Quantitative key findings:

- Saudi readers are highly connected to the Internet as a shifting trend is observed to consume more news from social media applications mainly from Twitter, Snapchat, Instagram, and online newspapers.
- Almost half of the study participants read online news only, however, there is an overlap of 20% of readers who get news from traditional print newspapers and online newspapers.
- 94% of the survey participants access the Internet using their smartphones.
- Readers turn to traditional print newspapers mainly in the morning while getting news from other formats most and/or all the time.
- Males are more information-driven than females as they read almost all types of news from traditional print and online newspapers with minimum interest in fashion news. However, in the US females are more information-driven than males.
- Participants spend shorter time reading news in the morning while longer time is spent in the evening and at night.
- Participants mainly seek information for three main reasons: to stay informed, to find out what's going on in the world, and to get breaking news and follow up with stories.
- Participants perceive ease of navigation as the most important feature of online newspapers and search engines. And ease of navigating, content update and, downloading time as important features of Twitter, while only commenting is considered an important feature of Facebook.
- Participants use the internet (i.e. adopt technology) to get a wider range of news anywhere and anytime, that save their time and effort as they are online most of their time, as those factors play a major role in shaping readers' decisions to read news online.
- Participants who still read the traditional print newspapers perceive its online format to be credible as well.
- The most dominant factors of credibility in traditional print newspapers are trustworthiness and expertise, while the most dominant factors for the other online news providers is hypertextuality, in addition to ease of accessing the website and the ability to share news.
- Employed participants are less likely to be entertainment-driven, opinion-driven, and social-driven motivated and thus are less likely to turn for news and media in general to satisfy those motivations, while unemployed participants are more entertainment-driven motivated. Yet, retired participants are more opinion-driven motivated and stay-at-home-mom are more social-driven motivated.
- Students do not turn to news media for entertainment nor to get different opinions.
- The more readers perceive online news sources as a credible source of information the more they are willing to pay for news in general from that source in the future.

However, the credibility of the news source is not considered as an indicator of current payment for readers' favourite online newspaper.

- Majority of the participants (78%) are not willing to pay to cover the cost to read their favourite online newspaper, however, the other 8% may consider paying only if they receive immediate news and something extra that is worth paying for.
- 60% of the participants have no future intention to pay for online news in general, while 31% were not sure. However, credibility is considered to be a significant indicator for readers' future payment.
- Participants are more likely to believe in Twitter and traditional print newspapers, as it continues to be considered as a trusted source of information.
- Participants turn to different news providers to read and get different news type, however, the only common genre of news that is accessed from any news provider is international news.
- There are four clusters of readers based on the Latent Class Model which demonstrated that there is heterogeneity in the News Access Profile of newsreaders.
- Three out of the four clusters are willing to pay for online news in general.
- Social Media News Seekers are not willing to pay for their favourite newspaper and show no future intention to pay for online news in general.
- A surprising change in intention of News Avoiders who show an unwillingness to pay for their favourite online newspaper while showing a future willingness to pay for online news in general showing that readers' conceptions and behaviours are constantly changing.
- All Source News Seekers scores high in all three motivations, are more likely to believe in online newspapers and Google News, and show similar high interest for all news types from all sources with the lowest being Yahoo News.
- Social Media News Seekers scores low in all three motivations, are more likely to believe in Twitter, and show relatively similar high interest for all types of news from Twitter.
- Online News Seekers are mainly information-motivated, are more likely to believe in online newspapers and Google News, and show high interest for all news types from all sources with low interest in all types of news from Yahoo.
- News Avoiders are less motivated among the other three clusters in getting news, more likely to believe in Google News, and show some interest in all types of news from Yahoo.

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Dedication

To fulfill the wishes of my father (May God bless his soul)

To my mother “Amirah”, brothers “Nabeel, Mohammed, and Mustafa (my partner in my study journey)” and sisters “Narmeen, Noor, and Nabaa”, who have always encouraged, supported, and believed in me.

To Nada, John, Shahad, and Rayan

To Khalid, Elina, Lilyan, and Muhra

I wish to dedicate this dissertation to them and I hope that my work and the successful completion of this study honours them.

For a better life and a bright future... To my beloved family

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Thesis Structure

Chapter 1 (Introduction) This chapter offers insight into the role and value of media in peoples' lives, and how this value creation has changed. I describe the economic-, technological-, and consumption-related changes in various parts of the world that have affected the news media industry, and how these changes have prompted shifts in human attention and in the strategies of news organizations. Acknowledging differences in the cultural and economics contexts of the Middle East and the West, I also consider whether Saudi newspapers may benefit from the successful solutions that have been adopted by Western media organizations. I conclude by presenting the statement of the problem, my main research question and related sub-questions, the purpose of the study, and the objective of the study.

Chapter 2 (Literature Review: Conceptual Frameworks) The discussion in this chapter sets out the conceptual framework guiding my analysis. It is comprised of three theories, two from the perspective of communication and society—*the attention economy theory* and *the uses and gratification theory*—and one from the perspective of business marketing—*Ansoff's matrix in marketing research theory*.

Chapter 3 (Literature Review: Empirical Findings) This chapter is divided into two parts. The first focuses on the financial crisis of the previous decade and the economic, technological, and social changes that have transformed the traditional print newspaper industry. Zeroing-in on marketing strategies in new media environments, the discussion illustrates how media organizations are marketing news in the traditional format, and provides examples of the strategies that have been adopted, namely self-promotion and cross-promotion on allied and non-allied media.

The second part of the discussion deals with the development of the press in the Arab world, providing a broad review of the newspaper business in the Middle East and Saudi Arabia in particular. Here, I examine the country's media publications, the domestic transformation from print to online media, and the adoption of the free online business model.

Chapter 4 (Methodology) The discussion in this chapter describes the processes and methods used to study the Saudi Arabian newspaper industry. Particular attention is given to the business strategies being adopted by domestic industry players and whether the adaptation and implementation of Western strategies might lead to innovation in the broader Saudi media market. The research design for this doctoral project involved two parts: 1) an analytical study of the Western newspaper industry; and 2) a mixed-method based explanatory study of the business and social factors influencing changes in the Saudi context.

Chapter 5 (Results from Interviews of *Okaz* Specialists) The discussion in this chapter is rooted in a case study of the daily newspaper *Okaz*. It sets out the findings emerging from interviews with specialists working in various departments at *Okaz*.

Chapter 6 (Results from the Surveyed Readers) The discussion in this chapter presents the findings emerging from a survey of a sample of newsreaders.

Chapter 7 (Discussions and Analysis) The discussion in this chapter presents a comparative analysis of the study findings to findings reported in studies focusing on changes in Western media industries.

Chapter 8 (Conclusions) The discussion in this chapter summarizes the arguments put forth in the dissertation, discusses the significance of the study, the limitations of this research, and provides some suggestions for future research.

Introduction

1 Introduction

The news media play an essential role in peoples' lives, providing information, facts and opinions about a broad array of different topics. News acts as an information commodity as well as influencing both the selection of issues that are prevalent in society, both locally and globally, and public opinions; a process known as agenda setting. Lee and Chyi (2014b) assert: "In media research, news is often studied as *is* and presumed to be innately of value" (p. 808). However, this is no longer the case, given that the potential for value creation¹ in the news industry has been compromised by the rapid diffusion of digital innovations that have – directly and indirectly – served to subvert how the media industry operates (Picard, 2004; Ahlers, 2006; Siles & Boczkowski, 2012). Likewise, the evolution of information and communication technologies such as the Internet has prompted significant shifts in consumer behaviour (Padgett & Mulvey, 2007; Ahlers, 2006; Mitchelstein & Boczkowski, 2010; Franklin, 2012), diverting readership and advertisers away from traditional media companies, toward multiple social media platforms and organisations (e.g. Google, Yahoo, Facebook, and Twitter). These new information providers seek the attention of both readers and advertisers, and have far lower costs than traditional media in gathering, editing and disseminating the news, which has brought about a higher level of competition to the news industry.

¹ "The value creation perspective asserts that value is in the mind of the consumer and is a measure of worth or importance placed on a product or service" (p. 18). It is "influenced by the traditions and the processes behind the creation and dissemination of news and information and the underlying cultural norms and philosophies of those journalistic activities" (p. 56). (Picard, 2006)

Challenges within the news media industry are not a new phenomenon, especially in the newspaper business. In the 19th century, newspapers were the most important means of mass communication. Since that time, they have repeatedly faced a wide range of changes and struggles (Shaw, Hamm, & Knott, 2000; Copeland, 2013). The advent of radio in the late 19th and early 20th centuries was one of the first factors to detrimentally affect newspaper circulation numbers by diverting readers' attention away from this medium thereby contributing to a decline in industry revenues. The arrival of television further took a slice out of newspaper earnings. Put simply, throughout the last century the newspaper business has faced a steady decline in revenue (Deloitte, 2016) and changes in readers' consumption habits (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, OECD, 2010b; Holm, Günzel, & Ulhøi, 2013). For the last quarter century, the industry has also had to contend with the negative consequences of printing and distribution costs being higher than the cost of distributing information via the Internet (Daripa & Kapur, 2001; Ahlers, 2006).

Meanwhile, the development of technology and the arrival of social media platforms has accelerated and amplified these challenges by continuing to draw away consumer attention and revenue from newspapers. Making matters worse for newspapers, many social media platforms give readers control over the news and information they consume (Hamilton, 2006; Lee & Chyi, 2014b; Vu, 2013). This, combined with many new players in the market providing news at a low cost (American Press Institute, 2007) has had grave consequences for the financial stability of many newspaper organizations. As readers shift to news providers that provide instant news anywhere and anytime at a low cost, advertisers are both following them, and benefiting from lower advertising costs than those charged by traditional print newspapers (Holm, Günzel, & Ulhøi, 2013; Phillips, Lee-Wright, & Witschge, 2012).

Digital technologies expand the possibilities for newspapers to reach their readers and advertisers as well as to attract new ones. Rapid technological changes has forced traditional

news media to implement, innovate, and adopt different strategies to achieve the objectives of meeting financial targets and satisfying the needs of their readers and advertisers. For example, digital innovations have created two types of competition with which newspapers must now contend. Attention-centered competition and subscription and advertising revenue centered competition. The attention side has been marked by the rise of direct competitors who provide information and indirect competitors that provide other content other than classic news (i.e. games, funny videos, chat...) that is more appealing to a growing part of the audience than serious public issues. These competitors have a characteristic feature of providing instant news at any time and anywhere. On the subscription and advertising revenue side, the competitors are low-cost aggregators who provide news at zero cost to readers and who provide available space to advertisers at a lower cost than the traditional print newspaper format.

These technological, economic, and social changes are occurring in varying degrees around the world. The 2008 financial crisis forced many newspaper organizations to take drastic measures to overcome their losses. Western newspaper publishers found themselves in a constant struggle to develop new practices and solutions to maintain their competitive advantage. Some have had to operate on fewer days, others transferred to an exclusively digital format. Some publishers however have overcome these challenges and are realizing benefits from the digitally based changes to the industry. Because the challenges and effects of the changes impact differently around the world, the strategies and business practices applicable in one region may not be transferrable to another country. For instance, although Arab news media publishers may benefit from some of the successful solutions and strategies adopted in the West, such approaches would likely need to be customized to better suit Arab culture. The paywall model is a good example in this regard. AlShehri and Gunter's (2002) study found that a majority of Arabs around the world are resistant to paying for online

content, whereas in the West, such resistance is most evident among young and low-income readers (Chiou & Tucker, 2013).

Newsreaders are often perceived as a mass of people (Albarran, 2010) who share common characteristics that contribute to their interest in news. Yet this is rarely the case, as each person has their own preferences and motivations for consuming the news. Although it is impossible to study each person individually, it is important for media organizations to consider the most common motivations. An effective way to understand differences in people's consumption patterns is to find similarities in their characteristics by clustering them together based on the combination of multiple factors, which would allow newspaper organizations to better understand their readers. Cluster analysis generally provides a fairly accurate representation of people's reading patterns based on the similarities found among them (Tan, Steinbach, Karpatne, & Kumar, 2005; Gengler & Mulvey 2017), such as whether people have similar consumption habits, perceive certain news providers as credible sources, or share the same point of view regarding the willingness to pay for online news. This dissertation investigates similarities and differences in news consumption habits and motivations among Saudi and Western readers, as well as the business strategies used in the West and Saudi Arabia to mitigate changing reader consumption patterns, and reduced revenues.

The news industry in Saudi Arabia has been contending with some of the issues discussed above since the beginning of 2016 (Waleed Qattan², personal communication, 2017). In order for Saudi Arabian newspaper organizations to survive this shift in the market

² Waleed Qattan is the director general of Okaz Organization for Press and Publication in Saudi Arabia, a board member of the National Newspaper Distribution Company and the Saudi Newspapers Publishing Council, and president of the Council of Press Organizations.

and overcome financial difficulties, it is essential for them to develop innovative businesses strategies for providing the news.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Technological development and economic change are not uncommon to the newspaper industry, however, the latest crisis seems unparalleled. Technology has diverted the attention of readers, who now have a variety of options to choose from when consuming news, and empowered them with a tool that transforms them into disseminators and creators of information.

In recent years, the Saudi Arabian news media market has faced similar economic and technological changes as their Western counterparts (Waleed Qattan, personal communication, 2017), along with a shift in readers' consumption habits. In response, Saudi newspapers are now investigating and assessing strategies that have been successfully implemented in other parts of the world.

1.2 Research Questions

This project is intended to increase the understanding of media challenges in Saudi Arabia and to help Saudi newspapers find ways to attract and retain readers, and to generate revenue from their online streams by taking advantage of shifts in readers' consumption habits. One of the strategies for realizing this objective involves comparing similarities and differences between strategies adopted and implemented by Western and Saudi newspaper organizations. This dissertation focuses on two aspects of the newspaper business—the reader and the newspaper side. The reader side is examined through the use of a reader survey that is designed to obtain data about Saudi users' on- and off-line newspaper access and consumption patterns, their motivations and interest in news, and how these may be linked to their willingness to pay for news online. The newspaper side is examined through the lens of

a case study of the ways in which the *Okaz* newspaper has sought to contend with the challenges to which this unprecedented era for the news media give rise.

The central research question guiding this doctoral research project is:

What are the potential avenues for survival for a Saudi Arabian newspaper facing readership decline?

There are two sub-questions guiding the reader-side investigation. They are:

- * How are the consumption patterns of Saudi citizens being altered in the light of digital innovations?
- * What might encourage Saudi Arabian readers to pay for online news?

There likewise are two sub-questions guiding the newspaper-side portion of this study. They are:

- * What are the business strategies that have been considered and adopted to attract and retain readers?
- * To what extent are recent business findings and strategies from the West relevant to the Saudi market?

1.3 Purposes of the Study and Objectives

The purpose of this study is to gain a better understanding of the forces shaping the Saudi newspaper market, and more broadly, the non-Western media market. My goal is to identify strategies that Saudi newspaper businesses can employ to preserve their readership and generate greater revenues from their online streams, as well as to identify the factors that lead Saudi newsreaders to pay for news online.

This study explores the business practices that have been adopted by *Okaz* to overcome the financial losses this newspaper experienced in recent years. The study also investigates the motivations of readers and their willingness to pay for news by measuring different variables through clustering analysis.

Literature Review

This study is based on a comparison between the print media markets in the Western world and the Arab media in general, and includes some of the marketing strategies that have been adopted on both markets as a result of recent economic and technological challenges in the media industry, as well as changes in readers' consumption habits. It then focuses on Saudi Arabia, and in particular *Okaz* newspaper as a case study of a media organization facing such challenges firsthand.

The literature review is divided into two chapters: Chapter 2, which consists of the conceptual framework and theories that were considered in my study; and Chapter 3, which includes an extensive review of the empirical findings.

2 Literature Review: Conceptual Framework

The advance in technology, and the economical crisis, has disrupted and altered the newspaper business landscape. Which in turn changes the perception of readers' value in news, their consumption habits and thus has created a challenging environment for newspaper businesses. Editors and Journalists are forced to take their readers' wants and needs into greater consideration when providing news, while newspaper businesses on the whole must do likewise by adopting different business strategies and adapt to the technological advance. What journalists consider as being of value and sufficient to grab readers' attention is not necessarily what readers deem to be of value and interest to them (Lee & Chyi, 2014b). However, readers have the power to consume and find the news that is most of interest to them. Thus, they shift to different providers that meet their different gratification and needs. Therefore, changes in business operations have been made with the intent to increase newspapers' readership base, to increase newspapers' brand recognition, and most importantly to grab readers' attention and generate financial revenue. **Based on**

these phenomena, the fundamental framework of this dissertation relies on a combination three main theoretical bodies: *the attention economy theory; the uses and gratification theory; and Ansoff's matrix in marketing research theory*. Since this study is a marketing business study, and the nature of the newspaper business cannot ignore the communication aspect and the journalistic nature of the industry, a combination of theories from the business aspect as well as from the social and communications aspect were considered for this study's conceptual framework.

However, it should be emphasized that this study, both epistemologically — as a marketing business thesis — and methodologically — as an empirical case-based investigation — does not present itself as a primarily theoretical contribution per se. While it certainly intends to contribute to our scientific knowledge of the current transformations of the media landscape, and in particular to raise specific observations that are useful to the global understanding of these phenomena, it does not aim to hold the level of theoretical deepening internal to communication science, as a different thesis would do within this particular discipline.

In the multidisciplinary perspective adopted here, the theoretical conceptualizations which follow are therefore presented mainly as conceptual supports that have guided and structured my preliminary reflections as well as my empirical observations and my analyses even if — like any scientific hypothesis — they remain the object of more detailed discussions in their own fields, in particular in media studies.

2.1 Attention Economy Theory:

The concept of attention was initially discussed by philosophers as it considered as an old issue in social sciences and it is closely connected to theories of knowledge (Festré & Garrouste, 2015). One of the main effects of the information age that we live in is what has been called attention crisis (Labasse, 2001). Journalism arose in an era when information was

a scarce resource, and thus it had value in and of itself (Meyer, 1996). Yet in today's world, the often-overwhelming information load is creating a shortage in human attention (Simon, 1971, page 40; Davenport & Beck, 2002, page 49), prompting people to only consume news that they find of interest and valuable to them, which raises potential issues within news organizations (Labasse, 2008). The problem of this attention economy was first considered by Herbert Simon in 1971, as a question of overabundance, but the concept became more widespread a quarter of a century later (Davenport & Beck, 2002; Lanham, 2006). Simon first observed the connection between information and attention (Festré & Garrouste, 2015). According to Simon, the 1978 winner of the (Nobel Prize in Economics):

“What information consumes is rather obvious: It consumes the attention of its recipients. Hence a wealth of information creates a poverty of attention, and a need to allocate that attention efficiently among the overabundance of information sources that might consume it” (Simon, 1971, page 40).

In earlier centuries, information was rare and held much value within it, whereas nowadays, it is more accessible and within reach of most people and can be accessed anywhere and anytime. According to Phillip Meyer: “Today, it is attention, not information, that is the scarce good” (1996, page 10). Michael Goldhaber followed up on that notion in a 1997 article:

“We are moving into a period wholly different from the past era of factory-based mass production of material items.... We are entering an entirely new *kind* of economy. The old concepts will just not have value in that new context” (Goldhaber, 1997b, p. 1).

Shapiro and Varina (1999) considered attention as a scarce economic resource and explores its significance for information users. Besides, the authors analyzed different business strategies to particularized information in order to draw consumers' interest and maximize their usefulness by providing them with more valuable information (Festré & Garrouste, 2015). In addition, Doran (2018) stated that: “Attention is now regarded as an

essential part of practices of consumption, entertainment and media culture, as it has become intensely valued both as capital and as a scarce commodity”.

Moreover, the “economics of attention” gained its importance in academic in 1997 when Goldhaber define it as a sub-field of the “Internet economics”, focusing on the time-consuming factor of the information overflow (Festré & Garrouste, 2015). Goldhaber (1997) noted that the world economy is changing from a material-based economy to an attention-based economy; one that focused on human attention. Most online services are provided free of charge. In the attention economy, attention is not just a resource but also a currency in which consumers pay attention to a service (Goldhaber, 1997a).

Goldhaber refused that information considers as a scarce, but attention is. This abundance of information thus shifts the initial concept of value from the information itself to consider the attention and needs of readers as a valuable and scarce resource that newspaper organizations need to retain. Thus, it is no longer the information that is considered the only valuable commodity, but also the attention of the receiver of information. Readers consume news that holds value to them based on their interests and needs. The rise in new technologies, and specifically the Internet, and the growing use of social media networks and the growing activity of bloggers (Festré & Garrouste, 2015) has led to the emergence of many news providers covering topics that only aspire to capture readers’ attention, without any regard for other factors. As new players emerge on the market, it becomes difficult for the traditional print newspapers to grab readers’ attention and to compete with those players. This dissertation recognizes that attracting and retaining readers’ attention is an essential indicator of the survival of a newspaper organization. Shapiro and Varina (1998) state that “If you want to personalize your information product, you have to know something about your customers”. Thus, it can be state that, the attention-economy theory is linked to the uses and gratification theory since the concept of value has shifted towards readers’ attention, and

businesses need to learn about their readers in order to personalize their information product and to grab their readers' attention; hence, newspaper organizations must now provide information based on the needs and gratifications of their readers rather than considering only the organization and journalists view.

2.2 Uses and Gratification Theory:

This paper also adopts the uses and gratification theory to explain trends in the newspaper organization from the perspective of its recipients (the readers). The uses and gratification approach were noticed in the late 1950s and early 1960s in an "attempts to measure the short-term effects on people of their exposure to mass media campaigns" (Blumler, 1979). It reflected a desire to understand audience involvement in mass communication. Katz, Blumler, and Gurevitch (1973) describe the uses and gratification approach is essentially an attempt to clarify how people use communications, among other tools in their environment, to fulfill their needs and reach their goals, and to do so simply by asking them. This effort is based on a series of hypotheses that have some degree of internal coherence. Later, Blumler and Katz in 1974, focused on the role of users of the media. The uses and gratification theory is also one of the main theories that explains media consumption trends and helps us understand why people are likely to seek out certain media over others in order to satisfy a specific need (Severin & Tankard, 1997).

The uses and gratification theory is a user-centred approach for analyzing mass communication (Palmgreen & Rayburn II, 1985), which builds upon the media effect theories that question the role of media to their audiences and focuses instead on the active role of the audience in choosing and using the media (Blumler & Katz, 1974). Levy (1977) notice, as many others before him, the gap in the uses and gratification theory as: "there is no general theoretical framework which systematically links gratifications to their social and psychological origins" (Blumler, 1979). Although the uses and gratification approach has

been later criticized for its lack of deep sociological basis (Blumler, 1979), it can still help us understand readers' motivations in choosing a particular media (Al-Jaber & Elareshi, 2014; Tanta, Mihovilović, & Sablić, 2014). Mehrad and Tajer (2016) stated that “with the emergence of communication technology, this theory has become increasingly important”. As technology and specially the Internet has provided readers with many different ways in which they can consume the media and news in general, thus to that perspective it rises the importance to study and consider the needs of readers and to satisfy them.

The uses and gratification theory assumes that audiences are not passive media consumers, and that they play the critical role of interpreting and integrating media into their lives (Korhan & Ersoy, 2015). Their behaviour changes and patterns make them the drivers of media trends (Palmgreen & Rayburn II, 1985). Thus, a change in their consumption patterns could elicit media strategies that conform to new consumer trends (McQuail, Blumler, & Brown, 1972). Readers are responsible for choosing the media platforms that meet their desires and needs in order to achieve gratification. The implication is that each media provider is competing with all the other providers for consumers' gratification (Albarran, 2002; Picard, 2002).

According to Lee, audiences can be characterized into four types: the information-motivated consumer; the entertainment-motivated consumer; the opinion-motivated consumer; and the socially-motivated consumer (2013). Of these four types, consumers can receive any of the following gratifications when consuming news media: making decisions related to purchasing or voting; gaining an entertainment experience; environment surveillance³; engaging in social interaction; and gaining self-satisfaction and understanding (Diddi & LaRose, 2006; Lee & Ma, 2011; Hussain & Ahmad, 2014; Lee & Chyi, 2014b).

³ Environment surveillance: “the need to know, to understand what is going on in the world and to keep up with the way the government functions” (as cited in Lee & Chyi, 2014b, p. 811).

Furthermore, Zhang (2015) noted that newspaper companies seek to meet their target audience's needs, which—according to the uses and gratification theory—can be categorized as cognitive, social integrative, affective, personal integrative, and tension-free. However, it is up to each reader to choose a media outlet that best satisfies his or her own needs.

Therefore, the integration of this theory into this study helps define the types of readers that newspaper companies seek to satisfy. As well, this theory places more emphasis on readers, which could help newspaper organizations consider readers as a key driver in choosing and providing news to the public based on their needs. The strategy of attracting and retaining readers' attention can better serve the newspaper organization's business strategies when deciding whether to expand their practices, to consider new markets, to expand their business, or to consider offering new services to its readers to reach its goals for generating revenue. This leads me to the business aspect of this dissertation, specifically the consideration of Ansoff's matrix in Marketing Research.

2.3 Ansoff's Matrix in Marketing Research Theory:

Since the uses and gratification theory places the audience at the center of the business, it is vital for the newspaper industry to understand how to identify opportunities by looking for patterns in the audience's behaviour. Changes in readers' demands and demographic shifts for different types of news content have imposed changes in the way that the news industry interacts with its audience. The Ansoff matrix, also known as the product-market matrix, is a strategic marketing framework for decision-making related to growth strategies (Ansoff, 1957). The framework was presented in 1957 by Igor Ansoff and elaborates upon four distinct strategies in which businesses can grow: through existing products; through new product development; in existing markets; or entering into new markets (Yin, 2016). The matrix also helps analyze the risks associated with each strategy. Ansoff's framework is an essential tool in strategic planning, as it is able to help businesses

recognize the fundamental motivations for change, while also encouraging them to evaluate this change as part of their growth strategy. The matrix involves four key strategies (see Figure 1): 1. Market penetration, which recommends strategies for organizations looking to increase market share in their current market segment. In doing so, the organization's main focus would be adding value to capture the attention of new readers within their existing market. 2. Market development, which deals with strategies around entering new markets with the same existing product. 3. Product development, which includes strategies related to providing new products and services to serve their current readers' needs in the existing market. 4. Diversification, which involves strategies related to providing new products and services in new markets (Ansoff, 1957; Navarra & Scaini, 2016).



Figure 1 The traditional Ansoff model: Four-box matrix (From Kent, 2018)

This framework would likely help media organizations achieve a successful transition from print to digital media. Therefore, the use of Ansoff's matrix may help the organization follow through on drastic decisions or measures. Whether developing their product or their market, adding value to their existing market, or providing a new product, their direction and decisions are generally based on readers' needs and attention. The four-box strategic growth matrix is widely used due to its simplicity, and can be applied to any business, yet because of

the construction of the matrix, it only offers a general picture of the risk of growth in the business as the markets and product developments regularly involve different stages of testing and improvement. On the other hand, the nine-box matrix (see Figure 2) is a more complex and sophisticated analytical tool that depends on the conditions and the situation of businesses, and can significantly contribute to enhancing a business's profitability and success. However, I will only consider the four-box matrix in my research to provide a broader view of the possible approaches that the newspaper business may consider.

This study's conceptual framework combines all three of these theories to focus on how newspapers can look at their business from different perspectives, using both social and business aspects to combine marketing theories with media theories. This combination may help newspaper organizations better overcome the crisis in their industry by securing their readers' attention and ensuring the gratification of their needs, as well as looking at opportunities to expand their markets or products based on the state of the current market and the above criteria.



Figure 2 The revised version of Ansoff's Model: Nine-box matrix (From Manktelow, 2011)

From the above theoretical theories, my research framework was constructed and can be presented and build upon these three bodies. In short, News organization needs to grab readers attention through learning their needs and by meeting their gratification which in turn lead them to consider different business strategy and thus reach their goal (i.e. one of their main goals of reaching a wide range of readers that might lead the newspaper business to generate more financial revenue, as well as attract more readers). Figure 3 present a cyclist link between these three theories.



Figure 3 Linking the three theoretical bodies together

3 Literature Review: Empirical findings

This review of empirical findings is divided into two parts. The first examines the 2008/2009 financial crisis and the subsequent economic, technological and social changes affecting the media industry in the Western world, focusing on the United States in particular. Particular attention is given to the strategies used to market the news in its traditional print format—such as self-promotion and cross-promotion on allied and non-allied media—as well as methods used in the online environment. This part of the discussion wraps up with a summary on digital media usage patterns worldwide.

The second part traces the historical background of the press in various Arab countries, providing overview of the four categories of press in the region. Recent economic challenges and threats to media in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries⁴, and the effect of the 2008/2009 financial crisis. The discussion then turns its attention to Saudi Arabia focusing on its transformation from print to online newspapers, readers' news consumption patterns across different platforms, and how these compare with other Arab countries.

3.1 The Western world

3.1.1 Overview of the Western world's newspaper crisis

When one looks at the history of the press, and specifically traditional print newspapers, it seems the industry has continuously been in crisis. Challenges and changes in the business have occurred from the early days of radio up to the arrival of social media

⁴ GCC countries: Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates.

applications. This section provides an account of recent struggles newspapers have encountered and some of the general changes newspapers have had to implement in response.

The 2008/2009 financial downturn was perhaps the most difficult incident the newspaper industry has faced since the introduction of both radio and television cut into its share of the number of readers and advertising revenues, changes in information and communication technology, and audience consumption behaviours have further aggravated the situation (Underwood, 1993; Ahlers, 2006; Collis, Olson & Furey, 2009; Ismail, 2013; Auwal, 2016). The newspaper business is not like other businesses in that it has a double market space—it sells information to readers through its print issues and simultaneously sells space in the newspaper to advertisers (Albarran, 2002; Rothmann & Koch, 2014). The 2008/2009 financial crisis negatively affected both sides of the newspaper business. News media organizations in the United States are heavily dependent upon advertising, and this made them more vulnerable to the crisis (Starr, 2012). Many newspaper businesses were forced to take drastic measures to cut costs, such as laying off employees, changing the layout of the newspaper (Kirchhoff, 2009; Salman, Ibrahim, Abdullah, Mustaffa, & Mahbob, 2011), and even operating on fewer days. *The New York Times* for example, went so far as to drastically reducing the size of the version of their newspaper in order to lower printing costs (Chyi, Lewis, & Zheng, 2012). By contrast, and despite declining readership and circulation and the advertisers, in some Asian countries (e.g. Malaysia) continued to favour traditional media, and readers continued to prefer to getting news through traditional print newspapers and television (Salman et al., 2011).

The following sections will take a more in-depth look into each of the main challenges, including the economic, technological, and social factors affecting the newspaper industry.

3.1.1.1 Economic Challenges

The economic downturn of 2008/2009 has greatly affected newspapers' traditional revenue model. Usher (2010) indicates that newspaper circulations in the period spanning 2007 to 2009 decreased significantly, resulting in the scaling down of major daily newspaper companies including *The Detroit Free Press* and *The New York Times*. Newspapers used to generate revenue by selling physical copies or subscriptions to readers, and by selling advertising space to advertisers, their most vital source of revenue (Chyi, Lewis, & Zheng, 2012). According to Picard (2008), in his analysis of a US database about growth trends in newspaper advertising between 1950 and 2005, "advertising accounted for about two-thirds of the content and 75–85% of income for the average newspaper in the United States, and similar situations are found in many European nations" (p. 704). Media companies are always looking for ways to maximize their advertising revenues, but as advertising in print publications continues to decline (Richter, 2019) See, Figure 4, news agencies around the world have experienced a serious financial crisis. For instance, Chahine, Vollmer, Bhargava, and Lahham (2011), at the time of writing, estimated that over the period of 25 years, the U.K.-based *Daily Mirror* and *Daily Express* had lost at least two-thirds of their circulation. However, the situation wasn't that bad for all countries. According to the World Press Trends database, newspaper circulation continued to rise from 2008 to 2012 in countries such as China, Saudi Arabia, and Mexico to name a few (DeSilver, 2013) (see Figure 5). Another database of the World Press Trend (2019), showed that print circulation daily average revenue witness stabilization after some steep decline in Asia Pacific, the Middle East, and North Africa. See, Figure 6.

The Dramatic Decline of Print Advertising

Estimated print advertising revenue in the United States

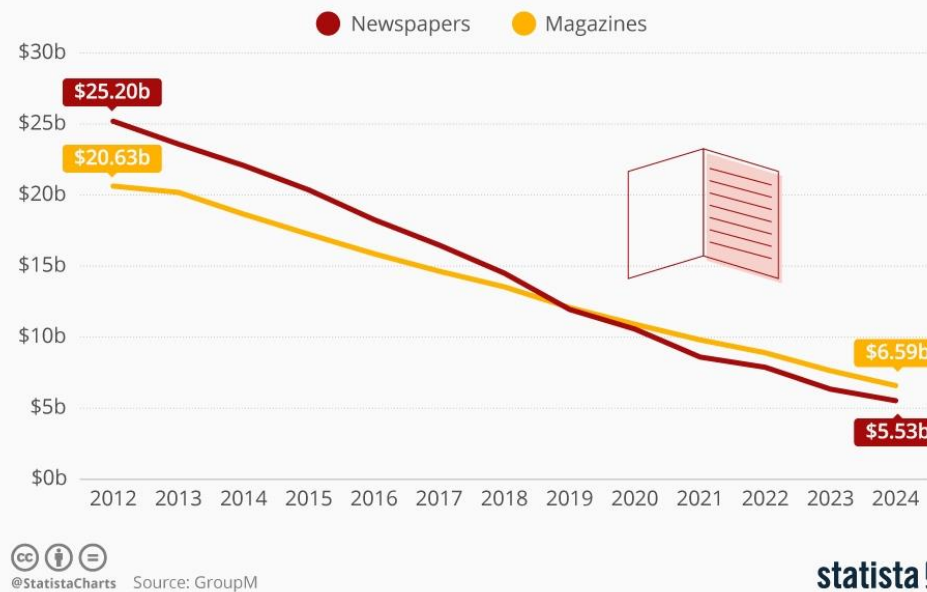


Figure 4 The Dramatic Decline on Print Advertising (Source: Richter, 2019)

Daily newspaper circulation

2008-12, % change

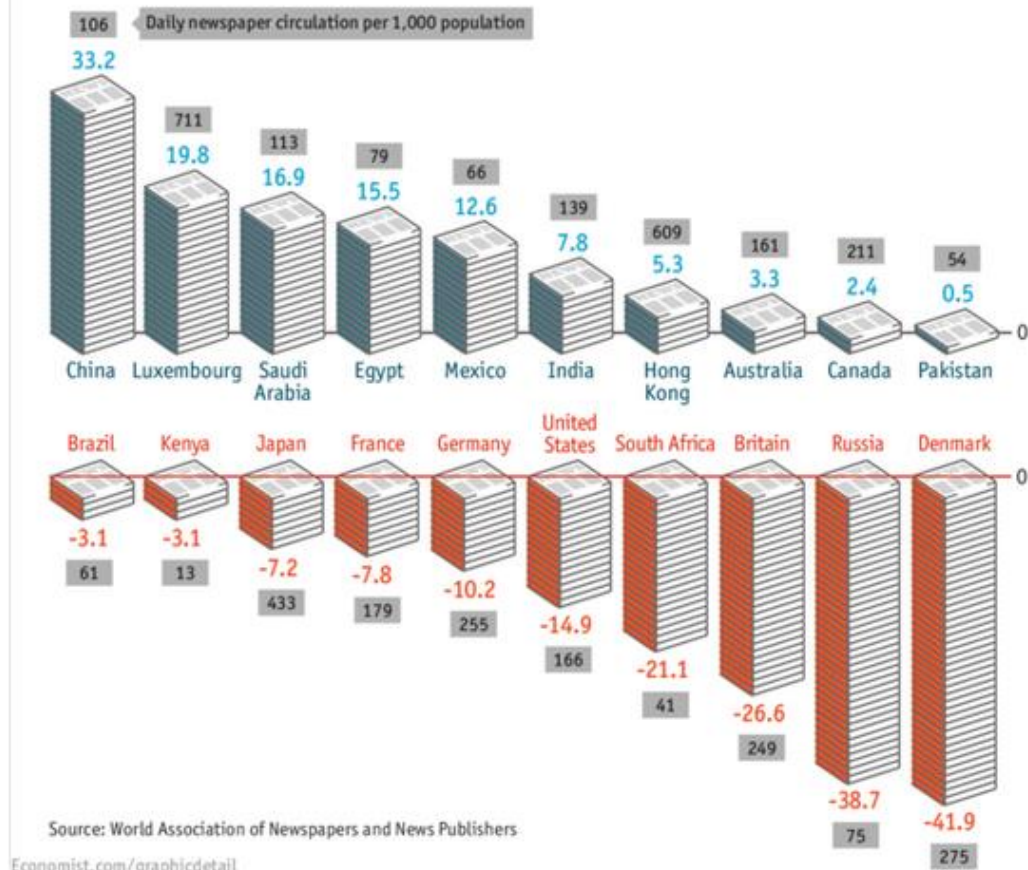
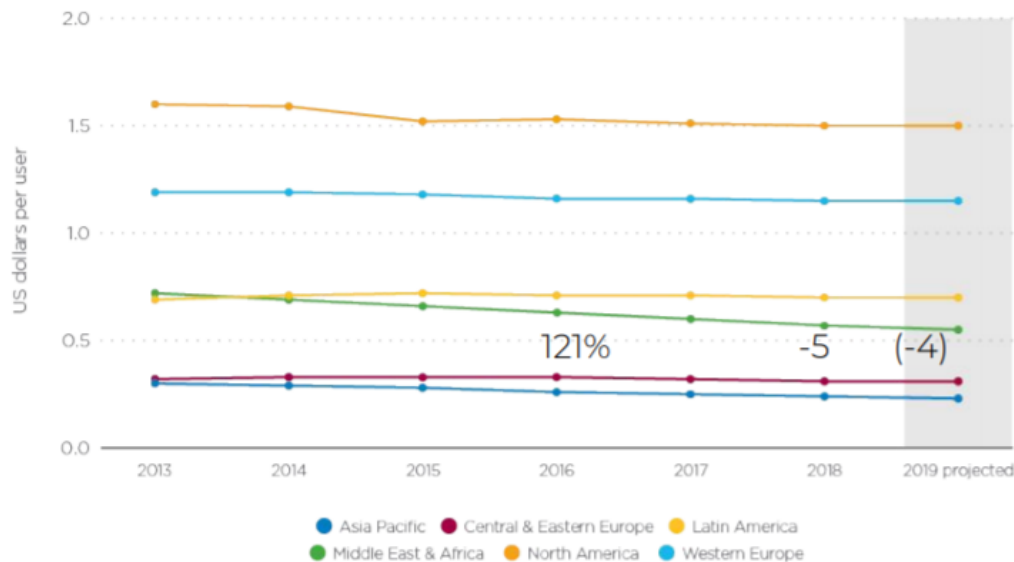


Figure 5 Daily newspaper circulation 2008–12, % change (From DeSilver, 2013)

Print circulation daily Average Revenues Per User (ARPU) by region is broadly stable, after a some steep declines in Asia Pacific and the Middle East & North Africa



Source: WPT analysis; PwC (Global Entertainment & Media Outlook 2018-2022); Zenith 2018

Figure 6 Print circulation daily average per user (Source: World press Trends, 2019)

According to a recent World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers (WAN-IFRA) study, print circulation continued to grow globally in 2015—though the rate of growth in 2015 (4.9%) was less than in 2014 (6.4%)—while print advertising revenue continued to decline (down 5.2% in 2014, and down 7.5%) (MarketingCharts staff, 2016; MarketingCharts staff, 2015). It is helpful to look at the breakdown of the change in circulation numbers and ad revenues around the world in order to understand the effect of the change in each region. As can be seen in Figure 7, during 2014 and 2015 print circulation and print advertising revenues fell in every region of the world except Asia.



Print Newspaper Circulation and Advertising Trends, by Region

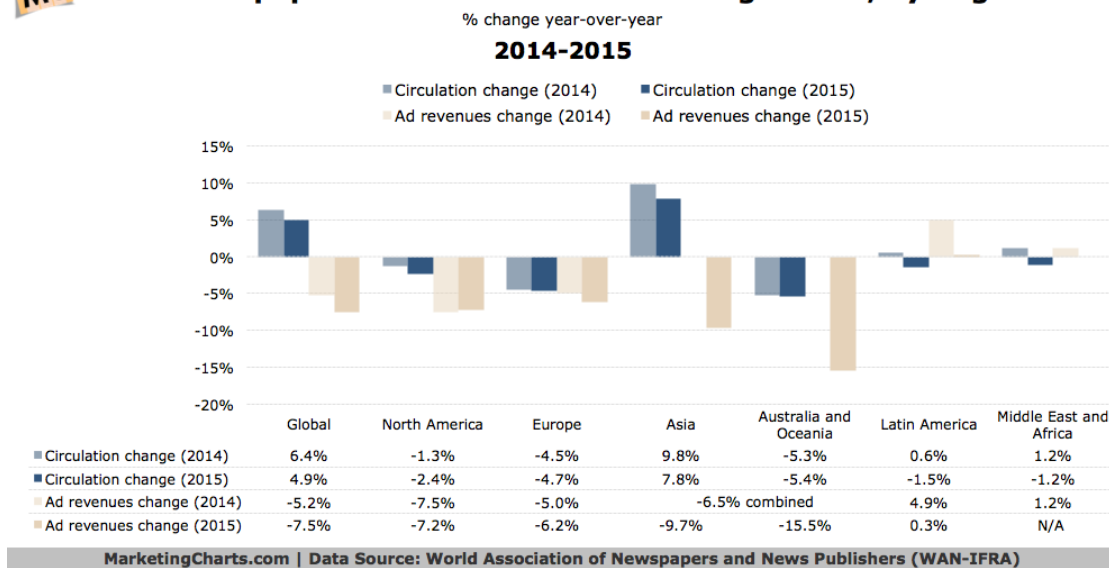


Figure 7 Print newspaper circulation and advertising trends by region, % change year-over-year, 2014–2015 (From MarketingCharts staff, 2016)

According to a World Press Trends study, 2016 was the first time ever that revenues from newspaper circulation worldwide, from print and digital formats combined, exceeded advertising revenues, with circulation sales accounting for 56% of newspapers’ overall revenue (Henriksson, 2017). According to WAN-IFRA CEO Vincent Peyrègne, “the shift from advertising to reader-based revenue is reshaping the fundamentals of our industry” (Henriksson, 2017).

Meanwhile, a study by The World Association of Newspaper and News Publishers (WAN-IFRA) (2016) found that newspapers generated an estimated \$168 billion in revenue worldwide in 2015, with \$78 billion coming from advertising and \$90 billion coming from circulation of print and digital newspapers. Moreover, (WAN-IFRA) (2017), state that newspaper revenues declined globally by 2% year-over-year in 2016⁵. This indicates that revenues from advertisers during this period were surpassed by readership revenues in the

⁵ I was unable to access further data from WAN-IFRA about recent numbers/figures of global newspaper revenue due to limited access.

industry (MarketingCharts staff, 2016; MarketingCharts Staff, 2017). However, the shift to audience-based revenues was evident as early as 2013, with a World Press Trends Analysis (WPT) (Global Entertainment & Media Outlook 2018–2022) showing that audience revenue of \$87 billion around the world in 2017 exceeded global advertising revenue of \$63 billion in the same year (as cited from Peyrègne, 2019) see (Figure 8).

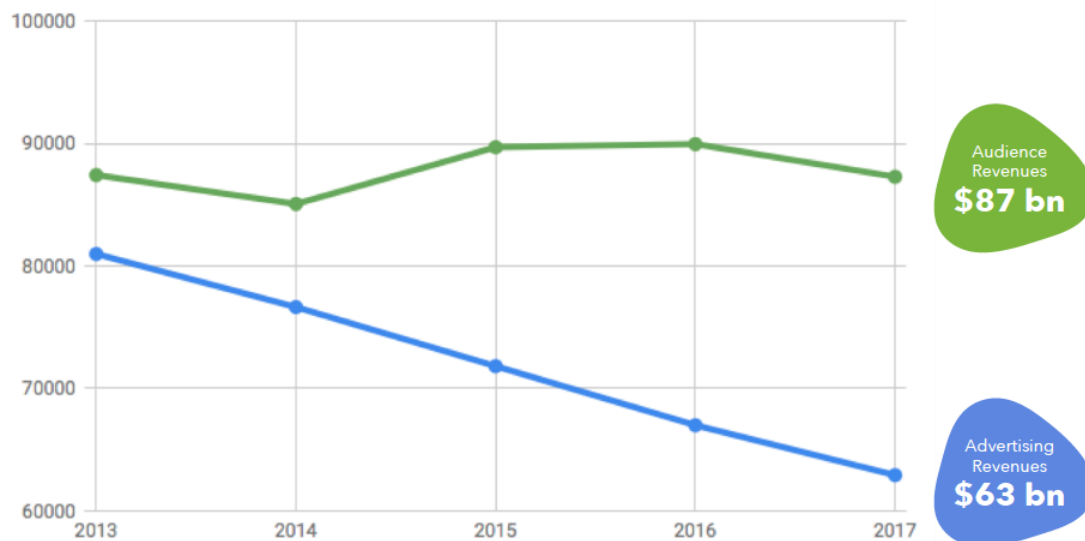


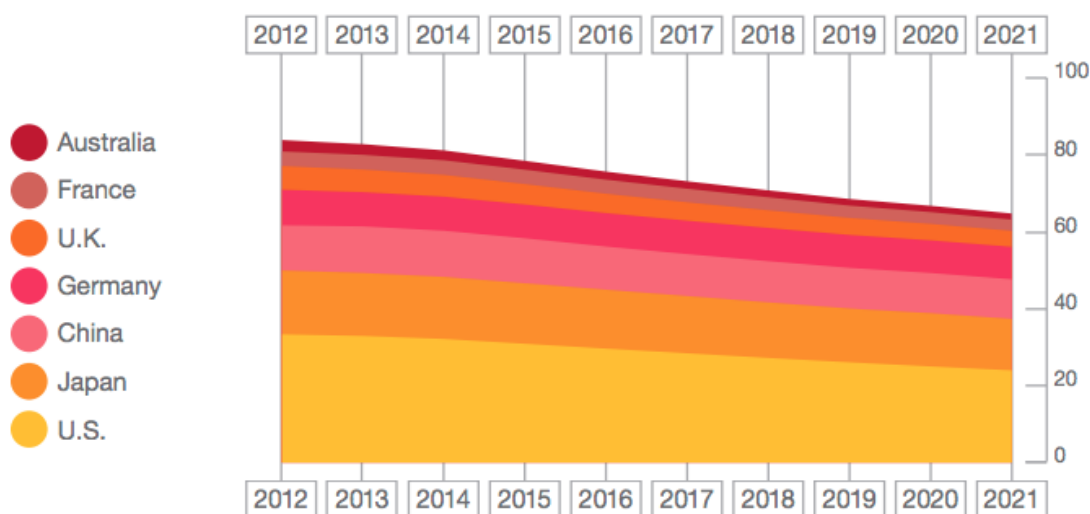
Figure 8 The shift to audience-based revenue continues to outpace ad revenue, but is it enough?
(From Peyrègne V., 2019)

Since income from circulation was expected to increase around the world after 2017, newspaper publishers began to re-focus their efforts on building a loyal readership in order to generate more consistent revenues from both print and digital media users. As Peyrègne (2019) says: “We have entered a pivotal moment ... and more than ever our focus needs to be on our audience and producing high-quality, engaging journalism.”

However, these data contrast with the findings of a 2016 study by PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) indicating that for US newspaper publishers the majority of their revenue still comes from advertising, and was declining even as circulation was gradually increasing. Writing in 2016, MarketingCharts staff (2016) was projecting that the

gap between circulation revenues and advertising revenues would likely narrow even further by 2020.

A different PwC study in 2017 found that readers' media preferences in Australia, France, the U.K., Germany, China, Japan and the U.S were changing dramatically, and that this had affected both the circulation and the advertising revenue of newspaper companies as readers abandoned traditional print newspapers for digital alternatives. The authors of that study hypothesized that this trend was likely to continue until at least 2021 (see Figure 9) (Bothun & Silver, 2017). The authors further contend that readers' shift to digital alternatives was fuelling a shift in how newspapers generate most of their money. They further contended this fluctuation in revenue and circulation numbers was likely to result in newspaper publishers rethinking their business strategies in order to withstand the ever-changing environment that is impacting their revenues.



Source: Global entertainment and media outlook 2017–2021, PwC, Ovum

Figure 9 Newspaper revenue (circulation + advertising) (in US\$ billions) (From Bothun & Silver, 2017)

Given ongoing economic uncertainty and its effect on newspaper revenues and circulation numbers, newspaper publishers must look to the internal factors over which they have control, such as employees, tailoring their news to appeal to more readers, and

increasing efficiencies. In doing so, newspaper publishers must shift their focus to meet their readers' wants and needs and keep in mind reader demographics.

3.1.1.2 Technological Challenges

Newspaper publishers face many challenges in seeking to harness opportunities from new technologies and keeping up with an ever-changing digital environment. Throughout the last quarter century, the internet has disrupted the longstanding practice of selling news to readers and readers' attention to advertisers (Deloitte, 2016).

Many scholars have described technology as a disruptive change to existing business practices (Padgett & Mulvey, 2007; Ahlers, 2006; Meyer, 2004; Karimi & Walter, 2015), particularly in established media industries, where new inventions and new standards are met with resistance (Van Weezel, 2009; Schultz & Sheffer, 2012). Commenting on market disruptions a decade ago, Clayton Christensen noted: "Existing players in an industry almost always fail to appreciate how disruption will affect them or understand how to adapt to it, and media companies are making all of those same mistakes" (as cited in Ketonen, 2013, page 3). Since then, existing media companies have tapped into the opportunity offered by the technology to expand their market reach. Hence, changing their orientation towards implementing and adopting technology specifically social media applications into their business practices. Early adopters to innovations in technology faced the question of how to get the most out of technology and integrate it into their business practices (Padgett & Mulvey, 2007; Lewis & Molyneux, 2018). In the early 2000s, a common trap that newspaper publishers often fell into was trying to reproduce "the old product in the new technology," which lead them to miss the full potential benefits of the technology (American Press Institute, 2006, page 14). Today, newspapers are reformulating and developing the news content and stories to fit into their online newspaper and official accounts on different social media applications (e.g. providing summaries of news articles, presenting more pictures,

infographics, and videos). On the one hand, technology creates new channels of communication between companies and their customers and between the employees and customers of these companies (as shown in **D**, **E**, and **F** in Figure 10) (Padgett & Mulvey, 2007).

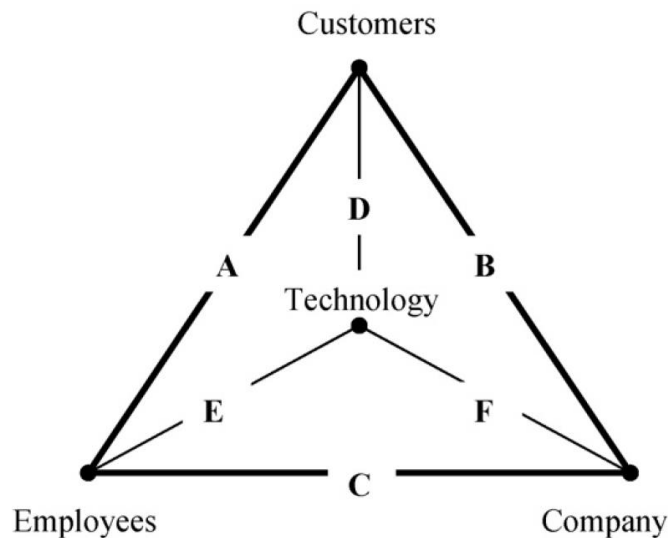


Figure 10 Services Marketing Pyramid Model (From Padgett & Mulvey, 2007)

Technology also opens up new arenas in which companies can distribute their products and services to a wider customer base. For instance, newspaper publishers are now able to attain new readers regardless of geographical boundaries and the time of day. In Canada, for example, major news agencies that have traditionally provided news exclusively in print formats changed their focus to tap into opportunities offered by the online news market (Goyette-Côté, Carbasse, & George, 2012), and this same trend has been rapidly occurring all over the world (Villi & Hayashi, 2017; Chyi & Tenenboim, 2019). On the other hand, as many newspaper publishers adapted their business processes new competitors continue to emerge (Newman & Levy, 2013). Put simply, just as consumers have greater access to new companies, online news providers have access to new readers who were previously constrained by geographical boundaries (Leurdijk, Slot, & Nieuwenhuis, 2012). These new providers generally fall into two categories: those that previously provided news

in a traditional format only and have since diversified to also provide news online; and those entities operating solely online – e.g., digital news platforms, news aggregators, search engines, and social media applications.

In order to attract new readers, newspaper publishers have shifted their practices, implemented various technologies into their businesses, adopted a social media presence, add video content, and followed the demands of their customers who prefer consuming news online (Wilding, Fray, Molitorisz, & McKewon, 2018; Giomelakis, Karypidou, & Veglis, 2019). Writing in the early 2000s, the American Press Institute (2006) noted that in the light of the pervasive diffusion of internetworking, newspaper publishers must understand the needs of their customers in a completely different way (American Press Institute, 2006), and they must allocate technology and communication resources to provide news that is of interest to their readers. Some fifteen years later, newspapers are accessible in online formats and on different social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, Snapchat, and Instagram. For example, *The New York Times* has a web presence on www.nytimes.com, as well as accounts on Twitter (<https://twitter.com/nytimes>) with 46.5 million followers, and a Facebook account (<https://www.facebook.com/nytimes>) with more than 17.2 million followers and more than 17.2 million people who “like” its Facebook page as of May 2020. Traditional newspaper publishers that are now producing online versions must compete with other newspapers that have established an online presence, as well as other online-only newspapers, websites and search engines that also seek to grab readers’ attention and advertisers’ dollars.

3.1.1.3 Social Challenges

The shift in readership away from traditional news journalism has had a major impact on the distribution and consumption of traditional news media, especially print newspapers,

as well as on the journalist's role insofar as it has altered the concept of the gatekeeper (Hepp, Breiter, & Hasebrink, 2018).

Technology has made the journalist's job easier than before with regards to collecting and distributing information to readers. However, the changes in technology have further empowered readers, allowed them to easily create, share, collect, store, modify, interpret, and incorporate new information more than ever (Graham & Hill, 2009; Lee, 2013). According to Nielsen (2014) and Lee and Chyi (2014b), journalists' choices regarding the news they report are often based on a common perception of newsworthiness and what they believe to be most interesting to their audience. In the past, a newspaper's journalists and editors deemed which stories were newsworthy for their readers and printed them without any involving or low participating from those readers (i.e. the recipients of the news). These changes have disrupted the gatekeeping function of newspaper publishers. It is the gatekeeper's role to decide what news and information should or should not be transmitted to readers (Nielsen, 2014). Traditionally, the gatekeeping⁶ practice of choosing what constitutes news has rested in the hands of the newsroom (Singer, 2014), yet it is now readers themselves who are determining what is of interest and newsworthy. According to Lee (2013), "active readers" consume the news that both interests them and satisfies their gratification needs. They do not wait for the journalist to provide them with news, but rather, actively seek out information that meets their own needs, further threatening the stability and traditional hierarchy of news journalism. These readers, it is claimed, are capable of determining the failure and success of newspapers by deciding on their own terms what they consider noteworthy (Lee & Chyi, 2014b). In other words, readers who used to receive information from news providers as one-

⁶ "Gatekeeping has been described as a 'regime of control' over what content is allowed to emerge from the newsroom and enter public circulation" (Singer 2014).

way communication are now becoming more interactive readers⁷ and can themselves become creators and disseminators of news. The digital media environment fosters two and even multi-way communication, where readers can directly reply back to the news provider and communicate amongst each other; a phenomenon that led to the emergence of citizen journalism⁸.

The Internet offers individuals a variety of channels from which to choose when consuming news or engaging in other forms of media (Albarran, 2010; Nielsen, Cornia, & Kalogeropoulos, 2016; Wilding, Fray, Molitorisz, & McKewon, 2018). Writing about how the internet was impacting traditional media organizations in the early 2000s, Albarran noted that audience behaviour, demographics, and needs changed significantly with the rise of digital media, which, in turn, forced media companies to look at their audiences in a completely different way. Writing during the same historical period, Napoli (2008) asserted: “Media audiences are changing. The dynamics of how audiences consume (and now, even produce) media are changing, as are the ways that media industries make sense of, and define, their audiences” (p. 2). The changes in audience behaviour and preferences to which these authors were referring, news publishers had to shift their business strategies to better align with the needs and desires of existing and prospective readers (Kerrigan & Graham, 2010). Since then, many news businesses have adopted technology and implemented online and social media presence to meet readers’ shifting behaviours (Everett, 2011; Wilding, Fray, Molitorisz, & McKewon, 2018). Based on studies from the Pew Research Center, the number of Americans who accessed news on social media between 2017 and 2018 surpassed the

⁷ Interactive readers: in this paper refer to readers who interact with each other in a two-way communication or multi-way communication with other readers or news providers through the internet.

⁸ Citizen journalism is sometimes described as public journalism or participatory journalism. It refers to people (citizens) who are not working at any media organization yet still gather content, create, produce, discuss and publish news reports, stories and information (Nip, 2006).

number of Americans who received their news from print newspapers. However, television remained a popular platform for news consumption (see Figure 11) (Shearer, 2018).

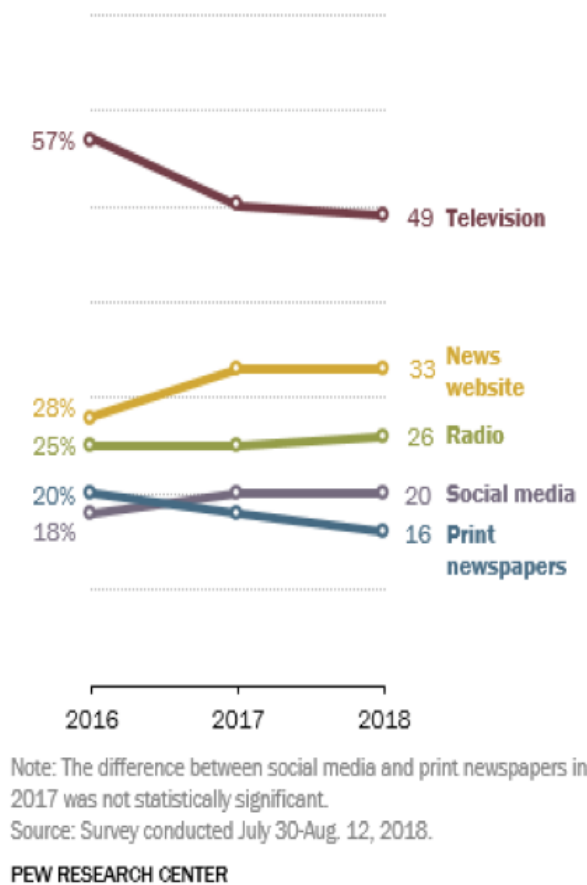


Figure 11 More Americans get news often from social media than from print newspapers (% of US adults who get news often on each platform) (From Shearer, 2018)

3.1.2 Marketing traditional print newspapers

Changes in technology, economics, circulation numbers, audience behaviours, and advertising streams have forced traditional newspaper publishers to find new ways of marketing their news. Like other businesses products and services, media products often require promotion in order for newspaper publishers to increase their consumer base (Palmer & Eriksen, 1999; Leurdijk, Slot, & Nieuwehuis, 2012; Bruns, 2018). The primary goal of a news media business is to attract and retain audiences, in order to attract advertisers and generate higher advertising revenues (Greer and Ferguson, 2011; Darr, 2018). Consequently,

newspaper publishers and other news media organizations have employed various strategies that involve self-promotion and cross-promotion (Terry, 2013; Freeman, 2015), as well as integrating and embracing online and social media platforms into their business plans to promote and market their brands (Schultz & Sheffer, 2012; Bruns, 2018).

3.1.2.1 Self-promotion marketing strategies

Self-promotion marketing strategies are a key method that has been used extensively by newspaper publishers and other media organizations to promote their content. Self-promotion is a strategy that “occurs within one media form” only (Terry, 2013, page 8). Newspaper publishers have always promoted their own content, and it has been a key method of marketing news in the print media industry. According to Hardy (2010), “the product which the media industries have to advertise is a privileged site for the advertisement of itself” (p. 91). Therefore, newspapers are themselves sites for newspaper publishers’ own marketing. In most cases, newspaper publishers use cover pages and newspaper mastheads to promote the contents of the inside pages. Such self-promotion often uses eye-catching headlines and fonts to entice readers to purchase one newspaper over another.

The transition from print to digitalized news delivery has made self-promotion insufficient as a mean of marketing for traditional print newspapers because this strategy does not reach people who do not read news in print format. Although it is still used by newspaper publishers, it now tends to be done in tandem with other means of promotion. For instance, many newspaper publishers now make use of social media sites to distribute their news content (Kumpel, Karnowski, & Keyling, 2015), as well as to promote and attract readers to the traditional print format. Not only is this method effective in marketing news outlets, it also involves lower costs for news publishers when compared to the cost of distributing traditional print newspapers. On the other hand, the use of social media limits the control that companies have over their own content and its dissemination (Mangold & Faulds, 2009;

Dwyer & Martin, 2017). Readers are now creators and disseminators of news—creating news through personal blogs, personal profile pages on various social media platforms, and disseminating this information via social media platforms.

3.1.2.2 Cross-promotion on allied media

Another effective way for newspaper publishers to promote their product is to advertise it on other media platforms they owned. This is known as allied media. This cross-promotional strategy has become more prevalent in recent years as a result of the number of mergers occurring in the media sector (Senter & Kim, 2017).

Many news businesses today are owned by conglomerates looking to maximize efficiencies (WebFX Team, 2017). This, however, is not new. Such large capitalist enterprises with diverse media interests have existed for more than a century. For instance, by 1918, the entrepreneur William Randolph Hearst had already established a media empire comprised of 31 newspapers and 6 magazines, as well as other media services (Hardy, 2010). Today, it is common for a newspaper to be marketed by a magazine, radio, or television channel owned by the same media group. For example, the Canadian newspaper *The Globe and Mail* is owned by Bell Globemedia which also owns conventional broadcast and pay TV. Also, *The Daily Mail* is owned by Daily Mail and General Trust which also owns television and radio stations. In many countries including Canada, UK and the US, cross-promotion of news content considered as a popular method of marketing news (Hardy, 2010; Terry, 2013; McClellan, 2017; Hardy, na). Such cross-promotion takes the form of advertising in spaces that would otherwise be used for third-party advertising.

3.1.2.3 Cross-promotion on non-allied media

A third method of marketing news entails cross-promotions on non-allied media. Dailey, Demo, and Spillman (2005) conducted a survey in the early 2000s, at that time, they found that almost 30% of daily newspaper publishers in the US had established partnerships

with television stations for cross-promotional purposes. A later study done by Dailey and Spillman (2013) surveying top editors (N=132) at US daily newspapers revealed that 42% of newspapers had partnership with TV stations, 47% had partnership with other newspapers, and 21% had partnerships with radio stations. Hardy (2010) suggest that collaborating with third-party companies is another form of advertisement. Social media platforms make it possible for media organizations to promote their content online by creating profiles on different social media applications. For example, *The New York Times* has an account on Twitter in which it tweets latest news stories on its account.

Newspaper publishers in particular, have adopted this strategy of promoting their content with the help of other independent media, including on the radio, on television, in magazines, and in other newspapers (Dailey & Spillman, 2013). This approach usually involves newspaper publishers, or other media organizations, being charged fees for placing advertisements on the platforms of other media organizations. However, the increased competition in the industry has made this form of promotion unpopular, especially when media are promoting products that are similar or in direct competition to their own (Hardy, 2010; Hardy, 2015), since these days most news media organizations already have alternative platforms for promoting their own content, especially online and through social media (Orellana-Rodriguez, & Keane, 2018).

3.1.3 Marketing the news online

The current communication of news through online and digital platforms has disrupted the traditional marketing channels of newspapers, and diversified the options available for advertising print newspapers by creating a faster and more convenient and low-cost means of advertising traditional print newspapers. Whereas the traditional broadcast model perceived audience as an unidentifiable mass (Hermida, Fletcher, Korell, & Logan,

2012), the contemporary online environment enables on- and off-line newspaper publishers to potentially increase their readership base by promoting their content online.

Social media have become an important marketing platform for most online newspapers (Hermida, Fletcher, Korell, & Logan, 2012; Olausson, 2018). Social networking sites such as Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Telegram and Twitter all provide links that direct users to news stories on the websites owned by media companies. Journalists also have adopted to social media as a means for promoting their own online content and raising their profile and that of the media organizations for which they work (Terry, 2013; Brems, Temmerman, Graham, & Broersma, 2017; Molyneux, Holton, & Lewis, 2018). Many North American and European (e.g., *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Telegraph*) news organizations have also adapted to this context by adding social networking functionality to their websites, which transfers readers who click on links to other interfaces on which the news organization has an official account. News organizations that create an official account on these social media sites allow and encourage audiences to share the news and information on their personal webpages by linking stories posted on the original news provider's platform.

3.1.3.1 Social sharing

Most newspapers now have a web presence on multiple social media platforms (Hong, 2012; Bowd, 2016), and have integrated Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Telegram, and Snapchat into their business strategies. The process of successfully attracting, reaching, and retaining large numbers of subscribers and followers online requires a strategic understanding of the readers being targeted and the process of building social media based relationships with these readers (Guo, 2014). Such methods require the creation of attractive headlines and engaging stories that trigger readers' curiosity and grab their attention.

Bastos (2014) showed that the efficacy of social sharing differs significantly from one social platform to another depending on the type of news being share and on the social media

platform being used. According to his study of social sharing trends among different newspapers, different types of news articles generate different level of web traffic depending on the social media platform that it presents it. For instance, he found that the most popular stories *The New York Times* posted on Facebook generated different degrees of interest than those that were most popular on Twitter.

By 2013, social sharing has become a standard practice employed by such newspapers as *The New York Times* and *The Guardian* to attract readers across different social media platforms (Bastos & Zago, 2013). Since then, social sharing has empowered readers to decide what news stories they share through different communication channels (Chakraborty, Ghosh, Ganguly, & Gummadi, 2019). A significant aspect of social sharing involves breaking down news content according to various categories. According to Bastos (2014), at that time of writing, Art and opinion pieces, for example, tend to be emphasized on Facebook page of *The New York Times*, articles about economy, technology and national news tend to be more popular on *The New York Times* Twitter account than any other social platform (Bastos, 2014). A follow up study by Chakraborty, Ghosh, Ganguly, and Gummadi (2019) revealed a slightly change in their finding, Arts, Opinion, and National stories are more shared on *The New York Times* Facebook page, whereas World, Technology, and Business stories are more popular on *The New York Times* Twitter account (Chakraborty, Ghosh, Ganguly, & Gummadi, 2019). Other social media platforms such as WhatsApp have recently become popular among people who are looking to share news in a more private manner. According to a 2018 Reuters study, WhatsApp is being used as both a messaging application and a news provider for readers seeking a more private means of accessing news. For instance, in Malaysia, 54% of Reuters study participants said they used WhatsApp for news. Similar findings were observed in Brazil (48%) and Spain (36%). This led the authors of the study to conclude that the use of WhatsApp for news “has almost tripled since 2014 and has overtaken

Twitter in importance in many countries” (p. 11) (Newman, Fletcher, Kalogeropoulos, Levy, & Nielsen, 2019).

3.1.3.2 Developing content strategy

Leurdijk, Slot, and Nieuwenhuis (2012) note that by developing strategies for online content, newspaper publishers have a wide range of avenues through which to communicate news and information to their readers. Newspaper publishers have had to learn how to effectively create and use their own platforms as well as learn how to effectively use other social media platforms to provide information to readers in an interesting way in order to increase their brand value, their readership base, and the value of the information they are provide to readers, while at the same time satisfying their readers’ emotional benefits⁹ and needs. While news publishers face unrelenting pressure to go online, most researchers had found differences in content between online newspapers and those appearing in the traditional print format. For instance, some online newspapers incorporate more local news than what they provide on their traditional print version, while others provide more opinion content online (Tewksbury & Rittenberg, 2012). Moreover, a study done by Santana and Dozier (2019), analyzing 50 US newspapers found that newspapers publishers provide different news content to mobile newsreaders (e.g. more braking news) comparing to their own print and online content. Similarly, when compared between online and print newspaper, the former appears to also provide more breaking news than the later (Santana & Dozier, 2019). However, online media have also become increasingly competitive, and virtually almost all newspapers now have an online presence (Pew Research Center, 2006; Mishra, 2017).

⁹ “Emotional benefits involves the understanding, peace of mind, comfort, self-esteem, feelings of involvement, participation, belonging, and community that consumers receive as a result of their use of the news product” (Picard, 2006, page 83).

Newspapers have changed their approach to content delivery by including more videos, pictures, and infographic features to their news stories (Leurdijk, Slot, & Nieuwenhuis, 2012; Jenkins, & Nielsen, 2020). The integration of these features into online content helps to enhance content delivery, enriches reader experience, and may evoke a desired emotional response. By integrating video features, newspapers may lure readers and grab their attention.

Another modification in content strategy has been the speed of content delivery. Newspaper publishers have shifted toward using their website or social media platform to release breaking news as it happens at any time of the day or night (Kerrigan & Graham, 2010; Greer & Ferguson, 2016). Some newspapers such as *The New York Times* have enhanced their live coverage of certain events through the use of YouTube channels. A 2016 Pew Research Center study indicated that readers of print newspapers are more likely to prefer watching the news on television as opposed to reading print editions (as cited from Barthel, 2016).

Rothmann and Koch (2014) found that the scope of content strategy goes beyond the news to capture advertisements that newspaper publishers integrate into their social media marketing attempts. These authors conclude, that with readers exposed to an extensive variety of online content, newspaper publishers have had to become more proactive at raising the bar in terms of the quality of advertisements (Rothmann & Koch, 2014).

3.1.3.3 Developing a strong revenue stream

This section provides a general outline of different strategies that newspapers have adopted in response to declining revenues, including introducing paywalls, using outsourcing as a way of reducing newspaper costs, and implementing hybrid business models to generate content and increase readership.

As mentioned earlier, newspapers have traditionally relied on advertising as their main source of revenue (Mitchell, Jurkowitz, & Guskin, 2013). However, this scenario has changed over the last decade as prospective advertisers have become less confident about the ability of print publications to reach large and targeted audiences. In response to their declining revenue streams, newspaper companies have adopted a range of strategies aimed at recapturing this income, including using free, premium, freemium, and metered models to circulate news (Albarran, 2010; Goyanes & Sylvie, 2014; Chyi & Lee, 2013; Chiou & Tucker, 2013). The free model focuses on providing content at zero cost to the consumer, generating revenue primarily through advertisements (Bleyen & Hove, 2010; Kirchhoff, 2009; Goyanes & Dürrenberg, 2014). Since the content itself is free, it increases the possibility that a greater number of people will have access to individual stories, which creates an opportunity for any advertisers who want to reach out to broad and diverse audiences.

The freemium business model is a mix of both free and premium content with a paywall (Holm, 2016), where some content is freely available while the full content is locked behind a paywall. According to Simon and Graves (2019) the freemium online news model has been the most popular business model in the digital sector. The authors also noted that the freemium and the metered models are the most dominant in Europe. This said, it must be noted that the freemium model does not exist in the US (Simon & Graves, 2019). Given that digital versions of newspapers often are cheaper than their printed counterparts, most newspapers have adopted the freemium and metered models (Simon & Graves, 2019) in attempts to encourage more readers to subscribe to the online version as a way to generate greater sales and revenues (Fortunati & Sarrica, 2010) while continuing to generate revenue from other sources such as advertising (Cornia, Sehl, Simon, & Nielsen, 2017).

Another approach that has been effective for some newspapers is to charge fees for digital content through monthly, quarterly, and yearly subscriptions (Leurdijk, Slot, & Nieuwenhuis, 2012), or requiring readers to purchase a daily pass (Chiou & Tucker, 2013). In an attempt to attract readers, some newspapers will allow users to access a limited number of articles for free before introducing the subscriptions (Leurdijk, Slot, & Nieuwenhuis, 2012). For instance, *The New York Times* allows readers to access a number of articles before a pop-up window appears asking readers to subscribe for full access (Leurdijk, Slot, & Nieuwenhuis, 2012; O'Malley, 2015; Benton, 2019). According to Reuters Institute in its annual digital news report, those who are paying for news online are most likely characterized as people who are wealthy and possess a university degree (Faulconbridge, 2019; Newman, Fletcher, Kalogeropoulos, & Nielsen, 2019).

There will always be far more people who prefer getting the news for free rather than paying for it. Chyi (2005) showed that only 1.3% of Hong Kong citizens surveyed (N=853) reported being willing to pay for news. A later study by Chyi and Lee (2013) had similar findings, showing that only 6% of the respondents (N=767) indicated that they were very likely to pay for online content. Another online study with 1000 adult participants conducted in August 2018 by a Vancouver-based research company found that 47% of participants do not visit any news providers that charge fees for online access. The study also found that only 9% of participants reported paying to read news online (Chin, 2018).

Another effective method that may help to sell newspapers while also reducing costs is to outsource printing services to a third party (Karimi & Walter, 2016; Leurdijk, Slot, & Nieuwenhuis, 2012; Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development OECD, 2010a). Although this method does not explicitly generate revenues, it allows the newspaper company to completely focus on content delivery through its digital platforms, thus reducing printing costs.

In addition to generating revenue from online subscriptions, newspapers have shifted their business practice to include the use of digital advertising. According to a 2015 survey conducted by Lu and Holcomb (2016) involving 94 digital news publishers, 94% of participants still relied on display advertising to increase their revenues. Although these advertisements have not entirely saved newspaper companies from financial uncertainty, they have been essential in creating another avenue through which newspapers can compensate for the financial losses incurred by their traditional print platform (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2010a).

There has also been growing interest within the industry about the potential benefits of implementing hybrid business models, whereby newspapers take advantage of the high traffic on their websites to generate revenues. The so-called hybrid paywall model involves generating innovative content aimed at boosting website traffic (Barland, 2013), and uses a “combination of a monthly page view limit and some premium content” (Simon & Graves, 2019, page 3). The objective here is to increase the number of visitors to the newspaper’s website, thereby enabling the company to both attract more advertising and tap into greater online advertising revenues.

3.1.3.4 Cross-platform branding

The use of digital tools by media organizations is now a prominent way of reaching readers. Newspapers had been trying to use their media outlet to target readers and increase awareness of the company’s digital platforms —this form of cross-platform branding is a way for an organization to promote its brand through the integration of both digital and traditional media outlets (Terry, 2013). The use of cross-platform branding had been slow among newspaper companies reflecting, in part, the slowness of the news industries in general to adapt to technological change (Albarran, 2010). Yet companies that have adopted this strategy (e.g. Bell media) have been able to develop better brand awareness among their

target readers and have achieved competitive differentiation advantages on their online platforms (Precourt, 2015; Li, Larimo, & Leonidou, 2020).

Moreover, the use of digital tools have improved the capability of newspapers to reach out to a specific niche of readers which, in turn, ensures that the digital platform of these newspapers can meet the specific needs of their readers and subscribers (Stewart & Pavlou, 2009, page 405; Nelson, 2017; Li, Larimo, & Leonidou, 2020).

To sum up, newspapers used to rely on a sole marketing platform when reaching out to their readers. The advent of the Internet opened up another arena for newspapers to reach their readers. The use of cross-platform branding has helped many companies including newspaper companies increase brand awareness and achieve a competitive advantage over their competitors (Precourt, 2015; Li, Larimo, & Leonidou, 2020). In addition, newspaper companies have adopted different strategies to market and disseminate the news. These include social sharing, developing content strategies, developing stronger revenue streams, and increasing brand recognition through cross-platform branding.

3.1.4 Determining brand value in the media industry

The discussion in this section examines the importance of brand, and its value proposition of the newspaper companies.

It is brand name and recognition that distinguishes news organizations from one another. Kotler (1994) provides the most commonly cited definition of brand: “A brand is a name, term, sign, symbol or design, or a combination of them, intended to identify the goods or services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of the competitors”. Holt advances a complementary view stating that the “brand is the product as it is experienced and valued in everyday social life” (2003, page 2).

According to Picard (2006), it often is consumers who determine the value of objects based on their own individual needs, demands, behaviours, and choices. “Value is shaped by

the subjective understanding of customers,” not only by what the company considers the “objective qualities of the product” (Holt, 2003, page 2). Newspapers need to build a strong brand name and must take into consideration what readers value. Describing value as “the basis of price”, McCracken (2005) argues that the product and/or service of an organization delivers value to customers because “it has delivered meaning” (p. 178). The key aspect of value creation is the products and services a firm produces which it believes to be of value to the consumers (Riel, Calabretta, Driessen, Hillebrand, Humphreys, Krafft, & Beckers, 2013). The latter comprise a firm’s value proposition. Holt defines value proposition as “the various types and amounts of value that the firm wants customers to receive from the market offering” (2003, page 1). It helps organizations communicate with their customers and offer them the services they need.

Moreover, the fundamental value proposition of every newspaper organization is to provide and deliver news to its customers. Value propositions are primarily shaped by the market, with an emphasis on the customer’s perspective; therefore, because media organizations can play an important role in the relationship between management, customers, and marketing, they often work to provide multiple value propositions (Chandler & Lusch, 2015). Information is considered an intangible economic good, and since it can be sold, it can thus generate revenue (Chan-Olmsted, 2006). Newspapers – whether on- or off-line - present information in different formats—as facts, as analyses, or as breaking news (Wurff, 2011). The ways in which a newspaper company packages information may be unique and distinctive in order to differentiate it from other news providers, with the goal of attracting a wider spectrum of customers (Picard, 2006).

Different factors can play a role in determining the brand value such as quality of the news reported (Hamilton, 2006). Labasse (2008) found the same effect among French news consumers. However, other factors come into play as well such as depth in coverage,

impartiality of reporting, accuracy or familiarity with the writing style, convenience of the online experience, habits, and the brand name of the news provider (Kantar Media, 2017).

People tend to consume and have greater trust in sources of information or newspaper brands that they know and trust (Newman, Levy, & Nielsen, 2015), especially those that have had a longstanding and prominent presence in the media industry. Many newspapers highlight their long history of existence in order to convey a message that they can be trusted. For example, *The New York Times*, which has been a daily newspaper since 1851, is one of the most popular newspapers in the US, and its lifespan contributes to this popularity (The New York Times Company, 2017). The longer a brand endures, the more credible it appears, and the organisations behind it can capitalize on this perception to attract more consumers.

People who trust the printed format of a newspaper brand will generally tend to subscribe to the same brand online. For instance, *The New York Times* estimated an overlap of 25% between its online and offline readers (Ahlers, 2006), which suggested that readers who trust this long-lasting brand may still prefer to read it in other media formats. Similarly, in the UK, many newspapers estimated an overlap between its online and offline readers (e.g. *The Sun Newspaper* 15%, *The Daily Mail* 13%, and *The Guardian* 11%) (Horsman, Fleming, & Genovese, 2018).

Moreover, readers who get news from newspapers may also consume it from other providers. Thus, audience overlap can also be found between different media players (Webster and Ksiazek, 2012; Weeks, Ksiazek, & Holbert, 2016). For instance, Webster and Ksiazek (2012) found that the audience fragmentation impacts upon news brand value. The authors conducted a systematic analysis of television and Internet viewing habits, and found that there are “high levels of audience duplication across 236 media outlets, suggesting overlapping patterns of public attention rather than isolated groups of audience loyalists” (Webster & Ksiazek, 2012, page 39). A later study by Weeks, Ksiazek, and Holbert (2016)

followed up on Webster and Ksiazek study in 2012 found that there is a high level of audience duplication among media outlets (e.g. local newspapers and TV news channels).

3.1.4.1 The Internet and brand value

Despite the number of challenges that newspapers have encountered as a result of technological advancements, the Internet has increased newspapers' options for branding and maintaining brand value. According to Da Silva and Alwi (2008), "online branding is more focalized on personalization, customer service, ease of use and security". Moreover, Sriram (2018) state that, legacy news organizations brand reach more readers than newer digital players due to their historical existence, yet reaching out to more readers does not always translate to increased advertising revenue. Thus, it seems plausible that branded news organizations continue to hold value in the digital environment.

Kerrigan and Graham (2010) investigated online news brands and competition for audiences and advertising revenues using semi-structured in-depth interviews and focus groups to examine the impact of the Internet on three London-based newspapers. They found that, at the time of writing, the London market had become fragmented, ostensibly forcing news organizations to reinvent themselves to survive. They concluded that in spite of their ever-developing multimedia portfolios, the media organizations in their study were not fully harnessing the power of the Internet and the potential of social media to deliver engaging user experiences.

3.1.4.2 The brand value and the paywall

The introduction of the pay walls led to across the board declines in on-line newspaper readership. Readers with low education degree, and those with low financial income, and those with low interest in news are less likely to pay or subscribe for digital news in the US (Newman, Fletcher, Kalogeropoulos, & Nielsen, 2019). According to O'Malley (2015) newspaper companies need to adopt alternative strategies to attract younger

readers. The researcher state that *The New York Times* offers mobile content at a low cost or for free to attract younger generations of readers in an attempt to entice them to become potential paid subscribers (O'Malley, 2015). Chyi (2005) found that people are unwilling to pay for online news, and when asked for their future intent, only 21% of participants said they would be willing to pay if it was necessary. Moreover, according to Reuters Institute report in 2019, most people are not willing to pay for online news and are unlikely to pay in the future. Another report by Stewart and Kenny (2020) found that only 16% of US readers (N=1010), 17% of UK readers (N=1002), 31% of South Korea readers (N=1003), 38% of India readers (N=3541), 22% of Germany readers (N=1001), and 37% of China readers (N=1608) are currently paying for news. Focusing on Denmark, Kammer, Boeck, Hansen, and Hauschildt (2015) found that young Danish newspaper readers are willing to pay for online news only if they can combine news content from different news providers. The researchers' findings suggest that young Danish readers could have the intention to pay for news, but only if it meets their specific needs and gratification and only if the news is of value to them. Reuter Institute (2019) found that the number of people paying for news subscriptions online is still low compared to those who are currently paying for print (Newman, Fletcher, Kalogeropoulos, & Nielsen, 2019).

Brands are dedicated to attracting customers, and the way for newspaper companies to achieve this is to convey an image of being credible trustworthy sources of interesting information, and to inform readers of what to expect from the media product (Siegert, 2008). Building brands requires a high level of brand awareness (Keller, 2001, as cited in Padgett & Mulvey, 2007), which is a much easier task for established newspapers than for smaller and newer publications seeking to expand their audiences (Steyn & Steyn, 2014).

Newspapers that employ paywall models focus on creating value not only for advertisers and investors but also for readers. According to Goyanes and Sylvie (2014), these

models depends on the satisfaction of customers, the importance of the content provided, whether the content meets readers' needs, and readers' perception of the quality of the newspaper's content (Goyanes & Sylvie, 2014). Newspaper companies operating through the use of a premium business model dedicate themselves to establishing a loyal customer base, by providing news of value to subscribers. This may take many forms including providing stories written by a popular journalist or one that specializes in a particular subject, attracting new subscribers with additional functions and services such as stock trackers and investment analyses (Carson, 2015), and/or the ability to read news on multiple platforms (Myllylahti, 2014).

Brand loyalty is an important indicator that measures the value of the brand to the customer. According to Punniyamoorthy and Raj (2007), brand loyalty is shaped by numerous factors, among them customer satisfaction, brand trust, commitment, price worthiness, and social value. Thus, when customers choose which newspaper to follow and/or subscribe, it seems plausible their attraction to a certain newspaper will likely be influenced by a combination of these factors. The authors have also found that brands provide value by improving customer loyalty, because "brand trust acts as a significant factor in influencing brand loyalty." (2007, page 224). Newspaper brands use different strategies to help ensure customers remain loyal. For example, they can provide more convenient methods of payment—either monthly, yearly, or pay-per-article subscriptions (Goyanes & Dürrenberg, 2014).

3.1.4.3 The relationship between credibility and newspaper brands

Trust and credibility are considered among the most important factors contributing to a newspaper company's value proposition. Newspapers publishers are somewhat unique compared to other online sources that do not employ professional editors, journalists, and fact-checkers with specialized skills, whereas newspaper publishers perform quality control

on all of their content (Lee, 2015). According to Greer (2003), the online version of *The New York Times* (*Nytimes.com*) considered more credible than a personal web page or blog. In March 2005, *The New York Times* achieved a 17% increase in page views from 2004. At that time, about 15 million unique users had visited *The New York Times* website, which was, at that time, five times more than the number of people who read the print version of the newspaper (Ahlers, 2006). This number has drastically increased since then. The 2018 *New York Times* Annual Report stated that NYTimes.com had a monthly average of 134 million unique visitors from around the world who access the website from different devices—on desktops, laptops or mobile devices based on internal data estimates—and has an approximate average of 94 million unique visitors in the United States alone based on comScore Media Metrix (*The New York Times*, 2019). These data suggest that *The New York Times* is adapting to the online environment, and that its brand still provides value and credible news to customers.

In addition, customers in the US are still attracted to popular brands, and *The New York Times* is an example of how newspaper brands in this Internet environment can still provide value and remain credible and popular to audiences (Leurdijk, Slot, & Nieuwenhuis, 2012). According to Router Institute Report (2020), news brand continues to hold value in the digital environment as US readers continue to prefer to subscribe to branded newspapers such as *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*. Thus, it seems plausible that credible and trusted news source contribute to its value proposition.

3.1.4.4 Influence of blogs and social networks on newspaper brands

Social networks and blogs are two of the main factors that have altered the landscape for traditional media publications. The vast majority of bloggers are not even involved in any form of journalism (Gerlis, 2008), yet numerous news blogs have emerged in recent years (Fortunati & Sarrica, 2010; Kim, Kim, Wang, & Lee, 2016), and journalists and critics are

now using blogs to inform the public about media organizations (Albarran, 2010), and/or journalists are using microblogs such as Twitter as an information source, for self-fulfillment, to be an influencer, and for work efficiency (Kim, Kim, Wang, & Lee, 2016). Blogs provide interactivity among users, who can share information, ideas, and their opinions with one another as well as with the news providers (Deuze, 2003; Thorson & Rodgers, 2006; Kietzmann, Hermkens, McCarthy, & Silvestre, 2011).

Blogs and news aggregators (i.e., sites that aggregate multiple news links) has altered readers' consumption patterns and challenged the authority of journalists as well as altering the privileged position of newspapers as news providers (Siles & Boczkowski, 2012). According to a 2013 Reuters Institute Digital News Report, "aggregators and new players have had the biggest impact in Japan and the US, while social media have the strongest foothold in Brazil, Spain, and Italy" (Newman & Levy, 2013, page 53). Japan was the only country where aggregators were the primary source of news consumption (78%), while the majority of people around the world still prefer to get their news from the websites of trusted news brands (see Figure 12 and Figure 13) (Newman & Levy, 2013).

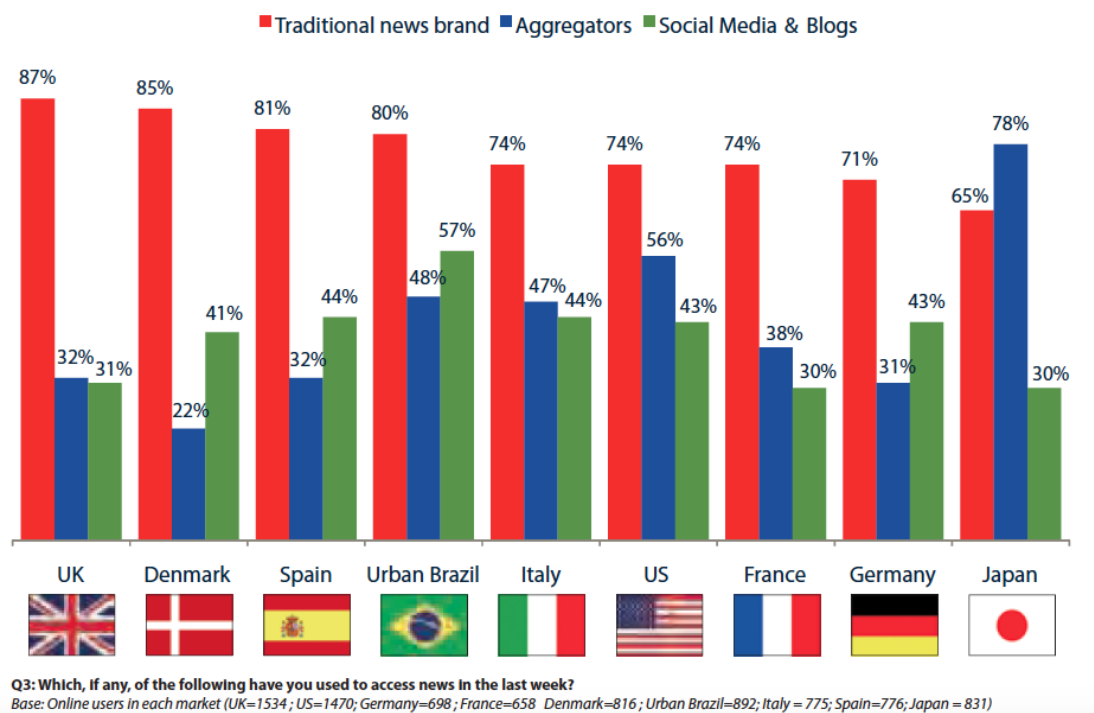


Figure 12 Strength of traditional news brands online compared by country (From Newman & Levy, 2013)

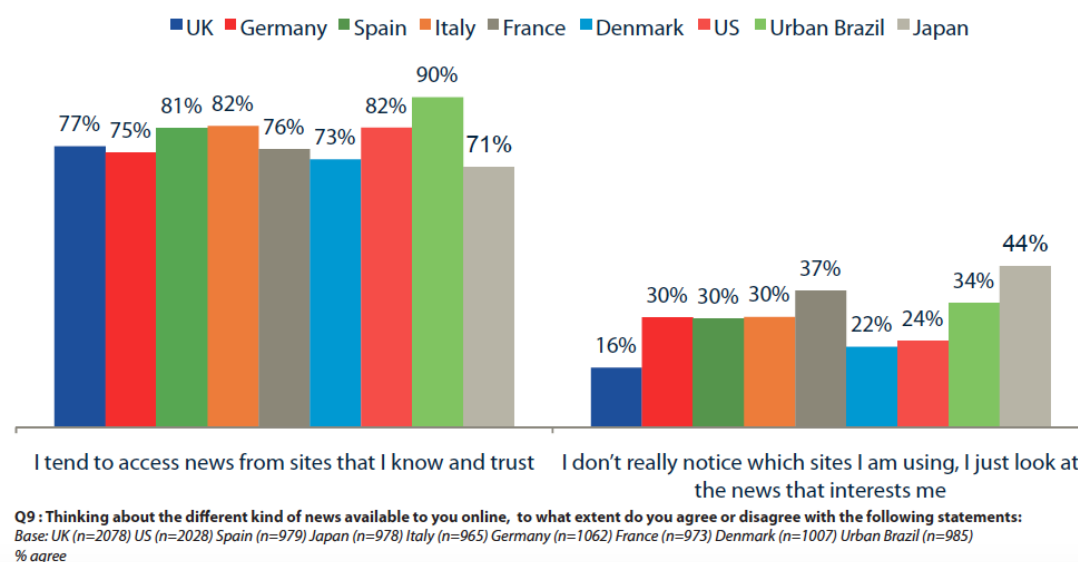


Figure 13 Preference for accessing news via trusted sites (all countries) (From Newman & Levy, 2013)

According to Router Institute Report (2020) Aggregators remain an important source of news in South Korea and Japan. While, in the UK, Australia, Croatia, Czech, Denmark, Finland, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Netherlands, and Norway, online including social media surpass TV as a source of getting news, However, in France, and Italy TV was slightly higher than online including social media in 2019. Yet, online source has slightly surpassed TV after 2019 in these two countries. Moreover, in Germany during 2019 people mostly get news from TV, while during 2020 TV and online including social media both consider an important source of news (Newman, Fletcher, Schulz, Andi, & Nielsen, 2020).

The level of trust in news media has fall globally. The same study by Newman, Fletcher, Schulz, Andi, and Nielsen (2020), reported that as Coronavirus hits, the overall level of trust in the news was at the lowest point since they start to track their data in all markets. However, people still trust news that they use. According to the researchers:

“In the US and France, local news is the most trusted news brand, while in Finland, Norway, and Germany local newspapers are second to public broadcasters, that have also built much of their reputation on local TV and radio services. In the UK, local newspapers are trusted by 55%, fourth in the list and much higher than the average for commercial media. Elsewhere, local news brands are typically trusted by more than half the surveyed population – for example, in Mexico (59%) and the Philippines (64%).” (Newman, Fletcher, Schulz, Andi, and Nielsen 2020, p. 49).

By the end of the first decade of the 2000s, almost all well-known newspaper companies internationally had established, and were publishing news on their own online platforms and on their different official accounts on social networks (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), 2010a; Hong, 2012) and using their platforms to gather information about their readers. These days, social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter have a much larger audience and more traffic than online newspapers (Hong, 2012; Bergström, & Jervelycke Belfrage, 2018; Boukes, 2019), yet, social media may help newspapers increase their web traffic. For example, *The New York*

Times Facebook page has been liked by more than 17.5 million people as of November 2020, and has more than 17.6 million followers, while its Twitter page has more than 48.2 million followers as of November 2020. Moreover, searching for the word “news” on Facebook pages still displayed the most popular newspaper brands (e.g., *The Wall Street Journal*, *The New York Times*, and *Daily Mail*) and news agencies (e.g., Reuters), suggesting that newspaper brands and news agencies continue to be seen as top hits than non-traditional news sources, bloggers, and news aggregators and providers.

Newspaper brands may generate traffic indirectly to their main website through social networking sites (Hong, 2012; Cornia, Sehl, Levy, & Nielsen, 2018). Hong (2012) presented an example of how individuals’ recommendations on a news story of one newspaper can generate traffic to its website. For instance, if someone only follows a local newspaper on Twitter, but other tweeters whom this user is following recommend reading an article from *The New York Times* or *The Washington Post*, there is a good chance this other person will respond to these recommendations, click on the link that will redirect him/her to those websites, and maybe even become a regular reader. This may also continue to be the case these days. As newspaper publishers use their accounts on different social media applications to drive traffic to its electronic site (Cornia, Sehl, Levy, & Nielsen, 2018). It seems plausible that today’s society is highly information-driven, and therefore diversification into blogs and social networking sites is one of the main ways that newspaper brands can attract and retain readership.

3.1.5 Digital use worldwide

The global population as of January 2020 was an estimated 7.75 billion people, of which 4.54 billion are Internet users. In addition, 3.80 billion are active social media users

(Kemp, 2020a), and in January 2019 there was 3.256 billion active mobile phone social media users (Kemp¹⁰, 2019a).

When looking at the breakdown of each region, it is clear that there is continued overall growth in Internet use, social media access, and mobile social media users in each continent. Looking at each region individually help the researcher to better comprehend the growth of the digital use in each country and thus assess the understanding of the level of the digital shift in the Arab Region. In return, the researcher can compare between the level of change in the West and in Arab countries.

Table 1 below provides a summary of the overall growth in each region.

Table 1 Overall growth in Internet use, social media access, (January 2012), and mobile social media users in the world (January, 2019)

Digital use as of Jan 2020	Total population	Annual growth	Internet users	Annual growth	Active social media users	Annual growth	Total population Jan 2019	Annual growth Jan 2019	Active mobile social media users (as of January 2019)	Annual growth (as of January 2019)
Around the world	7.75*	+1.1%	4.54*	+7.0%	3.80*	+9.2%	7.676*	+1.1%	3.256*	+10.0%
Africa	1.32*	+2.5%	453.2**	+10.0%	217.5**	+12.0%	1.304*	+2.5%	202.4**	+17.0%
The Americas	1.020*	+0.8%	776.1**	+2.3%	678.5**	+6.0%	1.020*	+0.9%	610.5**	+5.0%
Asia-Pacific	4.30*	+0.8%	2.42*	+9.2%	2.14*	+9.8%	4.250*	+0.8%	1.931*	+13.0%
Europe	849.5**	+0.2%	711.3**	+1.6%	470.5**	+4.4%	846.0**	+0.2%	393.4**	+4.5%
Middle East	258.8**	+1.7%	182.1**	+14%	125.4**	+14%	256.6**	+1.7%	118.0**	+2.3%

*=In billions, **=In millions

The annual growth is based on each region's population.

(Source: Kemp¹¹, 2019a; Kemp, 2020a)

¹⁰ Note: In justifying why I have relied on Kemp in reporting some of my data is that the information provided was difficult to obtain elsewhere, as the researcher has been unable to access comparable data from other resources. However, Kemp provides data as it is from many sources that include public and private companies and government agencies.

¹¹ Note: In justifying why I have relied on Kemp in reporting some of my data is that the information provided was difficult to obtain elsewhere, as the researcher has been unable to access comparable data from other

3.1.6 Time spent on the Internet around the world

As of January 2020, Philipinos are the most active Internet users, averaging 9:45 minutes of average daily use among those in the 16-64 age bracket. Users in the Philippines are followed by their counterparts in South Africa at 9:22, Brazil at 9:17, and Colombia at 9:10 minutes. The countries that are accessing the Internet the least are Japan at 4:22 minutes, Netherlands at 4:37, Germany at 4:52, and Denmark at 5:07. The overall time spent on the Internet fell slightly from January Q3 2018 to January Q3 2019 by 0.7% (Kemp, 2020a).

3.1.7 Social media use

Social media use also is growing globally. Based on Countries and Territories with the largest change in the absolute number of social media users (Jan 2020 vs. Apr 2019), and the greatest growth has been in India, followed by China, Indonesia and Brazil (see Figure 14), with users in the Philippines spending the most time using social media via any device at 3 hours and 53 minutes.

resources. However, Kemp provides data as it is from many sources that include public and private companies and government agencies.



Figure 14 Social Media Growth Rankings: Absolute Change (Source: Kemp, 2020a)

As of January 2019, mobile social media use continued to expand in many regions, with the U.A.E. having the highest penetration rate of 92% use followed by Taiwan at 89%. The lowest penetration rates are found in Nigeria at 12% and Kenya at 15% (Kemp, 2019a).

A Reuters Institute digital news report from 2019 (as cited from Kemp, 2019c) regarding consuming news on digital platforms found that: 82% of the participants (N=75,749) reported using online media (including social media), 70% stated they watch news on television (both broadcast and cable news), 52% primarily use social media (including messengers), and 32% said they still access news through print media and/or broadcast radio.

The countries that consume the most online news (using online channels including social media) are Greece and Mexico, where 92% and 91% of the participants, respectively, report accessing news online. Japan (60% of the participants), Germany (68%), report the lowest percentages of people accessing news online.

Mexico has the highest percentage of participants who use social media as a news source (73%), followed by South Africa (72%). South Korea (26%), and Germany (34%) have the lowest percentage of participants accessing news via social media (Kemp, 2019c).

3.1.8 Paying for news online

The Reuters Institute report (as cited from Kemp, 2019c) states that the highest percentage of Internet users who paid for news online in 2018 (34%) came from Norway and Turkey, followed by Sweden at 27%. The countries least willing to pay for online news were Croatia (6%) followed by the Czech Republic, Hungary, Bulgaria, Greece, Portugal, Chile, and Japan (each at 7%). The study also determined that the 25-to-34-year-old age group was most likely to pay for news online (17%), while the age group least likely to pay for online news was in the 45-to-54-year-old range and those 55 years of age and older (11%) (Kemp, 2019c).

3.2 The Arab World

3.2.1 The history of the press in the Arab world

The historical backdrop of the press in the Arab world dates back to the nineteenth century, while some historians date its origins to 1798 when French troops conquered Cairo. Even though not intended for an Arab audience, the first French periodical to appear in an Arabic-speaking land was *Le Courier de L’Egypte*. Some Egyptian commentators maintain that *Al-Hawadith Al-Yowmiyyah* (“Daily Events”) was first written in Arabic and then translated into French was in fact, the first Arabic paper (Ayalon, 1995). Other historians contend that the first Arab newspaper to be written specifically by and for Arabs was a Baghdad-based periodical, called *Jurnal Al-Iraq*. Established in 1816, this periodical was published in both the Arabic and Turkish languages. Shortly thereafter, two other newspapers were published in Cairo by the Egyptian government. *Jirnal al-Khadyu* and *Al-Waqa’ Al-Masriya* which started to be published in 1827 and 1828, respectively are considered by some

to be the first native Egyptian papers. These were followed by publications in Algeria in 1847, Beirut in 1858, Tunis in 1861, Damascus in 1865, and Tripoli, Libya, in 1866. The first official Arabic daily newspaper began publishing in Beirut in 1873 (Rugh, 2004), followed by San'a in 1879, Casablanca in 1889, Khartoum in 1899, and Mecca in 1908.

3.2.1.1 Media business in the Arab world

Rugh (2004) theorized that the press in the Arab world is divided into 4 ideal types: the mobilization press, the loyalist press, the diverse print media, and the transitional system of print media. Webb (2012) later study the changes within these four types and found that this division was valid, yet, some modifications were reported regarding the countries that fall under those categories. Moreover, Freedom of the press provides details about each country's categorization and the change in its press freedom in which may justify that Rugh categorization may still hold true these days (The Freedom House, 2020).

Rugh describes the mobilization press as being controlled by state governments. However, the government itself does not own the newspapers falling into this category and the news stories they publish may even contain some level of criticism regarding local government services (Rugh, 2004). The loyalist press category refers to newspaper publishers that are privately owned, loyal to the government, and nonetheless often subject to direct and indirect censorship by the government (Gunter & Dickinson, 2013; Rugh, 2004). The diverse press first appeared in the second half of the twentieth century, and comprises newspaper publishers that are privately owned and whose newspapers often reflect several different viewpoints. The newspapers in this category differ widely in terms of their content, style, and apparent political leanings (Rugh, 2004; Korany, 2011). They may even print news that does not support the government in power. The diverse press is somewhat free, with readers having access to a variety of information, including stories that are critical of social, economic, and political issues.

Rugh's fourth ideal type, the transitional system refers to a type of press that was established and undergone substantial transformations (Rugh, 2004). This category combines some elements that are favourable to the government with others that are more aligned with a free press. Some newspapers that Rugh placed in this category were owned by the government, while others were owned either by political parties or by private entities. This said, the government maintained control over newspaper publishers falling into this category insofar as it retains the authority to grant and revoke newspaper publishing licenses. Likewise, governments may press charges against journalists who write stories that provoke violence, insult the head of state or criticize the armed forces (Rugh, 2004). Moreover, the government can also employ economic pressure on the journalist or the newspaper, which results in a form of self-censorship that keeps freedom of expression and freedom of the press in check.

3.2.1.2 Print newspaper industry under threat

The news media market is changing all over the world, and the Middle East is no exception.

Innovations in the communication landscape have major implications for the news media industry and are threatening its stability. The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries have experienced a rapid transformation from print to digital in the news media industry (Chahine, Vollmer, Bhargava, & Lahham, 2011; Dubai Press Club, 2016). According to the Booz & Company News Readership Survey of readers from the UAE and KSA in February 2011, nearly 76% of the respondents had either decided to or already reduced or stopped their consumption of traditional print news (Chahine, Vollmer, Bhargava, & Lahham, 2011). Their study confirmed a general shift towards greater consumption of online news, which signified the potential for more such changes in the future. According to Anas (2013), news media in the Arab states were shifting towards greater adoption of digital

media, and were also changing in the nature of the content distributed. Since then, the phase of shifting to the digital continue to rise in the MENA region and is projected to even advance further by 2030 (Dubai Press Club, 2016).

Increased access to the Internet has led to rapid growth of online news sources in the KSA, and most Internet users access the websites of the major news agencies such as *Al Arabiya*, *Al Jazeera*, the BBC, and CNN, while traditional print newspaper publishers are being forced to compete with these media providers for the local news readership (Chahine, Vollmer, Bhargava, & Lahham, 2011), in addition, the print newspapers also face competition from news aggregators, search engines and different social media players (Dubai Press Club, 2016).

According to Chahine, Vollmer, Bhargava, and Lahham (2011), at the time the paper was written, the amount of advertising revenue earned by print media in the region was expected to continue to decline in 2013. Although overall advertising revenue increased during that same period, the share of revenues in the newspaper sector declined in Saudi Arabia (Chahine, Vollmer, Bhargava, & Lahham, 2011) (see Figure 15). According to the Dubai Press Club (2016), within MEAN countries, there was a print slowdown in the copy sales and advertising. While in the GCC countries, the impact was mostly due to the combination of high digital broadband and device penetration (Dubai Press Club, 2016).

**SAUDI ARABIA NEWSPAPER READERSHIP LEVELS
(IN THOUSANDS OF READERS)**

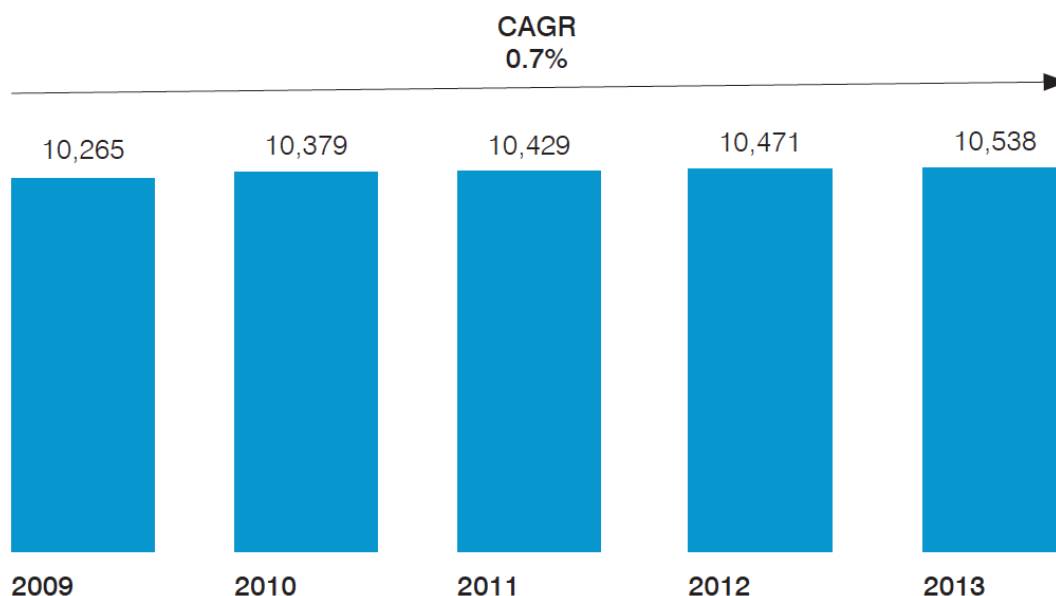


Figure 15 Projected trends in Saudi Arabia newspaper readership (in thousands of readers) between 2009 and 2013, showing near expected stagnation in growth: Arab Media Outlook, 2009–2013 (Source: Chahine, Vollmer, Bhargava, & Lahham, 2011)

In 2009, about 55% of total advertising revenue generated in the KSA was a result of newspaper advertising. This number was projected to fell to 49.5% in 2013, while ad revenues rose in both the digital and radio sectors (Chahine, Vollmer, Bhargava, & Lahham, 2011) (See, Figure 16). According to Dubai Press Club (2016) newspaper advertising was also projected to further decline in 2018 in the MENA countries (Dubai Press Club, 2016) (See, Figure 17).

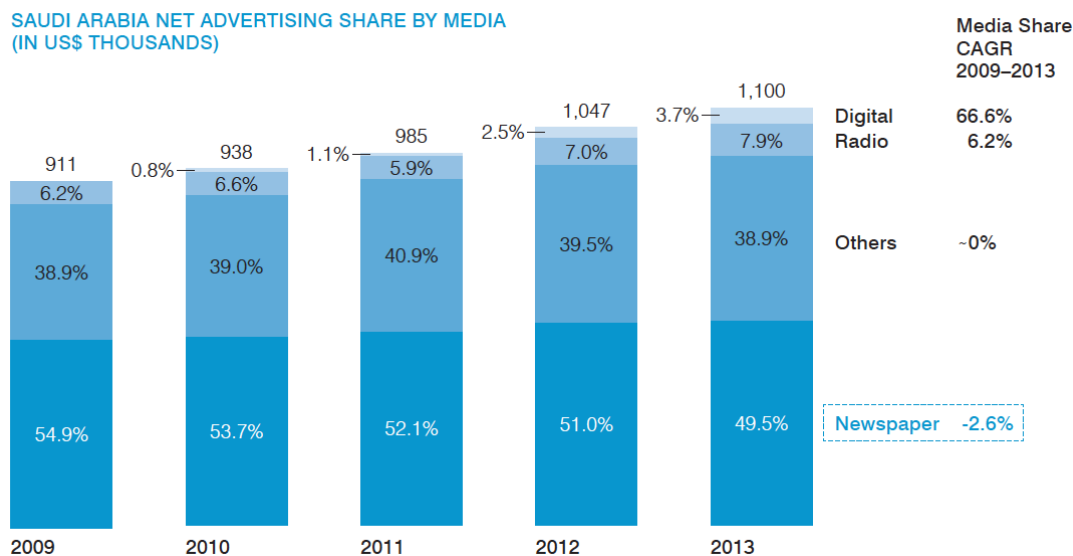


Figure 16 Projected changes in the share of advertising revenues of different media sectors in Saudi Arabia (From Chahine et al., 2011)



Figure 17 Projected MENA newspaper advertising decline (Dubai Press Club, 2016)

In the first decade of the 2000s, print newspapers in the KSA enjoyed a penetration rate of more than 70% (Chahine et al., 2011). According to the authors, during that period, advertising spending in digital platforms began to expand, leading to declining investment in print newspapers. In addition to the drop in advertising revenue during that period, newspaper publishers had to contend with competition in attracting larger audiences due to the influx of Internet-based platforms. According to Oxford Business Group, newspaper advertising in Saudi Arabia witness a drop in value of 7% year-on-year in 2015 down from \$831 million. This decline is due to the change landscape in many media organizations “There is a shift from newspaper ads as the traditional platform for advertising towards social media” (Oxford Business Group, 2017).

3.2.1.3 Impact of the 2008/2009 financial crisis in the Arab region

According to the Arab Media Outlook 2010, advertising revenue in the Arab region was harshly impacted by the financial crisis in 2009. The loss in revenue in the Arab Region was as the same level of impact as founded in North America (Figure 18).

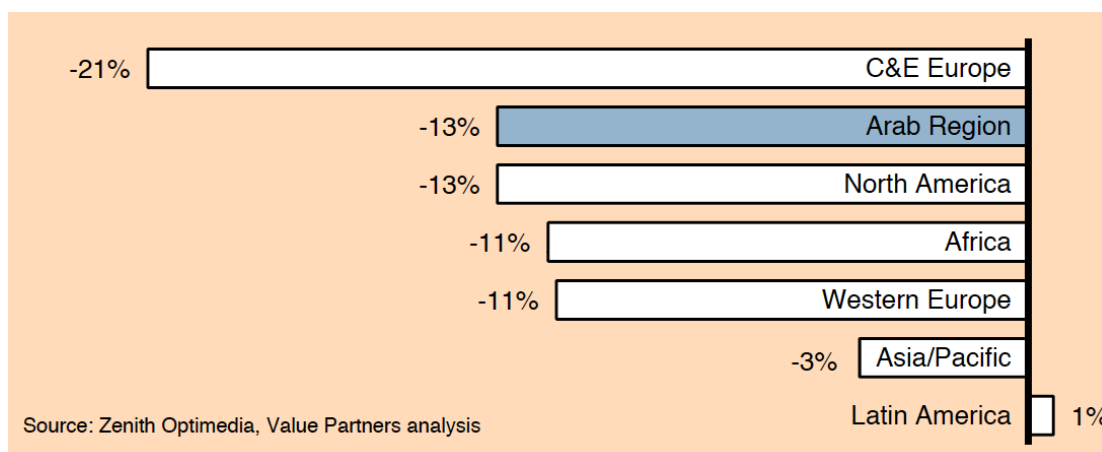


Figure 18 Change in advertising spending from 2008 to 2009 (%) (Source: Dubai Press Club, 2010)

However, the data for 2008 actually showed a projection of an increase in advertising revenue from the previous year in the Arab region, and forecast projection increase till 2013 (Figure 19) (Dubai Press Club, 2010).

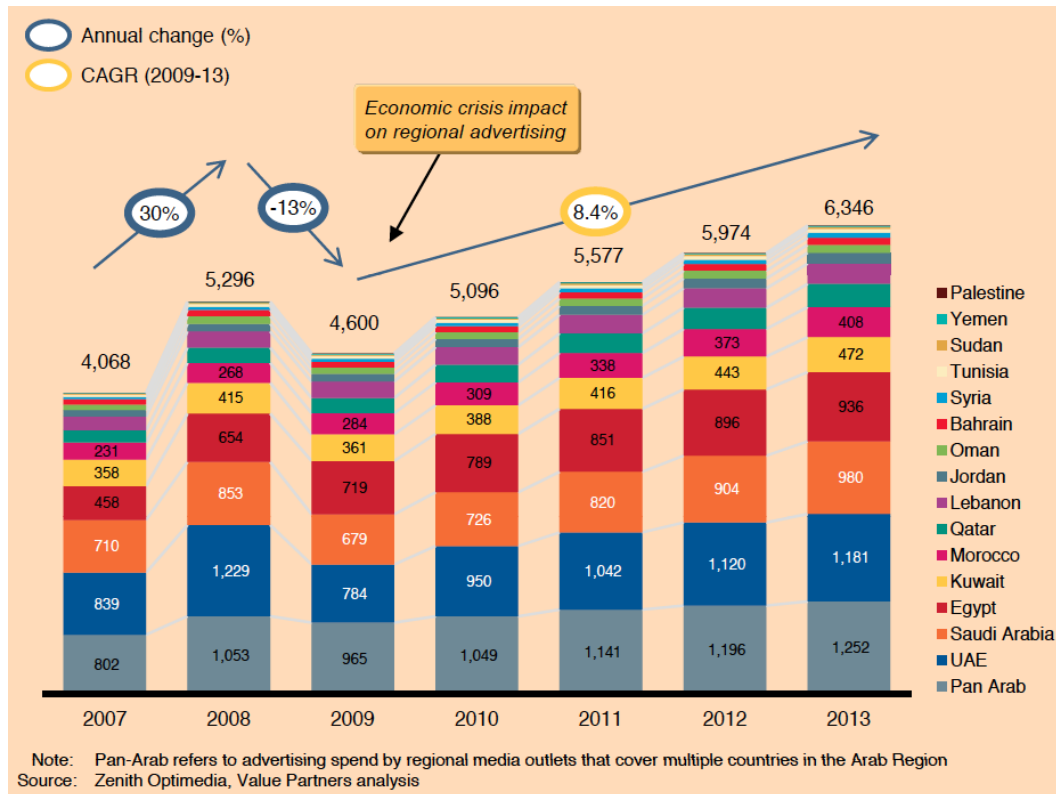


Figure 19 Projection advertising revenue for the Arab region, 2007–2013 (USD millions) (From Dubai Press Club, 2010)

Another report by Arab Media Outlook about 17 Arab countries revealed that from 2008 to 2009, net advertising spending fell by 12.1%, and started to rise again in 2009–2010. The rate of advertising spending was projected to fluctuated up and down in the ensuing years (Figure 20) (Dubai Press Club, 2012).

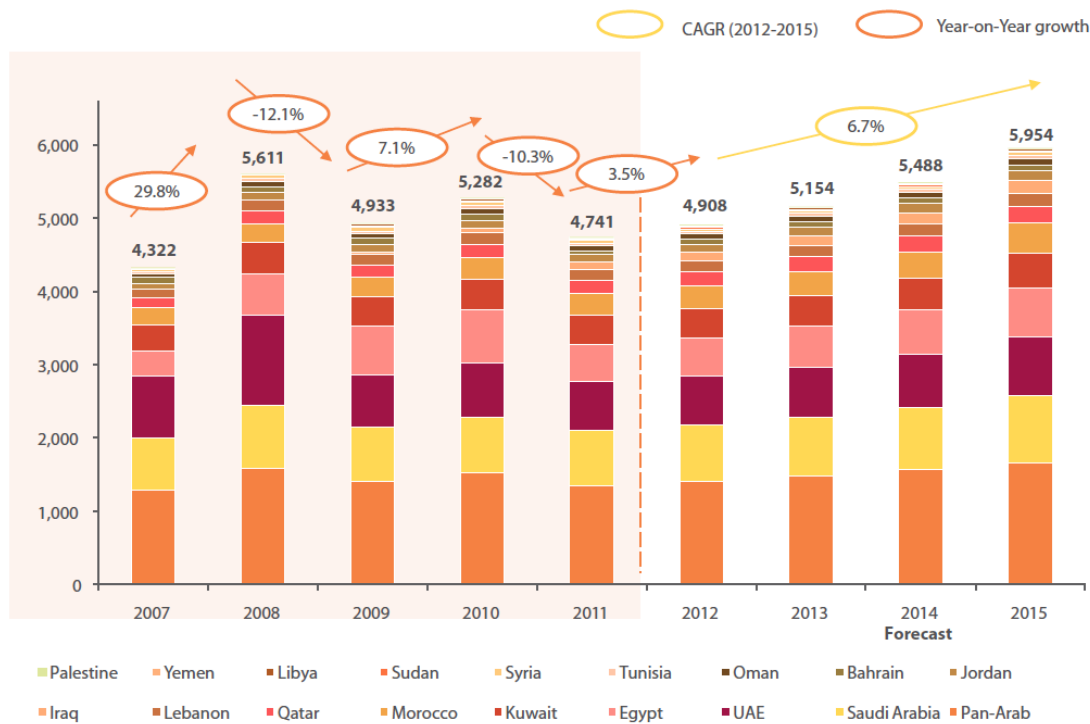


Figure 20 Evolution of net advertising spending in the Arab region (USD millions) with a forecast from 2012 to 2015 (Source: Dubai Press Club, 2012)

In 2010, newspaper publishers in Saudi Arabia (KSA), the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and Qatar sold an aggregate of 3.23 billion copies, a 2% growth in sales compared with 2008 (Chahine et al., 2011). Print advertising remained strong during that period. In 2010, 54% of the total money spent on advertisements in the KSA came from Saudi newspapers. From that, I can conclude that the main source of revenue for print publications was still coming from advertisers. Since then, according to Schoenbach, Wood, and Saeed (2016), more than 80% of key newspapers revenue are generated from advertising (Schoenbach, Wood, & Saeed, 2016). Moreover, Arab Media Outlook also showed that MENA newspaper market revenue continues to generate from advertising, yet, advertising revenue was projected to decline from 2014 to 2018 and newspaper copy sale was projected to increase for the same time period (Figure 17) (Dubai Press Club, 2016).

Another issue affecting Arab newspaper publishers is a lack of professional journalism training. This issue is not by any means new. It has been a concern since the rise of journalism in the region in the late 19th century (Moussa & Douai, 2014). According to a survey by Weaver et al. (2007), 22% of the surveyed journalists held no journalism degree or had no professional training before being employed (as cited in Anderson, Williams, & Ogola, 2014). Since then, lack of professional training still exists in many Arab countries (Alhuntushi & Lugo-Ocando, 2020; Arab Reporters for Investigative Journalism, 2020). Another key factor negatively affecting the news media in Arab countries is government censorship and the denying access to certain types of information. This has provoked some newspaper organizations to publish outside the Arab region and has contributed to the Arab media industry's to lag behind Europe and North America in terms of economics, political, and cultural freedom (Moussa & Douai, 2014; Al-Jaber & Elareshi, 2014). Based on the freedom house¹² standards, only Kuwait, Lebanon, Morocco and Jordan among all Arab countries were described as having partial freedom of the press, with only Tunisia that have freedom in its press (The Freedom House, 2020).

Despite some new publications being launched in the Arab region around the time of the 2008–2009 financial crisis (e.g., *Emirates Today (Alimarat Alyawm)*), founded in 2005 in UAE, and *Muscat Daily*, which began printing in 2009, others had to terminate operations (e.g., *Awan* newspaper in Kuwait, which opened in 2007 and closed in 2010, and *El Badeel* newspaper in Egypt, which started printing in 2006 and shut down in 2009) (Al-Shaqsi, 2013).

3.2.1.4 The rise of technology and the change in Arab media

Digital platforms and mobile devices have transformed the way media content is

¹² Freedom House “is an independent nongovernmental organization, (and) is widely recognized as the definitive source of information on the state of freedom around the globe” (Al-Jaber & Elareshi, 2014, page 16).

consumed in the Middle East as well as readers' behaviour (Dubai Press Club, 2016). As such, and despite the continued demand for news content in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) regions, newspaper publishers struggle to attract readers and generate financial returns on digital platforms. Initially, this challenge was seen as being due to the fact that “the commercial model is not as strong on these new platforms” (El-Darwiche, Bhargava, & Abou Jamous, 2013, page 3). In the intervening years since 2013, digital video and social media spending were driving the growth, with gaming hold the most growth due to a high proportion of young generation and smartphone usage. However, newspapers were yet to generate financial revenue on the digital platform as readers were not ready to pay for news content online (Dubai Press Club, 2016). According to Schoenbach, Wood, and Saeed (2016), only a small number of newspapers in the MENA countries have been able to successfully introduce the freemium models (Schoenbach, Wood, & Saeed, 2016).

3.2.1.5 The effect of the Internet on traditional media providers

Change in reader consumption patterns have impacted media sectors worldwide, and has had a particularly negative impact on the print sector in the Arab World (Dubai Press Club, 2016). From 2013 to 2017, print newspapers in Jourdan, Lebanon, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, and UAE have experienced a decline of 22% in readership (see, Table 2).

Table 2 The change in readership % from 2013 to 2017 among Arab nationals

	Newspapers	Radio	Magazine	Television	Internet
2013	47%	59%	26%	98%	63%
2017	25%	49%	19%	93%	84%

* Media use in the Middle East, 2017 (Jordan, Lebanon, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, and UAE).
(Source: Dennis, Martin, & Wood, 2017)

According to a 2011 Strategy and News Readership survey, despite increasing populations in MENA countries, readership levels were declining with 70% of readers having abandoned traditional print newspaper for digital-only readers (El-Darwiche, Bhargava, & Abou Jamous, 2013). Arab Media Outlook reports that between 2014 and 2018, digital media

was the fastest growing segment of MENA region digital market size with 17% Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR). It is not only social media platforms and search engines that were impacting the media sector in MENA countries, but also online publishing, video (SVOD, or Subscription Video on Demand) and gaming industries (Dubai Press Club, 2016).

3.2.1.6 Internet penetration and its effect on traditional media

Technological changes and increased broadband penetration in the Middle East have led to greater access to the Internet, with penetration rates of more than 80% in countries such as Qatar and the United Arab Emirates (Chahine, Vollmer, Bhargava, & Lahham, 2011). The authors demonstrated that in Saudi Arabia (KSA), mobile broadband penetration has become comparable to that of the US.

In the period from 2013 to 2017 internet usage in Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Tunisia, and the United Arab Emirates has increased (Dennis, Martin, & Wood, 2018). The largest rate of increase (47% to 80%) occurred in Jordan, followed by Lebanon (58% to 91%), Egypt (22% to 50%) Tunisia (45% in 2014 to 68% in 2017), UAE (88% to 99%), Qatar (85% to 95%), and KSA (81% to 91%).

Although Internet use has increased from 2013 to 2017 in all age groups in UAE, Qatar, KSA, Lebanon, Jordan, and Tunisia, younger generations continue to be the most dominant group when it comes to accessing the Internet. In the 18–24 age group, 86% of participants reported using the Internet for news in 2013 compared with 96% in 2017. In the 25–34 age group, there was an increase in Internet use from 77% to 94%, an increase from 52% to 88% in the 35–44 age group. Respondents in the 45 years of age and older category reported an increase of 28% to 55% for this same period, accounting for the greatest rate of growth among all age groups (Dennis, Martin, & Wood, 2017).

Another study on Internet penetration by Moussa and Douai (2014) divided Arab countries into three levels: 1) the first tier comprised the oil-rich countries in the Arab Gulf,

that enjoy the highest level of Internet penetration; 2) the second tier involved countries that had adopted “aggressive liberalization policies in the telecommunication sector” such as Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia, and Jordan; and 3) the lowest tier contained countries that had either been slow to embrace a market economy system, as in the case of Algeria and Syria, or the poorest nations in the region, such as Yemen (Moussa & Douai, 2014, Page 135) See, Table 3.

Table 3 Internet usage in Arab countries

	Population (2020 est.)	Internet usage (31March 2020)	% of population (penetration)
Oil-rich countries			
Saudi Arabia	34,813,871	31,856,652	91.5%
Kuwait	4,270,571	4,231,978	99.1%
United Arab Emirates	9,890,402	9,532,016	96.4%
Qatar	2,881,053	2,942,000	99.6%
Bahrain	1,701,575	1,615,620	94.9%
Oman	5,106,626	4,011,004	78.5%
Countries that adopt aggressive liberalization policies in the telecommunication sector			
Egypt	102,334,404	49,231,493	48.1%
Morocco	36,910,560	23,739,581	64.3%
Tunisia	11,818,619	7,898,534	66.8%
Jordan	10,203,134	8,700,000	85.3%
Countries slow to open a market economy system			
Algeria	43,851,044	25,428,159	58.0%
Syria	17,500,658	7,609,286	43.5%
Poorest countries in the region			
Yemen	29,825,964	7,903,772	26.5%

(Source: Internet World Stats, 2020a, November 11; Internet World Stats, 2020b, November 11).

3.2.1.7 Arab world connectivity

When looking at Internet use in the Arab world, almost the entire populations of Kuwait (99.6%), Qatar (99.6%), Bahrain (98.6%), United Arab Emirates (98.5%), and Saudi Arabia (93.3%) access the Internet, with Syria (34.2%) and Yemen (26.7%) being the least connected (Internet World Stats, 2019). According to Kemp’s January 2020 report, the total

population in the Middle East is 258.8 million, with an annual digital growth among the population of +1.7% between January 2020 and January 2019. Of those, 182.1 million are Internet users who access digital media (e.g., mobile phones, Internet, and social media), 125.4 million are active social media users, with an annual growth of +14% among Internet users, +14% among active social media users (Kemp, 2020a), and According to Kemp's January 2019 report, 118 of the total population in the Middle East are active mobile social users, with an annual growth of +2.3% among active users of social media on their mobile devices (Kemp, 2019a). Kuwait, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates (99%) are the highest-ranking countries in the region in terms of social media penetration followed by Bahrain (84%) (Kemp, 2020a).

In regard to time spent daily using social media, a 2018 report by Global Web Index found that residents of the UAE averaged the most time spent using social media per day at 3 hours, followed by Saudi Arabia at 2 hours and 52 minutes. In the first quarter of 2019, the average number of hours spent on social media rose even further, among users aged 16 to 64 years old, with an 11-minute increase in the UAE and a 6-minute increase in Saudi Arabia. The same report found that 49% of participants in Saudi Arabia and Egypt use social media on mobile devices to stay up-to-date with news and current events, compared with 46% of participants in UAE (GlobalWebIndex, 2019).

3.2.1.8 Media use by level of education

Internet penetration is most evident among people who hold a university degree or higher, though people with a primary school education and an intermediate education experienced the largest rates of increase between 2013 and 2017. As reported by Dennis, Martin, and Wood (2017), Internet penetration among people with a primary school education or less surged from 13% in 2013 to 31% in 2017; for those with an intermediate

education, from 38% to 77%; for people with a secondary education, from 71% to 91%, and for those with university or post-graduate degrees, there was an increase from 87% to 97%¹³.

These researchers also report that the use of different news sources increases positively with the level of education across all countries jointly (Jordan, Lebanon, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, and UAE) with the exception of TV, which shows a very similar level of viewership regardless of the level of education. Table 4 provides a summary.

Table 4 The use of different news sources and level of education

	Use the Internet	Listen to the radio	Read newspapers	Watch television
Primary or less	31%	43%	8%	93%
Intermediate	77%	40%	15%	94%
Secondary	90%	47%	25%	93%
University or higher	97%	60%	37%	93%

(Source: Dennis, Martin, & Wood, 2017)

Across all countries, the average time spent online was 29 hours per week, which had not changed much since 2013 (28 hours).

3.2.1.9 Newspaper readership by country

A different 2018 study by the same authors showed the decline in traditional print newspaper readership in seven Arab countries. The information presented in Table 5 sets out the percentage of the population who read traditional print newspapers in a typical week (Dennis, Martin, & Wood, 2018).

Table 5 The change in the % of traditional print newspaper readership in seven Arab countries

	Qatar	Jordan	UAE	Tunisia	Lebanon	KSA	Egypt
2013	63%	37%	75%	50%	35%	59%	25%
2017	29%	9%	48%	29%	15%	49%	16%
Difference	-34%	-28%	-27%	-21%	-20%	-10%	-9%

(Source: Dennis, Martin, & Wood, 2018)

¹³ Data were reported on the following countries—UAE, Qatar, KSA, Lebanon, Jordan, and Tunisia. However, data from Tunisia were gathered from the year 2014.

3.2.1.10 The importance of news on different media platforms

The average audience consumption of news on TV decreased from 86% in 2013 to 81% in 2017, though it remains the dominant source of news in the Arab region compared with Internet news—which rose from 56% in 2013 to 74% in 2017—and newspapers, which declined from 46% in 2013 to 34% in 2017 (Dennis, Martin, & Wood, 2018) (See Table 6).

Table 6 Average audience consumption of news on different platforms in seven Arab countries from 2013 to 2017

	Qatar		Jordan		UAE		Tunisia		Lebanon		KSA		Egypt	
	2013	2017	2013	2017	2013	2017	2013	2017	2013	2017	2013	2017	2013	2017
TV news	54%	53%	96%	72%	92%	88%	77%	91%	89%	91%	93%	82%	84%	74%
Internet news	67%	77%	61%	72%	84%	96%	51%	75%	68%	86%	78%	88%	22%	47%
Newspapers	44%	39%	61%	16%	70%	63%	26%	52%	57%	32%	63%	49%	23%	18%

(Source: Dennis, Martin, & Wood, 2018)

Only Tunisia and Lebanon have seen an increase in news consumption on TV, while only Tunisia has seen a similar upward trend related to reading news on traditional print newspapers.

3.2.1.11 Trust and credibility

Around two-thirds of Arab nationals in the countries examined by Dennis, Martin, and Wood (2017) stated that they trust traditional mass media (i.e., newspapers, TV, and radio) and felt they report fair and accurate news. The trust rate was found to be highest in the UAE (88%) and KSA (78%), and lowest in Tunisia at 56% (Dennis, Martin, & Wood, 2017). When comparing the finding from these six Arab countries to data from the US, Dennis, Martin, and Wood (2018) found that the overall percentage of Americans who trust the media is much lower than in the Arab countries with only 32% of Americans saying they trust traditional mass media in 2017.

According to Dennis, Martin, and Wood (2017), television is still considered the most important source of news and information in the Arab world, with 83% of nationals stating they still believed television to be a key news resource, compared with social media at 70% and direct messaging at 69%. Participants in Qatar and the UAE rated each of these three sources as almost equally important. The degree of trust in news from social media sites was identified as much weaker, particularly in Jordan (40%), Tunisia (36%), and Qatar (35%), while Lebanon (58%), KSA (56%), and the UAE (56%) were slightly more likely to trust social media news.

In regard to perceived credibility of news organizations, Dennis, Martin, and Wood (2018) found that media credibility was highest in the UAE (85%), Qatar (62%), and KSA (59%), while the perception of credibility was much lower in Tunisia (45%), Jordan (38%), Lebanon (38%), and Egypt (23%) (See Table 7).

Table 7 The perception of credibility of news organizations in seven Arab countries from 2013 to 2017

	UAE	Qatar	KSA	Tunisia	Jordan	Lebanon	Egypt
2013	73%	57%	73%	23%	66%	25%	27%
2017	85%	62%	59%	45%	38%	38%	23%
The change	+12%	+5%	-14%	+22%	-28%	+13%	-4%

(Source: Dennis, Martin, & Wood, 2018)

3.2.1.12 The transformation from print to online

Internet usage in the KSA has increased significantly in recent years (Simsim, 2011; Internet World Stats, 2020c; Export Entreprises SA, 2020). From 2000 to 2010, the rate of growth in the Kingdom was the highest among GCC countries (Alqudsi-ghabra, Al-Bannai, & Al-Bahrani, 2011). The rapid development of modern technology in Saudi Arabia brought about major changes in information flows and social interactions, with Saudis increasingly changing their consumption preferences from traditional print news to online news, especially

among younger generations (Hala Ahmed¹⁴, personal communication, 2016, July 19; Dennis, Martin, & Wood, 2017).

In an article published some six years ago by *The Economist*, the authors posited that the traditional newspaper might still be in a better situation in Saudi Arabia than in many other parts of the world (*The Economist*, 2014). *The Economist* contradicted claims that the Saudi newspaper industry was in decline, arguing that Saudi Arabia is beating the odds when it came to the public's preferences between print and online media. The publication also suggested that the traditional press and online social media in the country were equally resilient and popular in Saudi Arabia. At the time, there were more than a dozen national dailies that compete fiercely in the Saudi market. Even as other nations were experiencing a rapid downturn in the print media industry, Saudi Arabia continued to experience some growth in the sector. As recently as 2014, a new print publication named *Mecca* entered the market, suggesting confidence on the part of Saudi print media organizations at a time when traditional media were being forced out of the market in most other parts of the world.

Nevertheless, some trends observable in the US, where the Internet has been the dominant medium for a few years, are starting to become more evident in the KSA. According to *International Telecommunication Union (ITU)*, *World Bank*, and *United Nations Population Division*, as of July 2016, 64.7% of Saudi Arabia's population used the Internet, which means the Kingdom is home to nearly 21 million individual Internet users. With an increase of 2.8% more Internet users every year and a 1.96% increase in population (Internet Live Stats, n.d.), this is indication of a mature market.

The convergence of online and print newspapers was achieved through the development of the electronic newspaper (e-newspaper), a version that is published using e-

¹⁴ Hala Ahmed is a Senior Communication Director at HAVAS PR Arabia, and a Journalist at *SAYIDATY* magazine.

paper technology (Ihlström, 2005), yet duplicates the traditional print format. In Saudi Arabia, newspaper companies such as the *Saudi Gazette* had been actively developing electronic versions of their print newspapers, and successfully combined their online and print newspapers through the development of electronic newspapers (Chahine et al., 2011). The main advantage of the e-newspaper is that it gave the reader a very similar experience to that of the printed page, but is cheaper and more convenient (Ihlström, 2005). The Saudi newspaper *Al Majalla* used a similar strategy in 2009, abandoning its print version for an online publication (Chahine et al., 2011).

3.2.1.13 News consumption on different platforms

As of 2017, the most used digital platform to access news online across all the Arab countries was a smartphone (Dennis, Martin, & Wood, 2017). It had become the primary way to read news and headlines online. Dennis, Martin, and Wood (2017) found that 78% of people in the Arab region watched the news on TV, 67% accessed it on their smartphones, 33% listened to the radio, 20% used computers, 17% read printed newspapers, and 13% used their tablets.

Moreover, up to 68% of Arab nationals still received news daily face-to-face through interactions with their friends and families, via direct messaging (69%), social media (66%), from the Internet more broadly (69%), and from news apps (28%). In addition, the younger generation (18 to 24 years old) were more likely to access the news from online sources (79%) rather than TV, as is the 35-to-44-year-old age group (81%). However, 85% of those aged 45 years and older were more likely to consume news on TV on a daily basis (Dennis, Martin, & Wood, 2017).

3.2.1.14 The importance of accessing news using different platforms

Online platforms have gained popularity with Arab nationals. They increasingly rate it as a significant source of news, as important as television and interpersonal sources. On the

other hand, news apps are considered less important for news, and traditional print newspapers declined drastically as a news source between the years 2013 and 2017 (Dennis, Martin & Wood, 2017) (See Table 8).

Table 8 The importance of accessing news using different platforms among Arab nationals

	TV	Interpersonal resource	Internet	Social media	Direct messaging	News app	Traditional print newspapers
2013	86%	79%	65%	-	-	-	51%
2017	88%	78%*	80%	70%	69%	50%	38%
Rate of change	+2%	-1%	+15%	-	-	-	-13%

*=2016, -=no data provided in the original study
(Source: Dennis, Martin, & Wood, 2018)

3.2.1.15 Types of news

According to Dennis, Martin, and Wood (2017), most Arabs said that they consume both local and international news. On a daily basis, each consumed more local and domestic news (60%) than news about other Arab countries (50%); only Saudi Arabia nationals were found to consume an equal rate of news about their own country and other Arab countries.

The same study also showed that the topics of interest most commonly consumed on a daily basis in 2017 among that studied Arab countries are political news and current affairs (42%), arts and entertainment (40%), sports (30%), and religious and spiritual news (30%), followed by education news (22%), science and technology (20%), business and economy (18%), and fashion (17%). See, Figure 21.

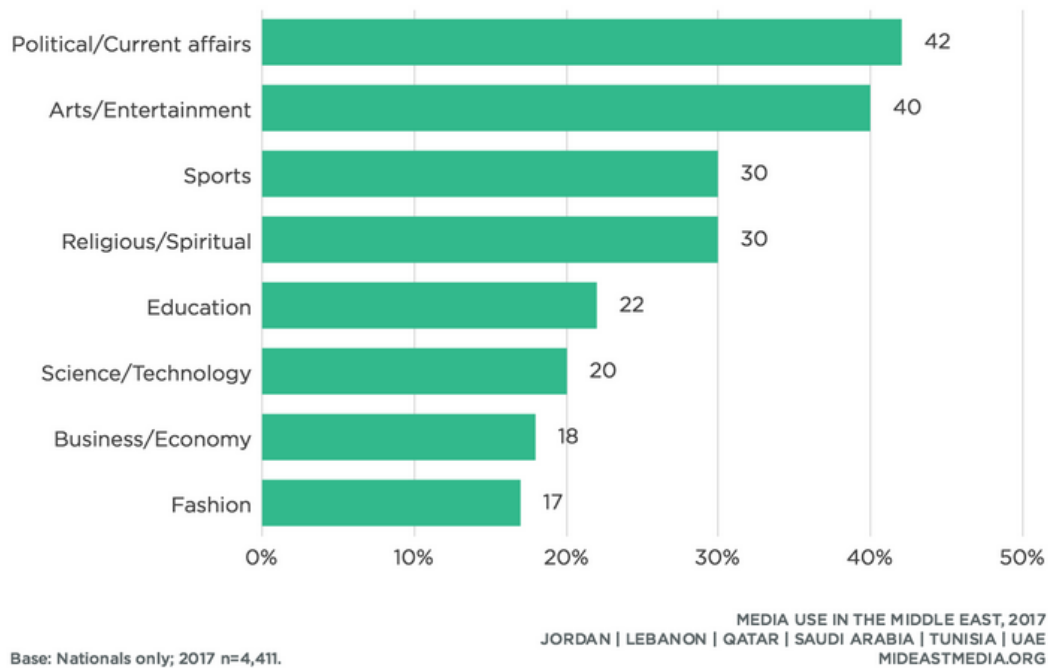


Figure 21 The % of people who read news about the following topics every day (Source: Dennis, Martin, & Wood, 2017)

3.2.1.16 News consumption on social media and messaging platforms

As of 2017, the most popular platforms among Arab nationals for accessing news were: Facebook (40%), Whatsapp (28%), and YouTube (25%) (Dennis, Martin, & Wood, 2017). Figure 22 provides the top three social media platforms used in each of the Arab countries examined.

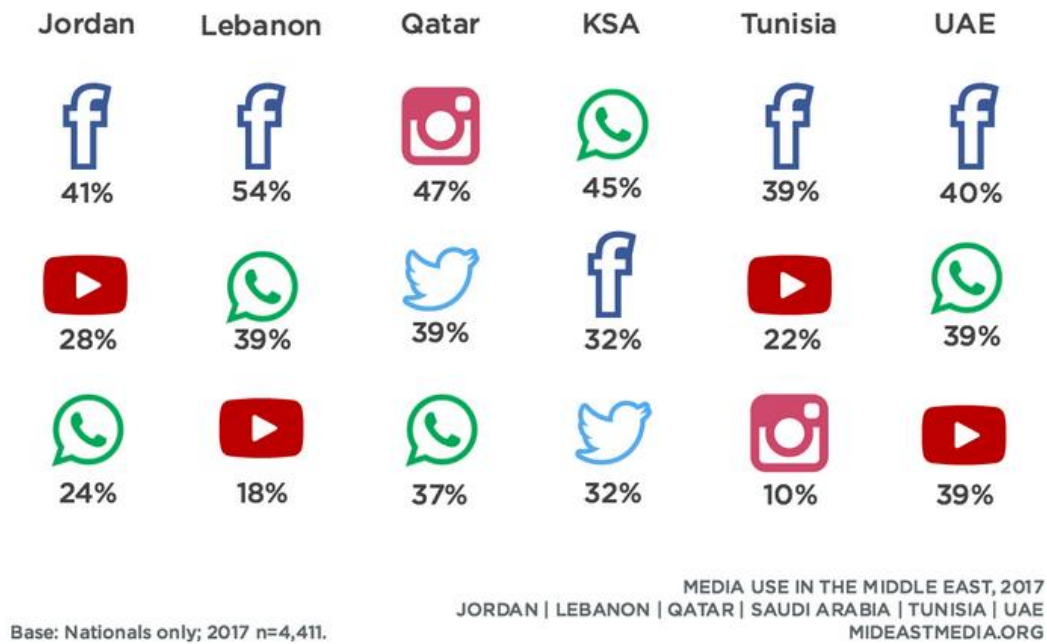


Figure 22 Top three social media platforms for accessing news in each Arab country (Source: Dennis, Martin & Wood, 2017)

3.2.1.17 The free online news model

The free online news model is a popular business model that has been adopted by major newspaper companies around the world and by most online content producers. This model entails allowing readers to access news stories at no charge with revenue mainly obtained through advertising (Steensen, 2011). For instance, Chahine et al. indicated that the UAE's *Gulf News* had been a leading provider of online news to the Gulf region. Through its website, www.gulfnews.com, *Gulf News* offered free content to its users, and was able to generate high advertising revenues due to the fact that they had been attracting more readers to their website (2011). The free business model has been widely adopted in Saudi Arabia online newspapers. The Saudi Research and Marketing Group's political affairs magazine, *Al Majalla*, for instance, had been a popular online magazine that publishes weekly and offered news content in both English and Arabic for free, while also provided features such as a daily news update, interactive forums, videos, and links to Facebook and Twitter (Chahine et al.,

2011). In addition, *Al Majalla* relied mainly on digital advertising income in order to survive in the market. This wasn't the only such magazine that provided news content for free; in fact, almost all Saudi Arabia newspapers provided online news at zero cost, allowing readers to access and read the electronic version of a newspaper on the company's website as well as downloading the PDF version of the traditional print paper without paying for it.

3.2.1.18 Willingness to pay for online news

Dennis, Martin, and Wood (2017) also examined the willingness to pay for news online, and found that the majority in Lebanon (75%), Jordan (74%), Qatar (71%), and Tunisia (61%) were reluctant to pay for news, whether it is digital, on TV, in newspapers or in magazines. Only one-third (33%) of the respondents across all the Arab nations reported any willingness to pay for news content. Another report by Dennis, Martin, and Wood (2018) showed that among the six Arab countries¹⁵, the average percentage of people willing to pay for online news content decreased between 2015 (44%) and 2017 (31%), with a particularly sharp decline reported in Qatar from 71% to 24%.

3.2.2 Brief history of the press in Saudi Arabia

The first newspaper in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) was *Al Hijaz*. It was established in 1908 (Press Reference, n.d.). The oldest newspaper that still exists today is *Asharq Al-Awsat*, which is printed in Arabic by the Saudi Research and Publishing Company (SRPC). When the KSA began to attract large numbers of expatriates as workers, it soon became necessary to introduce newspapers in other languages (Gale, 2007). The SRPC now publishes more than 15 newspapers and magazines in several different languages including Arabic, Urdu, and English (Hanware, 2015). According to Shoult (2006), one of the observable trends in Saudi print media in the early 2000s was regionalization, with leading newspapers focusing on particular regional locations. This trend remains strong with each

¹⁵ KSA, UAE, Qatar, Egypt, Tunisia, and Lebanon.

region in Saudi Arabia having its own newspaper which targets readers of that particular region and focuses on serving those readers' needs regarding news and information, although it also devotes some space to cover international news as well as stories from other regions in the Kingdom (Waleed Qattan, personal communication, 2017).

Many historians categorize the evolution of the Saudi press into two periods. The first, the individual press, spans from around 1924 to 1964 and represents the time when newspapers were owned by individuals (Kasba, Al-Hindi & Atwah, 2004). During this period, five daily newspapers were founded and owned by individual families. In the western region (Al-Hijaz) and specifically in the cities of Jeddah and Mecca, newspapers such as *Al-Bilad* and *Al Medina* were founded in the 1930s followed by *Okaz* and *Al-Nadwa* in 1960. Meanwhile, in the central region, *Al-Jazira* newspaper was founded in Al Riyadh city in 1962 (Rugh, 2004).

The second period, known as the institutional press, began around 1963 and continues today (Kasba et al., 2004). This period reflects the government's decision to allow newspapers to be managed by foundations or institutions run by at least 15 qualified citizens who become the members of the institution, as chosen by the Ministry of the Press. It was during this period that daily newspapers such as *Al-Riyadh* and *Al-Yawm* were established in the cities of Al-Riyadh and Al-Dammam (Rugh, 2004).

Some historians argue that there was another phase of evolution – i.e., integration stage. It is claimed to have begun around 1958 when the number of individual newspapers reached 40, and there were 100 more requests to start up other newspapers. During this time, the government conceived that it was better to merge newspapers in each part of the county and have them run by a group of qualified individuals and who would report about and print what was dictated by the public interest within the limits of what the system required. A total of 10 press institutions were created: Al Bilad Institution for press and publishing, Al Jazeera

Institution for press and publishing, The Islamic Daawa press institution, Eastern company for printing and press, Asir Institution for press and publishing, Okaz Institution for press and publishing, Al Madinah Institution for press, printing and publishing, Makkah Institution for printing and media, Al Yamamah press institution, and Dar Al Youm institution for press, printing and publishing. Although the government did not prevent government parties or even individuals from printing and distributing their own additional publications, it required them to obtain a permit from the Ministry of the Press (Kasba et al., 2004). These 10 companies still exist today as the main press institutions in the Saudi media market.

3.2.2.1 Saudi Arabia connectivity

According to a report published by Simon Kemp in January 2020, the total number of Saudi Arabian citizens who access digital media (mobile, Internet, and social media) is 34.54 million, with 32.23 million Internet users, 25.00 million active social media users (Kemp, 2020b), and according to Kemp another report in January 2019, there was only 16.00 million mobile social media users (Kemp, 2019b). Compared with the figures from the previous years, the number of Internet users rose by 15% (Jan 2020 vs. Jan 2019), while social media users rose by 8.7% (Jan 2020 vs. Apr 2019) (Kemp, 2020b), and mobile social media users (-11.1%) actually declined significantly from (Jan 2018 vs. Jan 2019). Table 9 below summarizes these findings.

Table 9 Connectivity of Saudi Arabian citizens

	Jan 2015	Jan 2016	Jan 2017	Jan 2018	Jan 2019	Jan 2020
Active Internet users	18.3	20.29	22.59	30.25	30.26	32.23
Active social media users	9.2	11.00	19.00	23.66	23.00	25.00
Active mobile social media users	8.0	10.00	16.00	18.00	16.00	No info

* Numbers are given in millions of users

(Source: Kemp, 2015; Kemp, 2016; Kemp, 2017; Kemp, 2018; Kemp, 2019b; Kemp, 2020b)

According to Global Web Index study, 93% of the study participants use mobile phones (any device), while 92% use smartphones, 57% use a laptop or desktop computer, and 34% use tablets (as cited from Kemp, 2020b).

3.2.2.2 Saudi population characteristics and Internet use

According to Kemp (2020), the total population in Saudi Arabia was approximately 34.54 million as of Jan 2020, of which 58% were male. The annual growth of the population was +1.6% and the median age was 31.8 years old. The overall literacy of those Saudis 15 years of age and older is 95%, with female literacy at 93% and male literacy at 97% (Kemp, 2020b).

Based on a global web index survey in Q3 of 2019, the average daily time that participants claim that they spend on the Internet is 7:46 minutes, while they spent 3:02 minutes on social media, 3:27 minutes watching television programs (via broadcasts, streaming, and video on demand), 1:109 minutes listening to streaming music, and 1:33 minutes using a game console. The total amount of Saudis who use the Internet from any device is 32.23 million, or 93% of the total population; moreover, the total number of active mobile Internet users is 30.46 million, which accounts for 95% of the total population (as cited from Kemp, 2020b).

3.3 Summary

The literature review (chapter 2 and chapter 3) presents the main theories this thesis considered, it also identifies the key studies that have examined the challenge and the change in the news media business, it also presents explored studies on how these challenges have affected readers consumption habits and changed the newspaper strategies and business practice. Moreover, previous studies have shown how the Arab and Saudi culture have been affected, changed, and adopted the technological advance. However, it is also clear that a gap in the Saudi literature still exists regarding the specificity of the implemented business

strategies and the main challenge that faced newspapers in Saudi Arabia. While some studies have explored the issue generally in the Arab countries, the issue of the challenges encountered and the strategies implemented by Saudi newspapers still need to be explored further. Thus, a comparative structure between western studies and Arab/Saudi studies are required to investigate the Saudi newspaper further in this study. However, the data collected from the interviews (Interviewing specialists from only one newspaper) prevent us from generalizing our findings and limit us to apply it to my case study of *Okaz* newspaper. Yet, it may guide the path for future research.

The following chapter will look at the methodology of this study.

Methodology

4 Introduction

While digital technology has empowered readers by enabling them to choose the platforms on which they want to consume news, it has also challenged newspapers to create new business strategies to overcome losses they faced as a result of unpredictable reader consumption patterns. Thus, I intend to assess the Saudi Arabian newspaper market by conducting a mixed-method approach: a qualitative research method that examines specialists working at *Okaz* newspaper as part of a case study; and a quantitative method that focuses on readers of the news. As I compare the findings from this study with the findings elsewhere, such as the research conducted in Western countries, I will strive to find patterns in readers' consumption habits that may help *Okaz* and the Saudi newspaper industry as a whole to understand their readers and thus find other ways to generate revenue online. Feagin, Orum, and Sjoberg (1991) defined a case study as “a method that relies on the examination of a single instance of a phenomenon to explore, often in rich detail, the hows and whys of a problem” (p. 121). Since there has been limited research conducted on the Saudi media market specifically, this case study could be useful in offering a broader understanding of the strategies and challenges that face *Okaz* newspaper publication in Saudi Arabia.

The methodology is directly linked to the objectives of this study (as stated in the introduction section), namely to: 1) explore the business strategies that have been adopted at *Okaz* newspaper to gain a better understanding of the specific marketing and business challenges and solutions used in non-Western media organizations; 2) analyze readers' consumption habits and motivations in accessing and reading news; 3) investigate and compare the business strategies used by Saudi media with those of US media organizations, and envision how the theories, strategies, and solutions of Western media organizations could

be applied to the Saudi market, identifying whether these tools could potentially lead to new and effective marketing ideas and improvements in Saudi Arabia; 4) compare the statistical findings from this study with those of US newspapers in order to recognize similarities and differences between the West and Saudi Arabia; and to 5) gain a better overall understanding of the communications industry in Saudi Arabia, particularly its challenges, opportunities, and strategies.

4.1 Research Design

Since the impacts of the changing communication technology landscape and the effects of economic changes and readers' consumption habits have not been addressed extensively in Saudi Arabia, and each newspaper must develop business strategies that are specific to its own unique characteristics and culture, my research embraces the following: 1) analytical research (comparative grounding) describing the media situation in the West, and the challenges and the strategies that have been applied to overcome these challenges, which includes pointing out the main variables and factors in comparison to the unique features of the Saudi Arabia newspaper market; and 2) exploratory research that will allow me to gain more knowledge about the current situation in the Saudi Arabian newspaper industry with regards to the current knowledge that has been developed in the West. Moreover, this section of the study was expanded to include two stages: 2.1) qualitative research in the form of one-on-one interviews with 11 employees of the *Okaz* daily newspaper, who worked as specialists in different departments of the organization, as part of a case study that will enable me to have an in-depth understanding of the current state of the *Okaz* newspaper business under study; and 2.2) quantitative research carried out through a questionnaire surveying 212 news media readers. The combination of qualitative and quantitative research gives me a deeper understanding of the state of the business from two different perspectives—the newspaper

specialists' side, which represents the business aspect, and the readers' side, which represents the societal aspect.

4.1.1 Comparative grounding

This section aims to analyze the market conditions in the Western world in order to compare them with those found in Saudi Arabia. This comparative theoretical analysis helps in understanding the strategies, struggles, and magnitude of the crisis in the West to determine what can be learned and applied to the Saudi Arabian market. By analyzing the overall situation in the West, focusing on what variables to look for in regard to the crisis, the challenges, and the solutions and strategies adopted, I can determine whether similar methods of dealing with the crisis would be appropriate for the Saudi market despite the cultural differences.

Table 10 below provides a general view of what information and findings I can expect to find in Saudi media—specifically at *Okaz* newspaper—for the purpose of comparison between Western media and Saudi Arabian media.

Table 10 Summary of the Western world analysis

The West			
Challenge	Outcome	Solution	Expectation and Outcome
Economic challenge (cost)	Financial losses/scaled down revenues and circulation numbers	Laying off employees	Cost reductions
		Shrinking the size of the newspaper	
		Operating on fewer days	
		Abandoning the traditional format	
Technological challenge	Rise of new players in the market (search engines, social media sites, and blogs), along with existing players	Creating an online presence for the newspaper	Getting the maximum benefits from technology to stay competitive in the new environment and to generate greater traffic to the newspaper's website and revenue
		Developing relationships with social media websites such as Twitter and Facebook	
		Embedding social and interactive features in the online newspaper website	
Social challenge	The rise of citizen journalism, and changes in habits and preferences related to receiving and reading the news	Allowing some freedom to readers to share their opinions	Retaining current readers and attracting new readers
		Adopting citizen journalism and incorporating their viewpoints after carefully analyzing and filtering the content	

Marketing News in the Traditional Print Format			
Strategies	How	What	Where
Self-promotion	Eye-catching headlines on the front page	Grabbing readers' attention and serving as its own advertiser	All newspapers follow this strategy in different ways, according to their audience and image
Cross-promotion on allied media	Relying on other media owned by the same company	Grabbing readers' attention by promoting content in other media	Bell Media and Québecor in Canada. This phenomenon can also be found in the US and UK and in other parts of the world
Cross-promotion on non-allied media	Relying on other media that are not associated with the organization for a fee	Grabbing readers' attention, though a conflict of interest can exist between competing media organizations	<i>The New York Times</i> , <i>The Guardian</i> , <i>The Washington Post</i> (to name a few)
Marketing News in New Media			
Strategies	How	What	Where
Social sharing (the use of social media)	Creating an account on Facebook, Twitter and other social media, and integrating social media features into the online newspaper	Grabbing readers' attention and disseminating information, so that readers also become distributors of the news. Increases brand recognition and meets readers' gratification needs	<i>The New York Times</i> , <i>Washington Post</i> , <i>Dallas Morning News</i> , <i>Arizona Republic</i> (to name a few)
Developing content strategy	Providing more local news or more opinion articles that expand upon the traditional print format, and integrating video features	Satisfying different needs of readers in order to ensure the print edition has a greater chance of survival. Enhancing readers' experiences and grabbing their attention to encourage them to subscribe to all the organization's platforms	
Developing strong revenue stream	Paywall model/outourcing	Generating revenue through subscriptions and advertising. Compensating for some of the lost revenues from the traditional print format by reducing costs associated with the print publication	
Cross-platform branding	Using technology to its full potential	Increasing awareness of the newspaper brand by harnessing information for the readers and maintaining the credibility of both the information and the organization	

4.1.2 Exploratory Research

This section aims to carry out an assessment of the status of the Saudi Arabian media market by employing two approaches in gathering and analyzing the data to gain a better understanding of the research topic: first, qualitative research focusing on the interviewing of

newspaper professionals (using *Okaz* newspaper as a case study); and second, quantitative research focusing on readers who responded to a questionnaire about their consumption habits, behaviours, motivations, and their willingness to pay for news online.

Building upon the conceptual framework in the literature review section (chapter 2), the qualitative and quantitative approaches can be interpreted using two separate but related aspects of the market: the business aspect and the societal aspect. In other words, the qualitative approach will correlate with the business aspect part of this study while the quantitative approach will relate to the social aspect of the study.

4.1.2.1 Qualitative method analysis

The qualitative method involves a one-on-one interview with news media specialists working at the newspaper in a range of departments. Eleven employees were interviewed and most of them were managers in their departments, including the International Advertising Manager, Digital Sales Manager, Advertising Director, Director of Electronic Publishing and Head of Department of the Culture Section for the traditional newspaper, Electronic Publishing Supervisor, Media Researcher who used to be a reporter, IT Director, Human Resources Specialist, Administrator in Human Resources Management, Director of the Office of the Chairman of the Board, and the General Manager, who is also a member of the Board of Directors and President of the Council of Press Institutions. The reason for interviewing employees from different departments is to understand all the challenges the newspaper is facing from different parts and perspectives of the organization, and to address the challenges from a fresh angle so as to present a more accurate overall picture. The interview questions were designed as open-ended questions originating from the literature review as well as other questions created specifically to better answer my research questions to meet this research objective. Interviewees were asked to address the issues facing them, the strategies that have been adopted, and the opportunities and challenges involved in incorporating digital and

social media platforms into their business practices, along with those challenges brought about by new players in the media market. They were also asked questions based on their field of work that were unique to their departments; moreover, other questions were generated at the time of the interview and were based on their responses to the prepared questions with the intention of seeking greater depth or clarification. The information compiled regarding the newspaper's general situation, challenges, opportunities, and strategies are considered the business aspect of the study. These interviews allowed the researcher to undertake an in-depth analysis of the factors that the newspaper perceives to be disruptive or beneficial to their strategies. Additionally, interviewees were provided the option to answer the questions in the English or Arabic language, and were informed that the interview would be recorded and had the right to stop the interview at any time. Only one interviewee requested to stop the interview early after feeling uncomfortable about continuing with the interview.

4.1.2.1.1 Business aspect

This aspect measures the overall situation of the newspaper industry—its current state, the threats that it faces, and the opportunity that the market provides. The information in this section was obtained by analyzing the responses provided by the employees working at *Okaz*, to better understand the situation in the newspaper industry. The first step in analyzing the situation specific to Saudi Arabia will help me to answer the question of why a newspaper business chooses one strategy over another, which has been addressed in Ansoff's Matrix. Ansoff's Matrix was chosen for two main reasons: first, readers and advertisers are considered the main assets in any media business, and advertisers will always follow the readers; and second, media organizations always have to keep their readers in mind and will only be able to achieve growth if they attract more readers. Once readers' needs and perceptions of value are understood by a media organization, Ansoff's Matrix helps it

understand the best possible ways for the newspaper to reach out to its customers, whether by creating a new product in the existing market, expanding the business into a new market, focusing on adding more value for the same product, or creating new products in new markets (Ansoff, 1957).

This section was dependent on *Okaz*'s cooperation in providing general and detailed information that would serve to anticipate the market and the decision-making used in choosing certain strategies, as well as the specific data that were obtained from the participants of the interview questionnaire.

4.1.2.2 Quantitative method among readers

The quantitative method relies on questionnaires issued and delivered both online and as hard copies to reach out to the maximum number of responders (readers). The questionnaire seeks background information regarding people's reading practices, their use of social media platforms and traditional print news formats, as well as their values, needs, attitudes, and motivations regarding consuming news on different platforms as well as the types of news they consume from each of these platforms. The questionnaire allows readers to express their opinions regarding the traditional, online formats of newspapers and the formats of different search engines and social media platforms, as well as the means they use to access news. Since this study relies on comparing findings from the Western world with those in the Arab world, my questionnaires were based on questions used in Western studies to meet my intent to have a comparative perspective. However, some questions have been slightly modified to fit my study. Additional questions were also generated to gain a better understanding about newsreaders in Saudi Arabia specifically. I have used several statistical methods to analyze my data: 1) descriptive statistics were used to summarize the sample data; 2) frequency and proportions were reported for categorical variables (gender) and mean/SD were used for numerical variables (scores); 3) associations between two numerical variables

were examined using Pearson correlation coefficients; 4) relationships between two categorical variables were explored using Chi-square tests; 5) comparisons of scores between subgroups were performed using independent sample t-tests (for 2 subgroups) or one-way ANOVA (for 3 or more subgroups); and 6) consistency of scale within the survey were assessed using cronbach's alpha with values above 0.8 suggest that participants' responded consistently to a set of questions. All descriptive and inferential statistical analysis was conducted using IBM SPSS software version 26. A level of significance of 0.05 was used for inferential analysis as commonly acceptable for social/business research, with p-values < 0.05 reported as statistically significant. Additionally, I have used box-whisker plots to display outliers in my data.

Moreover, my analysis focuses on how readers cluster together based on their news access profiles across eight news sources (Traditional Newspapers, Online Newspapers, Yahoo News, Google News, Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, and Instagram). Latent class cluster models are useful to capture heterogeneity in sets of indicator variables and to consider holistic patterns that can occur through individual subgroups of readers. Accordingly, I have used Latent Class Models: 1) to estimate the number of segments and the size of each segment; and (2) to determine how readers cluster together based on their news access profile, and then analyze which cluster demonstrates a willingness to pay for online news. The findings from Latent Class Models will enhance my knowledge about the nature of newsreaders, and the characteristics and motivations that lie behind their willingness to pay for online news. I have also created a model (see Figure 23¹⁶) intended to answer the

¹⁶ Figure 23 shows the variables included in the News Access Profile based on news sources/news providers (indicator variables). A range of variables is included in the model as covariates (motivations, credibility, trustworthiness, news type, as well as age and gender), and willingness to pay is modelled as an outcome (dependent variable).

following research question: What could encourage Saudi Arabian readers to pay for online news? To answer this question, I must first understand that people differ considerably based on range variables such as the motives for consuming news, how much they trust the news source, the credibility of the news source, the types of news they consume, the means platform they use to consume news, as well as their age and gender. All of these variables combine to form the reader's profile when accessing the news, as well as shape my outcomes regarding willingness to pay for online news.

I have implemented a three-step approach in my latent class analysis as suggested by Vermunt (2010). For the first step, I constructed a Latent Class Model using a set of eight indicator variables (Traditional Newspaper, Online Newspaper, Yahoo News, Google News, Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, and Instagram) to measure the news access profile. Participants were provided with a question regarding the frequency of using these eight media providers when accessing and reading news. Based on the indicators, a four-class solution was chosen. In the second step, study participants were assigned to their respective latent classes. The second step also involved creating a file (using LatentGold 5.1 software) and adding variables (covariates: motivation, credibility, believability, adoption of innovation, news type, age, and gender) that would be analyzed in the final step. And in the third step, I investigated and validated the model by examining the relationship between the assigned latent class and the external variables that were saved in step 2 to test the extent to which class group can predict the outcome of overall willingness to pay for online news.

The likelihood models using latent class have a validation component compared to traditional clustering techniques (like k-means clustering). The validation allows me to check how well participants are allocated to different latent classes in regard to their willingness to pay variable. It provides an additional verification for the accuracy of allocating participants to different clusters.

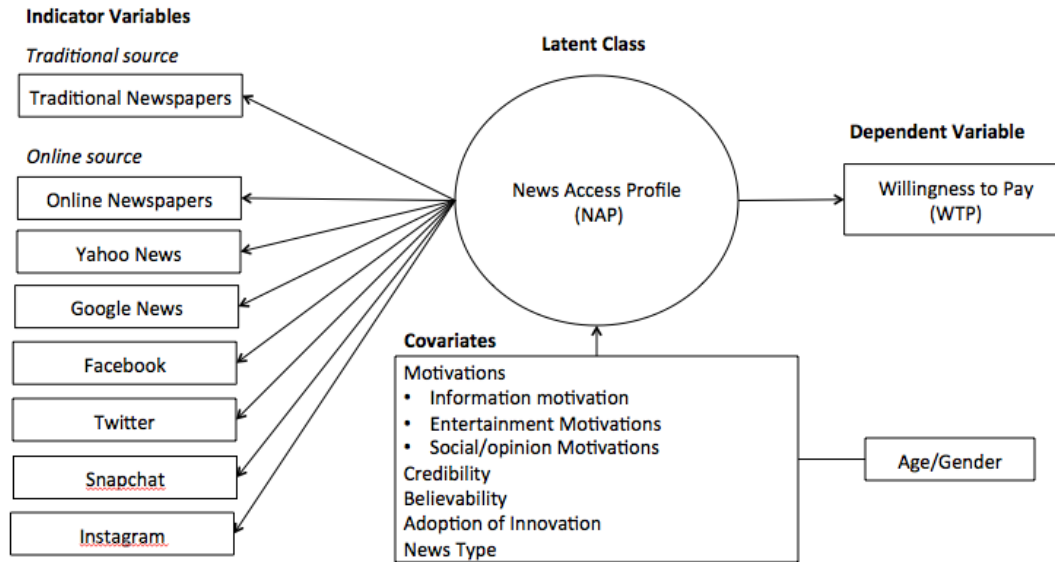


Figure 23 News Access Profile (NAP) Latent Class Model

Before distributing the questionnaire, a pilot test was conducted to ensure that the questionnaire was presented properly and easy to understand, as well as to estimate the completion time for the questionnaire. A total of 15 participants took place in this pilot test (10 females and 5 males), and the participants took an average of 45 minutes to complete the online version of the survey.

Once I confirmed that the data was readable on different platforms and accessible to all, a total of 180 hard copy surveys were distributed in malls, schools, companies, hospitals, and the King Abdul Aziz University in Jeddah to ensure that it would reach the widest possible range of participants from diverse backgrounds. To ensure the anonymity of participants, when distributing the survey to the front desk staff of each institution, an envelope was provided to allow each participant to place their completed survey directly into the envelope and seal it before handing it back to the receptionist. Moreover, I created two

links (one in Arabic, and one in English) that provided participants with the option to choose their preferred language for answering the questionnaire. After creating these two links and ensuring that they worked on different platforms (laptop, iPad, and cell phone), the links were printed on flyers and distributed along with the hard copy questionnaire, and also provided as a separate document for participants who chose to complete the survey electronically. Both links were also distributed in a WhatsApp message, on Instagram, on Snapchat, through the personal accounts of two social media celebrities on Snapchat, and on Twitter through the account of a media consultant in Saudi Arabia, as well as on numerous personal accounts/pages on Facebook and other social media sites. A total number of 774 participants sent responses of which only 212 were completed—of these 212 surveys, 119 were filled out electronically in Arabic and another 21 in English, while the remaining 72 were completed as hard copies in Arabic only.

4.1.2.2.1 Social aspect

The social aspect encompasses many different elements both inside (e.g. employees, managerial board) and outside (e.g. readers, advertisers, stakeholders) the organization. One of the main external variables with a direct impact on the business of every media organization is readers. Since readers are considered the main assets of any news business, and advertisers will usually follow the readers, it is essential for media organizations to be aware of readers' demographics, consumption habits, interests, motivations, and perceptions of value. News value is an essential element in understanding the motivations and behaviours of those who consume the news, and it is thus crucial for news organizations to observe these factors to understand things from their readers' perspective. Although news value is primarily researched from the provider's point of view (i.e., the journalist), the concept of uses and gratification theory examines news value from the perspective of the receiver's point of view (i.e., the audience members) (Lee and Chyi, 2014a; Lee and Chyi, 2014b). Once the news

organization takes readers' motivations, wants, needs, and gratifications into consideration, it can then attract these readers, capture their attention, and possibly even turn them into regular readers (regular consumers). Thus, in this dissertation, "news value" will refer to readers' preferences rather than to journalists' value.

This aspect will focus on readers. It will analyze patterns in their consumption habits, motivations, news access profile and their willingness to pay for news. The uses and gratification theory will be a guide to help determine the motivational groups that readers fall into. Although most of my survey questions are similar to those found in other studies, I modified them in a way that allows me to attain the maximum amount of data that readers can provide to cover most of the subjects in the study. I also considered the Latent Class Model to understand the different clusters of readers accessing and consuming the news, and thus to find out their intention to pay for news online. Intention to pay for online content may be influenced by many factors, such as age, level of education, motivations, trust, credibility, and other factors. In this study, I intend to further investigate the intention of Arab readers who are residents of Saudi Arabia to pay for online content.

Since this research is based on a comparison method, and there are many ways to devise polls for newsreaders, the specific questions I am dealing with and the problems which I am confronting oblige me to use methods that have already been used elsewhere, in order to permit more valid comparisons with research that has previously occurred in the West.

4.2 Research questionnaires

4.2.1 Employee questionnaires

The employees of *Okaz* newspaper were asked general questions about their age, their position at the newspaper, how long they have been working for the newspaper, and their daily work routine. While the participants were asked questions based on the specific position at the newspaper, there were additional questions related to the challenges the newspaper is

facing, participants' opinions about what could cause a drop in readership, the types of services they offer online, the impact of the Internet on the print edition of the newspaper, future payment models for the online edition of the newspaper, the level of competition from other news providers in the market, and their expectations of the survival of traditional print newspapers along with many other pertinent questions (see Appendix). The purpose of these questions was to determine the challenges and the changes related to *Okaz's* business practices, the economic challenges caused by the advent of new players in the market, as well as the way that readers' consumption habits have evolved in response to these changes. The objective is to learn what strategies have been considered and adopted to overcome the challenges in the industry, as well as the perspective of *Okaz's* employees regarding the future of the print version of the newspaper. Replies from employee participants were gathered and arranged into three groups—business, editorial, and administration—to present the different ideas and perspectives from all aspects of the business.

4.2.2 Readers' questionnaire

The questionnaires (see Appendix 1) used in this study have been designed based on existing questionnaires to test my concern variables from other studies. Since this research is based on a comparative method, I am compelled to develop questions and a methodology that have previously been used in order to provide a basis for comparison. Building upon what it is already known in the Western world, and what I have learned from the literature review, the variables that would be most valuable to understand are readers' demographics, motivations, and the credibility of the news source based on readers' perceptions. I have also developed supplementary questions to accomplish my study objective.

4.2.2.1 Demographics

The questionnaire was generated and presented in both the Arabic and English language, and covered personal information regarding participants' age, gender, marital

status, monthly income, level of education, occupation, and the languages they speak. This demographic information is used to analyze patterns of use on different news media platforms and to differentiate the preferences among readers of traditional print newspapers and online news providers.

4.2.2.2 Connectivity and media use

These sets of questions are intended to identify participants' frequency of accessing the Internet with the options of "every day", "2–3 days a week", "4–6 days a week", "about once a week", "less often", and "never". Participants were also asked about the duration of time they spend on the Internet—with response options including "less than 10 minutes", "more than 10 minutes but less than 30 minutes", "more than 30 minutes but less than 1 hour", "1–2 hours", "2–3 hours", "3+ hours", and "other options"—and the place or location from which they access the Internet, whether "at home", "at work", "at college or university", "Internet café", or "cell phone". Participants were allowed to choose all the options that applied to them. This question was followed by a short-answer question asking participants to identify the one primary place from which they access the Internet. Participants were also asked to rank 14 different activities that they perform on the Internet at home and at work.

4.2.2.3 News consumption

Participants were asked to provide their reading preferences and habits in regard to consuming news by stating the frequency with which they would access news on different formats—such as Traditional Newspapers, Online Newspapers, search engines (Yahoo News, Google News) and social media websites (Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, and Instagram). They were provided with the following response options: (Never, Seldom, Sometimes, Often, and Always), based on a 5-point Likert scale (Lee & Chyi, 2014a; Lee, 2013). This was followed by a question about their main source for reading news, with the option to choose only one answer and with the option of providing "other" news sources if their option was not

provided.

4.2.2.4 News Access Profile

The News Access Profile (NAP) is measured using eight news sources (Traditional Newspapers, Online Newspapers, Yahoo News, Google News, Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, and Instagram). Readers were asked to identify their use of different media providers when accessing and reading the news by indicating their frequency in accessing each of the eight news sources based on a 5-point scale (Never, Seldom, Sometimes, Often, and Always).

4.2.2.5 Attitudes and beliefs

Participants were provided with statements to measure how favourable they perceive the news to be, based on a 7-point Likert scale regarding their agreement or disagreement with the question: How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements about the news in general? (a) Getting the news is enjoyable to me, or (b) Getting the news is advantageous to me (Lee & Chyi, 2014a). Moreover, the same study of Lee and Chyi in 2014 measured news beliefs based on consumers' general view of the value of news. They measured believability by providing the participants with general questions asking for personal views on different statements such as: (a) News is important to me, on a 7-point scale, where 1=strongly disagree and 7=strongly agree.

4.2.2.6 Motivations

According to the uses and gratifications theory, the four main motivations that underlie and drive readers' decisions to consume news are: 1) information-driven, 2) entertainment-driven, 3) social-driven, and 4) opinion-driven (Lee, 2013). Participants were provided with statements to rank their motivational reasons for consuming and accessing news from their main news source, using a 7-point scale where 1=strongly disagree and 7=strongly agree (Palmgreen & Rayburn II, 1982; Lee & Chyi, 2014a; Lee, 2013). The following question was asked: Thinking back to the main sources from which you get your news (Traditional Newspaper/Online Newspaper/search engines/social media), how much do

you agree or disagree with the following statements? The 15 statements, categorized according to their motivation, were: (1) to find out what is going on in the world; (2) to keep up with the way my government functions; (3) to keep myself informed; (4) to pass time; (5) to share information with other people; (6) to compare my own ideas to those of the commentators; (7) to occupy myself during leisure time; (8) primarily because of the writer; (9) to find more detailed news and information; (10) for entertainment purposes; (11) because it is exciting; (12) because it is a habit that I have; (13) to appear more informed to those around me; (14) to make me more sociable and to feel part of a community; (15) to get breaking news and to follow up on news stories.

4.2.2.7 Readership

This section began with a specific question to participants about whether they read news online or on a traditional print newspaper, followed by a series of questions asking to provide the name of the print newspaper they read most often (if there is one) and the name of the online newspaper they read. They were also asked questions about their frequency of online news access, how long they have been reading news online, and the duration of time spent reading news during different parts of the day from each media provider.

Other questions related to the navigating services of different online news providers, downloading time, content updating, and commenting features included a five-point scale of “excellent”, “good”, “fair”, “poor”, and “very poor”, as well as the option of “not applicable” for participants who don’t have a specific news medium. When asked their opinion about the most important feature of online newspapers, they were given the following options to choose from: “it is free”; “I cannot get the print copy”; “I prefer to read the online version”; “it is always available when I want to read it”; “I can access it on multiple devices”; “to get real time news (instant news)”; and the option of “I do not read online newspapers” (AlShehri, & Gunter, 2002).

4.2.2.8 Paying and Willingness to pay

Participants were first asked a general question about whether they pay for news occasionally or always, or through a subscription, or do not pay for traditional print news, online newspapers, or news applications on their smart phones, with the option of “not applicable” if they do not use any of the options provided. This was followed by a specific question asking participants to provide the reasons behind these decisions, with the options of “it provides me with something extra that would be worth paying for”, “there is an app that allows me to identify specifically which topics interest me and are relevant to me”, “I receive immediate information”, “I receive quality information”, “I do not pay for news”, and the option to provide their own reason.

In relation to willingness to pay for their favourite online newspaper, three options were offered: “Yes”; “No” (AlShehri & Gunter, 2002); and “Yes, but only if” (Himma-Kadakas & Kõuts, 2015). If the participant answered “No”, then this question would be followed by another question providing reasons behind their unwillingness to pay for news, such as “I can get free news somewhere else”, “it should be free”, “I cannot afford it”, “I already pay for my Internet connection”, “I have no specific reason”, and an option to provide their own reason.

Moreover, this subject can be tackled from different angles. According to a study conducted by Himma-Kadakas and Kõuts (2015), financial reasons may not be the only factor behind an unwillingness to pay. For the purpose of my study, the method used in collecting the responses was modified to fit my study. If respondents answered “Yes, but only if”, they were asked to choose one statement that most closely fit their response, such as the following: “I may be willing to pay only if it provides me with something extra that would be worth paying for”; “I may be willing to pay if there is an app that allows me to set specifically which topics interest me and are relevant to me”; “I may be willing to pay only if

I receive immediate information”; “I may be willing to pay only if I receive quality information”, and an option to provide their own reason. Participants were also asked about their future intention to pay for online news, with the options of either “Yes” or “No” or “Not sure”.

4.2.2.9 Credibility

Participants were asked to rate the credibility of different news providers based on their own perceptions of media news, including Traditional Newspapers, Online Newspapers, search engines (Yahoo News and Google News), and social media websites (Facebook and Twitter), based on eight commonly identified criteria: clarity, bias, telling the whole story, accuracy, believability, trust, fairness, and timeliness, according to a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1=strongly disagree to 7=strongly agree. The measurement of credibility is the total combination of the eight criteria being used in the credibility ratings scale (Mehrabi, Abu Hassan, & Ali, 2011). The scale measurement was modified from a 5-point scale to a 7-point scale to be compatible with the other variables.

According to Fogg and Tseng (1999), many researchers have identified two key components of credibility in the traditional media: trustworthiness and expertise. Yet other scholars measure credibility based on a wider range of variables such as fairness, accuracy, and believability (Bucy, 2003; Meyer, Marchionni, and Thorson, 2010); how informative and in-depth it is (Bucy, 2003); or whether it is unbiased, trustworthy, and reliable (Meyer, Marchionni, and Thorson, 2010). Most studies on news credibility examine the extent to which users or readers perceive news information to be credible or trustworthy (Bucy, 2003; Chung, Nam, & Stefanone, 2012; Mitchelstein & Boczkowski, 2010; Metzger, Flanagin, & Medders, 2010). Therefore, the credibility of information can be determined by the credibility and the trustworthiness of the news source.

With the advent of innovative technology, many new players have emerged onto the media scene, and news has become more available on the Internet. Not long ago, the credibility of news and information from the perspective of the readers used to be based on whether the news was considered to be trustworthy, fair, accurate, and believable. As a consequence of these recent technological advances, other characteristics have emerged as significant measures of credibility, such as interactivity, hypertextuality, and multimodality (Chung, Nam, & Stefanone, 2012). Since my study focuses on added value, the following variables were added and considered as factors affecting readers' perceptions of credibility: trustworthiness, expertise, interactivity, hypertextuality, and multimodality. Thus, credibility is no longer simply measured based on the eight commonly identified criteria: clarity, bias, telling the whole story, accuracy, believability, trust, fairness, and timeliness, but also by the combination of all the above-mentioned factors.

4.2.2.10 Trustworthiness

A 7-point scale was used to measure news trustworthiness, ranging from 1=strongly disagree to 7=strongly agree. Respondents were asked to provide their opinions regarding different news providers using the following measurements: "fair", "unbiased", "objective", and "delivering a diversity of expertise" (Chung, Nam, & Stefanone, 2012).

4.2.2.11 Expertise

A 7-point scale was used to measure perceived expertise by asking the respondents to provide their personal opinions on news items using the following criteria: "professional", "in-depth", and "written by professional journalists" (Chung, Nam, & Stefanone, 2012).

4.2.2.12 Interactivity

Respondents were asked to provide their feedback on news organizations' websites by using a 7-point scale, where 1=strongly disagree and 7=strongly agree. They could respond based on the following options: "easy to comment on", "adds information easily", and "represents user's choice" (Chung, Nam, & Stefanone, 2012).

4.2.2.13 Hypertextuality

Hypertextuality was measured in regard to three features on the website. Respondents were asked to provide their feedback regarding the following measurements: “easy to share with others via link”, “easy to access via clicking”, and “presenting other news stories simultaneously” (Chung, Nam, & Stefanone, 2012).

As mentioned earlier in this section, with the advent of new technology and social media, the uses and gratification analysis requires me to consider other aspects and questions related to interactivity and hypertextuality. Ruggiero (2000) indicates that “interactivity significantly strengthens the core U&G¹⁷ notion of active users” since it measures the user’s degree of participation (Ruggiero, 2000, p. 15). Additionally, hypertextuality refers to layered information considering that “every building block of text (node) contains an abundance of hyperlinked keywords, pictograms, and pictures, which can be clicked on with a mouse” (Ruggiero, 2000, p. 23). This theory could help the newspaper decide what types of information would be beneficial to provide to its readers, as well as the best possible ways of delivering the news to readers.

4.2.2.14 Multimediality

A 7-point scale was used to measure the website’s external appearance, such as “uses graphics, figures, or photos”, “eye-catching”, and whether sites are viewed as “flashy” (Chung, Nam, & Stefanone, 2012).

A comparative analysis of media credibility was used to measure readers’ perceptions of credibility of a news story, an approach that can be traced back to Burns W. Roper (1985) (Kohring and Matthes, 2007; Roper, 1985).

¹⁷ U&G: uses and gratification.

4.2.2.15 Believability

Respondents were asked to rate a list of media outlets based on their believability using a 7-point scale, ranging from 1=not believable at all to 7=very believable (Xie & Zhao, 2014). The scale measurement was modified from a 5-point scale to a 7-point scale to be compatible with the other measured variables.

4.2.2.16 News type

Participants were asked to indicate their frequency of accessing different news sources (Traditional Newspapers, Online Newspapers, Yahoo News, Google News, Facebook, and Twitter) in relation to different categories or types of news—local news, international news, technological news, economic news, political news, fashion news, sports news, healthcare news, and gaming news—with the options being daily, weekly, monthly, once in a while, yearly, and never. The intention of this question was to find out which type of news was accessed most on different platforms to help the newspaper businesses focus on specific subject areas of greatest interest to their readers. News types have been added as a covariate to indicate willingness to pay for news based on the type of news that readers consume.

4.2.2.17 Adoption of innovation

Based on Rogers's review of several texts on the adoption of technological innovation, there are five attributes that will drive consumers to adopt new technologies: relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, trialability and results demonstrability (Rogers, 1962, page 211). According to Rogers, the relative advantage "is the degree to which an innovation is perceived as better than the idea it supersedes." Compatibility "is the degree to which an innovation is perceived as being consistent with the existing values, past experiences, and needs of potential adopters." Complexity "is the degree to which an innovation is perceived as difficult to understand and use." Trialability "is the degree to which an innovation may be experimented with on a limited basis." Results demonstrability

or observability “is the degree to which the results of an innovation are visible to others” (Rogers, 2003). Based on his in-depth research, Rogers listed these above five characteristics as the factors that most influence the adoption of an innovation (Rogers, 2003, page 36). This scale is used to explain how people adopt an innovation (such as technology), and can therefore be applied to how they adopt and use online news, as well as how the characteristics of these five scales may influence or lead to willingness to pay. These five scales could also help me to explain the reasons why readers using online websites in consuming news. Participants were provided with 18 statements and were asked to indicate how truthful each statement was based on their own points of view, using a 5-point scale where 1=not true at all and 5=very true.

4.2.2.18 News Access Profile (NAP) by using Latent Class Model

I used Latent GOLD first to determine the number of classes and to find out how readers cluster together based on different variables. Latent GOLD is a program that uses a “cluster module, which provides the state-of-the-art in cluster analysis based on Latent Class Models” (Statistical Innovations, n.d.). A latent class is a statistical method that uses a set of measures and indicator variables that reflect membership in latent unobserved categories in order to capture preference heterogeneity in the population. Latent classes are unobservable (latent) subgroups or segments: “Cases within the same latent class are homogeneous on certain criteria (variables), while cases in different latent classes are dissimilar from each other in certain important ways” (Vermunt & Magidson, 2005).

4.2.2.19 Other questions

To obtain insight into other applications that are used to consume news, participants were asked an open question to provide the names of applications that they have on their cell phone, including social media platforms such as Snapchat and Instagram.

At the end of the survey, participants were provided a space to offer any final comments and suggestions, and they were also given the choice to provide their personal email address for a chance to win a \$50 gift prize.

Results

The results section of my study is divided into two chapters: Chapter 5 consists of results gathered from the specialists of *Okaz* newspaper, which comprises the business aspect of the study and is related to the qualitative portion of my study. Chapter 6 includes results gathered from surveyed participants (readers), which represents the social aspect of the study and is related to the quantitative portion of my study. The analysis and discussion of both the qualitative and quantitative data will be provided in Chapter 7. Thus, this chapter is only intended to present my raw results.

5 Results from interviews with *Okaz* specialists

5.1 A brief history of *Okaz* newspaper

Okaz newspaper made its first appearance during the individual era of the press in 1960, when the founder “Ahmed Abdulgafour Attar” sent King Faisal a request to grant him approval in issuing the newspaper, which the king permitted later that year (Kasba et al., 2004).

In its early years, *Okaz* newspaper was a literary newspaper that was primarily interested in thoughts, ideas and the affairs of society, but also some political aspects. During the institutional era that followed, the newspaper shifted to a more social orientation, with an intention to cover more topics directly related to the Saudi society, yet it still kept its literary character. In 1969 *Okaz* published that it had secured an agreement with Associated Press to obtain news stories, which was followed by similar agreements with United Press and Reuters in 1973. From 1977 until 1980, the newspaper became characterized more as a political newspaper with interests in Arab news and on Arab matters. By the end of 1981 until 2004, *Okaz* evolved into a reputable local political and social newspaper, developing an

identity to become “every reader’s newspaper” and bearing the logo of “the journal of the whole country”.

During that time, the newspaper went through five stages of development in its content and format (Kasba et al., 2004): 1) 1981–1986: the newspaper’s main goal was to focus on internal affairs and develop a local identity directed to local readers; 2) 1986–1991: the newspaper focused on adopting the service theory¹⁸, which resulted in their new logo “from the reader to *Okaz*”. It opened up many avenues for the reader to communicate with the newspaper, in which they could express their concerns and opinions directly. In 1987, the shape and size of the newspaper changed, as it began to print with colour and reduced its size to 53 x 35 cm so it would be easier for readers to hold (Kasba et al., 2004); 3) In 1993, *Okaz* adopted the effect theory, which modified the logo to say “from *Okaz* to the reader”, as a way to align with its goals to enhance journalism content at that time. 4) The newspaper established a new goal to focus more on different regions of the KSA, and in this regard *Okaz* started its project of publishing and printing simultaneously in four different city centres in 1995, which was its first step at the level of the Saudi press. *Okaz* invested significant money in this project to ensure its content and coverage would meet the needs of its readership in each of these four different locations. The project was a success and prompted a complete transformation of the newspaper in 1998, which included an increased number of pages and a new font, more special supplements and eight weekly supplements for each region that included the important regions of the kingdom, greater in-the-field news coverage, and more of a focus on the human element of news stories. Moreover, at this time *Okaz* was still able to keep up with the developments and changes from the new competitors in the market such as

¹⁸ *Okaz*’s service theory is based on serving the readers by encouraging and allowing them to communicate with the newspaper regarding any needs or concerns they might have, thus creating a channel of communication from the readers to the newspaper and back to the readers again.

satellite channels and the Internet. These updates helped revamp the organizational structure of *Okaz* and reinforced its identity as the “newspaper for every home”, which later evolved into “a newspaper for every reader” as *Okaz* directed its attention to its readers, who were considered the primary focus of the newspaper’s business. In order to meet the needs of its readers, *Okaz* journalists were required to be well-informed and knowledgeable and to ensure that their content was a product of the opinions and statistical studies of their readers (Kasba et al., 2004).

Based on a report published by *Okaz*, advertisements remained an important source of income to the company in 2011, with an 18% increase in ad sales compared to the previous year. Local advertising at all of *Okaz* institution’s publications increased by 31% in 2011 compared with 2010. *Okaz*’s traditional print newspaper was able to generate an increase in advertising income in 2011 by 17.54% over the previous year, with a 12% increase in daily advertisement space and a 14.9% improvement in advertising income. In addition, the income from *Okaz*’s website rose 49.3% in 2011 compared with 2010. Meanwhile, the company was able to serve more of its readership around the world through its digital platforms, such as through its presence on social media, its online newspaper, and its website and mobile applications—from 2010 to 2011, it witnessed a surge in subscribers from 3.9 million to 10.2 million (*Okaz Organization for Press and Publication*, 2011). In 2011, the newspaper conducted many marketing campaigns to encourage readers to buy yearly subscriptions. These campaigns were executed on specific days and occasions during the year and provided a range of different offers and discounts such as the national day campaign, the teacher day campaign, the instant prize campaign, and campaigns to distribute newspapers to Arab and foreign airline companies, including Middle East Airlines, Gulf Airlines, Tunisia Airlines, Indian Airlines, and Singapore Airlines, as well as a number of hotels and hospitals. During the same period, the number of government subscriptions to the newspaper increased by 7%

in 2011 compared with 2010. It was also in 2011 that the newspaper introduced its new feature—the creation of *Okaz* digital on its website, which is an exact replica of its traditional print newspaper and makes the newspaper available to all readers online (Okaz Organization for Press and Publication, 2011).

The newspaper implemented more additions in 2013, including dividing the newspaper into seven main sections—news, community, economics, culture, politics, sports, and incidents/events—as well as publishing complete pages related to different regions of the kingdom, establishing an opinion section and offering a section with political and economical analyses. The newspaper also catered to younger generations under the age of 30 by creating a daily page for scholarship under the title of Home Ambassadors and two weekly appendices under the titles of New Media and University Girls (Okaz Organization for Press and Publication, 2013). These improvements enabled a 5.2% rise in advertisements in 2013 and advertising income to rise 3% compared with 2012. Moreover, government advertisements increased by 21.2% compared with the previous year, while individual advertisements in the newspaper surged by 57.8% from the year before (Okaz Organization for Press and Publication, 2013).

5.1.1 Marketing and promotions

Based on a 2011 report prepared by Okaz organization, *Okaz* adopted several strategies to promote its paper, including cross-promotions on non-allied media, or as the report describes it: “exchangeable advertisements”. This exchange of services occurs between the newspaper and other parties such as institutions, advertisement agencies, and media companies. No monetary transactions are involved, but rather each party exchanges advertisements using the other medium to promote the other institution’s products or services. *Okaz* newspaper promotes and advertises its brand name and content through several TV channels such as MBC, Rotana, and the Al Hadaf Agency for Publicity, Creative

Edge Agency, and many more. In addition, the newspaper initiates many other promotional and marketing campaigns for its subscribers, such as collaborations with outdoor billboard advertisers as well as TV, radio, and advertisement agencies (Okaz Organization for Press and Publication, 2011).

The year 2013 was a significant one for *Okaz* in which the company accomplished many new endeavours related to its online publication, such as promoting and advertising it on various media such as the Al Nahar Egyptian channels, MBC, Rotana, and Iqraa channels, as well as on MBC Radio, Rotana Radio, and Mix FM. In addition, the company continued to print newspaper advertisements informing readers about the services offered on its electronic publication with the intention of increasing the number of visitors to its website. During the month of Ramadan, the newspaper coordinated with the distribution department to conduct an extended marketing campaign that was considered the first of its kind and would last the entire month. As part of the campaign, *Okaz* launched ongoing promotions, offering prizes to anyone who subscribed to the newspaper during the month of Ramadan. Moreover, on the national day (September 23rd), another marketing campaign was launched by *Okaz* with a goal to increase the number of subscribers by providing them with discounts to all of *Okaz* institution's print publications on that day, and it coordinated yet another campaign with Al Arabia For Oud retail store to increase subscribers by providing retail benefits such as discounts and promotions. The institution also visited most of the hotels and hospitals across the kingdom to market its newspapers, while also distributing 33% more newspapers to Singaporean Airlines in order to further boost its visibility (Okaz Organization for Press and Publication, 2013).

In 2015 the newspaper began to shift its focus to capture the attention of younger generations by offering many topics, dialogues, and special interviews with prominent figures that might appeal to younger readers (Okaz Organization for Press and Publication, 2015). In

addition, the newspaper conducted many promotional and marketing campaigns such as the Okaz championship for PlayStation competition, and a Ramadan competition for companies that rewarded the winners and placed photos of the winner in the newspaper. Moreover, the newspaper organized and conducted competitions on its Twitter account as the number of followers reached 23,500, as well as on its Facebook page, where the number of followers reached 31,500. Additionally, the newspaper developed a partnership with MBC channels to set up the first collaboration with a press medium to exchange information and news between *Okaz* newspaper and the MBC sports channel, and another alliance with Sky News Arabia to exchange advertisements (Okaz Organization for Press and Publication, 2015).

5.1.2 Diversifying the income sources

Okaz follows several strategies to generate revenue, and one of the key strategies is diversifying its sources of income. With the support of the information centre at the institution, the newspaper creates an encyclopedia about important figures in the society, and markets it on brochures found within *Okaz*'s print edition, then sells it to those elite figures. The newspaper sold a total of 524 copies of the encyclopedia, of which 359 were regular copies while the remaining 165 were special-edition luxury copies sold collectively for 142,560 SR (\$49,903.74 CA) (Okaz Organization for Press and Publication, 2013).

Despite *Okaz*'s efforts, the year 2015 witnessed a general decline in the advertising market for traditional print newspapers across the Kingdom; *Okaz* itself experienced an 11.6% decrease in advertising in all of its publications compared with 2014 (Okaz Organization for Press and Publication, 2015).

5.1.3 *Okaz* newspaper in 2016 and 2017

The newspaper began conducting numerous marketing analyses regarding the readership of its newspaper, and in 2017 *Okaz* was ranked first among newspapers for the 15th consecutive year in terms of the highest newspaper circulation across the Kingdom

(Okaz Organization for Press and Publication, 2017). In 2016 *Okaz* had a readership rate of 23.8 (of the total population), which was double the rate of the second-ranked newspaper (see Figure 24) (Okaz Organization for Press and Publication, 2016).

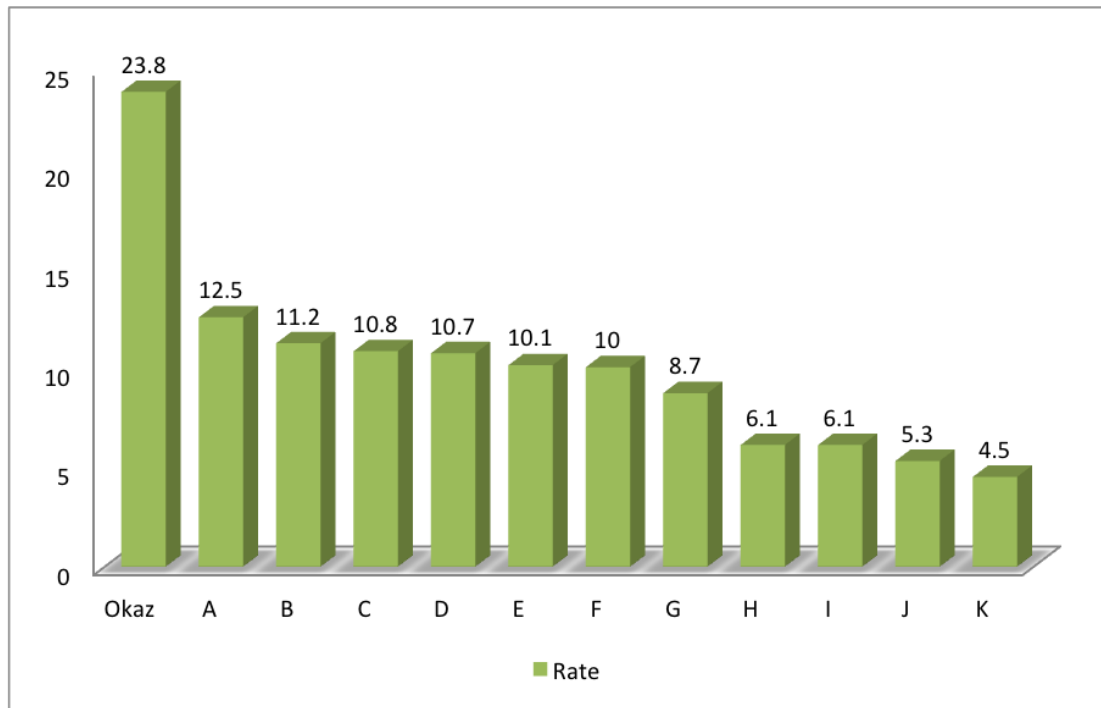


Figure 24 *Okaz* newspaper's readership rate in 2016 (From Okaz Organization for Press and Publication, 2016)

Although this rate decreased slightly in 2017 to 23.2, it remained double the rate of its next best competitor (Okaz Organization for Press and Publication, 2017).

Table 11 below shows that readers between the ages of 15 and 24 years old are becoming more interested in reading content provided by *Okaz's* traditional print newspaper. Among all the institutional publications, *Okaz* ranked first in the number of Twitter followers in 2016 (Table 12). The following year Twitter continued to attract more followers, while YouTube viewers also showed greater interest in *Okaz's* channel (see Table 13) (Okaz Organization for Press and Publication, 2016 & 2017).

Table 11 Percentage of *Okaz* readers based on their age group

	15–24 years old	25–34 years old	35–44 years old	45–54 years old	55+ years old
2015	29%	29%	20%	12%	10%
2016	29%	29%	21%	12%	10%
2017	31%	27%	20%	12%	10%

Table 12 *Okaz*'s social media presence in 2016

2016	YouTube Subscribers	YouTube Viewers	Facebook followers	Twitter followers
<i>Okaz</i>	16,352	11,470,564	407,551	1,165,640
<i>Al Nadi</i>	39,866	12,237,713	13,161	153,024
<i>Saudi Gazette</i>	107	180	1,563,916	42,888

Table 13 *Okaz*'s social media presence in 2017

2017	YouTube Subscribers	YouTube Viewers	Facebook followers	Twitter followers
<i>Okaz</i>	21K	16M	471K	1.53M
<i>Al Nadi</i>	50K	13M	15.6K	168K
<i>Saudi Gazette</i>	230	92K	1.72M	51K

In comparison to other newspapers in the Kingdom, *Okaz* remains the most reader-friendly newspaper according to its own survey (see Figure 25) (Okaz Organization for Press and Publication, 2017), with a greater number of readers describing *Okaz*'s traditional print newspaper format as being the most “enjoyable to read” (see Figure 26) (Okaz Organization for Press and Publication, 2017), while also stating that its digital format is “easy and fun to read”.

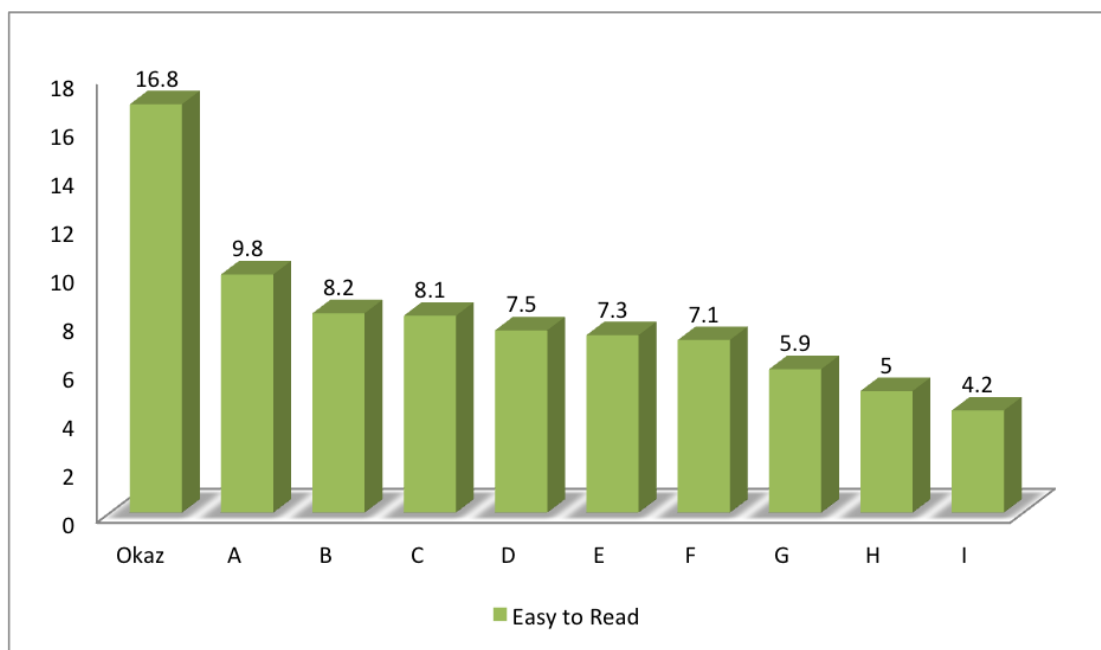


Figure 25 The most reader-friendly newspaper in the KSA (readers who described the newspaper as "easy to read") (From Okaz Organization for Press and Publication, 2017)

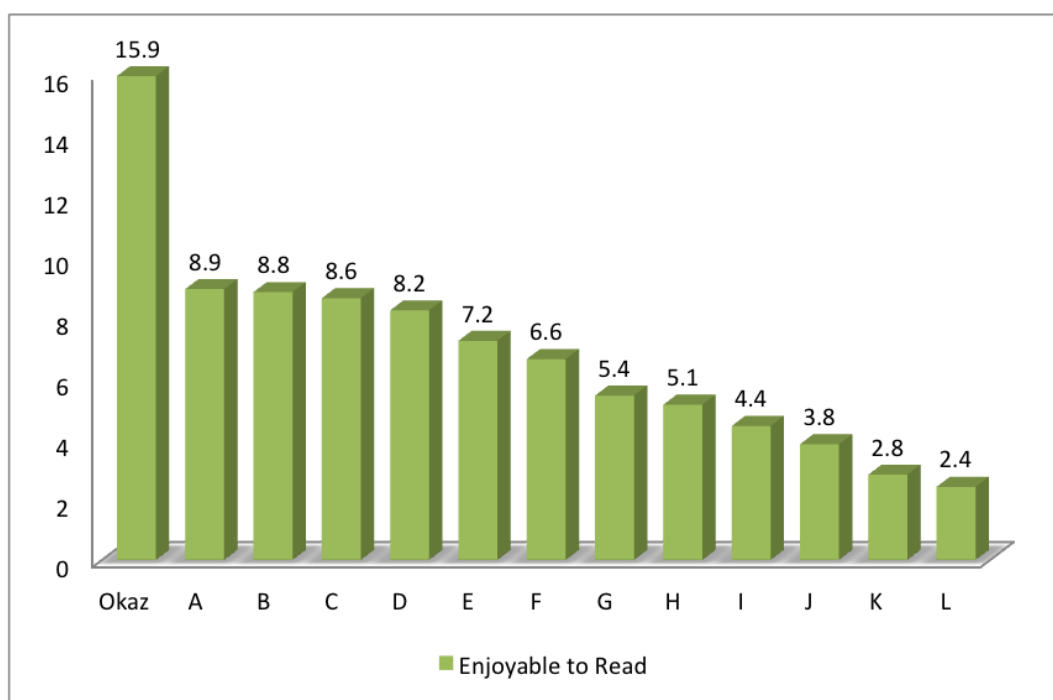


Figure 26 The most enjoyable newspaper to read (From Okaz Organization for Press and Publication, 2017)

Moreover, based on a study of 5,000 people who read dailies online, *Okaz* again ranked first with 35% of the participants stating they read *Okaz*, making it the most readable

newspaper on the Internet on any given day (see Figure 27) (Okaz Organization for Press and Publication, 2017).

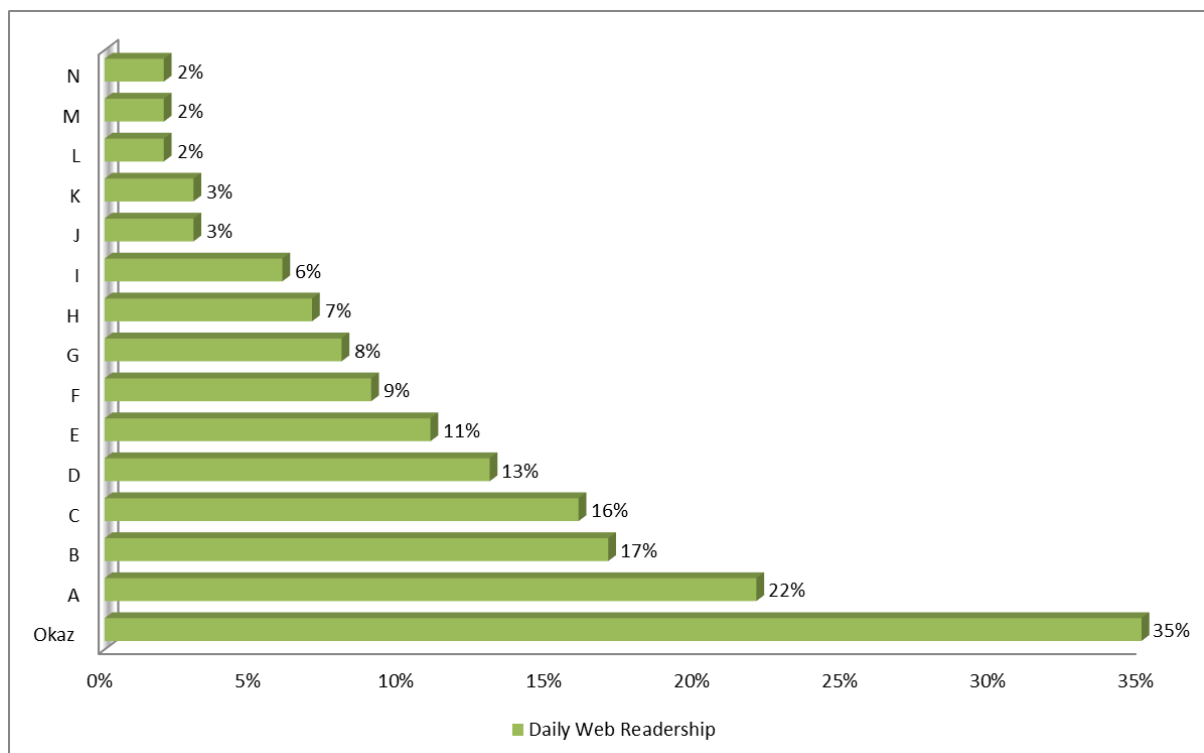


Figure 27 The percentage of people who read *Okaz* daily (From Okaz Organization for Press and Publication, 2017)

In addition, according to the same Okaz report, *Okaz* ranked first regarding all of the topics that its the newspapers cover compared with other newspapers in the Kingdom—among the subjects that *Okaz* reports on are the Saudi and Gulf stock markets, customer retail insights, financial analyses, opinion pieces, urban and suburban coverage, political topics such as matters concerning the Gulf and the Arab world, as well as international news. In addition, *Okaz*’s readers claimed that they spent more than 45 minutes a day reading the newspaper (Okaz Organization for Press and Publication, 2017).

5.2 Interviewed specialists

This section examines the responses from specialist employees at *Okaz* newspaper, to a series of general and specific questions related to their field of specialization. The questions

deal with the changes and challenges in the media business, the strategies and opportunities that have arisen in reaction to these changes and challenges, and how these specialists and the newspaper business at large perceive the transition from a traditional print business to electronic publishing within the Saudi context. To learn more about these subjects, I conducted interviews with 11 *Okaz* employees working in different departments at the company—two from the advertising department, one from the sales department, two from the editorial department, one from the information center department, one from the IT department, two from the human resources department, and two from the management department.

Participants' responses have been arranged into three groups: the first group entitled "Business" includes responses from the advertising and sales departments; the second group named "Editorial" comprises the two responses from the editorial department; and the third group named "Administration" includes responses from the remaining six respondents. The purpose of these categories is to gain a better understanding from multiple different perspectives of the changes in the industry, and thus to better present the similarities and differences from the perspective of each of the three groups.

5.2.1 Change in the industry

The years 2008/2009 were a turning point for many media businesses around the world, as the global financial crisis impacted many industries and devastated companies to the extent that some had to shut down their businesses. Though new advances in technology have led to numerous financial losses, it has also allowed these same businesses to establish an online presence, yet challenges still exist as many new and adaptable players have entered the marketplace and newspaper reading habits have shifted. For this section, I obtained answers from interviewees to understand the changes that have been occurring in Saudi Arabia media businesses, specifically at *Okaz* newspaper, since 2008–2009, compared to the

way the financial crisis affected media organizations in the West, as well as the ways in which the shift from traditional print to electronic journalism has affected the business.

5.2.1.1 The industry since 2008/2009

As previously mentioned, the challenges and changes in the news media business are observed differently based on each country's specific characteristics and culture. Thus, in order to understand how *Okaz* newspaper has been affected, participants were asked first to describe exactly what happened in 2008/2009 when the world financial crisis occurred, and how much this crisis impacted the newspaper business in Saudi Arabia. And the follow-up question was: What happens next? To understand the situation from the beginning of the crisis until the time when I conducted the interviews in 2018, all respondents from the three departments indicated that during the 2008/2009 time period, there were not any significant difficulties affecting the newspaper or media business in Saudi Arabia, as the changes and challenges occurring in the US and much of the Western world were not present in Saudi Arabia until years later. Specific replies have been provided below in more details from each department of the newspaper.

A. Business

In discussing the financial crisis of 2008 in the West but not in the Arab World, Participant #3 claimed: "The western world depends—as a system—on the country's institutions, and these institutions depend on their sales, and thus they develop the economy in that same country. On the other hand, in the third world, most of the countries depend on governmental expenditures, and thus as long as there are governmental expenditures then there will be prosperity." Moreover, Participant #3 also claimed that significant changes did not occur in Saudi Arabia until 2013: "Now the problem is in the changing of structure—the company strategy." The changing structure of the news business began with the changes in the way people with higher incomes spent their money—this segment consists of about 20%

of Saudi society. Advertisers who used to spend a certain amount of money started to think more about the beneficial returns from their spending, and thus began saving rather than making purchases. Some people within this sector lost parts of their business, and thus started to reduce their advertising spending in newspapers, which subsequently affected the newspaper business. Moreover, people's changing habits began to have a more noticeable affect on the industry, as more people preferred reading news on their computer rather than in printed newspapers.

B. Editorial

Meanwhile, Participant #4 from the editorial department said that in the year 2008, many readers were still purchasing traditional print newspapers and advertisers were still advertising in them. The problem began to appear after 2011 when the geographical distribution of printed newspapers decreased as a consequence of the increased presence of digital media. There was no longer a need to distribute traditional print newspapers to many locations that now had access to the electronic format, and thus the demand for traditional print newspapers decreased, especially after Twitter began to introduce video as a feature.

C. Administration

Participants #7, #8, #9, #10, and #11 stated that the situation in Saudi Arabia was totally different than in the US, as at the time of the financial crisis, the newspaper business did not face such challenges witnessed in other parts of the world. Moreover, Participant #7 described the financial situation of the media industry in Saudi Arabia at that time: “(Okaz) was at the beginning of its rise, and 2010 especially was the highest income for Okaz in all of its 50 years” as the newspaper's profits increased by approximately 30% to 40%. Furthermore, Participant #8 described the year of 2011 as “the Golden Era”, the year in which the newspaper witnessed its largest staff and highest profits. Additionally, Participants #7, #8, #9, and #11 stated that 2014 was the beginning of the newspaper's decline, as this was

the year when the newspaper started to face the same challenges felt in other parts of the world across all parts of the business.

5.2.1.2 The change in the business

Participants were asked to describe *Okaz*'s transformation from paper to electronic, and how that change has affected the business and its employees; some employees had a positive response to these changes while others met them with resistance before eventual acceptance.

A. Business

No comments from the business department were provided for this question.

B. Editorial

Participant #4 explained that the organizational systems at *Okaz* changed for the better after installing one type of software that operates on every platform related to the organization, including on social media applications, which has made the employees' jobs at the newspaper easier and more flexible. Moreover, the newspaper used to have several internal systems that needed to be managed, as Participant #5 explained: "*Okaz* used to have several internal systems—such as one for the comments, and another one for news—that journalists had to switch back and forth from one system to another in order to complete their job, but the new system merged all the news-press operations into one system; thus, it become easier for journalists to do their job."

C. Administration

Not all the employees viewed these changes as opportunities. For example, Participants #6 and #9 stated that the shift from paper to electronic was imposing disadvantages on their daily work routine as they had spent most of their lives reading and working on the paper-based version. Participant #6 confessed: "I am the one who most resisted and fought the transformation from paper to electronic." Eventually, all the

employees had no choice but to accept the technology being enforced as part of their daily job routine.

5.2.2 Challenges to the industry

As described in the literature review, the most common challenges faced by news organizations around the world have been the economic challenges, the rapid technological advancements, and the changes in readers' habits and behaviours as a result of the adjustments in their general lifestyle. In this section, participants were asked to rank the various challenges from the greatest impact to least impact on their business from their point of view, and the types of benefits that newspapers would gain as a result of these challenges. Employees also commented on the effects these changes had on external aspects of the newspaper such as its readers, advertisers, and circulation numbers, as well as the impact on competition, specifically the competition *Okaz* faces from newspapers in the same and different regions, the competition between the traditional print format of the newspaper and the online version, and whether or not journalists and specialists view social media as competitors.

5.2.2.1 Ranking the challenges

Participants were asked to rank the challenges to *Okaz's* newspaper business from most to least significant.

A. Business

Participant #3 expressed that the greatest challenge is not only from people changing their consumption habits or the technological and economic changes, but rather the updated rules and regulations the country has been enforcing. Moreover, Participants #1 and #3 stated that a big problem was that the newspaper market is shrinking, though Participant #1 did not link this specifically to the shift to digital media but rather because "people do not want to spend money, thus advertising revenue is not what it used to be ... Today the market is in

decline. I cannot say that the newspaper is the only one that is declining in terms of advertising, because today TV is declining, radio is declining, the outdoor¹⁹ is declining in a scary way. The digital impact did not increase; it is steady. Thus, this indicates that the technological and financial changes are not necessarily the main cause of businesses losing money, but rather the shift in people's orientation and habits, which has had a big effect on businesses."

B. Editorial

Participant #4 ranked the technological challenges as the main factor affecting readers' behaviour in terms of receiving news, and believes the economical challenges have had the least impact since the price of the paper "is less than a price of a cup of coffee" as Participant #4 described it. On the other hand, Participant #5 stated that the biggest challenge facing the newspaper comes from the drop in sales due to the economic recession.

C. Administration

Participants #6, #7 and #10 stated that the greatest challenge is related to the technological advancements, which have affected multiple components of the newspaper business: recruitments, number of employees doing the job, and the appearance of new media players in the market. Participant #6 explained that: "With the technological challenges, the number of employees in my department has shrunk and it is expected to be even less in the coming years." Additionally, Participant #9 expressed the effect of technological advancements on recruitment: "The advent of electronic newspapers has affected the recruitment rate, as now you find only 4 or 5 employees working in a department." Moreover, Participants #9 and #10 further emphasized that the economical and technological challenges go hand in hand with the changes in readers' media consumption habits. As Participant #10

¹⁹ The outdoor or a billboard is a large outdoor advertising structure (billing board) that presents large advertisements.

later explained, “the digital and the economic situation collectively has affected the news business.” According to Participant #11, “the most important thing that the press institution suffers from is the shortage in liquidity, which is considered an important factor that allows any organization either to shrink or expand, and thus the shortage in income forces the newspaper to lower the number of pages of content that it used to have and that it needs for advertisements.”

5.2.2.2 Other problems/challenges impacting *Okaz* newspaper

Participants were asked to provide examples of other challenges that the company has faced in addition to the three main challenges (economic/technological/social) presented in the literature review.

A. Business

Participant #3 explained, another main challenge has been the establishment of a specific government regulation that shifted the way companies released their financial statements: “Companies were obliged to issue a financial statement on its situation quarterly each year in one or two print newspapers, but the Ministry of Commerce two years ago issued a declaration that companies have the right to not issue their financial statement in the newspaper, and thus companies started to post their financial statement on a website instead of in the newspaper, and this decision has affected the newspaper business.” The company declaration in the print newspaper used to generate extra revenues for the newspaper, and thus newspaper business has been affected since this new regulation was introduced.

B. Editorial

The editorial department views the main challenges from another perspective. Participant #5 found that other news providers—whether newspapers or social media celebrities—have been increasingly taking content directly from *Okaz* newspaper with no regard for the copyright, and thus there is a loss of respect for the newspaper’s ownership of

information. All these rival news providers have to do is mention *Okaz*'s name at the end of the article to avoid any legal troubles, as Participant #4 said: "Once they mention the name of *Okaz*, then we cannot sue them and that is according to the regulations." Participant #4 also noted that the newspaper faces an even greater problem, which is that other news providers are impersonating *Okaz* newspaper: "There are around 14 pages on Facebook that carry the name of the *Okaz* newspaper and that creates another challenge."

C. Administration

Both Participants #7 and #11 in this department also described challenges that the editorial department mentioned. For example, Participant #7 said: "There is a website that took the word *Okaz* and wrote it in a different direction, it is difficult for the newspaper to continuously defend itself by saying it's fake news or a fake website; thus, it is a problem that readers do not have enough awareness or concentration to distinguish between the real and fake website." Moreover, Participant #11 explained: "This is proof that *Okaz* is strong and that's why they want to impersonate *Okaz* and not other newspapers." Meanwhile, some newspapers aggregate the best news articles from an array of different newspapers, and though they cite the main source at the end of each article, they are still violating the newspaper's rights by not providing any financial compensation in return. *Okaz* is studying the legalities of such cases; nevertheless, the problem still arises among individuals who copy articles from the newspaper, as Participant #10 explained: "The problem is if you are going to charge newspapers, for example, you can identify and count them, but when individuals copy the article and publish it somewhere else—for example in Twitter—then how many people are you going to charge, as there are a growing number of people involved so you won't be able to charge everyone."

Later, Participants #6 and #11 referred to a reporter who used to work at *Okaz* who was eager for fame, and thus he published information from an untrusted source along with

his own article to cover the shortage of information about one of the famous people he wrote about. This led to a request from a relative of that celebrity to open an investigation into the matter. The reporter claimed that he received his information from *Okaz*'s information center, yet there were no such records in the information center, and there was a great divergence between what the reporter claimed and the actual information found in the newspaper's information center.

Participant #11 explained that the government has started to impose penalties on the newspaper editor and reporter whenever there is a news story that has factual mistakes or is inaccurate. As Participant #11 described: "If there was a serious mistake in reporting a story or if there was a story that was not totally correct, the newspaper then had to pay a penalty. Because *Okaz* is considered one of the largest and most successful newspapers, in such cases we had to pay up to 2 or 3 million SR²⁰ (\$700,108.50 CA–\$1,050,162.78 CA) as compensation." Some reporters are only looking for fame, so they report stories without ensuring that the news story is 100% accurate, and thus in these situations, if facts in the story aren't accurate, then *Okaz* would lose its case and be forced to pay a fine. Because the government imposes these penalties, reporters sometimes hesitate to report sensitive news to avoid the potential risk of paying fines. Participant #11 later clarified: "If the journalist reported a news story that is true, and he had evidence of its accuracy, even if there was a penalty on the story for any reason, then the *Okaz* newspaper would pay the fine instead of the journalist, but if the reporter's story was proven to be wrong and he had no evidence to contradict this proof, then he would be the one to pay the penalty." The newspaper took this initiative as a step to encourage journalists to continue reporting stories.

²⁰ 1 SR=0.266 US\$=approximately 0.35 CA\$. Exchange rate is based on www.xe.com on 19 Dec 2019.

5.2.2.3 Challenges and the benefits behind the challenges

Specialists were also given the chance to talk more about these challenging situations and to offer a bright side that has arisen from them.

A. Business

While the advent of news aggregators collecting news stories from different newspapers has created challenges for *Okaz*, Participant #2 viewed this challenge as an opportunity to attract readers to the newspaper's electronic website: "Though the *Nabd*²¹ application is considered a competitor that readers may get news from, *Okaz* may benefit from it as *Nabd* provides a link to the newspaper's main website to anyone interested in reading more details about a story. Thus, readers are transferred to the *Okaz* newspaper website, and subsequently this application generates traffic and redirects traffic to the newspaper's website."

B. Editorial

No comments/information were provided.

C. Administration

No comments/information were provided.

5.2.2.4 Readers

Participants were asked about the challenges that *Okaz* faces as a result of readers' changing news consumption habits.

A. Business

Participants #2 and #3 described that the change in people's habits and their shifting interest in what constitutes news is more challenging among the younger generation, such as those who are under 30 years old and are more oriented toward an electronic world, and those

²¹ *Nabd* is a free application that provides news from more than 1500 news source in the Middle East and around the world, and has a feature that provides alerts of breaking news. It also has a website that gathers news from numerous different news sources.

who have no interest in opinion articles. Participant #3 explained: “This has affected newspaper sales but it did not affect the newspaper itself... The newspaper name is still as strong as it used to be.”

B. Editorial

Other challenges related to the website and the search mechanism has appeared, as some readers found it to be difficult to access certain news stories and to find other articles in the website archive, which led to complaints. As Participant #5 said: “Readers tell us to change this and that, meaning we have received some complaints.”

C. Administration

Participant #6 agreed with the editorial department, saying that the search mechanism of the website is still considered weak and not advanced enough, and that it is difficult for someone to find the exact news article when they are searching if they do not know the exact title of it.

5.2.2.5 Advertising and advertisers

Participants were asked to comment on the number of advertisements before and after the recent changes to the industry, and to describe the effects that the technological changes have had on the advertising market in general.

A. Business

The volume of advertising on traditional print newspapers has decreased with the advent of the new digital media environment. Participant #1 explained: “The newspaper is suffering from two sides: from the advertising side and from the decrease in distribution of the newspaper as readers do not prefer to read the news from the paper.” Moreover, Participant #3 had an additional comment regarding the advertisers who disappeared from the traditional print newspaper, saying that they are not shifting to electronic media: “The advertisers are not necessarily moving from one media to another. For example, companies

have changed, companies have closed, a certain demographic of people with buying power has left the county, and thus there is no need for advertisements that catered to this demographic to advertise as much anymore.”

B. Editorial

Participant #5 described advertising in the electronic media as weak, and not improving even as traditional print newspapers are losing advertisers. As that Participant claimed: “The price of a page of the paper costs between 100 and 200 thousand SR (\$35,000 CA- \$70,000 CA) while an advertisement in the electronic media (online) costs 20 to 30 thousand SR (\$7,001.08 CA–\$10,501.63 CA), and on Twitter it is 1,000 SA (\$350 CA) for a tweet.” (Participant #5). The decrease in advertisements is happening only to the traditional print newspaper as Participant #5 explained: “There are 100 million platforms that one can advertise on, so advertisers think about the number of followers when determining whether to advertise in the newspaper, or with one celebrity who has 20 million followers.”

C. Administration

Participant #7 noted: “Nowadays advertisers are advertising more in the digital media, the new platform which is social media, and the new channels that have opened, which also affect the newspaper’s advertisement level by 90%.” However, Participant #11 indicated: “If all newspapers in the Kingdom have an approximate value of \$2 billion and 500 million a year of gross advertisement spending, and if it is true that the electronic newspaper has affected traditional papers in this way, then that amount should be transferred to the electronic. Today the electronic media of all Saudi newspapers are not exceeding 100 million a year in ad spending, so there is another factor contributing to this, other than electronic newspapers.”

5.2.2.6 Job practice and employees

Participants were asked to describe the challenges they have faced as employees of the newspaper since the advancement of online technology and the adoption of new technologies in their business practice.

A. Business

Newspaper employees face an increase in workload, as Participant #2 explained: “The newspaper needs to increase its efforts and keep up to date in providing and transferring the news to maintain traffic to their website.”

B. Editorial

No comments/information were provided.

C. Administration

The new technology has changed the job practice of employees, as Participant #8 expressed: “The advent of electronic media has affected the traditional print newspaper, as a job that used to be done by several people now can be done by only one person.”

5.2.2.7 Circulation numbers

As a result of the technological advances, many traditional print newspapers around the world are experiencing a decrease in circulation, though the degree of change has varied based on the characteristics of the readers in each country.

A. Business

Participants #1 and #3 estimated that the circulation numbers of traditional print newspapers have decreased between 20% to 30%, though they may be underestimating the real loss, while the electronic media sites of these newspapers have witnessed a growth in the number of visitors. The only people who consistently read traditional print newspapers are the loyal readers who are used to this type of format, as Participant #1 stated: “The traditional print readers are fewer than the electronic... We are trying our best to pamper the loyal readers to keep them.” As a way to maintain readers, *Okaz* provides loyal readers with many

benefits during the year such as promotions, prizes for subscribers, contests during holiday seasons. Participant #1 later added: “We always try to come up with new things to keep those people loyal to *Okaz* ... though some people who leave we cannot replace.” Moreover, Participant #3 stated that the percentage decline is contingent on the seasons of the year, and is particularly noticeable in the summer: “When there are a lot of people on vacation, that affects the sales of the print newspaper, whether it is *Okaz* or any other newspaper.”.

B. Editorial

In the editorial department, Participants #4 and #5 agreed that the online version of the newspaper affects the traditional print version. The circulation of the traditional print newspaper continues to decrease, while the number of people accessing electronic news is increasing significantly. As Participant #4 explained: “From the 1st of September 2017 until the 30th of June 2018, our online numbers increased approximately 289% compared to the same time period of the previous year.” Moreover, Participant #5 explained that the impact of online newspapers on the traditional print format happens in two ways: “in the availability and accessibility”. First, there is the availability of the news anywhere and anytime, as people now can access it on any device for free and thus there is no need to purchase the traditional print format (accessibility). Second, there are many sources that provide real-time news and readers’ needs have changed; thus, instead of waiting for the printed newspaper to be distributed on the next day, people can access it anytime online as most readers want to be able to read the news as it happens (availability).

C. Administration

Participants #7, #10, and #11 agreed that the effects on the business occurred quite quickly, and that *Okaz* started to observe the decline in readership at the beginning of 2014. As Participant #11 said: “We started to see the decline in the paper from 2014 up to now, with more than a 60% decline in income and sales.” The estimated percentage decrease

ranged from 60% to 70%, though Participant #7 claimed that it may have been as high as 80 to 85%. However, Participant #10 explained more about the effect of the online newspaper on distribution numbers: “In 2008 the newspaper had not seen any effects, as it used to sell more than 100,000 copies, and as of 2011 the newspaper sold more than 120,000 copies. The year 2011 was the best year. After 2011, circulation started to drop considerably. In 2018 sales of traditional print newspapers were approximately 30,000, which is a decrease of around 70%.” Participant #11 stated that the sharp decline was not only due to the advancement of electronic media, but also due to the economic situation of the country in general: “When radio appeared, we did not have this strong effect; when TV appeared, we did not get such a strong effect; there are a lot of options for advertising in the market, but nothing has had such a strong impact on us, not even the electronic media.”

5.2.2.8 Competition between *Okaz* and other newspapers in the same/different regions

Participants were asked if there was any competition between *Okaz* and other newspapers in the same region, and between *Okaz* and other newspapers from different regions in the Kingdom.

A. Business

Participant #3 claimed that there is competition within the western region, as newspapers in Saudi Arabia are based on regionalization; each region has its own newspapers and has a dominant one. As this participant stated: “*Okaz* is considered number one in the western region, yet regarding Al Madinah city, it can be said that *Okaz* and *Al Madinah* newspapers are equally dominant in that city, but *Okaz* is the pioneer of the entire region.” (Participant #3).

B. Editorial

Participant #5 justified the existence of competition as each newspaper differentiates itself from the others by providing certain types of news: “*Al Watan* newspaper is

characterized with certain news, *Al Riyadh* has special resources, but *Okaz* is strong in its geographical spread throughout the Kingdom.”

C. Administration

Participants in the administration department had mixed responses. For instance, Participant #6 stated that competition exists at both levels, on the Kingdom level and the regional level: “It (*Okaz*) has both” (Participant #6), as the newspaper faces competition from *Al Madinah* newspaper and it faces additional competition from *Al Riyadh* newspaper, which is located in another region. Yet Participant #7 have a different opinion, saying that there is no competition within the same region for *Okaz* but rather at the kingdom level.

5.2.2.9 Competition and collaboration between *Okaz*’s traditional print newspaper and its electronic format

Participants were asked whether the electronic website of the newspaper complemented or competed with its traditional print format.

A. Business

Participants #2 and #3 did not feel that the newspaper’s electronic website competed with the traditional print format, but rather complemented the traditional newspaper, even the PDF format that is provided online for free. As Participant #3 said: “Publishing the PDF on the website helps us a lot in acquiring a lot of advertisements from clients that start to read the newspaper online and communicate with us about it.”

B. Editorial

The editorial department agreed with the business department that the online edition seemed to benefit the print version of the newspaper by promoting it. Participant #5 stated: “We are not in conflict with the paper. We try to save the paper through the website ... the website is the lifeline and the saviour for the paper.”.

C. Administration

Participants had mixed responses on the administration side—some agreed that the online format complemented the traditional print newspaper, while others disagreed, as Participant #7 explained: “When the electronic version of the newspaper first appeared from 2001–2003 it was complementing the traditional print format, but now it is competing with the newspaper for the number of readers.” Moreover, Participant #11 anticipated that this situation would change in the future: “At a certain period or time, the traditional print format will depend on the electronic format.” However, Participant #6 went even further, indicating: “We hope for it—the competition. I am not saying competing with the traditional print format per se, but differentiating from it. Thus, if we have lost readers from the traditional print newspaper, they will come back to us in the electronic newspaper, and the same scenario could even happen with the advertisers.”

5.2.2.10 *Okaz* newspaper and social media

Participants were asked if they considered social media platforms to be complementing or competing with the traditional print newspaper of *Okaz*.

A. Business

Participant #2 did not consider social media platforms to be competitors, but rather that they helped generate traffic. As indicated: “Social media attracts people; it does not compete with me... We can say 90% of the users came from social media sites, meaning it is not direct traffic.” (Participant #2).

B. Editorial

Participant #4 emphasized that Twitter was a helpful tool for newspapers and did not consider it as a competitor. While Participant #5 stated that: “Twitter consider as the lungs that we breathe from.”.

C. Administration

Participants #6 and #7 stated that the newspaper did not consider social media to be a competitor, as the newspaper seeks assistance from its social media account to generate traffic to its online website. Participant #7 explained that: “40% to 50% of the traffic comes from Twitter, as readers click on a link that redirects them to the electronic website.” Moreover, Participant #7 added that traffic not only comes to *Okaz* from different social media platform, but also from rival news providers, such as a website named *Nabd*. As explained: “*Nabd* is considered an aggregator that combines news stories from different newspapers and adds a link to each newspaper at the end of the story. It does not provide the whole story, but rather a short summary of the story that generates traffic to the original newspaper’s official website.” (Participant #7). However, Participant #6 expressed that the competition comes from individuals who first gained their fame and popularity in traditional print newspapers before social media popularized their names. These individuals turned to social media and have so many followers that advertisers are now turning to them to promote their product instead of advertising in newspapers. As said: “The challenge comes from certain people who the newspaper contributed in turning them into celebrities, especially people who used to have a presence in my market, and therefore it has affected the newspaper more.” (Participant #6). Yet, Participant #7 later expressed a feeling that the newspaper’s account on Twitter is affecting the traditional print newspaper itself, as justified: “People now are searching for speed or fast news and breaking news, but the newspaper’s traditional print format fails to provide this feature to the readers. Thus, more people are reading news on social media.” (Participant #7).

5.2.3 Strategies

Okaz has adopted many strategies to overcome the challenges it is facing; some of the strategies were successful while others were not. In this section, participants were asked what

strategies have been adopted to attract readers to the traditional print and online newspapers. Participants were also asked about online subscriptions to the electronic newspaper on its website and whether or not readers pay for news online; they were then asked to provide examples of successful and unsuccessful strategies that *Okaz* had adopted, why the newspaper stopped using strategies that it tried previously, as well as any strategies that Saudi Arabia media have shared from the Western media industry.

5.2.3.1 Attracting readers to the traditional print format of the newspaper

Participants were asked to describe the strategies they have applied to attract readers to the traditional print format of the newspaper amid the advent of new technology.

A. Business

Participants #2 and #3 agreed that to be able to attract readers and increase sales of the traditional print newspaper, it is up to the editorial team to present new ideas, content, and news stories that are of interest to readers and match their wants and needs in order to increase newspaper sales.

B. Editorial

Participants #4 and #5 provided different ideas for the newspaper to follow to attract readers to its traditional print format. Participant #4 stated that the newspaper adopts a strategy of attracting readers to its traditional print format by providing them with prizes when they subscribe to the traditional print newspaper. Moreover, Participant #5 suggested the well-known strategy of grabbing readers' attention with the use of attractive graphics on the front page of the newspaper. In addition, this participant later stated that the way the newspaper covers a news story prompts readers to purchase one newspaper over the other: "Some subjects attract readers' attention that are related to financial matters, such as when the price of electricity increases... *Okaz* is the first to provide readers with not only the news story, but also with solutions by providing them with steps that may help them lower their

electricity costs. In doing so, the newspaper is able to attract more readers to the newspaper.” (Participant #5).

C. Administration

The traditional print newspaper uses the strategy of diversifying its news to attract different segments of readers, Participant #11 explained: “The last two pages of the newspaper are directed toward the younger generation, even children.” The newspaper also allows readers to share pictures of their children with a brief caption under it during holiday seasons. This strategy is used as a way to grab readers attention to the traditional print newspaper, Participant #7 explained: “We use this strategy during holidays a way of encouraging participation from the citizens and as a way to attract readers to the traditional print newspaper.” Moreover, Participant #11 indicated that the newspaper attracts readers through big bold headlines on the front page, as well as in certain other sections of the newspaper. In addition, Participant #10 mentioned that the newspaper provides subscribers some privileges in entering football stadiums, as explained: “*Okaz* collaborates with one sales company in marketing football clubs. If there is someone cheering for team X, then when he subscribes to the newspaper, he gets a membership card that allows him to enter a certain number of games from different entrances and he also gains other privileges. Thus, the newspaper can attract readers as this strategy is a competitive advantage that distinguishes *Okaz* from other newspapers and allows it to attract certain readers.” (Participant #10).

5.2.3.2 Attracting readers to the newspaper’s electronic website

In this new technological landscape, the newspaper must have a presence on the Internet, though the newspaper’s website is not the only platform that provides news. Thus, the newspaper is adopting different strategies to attract readers to its electronic website.

A. Business

Participant #3 stated that journalists have to satisfy their readers' needs by providing them with material that is entertaining and informative, satisfies their desire for knowledge, and meets diverse tastes and opinions, in both the traditional print format and for its online newspaper.

B. Editorial

Okaz newspaper consider social media as a tool to attract readers to its electronic website. As Participant #4 explained: "I deal with the social media as an attracting tool to attract readers to my electronic website because in the end my financial target is the advertiser, and the advertiser does not come to me in social media, he comes to me from the website." Moreover, Participant #5 clarified that *Okaz* markets news stories on Twitter through tweets and hashtags, thus drawing on social media to generate traffic to its website.

C. Administration

Participant #10 explained that *Okaz* uses social media to attract readers to its website, such as by creating attractive and catchy titles for news stories on Twitter: "Titles that contain a puzzle, for example, or a riddle, prompt readers to click on the link which leads them to the website, and thus generates traffic to the website to increase the number of followers."

5.2.3.3 Maintaining readers

Participants were asked to provide strategies related to maintaining readers, especially the most loyal readers, on *Okaz*'s traditional print newspaper format.

A. Business

Okaz newspaper provides loyal readers with many benefits during the year such as promotions, prizes to subscribers, contests during certain holiday seasons. Participant #1 explained: "During Ramadan we provided the traditional print newspaper readers with a competition in which the prize reached up to 3 million SR (\$1,050,162.78 CA)." However,

Participant #1 also stated that loyal readers are usually “over 40 years old, though it is not an easy task to keep readers with the traditional print newspaper especially in the digital age. It is an ongoing task that needs new ideas to maintain their attention.”

B. Editorial

Participant #4 state that the traditional print newspaper provides loyal readers with prizes.

C. Administration

Participants #6, #7, and #10 agreed with the comments from the business and editorial departments about providing traditional print newspaper readers or “old subscribers” with prizes. This is considered one of the main strategies that the newspaper has used to hold on to readers. Participant #10 indicated that the newspaper provides loyal readers with big discounts and honours readers who invest in yearly subscriptions with prizes: “We provide prizes to old subscribers who have spent a long time with us, which are given to them in simple ceremonies.” Moreover, Participant #10 also indicated that the newspaper also gives priority to loyal readers who wish to publish news about special personal occasions such as weddings or graduations.

5.2.3.4 Online subscriptions

Participants were asked specific questions about online subscriptions to the electronic website of the newspaper, such as: Do readers need to pay a subscription fee to be able to read the content online? Do they implement this strategy in Saudi Arabia? And if not, why?

A. Business

Participants #1, #2, and #3 stated that no major newspapers in Saudi Arabia have yet adopted the strategy of an online subscription, including *Okaz*. However, this strategy requires an agreement between all newspapers to charge a fee for online news subscriptions, which requires collaboration between all newspapers. Participant #2 explained: “There was a

meeting between the Presidents of the Board of Directors of the newspaper organizations to study this subject.” Participant #2 later emphasized: “All newspapers must take this decision together because there is a third-party application named *Nabd* that aggregates news stories from different newspapers. Thus, the decision must be taken collectively in order to block *Nabd* from aggregating news and offering it for free. Only then will the strategy of paid subscriptions be successful.” In addition, implementing an online subscription depends on the society’s culture, as Participant #1 explained: “The people are not ready to pay subscription fees for online news.”

B. Editorial

Participant #4 stated that people are not ready to pay for online news: “people currently are not ready to pay for content, not as in the west”. (Participant #4)

C. Administration

Participants #6 and #10 from this group reported similar responses, stating that the newspaper does not charge any subscription fees for the electronic version of its newspaper. According to Participant #10, such an approach needs collaboration between all press institutions, Participant #10 also explained that: “There is a study between all press institutions regarding making PDF versions of the newspaper payable by subscription. Such an approach must be a collaboration between all institutions so that they all benefit; however, this subscription would be only on the PDF version and include a symbolic charge.” Participant #6 added: “If the newspaper (such as *Okaz*) decides to charge a fee for the online version of the newspaper, and if it is the only one who adopts this strategy, then it will only be a matter of a month or two before readers abandon the newspaper that they are reading for one that does not have subscription fees to read its content... Thus, an agreement between all newspapers is necessary for the success of this strategy.”

5.2.3.5 Generating revenues

Participants were asked to talk about the amount of income the newspaper generates online and the amount it generates through advertisements on the traditional print format. They were also asked to suggest other means of increasing revenue in this transforming business environment.

A. Business

Participant #1 stated that the income generated from the electronic newspaper cannot in any way make up for the losses incurred from traditional print newspapers: “We in marketing and advertising know that the money generated from the digital or the social media platforms will never compensate what used to come from the print newspaper...unless you have e-commerce, if you have other websites that let you make money...but with the things that we have...we can not close the gap.” (Participant #1). Participant #1 added: “If we sell on our website a full page on which is named the takeover price for a day²², it comes to \$10,000 US (\$13,127.90 CA). However, a page in *Okaz*’s newspaper earns 114,000 SR (\$39,908.81 CA), so there is a huge gap. Therefore, we must try to find another way to generate income, which we now are working on.” In addition, Participants #2 and #3 indicated that *Okaz* should rent part of its building to other companies to generate income. In addition, the newspaper has also held several events and generated some extra revenue by selling advertising space in the newspaper to advertisers regarding these events, and has rented out a theatre in its building to a third party to televise a football game. Moreover, Participant #3 named some “projects” that could also boost revenues such as “producing a special magazine for the VIP Saudi Airlines that have almost private airplanes with six seats

²² Homepage takeover is a common strategy used by advertisers to block out any competitor from displaying its advertisement on the homepage of a website on which it advertises. Thus, the homepage of that website only becomes occupied by advertisements from one company for a certain period.

and another special edition that is issued once a year based on the Saudization system²³ in Saudi Arabia, which talks about what is new and what are the new rules of Saudization.” Furthermore, Participant #2 indicated that newspapers in Saudi Arabia still rely on advertisements as a means of generating revenue online.

B. Editorial

No comments/information were provided.

C. Administration

Participants #7, #9, and #11 from the administration side reported similar responses as those reported from the business side. Participants #9 and #10 stated that the newspaper earns profits from its website by selling advertisement space, though the profit is much less than for the traditional print newspaper, as the income from paper-based advertisements is still higher than from the electronic version. Participant #9 explained: “The income from the online newspaper did not compensate for the income from the traditional print format, as advertisements online cost 10,000 SR/month (\$3,500.54 CA), while a page in the traditional print format costs 100,000 SR/day (\$35,005.43 CA).” In addition, Participant #11 added: “The profit from online does not exceed 10% compared with the traditional print newspaper. The price of advertisements for online newspapers is considered low, because the price of a colour advertisement is only 10,000 SR (\$3,500.54 CA) online compared to up to 150,000 SR (\$52,508.14 CA) for the traditional print newspaper.” *Okaz* has employed one recent new strategy to take over ownership of an events company as a way of diversifying its business income, while another strategy is partnering with different organizations such as one named Sa7, which organizes events and conferences. Participant #7 explained: “They partner with

²³ Saudization is a Saudi nationalization system that has been implemented by the Saudi Arabian Ministry of Labor and Social Development. Its latest policy is to increase the number of Saudi nationals to a certain level in private Saudi companies and in the enterprise sectors.

Okaz and use the institution's theatre to play the football game and sell tickets to people who want to see the game.”

5.2.3.6 Promoting/advertising *Okaz*

Participants were asked about the methods or strategies that they pursue to promote the *Okaz* newspaper.

A. Business

Participant #2 indicated that the electronic newspaper promotes itself through social media and the Google search engine, as *Okaz* invests in the search engine optimization (SEO) through direct marketing. As said: “We invest money so that we always appear within the top 10 or at least within the first page if not number one.” (Participant #2). Moreover, Participant #3 explained that one of *Okaz*'s strategies is to promote its newspaper brand name by sponsoring events or exhibitions and being one of the main sponsors of an event, though there is usually no monetary return for *Okaz*. As explained: “*Okaz* considered sponsoring such events as an honorable act just to publicize that it is sponsoring certain charity events as a community service.” (Participant #3). Participant #3 later added: “*Okaz* chooses events that not only add value to the event it is sponsoring, but also events that add value to the *Okaz* name itself.” In some cases, *Okaz* may also get a monetary return from some events it sponsors, as Participant #3 clarified: “An event such as a collective marriage in which it serves the community—the newspaper will get some payment from these types of events. The charities responsible for advertising these types of events are offered a huge discount up to 50% off, a discount that the newspaper does not give to anyone else.” Additionally, Participant #3 further explained: “The collective marriage event is seasonal, and its main season is during Ramadan.”

B. Editorial

Participant #4 explained that the newspaper promotes its **electronic version** in two ways: firstly, through social media promotion. This approach is done based on Google analytics, as the newspaper uses Google to find out the regions where it is weak in popularity, and then they can focus their marketing and promotional campaign in that region using Facebook or Twitter. However, this method is costly. The second approach, and a far cheaper one, is through the help of people who follow the news account on Twitter—the newspaper can provide its top news story, formulate it into a tweet in its main markets and the newspaper and its readers can further promote the story by commenting on it or sharing and re-tweeting the story.

Moreover, Participant #4 later explained: “We use the help of some of our managers from different regions who work for *Okaz* as journalists to promote the electronic version through their Twitter accounts by re-tweeting some of the news stories as a strategy to pull readers to the website and promote the *Okaz* brand through the news story.” As clarified, even this strategy does not necessarily generate traffic to the electronic website, but the goal is, as the participant added, “to circulate or spread the name of the *Okaz* account in an indirect way.” (Participant #4).

Participants #4 and #5 indicated that *Okaz* should promote its **traditional print newspaper** through its account on social media alone or collectively through the newspaper’s electronic account and social media account. Participant #5 described that the newspaper’s account on social media platforms such as Twitter is used to market and promote the traditional print newspaper in certain news stories. The newspaper account provides a kind of teaser by using a title that has an exciting element that grabs readers’ attention in the tweet that the account provides. Moreover, Participant #5 later added: “After we provide the tweet we write that more details can be found in the traditional print paper.” In addition, Participant

#4 provided an example of this approach as indicated: “When there was a dialogue with the British Foreign Affairs Secretary Johnson, who wrote a special article for the newspaper, *Okaz* seized the opportunity. Before providing the dialogue and the details, the newspaper created an electronic design on its social media platform that the Johnson article would be appearing in the printed newspaper the following day, providing questions on the main points in the article. So politicians and people who have an interest in this particular type of news would be more likely to purchase the traditional print newspaper, while the content in the online format was blocked until 3 o’clock to guarantee that a greater number of people would purchase the printed paper.” Participant #5 also stated that *Okaz* uses a technique of providing a summary of a special news story on the newspaper’s website, which is only available in the traditional print format, and then it promotes that story through social media with the intent of increasing people’s curiosity about the story and thus motivate them to purchase the traditional print newspaper.

Moreover, Participant #5 later indicated that the newspaper has adopted the strategy to advertise itself on allied and non-allied media, as *Okaz* has a marketing and advertisement campaign on TV channels: “We have a partnership with different TV channels such as MBC1, MBC4 and Al Ekbariah, and even on competitor newspapers such as with *Al Riyadh* and in *Al Jazirah* newspapers.” Participant #5 also noted that *Okaz* has even adopted the strategy to advertise itself on its rival newspapers as explained: “When we reached 1 million readers in our campaign, we took out a full page in the *Al Riyadh* and the *Al Jazirah* newspapers to present our campaign and as a way to further promote our name.” In addition, *Okaz* takes advantage of the benefits from social media, and Twitter in particular, to tweet and re-tweet news stories and by using hashtags to promote its stories. As Participant #5 said: “We consider Twitter as the window that we breathe from.” Additionally, Participant #4 explained: “I am not advertising about a new product; I am advertising about my brand. But

if I want to advertise a product, then I will advertise about it through social media celebrities, Snappers, or You-tubers. I give them the product, but I do not advertise about my brand through people... I want to keep and maintain the general image that I built over 50 or 60 years.”

C. Administration

Participants #10 and #11 indicated that the newspaper has promoted itself by using direct advertisements or by sponsoring events and occasions, as Participant #11 described: “The newspaper sponsors more than 200 occasions and events in the kingdom, some of them are entertainment events, some are governmental and some are related to charities, on approximately a day-to-day basis.” Moreover, Participant #11 also indicated that the newspaper promotes itself directly by staffing a booth in different places and at different events to increase recognition: “The most important thing for the paper-based version is the presence. Today I have presence in a lot of places for free, in restaurants, barbershops, furnished apartments, and foreign airlines—all these are considered ways of promoting the paper.” (Participant #11). In addition, the newspaper promotes itself by presenting figures about the number of its readers and by conducting studies with other companies. Participants #6 and #11 indicated that the newspaper conducted a study with the help of Stat Epsos, which led to a rivalry between *Okaz* and another famous newspaper in Saudi Arabia. Participant #11 explained: “This campaign allowed the newspaper to make promotions that it did not expect, and created a war between the two newspapers, which led to negative advertisements against *Okaz* from the other newspaper until the government stepped in to intervene and stop both campaigns.” As Participants #6 and #11 indicated, the result of the study showed that the newspaper was being read by 1 million readers in 2000/2001. According to this Stat Epsos study, *Okaz* now distributes around 150,000 copies, yet if one copy is read on average by 7 people, an average of 1 million people are reading the newspaper.

5.2.3.7 Similar and different strategies than the West

Specialists were asked to provide strategies *Okaz* adopted that were similar to those used by western countries, which were appropriate to the Saudi culture and characteristics.

A. Business

Participant #1 stated that each newspaper copies what other newspapers do in Saudi Arabia, as explained: “If one newspaper adopts a certain strategy, others will follow.” (Participant #1). Moreover, Participant #1 later emphasized that the situation is different than in the West because the market is different, as justified: “For example, in the West they adopt the strategy of selling content, a strategy which has still not been implemented in Saudi Arabia because the market is not ready yet... We cannot take whatever is done there and implement it here because the society is completely different.” (Participant #1).

Although the culture and society are different, some similar strategies from the West have emerged within Saudi Arabia, as both countries follow the strategy of advertising on non-allied media. *Okaz* has a partnership with some TV channels and radio stations, but as Participant #1 explained: “The only thing that we do not have partnership with is the outdoor²⁴.” Moreover, Participants #1 and #3 indicated that the newspaper also advertises in competitors’ newspapers as part of a partnership agreement. This strategy is usually achieved through an agreement between the two parties in which each side advertises in the other newspaper for a certain amount for a year. Participant #1 explained: “When the newspaper had a scratch-and-win campaign, we took out a jacket operation in the *Al Jazira* newspaper, which is the complete outer cover of the newspaper, to advertise about that campaign.” Moreover, Participant #3 added: “There is no monetary return from that, but only a tradeoff.”.

²⁴ The outdoor refers to the advertisements that are placed on big billboards in the streets.

B. Editorial

Participant #4 from the editorial department reported similar responses, stating that there are some common strategies shared between the West and Saudi Arabia. Mostly noted that *Okaz* has adopted the strategy of advertising itself on allied and non-allied media, which can also be found in the West. Participant #4 later explained that there are many similar promotional and marketing strategies used in the West and Saudi Arabia, Participant #4 also claimed that *Okaz* uses even more cross-promotion than the West: “We promote more articles on social media than the West. I follow *The Washington Post* and *The New York Times*, and they provide a link to a news story and a picture and that’s it, but we provide the story with a special design and video and sometimes questions on the subject if the story is strong and has multiple tweets. To be honest, this is not really available in the West but only here.” (Participant #4).

C. Administration

Participants #7, #9, #10, and #11 in this department also indicated that *Okaz* has adopted the strategy of advertising and promoting itself on non-allied media such as TV and radio (Mix FM), as Participant #11 said: “There is a partnership agreement, as there is no monetary return involved.” Moreover, Participant #10 stated that the newspaper also promotes itself through road advertisements, the electronic newspaper, and on other competitors’ newspapers if they have a partnership to advertise on them, as explained: “We even advertise about *Okaz* in malls, or in a draw for a car or a jet ski that has been sponsored by *Okaz* itself.” (Participant #10). Additionally, Participant #11 emphasized about the differences between the Western and the Saudi societies: “In the end, Western society and Saudi Arabia are totally different cultures and environments, and what interests people there is different than what interests people here.” In addition, Participant #10 later explained that some similarities can be found in the marketing strategies and the news stories that are related

to politics: “The differences between Saudi Arabia and the West can be found in the freedom of opinion, and in regard to advertisements, as some advertisements might be allowed in the west but not in Saudi Arabia, such as certain political advertisements.” (Participant #10).

Participants #8, #9, and #11 stated that, *Okaz* adopted the strategy of terminating some of its employees as a way to overcome financial challenges, much like in the West. Although Participant #8 noted that the newspaper did not initially replace experienced employees with new graduates, others explained that the newspaper’s current strategy is replacement. Furthermore, Participant #9 explained: “Currently, the newspaper is substituting employees, as they are replacing one employee with another.” Participant #9 also noted that the newspaper is replacing some of the terminated employees with a younger generation of journalists who are more technologically savvy.

Moreover, Participant #11 identified another similar strategy used in Saudi Arabia and in the West of reducing the number of pages of the newspaper as explained: “We reduced the length of the *Okaz* traditional print newspaper from 70 pages to 20 pages...the number of pages is associated with the number of advertisements. In some occasions, such as when the King tours the country, the number of advertisements can increase and consequently so do the number of pages in the traditional print newspaper.” (Participant #11).

5.2.3.8 Strategies or services that the newspaper used to have

Participants were asked to provide example of strategies that they used previously, which have now been discontinued for one reason or another.

A. Business

Okaz newspaper used to have a mobile application that it stopped using long ago, however, the newspaper currently working on updating it. Participant #2 explained: “The newspaper used to have an app, but this service stopped and currently the development team

is updating it and redeveloping it into a more professional mobile application, as it was a simple application that was identical to the website and the newspaper.”

B. Editorial

Participant #5 stated that *Okaz* had an email notification system that allowed readers to receive special emails in their inbox, as explained: “Whoever subscribed to *Okaz* and provided their email address could receive emails about breaking news, or an RSS²⁵ notification about the main sections of the newspaper such as local news, sports and health.” (Participant #5).

C. Administration

Participants #7 and #11 stated that the newspaper used to adopt a strategy of paying people money if they contributed news to a publication named “*Aain Al Youm*”, a subsidiary which was 50% owned by *Okaz*. Though the newspaper started this electronic version in 2008/2009, Participant #11 stated: “We started this newspaper that was available only online when there was not yet any demand for online newspapers. Thus, it did not receive the number of videos that we expected and there was little demand for the service so that newspaper lost money and closed.” Also, Participant #11 later mentioned that the traditional print newspaper used to have a couple of pages dedicated to other communities in the country, which was one of the only ways for people from these communities to get news about their countries, as stated: “The traditional print newspaper used to have a page on AL Soudan and AL Yemen that used to generate sales, because there are big Sudanese and Yemeni communities here. But with the advent of technology and specifically electronic media, there was a new means of receiving this information, and thus it affected the sales of

²⁵ RSS (Really Simple Syndication): “provides a means for users to keep track of updates posted across the web.” RSS feeds “usually combine either the lead paragraph, or a summary of an article published on the web or on a blog, and a hyperlink back to its source” (Tredinnick, 2006).

the printed newspaper.” (Participant #11). The newspaper also used to have a section in its traditional print format that was called “Where do you go this evening?” This section used to provide the names of restaurants, hotels, and events, so that visitors coming from different cities to visit Jeddah could find different places that may interest them, as well as a column named “Okaz with the morning coffee”, which described places where the newspaper was available. Participant #11 additionally explained: “The ‘Where do you go this evening?’ feature used to be a hit in the newspaper, as the newspaper provided it for a fee and it contained an ad as a banner. Unfortunately, the newspaper stopped this service and the column, since the market has changed and social media can convey these types of announcements much faster than a traditional print newspaper. No one is reading newspapers anymore to find out what events are happening, as social media is considered an easier and more convenient way to search for these things.”

Moreover, Participant #11 stated that “*Okaz* newspaper is a creator and not a news conveyor.” The newspaper used to adopt a method that they called “revealing the hidden” in which they would disguise a reporter as a regular citizen to get news stories from people, with a goal of revealing the hidden truth about different matters in society. This method is based on the vision of the chief editor at the time, as Participant #11 specified: “This strategy depends on the chief of editor’s connection, power and his orientation.... This used to be the most popular feature that differentiated *Okaz* from other newspapers, but this practice caused the newspaper a lot of problems with different governmental sectors, and thus we were forced to stop using it.” Furthermore, Participant #11 mentioned other popular ideas from the newspaper in the past, which they have reactivated but with a different format and new materials, as explained: “Long ago, thirty years ago, the newspaper had a feature on the last page of the newspaper called ‘Arabic Hope’, which was in such high demand that people had to wait for a year to two to publish their children’s pictures. Over time, it would be replaced

by news on the last page. However, now the concept has returned, and the newspaper saves the last two pages for the youth sector to produce some pictures and some news stories that may be of interest to the younger generation, such as a similar feature, story or trend that may be found on WhatsApp or Twitter these days. By appealing to that demographic, the newspaper is again attracting the segment of the population that it lost.” (Participant #11).

5.2.3.9 Successful and unsuccessful strategies

Specialists were asked to name examples of successful strategies that were implemented by *Okaz* and unsuccessful strategies that the newspaper discontinued.

A. Business

Without continuously providing readers with promotions, it is difficult to attract them and to create loyal consumers, as Participant #1 stated: “One of the short-term successful campaigns that failed was a promotion for a scratch-and-win coupon for 10 litres of petrol, which had a value of 300 SR (\$105 CA). At the time of the campaign, it was hard to find copies of the printed newspaper, but the downside of it was that people were mostly buying the newspaper to win petrol for their cars, not to read the news. It led to increased sales of the newspaper, but once the campaign ended, people stopped buying copies. Thus, it was an inappropriate strategy to create loyal consumers.” One campaign that was successful and was dedicated to maintaining loyal customers took place during different seasons such as at Ramadan, Al Haj and on the national day, as Participant #1 later added: “These campaigns can be successful, renewing loyal customer subscriptions at a 50% discount,” though Participant #1 also explained that it was difficult to sustain readers without providing them with more promotions and discounts, as noted: “To hold on to these people is really difficult, as they come for a short period of time as long as the promotion is active and then they leave.” (Participant #1).

B. Editorial

No comments/information were provided.

C. Administration

The most successful campaigns that the traditional print newspaper has offered are related to subscriptions to the paper-based format, as Participant #7 explained: “The newspaper once offered subscribers a watch from the Al Hasaini shop, and another was that subscribers could get coupons from Panda supermarket for the same value of their subscription, so that if the reader subscribed to the newspaper for a price of 600 SR (\$210 CA), he would receive coupons of 600 SR (\$210 CA) at the supermarket.” Moreover, Participant #7 also described a similar deal with Saudi Arabia Airlines: “If a reader subscribed to the newspaper for 3 years at 1,000 SR (\$350.05 CA), then he could buy a ticket of the same value to certain destinations chosen by the airline. In these campaigns the goal was to sell as many subscriptions as possible in hopes that advertising income would subsequently increase in response to the higher circulation numbers.” In addition, Participant #10 added: “The main goal or target for the newspaper was to have a new category of readers that they could use to create a database for them to be able to attract more advertisers... You may be able to attract this new segment for a year, but the main challenge remained. How are you going to maintain them?”

Regarding the electronic edition of the newspaper (the website), *Okaz* provides an instant prize to readers, as Participant #7 explained: “During the World Cup game between France and Croatia, for example, someone who predicted the result of the game could win an iPhone at the end of the game. We provided 10 phones to the first 10 people who could guess the score correctly. Since there were more than 10 people who guessed the correct score, then we had a draw to decide who would win the iPhones.”

5.2.4 Plans and expectations about the future of the newspaper

Participants were asked to reflect on *Okaz*'s future plans and projects, as well as their expectations about the future of the traditional print newspaper.

5.2.4.1 Future projects and upcoming plans

Participants provided some details about *Okaz*'s business plans and future projects.

A. Business

Participant #2 stated that *Okaz* is planning to update and develop its smartphone application to a new one that enables readers to choose which type of news they are interested in receiving notifications about. In addition, Participant #1 mentioned a project known as “Okaz Gate” that will be available online. Okaz Gate is a website that includes five main sections of the newspaper that is intended to attract certain segments of the society.

B. Editorial

Okaz organization has plans to invest more resources and make greater improvements on its newspaper. Participant #4 discussed a feature called “the phone press”, which would involve having a journalist create an appealing and fresh story using his cell phone—known as mobile journalism²⁶ (MOJO)—though a final approval is needed from the head editor before publishing the material. Moreover, Participant #4 also added that the newspaper is planning to provide the PDF version of the newspaper for a fee online, as currently it is available for free. In addition, Participant #5 specified Okaz Gate as one of its future plans, which was described as “an umbrella that covers all the institution’s newspapers”. (Participant #5). Additionally, Participant #4 provide more description about Okaz Gate, as explained: “There will be five sections: the first section will contain all news sources owned by the Okaz institution, which are the *Okaz* newspaper, *Saudi Gazette*, and *Al Nadi*; the

²⁶ The use of a mobile device to gather, record, write, edit, and distribute a news story using a single device (mobile phone) by one reporter.

second will be a business section that includes statistics and economics studies, which will be a product that Okaz is going to sell; the third will be an entertainment section that will contain games and movies; the fourth will be a science section that will contain scientific studies, and the fifth section will be related to travel and tourism.” This new feature targets companies and businessmen and will have specialized stories that cannot be accessed without payment.

C. Administration

Participants #6, #7, #9, and #11 noted that *Okaz* plans to reduce extra expenses, As Participant #11 explained: “We are going to put the building up for rent and rent a smaller place, and are planning to minimize the number of employees, continuing this phase which started three years ago that will ultimately cut the number of employees by 50%.” The newspaper also plans to minimize the size of its traditional print newspaper, while some added that the institution is thinking about making the traditional print format of the newspaper free, and to invest more in the electronic version of the newspaper. Participant #11 also expressed that: “The electronic version is the future.” Moreover, Participants #7, #9, #10, and #11 noted that the institution is investing in the electronic version through its “*Okaz* electronic Gate” which will be launched soon. This is an electronic website that combines all the newspapers and magazines owned by Okaz Institution. Participant #11 stated that “other sections will be provided such as news, entertainment (electronic games), e-commerce, education, and tourism.” In addition, Participant #7 further provide an explanation about the tourism and e-commerce sections: “If there is a hotel booking, then it is going to be through booking.com and if there is an electronic store, then it will be through souq.com, so there will be a partnership with these companies.” These sections will serve all segments of society, as Participant #11 explained: “Our goal is to attract a high number of viewers and consequently more advertisers, and thus greater advertising income.” In addition, Participant #10 indicated

that *Okaz* is contemplating forming a “content management committee” to decide which content should be included and what should be deleted.

5.2.4.2 Expectations about the future of the traditional print newspaper

Participants were asked about their expectations about the future of the traditional print newspaper in this current business environment.

A. Business

Participant #2 believed that online news will ultimately replace the traditional print newspaper, as the habits of people are changing, while Participant #3 disagreed justifying that: “The radio came, TV did not replace it, and then the Internet did not replace it. The traditional print newspaper was there and websites came, and still none of them have cancelled or replaced the other.” (Participant #3).

B. Editorial

Much like the business department, the editorial side had mixed opinions about the future, with Participant #5 stated that the traditional print newspaper is going to disappear and Participant #4 stated that traditional print newspapers will remain, but only on one condition, as explained: “If the print newspaper continues to be only a transmitter of news stories, then it will disappear, but if it transforms itself into a product that provides analytical reports and numbers, and not only presenting events as it does now, then it will continue to exist.” (Participant #4).

C. Administration

Participants #9, #10, and #11 anticipated that the traditional print newspaper would disappear in the next five to ten years, though Participants #6 and #7 believed it would continue to exist, even after 10 years. Participants #9 and #10 linked the disappearance of the traditional print newspaper to the speed of technological development, the speed of accessing the same information on the Internet, and the financial uncertainty. Moreover, Participant #7

explained: “The traditional print newspaper has an interaction with the government. For example, the ministry of justice provides announcements and advertisements in the traditional print newspaper, which it considers to be a certified document. Even though they have their official website, they (the governmental sectors) must provide their announcements on one of the printed newspapers as well.” Additionally, Participant #7 tried to predict the circulation of the traditional print newspaper: “It will continue to decrease until it reaches only 10,000 copies a day, which is the government subscription, but in regard to people’s subscriptions, we may have a year or two before they will stop.” (Participant #7).

Moreover, Participant #11 later anticipated that traditional print newspaper would eventually be distributed for free, as explained: “The one advantage of providing the newspaper to readers at no cost is that the traditional print newspaper reaches out to more readers than it does now, and thus it is considered a way of marketing the newspaper name.” (Participant #11). Furthermore, Participants #7 and #11 stressed that media institutions need governmental support to continue to survive in this digital age, as Participant #11 explained: “The paper might be distributed for free, but for the paper to continue based on the current situation and events, it will not last long without the support of the government.”

This chapter specifically collected the observations of *Okaz* newspaper specialists and presented them in a logical three-group perspective, while my in-depth analysis and discussion of the data will be provided in Chapter 7 of this study.

6 Results from the surveyed readers

This section summarizes the results of the data collected from 212 people who completed the survey for this study. Surveyed participants were asked questions regarding their demographics, news consumption habits and motivations, along with questions dealing with their willingness to pay for news online. This chapter only intends to present the responses collected from the surveyed participants, while the comprehensive analysis and discussion will be provided in Chapter 7 of this study.

6.1 Surveyed participants

In this section I present findings from the survey that was distributed in hard-copy format and provided electronically in both the Arabic and English languages to newsreaders who read or access news on different formats. Participants were asked general questions about their demographics, then they were asked specific questions about their connectivity and Internet access, as well as questions related to their news consumption, motivation for consuming news, the types of news they read from different news providers, and other questions related to the willingness to pay for news online. A total of 212 completed surveys (out of 774 received responses²⁷) were analyzed and the findings are presented below.

6.1.1 Demographics

Participants of the survey were asked basic questions about their age group, gender, marital status, monthly income, level of education, occupation, and the language they speak. Descriptive statistics were organized based on these collected data.

²⁷ I received 774 responses, from whom only 212 were exploitable. The remain 562 were uncomplete and thus, I did not include them in my study. (respondents stop completing the survey either half way through, or after filling out fewer pages of the survey)

6.1.1.1 Age

Study participants were between 18 and 56+ years of age; almost half of them (48%) were young adults (26–35 years old), while 30% were between 36 and 45 years old. The remainder fell into the age ranges of 18–25 years old (10%), 46–55 years old (8%), and 56 years old and over (5%).

6.1.1.2 Gender

The majority of the respondents (61%) identified as female, while the remainder (39%) were male.

6.1.1.3 Marital status

More than half of the participants (58%) stated that they are married, while almost a third of the participants (32%) are single/never married, and around 9% and 2% are divorced and widowed, respectively.

6.1.1.4 Monthly income

Monthly income varied greatly among participants: 22% earn between 10,001 and 15,000 SR (\$3,500.89 CA – \$5,250.8 CA), followed by 19% who earn between 5,001 and 10,000 SR (\$1,750.6 CA – \$3,500.5 CA). In addition, 17% earn between 2,001 and 5,000 SR (\$700.5 CA – \$1,750 CA), while the same percentage stated that they have no income. The final three categories are: 12% who earn more than 20,001 SR (more than \$7,001 CA), followed by 7% with incomes between 15,001 and 20,000 SR (\$5,251 CA - \$7,001 CA), and 6% who earn less than 2,000 SR (less than \$700.10 CA) a month.

6.1.1.5 Level of education

The majority of participants (57%) have obtained college or university degrees, including 21% with a master's degree, while 18% had a high school education or less, 4% held a doctorate degree, and only 1% had a diploma²⁸.

²⁸ This sample is closer to the potential audience of the paper.

6.1.1.6 Occupation

More than the half of the respondents were employed (61%), while nearly the same percentage (13%) and (12%) were students and stay-at home moms, respectively, and the remainder were unemployed (8%), retired (3%), and self-employed (2%).

6.1.1.7 Language

Half of the participants (50%) stated that they speak both Arabic and English, while almost half speak only Arabic (49%) and 1% speak only English.

6.1.2 Internet access/connectivity

Participants were asked about their Internet access duration time and the activities they perform on the Internet.

6.1.2.1 Frequency of accessing the Internet

Participants were asked about the frequency of accessing the Internet in general, and they were provided with different options. The large majority of respondents (93%) reported that they use the Internet every day, while the remaining access the Internet 2–3 days a week (3%), 4–6 days a week (2%) or about once a week (2%), with only 1% accessing the Internet less often.

6.1.2.2 Average time spent on the Internet

Participants were provided with different options to choose from and they were asked about the average time they spend on the Internet. More than half of the respondents (51%) spend more than 3 hours on the Internet, 19% spend 1–2 hours and 16% spend between 2 and 3 hours. An additional 9% of interviewees spend an average of more than 30 minutes but less than 1 hour, while 5% spend an average of more than 10 minutes but less than 30 minutes, and only 1% spends less than 10 minutes online.

6.1.2.3 Internet access

Participants were asked to choose all the answers that apply to them, as they were asked to indicate the places where they access the web. The cell phone was identified as the

main method of accessing the web (94%), followed by accessing it at home (37%) and at work (20%). Participants were then provided with an open question that asked them to provide the main source from which they access the web. For that question, participants listed home (39%) and their cell phone (26%) as the top two responses. Table 14 provides a summary of these results.

Table 14 Internet access

	N (%)
Accessing the web¹	
Cell phone	200 (94%)
Home	78 (37%)
Work	42 (20%)
University	19 (9%)
Internet café	2 (1%)
Main source of web access	
Home	83 (39%)
Phone	54 (26%)
Everywhere	32 (15%)
Google	12 (8%)
Work	7 (3%)
Laptop	4 (2%)
Safari	3 (1%)
Twitter	2 (1%)
Computer	1 (1%)
PlayStation	1 (1%)
Instagram	1 (1%)

Note: ¹ The percentages do not add up to 100% due to multiple responses.

6.1.2.4 Ranking Internet use at home and at work

Participants were asked to rank 14 separate categories based on their Internet usage at home and at work. At home, participants access Internet mostly for pleasure (44% ranked this as the top reason), paying bills and fees online (34%), and reading news on a social media website (33%). At work, participants access the Internet mostly for checking emails (34% ranked this as the top reason), working (34%), and education (26%). Only (20%) read news on a social media website at their workplace. Table 15 and Table 16 provide a summary of these results.

Table 15 Ranking Internet use at home

Category	N	Average rank (1–14, smaller value represents higher rank)	Number and % rank
Pleasure	212	3.85	93 (44%)
Paying bills and fees online	211	6.06	73 (34%)
Reading news on a social media website	210	5.32	70 (33%)
Research	210	4.31	68 (32%)
Banking	209	6.00	67 (32%)
Checking emails	209	5.27	63 (30%)
Making travel arrangements	209	6.71	60 (28%)
Online shopping	209	6.17	54 (26%)
Education	208	5.89	52 (25%)
Reading news on a newspaper's website	210	7.14	49 (23%)
Reading news on search engines	209	7.10	48 (23%)
Working	211	7.51	48 (23%)
Gaming/playing games	207	7.66	46 (22%)
Sharing news	207	7.20	45 (21%)

Table 16 Ranking Internet use at work

Category	N	Average rank (1–14, smaller value represents higher rank)	Number and % rank
Checking emails	186	5.19	73 (34%)
Working	188	5.38	71 (34%)
Education	182	5.90	55 (26%)
Research	186	5.44	54 (26%)
Reading news on a social media website	183	7.31	42 (20%)
Paying bills and fees online	182	8.47	38 (18%)
Sharing news	183	8.01	32 (15%)
Banking	182	8.34	32 (15%)
Making travel arrangements	182	8.69	32 (15%)
Reading news on a newspaper's website	183	8.08	30 (14%)
Reading news on search engines	183	8.21	30 (14%)
Online shopping	181	9.24	23 (11%)
Gaming/playing games	181	10.26	20 (9%)
Pleasure	185	8.41	19 (9%)

6.1.2.5 Accessing and reading news

Respondents were asked about their frequency of accessing and reading news from different sources. Participants were provided with eight different sources of news. Based on the average response score, Twitter is the most frequently accessed source (3.62), followed

by Snapchat (3.32), Instagram (3.31) and online newspapers (3.27). Table 17 provides a summary of these results. Later, respondents were asked to provide their main source for getting news, and these results confirm that Twitter is the main source for getting news. The highest proportion of participants selected Twitter (46%), followed by online newspapers (18%), as shown in Table 18.

Table 17 Accessing and reading news

Source for accessing and reading news	Mean	Never n (%)	Seldom n (%)	Sometimes n (%)	Often n (%)	Always n (%)
Twitter	3.62	32 (15%)	15 (7%)	41 (19%)	38 (18%)	86 (41%)
Snapchat	3.32	46 (22%)	14 (7%)	45 (21%)	41 (19%)	66 (31%)
Instagram	3.31	45 (21%)	25 (12%)	40 (19%)	24 (11%)	78 (37%)
Online Newspaper	3.27	23 (11%)	36 (17%)	61 (29%)	45 (21%)	47 (22%)
Google News	2.88	47 (22%)	42 (20%)	48 (23%)	39 (18%)	36 (17%)
Facebook	2.14	98 (46%)	34 (16%)	46 (22%)	20 (9%)	14 (7%)
Traditional Newspaper	2.04	92 (43%)	57 (27%)	39 (18%)	11 (5%)	13 (6%)
Yahoo News	1.63	128 (60%)	48 (23%)	26 (12%)	6 (3%)	4 (2%)

Table 18 Main source for accessing news

	N (%)
Twitter	98 (46%)
Online Newspaper	37 (18%)
Other source	35 (17%)
Search engines such as Google, Yahoo News	29 (14%)
Facebook	7 (3%)
Traditional Newspaper	6 (3%)

6.1.2.6 Cell phone applications

Participants were asked to list all the applications they have on their cell phone that provide news, and the most widely used applications were Twitter (66%), Snapchat (61%) and Instagram (61%).

6.1.3 Motivation

Participants were asked about their motivations/beliefs for accessing news. They were asked 18 different statements and provided their level of agreement on a 7-point Likert scale from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree”. The statements were selected with regards to previous research. The average score shows that the three statements with the highest level of agreement were: “to keep myself informed” (5.81), “to find out what is going on in the world” (5.75) and “to get breaking news and to follow up on news stories” (5.31). The lowest level of agreement was for the statement “primarily because of the writer” (3.35). Table 19 provides a summary of these results.

Table 19 Evaluating motivations for accessing news

Statements	Mean	Strongly Disagree (n) %	Disagree (n) %	Somewhat Disagree (n) %	Neutral (n) %	Somewhat Agree (n) %	Agree (n) %	Strongly Agree (n) %
To keep myself informed	5.81	7 (3%)	1 (1%)	3 (1%)	15 (7%)	31 (15%)	86 (41%)	69 (33%)
To find out what is going on in the world	5.75	8 (4%)	1 (1%)	2 (1%)	22 (10%)	34 (16%)	70 (33%)	75 (35%)
To get breaking news and to follow up on news stories	5.31	9 (4%)	4 (2%)	10 (5%)	21 (10%)	57 (27%)	68 (32%)	43 (20%)
To keep up with the way my government functions	5.19	9 (4%)	7 (3%)	10 (5%)	37 (18%)	39 (18%)	66 (31%)	44 (21%)
To find more detailed news and information	5.08	7 (3%)	9 (4%)	11 (5%)	32 (15%)	55 (26%)	71 (34%)	27 (13%)
Getting the news is advantageous to me	5.02	12 (6%)	3 (1%)	13 (6%)	36 (17%)	48 (23%)	76 (36%)	24 (11%)
Because news is important to me	4.86	9 (4%)	13 (6%)	14 (7%)	34 (16%)	55 (26%)	66 (31%)	21 (10%)
Share information with other people	4.83	6 (3%)	12 (6%)	14 (7%)	46 (22%)	54 (26%)	61 (29%)	19 (9%)
To make me more sociable and to feel part of a community	4.49	20 (9%)	16 (8%)	16 (8%)	36 (17%)	57 (27%)	46 (22%)	21 (10%)
Getting the news is enjoyable to me	4.36	20 (9%)	14 (7%)	23 (11%)	47 (22%)	49 (23%)	39 (18%)	20 (9%)
To occupy myself during leisure time	4.28	19 (9%)	26 (12%)	17 (8%)	43 (20%)	48 (23%)	40 (19%)	19 (9%)
Because it is exciting	4.26	20 (9%)	20 (9%)	19 (9%)	46 (22%)	55 (26%)	36 (17%)	16 (8%)

It provides entertainment	4.25	23 (11%)	15 (7%)	21 (10%)	48 (23%)	53 (25%)	35 (17%)	17 (8%)
Because it is a habit that I have	4.23	21 (10%)	22 (10%)	16 (8%)	50 (24%)	52 (25%)	34 (16%)	17 (8%)
To compare my own ideas with other commenters	4.15	19 (9%)	27 (13%)	14 (7%)	49 (23%)	59 (28%)	35 (17%)	9 (4%)
To pass time	3.99	29 (14%)	23 (11%)	20 (9%)	48 (23%)	48 (23%)	30 (14%)	14 (7%)
To appear more informed to those around me	3.68	40 (19%)	37 (18%)	20 (9%)	28 (13%)	39 (18%)	36 (17%)	12 (6%)
Primarily because of the writer	3.35	45 (21%)	33 (16%)	20 (9%)	60 (28%)	31 (15%)	7 (8%)	6 (3%)

6.1.4 Reading frequency and preferences

Participants were asked about their frequency of accessing news online and on what platform they prefer to read their news, as well as the duration of time and part of the day when they read news on the Internet most often.

6.1.4.1 Reading preferences

Participants were asked about their reading preferences, specifically if they read traditional print newspapers, online newspapers, both, or neither. Overall, 26% of the respondents said they read print newspapers and 67% said they read online newspapers. There is an overlap of 20%, which includes those people who read both traditional print and online newspapers. Only 6% of respondents read exclusively print newspapers, but almost half (47%) of the people surveyed said they read exclusively online newspapers. About a quarter of the study participants (27%) indicated that they read neither online nor print newspapers. Table 20 provides the summary of these results.

Table 20 Reading preferences

Do you read traditional newspapers or online newspapers?	N (%)
Traditional print newspapers	12 (6%)
Online newspapers	99 (47%)
Both	43 (20%)
Neither	58 (27%)

These participants were then asked two additional questions: 1) Which print newspaper do you read most often? And they were given the choice of “I do not read a print edition of a newspaper” and the choice of providing the name of the print newspaper that they read or prefer to read. 2) Is there one online newspaper you read more often than any others? Here, they were given the choice of either “Yes” or “No”, and those who answered Yes were given a space to expand upon their answer.

In regard to the first question, out of the 52 respondents who read print newspapers, 35 (67%) indicated that they read *Okaz*. This newspaper is by far the dominant print newspaper among the participants surveyed. In regard to the second question, out of 59 participants who indicated they read online newspapers, *Sabq* was chosen by 33 people (56%) as the one they read most often. *Okaz* was the second most read online newspaper, chosen by 12 people (20%), followed by *Nabd* which was selected by 5 people (8%).

6.1.4.2 Newsreading frequency

Respondents were asked about their frequency of accessing the news online. Almost half (46%) claimed that they access online news daily, while a third (33%) access news on an irregular basis. Participants were also asked to report how long have they have been reading news online. They were provided with a range of options from “never” to “more than 2 years”. The majority of respondents (64%) reported that they have been reading online news for more than 2 years. Table 21 provides a summary of these results.

Table 21 Frequency and duration of accessing and reading the news online

How often do you access the news online?	N (%)
Every day	98 (46%)
Not regularly	69 (33%)
1–2 days a week	15 (7%)
3–4 days a week	14 (7%)
Never	9 (4%)
5–6 days a week	7 (3%)

How long have you been reading news online?

More than 2 years	136 (64%)
1–2 years	40 (19%)
Never	20 (9%)
3 months to less than 1 year	11 (5%)
Less than 3 months	4 (2%)

6.1.4.3 Reading news on the Internet

Participants were asked about the duration of time that they spend reading news online. The analysis of the duration of time spent reading news on the Internet suggests that people read news on the Internet for a longer duration at night and in the evening, and a shorter duration in the morning and afternoon. Table 22 provides a summary of these results.

Table 22 Reading news on the Internet

	N, Mean (M)	Never n (%)	5 minutes or less n (%)	6–10 minutes n (%)	11–30 minutes n (%)	31–60 minutes n (%)	More than 60 minutes n (%)
Morning	167, M=2.50	45 (21%)	35 (17%)	56 (26%)	44 (21%)	21 (10%)	11 (5%)
Afternoon	136, M=2.10	76 (36%)	51 (24%)	42 (20%)	26 (12%)	12 (6%)	5 (2%)
Evening	172, M=2.80	40 (19%)	34 (16%)	40 (19%)	47 (22%)	29 (14%)	22 (10%)
Night	160, M=2.83	52 (25%)	35 (17%)	37 (18%)	34 (16%)	29 (14%)	25 (12%)

6.1.4.4 Interacting with media by type and time of day

Participants were presented with 6 main news providers out of the original 8 from the previous question (Traditional Newspaper, Online Newspaper, Google News, Yahoo News²⁹, Facebook and Twitter) that they might access during different parts of the day. They were asked to choose all the answers that applied to them. The results showed that participants interact with traditional print newspapers mostly in the morning (17%). The majority interact with online newspapers most of the time (26%) or all the time (14%); for Google News, the interaction is similarly constant (22% said most of the time and 13% said all the time).

²⁹ Note: I did not report results from Yahoo News because the percentage does not exceed 4% in the evening.

Accessing news on Facebook occurs most of the time among 13% of participants, and all the time or at night among 8%. Twitter is similar to online newspapers and Google News, with most interaction happening all the time (30%) or most of the time (27%).

6.1.5 Rating online features

Participants were provided with different online features and were asked to rate them. They were also asked about the feature that is most important to them when reading online newspapers.

6.1.5.1 Accessibility and quality issues

Out of the 6 main news providers (5 of which are accessible through the Internet), online news providers were rated on five-point scales according to ease of navigation, downloading time, updating of content, and commenting features. The results indicated that the best feature of online newspapers is ***navigating in general***, which 22% of respondents rated as excellent with the highest overall mean score of 3.88. While the best feature of Yahoo News is also ***navigating in general***, 13% of respondents rated it as excellent or good with the highest overall mean score of 3.45. The best feature of Google News is also ***navigating in general***, with 29% of respondents rating it as excellent and the highest overall mean score of 4.10; likewise, the best feature of news on Twitter is ***navigating in general***, where 45% of respondents rated it as excellent with the highest overall mean score of 4.40. However, the best feature of news on Facebook is ***commenting***, which 15% of respondents rated excellent with the highest overall mean score of 3.81. News on Twitter was rated highest among all four categories in comparison with all the other news providers (Online Newspapers, Yahoo News, Google News and News on Facebook). Table 23 provides a summary of these results.

Table 23 Rating online news providers

	N, Mean (M)	Very poor n (%)	Poor n (%)	Fair n (%)	Good n (%)	Excellent n (%)	Not applicable n (%)
Online Newspapers							
Navigating in general	156, M=3.88	2 (1%)	3 (1%)	54 (26%)	50 (24%)	47 (22%)	56 (26%)
Content updating	156, M=3.58	4 (2%)	12 (6%)	57 (27%)	56 (26%)	27 (13%)	56 (26%)
Downloading time	156, M=3.50	7 (3%)	21 (10%)	42 (20%)	59 (28%)	27 (13%)	56 (26%)
Commenting	145, M=3.48	8 (4%)	14 (7%)	51 (24%)	44 (21%)	28 (13%)	67 (32%)
Yahoo News							
Navigating in general	56, M=3.45	3 (1%)	3 (1%)	21 (10%)	24 (11%)	5 (2%)	156 (74%)
Downloading time	61, M=3.21	7 (3%)	8 (4%)	15 (7%)	27 (13%)	4 (2%)	151 (71%)
Content updating	63, M=3.16	6 (3%)	11 (5%)	20 (9%)	19 (9%)	7 (3%)	149 (70%)
Commenting	56, M=3.09	6 (3%)	6 (3%)	25 (12%)	15 (7%)	4 (2%)	156 (74%)
Google News							
Navigating in general	138, M=4.10	4 (2%)	7 (3%)	21 (10%)	45 (21%)	61 (29%)	74 (35%)
Downloading time	137, M=3.97	3 (1%)	7 (3%)	26 (12%)	56 (26%)	45 (21%)	75 (35%)
Content updating	137, M=3.92	3 (1%)	8 (4%)	30 (14%)	52 (25%)	44 (21%)	75 (35%)
Commenting	118, M=3.67	5 (2%)	14 (7%)	35 (17%)	25 (12%)	39 (18%)	94 (44%)
News on Facebook							
Commenting	98, M=3.81	5 (2%)	5 (2%)	26 (12%)	30 (14%)	32 (15%)	114 (54%)
Navigating in general	100, M=3.51	3 (1%)	12 (6%)	36 (17%)	29 (14%)	20 (9%)	112 (53%)
Downloading time	100, M=3.51	3 (1%)	11 (5%)	35 (17%)	34 (16%)	17 (8%)	112 (53%)
Content updating	99, M=3.34	6 (3%)	14 (7%)	37 (18%)	24 (11%)	18 (9%)	113 (53%)
News on Twitter							
Navigating in general	169, M=4.40	—	4 (2%)	21 (10%)	48 (23%)	96 (45%)	43 (20%)
Content updating	170, M=4.34	2 (1%)	4 (2%)	25 (12%)	43 (20%)	96 (45%)	42 (20%)

Commenting	166, M=4.32	1 (1%)	7 (3%)	24 (11%)	40 (19%)	94 (44%)	46 (22%)
Downloading time	170, M=4.28	—	6 (3%)	24 (11%)	57 (27%)	83 (39%)	42 (20%)

6.1.5.2 Important features of reading online newspapers

Participants were asked to choose the most suitable answer that best describes their reason for reading an online newspaper. The most important feature is the fact that “***it is always available when I want to read it***”, as identified by 35% of respondents. The second most important feature is “***to get real time news/instant news***” as chosen by 21% of respondents. This was followed by “*It is free*” with 18%, “*I do not read online newspapers*” (15%), while only 8% responded “*I can access it on multiple devices*” and 3% “*prefer to read the online version*”.

6.1.6 Payment

Participants were asked a series of questions regarding their willingness to pay for online news. First, participants were asked if they pay for news, subscribe, or if they don't pay at all. Only 16% of participants receive a traditional print newspaper for free, compared to 62% for online newspapers and a news app on their smartphone. Meanwhile, 19% of participants buy (occasionally or always) or have a subscription to a traditional print newspaper. This is compared to only 9% for online newspapers and 14% for news apps on a smartphone. Table 24 provides a summary of these results.

Table 24 Paying for news (subscription)

Paying for news (subscription)	Free (not paying) n (%)	Buy/ Occasional n (%)	Buy/ Always n (%)	Subscription n (%)	Not applicable n (%)
Traditional Print Newspaper	34 (16%)	14 (7%)	13 (6%)	13 (6%)	138 (65%)
(Digital) Online Newspaper	131 (62%)	4 (2%)	6 (3%)	8 (4%)	63 (30%)
News app on Smartphone	131 (62%)	8 (4%)	10 (5%)	10 (5%)	53 (25%)

Next, participants were asked about their intentions behind paying for news. Those who pay for news (or have a subscription) stated “***I receive immediate information***” as the top reason. Altogether, 39 out of 87 participants (45%) who pay for news chose this response. More than a third of the remaining participants (21%) pay for news because “***it provides me with something extra that would be worth paying for***”. Table 25 provides a summary of these results.

Table 25 Reason behind payment for news

Reason behind payment for news	N (%)
I receive immediate information	39 (18%)
It provides me with something extra that would be worth paying for	18 (9%)
I receive quality information	17 (8%)
There is an app that allows me to identify specifically which topics interest me and are relevant to me	13 (6%)
I do not pay for news	125 (59%)

Participants were then asked if they were willing to pay a fee to cover the cost of reading their favourite online newspaper, and they were given three choices: “Yes”, “No”, and “Yes, but only if...”. If participants chose “No” or “Yes, but only if...”, then they were provided with a series of other options to choose from indicating the reasons behind their decision. Finally, they were asked about their intention to pay for online news in the future, with response options of “Yes”, “No”, and “Not sure”.

Only 15% of participants indicated a willingness to pay a fee to cover the cost of reading their favourite newspaper. Another 8% gave a conditional agreement (“yes, but only if”), with the main condition being the ability to ***get something extra that would be worth paying for***. However, the vast majority of respondents (78%) were not willing to pay a fee, with the main reason being that they are ***able to get free news somewhere else***.

As for what would prompt them to pay for online news in the future, only 9% said they would consider paying for online news, while 60% would not. Meanwhile, 31% of

respondents were not sure whether or not they would consider paying for online news. Table 26 provides a summary of these results.

Table 26 Willingness to pay a fee to cover the cost of reading your favourite online newspaper

Are you willing to pay a fee to cover the cost of reading your favourite newspaper online?	n (%)
Yes	31 (15%)
No	165 (78%)
I can get free news somewhere else	88 (42%)
I already pay for my Internet connection	33 (16%)
It should be free	23 (11%)
I have no specific reason	16 (8%)
I cannot afford it	3 (1%)
Other	2 (1%)
Yes, but only if	16 (8%)
It provides me with something extra that would be worth paying for	5 (3%)
I receive immediate information	4 (3%)
I receive quality information	3 (2%)
There is an app that allows me to identify specifically which topics interest me and are relevant to me	2 (1%)
Other (trust)	2 (1%)
In the future, would you consider paying for online news?	n (%)
Yes	19 (9%)
No	127 (60%)
Not sure	66 (31%)

6.1.7 Believability of media sources

Participants were asked how much they believe the six main news providers in this survey. The results showed that the highest believability score has been awarded to news on Twitter (M=3.60) followed by Traditional Print Newspapers (M=3.57). Google News³⁰ is in third place (M=3.50) followed by Online Newspapers (M=3.42) and Yahoo News (M=3.17). The least believable news source was Facebook (M=2.87).

³⁰ Since Google and Yahoo merely provide newspaper news.

6.1.8 Consumption of different types of news from different news providers

Participants were asked about different types or categories of news (local news, international news, technology news, economic news, political news, fashion news, health news, and gaming news) and their frequency of consuming each type of news from the six main news providers. The summary results in Table 27 show that traditional print newspapers are associated with the highest frequency of participants reading health news (M=3.03), international news (M=2.92), technology news (M=2.88) and local news (M=2.84), and the lowest frequency for gaming news (M=2.18). While international and local news are most frequently read in online newspapers (M=4.14 and M=4.09 respectively), gaming news is least frequently read online (M=2.72) (see Table 28). Moreover, Yahoo News has the lowest frequency of being read (with all mean values between 1.46 and 1.66). International and technology news are being accessed more frequently on Yahoo News than other news types. Similar to online newspapers, Google News is most frequently read for international (M=3.35) and local (M=3.34) news. International news (M=2.23), health news (M=2.16), technology news (M=2.13) and local news (M=2.12) are most frequently accessed on Facebook. And lastly, news on Twitter has the highest frequency across all types compared with all other news sources. Participants most frequently read local news (M=4.47) and international news (M=4.13) on Twitter. Half of the respondents indicated that they read these types of news on Twitter on a daily basis (53% local news and 42% international news). Table 27, Table 28, Table 29, Table 30, Table 31, and Table 32 summarize these results.

Table 27 Consumption of different types of news in traditional print newspapers

Traditional Print Newspaper	Mean	Never n (%)	Yearly n (%)	Once in a while n (%)	Monthly n (%)	Weekly n (%)	Daily n (%)
Health news	3.03	89 (42%)	11 (5%)	31 (15%)	9 (4%)	30 (14%)	42 (20%)
International news	2.92	94 (44%)	12 (6%)	32 (15%)	9 (4%)	22 (10%)	43 (20%)

Technology news	2.88	89 (42%)	10 (5%)	44 (21%)	13 (6%)	18 (9%)	38 (18%)
Local news	2.84	95 (45%)	14 (7%)	36 (17%)	8 (4%)	15 (7%)	44 (21%)
Political news	2.69	100 (47%)	11 (5%)	41 (19%)	8 (4%)	18 (9%)	34 (16%)
Sports news	2.53	114 (54%)	12 (6%)	32 (15%)	5 (2%)	12 (6%)	37 (18%)
Economic news	2.52	105 (50%)	11 (5%)	44 (21%)	9 (4%)	18 (9%)	25 (12%)
Fashion news	2.48	111 (52%)	13 (6%)	33 (16%)	12 (6%)	17 (8%)	26 (12%)
Gaming news	2.18	125 (59%)	13 (6%)	33 (16%)	10 (5%)	14 (7%)	17 (8%)

Table 28 Consumption of different types of news in online newspapers

Online Newspaper	Mean	Never n (%)	Yearly n (%)	Once in a while n (%)	Monthly n (%)	Weekly n (%)	Daily n (%)
International news	4.14	31 (15%)	10 (5%)	46 (22%)	15 (7%)	31 (15%)	79 (37%)
Local news	4.09	39 (18%)	10 (5%)	44 (21%)	7 (3%)	24 (11%)	88 (42%)
Health news	3.99	38 (18%)	8 (4%)	45 (21%)	14 (7%)	42 (20%)	65 (31%)
Technology news	3.89	37 (18%)	11 (5%)	50 (24%)	17 (8%)	35 (17%)	62 (29%)
Political news	3.60	55 (26%)	10 (5%)	49 (23%)	8 (4%)	31 (15%)	59 (28%)
Fashion news	3.39	63 (30%)	12 (6%)	45 (21%)	18 (9%)	20 (9%)	54 (26%)
Economic news	3.33	64 (30%)	11 (5%)	51 (24%)	10 (5%)	28 (13%)	48 (23%)
Sports news	3.27	75 (35%)	12 (6%)	37 (18%)	13 (6%)	18 (9%)	57 (27%)
Gaming news	2.72	89 (42%)	15 (7%)	54 (26%)	7 (3%)	14 (7%)	33 (16%)

Table 29 Consumption of different types of news on Yahoo News

Yahoo News	Mean	Never n (%)	Yearly n (%)	Once in a while n (%)	Monthly n (%)	Weekly n (%)	Daily n (%)
International news	1.66	169 (80%)	8 (4%)	9 (4%)	3 (1%)	11 (5%)	12 (6%)
Technology news	1.63	166 (78%)	8 (4%)	14 (7%)	7 (3%)	8 (4%)	9 (4%)

Health news	1.61	164 (77%)	9 (4%)	17 (8%)	9 (4%)	6 (3%)	7 (3%)
Fashion news	1.59	169 (80%)	7 (3%)	16 (8%)	4 (2%)	5 (2%)	11 (5%)
Local news	1.58	170 (80%)	9 (4%)	12 (6%)	4 (2%)	8 (4%)	9 (4%)
Economic news	1.55	173 (82%)	7 (3%)	12 (6%)	4 (2%)	6 (3%)	10 (5%)
Political news	1.50	173 (82%)	9 (4%)	14 (7%)	2 (1%)	8 (4%)	6 (3%)
Gaming news	1.49	174 (82%)	9 (4%)	10 (5%)	7 (3%)	7 (3%)	5 (2%)
Sports news	1.46	177 (84%)	8 (4%)	12 (6%)	2 (1%)	6 (3%)	7 (3%)

Table 30 Consumption of different types of news on Google News

Google News	Mean	Never n (%)	Yearly n (%)	Once in a while n (%)	Monthly n (%)	Weekly n (%)	Daily n (%)
International news	3.35	71 (34%)	6 (3%)	43 (20%)	11 (5%)	32 (15%)	49 (23%)
Local news	3.34	71 (34%)	8 (4%)	40 (19%)	12 (6%)	33 (16%)	48 (23%)
Health news	3.07	80 (38%)	10 (5%)	42 (20%)	11 (5%)	33 (16%)	36 (17%)
Technology news	3.06	81 (38%)	8 (4%)	45 (21%)	14 (7%)	24 (11%)	40 (19%)
Political news	2.91	84 (40%)	10 (5%)	49 (23%)	11 (5%)	26 (12%)	32 (15%)
Fashion news	2.80	95 (45%)	8 (4%)	40 (19%)	13 (6%)	25 (12%)	31 (15%)
Economic news	2.70	98 (46%)	9 (4%)	44 (21%)	11 (5%)	19 (9%)	31 (15%)
Sports news	2.67	101 (48%)	11 (5%)	40 (19%)	9 (4%)	20 (9%)	31 (15%)
Gaming news	2.33	115 (54%)	11 (5%)	43 (20%)	9 (4%)	11 (5%)	23 (11%)

Table 31 Consumption of different types of news on Facebook

News on Facebook	Mean	Never n (%)	Yearly n (%)	Once in a while n (%)	Monthly n (%)	Weekly n (%)	Daily n (%)
International news	2.23	134 (63%)	6 (3%)	23 (11%)	11 (5%)	15 (7%)	23 (11%)
Health news	2.16	134	6 (3%)	29 (14%)	8 (4%)	17 (8%)	18

Technology news	2.13	(63%) 140	6 (3%)	20 (9%)	8 (4%)	20 (9%)	18 (9%)
Local news	2.12	(66%) 138	7 (3%)	25 (12%)	7 (3%)	16 (8%)	19 (8%)
Fashion news	2.08	(65%) 139	6 (3%)	25 (12%)	11 (5%)	15 (7%)	16 (9%)
Political news	2.06	(66%) 141	7 (3%)	22 (10%)	8 (4%)	20 (9%)	14 (8%)
Sports news	1.94	(67%) 145	8 (4%)	25 (12%)	8 (4%)	12 (6%)	14 (7%)
Economic news	1.94	(68%) 147	7 (3%)	21 (10%)	10 (5%)	15 (7%)	12 (7%)
Gaming news	1.93	(69%) 149	7 (3%)	19 (9%)	8 (4%)	16 (8%)	13 (6%)
		(70%)					(6%)

Table 32 Consumption of different types of news on Twitter

News on Twitter	Mean	Never n (%)	Yearly n (%)	Once in a while n (%)	Monthly n (%)	Weekly n (%)	Daily n (%)
Local news	4.47	39 (18%)	5 (2%)	25 (12%)	5 (2%)	25 (12%)	113 (53%)
International news	4.13	48 (23%)	5 (2%)	29 (14%)	9 (4%)	32 (15%)	89 (42%)
Technology news	3.91	56 (26%)	6 (3%)	32 (15%)	11 (5%)	21 (10%)	86 (41%)
Health news	3.85	59 (28%)	5 (2%)	30 (14%)	12 (6%)	26 (12%)	80 (38%)
Political news	3.77	61 (29%)	6 (3%)	35 (17%)	5 (2%)	29 (14%)	76 (36%)
Economic news	3.57	67 (32%)	6 (3%)	39 (18%)	10 (5%)	20 (9%)	70 (33%)
Sports news	3.53	77 (36%)	6 (3%)	29 (14%)	3 (1%)	22 (10%)	75 (35%)
Fashion news	3.37	78 (37%)	6 (3%)	38 (18%)	6 (3%)	18 (9%)	66 (31%)
Gaming news	3.02	96 (45%)	7 (3%)	32 (15%)	6 (3%)	15 (7%)	56 (26%)

6.1.9 Characteristics of innovation

Participants were provided with statements to measure their adaptability toward technology. Participants mostly agree with the following two statements: “Using technology (the Internet) to get news online will help me when I need to get news anytime and

anywhere” (M=4.13) and “Using technology (the Internet) to get news online is convenient for me because I am online most of the time” (M=4.03). These were followed by: “Using technology (the Internet) to get news online allows me to get to know a wider variety of news” (M=3.96) and “Using technology (the Internet) to get news online is useful for saving time and effort” (M=3.94).

6.1.10 Association between frequency of accessing the news online and news providers’ rating

Pearson correlation analyses were used to examine association between the frequency of accessing the news online (1=every day, 6=never) and rating different online news providers. The findings suggest that when people access online newspapers and Google News more often, they rate more highly for “download time” ($r=-0.23$ and $r=-0.19$, respectively). Accessing online newspapers more often is also associated with a significantly higher perception of “content updating” ($r=-0.24$). Table 33 provides a summary of these results.

Table 33 Correlations with frequencies of online access (1=every day, 6=never)

	Navigating in general	Downloading time	Content updating	Commenting
Online Newspapers	-0.10	-0.23**	-0.24**	-0.05
Yahoo News	0.05	-0.01	0.02	0.21
Google News	-0.14	-0.19*	-0.09	-0.11
News on Facebook	0.15	0.03	0.12	0.05
News on Twitter	-0.06	-0.10	-0.11	0.02

Note: * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

6.1.10.1 Correlations between use of Internet at home/work and news providers’ rating

With regard to reading news from home and from work, and rating different online news providers on their features of navigating, downloading time, content updating, and commenting. The correlation analysis shows a significant association between the frequency of “reading news on an online newspaper’s website” at home and rankings for “navigating in

general” ($r=-0.17$) and downloading time ($r=-0.23$). “Reading news on a social media website” at home for online newspapers is associated with higher rankings for “navigating in general” ($r=-0.16$). “Reading news on a social media website such as reading news on Twitter” is associated with higher rankings for “content updating” ($r=-0.17$).

A higher frequency of “reading news on the Yahoo News search engine” at home is associated with higher rankings for “commenting” ($r=-0.31$), while a higher frequency of “reading news on Google News” at home is associated with higher rankings for “navigating in general”, “downloading time”, “content updating”, and “commenting” ($r=-0.19$, $r=-0.22$, $r=-0.29$, and $r=-0.20$, respectively).

“Sharing news on online newspapers” at home can be related to higher rankings for “downloading time” ($r=-0.18$). Meanwhile, “sharing news on Google News” at home is more often associated with higher rankings for “content updating” ($r=-0.22$). Meanwhile, a higher frequency of Internet use at work for reading or sharing news has no significant association with ranking. Table 34 provides a summary of these results.

Table 34 Correlating the ranking of online news-related activities at home and at work

		Navigating in general	Downloading time	Content updating	Commenting
Use Internet at home: reading news on a newspaper’s website	Online Newspaper	-0.17*	-0.23**	-0.14	-0.10
	Yahoo News	-0.18	-0.07	-0.16	-0.14
	Google News	0.00	-0.06	-0.05	-0.04
	News on Facebook	-0.01	-0.09	-0.08	0.03
	News on Twitter	0.04	0.00	-0.06	0.04
Use Internet at home: reading news on a social media website	Online Newspaper	-0.16*	-0.09	-0.09	-0.05
	Yahoo News	0.04	0.03	-0.05	0.01
	Google News	0.02	-0.05	-0.12	-0.07
	News on Facebook	0.13	-0.03	0.08	0.05
	News on Twitter	-0.09	-0.07	-0.17*	-0.08
Use Internet at home: reading news on search	Online Newspaper	-0.10	-0.11	-0.07	0.04
	Yahoo News	-0.14	-0.25	-0.24	-0.31*
	Google News	-0.19*	-0.22*	-0.29**	-0.20*

engines	News on Facebook	0.04	0.01	0.09	-0.06
	News on Twitter	-0.05	-0.02	-0.06	-0.04
Use Internet at home: sharing news	Online Newspaper	-0.10	-0.18*	-0.04	-0.12
	Yahoo News	-0.16	-0.14	-0.17	-0.20
	Google News	-0.08	-0.07	-0.22*	-0.13
	News on Facebook	0.01	0.00	0.06	0.03
	News on Twitter	0.00	-0.08	-0.07	-0.03
Use Internet at work: reading news on a newspaper's website	Online Newspaper	-0.08	-0.07	0.02	-0.03
	Yahoo News	-0.06	0.04	-0.03	-0.02
	Google News	0.03	0.06	0.06	0.08
	News on Facebook	0.01	0.13	0.06	0.14
	News on Twitter	0.01	0.01	-0.07	0.03
Use Internet at work: reading news on a social media website	Online Newspaper	0.01	0.02	0.04	-0.09
	Yahoo News	0.02	0.17	0.02	0.18
	Google News	-0.06	-0.03	-0.04	-0.01
	News on Facebook	0.03	0.11	0.14	0.03
	News on Twitter	-0.08	-0.02	-0.15	-0.04
Use Internet at work: reading news on search engines	Online Newspaper	0.08	0.09	0.07	0.06
	Yahoo News	-0.07	0.01	-0.01	0.02
	Google News	-0.09	-0.05	-0.11	0.02
	News on Facebook	-0.03	0.20	0.17	0.02
	News on Twitter	0.00	0.10	0.01	0.06
Use Internet at work: sharing news	Online Newspaper	0.14	0.06	0.08	0.04
	Yahoo News	-0.22	0.03	-0.03	0.04
	Google News	-0.02	0.04	-0.03	0.07
	News on Facebook	0.02	0.17	0.16	0.14
	News on Twitter	0.04	0.08	-0.02	0.07

Note: * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

6.1.10.2 Correlations between accessing and reading news from different news providers and credibility

Pearson correlations were computed to examine the association between accessing news from the six main news providers and the credibility of these sources with the average time spent on the Internet. The analysis found that the more time spent on the Internet was associated with a higher credibility score for News on Twitter ($r=0.20$). Moreover, a statistically significant association was found between higher frequency of accessing news sources and perceived credibility of that source. This is true for all six news sources, with the strongest correlation for Twitter and Google News ($r=0.37$ and $r=0.35$, respectively).

Therefore, the more people perceive a news source as credible, the more likely they are to spend more time on that source, with the highest score found on Google News and Twitter. A higher frequency of accessing and reading traditional print newspapers is also associated with a higher perceived credibility of online newspapers ($r=0.18$). Thus, people who consider traditional print newspapers to be credible are more likely to consider its online format as credible as well, and thus are more likely to access the same newspaper online. Table 35 provides a summary of these results.

Table 35 Correlations between accessing and reading news, credibility and average time spent on the Internet

	Credibility score: Traditional Newspaper	Credibility score: Online Newspaper	Credibility score: Yahoo News	Credibility score: Google News	Credibility score: News on Facebook	Credibility score: News on Twitter
Average time spent on the Internet		0.03	0.11	0.06	0.02	0.20*
Accessing and reading news: Traditional Newspaper	0.28***	0.18*	0.02	0.14	0.11	0.00
Accessing and reading news: Online Newspaper		0.22**				
Accessing and reading news: Yahoo News			0.26*			
Accessing and reading news: Google News				0.35***		
Accessing and reading news: Facebook					0.21*	
Accessing and reading news: Twitter						0.37***

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

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

*** Correlation is significant at the 0.001 level (2-tailed).

6.1.10.3 Comparing gender perceptions of a news source's credibility

Independent sample t-tests were used to compare credibility scores for each of the six main news sources for both genders. The results of the credibility score do not show any

significant difference between males and females for any of the six news sources; all p-values > 0.05 as shown in Table 36.

Table 36 Credibility of the news source and gender

Credibility score	Males	Females	Independent sample T-tests
Traditional Newspaper	4.04(1.29)	4.29 (1.11)	p=0.211
Online Newspaper	4.56 (0.96)	4.52 (0.97)	p=0.773
Yahoo News	4.09 (1.03)	4.33 (0.89)	p=0.311
Google News	4.78 (0.99)	4.95 (0.85)	p=0.299
News on Facebook	3.80 (1.07)	4.08 (1.14)	p=0.235
News on Twitter	4.68 (1.10)	4.82 (1.01)	p=0.416

Note: The reported results represent the mean (SD)

6.1.11 Comparison of believability in news source for both genders

A chi-square test was conducted to compare responses to believability questions between female and male participants. The tests show no statistically significant differences between males and females in regard to believability of news sources. All p-values > 0.05 indicate males and females have a similar degree of believability for each of the six news sources. Results are shown in Table 37.

Table 37 Believability in the news source and gender

			Not believable at all	Not believable	Neutral	Believable	Very believable	Chi- Square Tests
How believable:	Gender	M	1.5%	10.3%	32.4	36.8	19.1	0.177
Traditional Newspaper		F	4.2	5.6	31	50.7	8.5	
How believable:	Total		2.9	7.9	31.7	43.9	13.7	0.654
Online Newspaper	Gender	M	1.3	10.4	33.8	46.8	7.8	
		F	2	10	44	39	5	0.616
How believable:	Total		1.7	10.2	39.5	42.4	6.2	
Yahoo News	Gender	M	4.4	8.9	53.3	31.1	2.2	0.171
		F	4.2	8.3	62.5	18.8	6.3	
How believable:	Total		4.3	8.6	58.1	24.7	4.3	0.713
Google News	Gender	M	3	6.1	36.4	51.5	3	
		F	1.2	7.2	42.2	37.3	12	0.400
How believable:	Total		2	6.7	39.6	43.6	8.1	
News on Facebook	Gender	M	9.8	21.3	50.8	16.4	1.6	0.400
		F	5.2	24.1	44.8	22.4	3.4	
How believable:	Total		7.6	22.7	47.9	19.3	2.5	0.400
News on Twitter	Gender	M	5.4	8.1	33.8	35.1	17.6	
		F	2	5.9	30.4	48	13.7	0.400
	Total		3.4	6.8	31.8	42.6	15.3	

6.1.12 Comparing trustworthiness scores for both genders

Independent sample t-tests were performed to compare trustworthiness scores of the news stories between genders to find out if there is any difference between males and females regarding the trustworthiness of different news sources. The results show that there are no significant differences between males and females in regard to any of the six news sources, as shown in Table 38.

Table 38 Trustworthiness and gender

Trustworthiness score	Males	Females	Independent sample T-tests
Traditional Newspapers	4.16 (1.17)	4.31 (0.91)	p=0.398
Online Newspapers	4.38 (1.01)	4.40 (0.85)	p=0.865
Yahoo News	4.11 (0.82)	3.90 (0.94)	p=0.352
Google News	4.60 (0.85)	4.75 (0.75)	p=0.299
News on Facebook	3.95 (0.82)	4.25 (0.73)	p=0.077
News on Twitter	4.37 (1.01)	4.59 (0.86)	p=0.157

6.1.13 Comparing expertise scores for both genders

Independent sample t-tests were used to find out if there is any difference between males and females in perceiving news as being written with expertise (by an expert journalist). The results suggest no significant difference between males and females in regard to expertise scores associated with the six news sources. Table 39 provides a summary of these results. Males and females have similar perceptions regarding the expertise level of each of the news sources.

Table 39 Expertise and gender

Expertise score	Males	Females	Independent sample T-tests
Traditional Newspapers	4.56 (1.21)	4.42 (1.13)	p=0.462
Online Newspapers	4.41 (1.23)	4.46 (1.20)	p=0.805
Yahoo News	4.20 (1.30)	4.33 (1.19)	p=0.683
Google News	4.76 (1.49)	4.88 (1.09)	p=0.589
News on Facebook	3.76 (1.36)	4.09 (1.40)	p=0.265
News on Twitter	4.49 (1.57)	4.50 (1.30)	p=0.975

6.1.14 Comparing interactivity scores for both genders

I discovered similar results from independent sample t-tests comparing interactivity scores for both genders, specifically that there was no difference found between the two genders in regard to interactivity among all six news sources. Table 40 shows a summary of the findings.

Table 40 Interactivity and gender

Interactivity score	Males	Females	Independent sample T-tests
Traditional Newspapers	3.63 (1.51)	3.60 (1.32)	p=0.885
Online Newspapers	5.12 (1.16)	5.14 (1.07)	p=0.898
Yahoo News	4.30 (1.32)	4.43 (1.35)	p=0.698
Google News	5.20 (1.30)	5.04 (1.16)	p=0.492
News on Facebook	4.47 (1.54)	4.83 (1.34)	p=0.252
News on Twitter	5.30 (1.33)	5.51 (1.13)	p=0.298

6.1.15 Comparing multimodality scores for both genders

Statistical analysis of multimodality and gender was conducted on the six different news sources. The results showed no significant difference between males and females in regard to multimodality associated with all the news sources. For news on Facebook, there appear to be slightly higher multimodality scores for females (M=4.92) compared to males (M=4.33), with the results approaching statistical significance at p=.065. Table 41 provides a summary of these results.

Table 41 Multimodality and gender

Multimodality score	Males	Females	Independent sample T-tests
Traditional Newspapers	4.16 (1.29)	4.41 (1.24)	p=0.232
Online Newspapers	5.15 (1.28)	5.22 (1.17)	p=0.713
Yahoo News	4.46 (1.43)	4.42 (1.61)	p=0.918
Google News	5.29 (1.35)	5.28 (1.12)	p=0.964
News on Facebook	4.33 (1.53)	4.92 (1.41)	p=0.065
News on Twitter	4.95 (1.40)	5.18 (1.28)	p=0.291

6.1.16 Comparison of news hypertextuality for both genders

I also conducted a series of t-tests for hypertextuality scores for each gender based on the six different news sources. Once again, no significant difference between males and females was found in regard to hypertextuality scores associated with the six news sources. Table 42 provides a summary of these results.

Table 42 Hypertextuality and gender

Hypertextuality score	Males	Females	Independent sample T-tests
Traditional Newspapers	3.85 (1.46)	4.14 (1.23)	p=0.208
Online Newspapers	5.60 (1.22)	5.57 (1.16)	p=0.885
Yahoo News	4.55 (1.50)	4.84 (1.51)	p=0.438
Google News	5.54 (1.34)	5.47 (1.21)	p=0.768
News on Facebook	4.44 (1.65)	4.89 (1.37)	p=0.174
News on Twitter	5.59 (1.33)	5.74 (1.22)	p=0.464

6.1.17 Association between different types of news and gender

I examined the association between six main news sources and the types of news that people may access on them based on their gender. Chi-square tests were used to explore whether the association was statistically significant. The results showed that, on a daily basis, males read the following news on a traditional print newspaper more frequently than females: local (37.3%), international (32.5%), technology (26.5%), economics (22.9%), political (27.7%), sports (32.5%) and gaming (13.3%). Meanwhile, females read fashion news (17.2%) more frequently than males. There is no significant difference between males and females in terms of the frequency of reading health news.

Moreover, males were found to read the following news more frequently than females when accessing an online newspaper: international (50.6%), technology (41%), economics (38.6%), political (44.6%), sports (47%) and gaming (20.5%). Similarly, females read fashion news (31.3%) online more frequently than males. There was no significant difference between males and females in terms of the frequency of reading online local and health news.

With regard to Yahoo News, males more frequently read the following types of news: economics (9.6%), political (4.8%), sports (6%) and gaming (3.6%). There is no significant difference between males and females in terms of the frequency of reading local, international, technology, fashion, and health stories on Yahoo News.

Regarding Google News, males were found to read the following types of news more frequently than females: local (33.7%), international (31.3%), technology (27.7%), economics (24.1%), political (26.5%), sports (26.5%) and gaming (18.1%). There was no significant difference between males and females in terms of the frequency of reading fashion and health news.

Additionally, males were also found to read the following types of news on Facebook more frequently than females: local (13.3%), international (13.3%), technology (10.8%), economics (7.2%), political (9.6%), sports (10.8%), health (9.6%) and gaming (6%). There was no significant difference between males and females in terms of the frequency of reading fashion news.

Lastly, in regard to Twitter, males were found to read the following news types more frequently: international (56.6%), technology (51.8%), economics (45.8%), political (50.6%), sports (51.8%), and gaming (33.7%). There was no significant difference between males and females in terms of the frequency of reading local, fashion, and health news. Full details can be found below in Table 43, Table 44, Table 45, Table 46, Table 47, and Table 48.

Table 43 Association between frequency of news consumption and gender — traditional newspapers

Traditional Print Newspaper			Never	Yearly	Once in a while	Monthly	Weekly	Daily	Chi-Square Tests
Gender *	Gender	M	34.9%	4.8%	14.5%	2.4%	6%	37.3%	100%
Local news		F	51.6%	7.8%	18.8%	3.9%	7.8%	10.2%	100%
	Total		45%	6.6%	17.1%	3.3%	7.1%	20.9%	100%
Gender *	Gender	M	34.9%	2.4%	14.5%	1.2%	14.5%	32.5%	100%
International news		F	50.8%	7.8%	14.8%	6.3%	7.8%	12.5%	100%
	Total		44.5%	5.7%	14.7%	4.3%	10.4%	20.4%	100%

Gender *	Gender	M	34.9%		15.7%	8.4%	14.5%	26.5%	100%	0.001
Technology news		F	46.9%	7%	24.2%	4.7%	4.7%	12.5%	100%	
	Total		42.2%	4.3%	20.9%	6.2%	8.5%	18%	100%	
Gender *	Gender	M	41%	2.4%	18.1%	3.6%	12%	22.9%	100%	0.001
Economic news		F	55.5%	7%	22.7%	4.7%	5.5%	4.7%	100%	
	Total		49.8%	5.2%	20.9%	4.3%	8.1%	11.8%	100%	
Gender *	Gender	M	36.1%		20.5%	2.4%	13.3%	27.7%	100%	<0.001
Political news		F	54.7%	8.6%	18%	4.7%	5.5%	8.6%	100%	
	Total		47.4%	5.2%	19%	3.8%	8.5%	16.1%	100%	
Gender *	Gender	M	65.1%	4.8%	15.7%	3.6%	6%	4.8%	100%	0.034
Fashion news		F	44.5%	7%	15.6%	6.3%	9.4%	17.2%	100%	
	Total		52.6%	6.2%	15.6%	5.2%	8.1%	12.3%	100%	
Gender *	Gender	M	41%	2.4%	12%	3.6%	8.4%	32.5%	100%	<0.001
Sports news		F	62.5%	7.8%	17.2%	0.8%	3.9%	7.8%	100%	
	Total		54%	5.7%	15.2%	1.9%	5.7%	17.5%	100%	
Gender *	Gender	M	41%	1.2%	13.3%	4.8%	21.7%	18.1%	100%	0.074
Health news		F	43%	7.8%	14.8%	3.9%	9.4%	21.1%	100%	
	Total		42.2%	5.2%	14.2%	4.3%	14.2%	19.9%	100%	
Gender *	Gender	M	51.8%	1.2%	22.9%	2.4%	8.4%	13.3%	100%	0.002
Gaming news		F	64.1%	9.4%	10.9%	6.3%	4.7%	4.7%	100%	
	Total		59.2%	6.2%	15.6%	4.7%	6.2%	8.1%	100%	

Table 44 Association between frequency of news consumption and gender — online newspapers

Online Newspaper			Never	Yearly	Once in a while	Monthly	Weekly	Daily		Chi-Square Tests
Gender *	Gender	M	15.7%	3.6%	13.3%	2.4%	10.8%	54.2%	100%	0.079
Local news		F	20.3%	5.5%	25%	3.9%	11.7%	33.6%	100%	
	Total		18.5%	4.7%	20.4%	3.3%	11.4%	41.7%	100%	
Gender *	Gender	M	8.4%	3.6%	16.9%	4.8%	15.7%	50.6%	100%	0.023
International news		F	18.8%	5.5%	25%	8.6%	13.3%	28.9%	100%	
	Total		14.7%	4.7%	21.8%	7.1%	14.2%	37.4%	100%	
Gender *	Gender	M	12%	1.2%	14.5%	6%	25.3%	41%	100%	<0.001
Technology news		F	21.1%	7.8%	29.7%	8.6%	10.9%	21.9%	100%	
	Total		17.5%	5.2%	23.7%	7.6%	16.6%	29.4%	100%	
Gender *	Gender	M	19.3%	1.2%	20.5%	3.6%	16.9%	38.6%	100%	<0.001
Economic news		F	37.5%	7.8%	25.8%	5.5%	10.9%	12.5%	100%	
	Total		30.3%	5.2%	23.7%	4.7%	13.3%	22.7%	100%	
Gender *	Gender	M	14.5%	1.2%	19.3%	2.4%	18.1%	44.6%	100%	<0.001
Political news		F	33.6%	7%	25.8%	3.9%	12.5%	17.2%	100%	
	Total		26.1%	4.7%	23.2%	3.3%	14.7%	28%	100%	
Gender *	Gender	M	42.2%	6%	20.5%	6%	8.4%	16.9%	100%	0.032
Fashion news		F	21.9%	5.5%	21.1%	10.2%	10.2%	31.3%	100%	
	Total		29.9%	5.7%	20.9%	8.5%	9.5%	25.6%	100%	
Gender *	Gender	M	16.9%	2.4%	13.3%	6%	14.5%	47%	100%	<0.001
Sports news		F	47.7%	7.8%	20.3%	5.5%	4.7%	14.1%	100%	
	Total		35.5%	5.7%	17.5%	5.7%	8.5%	27%	100%	
Gender *	Gender	M	20.5%	1.2%	14.5%	10.8%	22.9%	30.1%	100%	0.087
Health news		F	16.4%	4.7%	25.8%	3.9%	18%	31.3%	100%	
	Total		18%	3.3%	21.3%	6.6%	19.9%	30.8%	100%	
Gender *	Gender	M	34.9%	3.6%	25.3%	4.8%	10.8%	20.5%	100%	0.040
Gaming news		F	46.9%	9.4%	25.8%	1.6%	3.9%	12.5%	100%	
	Total		42.2%	7.1%	25.6%	2.8%	6.6%	15.6%	100%	

Table 45 Association between frequency of news consumption and gender — Yahoo News

Yahoo News			Never	Yearly	Once in a while	Monthly	Weekly	Daily		Chi-Square Tests
Gender * Local news	Gender	M	80.7%		4.8%	2.4%	4.8%	7.2%	100%	0.094
		F	79.7%	7%	6.3%	1.6%	3.1%	2.3%	100%	
	Total		80.1%	4.3%	5.7%	1.9%	3.8%	4.3%	100%	
Gender * International news	Gender	M	78.3%	1.2%	4.8%	1.2%	7.2%	7.2%	100%	0.517
		F	80.5%	5.5%	3.9%	1.6%	3.9%	4.7%	100%	
	Total		79.6%	3.8%	4.3%	1.4%	5.2%	5.7%	100%	
Gender * Technology news	Gender	M	78.3%		6%	2.4%	6%	7.2%	100%	0.069
		F	78.1%	6.3%	7%	3.9%	2.3%	2.3%	100%	
	Total		78.2%	3.8%	6.6%	3.3%	3.8%	4.3%	100%	
Gender * Economic news	Gender	M	78.3%		4.8%	3.6%	3.6%	9.6%	100%	0.014
		F	83.6%	5.5%	6.3%	0.8%	2.3%	1.6%	100%	
	Total		81.5%	3.3%	5.7%	1.9%	2.8%	4.7%	100%	
Gender * Political news	Gender	M	81.9%		6%	2.4%	4.8%	4.8%	100%	0.046
		F	81.3%	7%	7%		3.1%	1.6%	100%	
	Total		81.5%	4.3%	6.6%	0.9%	3.8%	2.8%	100%	
Gender * Fashion news	Gender	M	79.5%		8.4%	1.2%	4.8%	6%	100%	0.124
		F	79.7%	5.5%	7%	2.3%	0.8%	4.7%	100%	
	Total		79.6%	3.3%	7.6%	1.9%	2.4%	5.2%	100%	
Gender * Sports news	Gender	M	79.5%		8.4%	1.2%	4.8%	6%	100%	0.032
		F	85.9%	6.3%	3.9%	0.8%	1.6%	1.6%	100%	
	Total		83.4%	3.8%	5.7%	0.9%	2.8%	3.3%	100%	
Gender * Health news	Gender	M	78.3%		8.4%	3.6%	3.6%	6%	100%	0.097
		F	76.6%	7%	7.8%	4.7%	2.3%	1.6%	100%	
	Total		77.3%	4.3%	8.1%	4.3%	2.8%	3.3%	100%	
Gender * Gaming news	Gender	M	78.3%	1.2%	7.2%	3.6%	6%	3.6%	100%	0.110
		F	84.4%	6.3%	3.1%	3.1%	1.6%	1.6%	100%	
	Total		82%	4.3%	4.7%	3.3%	3.3%	2.4%	100%	

Table 46 Association between frequency of news consumption and gender — Google News

Google News			Never	Yearly	Once in a while	Monthly	Weekly	Daily		Chi-Square Tests
Gender * Local news	Gender	M	27.7%		13.3%	6%	19.3%	33.7%	100%	0.004
		F	37.5%	6.3%	22.7%	4.7%	13.3%	15.6%	100%	
	Total		33.6%	3.8%	19%	5.2%	15.6%	22.7%	100%	
Gender * International news	Gender	M	28.9%		13.3%	4.8%	21.7%	31.3%	100%	0.005
		F	36.7%	4.7%	25%	5.5%	10.2%	18%	100%	
	Total		33.6%	2.8%	20.4%	5.2%	14.7%	23.2%	100%	
Gender * Technology news	Gender	M	31.3%		16.9%	7.2%	16.9%	27.7%	100%	0.003
		F	43%	6.3%	24.2%	5.5%	7.8%	13.3%	100%	
	Total		38.4%	3.8%	21.3%	6.2%	11.4%	19%	100%	
Gender * Economic news	Gender	M	34.9%	2.4%	16.9%	4.8%	16.9%	24.1%	100%	<0.001
		F	53.9%	5.5%	22.7%	5.5%	3.9%	8.6%	100%	
	Total		46.4%	4.3%	20.4%	5.2%	9%	14.7%	100%	
Gender * Political news	Gender	M	30.1%	3.6%	15.7%	7.2%	16.9%	26.5%	100%	<0.001
		F	46.1%	5.5%	28.1%	3.9%	8.6%	7.8%	100%	
	Total		39.8%	4.7%	23.2%	5.2%	11.8%	15.2%	100%	
Gender * Fashion news	Gender	M	53%	2.4%	14.5%	4.8%	14.5%	10.8%	100%	0.270
		F	39.8%	4.7%	21.1%	7%	10.2%	17.2%	100%	
	Total		45%	3.8%	18.5%	6.2%	11.8%	14.7%	100%	
Gender * Sports news	Gender	M	33.7%	3.6%	16.9%	2.4%	16.9%	26.5%	100%	<0.001
		F	57%	6.3%	20.3%	4.7%	4.7%	7%	100%	
	Total		47.9%	5.2%	19%	3.8%	9.5%	14.7%	100%	
Gender * Health news	Gender	M	37.3%	1.2%	16.9%	4.8%	19.3%	20.5%	100%	0.328
		F	38.3%	6.3%	21.9%	5.5%	13.3%	14.8%	100%	
	Total		37.9%	4.3%	19.9%	5.2%	15.6%	17.1%	100%	
Gender * Gaming news	Gender	M	47%		20.5%	6%	8.4%	18.1%	100%	0.002
		F	59.4%	8.6%	20.3%	2.3%	3.1%	6.3%	100%	
	Total		54.5%	5.2%	20.4%	3.8%	5.2%	10.9%	100%	

Table 47 Association between frequency of news consumption and gender — news on Facebook

Facebook News			Never	Yearly	Once in a while	Monthly	Weekly	Daily		Chi-Square Tests
Gender *	Gender	M	54.2%		15.7%	4.8%	12%	13.3%	100%	0.005
Local news		F	72.7%	5.5%	9.4%	2.3%	4.7%	5.5%	100%	
	Total		65.4%	3.3%	11.8%	3.3%	7.6%	8.5%	100%	
Gender *	Gender	M	54.2%		14.5%	6%	12%	13.3%	100%	0.014
International news		F	69.5%	4.7%	8.6%	4.7%	3.1%	9.4%	100%	
	Total		63.5%	2.8%	10.9%	5.2%	6.6%	10.9%	100%	
Gender *	Gender	M	55.4%		14.5%	3.6%	15.7%	10.8%	100%	0.005
Technology news		F	73.4%	4.7%	6.3%	3.9%	5.5%	6.3%	100%	
	Total		66.4%	2.8%	9.5%	3.8%	9.5%	8.1%	100%	
Gender *	Gender	M	57.8%		14.5%	4.8%	15.7%	7.2%	100%	<0.001
Economic news		F	77.3%	5.5%	7%	4.7%	1.6%	3.9%	100%	
	Total		69.7%	3.3%	10%	4.7%	7.1%	5.2%	100%	
Gender *	Gender	M	54.2%		15.7%	4.8%	15.7%	9.6%	100%	0.001
Political news		F	75%	5.5%	7%	2.3%	5.5%	4.7%	100%	
	Total		66.8%	3.3%	10.4%	3.3%	9.5%	6.6%	100%	
Gender *	Gender	M	63.9%		13.3%	4.8%	12%	6%	100%	0.088
Fashion news		F	67.2%	4.7%	10.2%	5.5%	3.9%	8.6%	100%	
	Total		65.9%	2.8%	11.4%	5.2%	7.1%	7.6%	100%	
Gender *	Gender	M	55.4%		16.9%	4.8%	12%	10.8%	100%	<0.001
Sports news		F	77.3%	6.3%	8.6%	3.1%	1.6%	3.1%	100%	
	Total		68.7%	3.8%	11.8%	3.8%	5.7%	6.2%	100%	
Gender *	Gender	M	56.6%		15.7%	3.6%	14.5%	9.6%	100%	0.027
Health news		F	68%	4.7%	12.5%	3.9%	3.9%	7%	100%	
	Total		63.5%	2.8%	13.7%	3.8%	8.1%	8.1%	100%	
Gender *	Gender	M	62.7%		12%	4.8%	14.5%	6%	100%	0.007
Gaming news		F	75.8%	5.5%	7%	3.1%	3.1%	5.5%	100%	
	Total		70.6%	3.3%	9%	3.8%	7.6%	5.7%	100%	

Table 48 Association between frequency of news consumption and gender — news on Twitter

Twitter News			Never	Yearly	Once in a while	Monthly	Weekly	Daily		Chi-Square Tests
Gender *	Gender	M	13.3%		8.4%	2.4%	10.8%	65.1%	100%	0.064
Local news		F	21.9%	3.9%	14.1%	2.3%	12.5%	45.3%	100%	
		Total		18.5%	2.4%	11.8%	2.4%	11.8%	53.1%	
Gender *	Gender	M	13.3%		8.4%	3.6%	18.1%	56.6%	100%	0.001
International		F	28.9%	3.9%	17.2%	4.7%	13.3%	32%	100%	
news		Total		22.7%	2.4%	13.7%	4.3%	15.2%	41.7%	
Gender *	Gender	M	19.3%		12%	3.6%	13.3%	51.8%	100%	0.015
Technology		F	31.3%	4.7%	17.2%	6.3%	7.8%	32.8%	100%	
news		Total		26.5%	2.8%	15.2%	5.2%	10%	40.3%	
Gender *	Gender	M	20.5%		13.3%	7.2%	13.3%	45.8%	100%	<0.001
Economic		F	39.1%	4.7%	21.9%	3.1%	7%	24.2%	100%	
news		Total		31.8%	2.8%	18.5%	4.7%	9.5%	32.7%	
Gender *	Gender	M	15.7%		12%	3.6%	18.1%	50.6%	100%	<0.001
Political news		F	37.5%	4.7%	19.5%	1.6%	10.9%	25.8%	100%	
		Total		28.9%	2.8%	16.6%	2.4%	13.7%	35.5%	
Gender *	Gender	M	44.6%	1.2%	15.7%	4.8%	3.6%	30.1%	100%	0.086
Fashion news		F	32%	3.9%	19.5%	1.6%	11.7%	31.3%	100%	
		Total		37%	2.8%	18%	2.8%	8.5%	30.8%	
Gender *	Gender	M	22.9%		12%	2.4%	10.8%	51.8%	100%	<0.001
Sports news		F	45.3%	4.7%	14.8%	0.8%	10.2%	24.2%	100%	
		Total		36.5%	2.8%	13.7%	1.4%	10.4%	35.1%	
Gender *	Gender	M	24.1%		15.7%	4.8%	12%	43.4%	100%	0.342
Health news		F	30.5%	3.9%	13.3%	6.3%	12.5%	33.6%	100%	
		Total		28%	2.4%	14.2%	5.7%	12.3%	37.4%	
Gender *	Gender	M	39.8%		12%	4.8%	9.6%	33.7%	100%	0.027
		F								

Gaming news	F	49.2%	5.5%	17.2%	1.6%	5.5%	21.1%	100%
Total		45.5%	3.3%	15.2%	2.8%	7.1%	26.1%	100%

6.1.18 Credibility of online newspapers and intention to pay for news

Analyses were performed to compare the credibility score and other measures between three categories related to paying for the news.

6.1.18.1 Relationship between the credibility of online newspapers and future intention to pay for online news in general

A one-way ANOVA test was used to examine the association between credibility scores of online newspapers and readers' future intention to pay for news online in general. The results found that there was a statistically significant difference between participants who would consider paying for online news in general and those who would not pay based on the credibility scores of online newspapers ($p=0.006$). Those who would consider paying for online news in general had a significantly higher credibility score for online newspapers ($M=5.12$) compared with those who would not consider paying ($M=4.68$). Table 49 provides a summary of the results.

Table 49 Credibility score of online newspapers (future intention)

	In the future, would you consider paying for online news?			ANOVA
	Yes, N=19 (9%)	No, N=127 (60%)	Not Sure, N=66 (31%)	
Online newspaper credibility score	5.12 (0.72)	4.36 (1.05)	4.68 (0.77)	$p=0.003$ Post Hoc p Value=0.006 for Yes vs. No

Note: Reported values are mean (SD)

6.1.18.2 Relationship between the credibility of online newspapers and the willingness to pay a fee to cover the costs of reading one's favourite online newspaper

The credibility of online newspapers was also analyzed in conjunction with the question asking participants about their willingness to pay a fee to cover the costs of reading their favourite online newspaper. The results show no significant difference between the three

subgroups of respondents related to willingness to pay a fee to cover the costs of reading their favourite online newspaper in regard to the credibility score of the online newspaper ($p=0.360$). Table 50 provides a summary of these results.

Table 50 Credibility score of online newspapers

	Are you willing to pay a fee to cover the costs of reading your favourite online newspaper			ANOVA
	Yes, N=29 (17%)	No, N=129 (74%)	Yes, but only if... N=16 (9%)	
Online newspaper credibility score	4.74 (0.81)	4.48 (1.00)	4.66 (0.88)	$p=0.360$ No difference in online newspaper credibility scores between the three response subgroups

Note: Reported values are mean (SD)

6.1.19 Reliability of motivation

A statistics analysis of each of the four motivations was conducted to examine the reliability (internal consistency) of each motivation scale. Cronbach's alpha summarizes the degree of similarity in response to individual questions within a scale. Instruments with values above 0.8 are considered reliable. The reliability analysis shows good consistency of items within each motivation scale. Only opinion-driven motivation factors do not have a great reliability, perhaps due to a small number of items in the scale. Table 51 summarizes these findings.

Table 51 Reliability of motivation

Scale	Cronbach's alpha	N of items
Information-driven motivation	0.861	5
Entertainment-driven motivation	0.817	5
Social-driven motivation	0.734	3
Opinion-driven motivation	0.541	2

6.1.20 Comparison of motivation scores for both genders

I conducted independent sample t-tests to explore the differences in motivation scores between genders. The results show that male participants had a significantly higher information-driven motivation ($M=5.65$) in comparison to females ($M=5.30$), $p=0.031$. No significant difference was found between males and females in regard to the other three motivation scores (entertainment-driven, opinion-driven and social-driven). Table 52 provides a summary of these findings.

Table 52 T-tests between motivation and gender

Motivation score	Males	Females	Independent sample T-test
Information-driven motivation	5.65 (0.92)	5.30 (1.26)	$p=0.031$
Entertainment-driven motivation	4.04 (1.36)	4.29 (1.29)	$p=0.178$
Opinion-driven motivation	3.81 (1.45)	3.72 (1.35)	$p=0.643$
Social-driven motivation	4.20 (1.35)	4.42 (1.42)	$p=0.264$

6.1.21 Comparison of motivation scores in relation to levels of education

I performed a one-way ANOVA test to compare motivation scores between three different levels of education. The results show no significant difference in motivations between participants within the three separate education levels. All ANOVA p-values > 0.05 . Table 53 provides a summary of these findings.

Table 53 ANOVA tests comparing motivation scores among education levels

	High school or less (N=37)	College/ university degree (N=120)	Master's degree (N=45)	ANOVA
Information-driven motivation	5.17 (1.37)	5.37, SD=(1.15)	5.72 (1.04)	$p=0.096$
Entertainment-driven motivation	4.30 (1.71)	4.18 (1.24)	4.11 (1.17)	$p=0.799$
Opinion-driven motivation	4.15 (1.42)	3.65 (1.37)	3.61 (1.33)	$p=0.128$
Social-driven motivation	4.51 (1.63)	4.31 (1.34)	4.30 (1.36)	$p=0.723$

Note: Respondents from the following education levels—no schooling=0, doctorate degree=8, and other=2—were removed because of the small sample number of people in each of these categories.

6.1.22 Comparison of motivation scores in relation to age groups

Another ANOVA test was conducted to compare the motivation scores among five different age groups. There was no significant correlation found between the age groups of the participants and the motivation scores. All ANOVA p-values > 0.05. Results approaching significant levels between age groups were only found in regard to information-driven motivation ($p=0.067$), as younger participants (18–46) appeared to have higher information-driven motivation scores than older participants (46+). Table 54 summarizes these findings.

Table 54 ANOVA tests comparing motivation scores among age groups

	18–25 years old (N=21)	26–35 years old (N=101)	36–45 years old (N=64)	46–55 years old (N=16)	56 years old and over (N=10)	ANOVA
Information-driven motivation	5.36 (0.92)	5.48 (1.08)	5.59 (0.92)	4.99 (1.51)	4.62 (2.39)	$p=0.067$
Entertainment-driven motivation	4.13 (1.54)	4.34 (1.23)	4.10 (1.40)	3.75 (1.08)	4.30 (1.50)	$p=0.485$
Opinion-driven motivation	4.14 (1.31)	3.81 (1.32)	3.66 (1.50)	3.06 (0.91)	3.95 (1.91)	$p=0.183$
Social-driven motivation	4.24 (1.18)	4.54 (1.36)	4.25 (1.41)	3.88 (1.57)	3.73 (1.46)	$p=0.180$

6.1.23 Comparison of motivation scores in relation to employment categories

Another ANOVA test was completed to see if motivations differ depending on participants' employment status. The ANOVA test of motivations between employment status subgroups showed statistically significant (or approaching significant) differences for employed participants, who appeared to have the lowest score for entertainment-driven, opinion-driven and social-driven motivations. Specifically, I found a significant difference between employed ($M=3.97$) and unemployed ($M=5.00$) participants in entertainment-driven motivation, $p=0.026$. The difference between employed ($M=3.51$) and retired ($M=4.93$) participants was approaching significance in opinion-driven motivation, $p=0.084$, as well as between employed participants ($M=4.13$) and stay-at-home moms ($M=4.95$) in social-driven motivation, $p=0.062$. Table 55 provides a summary of these results.

Table 55 ANOVA tests comparing motivation scores based on employment status

	Student (N=28)	Self- employed (N=5)	Employed (N=129)	Unemployed (N=17)	Stay- at- home (mom) (N=26)	Retired (N=7)	ANOVA
Information- driven motivation	5.47 (0.80)	5.68 (0.72)	5.29 (1.32)	5.74 (0.72)	5.66 (0.93)	6.029 (0.76)	p=0.272
Entertainment- driven motivation	4.19 (1.38)	4.88 (1.20)	3.97 (1.21)	5.00 (1.14)	4.44 (1.63)	5.14 (1.15)	ANOVA p= 0.006 Post Hoc tests show significant difference between unemployed and employed (p= 0.026)
Opinion-driven motivation	4.00 (1.17)	3.60 (0.89)	3.51 (1.36)	4.15 (1.26)	4.10 (1.64)	4.93 (1.43)	ANOVA p= 0.023 Post Hoc tests show approaching significant difference between retired and employed (p=0.084)
Social-driven motivation	4.27 (1.22)	4.73 (1.46)	4.13 (1.40)	4.94 (1.13)	4.95 (1.48)	4.43 (1.27)	ANOVA p= 0.037 Post Hoc tests show approaching significant difference between stay-at- home (mom) and employed (p=0.062)

6.1.24 Comparison of motivation scores in relation to income levels

An ANOVA test was used to compare motivation scores between seven income categories. The level of income plays a statistically significant role in opinion-driven motivation, $p=0.028$. Moreover, participants with no income appear to have a higher level of opinion-driven motivation ($M=4.21$) compared to middle-income participants in the 10,001–

15,000 SR (\$3,500.89 CA–\$5,250.8 CA) income range (M=3.18), $p=0.015$. Table 56 provides a summary of these results.

Table 56 ANOVA tests comparing motivation scores among income levels

	No income (N=36)	Less than 2000 SR (N=13)	Between 2001 and 5000 SR (N=36)	Between 5001 and 10000 SR (N=41)	Between 10001 and 15000 SR (N=46)	Between 15001 and 20000 SR (N=15)	More than 20001 SR (N=25)	ANOVA
Information-driven motivation	5.62 (0.90)	5.48 (0.93)	5.40 (1.26)	5.78 (0.84)	5.12 (1.19)	5.61 (0.98)	5.04 (1.71)	$p=0.079$
Entertainment-driven motivation	4.47 (1.53)	4.34 (1.50)	4.34 (1.38)	4.15 (1.26)	4.11 (1.19)	3.96 (1.30)	3.94 (1.18)	$p=0.698$
Opinion-driven motivation	4.21 (1.32)	3.88 (1.50)	3.89 (1.27)	3.98 (1.27)	3.18 (1.22)	3.70 (1.47)	3.50 (1.75)	ANOVA $p=0.028$ Post Hoc tests show significant difference between no income and 10,001– 15,000 SR ($p=0.015$)
Social-driven motivation	4.73 (1.33)	4.79 (1.68)	4.56 (1.31)	4.46 (1.25)	4.00 (1.41)	3.91 (1.19)	3.88 (1.53)	$p=0.052$

6.1.25 Comparison of motivation scores related to marital status

I also conducted an ANOVA test to compare motivation scores between subgroups of participants with different marital statuses. The results show that marital status does not have a significant effect on motivation, as all p -values > 0.05 . Table 57 provides a summary of these results.

Table 57 ANOVA tests comparing motivation scores related to marital status

	Single/never married (N=68)	Married (N=122)	Divorced (N=18)	ANOVA
Information-driven motivation	5.37 (1.12)	5.49 (1.21)	5.21 (1.03)	$p=0.585$
Entertainment driven motivation	4.39 (1.18)	4.18 (1.37)	4.06 (1.24)	$p=0.451$
Opinion-driven motivation	3.99 (1.22)	3.72 (1.46)	3.42 (1.24)	$p=0.209$
Social-driven motivation	4.44 (1.30)	4.36 (1.44)	4.17 (1.33)	$p=0.759$

Note: Respondents indicating their marital status as “Widowed=4” were removed because of the small sample of people available in this category.

6.1.26 Comparison of motivation scores related to language groups

Independent sample t-tests were conducted to compare the motivation scores between the participants' two language groups. The results show that motivation scores are not significantly different between participants who speak Arabic only and those who speak both Arabic and English, as all t-test p-values > 0.05. Table 58 summarizes these results.

Table 58 T-tests comparing motivation scores in relation to language groups

	Arabic (N=104)	Both Arabic and English (N=105)	Independent sample T-tests
Information-driven motivation	5.40 (1.24)	5.47 (1.09)	0.672
Entertainment-driven motivation	4.24 (1.30)	4.16 (1.34)	0.668
Opinion-driven motivation	3.79 (1.36)	3.73 (1.41)	0.774
Social-driven motivation	4.34 (1.46)	4.34 (1.33)	0.987

Note: Respondents who speak "Only English=3" were removed because of the small sample of participants in this category.

6.1.27 Importance of the news to participants

Participants were provided with a statement regarding the importance of news to them. Overall, respondents primarily agreed with the statement "because news is important to me". The average response score was 4.86 (on a 1–7 scale), and 40% of participants agreed or strongly agreed with this statement. Only 17% of the respondents disagreed with this statement. Table 59 provides a summary of these results.

Table 59 Importance of news

Because news is important to me	Number of respondents	Percent
Strongly disagree	9	4.2
Disagree	13	6.1
Somewhat disagree	14	6.6
Neutral	34	16.0
Somewhat agree	55	25.9
Agree	66	31.1
Strongly agree	21	9.9

Mean=4.86 (based on a 1–7 scale)

6.1.28 Enjoyment of news for participants

Participants were provided with a statement regarding their perception of the enjoyment of the news. Respondents somewhat agreed with the statement “getting the news is enjoyable to me”. The average response score was 4.36 (on a 1–7 scale), and 41.5% of participants agreed or somewhat agreed with this statement. An additional 27% of participants disagreed with this statement.

Table 60 summarizes these results.

Table 60 Enjoyment of news

Getting the news is enjoyable to me	Frequency	Percent
Strongly disagree	20	9.4
Disagree	14	6.6
Somewhat disagree	23	10.8
Neutral	47	22.2
Somewhat agree	49	23.1
Agree	39	18.4
Strongly agree	20	9.4
Mean=4.36 (based on a 1–7 scale)		

6.1.29 Advantageousness of news to participants

Participants were provided with a statement regarding how much they perceived getting the news as advantageous. The results found that a high level of agreement existed between participants regarding the statement that “getting the news is advantageous to me”. The average response score was 5.02 (on a 1–7 scale), and almost half of the participants (47%) agreed or strongly agreed with the statement. Only 13% of participants disagreed with this statement. Table 61 provides a summary of these results.

Table 61 Advantageousness of news

Getting the news is advantageous to me	Frequency	Percent
Strongly disagree	12	5.7
Disagree	3	1.4
Somewhat disagree	13	6.1
Neutral	36	17.0
Somewhat agree	48	22.6
Agree	76	35.8
Strongly agree	24	11.3

Mean=5.02 (based on a 1–7 scale)

6.1.30 Adoption of innovation scale

Participants were given a list of statements regarding online news and were asked to choose the most truthful statement to them. Here is what the findings revealed:

A statistically significant positive association was found between accessing and reading the news in online newspapers and agreement with the statements listed below:

- Reading news online allows me to find news more easily ($r=0.16$)
- Using technology (the Internet) to get news online is useful for saving time and effort ($r=0.18$)
- Using technology (the Internet) to get news online allows me to get to know different news providers better ($r=0.19$)
- Using technology (the Internet) to get news online will help me when I need to get news anytime and anywhere ($r=0.21$)
- Using technology (the Internet) to get news online allows me to get to know a wider variety of news ($r=0.21$)
- Learning to read news online would be easy for me ($r=0.14$)

* r = correlation coefficient

A positive correlation coefficient indicated that reading more news online was associated with greater agreement for each of the statements. In addition, the results found that there is also one significant negative correlation between reading online newspapers and being frustrated with the experience of accessing news online ($r=-0.15$). A negative correlation suggests that individuals who read more online news agreed less with the statement that it is a frustrating experience, as they do not feel any frustration using technology to get the news online. Table 62 provides a summary of these results.

Table 62 Adoption of innovation

	Accessing and reading news: online newspapers
Reading news online allows me to find news more easily	0.16*
Using technology (the Internet) to get news online is useful for saving time and effort	0.18*
Using technology (the Internet) to get news online allows me to get to know different news providers better	0.19*
Using technology (the Internet) to get news online will be more convenient for me because I can't get the traditional paper all or most of the time	0.12
Using technology (the Internet) to get news online will help me when I need to get news anytime and anywhere	0.21*
Using technology (the Internet) to get news online allows me to get to know a wider variety of news	0.21*
Using technology (the Internet) to get news online is convenient for me because I am online most of the time	0.13
Using technology (the Internet) to get news online fits well with my reading style	0.12
Using technology (the Internet) to get news online suits me because I mostly communicate with the people I know online	0.10
An online news website is difficult to use	-0.003
Learning to read news online would be easy for me	0.14*
It would be easy for me to become skillful at reading news online	0.12
Using technology (the Internet) to get news online would be a frustrating experience for me	-0.15*
I know that I can take a site tour to see the online news site before I decide to subscribe to the website	0.13
I know that I can read some articles on the online news site before I decide to subscribe	0.12
It is easy to communicate to others the consequences of using online news websites	0.12
It is obvious to me whether an online news source is beneficial or not	0.12
It is difficult to explain why reading news online may or may not be beneficial	-0.03
Note: * $p < 0.05$	

6.1.31 News media providers and their credibility, trustworthiness, expertise, interactivity, multimodality and hypertextuality scores

Participants were provided with different statements to measure the credibility, trustworthiness, expertise, interactivity, multimodality and hypertextuality of different news

providers based on their perceptions of media news. Summaries for each of these components are provided in Table 63, Table 64, Table 65, Table 66, Table 67, and Table 68 below.

Overall, the results show that traditional print newspapers rated highly on the following two dimensions: it delivers a wide diversity of expertise (M=4.80) (trustworthiness scale) and its writers are known for their expertise (M=4.77) (expertise scale).

Online newspapers, Yahoo News, Google News, news on Facebook, and news on Twitter stand out for the ease of sharing with others via a link (M=5.74, M=4.62, M=5.58, M=4.72, M=5.78, respectively) (hypertextuality scale) and their news stories/publications are easy to access via clicking on a link (M=5.66, M=4.73, M=5.50, M=4.74, M=5.75, respectively) (hypertextuality scale). News on Twitter is also rated highly for being timely (M=5.77) (credibility scale).

Table 63 Traditional print newspapers and their credibility, trustworthiness, expertise, interactivity, multimodality and hypertextuality scores

Traditional print newspapers	N, Mean	Strongly disagree n (%)	Disagree n (%)	Somewhat disagree n (%)	Neutral n (%)	Somewhat agree n (%)	Agree n (%)	Strongly agree n (%)	Not applicable n (%)
Credibility									
It is clear	139, M=4.66	6 (3%)	8 (4%)	12 (6%)	39 (18%)	24 (11%)	36 (17%)	14 (7%)	73 (34%)
It is fair	142, M=4.27	7 (3%)	12 (6%)	11 (5%)	56 (26%)	23 (11%)	27 (13%)	6 (3%)	70 (33%)
It is timely	143, M=4.06	14 (7%)	17 (8%)	21 (10%)	28 (13%)	31 (15%)	22 (10%)	10 (5%)	69 (33%)
It is biased	142, M=4.50	5 (2%)	14 (7%)	9 (4%)	46 (22%)	30 (14%)	21 (10%)	17 (8%)	70 (33%)
It is believable	145, M=4.38	11 (5%)	6 (3%)	14 (7%)	47 (22%)	28 (13%)	31 (15%)	8 (4%)	67 (32%)
It can be trusted (trustworthiness)	145, M=4.39	9 (4%)	9 (4%)	17 (8%)	42 (20%)	26 (12%)	33 (16%)	9 (4%)	67 (32%)
It tells the whole story	144, M=4.21	10 (5%)	16 (8%)	18 (9%)	34 (16%)	32 (15%)	24 (11%)	10 (5%)	68 (32%)
It is accurate	143, M=4.15	10 (5%)	12 (6%)	21 (10%)	41 (19%)	28 (13%)	24 (11%)	7 (3%)	69 (33%)

Trustworthiness

It is fair	142, M=4.27	7 (3%)	12 (6%)	11 (5%)	56 (26%)	23 (11%)	27 (13%)	6 (3%)	70 (33%)
It is biased	142, M=4.50	5 (2%)	14 (7%)	9 (4%)	46 (22%)	30 (14%)	21 (10%)	17 (8%)	70 (33%)
It is objective	142, M=4.49	6 (3%)	5 (2%)	8 (4%)	56 (26%)	34 (16%)	27 (13%)	6 (3%)	70 (33%)
It delivers a wide diversity of expertise	140, M=4.80	1 (1%)	8 (4%)	9 (4%)	39 (18%)	35 (17%)	39 (18%)	9 (4%)	72 (34%)

Expertise

Its writers are known for their expertise	141, M=4.77	5 (2%)	6 (3%)	9 (4%)	44 (21%)	27 (13%)	32 (15%)	18 (9%)	71 (34%)
It is professional	144, M=4.44	3 (1%)	11 (5%)	18 (9%)	50 (24%)	20 (9%)	34 (16%)	8 (4%)	68 (32%)
It has in-depth coverage	145, M=4.12	8 (4%)	11 (5%)	25 (12%)	47 (22%)	24 (11%)	25 (12%)	5 (2%)	67 (32%)
Articles are written by professional journalists	142, M=4.62	4 (2%)	4 (2%)	14 (7%)	46 (22%)	33 (16%)	34 (16%)	7 (3%)	70 (33%)

Interactivity

It is interactive	142, M=3.73	17 (8%)	23 (11%)	18 (9%)	36 (17%)	24 (11%)	19 (9%)	5 (2%)	70 (33%)
Commenting on stories is easy	142, M=3.41	28 (13%)	24 (11%)	13 (6%)	39 (18%)	16 (8%)	21 (10%)	1 (1%)	70 (33%)
It is easy to add information	141, M=3.19	31 (15%)	29 (14%)	13 (6%)	38 (18%)	12 (6%)	16 (8%)	2 (1%)	71 (34%)
It represents users' wants	143, M=4.10	10 (5%)	13 (6%)	17 (8%)	48 (23%)	29 (14%)	20 (9%)	6 (3%)	69 (33%)

Multimediality

It makes good use of graphics, figures or photos	144, M=4.46	5 (2%)	8 (4%)	17 (8%)	40 (19%)	41 (19%)	26 (12%)	7 (3%)	68 (32%)
It is eye-catching	145, M=4.35	9 (4%)	10 (5%)	13 (6%)	46 (22%)	32 (15%)	26 (12%)	9 (4%)	67 (32%)
It is flashy (it has high colour contrast)	142, M=4.10	7 (3%)	19 (9%)	15 (7%)	46 (22%)	27 (13%)	23 (11%)	5 (2%)	70 (33%)

Hypertextuality

It is easily shared with others via a link	140, M=3.71	22 (10%)	22 (10%)	11 (5%)	38 (18%)	23 (11%)	15 (7%)	9 (4%)	72 (34%)
Presenting other news stories simultaneously	141, M=4.24	8 (4%)	9 (4%)	13 (6%)	55 (26%)	27 (13%)	25 (12%)	4 (2%)	71 (34%)
News stories/publications are easy to access via clicking on a link	138, M=4.11	16 (8%)	9 (4%)	11 (5%)	50 (24%)	20 (4%)	24 (11%)	8 (4%)	74 (35%)

Table 64 Online newspapers and their credibility, trustworthiness, expertise, interactivity, multimodality and hypertextuality scores

Online newspapers	N, Mean	Strongly disagree n (%)	Disagree n (%)	Somewhat disagree n (%)	Neutral n (%)	Somewhat agree n (%)	Agree n (%)	Strongly agree n (%)	Not applicable n (%)
<u>Credibility</u>									
It is clear	173, M=5.04	5 (2%)	8 (4%)	11 (5%)	30 (14%)	39 (18%)	57 (27%)	23 (11%)	39 (18%)
It is fair	173, M=4.35	7 (3%)	11 (5%)	17 (8%)	59 (28%)	46 (22%)	24 (11%)	9 (4%)	39 (18%)
It is timely	174, M=5.57	1 (1%)	5 (2%)	8 (4%)	20 (9%)	34 (16%)	57 (27%)	49 (23%)	38 (18%)
It is biased	172, M=4.47	5 (2%)	13 (6%)	15 (7%)	55 (26%)	43 (20%)	29 (14%)	12 (6%)	40 (19%)
It is believable	171, M=4.46	6 (3%)	11 (5%)	24 (11%)	39 (18%)	47 (22%)	36 (17%)	8 (4%)	41 (19%)
It can be trusted (trustworthiness)	173, M=4.30	7 (3%)	14 (7%)	32 (15%)	36 (17%)	42 (20%)	35 (17%)	7 (3%)	39 (18%)
It tells the whole story	173, M=4.61	6 (3%)	15 (7%)	21 (10%)	31 (15%)	45 (21%)	35 (17%)	20 (9%)	39 (18%)
It is accurate	171, M=4.44	6 (3%)	13 (6%)	23 (11%)	40 (19%)	47 (22%)	31 (15%)	11 (5%)	41 (19%)
<u>Trustworthiness</u>									
It is fair	173, M=4.35	7 (3%)	11 (5%)	17 (8%)	59 (28%)	46 (22%)	24 (11%)	9 (4%)	39 (18%)
It is biased	172, M=4.47	5 (2%)	13 (6%)	15 (7%)	55 (26%)	43 (20%)	29 (14%)	12 (6%)	40 (19%)
It is objective	172, M=4.70	6 (3%)	4 (2%)	10 (5%)	58 (27%)	42 (20%)	41 (19%)	11 (5%)	40 (19%)
It delivers a wide diversity of expertise	172, M=5.01	4 (2%)	6 (3%)	5 (2%)	41 (19%)	49 (23%)	48 (23%)	19 (9%)	40 (19%)
<u>Expertise</u>									
Its writers are known for their expertise	167, M=4.26	4 (2%)	14 (7%)	23 (11%)	60 (28%)	32 (15%)	27 (13%)	7 (3%)	45 (21%)
It is professional	171, M=4.55	6 (3%)	10 (5%)	17 (8%)	47 (22%)	45 (21%)	34 (16%)	12 (6%)	41 (19%)
It has in-depth coverage	171, M=4.58	4 (2%)	13 (6%)	19 (9%)	42 (20%)	43 (20%)	37 (18%)	13 (6%)	41 (19%)
Articles are written by professional journalists	171, M=4.33	9 (4%)	9 (4%)	20 (9%)	54 (26%)	43 (20%)	30 (14%)	6 (3%)	41 (19%)
<u>Interactivity</u>									
It is interactive	171, M=5.27	3 (1%)	4 (2%)	5 (2%)	30 (14%)	45 (21%)	57 (27%)	27 (13%)	41 (19%)
Commenting on stories is easy	170, M=5.44	2 (1%)	3 (1%)	4 (2%)	30 (14%)	36 (17%)	60 (28%)	35 (17%)	42 (20%)
It is easy to add information	166, M=4.85	4 (2%)	9 (4%)	13 (6%)	38 (18%)	40 (19%)	42 (20%)	20 (9%)	46 (22%)
It represents users'	169, M=4.85	2 (1%)	8 (4%)	5 (2%)	40 (18%)	55 (26%)	45 (20%)	14 (9%)	43 (22%)

wants	M=4.95		(4%)		(19%)	(26%)	(21%)	(7%)	(20%)
Multimediality									
It makes good use of graphics, figures or photos	172, M=5.09	2 (1%)	11 (5%)	11 (5%)	31 (15%)	37 (18%)	50 (24%)	30 (14%)	40 (19%)
It is eye-catching	172, M=5.26	3 (1%)	4 (2%)	6 (3%)	30 (14%)	48 (23%)	51 (24%)	30 (14%)	40 (19%)
It is flashy (it has high colour contrast)	171, M=5.18	2 (1%)	7 (3%)	6 (3%)	38 (18%)	37 (18%)	52 (25%)	29 (14%)	41 (19%)
Hypertextuality									
It is easily shared with others via a link	171, M=5.74	1 (1%)	3 (1%)	4 (2%)	22 (10%)	26 (12%)	60 (28%)	55 (26%)	41 (19%)
Presenting other news stories simultaneously	170, M=5.35	3 (1%)	4 (2%)	5 (2%)	31 (15%)	36 (17%)	57 (27%)	34 (16%)	42 (20%)
News stories/publications are easy to access via clicking on a link	172, M=5.66	2 (1%)	4 (2%)	7 (3%)	19 (9%)	27 (13%)	59 (28%)	54 (26%)	40 (19%)

Table 65 Yahoo News and its credibility, trustworthiness, expertise, interactivity, multimediality and hypertextuality scores

Yahoo News	N, Mean	Strongly disagree n (%)	Disagree n (%)	Somewhat disagree n (%)	Neutral n (%)	Somewhat agree n (%)	Agree n (%)	Strongly agree n (%)	Not applicable n (%)
Credibility									
It is clear	64, M=4.13	6 (3%)	6 (3%)	4 (2%)	21 (10%)	15 (7%)	9 (4%)	3 (1%)	148 (70%)
It is fair	63, M=3.95	6 (3%)	5 (2%)	7 (3%)	24 (11%)	12 (6%)	7 (3%)	2 (1%)	149 (70%)
It is timely	64, M=4.58	4 (2%)	3 (1%)	4 (2%)	20 (9%)	12 (6%)	16 (8%)	5 (2%)	148 (70%)
It is biased	63, M=4.08	4 (2%)	4 (2%)	5 (2%)	32 (15%)	8 (4%)	8 (4%)	2 (1%)	149 (70%)
It is believable	66, M=4.33	5 (2%)	2 (1%)	6 (3%)	24 (11%)	14 (7%)	12 (6%)	3 (1%)	146 (69%)
It can be trusted (trustworthiness)	64, M=3.97	5 (2%)	5 (2%)	10 (5%)	20 (9%)	16 (8%)	7 (3%)	1 (1%)	148 (70%)
It tells the whole story	63, M=4.05	5 (2%)	2 (1%)	9 (4%)	27 (13%)	11 (5%)	7 (3%)	2 (1%)	149 (70%)
It is accurate	64, M=4.19	4 (2%)	2 (1%)	8 (4%)	27 (13%)	12 (6%)	9 (4%)	2 (1%)	148 (70%)
Trustworthiness									
It is fair	63, M=3.95	6 (3%)	5 (2%)	7 (3%)	24 (11%)	12 (6%)	7 (3%)	2 (1%)	149 (70%)
It is biased	63, M=4.08	4 (2%)	4 (2%)	5 (2%)	32 (15%)	8 (4%)	8 (4%)	2 (1%)	149 (70%)

It is objective	63, M=3.97	6 (3%)	6 (3%)	5 (2%)	23 (11%)	14 (7%)	8 (4%)	1 (1%)	149 (70%)
It delivers a wide diversity of expertise	64, M=4.31	5 (2%)	2 (1%)	7 (3%)	22 (10%)	14 (7%)	10 (5%)	4 (2%)	148 (70%)
<u>Expertise</u>									
Its writers are known for their expertise	63, M=3.98	6 (3%)	5 (2%)	7 (3%)	23 (11%)	12 (6%)	8 (4%)	2 (1%)	149 (70%)
It is professional	64, M=4.36	4 (2%)	3 (1%)	6 (3%)	22 (10%)	16 (8%)	8 (4%)	5 (2%)	148 (70%)
It has in-depth coverage	63, M=4.27	4 (2%)	2 (1%)	6 (3%)	25 (12%)	16 (8%)	7 (3%)	3 (1%)	149 (70%)
Articles are written by professional journalists	64, M=4.20	4 (2%)	5 (2%)	6 (3%)	24 (11%)	13 (6%)	8 (4%)	4 (2%)	148 (70%)
<u>Interactivity</u>									
It is interactive	64, M=4.34	5 (2%)	1 (1%)	5 (2%)	26 (12%)	13 (6%)	11 (5%)	3 (1%)	148 (70%)
Commenting on stories is easy	64, M=4.39	4 (2%)	4 (2%)	7 (3%)	19 (9%)	13 (6%)	12 (6%)	5 (2%)	148 (70%)
It is easy to add information	62, M=4.45	3 (1%)	6 (3%)	6 (3%)	17 (8%)	12 (6%)	11 (5%)	7 (3%)	150 (71%)
It represents users' wants	65, M=4.09	6 (3%)	5 (2%)	4 (2%)	26 (12%)	12 (6%)	10 (5%)	2 (1%)	147 (69%)
<u>Multimediality</u>									
It makes good use of graphics, figures or photos	65, M=4.32	6 (3%)	4 (2%)	4 (2%)	19 (9%)	16 (8%)	13 (6%)	3 (1%)	147 (69%)
It is eye-catching	65, M=4.49	4 (2%)	4 (2%)	6 (3%)	19 (9%)	13 (6%)	12 (6%)	7 (3%)	147 (69%)
It is flashy (it has high colour contrast)	63, M=4.40	5 (2%)	4 (2%)	4 (2%)	19 (9%)	14 (7%)	13 (6%)	4 (2%)	149 (70%)
<u>Hypertextuality</u>									
It is easily shared with others via a link	65, M=4.62	5 (2%)	5 (2%)	3 (1%)	18 (9%)	9 (4%)	16 (8%)	9 (4%)	147 (69%)
Presenting other news stories simultaneously	63, M=4.48	4 (2%)	3 (1%)	6 (3%)	21 (10%)	10 (5%)	13 (6%)	6 (3%)	149 (70%)
News stories/publications are easy to access via clicking on a link	64, M=4.73	4 (2%)	2 (1%)	4 (2%)	19 (9%)	11 (5%)	16 (8%)	8 (4%)	148 (70%)

Table 66 Google News and its credibility, trustworthiness, expertise, interactivity, multimodality and hypertextuality scores

Google News	N, Mean	Strongly disagree n (%)	Disagree n (%)	Somewhat disagree n (%)	Neutral n (%)	Somewhat agree n (%)	Agree n (%)	Strongly agree n (%)	Not applicable n (%)
<u>Credibility</u>									
It is clear	123, M=5.25	3 (1%)	4 (2%)	1 (1%)	24 (11%)	27 (13%)	47 (22%)	17 (8%)	89 (42%)
It is fair	124, M=5.07	2 (1%)	1 (1%)	8 (4%)	32 (15%)	28 (13%)	38 (18%)	15 (7%)	88 (42%)
It is timely	123, M=5.49	2 (1%)	1 (1%)	3 (1%)	16 (8%)	31 (15%)	47 (22%)	23 (11%)	89 (42%)
It is biased	123, M=4.50	4 (2%)	5 (2%)	12 (6%)	47 (22%)	21 (10%)	27 (13%)	7 (3%)	89 (42%)
It is believable	121, M=4.98	2 (1%)	-	7 (3%)	33 (16%)	36 (17%)	34 (16%)	9 (4%)	91 (43%)
It can be trusted (trustworthiness)	124, M=4.83	2 (1%)	1 (1%)	17 (8%)	29 (14%)	33 (16%)	31 (15%)	11 (5%)	88 (42%)
It tells the whole story	122, M=5.17	2 (1%)	5 (2%)	3 (1%)	25 (12%)	30 (14%)	39 (18%)	18 (9%)	90 (43%)
It is accurate	123, M=5.01	2 (1%)	1 (1%)	7 (3%)	29 (14%)	40 (19%)	33 (16%)	11 (5%)	89 (42%)
<u>Trustworthiness</u>									
It is fair	124, M=5.07	2 (1%)	1 (1%)	8 (4%)	32 (15%)	28 (13%)	38 (18%)	15 (7%)	88 (42%)
It is biased	123, M=4.50	4 (2%)	5 (2%)	12 (6%)	47 (22%)	21 (10%)	27 (13%)	7 (3%)	89 (42%)
It is objective	122, M=4.99	3 (1%)	1 (1%)	7 (3%)	31 (15%)	33 (16%)	35 (17%)	12 (6%)	90 (43%)
It delivers a wide diversity of expertise	121, M=5.24	2 (1%)	2 (1%)	4 (2%)	25 (12%)	33 (16%)	34 (16%)	21 (10%)	91 (43%)
<u>Expertise</u>									
Its writers are known for their expertise	116, M=4.63	5 (2%)	2 (1%)	13 (6%)	33 (16%)	30 (14%)	24 (11%)	9 (4%)	96 (45%)
It is professional	122, M=4.90	4 (2%)	3 (1%)	9 (4%)	31 (15%)	29 (14%)	30 (14%)	16 (8%)	90 (43%)
It has in-depth coverage	123, M=5.07	2 (1%)	4 (2%)	6 (3%)	28 (13%)	31 (15%)	35 (17%)	17 (8%)	89 (42%)
Articles are written by professional journalists	118, M=4.69	5 (2%)	3 (1%)	7 (3%)	37 (18%)	32 (15%)	24 (11%)	10 (5%)	94 (44%)
<u>Interactivity</u>									
It is interactive	121, M=5.25	2 (1%)	1 (1%)	6 (3%)	26 (12%)	27 (13%)	39 (18%)	20 (9%)	91 (43%)
Commenting on stories is easy	122, M=5.07	4 (2%)	1 (1%)	7 (3%)	29 (14%)	27 (13%)	38 (18%)	16 (8%)	90 (43%)
It is easy to add information	120, M=5.08	4 (2%)	1 (1%)	7 (3%)	29 (14%)	25 (12%)	37 (18%)	17 (8%)	92 (43%)
It represents users'	123, M=5.08	2 (1%)	3 (1%)	4 (2%)	28 (14%)	30 (15%)	40 (18%)	16 (8%)	89 (43%)

wants	M=5.15		(1%)		(13%)	(14%)	(19%)	(8%)	(42%)
Multimediality									
It makes good use of graphics, figures or photos	123, M=5.37	2 (1%)	2 (1%)	4 (2%)	23 (11%)	28 (13%)	37 (18%)	27 (13%)	89 (42%)
It is eye-catching	122, M=5.30	2 (1%)	2 (1%)	3 (1%)	27 (13%)	27 (13%)	38 (18%)	23 (11%)	90 (43%)
It is flashy (it has high colour contrast)	120, M=5.19	2 (1%)	2 (1%)	4 (2%)	28 (13%)	28 (13%)	39 (18%)	17 (8%)	92 (43%)
Hypertextuality									
It is easily shared with others via a link	122, M=5.58	2 (1%)	1 (1%)	3 (1%)	18 (9%)	25 (12%)	40 (19%)	33 (16%)	90 (43%)
Presenting other news stories simultaneously	122, M=5.44	2 (1%)	1 (1%)	4 (2%)	22 (10%)	26 (12%)	39 (18%)	28 (13%)	90 (43%)
News stories/publications are easy to access via clicking on a link	121, M=5.50	3 (1%)	2 (1%)	6 (3%)	16 (8%)	19 (9%)	43 (20%)	32 (15%)	91 (43%)

Table 67 Facebook and its credibility, trustworthiness, expertise, interactivity, multimediality and hypertextuality scores

News on Facebook	N, Mean	Strongly disagree n (%)	Disagree n (%)	Somewhat disagree n (%)	Neutral n (%)	Somewhat agree n (%)	Agree n (%)	Strongly agree n (%)	Not applicable n (%)
Credibility									
It is clear	90, M=4.12	6 (3%)	10 (5%)	9 (4%)	29 (14%)	18 (9%)	14 (7%)	4 (2%)	122 (58%)
It is fair	86, M=4.19	6 (3%)	5 (2%)	8 (4%)	32 (15%)	21 (10%)	11 (5%)	3 (1%)	126 (59%)
It is timely	87, M=4.20	4 (2%)	9 (4%)	12 (6%)	27 (13%)	15 (7%)	16 (8%)	4 (2%)	125 (59%)
It is biased	87, M=4.23	6 (3%)	5 (2%)	8 (4%)	33 (16%)	17 (8%)	15 (7%)	3 (1%)	125 (59%)
It is believable	88, M=3.64	8 (4%)	9 (4%)	21 (10%)	31 (15%)	9 (4%)	8 (4%)	2 (1%)	124 (59%)
It can be trusted (trustworthiness)	88, M=3.84	8 (4%)	6 (3%)	17 (8%)	34 (16%)	11 (5%)	8 (4%)	4 (2%)	124 (59%)
It tells the whole story	87, M=3.86	8 (4%)	12 (6%)	11 (5%)	25 (12%)	18 (9%)	10 (5%)	3 (1%)	125 (59%)
It is accurate	88, M=3.85	7 (3%)	12 (6%)	11 (5%)	33 (16%)	12 (6%)	8 (4%)	5 (2%)	124 (59%)
Trustworthiness									
It is fair	86, M=4.19	6 (3%)	5 (2%)	8 (4%)	32 (15%)	21 (10%)	11 (5%)	3 (1%)	126 (59%)
It is biased	87, M=4.23	6 (3%)	5 (2%)	8 (4%)	33 (16%)	17 (8%)	15 (7%)	3 (1%)	125 (59%)

It is objective	86, M=4.03	5 (2%)	7 (3%)	9 (4%)	40 (19%)	11 (5%)	12 (6%)	2 (1%)	126 (59%)
It delivers a wide diversity of expertise	84, M=4.40	3 (1%)	8 (4%)	7 (3%)	28 (13%)	16 (8%)	16 (8%)	6 (3%)	128 (60%)
<u>Expertise</u>									
Its writers are known for their expertise	85, M=3.84	5 (2%)	11 (5%)	14 (7%)	33 (16%)	10 (5%)	9 (4%)	3 (1%)	127 (60%)
It is professional	86, M=4.03	3 (1%)	13 (6%)	12 (6%)	31 (15%)	10 (5%)	11 (5%)	6 (3%)	126 (59%)
It has in-depth coverage	86, M=4.02	4 (2%)	11 (5%)	14 (7%)	29 (14%)	12 (6%)	10 (5%)	6 (3%)	126 (59%)
Articles are written by professional journalists	87, M=3.79	5 (2%)	16 (8%)	10 (5%)	32 (15%)	11 (5%)	11 (5%)	2 (1%)	125 (59%)
<u>Interactivity</u>									
It is interactive	87, M=4.62	5 (2%)	5 (2%)	8 (4%)	24 (11%)	12 (6%)	24 (11%)	9 (4%)	125 (59%)
Commenting on stories is easy	85, M=4.86	4 (2%)	5 (2%)	8 (4%)	19 (9%)	10 (5%)	24 (11%)	15 (7%)	127 (60%)
It is easy to add information	87, M=4.67	3 (1%)	8 (4%)	7 (3%)	24 (11%)	12 (6%)	21 (10%)	12 (6%)	125 (59%)
It represents users' wants	87, M=4.34	4 (2%)	7 (3%)	12 (6%)	27 (13%)	14 (7%)	15 (7%)	8 (4%)	125 (59%)
<u>Multimediality</u>									
It makes good use of graphics, figures or photos	86, M=4.67	3 (1%)	6 (3%)	8 (4%)	23 (11%)	17 (8%)	17 (8%)	12 (6%)	126 (59%)
It is eye-catching	87, M=4.60	4 (2%)	7 (3%)	8 (4%)	22 (10%)	17 (8%)	18 (9%)	11 (5%)	125 (59%)
It is flashy (it has high colour contrast)	87, M=4.52	4 (2%)	7 (3%)	6 (3%)	28 (13%)	15 (7%)	19 (9%)	8 (4%)	125 (59%)
<u>Hypertextuality</u>									
It is easily shared with others via a link	86, M=4.72	4 (2%)	5 (2%)	11 (5%)	19 (9%)	10 (5%)	26 (12%)	11 (5%)	126 (59%)
Presenting other news stories simultaneously	86, M=4.49	3 (1%)	7 (3%)	9 (4%)	26 (12%)	14 (7%)	21 (10%)	6 (3%)	126 (59%)
News stories/publications are easy to access via clicking on a link	85, M=4.74	5 (2%)	6 (3%)	7 (3%)	19 (9%)	11 (5%)	25 (12%)	12 (6%)	127 (60%)

Table 68 Twitter and its credibility, trustworthiness, expertise, interactivity, multimodality and hypertextuality scores

News on Twitter	N, Mean	Strongly disagree n (%)	Disagree n (%)	Somewhat disagree n (%)	Neutral n (%)	Somewhat agree n (%)	Agree n (%)	Strongly agree n (%)	Not applicable n (%)
<u>Credibility</u>									
It is clear	151, M=5.27	4 (2%)	4 (2%)	11 (5%)	16 (8%)	38 (18%)	49 (23%)	29 (14%)	61 (29%)
It is fair	149, M=4.71	3 (1%)	12 (6%)	14 (7%)	34 (16%)	37 (18%)	31 (15%)	18 (9%)	63 (30%)
It is timely	149, M=5.77	3 (1%)	5 (2%)	2 (1%)	12 (6%)	25 (12%)	47 (22%)	55 (26%)	63 (30%)
It is biased	151, M=4.67	7 (3%)	8 (4%)	10 (5%)	44 (21%)	35 (17%)	28 (13%)	19 (9%)	61 (29%)
It is believable	147, M=4.86	6 (3%)	6 (3%)	14 (7%)	25 (12%)	42 (20%)	33 (16%)	21 (10%)	65 (31%)
It can be trusted (trustworthiness)	149, M=4.64	7 (3%)	10 (5%)	17 (8%)	31 (15%)	34 (16%)	31 (15%)	19 (9%)	63 (30%)
It tells the whole story	151, M=4.80	10 (5%)	5 (2%)	17 (8%)	24 (11%)	36 (17%)	35 (17%)	24 (11%)	61 (29%)
It is accurate	148, M=4.68	3 (1%)	13 (6%)	14 (7%)	33 (16%)	38 (18%)	30 (14%)	17 (8%)	64 (30%)
<u>Trustworthiness</u>									
It is fair	149, M=4.71	3 (1%)	12 (6%)	14 (7%)	34 (16%)	37 (18%)	31 (15%)	18 (9%)	63 (30%)
It is biased	151, M=4.67	7 (3%)	8 (4%)	10 (5%)	44 (21%)	35 (17%)	28 (13%)	19 (9%)	61 (29%)
It is objective	150, M=4.70	8 (4%)	6 (3%)	12 (6%)	42 (20%)	30 (14%)	33 (16%)	19 (9%)	62 (29%)
It delivers a wide diversity of expertise	150, M=5.21	4 (2%)	2 (1%)	10 (5%)	24 (11%)	42 (20%)	39 (18%)	29 (14%)	62 (29%)
<u>Expertise</u>									
Its writers are known for their expertise	149, M=4.46	7 (3%)	11 (5%)	19 (9%)	41 (19%)	27 (13%)	28 (13%)	16 (8%)	63 (30%)
It is professional	148, M=4.59	4 (2%)	10 (5%)	19 (9%)	35 (17%)	37 (18%)	28 (13%)	15 (7%)	64 (30%)
It has in-depth coverage	149, M=4.68	6 (3%)	12 (6%)	13 (6%)	34 (16%)	32 (15%)	32 (15%)	20 (9%)	63 (30%)
Articles are written by professional journalists	149, M=4.27	8 (4%)	19 (9%)	18 (9%)	38 (18%)	27 (13%)	24 (11%)	15 (7%)	63 (30%)
<u>Interactivity</u>									
It is interactive	149, M=5.65	4 (2%)	1 (1%)	2 (1%)	19 (9%)	28 (13%)	51 (24%)	44 (21%)	63 (30%)
Commenting on stories is easy	149, M=5.48	5 (2%)	2 (1%)	4 (2%)	23 (11%)	30 (14%)	41 (19%)	44 (21%)	63 (30%)
It is easy to add information	149, M=5.38	4 (2%)	3 (1%)	2 (1%)	28 (13%)	38 (18%)	34 (16%)	40 (19%)	63 (30%)
It represents users'	150, M=5.38	5 (2%)	2 (1%)	7 (3%)	30 (13%)	37 (18%)	41 (16%)	28 (19%)	62 (30%)

wants	M=5.18		(1%)		(14%)	(18%)	(19%)	(13%)	(29%)
Multimediality									
It makes good use of graphics, figures or photos	150, M=4.92	4 (2%)	11 (5%)	11 (5%)	26 (12%)	37 (18%)	37 (18%)	24 (11%)	62 (29%)
It is eye-catching	150, M=5.32	3 (1%)	5 (2%)	5 (2%)	24 (11%)	39 (18%)	39 (18%)	35 (17%)	62 (29%)
It is flashy (it has high colour contrast)	145, M=5.02	7 (3%)	7 (3%)	6 (3%)	26 (12%)	35 (17%)	38 (18%)	26 (12%)	67 (32%)
Hypertextuality									
It is easily shared with others via a link	148, M=5.78	4 (2%)	-	3 (1%)	15 (7%)	30 (14%)	40 (19%)	56 (26%)	64 (30%)
Presenting other news stories simultaneously	150, M=5.49	3 (1%)	3 (1%)	2 (1%)	26 (12%)	33 (16%)	42 (20%)	41 (19%)	62 (29%)
News stories/publications are easy to access via clicking on a link	150, M=5.75	3 (1%)	1 (1%)	5 (2%)	18 (9%)	20 (9%)	50 (24%)	53 (25%)	62 (29%)

6.1.32 Outliers of the data

There were some outliers in the data, though they did not affect my overall results. However, I have provided a summary table with a description related to each outlier found.

6.1.32.1 Descriptive statistics for credibility scores

Box-whisker plots show fairly symmetrical distribution for credibility scores with very few outliers. Table 69 provides a summary of these results. (Box-whisker plots are provided in the Appendix. See Figure 28).

Table 69 Descriptive statistics for credibility scores

Credibility score	Mean	SD
Traditional newspapers	4.19	1.19
Online newspapers	4.54	0.96
Yahoo News	4.17	1.00
Google News	4.89	0.91
News on Facebook	3.94	1.10
News on Twitter	4.75	1.05

6.1.32.2 Descriptive statistics for trustworthiness scores

Box-whisker plots show fairly symmetrical distribution for trustworthiness scores with very few outliers. There appear to be more outliers in the trustworthiness score for

traditional print newspapers. Table 70 provides a summary of these results. (Box-whisker plots are provided in the Appendix. See Figure 29).

Table 70 Descriptive statistics for trustworthiness scores

Trustworthiness score	Mean	SD
Traditional newspapers	4.25	1.03
Online newspapers	4.39	0.91
Yahoo News	3.98	0.89
Google News	4.68	0.79
News on Facebook	4.10	0.79
News on Twitter	4.49	0.93

6.1.32.3 Descriptive statistics for expertise scores

Box-whisker plots show fairly symmetrical distribution for expertise scores with very few outliers. There appears to be a slightly left-skewed distribution for Google News in the expertise score. Table 71 provides a summary of these results. (Box-whisker plots are provided in the Appendix. See Figure 30).

Table 71 Descriptive statistics for expertise scores

Expertise score	Mean	SD
Traditional newspapers	4.48	1.16
Online newspapers	4.43	1.22
Yahoo News	4.21	1.29
Google News	4.84	1.26
News on Facebook	3.93	1.38
News on Twitter	4.50	1.42

6.1.32.4 Descriptive statistics for interactivity scores

Box-whisker plots show fairly symmetrical distribution for interactivity scores with very few outliers. Table 72 provides a summary of these results. (Box-whisker plots are provided in the Appendix. See Figure 31).

Table 72 Descriptive statistics for interactivity scores

Interactivity score	Mean	SD
Traditional newspapers	3.61	1.40
Online newspapers	5.13	1.10
Yahoo News	4.32	1.38
Google News	5.11	1.21
News on Facebook	4.65	1.45
News on Twitter	5.42	1.22

6.1.32.5 Descriptive statistics for multimodality scores

Box-whisker plots show fairly symmetrical distribution for multimodality scores with very few outliers. Table 73 provides a summary of the results. (Box-whisker plots are provided in the Appendix. See Figure 32).

Table 73 Descriptive statistics for multimodality scores

Multimodality score	Mean	SD
Traditional newspaper	4.29	1.27
Online newspaper	5.18	1.22
Yahoo News	4.39	1.56
Google News	5.29	1.21
News on Facebook	4.61	1.49
News on Twitter	5.08	1.33

6.1.32.6 Descriptive statistics for hypertextuality scores

Box-whisker plots show fairly symmetrical distribution for hypertextuality scores with very few outliers. There appears to be slightly left-skewed distribution for news on Facebook and for Yahoo News hypertextuality scores. There are also some outliers for the hypertextuality scores of traditional print newspapers and online newspapers. Table 74 provides a summary of these results. (Box-whisker plots are provided in the Appendix. See Figure 33).

Table 74 Descriptive statistics for hypertextuality scores

Hypertextuality score	Mean	SD
Traditional newspapers	4.02	1.34
Online newspapers	5.58	1.18
Yahoo News	4.64	1.56
Google News	5.50	1.26
News on Facebook	4.65	1.52
News on Twitter	5.66	1.28

6.1.32.7 Descriptive statistics for motivations and other scores

Box-whisker plots show fairly symmetrical distribution for other scores with very few outliers, though there appear to be some outliers for the information-driven motivation score. Table 75 provides a summary of these results. (Box-whisker plots are provided in the Appendix. See Figure 34, Figure 35, and Figure 36).

Table 75 Descriptive statistics for motivations and other scores

Scores	Mean	SD
Information-driven motivation	5.43	1.16
Entertainment-driven motivation	4.20	1.32
Opinion-driven motivation	3.75	1.39
Social-driven motivation	4.34	1.39
Relative advantage scale	3.80	0.98
Compatibility scale	3.74	1.14
Complexity scale	3.92	0.82
Trialability scale	3.04	1.21
Results demonstrability scale	3.17	1.09
Noteworthiness score (based on importance, enjoyment and advantageousness)	4.75	1.39

6.1.32.8 Descriptive statistics for time spent reading news online

Study participants reported spending between 0 and 360 minutes (6 hours) daily reading news online. The average time was 68.33 minutes and the median was 37 minutes. Half of the participants spent less than 37 minutes online, while the other half spent more than 37 minutes. The standard deviation was 78.12 minutes.

Box-whisker plots show positively skewed distributions of time spent reading online news. Most participants spent little time online, while a very small number spent an excessive amount of time. (Box-whisker plots are provided in the Appendix. See Figure 37).

6.1.33 News Access Profile (NAP) and Latent Class Model

The decision to consider the Latent Class Model was made after analyzing the data. Latent Class Model seeks divisions that maximize the between-cluster differences and minimize the within-cluster differences (Schreiber, 2017). This model is used to find patterns in readers' consumption in accessing the news to determine the similarities found in readers' news consumption patterns based on different variables that lead to their willingness to pay for online news. I used this model as a way to identify different segments of readers, their motivations, their news access habits, their levels of news credibility and believability, the types of news they access, and their adoption of technology in reading and accessing news online. In doing so, I am better able to understand the different patterns of readers when it comes to accessing and reading news, and their level of intention to pay for news online. This decision will act as a further addition to my initial goal of comparing the results found by other researchers in the West with those of my survey participants. In doing so, I hope to develop a greater insight into the different characteristics and criteria of readers who are willing to pay for news online, and thus encourage news organizations to locate and target those segments.

6.1.33.1 News use frequency (by platform) and clusters

To determine the number of classes, I used Latent GOLD5.1 to fit a series of latent class regression models, beginning with a 1-class model, and sequentially increasing the number of latent classes while examining the fit statistics. Fit indicates for 1-through-8—

class models. The Bayesian information criterion (BIC) and consistent Akaike information criterion (CAIC) support a four-class solution (Class 1=31.7%; Class 2=30.7%; Class 3=30.4%; Class 4=7.1% of the total number of participants, N=212).

The results support four unique classes of readers ranging from “All-Source News Seekers” of multiple news providers and platforms to “News Avoiders”. Additionally, class membership is predicted using covariates (motivation, credibility, believability, adoption of innovation, news type, age, and gender), and is predictive of readers’ willingness to pay for online news. However, the results show that age and gender were not significant predictors of willingness to pay for online news.

The parameter estimates of news use frequency (by platform) for the 4-cluster model are shown in Table 76. The indicators for each of the eight news sources contribute significantly to the overall model (see the p-value of each source). From the analysis, the most significant sources were Instagram and Snapchat with R^2 values of .63 and .58 respectively, followed by Google News (.29) and online newspapers (.26). News on Instagram makes a statistically significant contribution to cluster allocation ($p < .001$), accounting for 63% of variability between clusters. This variable has the largest effect size. Similarly, the Snapchat news source accounts for 58% of variability explained by cluster membership, and is also statistically significant ($p < .001$).

Table 76 News use frequency (by platform) and clusters

Models for indicators	Cluster 1 All-Source News Seekers	Cluster 2 Social Media News Seekers	Cluster 3 Online News Seekers	Cluster 4 News Avoiders	Wald	p-value	R^2
Traditional newspapers	0.63	-0.14	0.83	-1.32	13.0	.01	.17
Online newspapers	0.50	-0.07	0.82	-1.26	25.6	< .001	.26
Yahoo News	0.81	-1.47	0.93	-0.27	12.5	.01	.20

Google News	0.65	-0.26	0.66	-1.05	20.7	< .001	.29
Facebook	0.83	0.51	0.94	-2.27	7.9	< .05	.10
Twitter	0.60	0.02	-0.01	-0.62	21.6	< .001	.17
Snapchat	2.02	0.36	-0.46	-1.92	36.3	< .001	.58
Instagram	2.06	0.33	-0.68	-1.71	30.5	< .001	.63

R² values refer to the amount of variance accounted for by cluster membership.

6.1.33.2 News Access Profile and reader clusters

The first finding is that there are four main clusters that define my data. Each of these clusters has its own characteristics that describe readers' motivational factors in regard to willingness or unwillingness to pay for news.

When looking at these four clusters regarding the frequency in accessing the various media, I notice that all eight types of media indicators contribute significantly to the overall model (see Table 76), in particular Instagram R² (.63) and Snapchat R² (.58), followed by Google News R² (.29) and online newspapers R² (.26). When looking at each cluster in regard to consuming news on different news providers, the first cluster (All-Source News Seekers) which account for 31.7% of our data. This cluster is highly correlate to all news source, that is characterized by newsreaders that read the news on all news providers/platforms. I observed positive scores across all eight indicators with the strongest being Instagram, Snapchat, Google News, and Online Newspapers. The second cluster (Social Media News Seekers) account for 30.7% of our data is characterized by newsreaders who are more likely to seek news on social media platforms. This is evident from observing positive scores for Snapchat, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, and slightly negative scores for other online and traditional print news sources with the strongest correlation being Instagram and Snapchat. The third cluster (Online News Seekers) account for 30.4% of our study participants, is characterized by newsreaders searching for news on non-social media platforms and traditional print news. Participants in this cluster showed negative scores for

social media such as Twitter, Snapchat and Instagram, and positive scores for all other sources with the highest being with Google News and Online Newspaper. Finally, the fourth cluster (News Avoiders) which account for 7.1% of our data is characterized by people who pay the least attention to the news and thus shows a negative score for all news sources. This group is unlikely to consume news on any platforms/providers, which is evident from all scores being negative.

6.1.33.3 Willingness to pay

Next, I asked readers two questions regarding paying for the news (see Table 77). The first question dealt with the willingness to pay a fee for their favourite online newspaper, but the model was not significant in general ($p=.53$). However, All-Source News Seekers and Online News Seekers are more likely to pay a fee for their favourite online newspaper, while Social Media News Seekers and News Avoiders shows no interest in paying that fee and/or give a conditional motive or reason behind their consideration to pay a fee for their favourite online newspaper.

Meanwhile, the second question sought responses related to paying for online news in general, and the model was highly significant. Of the Online News Seekers, most responded that they are willing to pay for online news (115.12), while the remaining respondents in this cluster were equally either unwilling or unsure if they would pay for online news. The same pattern was observed with the All-Source News Seekers (114.98) and surprisingly with the News Avoiders (114.75), with these results revealing that most of the respondents would be willing to pay for online news. Moreover, there is no significant difference of the level of willingness or even unwillingness between these three clusters. Social Media News Seekers (-344.85) are the only cluster in which the majority of respondents were either unwilling or unsure whether they would ever pay for news online. The difference between clusters is statistically significant, $p < .001$.

Table 77 Willingness to pay for news and clusters

	Cluster 1 All-Source News Seekers	Cluster 2 Social Media News Seekers	Cluster 3 Online News Seekers	Cluster 4 News Avoiders	Wald	p-value
Models for Dependents	31.7%	30.7%	30.4%	7.1%		
Would you be willing to pay a fee to cover the costs of reading your favourite online newspaper?						
Yes	0.73	-0.99	0.81	-0.55	5.1	.53
No	-0.19	0.62	-0.48	0.04		
Yes, but only if...	-0.54	0.36	-0.33	0.51		
In the future, would you consider paying for online news?						
Yes	114.98	-344.85	115.12	114.75	556.9	< .001
No	-57.80	172.45	-57.70	-56.95		
Not sure	-57.18	172.40	-57.42	-57.80		

6.1.33.4 Motivations

Four types of motivations were initially created for this study, and then social-driven and opinion-driven motivations were combined due to the similarity of the two types and the small number of items in each subgroup.

The information motivations are driven by the following variables: because the news is important to me (.796); to get breaking news and to follow up on news stories (.780); to keep myself informed (.767); to find out what is going on in the world (.752); getting the news is advantageous to me (.750); to keep up with the way my government functions (.688); to find more detailed news and information (.686); and because getting news is enjoyable to me (.657).

The entertainment motivations are driven by the following variables: because it provides entertainment (.813); occupying myself during leisure time (.764); to pass time (.739); because it is exciting (.704); to appear more informed to those around me (.635); because it is a habit that I have (.564); and to make me more sociable and to feel part of the community (.563).

The social motivations are driven by the following variables: comparing my own ideas with other commenters (.764); and to share information with other people (.714). Since I provided participants in this study with only two statements to measure their opinion-driven motivation, to make the results more sufficient, I combined it with the social motivation, because as aforementioned, opinion-driven motivation can be associated with being socialized. The social motivation can be a combination of social-driven and opinion-driven motivation due to the fact that for people who provide their opinions on news stories, this act can be perceived as being socialized.

When looking at the NAP, three main motivations have emerged: information motivation; entertainment motivation; and social motivation. Each of these three motivational factors contributes significantly to the overall model with $p=.002$.

All-Source News Seekers are more likely to access news to get information, to be entertained and to be socialized, as they have a high score for all three motivations, while Social Media News Seekers scored low in all three motivations, but are a bit more likely to access news for information compared to the other two motivations. As for Online News Seekers, their primary reason for accessing news is for information, followed by for entertainment and social reasons. Only the News Avoiders are less motivated to access and consume news, as their score was negative, which indicates that they have the least interest in the news. There are many parameters contributing to each of these three motivational factors, which were highly significant in the overall model with $p=.002$. (See Table 78.)

Table 78 Motivations and clusters

	Cluster 1 All-Source News Seekers	Cluster 2 Social Media News Seekers	Cluster 3 Online News Seekers	Cluster 4 News Avoiders	Wald	p-value
Models for dependents	31.7%	30.7%	30.4%	7.1%		
Intercept	0.622	0.765	0.782	-2.169	15.06	.002
Covariates						
Information-driven motivation	0.619	0.095	0.499	-1.214	19.2	.0002
Entertainment-driven motivation	0.677	-0.192	0.162	-0.648	9.3	.03
Social- and opinion-driven motivation	0.561	-0.095	0.135	-0.601	10.5	.01

Moreover, the All-Source News Seekers show a highly significant score in regard to “occupying myself during leisure time” and a significant score with “it provides entertainment” and “getting the news is enjoyable to me”. Social Media News Seekers show a highly significant score in regard to “occupying myself during leisure time” and a significant score with “it provides entertainment”, “to get breaking news and to follow up on news stories”, and “getting the news is enjoyable to me”. Online News Seekers show a highly significant score related to “occupying myself during leisure time” and a significant score with “it provides entertainment”, “to get breaking news and to follow up on news stories”, and “getting the news is enjoyable to me”. Finally, News Avoiders show a highly significant score in regard to “comparing my own ideas with other commenters” and a significant score with “to appear more informed to those around me”.

When I look closely at the differences between each pair of clusters in Table 78, I find that Cluster 1 (All-Source News Seekers) and Cluster 3 (Online News Seekers) are not statistically significantly different in regard to information-driven motivation, as they show similar level of motivation that drive there two cluster to consume news for Information, but are significantly different than Cluster 2 (Social Media News Seekers) in which being less

motivated compared with those two clusters and even more different than Cluster 4 (News Avoiders). In regard to entertainment-driven motivation, one can find that Cluster 1 (All-Source News Seekers) and Cluster 4 (News Avoiders) are statistically significantly different, but less different than between Cluster 2 (Social Media News Seekers) and Cluster 4 (News Avoiders). Additionally, for social- and opinion-driven motivation, one can probably see that Cluster 2 (Social Media News Seekers) and Cluster 3 (Online News Seekers) are significantly different, and that Cluster 1 (All-Source News Seekers) and Cluster 4 (News Avoiders) are totally different. In addition, one can find that All-Source News Seekers shows high level of entertainment motivation and social- and opinion motivation than Online News Seekers.

6.1.33.5 Credibility

Next, I looked at the credibility of the news and information posted by the following news providers (traditional newspapers, online newspapers, Facebook and Twitter), paying particularly close attention to Twitter. There are mainly two or three factors that describe the credibility of the news. When it comes to traditional newspapers, the three most important factors are the fairness factor, the sharing factor, and the professionalism factor. People are more likely to consider traditional newspapers as credible, as they provide fair content, meaning that the content is created and edited by specialists in the field, and as a result it is more believable and can be trusted and shared with others. Moreover, the news is written and presented professionally through the use of eye-catching headlines as well as relevant figures and photos, and these newspapers seek to be as objective as possible in their reporting as well as in their presentation of the news. In regard to the remaining three news providers in this category (online newspapers, Facebook and Twitter), only two factors are relevant, which are the fairness factor and the sharing factor. Of the four news providers surveyed (traditional newspapers, online newspapers, Facebook and Twitter), the results show that they are all perceived as unbiased in the information they provide.

The fairness factor includes items related to believability, accuracy, fairness and clarity of the information presented. The sharing factor describes the ability of the newsreader to share information with others, and the professionalism factor relates to the quality of information provided from the perspective of journalism and presentation.

Each of these factors has many components, all of which are included to measure the credibility of news. The following paragraphs show each of the two or three factors and the main components for all four news providers.

Traditional Newspapers comprise 3 groups of factors:

Fairness factor includes: trusted (.858), believable (.802), accurate (.786), fair (.768), clear (.764), tells the whole story (.748), objective (.669), expert writers (.666), and timely (.620).

Sharing factor includes: can be shared with others (.845), easy to add information (.843), commenting in a story (.824), easy to access (.742), and interactive (.690). For traditional newspapers, this would entail sharing with others physically or by word of mouth.

Professionalism factor includes: makes good use of figures and photos (.804), high colour contrasts (.782), eye-catching (.702), and articles are written by professionals (.659).

Online Newspapers comprise 2 groups of factors:

Fairness factor includes: accurate (.866), believable (.808), trusted (.807), professional (.778), tells the whole story (.777), objective (.757), articles are written by professionals (.752), expert writers (.750), and in-depth coverage (.744).

Sharing factor includes: easy to access (.869), can be shared with others (.842), commenting in a story (.765), eye-catching (.749), presents other stories simultaneously (.78), flashy with high colour contrasts (.686), interactive (.669), easy to add information (.651), represents users' wants (.622), and makes good use of figures and photos (.613).

Facebook comprises 2 groups of factors:

Fairness factor includes: trusted (.863), believable (.856), articles are written by professionals (.853), accurate (.845), expert writers (.843), objective (.806), professional (.779), tells the whole story (.773), in-depth coverage (.711), clear (.700), and fair (.694).

Sharing factor includes: commenting in a story (.881), makes good use of figures and photos (.873), easy to add information (.853), eye-catching (.840), flashy with high colour contrasts (.825), can be shared with others (.818), presents other stories simultaneously (.810), easy to access (.789), delivers a wide diversity of expertise (.731), represents users' wants (.684), and interactive (.621).

Twitter comprises 2 groups of factors:

Fairness factor includes: objective (.875), articles are written by professionals (.861), trusted (.851), professional (.834), accurate (.809), expert writers (.804), in-depth coverage (.800), fair (.797), believable (.757), tells the whole story (.702), and makes good use of figures and photos (.624).

Sharing factor includes: can be shared with others (.895), easy to access (.883), presents other stories simultaneously (.846), interactive (.808), commenting in a story (.801), timely (.766), eye-catching (.743), easy to add information (.739), represents users' wants (.651), and delivers a wide diversity of expertise (.625).

Moreover, for all four news providers readers did not consider any of them as biased source. Traditional print newspapers (-.984), online newspapers (-.977), Facebook (-.851), and Twitter (-.951).

When I look closely at the Twitter NAP, each of the sharing factors ($p=0.03$) contributes significantly to the overall model. There is no significant difference between the

All-Source News Seekers in Cluster 1 and Social Media News Seekers in Cluster 2, yet there is a significant difference between News Avoiders in Cluster 4 and All-Source News Seekers in Cluster 1, as well as between Online News Seekers in Cluster 3 and Social Media News Seekers in Cluster 2. Moreover, there is no significant difference between Cluster 3 (Online News Seekers) and Cluster 4 (News Avoiders) in regard the sharing factor (See Table 79.)

Table 79 Credibility of Twitter and clusters

	Cluster 1 All- Source News Seekers	Cluster 2 Social Media News Seekers	Cluster 3 Online News Seekers	Cluster 4 News Avoiders	Wald	p-value
Intercept	0.755	0.502	0.517	-1.775	18.0	< .001
Covariates						
Fairness factor	0.242	-0.321	-0.049	0.128	3.5	.32
Sharing factor	0.378	0.218	-0.201	-0.388	8.9	.03
Professionalism factor	0.216	0.190	0.266	-0.673	4.3	.24

6.1.33.6 Believability

Next, I examined the believability of the news in regard to the NAP. My findings reveal that online newspapers ($p=0.03$), Google News ($p=0.02$), and Twitter ($p=0.01$) are contributing significantly to the overall model (see Table 80). All-Source News Seekers (Cluster 1) and Online News Seekers (Cluster 3) are more likely to believe in online newspaper sources and Google News, as there is no significant difference in the level of believability between the two clusters. The Social Media News Seekers (Cluster 2) are more likely to believe in Twitter, but less likely to believe in online newspapers and Google News, as there is a significant difference between the level of believability of this cluster and clusters 1 and 3, while the News Avoiders (Cluster 4) are more likely to believe in Google News and less likely to believe in online newspapers and Twitter (see Table 80). Among the

groups of all four clusters, online newspapers, Google News, and Twitter were highly significant in terms of believability, while Yahoo News was less significant.

Table 80 Believability in regard to NAP

	Cluster 1 All- Source News Seekers	Cluster 2 Social Media News Seekers	Cluster 3 Online News Seekers	Cluster 4 News Avoiders	Wald	p-value
Intercept	-5.342	7.537	-5.724	3.529	6.49	.09
Covariates						
Traditional newspapers	0.074	0.181	0.378	-0.629	6.3	0.09
Online newspapers	1.076	-1.644	1.566	-0.998	9.2	0.03
Yahoo News	-0.415	0.030	-1.109	1.493	4.8	0.19
Google News	1.569	-3.956	1.643	0.745	10.1	0.02
Facebook	-0.755	1.612	-0.376	-0.481	4.2	0.24
Twitter	0.308	1.453	-0.105	-1.656	10.6	0.01

In regard to traditional print newspapers, there are no significant differences in terms of the level of believability among all four clusters, but for online newspapers, Facebook and Twitter, there is a difference in the level of believability among the News Avoiders (Cluster 4) compared with the other three clusters, as News Avoiders deem them less believable. When it comes to the level of believability of Yahoo News and Google News, Social Media News Seekers (Cluster 2) view them as less believable among all the clusters.

6.1.33.7 Adoption of innovation

I then looked at the NAP in regard to the adoption of innovation, and I found that relative advantages ($p=0.001$) and trialability ($p=0.02$) contribute significantly to the overall model (see Table 81). All-Source News Seekers (Cluster 1) show high importance related to both the relative advantages scale and the trialability scale, which means that readers in this group actively seek news and may access the news on different platforms if they perceive advantages from that platform. Moreover, they may consider trying out the news sources first

before deciding to regularly access and consume news on them. In addition, this group scores highly in all three motivational factors. Social Media News Seekers (Cluster 2) show greater significance when it comes to trialability, while Online News Seekers (Cluster 3) show greater significance on the relative advantage scale and also score high on the information motivation factor. The News Avoiders (Cluster 4) show the least importance and interest in all innovation factors.

Table 81 Adoption of Innovation in regard to NAP

	Cluster 1 All- Source News Seekers	Cluster 2 Social Media News Seekers	Cluster 3 Online News Seekers	Cluster 4 News Avoiders	Wald	p-value
Relative Advantage Scale	0.185	0.001	0.464	-0.649	16.6	0.001
Compatibility Scale	0.316	0.056	0.241	-0.614	5.3	0.15
Complexity Scale	0.039	0.017	0.115	-0.172	1.0	0.78
Trialability Scale	0.237	0.120	0.409	-0.767	9.6	0.02
Results Demonstrability Scale	0.125	0.028	0.196	-0.349	2.3	0.51

6.1.33.8 News type

After that, I looked at the different types of news on the various news providers. The overall model is highly significant ($p=0.03$), though each news type is not significant. When looking at each cluster in general, All-Source News Seekers (Cluster 1) score high in regard to international news. Social Media News Seekers (Cluster 2) show interest in all types of news, particularly local news, technology, economics, politics and health. Meanwhile, the Online News Seekers (Cluster 3) and News Avoiders (Cluster 4) show the least interest in all types of news.

In regard to the news providers and the types of news, All-Source News Seekers (Cluster 1) score highly on all news types for all news providers, which indicates that they show the same interest among all news types on different providers, though Yahoo News

scores the lowest among the news providers in all news types. Social Media News Seekers (Cluster 2) score low for all news types on all news providers, though Twitter scores higher relative to the other news providers for all news types. Meanwhile, the Online News Seekers (Cluster 3) score highly for traditional newspapers, online newspapers, Google News and Facebook and relatively high on Twitter, but they score low on Yahoo News for all news types. Finally, News Avoiders (Cluster 4) score low for all news types on all news providers, but they show a slight improvement when it comes to Yahoo News. Table 82 below summarizes my findings.

Table 82 Summary of the NAP model findings

	All-Source News Seekers	Social Media News Seekers	Online News Seekers	News Avoiders
% of respondents (% refers to the share of the sample)	31.7%	30.7%	30.4%	7.1%
Intent to pay for online news	Willing to pay for news	Unwilling to pay and uncertain if they would pay	Willing to pay for news	Willing to pay for news
Platforms used to read/access news	Read news from/on all news providers/platforms	Seek news on social media platforms	Seek news on almost all online news providers, but rarely from traditional newspapers	Less likely to consume news from/on all providers/platforms
Motivation behind reading/accessing news	- To get information - To be entertained - To be socialized	- Low score for all three motivation factors (to get information, to be entertained, and to be socialized) - Sharing factor	- To get information	- Less motivated to get information, to be entertained, and to be socialized
Credibility factor consideration of Twitter	- Sharing factor	- Sharing factor	- Less interested in the sharing factor	- Less interested in the sharing factor
Believability in the news source	- More likely to believe online newspaper sources - More likely to believe Google News	- More likely to believe Twitter - Less likely to believe online newspapers - Less likely to believe Google News	- More likely to believe online newspaper sources - More likely to believe Google News	- More likely to believe Google News - Less likely to believe online newspapers - Less likely to believe Twitter
Innovation factors scale	- Place high importance on the relative advantages	- Place significant importance on	- Place significant importance on the relative advantage	- Place least importance and interest on all

	scale	the trialability scale	scale	innovation factors
News types for all six news sources	- Place high importance on the trialability scale - Score high for all news types (similar level of interest for all news types) - Yahoo News is considered the lowest in regard to interest	- Score low for all news types on all news sources - Score relatively high on Twitter for all news types	- Score high for traditional newspapers - Score high for online newspapers - Score high on Google News - Score high on Facebook - Score relatively high on Twitter - Score low on Yahoo News	- Score low for all six news sources - Show some improvement in regard to Yahoo News

This chapter highlighted the statistical data that I analyzed based on the responses from my surveyed participants, and presenting the data in the same order that they were presented on the survey, yet my in-depth analysis and discussion of the study will be provided in the following chapter.

Discussion and Analysis

7 Discussion

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss and analyze the Western literature and to examine the information collected from the Saudi newspaper media market. This chapter will also discuss and analyze the collected results from the participants in this study. To answer the main question (“What are the potential avenues for survival for a Saudi Arabian newspaper facing readership decline?”), it is necessary to consider my two aspects of the study. Initially, the study introduced two sets of questions that tackle the subject of declining readership of Saudi Arabian newspapers. These sets were divided into questions relating to both the newspaper side (our qualitative findings) and the reader side (our quantitative findings).

This chapter is divided into three sections 7.1 that discuss and analyze the Western literature and will provide a summary table of the challenges and strategies found in Western world and Arab countries, and Okaz newspaper in particular. Section 7.2 which discuss and analyze my data collected from interviewing specialists working in *Okaz* newspaper and section 7.3 that deal with the surveyed newsreaders.

7.1 Analysis and discussion of the literature review

As discussed in the literature review section, the broad picture that appears is that media businesses are facing numerous challenges—most notably economic, technological, and social changes that are forcing news organizations to take drastic measures to cope with the magnitude of these challenges. Moreover, as observed from the literature, some incipient procedures were taken by Western newspapers to compensate for some of their financial

losses such as laying off employees or reducing the size of the publication, while others were forced to abandon the traditional print format altogether and operate online only. In some extreme cases, newspapers went out of business as a result of being unable to adapt to the new technological landscape. The advances in technology have brought new competitors into the market—including search engines and social media websites, which have to some extent turned readers into citizen journalists—which are also looking to distribute news and are competing to grab readers' attention in order to generate loyal followers. Newspapers have been given the choice to either compete with these new competitors or to gain an advantage by collaborating with such websites to grab readers' attention (attention theory) and as a way to diversify their business (Ansoff matrix).

Since there is limited academic literature published in English or in Arabic specifying the challenges and crises in the Saudi Arabia newspaper media market (as stated in Chapter 1), this study may add value to the existing literature by shedding light on a part of the world that has not been studied in depth. Meanwhile, by focusing on *Okaz*, one of the biggest newspapers in Saudi Arabia, I will have a tangible model to reference when analyzing how the news media business in Saudi Arabia is resolving its own economic and technological challenges.

When looking at the magnitude of these shifts in business procedures, societal factors must also be taken into consideration. As has been observed in the literature, some countries in the Eastern world still prefer the traditional format of print newspapers when consuming news, as is the case in Malaysia (Salman et al., 2011) and India (Char, 2019). This reinforces the fact that, while lessons can be learned from the experience of Western world countries, the crisis and potential solutions to it should not be generalized and applied to all parts of the world, but rather that each region should be studied individually. For instance, younger generations or baby boomers could shift the trends in Eastern countries in similar ways as

they did in the Western world. If so, organizations should be prepared to examine some of the successful solutions implemented in the West while bearing in mind the cultural differences that exist in each region. From the literature review section, the study also finds similarities between the habits and preferences of US and Malaysian newsreaders, specifically that younger generations tend to read online news more than older generations. Using this information, a similar trend is found in the Arab region, including Saudi Arabia (as stated in Chapter 3) as younger generations reported that they use the Internet for news. This trend can be expected to occur in my findings.

In regard to the marketing of news, particularly traditional print publications, the most commonly used strategies adopted in the West are self-promotion, cross-promotion on allied media, and cross-promotion on non-allied media. The objective of using these strategies is to increase the newspaper's customer base by attracting readers' attention using different tactics that include eye-catching headlines on the front page to entice readers to read one newspaper over another, or by presenting summaries with page numbers to more detailed stories in other sections of the paper. By doing so, newspaper organizations can use their own publication as a means to advertise their content. The *New York Journal* (1937–1966) was one example of a newspaper that used this strategy, which is deeply rooted in the news business and can be found in almost any traditional print newspaper. Other means of self-promotion have emerged in recent years, such as through the use of social media, while traditional media around the world are more frequently using a cross-promotional approach on allied media and non-allied media.

Additionally, the study looks at ways of marketing and disseminating news on new media by taking advantage of the new technology. This can also be referred to as the use of cross-promotional strategy, which takes two approaches—either by creating an interface on a social media site such as Twitter or Facebook, or by providing readers with the ability to

share news by integrating social media into the online pages of the newspaper. This combination of adopting social media and allowing readers to comment and share news is now a major part of the marketing strategies and branding of most newspapers in the West; one of the most successful examples is *The New York Times*. Moreover, it has become imperative to provide readers with different types of news on different platforms (online, print, and on social media) in order to meet readers' different gratification needs (through the uses and gratification theory). Other strategies that have been adopted by the Western news media are developing and presenting different content on both the online and traditional print versions of the same newspaper, which generates revenue for the online publication by charging subscription fees to readers, as well as using technology to its full potential by providing news on different platforms such as mobile device apps. In this context, the study is firstly concerned with looking for similar strategies being used in the Saudi market, and secondly determining whether or not those strategies have been successful by interviewing specialists in the business field to obtain more information, and finally looking at other possible strategies that are being considered or could be put into use in the future.

To sum up, the above analysis serves to provide a general overview of the challenges that face newspaper organizations in the Western world, some of the strategies that have been used in recent years to overcome these challenges, and those that have been tested in Saudi Arabia. Although not all of these strategies may be equally as effective in Saudi Arabia, it is worthwhile to consider them, and potentially modify them in a way that is appropriate to the Saudi culture.

Table 83 provides a summary of the challenges and strategies found in Western world media compared with the media sector in Arab countries, and *Okaz* newspaper in particular.

Table 83 Summary comparisons of the challenges and strategies found in Western world media/Arab countries, and *Okaz* newspaper in particular

	Western countries	Arab countries	The case of <i>Okaz</i> newspaper in Saudi Arabia
Challenges			
Financial challenges	-The most significant impact was during the years of 2008/2009, especially in the UK countries. -The impact of the financial crisis on circulation globally continued as of 2015. -There was still growth in circulation in 2008-2009 in other countries such as in Mexico and even in Asian countries such as in China - Globally, advertising revenue continues to fall as of 2015, while it started to increase marginally in the US.	-Some scholars have stated that the impact in Arab countries was the same as in the US, yet others reported circulation growth in 2008–2009 in some Arab countries. -In the KSA, advertising revenue started to fall in 2013.	-Stated that the impact of the financial crisis on the newspaper began later, around 2014 -Stated that the decline in the advertising market in the KSA began in 2015.
Observations and comments			
-One can see that there is no clear picture on the actual year when the financial crisis began in the Arab world, or when it had the greatest impact. This view is also supported by <i>Okaz</i> specialists in varying degree.			
Advisable solutions and/or steps and measures to consider			
-Laying off employees and reducing the size of the printed newspaper were the most common strategies implemented in the West and in Saudi Arabia. <i>Okaz</i> also adopt this strategy along with the strategy of replacement.			
Technological challenges	-The advent of new players in the market (online-only newspapers, news aggregators) has disrupted the traditional print newspaper industry, yet it opens up new markets in which they can disseminate information and reach readers more easily. However, recent players, particularly social media sites, have accelerated the challenges. Meanwhile, other forms of entertainment (live streaming, gaming, chat rooms) have created additional challenges in the traditional print newspaper industry.	-The same challenges that are impacting the media sector in the West have also occurred/are also occurring in Arab countries.	-<i>Okaz</i> newspaper has only begun to feel the impact of these challenges in recent years, mainly from 2014 to the present.

Observations and comments			
-Similar challenges can be detected in both the West and in Saudi Arabia, yet one can say that in the West, the challenges were observed much earlier than in the KSA. However, as <i>Okaz</i> specialists report, the magnitude of the impact from these challenges is currently greater in Saudi Arabia in general, as these technological challenges have occurred in tandem with changes in readers' consumption habits, which has led to further economic challenges.			
Advisable solutions and/or steps and measures to consider			
-Embracing and implementing the new technologies, and making greater investments into improving the online product. -Taking advantage of a systematic observation of the successes and failures of the various apps developed for some years in the West (some of which, like La Presse+, have been licensed to other newspapers).			
Changes in readers' consumption patterns	-Readers are abandoning the traditional print format of newspapers in favour of their online versions, but even more so they are moving toward social media applications to get breaking news anytime and anywhere, and summaries of the latest news from multiple publications. However, print versions of the newspaper are found in less places.	-The same scenario is happening in Arab countries. However, print versions of the newspaper can still be found in retail stores.	- <i>Okaz</i> newspaper continues to distribute its print version to retail shops. Although young readers are less interested in the print version, government subscriptions to the newspaper are still popular.
Observations and comments			
-A major shifting trend from print to electronic is being observed in Saudi Arabia, yet specialists at <i>Okaz</i> are devising strategies that would revive the print format of the newspaper.			
Advisable solutions and/or steps and measures to consider			
-Focusing more on readers' needs, and shifting to a more reader-centred approach.			
Other challenges			
Lack of journalist training	-This concern was not discussed in my study.	-The lack of journalist training in the Arab countries is noteworthy.	-Some stated that older journalists at the newspaper do not hold journalism degrees, nor did they receive professional training before being hired.
Observations and comments			
-It appears that most Arab countries lack a formal journalism training program, and the lack of journalism training is true at <i>Okaz</i> , yet recent journalism graduates are being provided with training before being hired by the newspaper.			
Advisable solutions and/or steps and measures to consider			
-Invest more resources into training current and future employees at the newspaper.			
Freedom of the press	-There is freedom of the press throughout the US.	-Few of the Arab countries are can claim to offer freedom of the press, except at a limited level in Kuwait and Lebanon.	-No data provided, as <i>Okaz</i> specialists did not perceive the lack of press freedom as a challenge to the newspaper.
Observations and comments			
-This is a major cultural difference between Arab and Western world countries			
Advisable solutions and/or steps and measures to consider			
-This is an issue that is specific to each country and is beyond the scope of this thesis.			

Strategies			
Marketing strategies in the traditional print newspaper format			
Self-promotion	-Western print newspapers promote their content and brand name on their front-page headlines, attracting readers by using a variety of eye-catching strategies.	-The same is true with Arab print newspapers and other papers around the world. This long-lasting technique still exists and is considered one of the oldest and most successful strategies in the industry.	-Okaz newspaper also uses this strategy, promoting content within its newspaper by using the front page (cover page) of the printed newspaper to entice readers to purchase one newspaper over the others.
Observations and comments			
-This strategy is used similarly in both the West and in Arab countries.			
Advisable solutions and/or steps and measures to consider			
-This depends largely on the orientation of the newspaper's readers (suggestions may range from providing the paper at no cost or making the print edition totally different than the online version, and making exclusive scoops available only in the print version).			
Cross-promotion on allied media	-Cross-promotion is a strategy that has been implemented and used regularly in almost all Western countries.	-Although this was not explicitly discussed in the study, one can say that cross-promotion is a strategy that has been used by all print media, and has become especially popular with the emergence of social media applications.	-Okaz newspaper follows this strategy as well, with reasonable success.
Observations and comments			
-One can say that this strategy can be found in the West as well in Saudi Arabia.			
Advisable solutions and/or steps and measures to consider			
-This strategy is still valid and will continue to be used frequently in the new media environment.			
Cross-promotion on non-allied media	-This strategy is used frequently by Western newspapers.	-This strategy was not discussed in the Arab world section of my study, as no explicit data was provided regarding this technique.	-Okaz also uses this strategy to promote its brand name—on television, radio, and competing newspapers. -There is no monetary return from this type of advertising, but rather a straight exchange where one medium advertises in the other.
Observations and comments			
-There is a lack of literature in the Arab world that speaks explicitly about these types of strategies and their effect on the media industry. However, one can observe on television channels, and radio stations that almost all Arab countries use these strategies.			
Advisable solutions and/or steps and measures to consider			
-This strategy is still valid.			
Marketing strategies in new media			
Social sharing (the use of social media)	-All newspapers now have a prominent web presence, as well as accounts on multiple	-All newspapers now have a web presence, as well as accounts on	-Okaz has a web presence on different social media

	social media applications.	different social media applications that allow newspapers and readers alike to share and disseminate the contents of the news.	applications, and has implemented social media icons on its website as well.
Observations and comments			
-All newspapers allow readers to share and disseminate their news on numerous social media websites. However, when one compares, for example, <i>Okaz's</i> website, <i>The New York Times</i> , and <i>The Guardian</i> one can find that <i>Okaz</i> has implemented more social media applications icons on its website than one can observe on <i>The New York Times</i> and <i>The Guardian</i> for instance.			
Advisable solutions and/or steps and measures to consider			
-Concentrating on updating the website more frequently. -It is also worth mentioning that <i>Okaz</i> has updated its website (as recently as December 2019) to become more appealing to readers, yet it is only a trial launch so far.			
Developing content strategy	-Most stories are usually the same in each of the two formats (print and online website), yet some are adapted and some are web-only (including special contents on Snapchat and other emerging medias). However, some newspapers provides more local news on its online version than that can be found in its printed newspapers.	-The content of the website of the newspaper is different than the printed version. However, some news stories are similar in the two formats (print and online website).	- <i>Okaz</i> newspaper provides different news stories on its print version than on its website. However, some stories are copied word-for-word and transferred from the print version to the website later in the evening.
Observations and comments			
-There are similarities between the West and Saudi Arabia. News provided on the electronic version can be different than those that in the printed version, and more stories are covered in the electronic version than in the traditional print newspaper.			
Advisable solutions and/or steps and measures to consider			
-Transferring news to the online version of the newspaper that has already been reported in the print version has two views: 1) It is a waste of the employees' time and effort to transfer something that already appears on the physical newspaper, and readers can already find an online version of the story on the company's website (the e-newspaper). (i.e. <i>Okaz</i> online website provides news stories that some are similar to the print version and some are provided only for the online format, however, the electronic website also provides the e-newspaper an exact replica of the print version with a PDF version, thus it is consider a waste of the employees' time (in the night shift) to transfer what is already being provided in the PDF to the electronic website) 2) This approach may be beneficial for readers and researchers who want to follow up with certain stories to access it more easily online (as the e-newspaper is still not considered as user-friendly as the website when searching for specific story titles), and the newspaper can benefit by keeping the exact print version of the story in its database (though not providing it to readers). Thus, they can sell that exclusive content later to researchers and/or interested readers as a way to create another online revenue stream.			
Developing strong revenue streams	-Newspapers in several countries have been providing their online content for a fee for quite some time, and some of them have been successful.	-Some Saudi newspapers are looking for alternative ways to generate revenue by diversifying their business. Yet charging a fee to access the	- <i>Okaz</i> has not yet implemented the paywall model, as this strategy will need to be occur collaboratively along with all the other newspapers in Saudi Arabia to maximize its

		online version of the newspaper or the website of the newspaper has not yet been implemented in Arab countries.	effectiveness.
Observations and comments			
-The success of the paywall model depends on its acceptance among readers and the type (quality, scoop originality) of content that will come at a cost. Not every Western newspaper has implemented this strategy, which may be more familiar and popular in the West, yet it may not be accepted in Arab countries (there remains a lack of acceptance of the paywall model in Arab countries) and <i>Okaz</i> newspaper is not different.			
Advisable solutions and/or steps and measures to consider			
-Newspapers may provide specific, targeted statistical data and financial/economic news to be sold to businessmen or researchers to earn extra revenues. They may also employ special investigations and reports for some stories that can only be accessed for a fee, though this depends on the philosophy of the editorial management. As each manager has his own specific vision and orientation.			
Cross-platform branding	-With social media, all print newspapers promote their content and brand name on social media applications.	-The same trend is observed in the Arab countries and other parts of the world.	-The trend is also observed at <i>Okaz</i> newspaper.
Observations and comments			
-There are similarities in the use of this method in Saudi Arabia and in the West, as cross-platform branding can be found in both culture.			
Advisable solutions and/or steps and measures to consider			
-All newspapers have implemented this strategy of cross-promotion. The challenges lay in how to attract and retain readers by continuously working to provide content that is new, interesting, unique, and high quality.			

7.2 Analysis and discussion of the qualitative findings

7.2.1 The crisis

As mentioned in several previous sections, the challenges and changes in the media business are happening in different degrees all over the world. What guides the magnitude of the changes is the unique characteristics of each country. Based on all the interviewed participants, the 2008/2009 period did not cause any major financial crises in the newspaper business in Saudi Arabia in general, or at *Okaz* newspaper specifically, unlike what was observed among Western media. Yet challenges arose shortly afterward.

Although specialists at *Okaz* newspaper felt that there have not been major challenges, the Arab media outlook report stated that challenges had indeed occurred in Arab countries on a similar scale than in the US, as all the Arab countries were affected by lower

advertising revenues in 2009, even though they increased again in the years that followed (Dubai Press Club, 2010). This point can be interpreted or argued due to the fact that the report was explaining the impact on media outlets in general and not traditional print newspapers specifically; thus, while traditional print newspapers began to face the impacts of the turmoil in 2008 and 2009—especially newspapers in the West and other parts of the world that experienced the most devastating impact of the financial crisis—Saudi print newspapers and specifically *Okaz* print newspaper witnessed no impact at all.

The problem is that there is no accurate information about that year, which is possibly because different departments were impacted before others, based on the nature of their work. This was obvious from my interviews, as the *Okaz* business department stated that 2013 was the year that the crisis began, whereas participants from the editorial department stated that the crisis began in 2011, and the administration department identified 2014 as the start of the crisis. The nature of the work and the diverse points of view and objectives of each department were the main factors in the discrepancies. Because income is the most important factor for the administration department, it described the year 2011 as the Golden Era, and that year they witnessed high profits from advertisers while digital media was still in its formative years. On the other hand, the editorial department described 2011 as the beginning of the crisis due to the fact that the emergence of digital media and online newspapers reduced the need for them to distribute the traditional print format of the newspaper, so they could foresee troubles ahead. Meanwhile, by the year 2013, the business department was able to make the connection between the difficulty in attracting advertisers to the traditional print newspaper and the fact that a greater number of people were using digital media, there were more new players in the media market, and advertising costs in the digital format were much lower. It was only at this time that the administration department could feel the impact more directly of the decrease in print advertisements and the increasing number of readers who

were abandoning the traditional print newspaper to access news online. Therefore, each department looked at the scenario from its own unique standpoint, which explains why departments had different responses to the question regarding the initial year that *Okaz*'s business was affected by the financial and technological challenges. Hence, from my study, one can discern that Saudi Arabia, and specifically *Okaz* newspaper, did not experience the same negative impact that affected the West in 2008/2009 yet the challenge arises in the following years.

7.2.2 The change in job practices

Most of the participants were in favour of the transformation from traditional print to online, as this transformation and technology in general has positively affected their jobs by saving them time and making their jobs much easier. Even the internal operating system was combined into one system that has made tasks simpler and more accurate. Yet others met this change with resistance, since it was a more difficult transition for those who were less technology-savvy and has changed their previous job routine.

7.2.3 The challenges

Almost all of the participants agreed that the biggest challenge comes from the recent technological advances, which has influenced many aspects of the traditional print newspaper business, especially as more news providers enter the digital market. The emergence of these new players has affected readers' behaviours by enabling them to search for news in a faster and more convenient way, and it has affected newspaper revenues by offering advertisers lower fees to advertise online, which in turn has driven advertisers away from print newspapers. A few others ranked the economic challenges as the biggest impact to the business, as it led to fewer newspaper sales as well as a decline in advertisements, which forced traditional print newspapers to find alternative cost-cutting measures similar to those found in the west and other parts of the world such as laying off employees, reducing the

number of pages of the printed paper, freezing new hires, focusing more on the website, and searching for supplementary sources of revenue.

The three main challenges—technological developments, the economic downturn, and changes in readers' consumption habits—weren't the only factors seen as disrupting *Okaz's* business. Some participants indicated that changes in the media market in general, and the modifications of rules and regulations in the country for the press, were just as detrimental to the media business at that time. Some other secondary challenges that were raised include the advent of other online news providers impersonating *Okaz*, the copyright issues related to other websites using content from *Okaz* without giving credit to the newspaper, and the rise of news aggregators that collect news stories from different publications and republish them on their own site. Although news aggregators can be a positive impact in that they include a link to the website where the original story came from, making it possible for readers to click the link and be redirected to the original news provider to get the full story, many users are satisfied with reading just a brief of the news story, and thus only follow the news aggregators without visiting the websites of the original media publication.

While it is not always easy to come to an agreement about the primary challenge to traditional print media, it is clear that that all of the challenges discussed above overlapped with one another and increased the magnitude of the crisis for the *Okaz* operations. However, the main three challenges found in the West and other parts of the world also exist in Saudi Arabia. Technological advances, the financial and economic crisis, and changes in readers' consumption habits have drastically affected all media businesses regardless of the region, differences in culture and the magnitude of the impact.

7.2.4 Readers' changing habits

In regard to readers' changing habits, some participants viewed this challenge from the standpoint of the organization, as an issue of young readers leaning more towards digital

technology and away from traditional print media, while others viewed it from the standpoint of the readers, namely that the newspaper was unable to adapt to the new environment. Younger generations are considered the most difficult segment to attract to the traditional media, but other challenges could possibly arise in regard to an online newspaper such as whether the newspaper organization has an undeveloped website because it did not invest enough in it and did not harness the full potential of the technology in order to make its online format more user-friendly or appealing to readers. One other point that I must not ignore is that if a newspaper decides to invest in a more advanced website, it requires time, effort, labour, money, and other resources that may be expensive, especially at a time when the newspaper may be trying to cut costs and reduce its expenses. A similar trend is found in the West, where most young American readers prefer to get their news online rather than getting it from the traditional print format.

7.2.5 Changes in advertising

Most participants explained that the concerns regarding advertisers and advertisements in general is that with the advent and the advance in technology, advertisers are shifting to other platforms, as there are numerous websites and social media sites to choose from now, and thus advertisers have many more options and the upper hand, which has affected the traditional revenue stream of print publications. On the other hand, advertisers may not always shift to digital media platforms, due to the fact that other businesses (which used to advertise in the newspaper) may also be suffering from economic losses at the same time. Businesses that are looking to reduce their costs by cutting unnecessary expenses might choose not to place an advertisement in either the print newspaper or online, while other businesses that have gone bankrupt no longer advertise in the newspaper as they did previously. On the other hand, advertisers who shift to advertise in digital media pay much less than they used to pay for ad space in traditional print

newspapers, which also affects newspaper revenues. This leads me to a point that I discussed earlier in the results chapter that technological and economic challenges go hand in hand, not only affecting the media business but also other industries in Saudi Arabia. This trend is being observed all over the world, where the lower cost of advertising online has prompted many companies to advertise online rather than in traditional print publications (Holm, Günzel, & Ulhøi, 2013; Phillips, Lee-Wright, & Witschge, 2012).

7.2.6 Changes in employee workload

Though technology has saved employees time while searching for, editing, and distributing news and information, many journalists are actually experiencing an increased workload, as they are now required to allocate more time and effort into updating the website around the clock every day to stay competitive in the market as reported by my interviewed participants. Newspapers have managed to deal with this situation in some ways by assigning employees to work day and night shifts to keep up with events and breaking news as they happen at any time. In addition, employees working at night use some of their time to transfer the top news stories from the print newspaper—word for word—to the website. The potential problem, however, is that in doing this, they may not focus their efforts in presenting the news content or format that appeals most to their readers.

At the same time, fewer employees are required for some administration tasks. This may be seen as a benefit from the organization's point of view, as the newspaper saves money if it doesn't require the extra labour it previously needed, but this can also come at the cost of less investigative reporting. From the employee angle, if the newspaper's labour needs are reduced, the level of job security decreases and the probability of a newspaper employee losing his job increases. This will also increase the workload for the remaining employees, as they are required to double their efforts to compensate for the work that was once performed by several employees. Reducing the number of employees is a strategy that was used often

both in the West and in Arab countries, as a way to cut costs to alleviate financial losses, and *Okaz* newspaper is no different. However, *Okaz* newspaper needs more financial liquidity to pay off indemnity to the employees that the newspaper is willing to lay off, yet with the financial crisis, this approach requires more time due to the shortage of liquidity.

7.2.7 Lack of professional training

The lack of professional training has been identified as one of the weaknesses that print newspapers have faced since almost the start of the journalism era in the Arab world (Moussa & Douai, 2014). One of the surveyed participants from *Okaz* newspaper even stated that older journalists don't even hold degrees even though they are considered highly professional and among the best in their field. Although the lack of professional training was mentioned by many researchers who studied the media industry in Arab countries, as well as by the *Okaz* newspapers specialists who were interviewed for this study, it was not explored by the researcher in great depth because this challenge was not an issue in the Western world.

7.2.8 Freedom of the press

The lack of freedom of expression in the media is one of the distinguishing features of many of the Arab countries, as media organizations in the Arab region are still largely controlled by the government, with the exception of a few countries that can be described as partly free. This is in sharp contrast to the freedom of the press that exists in many other countries around the world, and is even highlighted in their constitutions. Although this is a complex subject, it was not discussed at length in my study, as the intention was primarily to describe the main challenges that affect media businesses in general around the world. Interestingly, none of the specialists interviewed from *Okaz* newspaper mentioned "freedom of the press" as a challenge in the industry, which could imply that they do not consider it to be an obstacle in reporting the news in Saudi Arabia, even though many other countries may have a different perception.

7.2.9 Circulation numbers

A prevailing trend occurring in Saudi Arabia, and at *Okaz* newspaper in particular, can be found all over the world to varying degrees, as the circulation numbers of printed newspapers has dropped steadily over the past decade. Linking back to the literature review, Chahine, Vollmer, Bhargava, and Lahham (2011), at the time of writing, estimated that over the period of 25 years, some UK newspapers have lost as much as two-thirds of their total circulation (Chahine, Vollmer, Bhargava, & Lahham, 2011). However, other countries have witnessed a continuous rise in circulation like in Saudi Arabia, China, and Mexico—defying the general trend in the West (DeSilver, 2013). Yet, according to an annual World Press Trends survey issued by the World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers (WAN-IFRA) print circulation as of 2015 continued to decrease globally, showing a similar impact on the Western world and in the MENA countries (MarketingCharts staff, 2016). Thus, although the western world has suffered the worst negative impacts earlier than other parts of the world as in the USA and some parts of Europe especially during 2008/2009, the media in Arab countries are now experiencing a significant decline in circulation that is now can be comparable to the West.

Most of the respondents of my study underestimated the drop in circulation numbers of the print newspaper that occurs in recent years, which is somewhat unexpected in an industry where employees all over the world are supposed to be very concerned about this figure. The problem is that the participants were very discreet in providing such sensitive information, possibly due to the fact that *Okaz* has been ranked the top newspaper for 15 consecutive years, and making such information public may give the impression that the newspaper is struggling. While newspapers try to maintain their strong reputations and status in the market, there is no denying that newspaper businesses are suffering financially. The other possible factor for not providing such information is related to the fact that perhaps the

respondent didn't have the authority to provide such information given his or her position at the company. Prior to the crisis, there were some periods during the year—specifically summertime—in which newspaper circulations declined seasonally, though they would later recover once the season ended, but the current decline is here to stay and remains a challenge to the newspaper industry. Companies use various strategies to continuously encourage readers to subscribe to the print newspaper through promotional discounts, yet these methods are often considered temporary and not efficient ways to maintain readers over the long term, in particular the younger generations who are more drawn to digital media. On the other hand, the percentage of people who now access *Okaz*'s website and online newspapers has increased significantly, which indicates that its brand name remains strong.

7.2.10 Competition among newspapers

The newspaper business in Saudi Arabia is based on regionalization, though competition exists between newspapers within the same region and between newspapers in different regions. Some of the study participants shrugged off the notion of competition claiming that *Okaz* is the top-ranked newspaper, yet it is in the nature of any industry to have competition, especially within businesses that provide a similar service or product.

7.2.11 Competition between various news platforms

There was a mixed response as to whether the online version of *Okaz* newspaper is in competition with the print edition, with some participants stating that they wished to see greater differentiation between the two formats. It could be argued that only certain segments of the population are reading the traditional print newspaper (such as an older demographic), who are used to reading it and prefer the predictability of it, while younger generations are searching for faster and more convenient ways of accessing the news. Which can be also observed among newsreaders in the US, as older generation prefer to get the news from traditional format (from the television). However, it doesn't necessarily mean that readers in

Saudi Arabia are shifting from *Okaz*'s print version to the online version, as now there are numerous different providers to choose from. One participant stated that the number of readers accessing *Okaz*'s website increased significantly in 2018; however, that does not erase the fact that there are many other options competing for readers' attention, not only news providers but also entertainment and gaming websites.

If one considers the electronic website and the traditional print format of the newspaper as two separate entities, then one can indeed say that there is competition between the two and that the traditional print version is suffering the most. However, if one sees the two formats as being related, then readers who are shifting to the online version are still reading news, but the newspaper still generates losses since the revenues it receives for online advertisements are lower than for print advertisements. With readers shifting to other platforms, newspapers have no choice but to provide huge discounts to their advertisers, or to make the print version completely different than the online version in the hopes of re-attracting readers, increasing readers' attention, and increasing circulation numbers. This does not eliminate the fact that there is a segment of people who are not interested in news at all, which is considered the most difficult segment to entice to either the electronic or printed version of the newspaper.

The same concept applies to the social media account of the newspaper. On one hand, it generates traffic to the electronic website of the newspaper and sometimes to the traditional print format, particularly in cases when the journalist writes an article exclusively for the print version. The strategy here is that by promoting the exclusive newspaper article on social media applications, people on social media will be tempted to purchase the print version to read the story. Usually, however, placing news on a social media website does not generate revenue for the print newspaper, unless the news is of interest to readers and prompts them to subscribe to it, thereby increasing the circulation of the newspaper and attracting advertisers.

On the other hand, those people who only search for headlines or news on the go are not likely to turn to the traditional print format or even the online version for that matter.

As noted on the literature review above, many newspapers in the West and other parts of the world have embraced social media as a way to promote their brand name and their content online. Saudi newspapers, and *Okaz* in particular, also follow such an approach. Additionally, these publications create a greater presence on these social media application as a way to distribute their news, meet readers' different needs of finding news on the go, and enticing readers to get the full news story either from their official electronic website or through its printed version by subscribing online to the electronic website or purchasing or subscribing to its printed copy. However, the concept of paying a fee online has not yet been applied in Saudi Arabia.

7.2.12 Strategies

7.2.12.1 Attracting readers to the print version of the newspaper

Participants' responses can be divided into two groups. The first group believes that the journalist must continue to provide interesting news stories on a wide variety of subjects, and carry on with making use of the front page to entice readers to purchase the printed version. The second group believes that the newspaper should continue to provide readers with prizes, offers, and promotions to attract readers. In both cases, all of these strategies are effective, though there is a negative side to each of them. In the first case, even if the newspaper offers captivating stories, some readers may prefer other newspaper brands, or may not be interested in the print version of the news for other reasons, or may not be interested in news at all, while others may not make the extra trip to the store to purchase the print format, rendering this strategy ineffective. In the second case, these types of strategies are usually only effective for the short term, because special promotions lose their

significance and are no longer considered special if they are implemented for a long time. Typically, readers who are attracted by these promotions are not purchasing the newspaper for the stories and information, but rather to have a chance of winning the prizes associated with purchasing the paper as part of the promotion. Although interviewees spoke about these strategies as suggestions and not as facts, *Okaz* has indeed used all of these strategies that also can be found in western newspapers to attract more readers, in addition to others such as encouraging readers to share pictures of their children during the holiday seasons in the traditional print newspaper.

7.2.12.2 Attracting readers to the newspaper's website

Newspapers follow a strategy of providing a diversity of news stories that satisfy readers' interests, different tastes, and motivational and gratification needs in both their print and electronic versions. In addition, the newspaper uses its account on social media platforms such as Twitter to redirect readers to the online version of the newspaper on its website, in much the same way that they use the front page of the print version to grab readers' attention to make them purchase their newspaper instead of their competitors' newspapers. My conceptual framework is reflected in that regard, for instance, providing different types of news on different platforms, meeting readers' different gratifications and needs while simultaneously increasing readers' attention when covering news of interest to them. Providing news on different platforms reflects what Ansoff describes in his matrix of diversification and expanding the newspaper reach to a different market.

Almost all participants agreed that social media sites, especially Twitter, support the newspaper by allowing it to post news on social media to attract potential readers and generate traffic to the official website of the newspaper. A pull method is used in enticing readers to click on a link on the newspaper's Twitter account which redirects them to the *Okaz* website and thus increases the traffic on its website. Yet no subscription fee is

necessary to read the full content of the newspaper website, and thus the newspaper fails to harness the full potential of the Internet. Many Western newspapers follow a similar approach but with a slightly different twist, using their official account on Twitter to redirect readers to the official website, yet readers are allowed to read only a certain number of articles before a subscription fee is required to read full stories or more stories.

Some newspapers use additional strategies on their websites such as encouraging discussion among readers on an open forum, something which *The Wall Street Journal* has used successfully to generate traffic to its website (Albarran, 2010). Research shows that 35% of Americans read news comments, and 14% have commented on the news (Stroud, Van Duyn, & Peacock, 2015), providing proof that commenting forums continue to be worthy of study. However, there may be the start of a trend toward stopping reader's comments as, for example, *The Atlantic's* editor in chief has decided to shut down comments on *The Atlantic* website.

Similarly, many Arab newspapers allow readers to share comments online. For instance, the *Al-Madina* newspaper website and *Okaz's* website give readers the opportunity to comment on news stories and discuss events with other readers. Yet, as stated by many of the interviewed employees of *Okaz*, journalists at the newspaper do not pay much attention to these comments and do not engage with readers in the comment forum. However, Saudi newspapers have no intention to stop readers from commenting on their stories, yet they continue to closely monitor them before being published online. By allowing readers to share comments, news organizations meet several user gratification motivations of sharing and getting opinions from their peers and meet their social gratification along with meeting their information motivations. For instance, when a newspaper provides a news story on its website and presents readers with a commenting box, it first meets readers' gratification of information motivation by presenting the news story, and encourages readers to shift from

passive to active participants who can provide their opinions and concerns about the news story provided. They can also discuss these issues with other readers, which in turn meets their gratification of sharing and hearing opinions from other commenters, creating a more social atmosphere among readers that meets their socialization needs and gratification.

7.2.12.3 Maintaining readers

Almost all of the participants in my study stated that *Okaz* continues to maintain the loyal readers of its newspaper through the use of promotions and discounts even in the midst of the industry's transformation. Moreover, the newspaper makes those readers feel special by providing them with additional privileges, such as honouring them and giving them priority when posting pictures about their special occasions in the print version, yet the newspaper still has the most difficulty attracting younger generations to the print version of the newspaper.

The orientation of young readers who are interested in getting their news online is observed all over the world. In the West, as in Saudi Arabia, some of the strategies used to maintain this segment of readers is to incorporate more news stories about subjects that meet their interests and satisfy their gratification needs. However, this generally applies only to the online version of the newspaper or its accounts on different social media applications since these readers are more oriented toward online news, yet many other non-media entities such as gaming companies and chat rooms may also hamper this segment of the population from getting news online.

7.2.12.4 Online subscriptions

There is no doubt that subscribing to online news for a fee has not yet been accepted in Saudi Arabia. Such a strategy requires collaboration among all the country's newspapers to simultaneously charge fees, or else readers will abandon one online newspaper for another that does not require a subscription fee as reported by several employees. Yet in the West,

this strategy has been implemented and has been relatively successful in the US, particularly for *The New York Times* newspaper. This leads us to understand that the problem is not with the strategy itself, but with the level of acceptance of the people to pay for news online. Everyone prefers to get a product or service for free, and Saudi society is no different. However, there is a segment of people willing to pay for news online as is the case in other societies. Nonetheless, newspapers in Saudi Arabia must put more effort into providing unique services, information, and news to the segments of the population that are willing to subscribe and pay the fees, collaborating to charge fees with all the other newspapers who provide trustworthy news, and enticing people to subscribe by creating marketing campaigns about the exclusiveness of the stories that pique readers' curiosity, while at the same time offering less news for free.

7.2.12.5 Promoting/advertising *Okaz*

The newspaper follows several strategies to promote its brand name. As indicated by most participants, investing in search engines, using different platforms including social media, and sponsoring events are among the ways that *Okaz* has elevated its brand, as many other newspapers did in the West. The main goal is to be present all the time in as many places as possible in both the print and the online versions of the newspaper.

In addition, the newspaper uses its accounts both on social media and on its website to entice readers to purchase the printed version of the newspaper, but such a strategy only works in cases where there is a special scoop or an exclusive dialogue with an elite figure in society and the story is published exclusively in the print version of the newspaper. *Okaz* newspaper also promotes its name – as many other newspapers in the west- through using one of the oldest methods of attracting readers (self-promotion) by creating an eye-catching headline on the top of the front page of its printed version. It also, adopt the strategy of cross promotion on non-allied media through its competitors, such as other newspapers, and

through partnerships with TV channels, but receives no money in return, a strategy that has also been implemented in the West as a way of promoting the newspaper's name and content through non-allied media. However, in the West a fee is often paid for such a partnership.

Additionally, many newspapers in the West promote their content through other media providers that they own, and although Okaz Institution owns other newspapers, it does not promote for the other newspapers owned by the same organization. For instance, *Okaz* newspaper does not promote for *Saudi Gazette*, even though both are owned by Okaz Institution, because the targeted audiences are different so there are few benefits for doing so. Yet *Okaz* promotes its own content as many other media publications in the US and around the world on Twitter, Facebook, and other social media applications, as different applications generate different traffic based on the genres or types of news, as well as on readers' gratification needs.

Moreover, the newspaper does not have to stand alone in promoting its name or content. Sometimes the readers themselves will promote the newspaper, though it still needs to create short, interesting, front-page stories that readers will want to repost and re-tweet on Twitter and on their personal pages, thus publicizing the newspaper's name and stories indirectly.

7.2.12.6 Promotions and discounts

Okaz continues to increase its presence on multiple social media platforms as a way to adapt to technological challenges, yet at the same time the company also offers numerous promotions, discounts and instant prizes to readers who subscribe to its print version on a yearly basis. It has used a similar approach on its Twitter account, awarding prizes on several occasions to its Twitter followers. The newspaper also provides exclusive news content for both its online version and for its print version in hopes of doubling its chances of increasing revenues—by generating more traffic to its official website and increasing newspaper sales

and circulation numbers. Though providing promotions may not create loyal readers, it increases the number of sales and thus attracts more advertisers who are interested in advertising their product to a larger number of people and it also increases the readers' information database, which can be later sold to advertisers.

7.2.13 Similarities and differences between the West and Saudi Arabia

Even though the impact of the economic downturn, technological development, and the change in newsreaders' reading habits were widespread, some key differences and similarities were found between the Western world and the Arab world -precisely in Saudi Arabia- in regard to the changes and challenges affecting the newspaper business and the strategies implemented to overcome them. For instance, as some newspapers in many western countries forced to cut cost by shifting their business practice to only operate online, laying off employees, and even shrinking the size of its printed version, other countries especially in the Arab region, such as Oman and the UAE actually launched newspapers in the midst of this difficult period, while newspapers in Kuwait and Egypt shut down operations (Al-Shaqsi, 2013), illustrating that the situation in Arab countries was not the same in all areas. In recent years *Okaz* has found it practical and more feasible to emulate the strategies implemented in the West such as laying off employees, shrinking the size of the printed paper, and reducing the number of pages. Many other newspapers in the Kingdom are now following in the footsteps of *Okaz*. In addition, all of the newspapers in the Kingdom have established partnerships with a single centralized company to deliver all of their newspaper publications as a means to cut distribution costs.

Although most participants agreed that there are differences between the culture and society in the West and in Saudi Arabia, this does not contradict the fact that media sectors in both markets have adopted the strategy of advertising and promoting their content through

the use of self-promotion and cross-promotion on allied and non-allied media. *Okaz* newspaper may go even further than many Western newspapers in its cross-promotion by promoting more articles on social media than *The New York Times* for instance, as one participant observed. *Okaz* also invests more time and effort in creating attractive headlines compared with some Western newspapers.

Other strategies related to reducing the financial losses in the newspaper business are also shared between the two cultures, as indicated by *Okaz*'s decisions to lay off employees, reduce the size of the newspaper, reduce the number of pages in the newspaper, and replace some of its longstanding employees with recent graduates in administration jobs as means of cutting costs. However, there are other Western strategies that have not yet been implemented in the Saudi media industry, such as charging subscription fees to readers in order for them to access the online version of the newspaper and/or be able to access several articles on the websites of other newspapers.

As stated in the literature review, *The New York Times* "follows the strategy of expanding their market reach both nationally and internationally", which has enhanced the newspaper's revenues. The expansion of its business attracts more viewers to its website globally, which in turn increases its revenues. *Okaz* has pursued a similar strategy to expand its markets by covering local, regional (Arab world), and international news, but has yet to harness the full potential of the Internet to generate online revenues.

Moreover, Bastos and Zago (2013) stated that *The New York Times* and *The Guardian* specifically cater their content to each social media platform with the intention of generating higher traffic or increasing their readership base. Newspapers can generate traffic to their websites by posting tweets on a social media website such as Twitter, which then redirects readers to the website of the newspaper where the story originated if they click on the news story on Twitter. *Okaz* has a similar approach, as it also differentiates its content for each

social media platform and maintains a social media presence—as stated by my interviewed participants—to help attract readers to its electronic website. Creating and modifying content to attract readers on multiple platforms is considered a way to grab readers’ attention amid the abundance of news media and entertainment providers. It is also considered a useful method in meeting readers’ needs of getting immediate news stories, as well as a strategy for the newspaper to offer a new or different product in a different market, that being the social media application.

7.2.14 Previous strategies used by *Okaz*

In some cases, newspapers will try different strategies that may gain acceptance in society or increase the number of readers/followers to the newspaper itself, and *Okaz* is no different in this respect. It used to have a mobile application that was not broadly accepted, due to the fact that it wasn’t developed properly and the timing was incorrect—it was available before there was much demand for such a service. Thus, it failed to gain popularity due to the lack of demand and because it required more development. However, the *Okaz* newspaper is working on updating its mobile application in a way that makes it more appealing to readers, focusing on features that allow readers to receive notifications about different news types that are of most interest to them, in hopes of capturing readers’ attention by meeting their different gratifications and needs, and diversifying the newspaper business by expanding their market reach—which aligns with my conceptual framework. This method has also been evident in the Western media market, where several western newspapers have adopted mobile applications as a way to provide news, to diversify their products, and as a way to attract a certain group of readers, specifically young readers with low incomes. Moreover, news mobile applications in Western countries are used as a way to generate revenues in this new era, though it requires readers to pay a low subscription fee in order for

that to work (O'Malley, 2015). Other strategies with which *Okaz* has experimented include offering money to readers who contributed stories to the newspaper, a strategy that can also be found in several Western newspapers, though this service also requires journalists to take more time and effort to ensure the truthfulness and accuracy of the information provided. Another reason that *Okaz* stopped this service was due to the lack of interest at the time that the newspaper implemented this strategy.

This seems to be a recurring problem at *Okaz*, introducing ideas at an inappropriate time, where the company's execution was unable to match its vision due to not fully understanding its market and their readers' needs. For instance, when *Okaz* newspaper first embraced and launched its electronic website, there was not much demand for news on the digital format. The lack of reader interests in this new format of presenting the news did not meet the expectations of the newspaper in generating traffic to the website at that time, as one of the study participants explained.

On the other hand, the newspaper has successfully adopted the system of email and RSS notifications to subscribers, who are able to receive messages about certain preferential types of news, a feature that is still active and offered to subscribers—this strategy has also been implemented in Western newspapers such as *The Washington Post* and many others. This service could be further developed to enable readers to receive breaking news stories, stories written by certain preferred writers, and news from specific categories of interest to them. Such features require the newspaper to have more programmers and system developers who are capable of creating such features for subscribers, and thus it may become more expensive for this service to function at its optimal level. Another service has involved dedicating the last two pages of the printed newspaper to younger generations as a way to attract the attention of young readers to the printed version. *Okaz* newspaper was able to

choose the proper time in activating and stopping this service based on the demands of the market.

7.2.15 Successful and unsuccessful strategies

It is more difficult to maintain readers than to attract them—newspapers can easily attract readers with gifts and special offers, yet this strategy is often only effective on a short-term basis. Therefore, the newspaper needs to continuously think of new strategies to grab readers and keep them interested enough to keep them for the long-term. Thus, promotions and special discounts are among the most common methods that the newspaper has adopted to maintain the business and attract readers. As stated before, some of its promotional marketing campaigns were only successful in the short run, though the negative side is that people were only buying the printed paper for the promotion rather than the content, even if it allowed *Okaz* to sell enough copies of the print newspaper to meet its revenue-generating goals. On the other hand, when adopting such strategies, *Okaz* does not necessarily achieve its main goals of informing and enlightening people about what is going on in the world and in Saudi society, despite the fact that it may be generating enough revenue to be able to survive a little longer. As of now, there is no certain way to maintain readers over the long term in Saudi Arabia without continuously luring them with promotions, prizes and discounts, and it has been established that such strategies do not create loyal readers, as stated by several participants.

Even though the advances in technology and the shift in readers' consumption patterns from print to online makes it even more difficult for some countries to attract readers to the print edition of the newspaper, it is based on each society's orientation to decide the way they get their news, along with the capability of the news organization in providing news of interest to readers, which is also considered accurate and credible. However, there is little

doubt that the shift to exclusively digital news is inevitable in all countries around the world, and has already begun in parts of the Western world.

7.2.16 Future plans and expectations about the newspaper's future

It is an observable fact that every organization invests in the business resources that they have, and *Okaz* is no different. Having said that, *Okaz* plans to seize the opportunity offered by these technological developments. Most of the study participants revealed that the newspaper plans to invest more in its mobile application as a way to diversify its service, as well as investing more in social media applications such as Snapchat to provide news that can attract more readers to both the print and online versions of the newspaper. Reviving the mobile application now is a step that may gain popularity in our widespread digital era. Although the West is increasing revenues as a result of online subscriptions, this strategy has been very slow to take hold in Saudi Arabia, as stated by many participants, yet *Okaz* is still contemplating creating another web presence known as *Okaz Gate* in which some sections are available to readers only for a fee, as a way to generate revenue online. In addition, the newspaper is proceeding with the cost-reduction plan it began several years ago by continuing to reduce the number of its employees, reducing the size of its print edition, establishing partnerships with other non-media businesses, and renting a smaller and less expensive office while leasing out its current building as a way to improve revenues and decrease costs.

7.2.17 Expectations about the future of the traditional print newspaper

Almost all of the participants were convinced that the online version of the newspaper would eventually replace the print format within the next 5 to 10 years, unless *Okaz*

drastically changes the content of its print version so that it becomes a provider of specialized news such as analytical data rather than news reporting, or unless it is distributed for free.

Regardless of the participants' expectations, traditional print newspapers could continue to exist even if it continues to be distributed for a fee and has low circulation numbers, due to the fact that it is considered an official document for governmental announcements in Saudi Arabia even though government sectors have their own websites to publish official proclamations. Furthermore, if traditional print newspapers are ultimately distributed for free, it will continue to be attractive to those advertisers who seek to advertise their products and services to a broad audience.

7.2.18 Conclusion

What I have largely observed from the interviews is that each of the three groups from the newspaper division (Business, Editorial and Administration) has described strategies that other departments should concentrate on implementing or improving. For instance, between Business and Editorial, each department had suggestions for employees of the other department, rarely providing insight into what is deficient in their own department. This could be related to the fact that they were being careful about providing information that might have negative consequences for their department. Although they pronounced that the business is suffering and they are doing their best to save it, all of the new measures³¹ and strategies implemented by *Okaz* have been slow to take hold due to the fact that the newspaper has to maintain its reputation and therefore it must consider each one of these strategies carefully before deciding whether or not to adopt it. On the other hand, the

³¹ The exception to this statement is when *Okaz* initially attempted to introduce an online newspaper, but that strategy did not yield the expected traffic at that time. Thus, the organization is choosing new strategies more carefully before deciding to adopt it, which is more time-consuming.

administrative group was a bit more open about stating the problems and challenges they face within their own department.

In consideration of the above analysis and discussion regarding the economical and technological challenges and readers' changing consumption habits, as well as the strategies and future plans of *Okaz*, it would not be surprising if the organization ultimately provided its newspaper for free. One strategy that most of the participants said is close to being implemented is differentiating the content in the printed version from the electronic version and to offer a PDF replica of the printed format for a fee. Charging a fee for subscribers to access the online version of the newspaper may not be an effective strategy currently, but may only require some additional time for Saudi society to accept the notion of paying for news online, or else establishing an agreement among all Saudi newspapers to concurrently charge users to read the content on their websites. Yet the success of such a strategy is not guaranteed and requires more tests and analyses to determine its effectiveness, and it might only be successful if these newspapers continuously study their readers' rapidly changing behaviors, motivational needs, and characteristics. This would require that newspapers put more consideration into what their readers deem to be newsworthy without erasing the role of the journalist as a news provider, as well as provide a wider diversity of news to attract a broader segment of the population. This will only be achievable if the newspaper takes bold steps in the near future, even if that means it may incur financial costs at first to invest more money and resources to do so.

Mobile applications and online subscriptions for newspapers have been met with some acceptance in Western countries by readers of many well-known newspapers. This can be attributed to the fact that the magnitude of the challenges varied between the West and Saudi Arabia, and that Western culture is quite different from that of Saudi society. Thus, what may be successful in the West may not be accepted and may even be met with

resistance in Saudi Arabia. However, similarities do arise in terms of some of the strategies between the West and Saudi Arabia, as in adopting and implementing the strategies of advertising the newspaper brand name and contents on allied and non-allied media, seizing the opportunity provided by technology and social media applications to provide content on different platforms to reach out to a wider readership by expanding the newspaper market reach to meet different readers' needs and gratification, as well as developing ways to entice advertisers to spend their money on the newspaper and to attract and maintain readers' attention. Therefore, my conceptual framework could be put into action at *Okaz* and other Saudi newspapers on several levels.

Hence, in answering section B from my research questionnaire, which deals with the newspaper side of my study, "What are the business strategies that have been considered and adopted to attract and retain readers?", I can find main similar strategies that have been considered in the West. These strategies range from the long-lasting practice of using eye-catching headlines, especially on the cover page, providing summaries of stories that can be found within a different section of the printed paper as a way to entice readers to purchase one newspaper over other competitors, and promoting and marketing the brand name of the newspaper on other media such as television and radio to a new practice that includes marketing the content of the newspaper on digital technology and social media applications. Posting headlines and breaking news on Twitter, Facebook, Snapchat and other platforms as a way to grab readers' attention to get the full news story from the official website or the traditional print newspaper even in the midst of the new digital era is one way to revive the traditional print format. Some other strategies include providing special discounts, offers, and coupons to subscribers of the print newspaper, as well as instant prizes and competition questions to attract and retain readers, in addition to presenting more news stories that are of interest to different segments of readers in society.

Moreover, in response to the question of “To what extent are recent business findings and strategies from the West relevant to the Saudi market?” in that same section, many of the findings are similar as there will always be more people who prefer to get news for free all over the world, and more are turning to social media to get convenient news as they gain more popularity among readers. However, long-lasting businesses (television, and print newspapers) continue to be considered trustworthy sources of news, yet social media are changing the playing field. Newspapers are struggling to generate revenue since there are far more news and entertainment providers now who are striving for the attention of the same number of readers. However, presenting news on social media as well as implementing social network sharing icons on the official website of the newspaper are strategies that have been considered relevant in both societies. Thus, most of the main business strategies can be found in media around the world, yet differences still exist between the Western world and Saudi Arabia in regard to generating revenue from online subscriptions and the freedom of the press, and thus reporting the news presents a distinct difference between the two societies, especially when it comes to reporting on an election.

The table below (Table 84) highlights some of the findings generated from other studies in the West and my findings from the participants I interviewed at *Okaz* newspaper for the purpose of comparison and clarification.

Table 84 Summary comparisons of the findings from other studies and my qualitative study of *Okaz* newspaper

	Findings from other studies	<i>Okaz</i> newspaper (<i>Okaz</i> specialists' explanations)
The challenges	-The main three challenges that face any newspaper are the economic and technological challenges, and the change in readers' consumption habits.	-Besides the three main challenges (economics, technology, and change in reading habits), some others arise but are not considered as major except for the changes in Saudi Arabia's regulations regarding the press.
Observations and comments		
-The three major challenges exist all over the world with some differences arising based on each country's unique characteristics.		
The years 2008/2009 and economical challenges	-Many newspapers in the West and other parts of the world have suffered financially during these years.	- <i>Okaz</i> did not encounter any financial losses in the years 2008/2009.
Observations and comments		
-The differences in the financial situation and governmental regulations in each country play a role in the magnitude of the challenge.		
Changing readers' habits in getting news	-Young readers are more into getting news online while older readers continue to prefer getting news from the traditional news format.	-As in the West, young readers are more into getting news online while older readers prefer getting news from the traditional news format.
Observations and comments		
-Similarities exist between the West and the response gathered from <i>Okaz</i> specialists, which can be attributed to the fact that older generations share the same habits of getting the news from traditional formats (print newspaper or even from TV).		
Advertising changes	-Most advertisers shift their practice to advertise on the online platform that includes social media applications since the price of placing an ad online is lower than the print version of the newspaper.	-Although most advertisers shift to advertise online due to the lower cost, it also depends on the type of product. For instance, <i>Okaz</i> newspaper continues to receive requests for advertisements about real estate on its printed version.
Observations and comments		
-Although similarities exist, all advertisers are shifting to online and social media platforms. In Saudi Arabia, the decision to place an advertisement continues to depend on the type of product that is being advertised as well as the audience advertisers are interested in targeting.		
Technological changes (competition between various news platforms)	-The online version of the newspaper is complementing the print version. -Many newspapers promote their stories and brand name through their official account on various social media applications.	-Similarly, <i>Okaz</i> newspaper considers the online version of the newspaper as complementing the print version. - <i>Okaz</i> newspaper also promotes its stories and brand name through its official account on social media applications.
Observations and comments		
-A similar trend is being found between <i>Okaz</i> newspaper and other papers around the world.		
Strategies	-The eye-catching headline was reported as a strategy used by many newspapers. -Newspapers provide different types of news to meet different gratifications. -Many newspapers in the West are far more advanced in harnessing the benefits provided by the Internet. -Many newspapers use social	- <i>Okaz</i> follows the same strategy of eye-catching headlines as a way to increase readers' attention, as well as continuing to provide promotions and discounts to entice readers to buy the print version. - <i>Okaz</i> also provides numerous different types of news to readers and tries to harness the full potential of the Internet. - <i>Okaz</i> newspaper uses social media to persuade readers to access the full story on the newspaper's official website, yet no fee is required to do so at this stage.

	media applications as an attractive tool to entice readers to the newspaper's website, yet a fee may be required to read full stories after reading a certain number of articles. -The mobile application was also intended to target younger readers with low income, by presenting news at a low cost.	- <i>Okaz</i> newspaper goes beyond what other newspapers do in the West in promoting its news stories on social media platforms. - <i>Okaz</i> newspaper is relaunching its mobile application that targets all segments of the population, but for no monetary return. - <i>Okaz</i> dedicates the last two pages of its printed version of the newspaper to young readers. These pages provide stories that are considered the most interesting trending news stories found on social media.
Observations and comments		
-Similarities and differences do exist between <i>Okaz</i> newspaper and other newspapers in the West and other parts of the world. Western newspapers are closer to harnessing the full potential of the Internet, while <i>Okaz</i> has yet to reach that level. - <i>Okaz</i> newspaper is still fighting for the survival of its printed version.		

7.3 Analysis and discussion of the quantitative findings

7.3.1 Descriptive statistics

This chapter has explored the general characteristics of Saudi newsreaders. While readers' consumption habits have changed with the advent of technology, little research has been done to understand the nature of their motivations, the types of news they read, and readers' willingness to pay to access and consume news from different online platforms. This section is intended to discuss and analyze the results I provided in Chapter 6 and compare them with findings from studies in the West and other parts of the world.

7.3.1.1 Means and frequency of getting news

The survey responses suggest that the main consumption patterns in Saudi Arabia are rather similar to the West and other parts of the world—virtually everyone now accesses the Internet using a smartphone, with the most dominant segment being young to middle-aged adults. In addition, one can find a growing number of readers in the US who get their news from social media sites. My survey confirms these findings as 94% of my participants access the Internet using their smartphone. Moreover, reading news on a social media website is one of the top three activities that Saudi participants do at home, which indicates a growing trend in perceiving social media as a source of news, and Twitter was ranked as the main source of

getting news online (46%). More and more people globally are using the Internet as well, which indicates an increasing level of world connectivity and a rising trend in digital technology.

However, Americans still consider traditional media as important sources of news, as television is still the most popular method for accessing news, followed by word of mouth from their peers (American Press Institute, & Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research, 2014). In the Arab countries, television and interpersonal resources (friends and family) are considered the most important sources of news, though online platforms are gaining popularity with Arab nationals (Dennis, Martin, & Wood, 2017).

With advances in technology, almost all newspapers now have a web presence as a way to capture readers' attention, as they attempt to meet the gratification needs of their audience by publishing different types of news that cater to different tastes and can be accessed anywhere and at any time. My reader's survey shows that there are more people who read online newspapers than traditional print newspapers, which illustrates a shift in readers' consumption patterns as they search for the most up-to-date facts, news and information available to them. This shift can also be found in the West and all over the world as readers move from the traditional newspaper to consuming their news online. Moreover, similarities can also be found when comparing demographics between the US and KSA, as indicated in the literature review. In both countries, younger readers prefer to get their news online, while older readers prefer traditional print format and television.

Furthermore, my analysis shows that almost half of the surveyed participants access online news on a daily basis, and have been reading news online for more than two years, mostly doing so in the evening and at night, and access it less frequently in the morning and the afternoon and for shorter time periods. Traditional print newspapers are mostly being read in the morning, while online newspapers, news aggregators, and social media are being read

most and/or all of the time. On the other hand, according to The Media Insight Project (2014), about 33% of American participants reported that they follow the news at any time of the day, yet 24% follow the news strictly in the morning and 26% follow news strictly in the evening regardless if they watch, read, or listen to the news. In addition, about 76% of Americans get news on a daily basis whether they are watching, hearing or reading the news (American Press Institute & Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research, 2014).

The Internet offers thousands of information sources which readers can choose from, yet my survey shows that there is an overlap (20%) between readers who get their news from online and traditional print formats, which indicates that traditional print media brands that are seen as trustworthy still attract audiences to read their news in a digital environment. A similar trend is found in other parts of the world, as *The New York Times* in the US. and *The Daily Telegraph*, *The Guardian*, and, *The Independent* in the UK (Thurman, 2014), for instance, each have witnessed an overlap of readers who access both the online and traditional print newspapers of these publications.

7.3.1.2 Shifting trend of getting news

The shifting trend towards consuming news online via social media sites is evident in many readers' changing consumption habits, as growing numbers of people turn to social media applications such as Twitter, Snapchat and Instagram to get their news, far surpassing their consumption of online newspapers. My survey results showed that these social media applications—Twitter, Snapchat and Instagram—are the three main applications that participants downloaded onto their smartphones. However, when participants were asked about their main source of news, social media—and Twitter in particular—continues to be the frontrunner, which indicates a growing trend among many to consume news predominantly on social media applications. Although almost half of the surveyed participants mainly get

their news from Twitter, the survey did not specify whether or not readers were consuming news from newspapers' official accounts on social media applications or from people they follow, yet newspapers might consider using Twitter more often to attract readers to their official accounts or to entice readers to subscribe to their official websites. Similarly, according to Reuters, 51% of Americans claimed that they get their news from social media (Newman, Fletcher, Kalogeropoulos, Levy, & Nielsen, 2017), which shows a shifting trend in consuming news on digital formats. However, a more recent study by Pew Research Center stated that about two-thirds of American (68%) get their news from social media sites, and that Facebook (43%) is mostly used for news, followed by YouTube (21%), and Twitter (12%), while only 8% or fewer get news from Instagram or Snapchat (Shearer & Matsa, 2018). Although similarities can exist between Saudis and Americans, as both countries are witnessing a similar shift of newsreaders to the digital environment in terms of accessing news from social media and traditional newspapers are struggling to maintain their audience base, differences exist regarding the preferred platform that they use to read the news. This shift in readers' preferences has affected the media business more and more as readers' attention becomes increasingly important to media organizations thus, they alter their approach to put more emphasis on their readers and thus follow readers to different platforms, which reflects why I have included the attention theory in my conceptual framework.

7.3.1.3 Motivation behind accessing news

Most of the respondents access news mainly to fulfill their gratification needs to be informed about events in their country and region, in addition to getting breaking news and important news, as they show a high overall level of information-driven motivation compared to entertainment, social, and opinion-driven motivation. Most participants reported no difficulties in navigating online newspapers, Yahoo News, Google News, and Twitter, and

had no problems with commenting on stories found on Facebook—these are the two factors that readers consider most important among online news providers.

A similar trend was found in the West. According to Lee's study of US adults (2013), the study participants were mostly driven by information-driven motivation when consuming news followed by social, entertainment, and opinion-driven motivation. My data reveal that the Saudi population is mostly driven by the same motivations. In Lee's study, age was a predictor for all four motivations, education was a predictor for information and opinion-driven motivation, and gender was a predictor for only information-driven motivation. Yet that was not the case in my findings, as age and gender were both predictors for only the information-driven motivation.

By considering the uses and gratification theory, a news organization may be able to get a more analytical view of the type of motivation that mainly drives readers to get their news, and thus they can focus more on those motivations and develop the intention to meet their readers' needs that are tied to these motivations.

7.3.1.4 Willingness to pay for news

Most readers of online newspapers regard the availability of news at any time of the day as the most important feature of reading news online, followed by receiving instant news and receiving the news for free. Similar findings to these were observed previously (AlShehri & Gunter, 2002), as Arab readers mainly get news online because they don't have to pay for it. Thus, the availability of news at any given time at no cost is one of their primary reasons for reading online newspapers. Although most of the surveyed participants do not pay for news online, the one exception indicated that their main reason for paying for online news was the immediacy of receiving news, as well as the additional benefits they received from

paying. In Estonia, a study conducted by Himma-Kadakas and Kõuts in 2015³² found that exclusive quality and distinctive content were the two main features behind readers' willingness to pay for online news. Yet somewhat surprisingly, immediacy of information was not at the top of the list of factors motivating Estonians to pay for news, although it was the main reason given in my study. The wide majority of the people surveyed indicated they are not willing to pay for their favourite newspaper online, stating that they can get free news elsewhere and that they already pay enough for their Internet connection; however, a small number of participants provided conditions that would make them more willing to pay for their favourite newspaper online, notably immediacy of information and whether the publication was worth paying for. Yet only 15% of the surveyed people said they are willing to pay to read their favorite newspaper online.

The wide majority of the expatriate participants in the AlShehri and Gunter study were also not willing to pay a fee to read their favourite online newspaper, even though they had no physical access to the print version of their native newspaper, nor was there any other way to access stories from their regional newspaper except online. As stated before, a similar trend was observed in other parts of the world, as Chyi and Lee's 2013 study found that only 6% of the participants in the US stated that they were willing to pay for news online. Furthermore, Dennis, Martin and Wood, (2017) reported that across Arab nations, only 33% of the respondents reported any willingness to pay for news content whether digital, on TV, in newspapers, or in magazine.

³² The reason for including this study (by Himma-Kadakas and Kõuts) specifically is because my survey question is adapted from it—the section related to the “not sure” answers. However, the other study of AlShehri and Gunter (2002) used a similar question but with only “yes” and “no” for the answers, and this latter study only interviewed Arab readers who are residents of other countries, not their own native country.

Several studies have stressed the importance of quality for news purchase motivations, either in print or online. In France, Labasse (2008) found that the perceived quality of content was the second predictor of newspaper purchases, after parental habits but even before the age and level of education of the respondents (n=30,000). More recently, a Reuters Institute study also showed that the key criterion that would prompt readers to pay for news is the quality of the news, which included factors such as depth of coverage, impartiality of reporting, accuracy, familiarity with the writing style, the ease and convenience of the online experience, and the brand name of the news provider (Kantar Media, 2017). Some related factors can be found in the responses of my survey participants in Saudi Arabia, who were driven by the immediacy and quality of the information, whether they would receive extra information, the trustworthiness of the source, and content that would be relevant to the readers. Yet this only accounts for 8% of all the survey participants who expressed a willingness to pay for news online, indicating that additional future research may be needed in this regard.

Likewise, when participants were asked about their future intentions to pay for online news in general, although a large majority still maintained an unwillingness to pay, in which only 9% declared that they were willing to pay, and almost one-third of the respondents were unsure, indicating a possibility that they could change their mind in the future about paying for news online. In 2015, Himma-Kadakas and Kõuts presented similar findings from Europe, in which most Estonians stated they were not willing to pay for online content, though the percentage of participants who were “not sure” was only slightly less than in my survey. Moreover, Chyi (2005) reported that only 21% of participants from Hong Kong are willing to pay for news if they need to pay, while Kammer, Boeck, Hansen, and Hauschildt (2015) reported that young readers from Denmark would be willing to pay for online news only if they can combine news content from different news providers.

However, to understand more about readers' willingness to pay and what prompts readers to pay for news, I decided to look deeper into clustering readers into different segments based on their News Access Profile, to understand which motivational factors are driving readers to pay for news. I found that three out of the four readers clustered groups are willing to pay for news based on different factors, which include having different motivational drivers. The discussion of my Latent Class Model is provided later in this chapter.

7.3.1.5 Rating news believability

Our participants indicated a higher level of believability regarding the news provided on Twitter than the other news providers (traditional print newspapers, online newspapers, Yahoo News, Google News, and news on Facebook); however, my study did not specify whether this news came from the official accounts of news media providers or from unofficial sources. Nevertheless, my participants still consider traditional print newspapers to be a believable and credible source of news, even in this changing digital media environment. Although the question from my questionnaire of believability was adopted from Xie and Zhao's study (2014) in China, their initial question regarding believability was similar to my study. Yet the news providers were different as they put together a collection of print newspapers and TV channels together. Their study found that believability in females is higher than in males, however, my study found no significant difference between genders in terms of believability in news sources.

Moreover, another study by Mehrabi, Abu Hassan, and Ali on non-academic professional staff in Malaysia (2011) found that news from printed newspapers was rated more credible than news from the Internet. A similar finding was reported by my study as print newspapers are still considered as a credible source of information.

7.3.1.6 Consuming different types of news from online and print news providers

News providers tend to attract different readers depending on the types of news they publish. My statistical analysis shows that readers turn to traditional print newspapers for stories related to health, technology, local and international news, and also tend to access local and international news through online newspapers and Google News. Readers access international news and news related to technology most on Yahoo, while local, international, and news related to health and technology are being accessed primarily on Facebook. Overall, Twitter was the news source accessed most frequently by participants for local and international news.

Another study shows that most Arabs are interested in reading both local and international news on a daily basis (Dennis, Martin, & Wood, 2017); however, the same study shows that Saudi Arabian residents are mostly accessing news related to art and entertainment, which are different types of news than the findings of my study. Thus, there is a need to conduct more research to better understand what types of newsreaders prefer to consume from each platform. These data will help news organizations determine the types of news that interest readers and meet their gratification needs. In the UK, a Reuters Institute Digital News Survey in 2017 revealed that the two types of news of most interest to readers in that country are local and regional news followed by international news (Schröder, 2019). However, the study did not show the means in which UK readers were accessing the news, specifically whether it was a print format, online, search engine or a social media application.

As previously mentioned, a study by Bastos (2014) showed that *The New York Times* emphasizes topics related to economics, lifestyle, national news, and technology on its Twitter account, while news stories about art, entertainment, fashion, local news, opinion pieces, and politics were more popular on Facebook. These data indicate that the newspaper focuses on and provides the news type that generates the most traffic on each specific media

platform according to its readers' interests. My survey shows that the types of news varies between readers in the US and Saudi Arabia, except that readers in both regions prefer accessing local news on Facebook, which highlights the difference in readers' interests and in the culture of these two countries.

Moreover, newspaper businesses could choose to emphasize a specific category of news over others when providing news on different platforms, thus maximizing their chances to attract readers who are drawn to that type of news on their official media accounts. Understanding readers' interest in news reflects the importance of the uses and gratification theory from my conceptual framework, as readers tend to turn to a specific platform to consume specific categories of news. By understanding readers' motivations and gratification needs, and what type of news that they most read, news organization will then be able to target the types of news they generate to all the various platforms.

7.3.1.7 Rogers' diffusion of innovation

When considering Rogers's five attributes on the adoption of technological innovation in explaining why readers consume news online, my findings suggests that "getting news at any time" is a stronger predictor for consuming news online. Readers reported that they are "online most of their time", as using technology allows them to find a wide variety of news as well as save them time and effort in searching for news stories. From my results when considering Rogers' adoption of innovation, the following attributes of: "getting news at any time," "being online most of the time," "finding a wide variety of news," and "saving time and effort in searching for news" justify the reasons behind the shifting trend of readers turning to social media and mobile applications when consuming news online.

The trend to consume online is evident all over the world. According to Pew Research Center, more Americans are shifting their reading consumption patterns from print to online—33% of Americans get their news from news websites and 43% get their news either

from news websites or social media combined, compared to only 16% who get their news from print newspapers in 2018. Yet, people are 65+ years old still prefer to get their news from TV and print newspapers (Shearer, 2018). Readers are clearly searching for a more convenient and more accessible way to get news anywhere and at any time. To attract readers' attention, news organizations expand their business reach to follow readers who shift their interests to consume news online. Thus, Ansoff's matrix is useful in explaining why news businesses are expanding their market reach, while at the same time competing for readers' attention by providing news on multiple applications.

7.3.2 Correlations

When I conducted a Pearson correlation test in explaining why readers access the news online from different news providers in relation to technical features of the online websites, I found that there are two variables that predict why readers frequently access news from a newspaper's website—downloading time and content updates—while the most frequent predictor of readers accessing news on Google News was downloading time. Although this measurement was adopted from AlShehri and Gunter in 2002, it is worth noting that their study focused on Arab residents living outside of their native country and occurred at a time when online newspapers were just beginning to emerge, yet it was intended to understand the changes in Arab readers' attitudes. Their findings demonstrated a higher correlation to the variables of navigation and content updates, while my study concurs that frequent content updates continue to be an important predictor for people to read online newspapers.

One of the notable findings of my study among readers' activities at home or at work (as shown in Table 34) is that home activities related to “reading news on a newspaper's website” correlated highly with online newspapers in “navigating in general/ease of navigation” and “downloading time”, while the activity of using the Internet to “read news on

social media websites” is highly correlated to online newspapers regarding “navigating in general/ease of navigation”, and “news found on Twitter” is highly correlated regarding “content updating”. Additionally, readers use the Internet at home primarily to “read news from search engines” such as Yahoo News, which is frequently accessed due to the “ease of commenting”, while Google News ranks highly in regard to “ease of navigation”, “downloading time”, “content updating” and “ease of commenting”. In addition, my findings show that people’s tendencies to “share news” from “online newspapers” is associated with fast “downloading time”, which suggests that online newspapers invest more time and effort into providing content that can be easily accessed on digital devices. Moreover, readers are more likely to “share news” on “Google” when they find more “updated content”, as readers now have access to a variety of news stories from all possible news providers with no geographical boundaries.

The findings also indicate a higher level of Internet connectivity, as readers mainly access news at home and rank different news providers based on features that are most appealing to them. Thus, newspaper businesses not only consider all platforms to access news, but also the most appealing features to readers when providing news. This question was also adapted from AlShehri and Gunter’s study in 2002, which mostly focused on online newspapers and did not include the option of “commenting” nor did it explore the different activities performed at home and at work by study participants, which were included in my questionnaire so that I could have a more comprehensive understanding of readers’ criteria for accessing news online. Nevertheless, in their study, three features correlated to reading online newspapers (navigating, downloading, and updating); however, my study only shows a correlation between reading online newspapers and “navigating the website in general” and “downloading time”. Navigating and downloading continue to be the main features that encourage readers to read online newspapers. Although it is curious that “updated content” is

not one of the principal reasons, it might be that readers already perceive that online newspapers provide news which is up-to-date, and thus it was not a key consideration for people's reasons for reading news online.

Pearson correlation was also used to identify and determine the level of credibility of each news provider (e.g., traditional print newspapers, online newspapers, Google News, Yahoo News, news on Facebook, and news on Twitter) in relation to the average time spent on the Internet and reading news from those sources (see Table 35). My results show that out of all six news sources, the strongest correlation between the credibility of a source and accessing news from that same source was found on Google News and on Twitter, which implies that respondents in my sample perceive Google and Twitter to be credible sources of news and information. The participants consider all of the other news sources to be credible as well, but with a lower correlation. Additionally, readers spend more time on the Internet reading news on Twitter, which is also a result of the perception that it is a credible source for getting news online. Thus, newspapers might seize this opportunity in providing more appealing titles of a news story to attract readers' attention and capture their attention to look for more details on that story on their online version, or the newspapers might even be able to persuade them to subscribe to or purchase the traditional print format. Furthermore, my findings reveal that participants who still read a newspaper's traditional print format perceive its online version to be credible as well, which indicates that brand value continues to be significant in this changing media environment. A similar finding was reported in the West, as readers who consider the print format of the newspaper to be credible are more likely to perceive its online version to be credible as well (Mitchelstein & Boczkowski, 2010; Leurdijk, Slot, & Nieuwenhuis, 2012), thus illustrating their trust in and loyalty toward the brand name of the newspaper (Herbert & Thurman, 2007).

In regard to gender, my survey results find that males are interested in reading almost all types of news from any news format with the exception of fashion news, which was found to be of most interest to females. Although the majority of my survey participants were females, it can be indicated that males have more interest than females in reading a wider variety of news genres from different news providers (details about these data results were provided in section 6.1.17). A study of Americans conducted by The Media Insight Project in 2014 found that males are more likely to be interested in international news (75% males – 61% females) and sports news (57% males – 34% females), while females are more likely to be interested in news on education (69% females – 50% males), health news (74% females – 56% males), lifestyle (58% females – 30% males), and entertainment and celebrities (44% females – 28% males), regardless of the news provider from which they get their news (American Press Institute & Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research, 2014).

A correlation analysis was conducted between online newspaper credibility and the future intention to pay for online news. I used the one-way ANOVA test because there is a minimum of three groups. My results find that readers who may consider paying for online news also perceive there to be a higher level of credibility among online newspapers. Thus, the more people perceive a news source's credibility, the more they are willing to pay for news from that source. A study conducted in 2015 in Estonia found that willingness to pay for online news is driven by many factors including the quality of the news provided, yet quality is a bit of a fuzzy term that can hold different meanings depending on each reader's own preferences and perceptions (Himma-Kadakas & Kõuts, 2015). Himma-Kadakas and Kõuts did not mention credibility per se in their study, yet credibility can be explained by the quality of the news.

In regard to survey respondents currently paying for their favourite online newspaper and the perceived credibility of the online newspaper, my results show no difference, which indicates that the credibility of a news source has no bearing on respondents' current intentions to pay for online newspapers. This is a clear signal that readers are not ready to pay for news at this time, though readers consider credibility to be a main determining factor in their future intention to pay for news. In other words, if they have to pay, credibility will be the driver of which news source they intend to pay for.

Regarding the uses and gratification theory (motivations behind reading the news), I can find four main motivations in readers when they consume news. My statistical analysis reveals that these four motivations show high reliability in each of its components, yet opinion-driven motivation was the lowest among them, which could be due to the fact that I only provided two statements to participants to measure this motivation. In regard to gender-related motivation, my results reveal that males have significantly higher information-driven motivation than females. As mentioned earlier, males in my survey showed more interest in almost all types of news, and therefore score higher for information motivation. It is interesting to note that age and level of education show no difference in driving participants' motivation; however, younger participants (18–45 years old) were closer to approaching significance regarding information-driven motivation than those who are 46+ years old. In the West, a study done by Lee (2013) showed that the average American adult was mostly driven by information motivation, followed by social, entertainment, and opinion-driven motivation. However, Lee's study results showed that women were more likely to consume news for information motivation than men, while my study revealed the opposite. Moreover, in Lee's study, age was a predictor for all four motivations, and level of education was a predictor only for information- and opinion-driven motivation, and older adults were more likely to consume news for information- and opinion-driven motivation while younger

readers were more likely to consume news for entertainment- and social-driven motivation. Nevertheless, age and level of education show almost no variation in my study, other than the fact that participants in the younger age groups (up to 45 years old) were somewhat more driven by information motivation than those aged 46 years and older. Considering the uses and gratification theory from my framework, if a newspaper were interested in targeting females, then it may emphasize providing more stories about fashion; however, if the newspaper sought to target male readers, then it could decide to offer any other type of news but fashion, since males are more driven by information motivation factor than females.

Moreover, when I looked at testing motivations regarding employment status, my results reveal that employed participants had a lower score for entertainment-driven, opinion-driven and social-driven motivations, which can likely be explained by their busy working days and their lack of available time to turn to media to fulfill entertainment or social needs that are more easily satisfied when gathering with friends and family or even with co-workers. On the other hand, unemployed participants have more leisure time, and thus they do turn to media for entertainment and subsequently have a higher score for entertainment-driven motivation. This same trend can be observed between employed participants and retired participants (who are approaching significance), as retired people may be more likely to turn to media to find out people's opinions regarding certain subjects. This can be further justified by the fact that employed participants are exposed to a wide range of opinions from co-workers at their workplace, an option that retired people do not have. A similar situation can be found between employed mothers and stay-at-home moms in regard to social-driven motivation, as employees can satisfy their need of being socialized at their workplace. One other observation worth stating is that students do not turn to news media³³ for opinions and

³³ When describing media in relation to motivation, there is a distinction between media sources that mainly provide news and media that are only intended to provide entertainment.

entertainment (as they don't consider news media to be sources of entertainment), but rather will turn to media sources other than news providers for entertainment. Thus, for newspapers to be able to target young readers (students), they might consider entering a new market—as reflected in Ansoff's matrix from my framework—by providing these segments of readers with options such as online games or chat forums on their website. Likewise, *Okaz* newspaper has already researched ways of attracting young readers by considering providing them with games in its future new “Okaz Gate” format as a way to attract this demographic of readers to the website, which could serve simultaneously to generate traffic to its website and thus attract advertisers and generate greater income.

When I look at the relationship between the level of income and the type of motivation driven by it, the results show that people with no income perceive more significance regarding opinion-driven motivation. Additionally, people show no difference regarding all types of motivation when I considered their marital status or the language they speak. These results could generate interest for future research to examine in greater depth the reasons behind people's motivations regarding media. However, in the West, Lee's study in 2013 found that the level of income was not a predictor for any type of news consumption motivation.

Most participants from my study perceive and describe news as important to them, yet although they enjoy news, their level of enjoyment was less than the importance of getting the news. Therefore, importance of “news enjoyment” and “the advantages of news”, and a “more favourable attitude towards news overall” can lead to higher correlations of news consumption. Similar findings on motivational consumption were reported by Lee and Chyi (2014a) in their survey on American adults. Another study by The Media Insight Project in 2014 reported that the vast majority of Americans (88%) claim that they enjoy keeping up

with the news (American Press Institute & Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research, 2014).

When I look at innovation, I find a significant correlation between reading news from online newspapers and the five attributes that can drive the adoption of technology. These are attributes that drive readers to consider reading news online, such as accessing the news more easily anywhere and at any time, saving them time and effort, and finding a wider variety of news from multiple providers. Readers also reported other factors including the ease of learning to read news online and that reading news online would not lead to a frustrating experience. From that, one can infer that readers put a greater emphasis on statements around relative advantage and complexity attributes. According to Pew Research Center (2019), ease of use of the website (a basic need) is considered one of the most important features for Americans when they consume news online, and is of even greater importance than having a more advanced website that provides more digital features (Pew Research Center, 2019). However, my study found that the statement “online news website is difficult to use” (which is equal to/explained by the ease of use) was not a significant predictor for readers to read news online. Thus, one can find that other factors (finding news more easily anywhere and at any time, finding a wider variety of news that saves readers time and effort, and an online experience that does not cause frustration for them) play major roles in shaping readers’ decisions to read news online.

Many researchers measure credibility differently, and since my findings show that readers “still consider all news sources credible”, it is worthy to look at the most dominant features that enhance their belief that these news providers are credible; in other words, the components of credibility that readers look at in regard to each news provider. My results indicate that readers perceive credibility in traditional print newspapers based on trustworthiness and expertise, a finding that is compatible with what Fogg and Tseng and

several researchers have identified as key components of credibility. Yet, Bucy (2003) and Meyer, Marchionni, and Thorson (2010) as well as several other researchers described fairness and accuracy as major components of credibility, and my results don't show any difference regarding these components. Regarding the other five news providers (online newspapers, Yahoo News, Google News, news on Facebook, and news on Twitter), participants emphasize that hypertextuality is a greater measure of credibility in the digital environment. However, in their recent study of participants at a large American university, Chung, Nam, and Stefanone (2012) found that news on Yahoo scores low on the hypertextuality scale, and hypertextuality did not contribute to credibility for one of the main online newspapers (*The New York Times*). My results demonstrate the opposite, that the hypertextuality scale does contribute to the credibility of all online news sources (see Chapter 6 for more details). From these data, I can determine that the most dominant factors of credibility in traditional print newspapers among Saudi readers are if they perceive the publication to be trustworthy and written with expertise, while the most dominant factor to determine credibility for other online news providers is based on special features that they offer Saudi readers, in addition to ease of accessing and sharing the news. Thus, newspapers include features that allow readers to "share news by clicking" and "access news by a link" as ways to meet readers' needs and motivations, and enhance their experience to use the newspapers' website.

7.3.3 Data Outliers

Since the length of the survey questionnaires may have been a bit long, I have observed outliers in some scores related to the credibility of the news sources (traditional print newspapers, online newspapers, Yahoo News, Google News, news on Facebook, and news on Twitter), the trustworthiness scores for traditional print newspapers, and the expertise score for Google News. The results have slightly left-skewed distribution for

interactivity scores, multimediality scores, and hypertextuality scores for news on Facebook and for Yahoo News, and also have slightly left-skewed distribution for hypertextuality scores of traditional print newspapers and online newspapers, the information-driven motivation score, and the amount of time spent reading online news, yet the box-whisker plots show fairly symmetrical distribution in all of the outliers. Although these outliers did not affect my overall results, it is worth mentioning them. However, for future research, a shorter and more focused version of the survey would be preferable to avoid such outliers.

7.3.4 Latent class models

In considering the Latent Class Model, the results show that readers from Cluster 1 (All-Source News Seekers) and Cluster 3 (Online News Seekers) are more likely and willing to pay a fee to cover the costs of reading their favourite online newspaper. Moreover, readers who are in Cluster 1 (All-Source News Seekers), Cluster 3 (Online News Seekers), and Cluster 4 (News Avoiders) show a future intention and greater consideration to pay for online news in general. Surprisingly, News Avoiders, who had no interest in paying a fee to read their favourite online newspaper, demonstrate a shift in their intentions as they were found to be willing to pay for news online in general in the future. This may indicate either that they could change their mind in the future or that they would be willing to pay if they had to (out of necessity) because there is no other way to get the news for free or if something really important were to happen that might have a direct effect on that person. In addition, in both cases, Cluster 2 (Social Media News Seekers) shows no interest in paying for news online. Moreover, Social Media News Seekers, the cluster that is not willing to pay for its favourite online newspaper and has no intention to do so in the future, are described as a group of people who read news from social media sources but not from search engines, traditional print newspapers or online newspapers. They are basically motivated or driven by information, and they primarily access social media to get information. Moreover, this cluster

scores high in sharing news on Twitter, as they are more likely to find Twitter believable and less likely to find online newspapers and Google News believable.

As with News Avoiders, who might change their future intention to pay for news online, a similar trend was reported by Hong Kong citizens, who claim that they may be willing to pay for news online but only out of necessity. Thus, there is evidence that different segments may change their mind and demonstrate greater willingness to pay for news online contingent on specific circumstances. Therefore, newspapers ought to continuously monitor the business market and focus on understanding and observing readers' different needs, gratifications, and motivations based on the changing media market environment, since Cluster 4 proves that readers' conceptions and behaviour are constantly changing.

Meanwhile, Clusters 1, 3, and 4, who are willing to pay for online news in the future, either score high or relatively high in all three motivations—as is the case for Clusters 1 and 3—or they score low in all three motivations, as is the case for Cluster 4. In addition, the three clusters that are willing to pay are more likely to believe in Google News, in contrast to Cluster 2, which is not willing to pay for online news and is less likely to believe in Google News. As a result, I found that these four classes demonstrated that there is heterogeneity in the News Access Profile of newsreaders. The heterogeneity can be justified based on the different levels of credibility, believability, the types of news that readers access, the motivations behind reading the news, and their ability to adapt to new technology.

The uses and gratification framework is reflected in my Latent Class Model, as readers who are willing to pay for news online are more likely to be described as either only information-driven readers or highly driven by all three motivations³⁴, or else they are even

³⁴ Originally and mainly they are four motivations, however, in my Latent Class Model, I combined the social-driven motivations with the opinion-driven motivations because opinion-driven motivation can be associated with being socialized. (as stated before in chapter 6).

less motivated as is the case with News Avoiders. However, News Avoiders' intentions are related to the necessity of getting news. Thus, newspapers may focus more on providing as much information as possible which meets readers' different gratifications, with a special focus on information-driven motivation as it appears to be the one common motivation among the three clusters.

By understanding the factors that help shape readers' willingness to pay for online news, newspaper organizations are then able to target the segments of the population that are most willing to pay for news online, and to receive greater insight about different categories of readers so that they can rethink their business strategies and create new ideas based on the needs and interests of those specific segments. In addition, online newspapers can provide a short version of the survey used in my study to determine the clusters of specific customers. In this way, they can target readers in Clusters 1, 3, and 4 with more targeted offers, as well as try to convert the readers in Cluster 2 into becoming future paying customers. Yet, Cluster 4 considers the most challenging segment to attract them as they score low in all motivations. Thus, it is difficult to predict what to expect from them in term of their changing behaviour and what is their future intention. Which is require future research on those specific cluster. Therefore, it is necessary for newspapers' businesses to continuously monitor the market, understand readers' needs, changing behaviors, and motivations while providing them with innovative services that grab their attention. The summary of these findings can be found in Chapter 6 (in particular, Table 82 Summary of the NAP model findings).

In response to the first question in section A from my research questions that deal with the readers' side— "How are the consumption patterns of Saudi citizens being altered in the light of digital innovations?"—one can find that more people are abandoning the traditional print format in order to consume news on social media applications, and especially Twitter which is currently the most popular site for accessing the news. Readers are turning

to various social media applications to get different types of news, a trend that can be also observed within other nations. The shift to online newspapers is increasingly evident among Saudi citizens as a way to get news. Change in readers' lifestyles, different motivations, and seeking to fulfill different gratifications that can only be met online are mostly what are persuading these readers to access news from the Internet. Moreover, in answering the second question of this section, "What could encourage Saudi Arabian readers to pay for online news?", the general answer to this question is "out of necessity", if there is no other way to get the news unless they have to pay, or otherwise if newspapers provide special news that can only be obtained through payments. Thus, I can answer my main question of the study "What are the potential avenues for survival for a Saudi Arabian newspaper facing readership decline?" by considering the two aspects of my study—the business aspect and the social aspect—and by continuously developing innovative practices and strategies that grab readers attention, meet their gratifications needs, and expand the vision of the newspaper business by considering different market and services which cover the conceptual framework of my study. Nevertheless, it is also important for newspapers to find ways to make these kinds of improvements while also keeping in mind what readers deem to be newsworthy and without eliminating the jobs of journalists and reporters who provide news that is considered credible and trustworthy, as journalists continue to be authentic providers of the news amidst this evolution of technology.

The following table (Table 85) provides a comparison between my study and some of the main findings in US studies for the purpose of summarizing the data in the West and in Saudi Arabia.

Table 85 Summary comparisons of some of the main findings from my quantitative study and US studies

	Findings from other studies	Findings from this study
Accessing the Internet	-Most US readers access the Internet using a smartphone.	-94% of the participants access the Internet using a smartphone.
Observations and comments		
-There is a growing trend in accessing the Internet using a smartphone globally.		
Accessing the news	-More than two-thirds of Americans report getting news on a daily basis -More than a third of Americans get news online at any time of the day; however, they follow news in the evening more than they do in the morning.	-Almost half of the participants access the news online on a daily basis. -Most of the participants get their news in the evening and late at night, and less frequently in the morning and afternoon.
Observations and comments		
-One can observe that people are more connected to the Internet as their habits shift to consume news online. -Similarities do exist between the West and Saudi Arabia in regards to the amount of news being accessed and read, as in both cultures readers follow the news more at night than in the morning, which indicates that readers have more time to read news online while they are not at work. Other factors may contribute to that such as the means by which they access the news.		
Getting news	-Most US readers get their news from social media applications. -Twitter is among the top three sites being used for online news (ranked third after Facebook and YouTube) -A shifting trend to consume news online is evident in the West.	-One of the three main activities of Saudis is using the Internet at home to access and read news on social media applications. -The highest ranked site for reading online news is Twitter. -The surveyed participants are shifting to consume news in online formats.
Observations and comments		
-There is a shifting trend to get news from social media applications all over the world. -Twitter is considered among the preferred applications for getting news online. -One can observe a distinct shift toward consuming news online all over the world.		
Brand loyalty in the digital era	-An overlap among readers on the traditional print format and its online version is found among Western newspapers.	-My survey found that there is a 20% overlap of readers who read the traditional print format of the newspaper and its online version.
Observations and comments		
-An overlap of readers indicates that traditional newspapers still continue to be a trusted, credible source of information. -It is also evidence that loyal readers will follow the trusted newspaper brand anywhere.		
Motivations and drivers of the motivations	-Information-driven is considered the main motivation behind consuming news followed by social-driven motivation, entertainment-driven motivation, and opinion-driven motivation.	-All four motivations are considered important drivers in consuming news in the following order: information-driven motivation followed by entertainment-driven motivation, social-driven motivation, and opinion-driven motivation.
Observations and comments		
-In both cultures, one can find that information-driven motivation is the main reason for consuming news, as other motivations can be met by other means. -American females are more likely to be driven to consume news for information, while Saudi males are also more likely to be driven by information motivation. -In the US, age was a predictor for all four motivations, education was a predictor for information and opinion, and gender predicts only information. Yet in Saudi Arabia, age and gender are only predictors for information-driven motivation. Moreover, people with no income in Saudi Arabia are more motivated by opinion-driven motivation; however, in the US, the level of income was not a factor in driving any of the motivations. -One can find that all motivations are perceived as important; however, differences exist regarding the predictors that trigger or drive each motivation between the two cultures.		
Interest in different	-Males are more interested in	-Males from my study are more interested

types of news for each gender	international and sports news, while females are more interested in education news, health news, lifestyle, entertainment and celebrity news.	in all types of news except for fashion news, which was found to be the most interesting type of news among females.
Observations and comments		
-Differences between each gender's interests in the news do exist between American and Saudi readers, as Saudi males are more interested in a wider variety of news than Americans, while American females are more interested in a wider variety of news than Saudi females. -It is worth noting that the studies of American readers did not consider the type of media from which readers consume news, yet my survey considers different sources of news providers while the one referred to in this table traditional print newspapers. More details about the other news sources can be found in section 6.1.17).		
Paying for news	-Many US readers are not willing to pay for news online. According to one study, only 6% of Americans are willing to pay for news online.	-Similar to the West, only 15% of my surveyed participants are willing to pay to read their favourite newspaper online, while only 9% of my participants intend to pay for news online in the future.
Observations and comments		
-Regardless of the percentage of people who are willing to pay for news online, there are still far more people who prefer to get news for free and that is evident in the US and Saudi Arabia as well as all over the world.		
Level of news enjoyment	-A vast majority of Americans claim that they enjoy keeping up with the news.	-My participants' claim that they perceive the news as important to them more than they enjoy getting the news, yet they still enjoy getting the news.
Observations and comments		
-In both cultures, one can find that readers enjoy getting and/or keeping up with news; however, Saudi readers consider getting news as more important than enjoying it.		
Main types of news on Twitter and Facebook	-<i>The New York Times</i> emphasizes topics related to economics, lifestyle, national news, and technology on its Twitter account. - <i>The New York Times</i> emphasizes stories about art, entertainment, fashion, local news, opinion pieces, and politics on Facebook.	-My surveyed participants are more likely to read local and international news on Twitter -The participants are most interested in reading local and international news, and news related to health and technology on Facebook
Observations and comments		
-When looking at the types of news that <i>The New York Times</i> focuses on, one can say that the newspaper has already studied readers' interests and is thus providing certain news types that grab readers' attention on each specific social media application. -Our study intended to find out and determine what types of news most captures readers' attention on different social media applications, so that newspapers can focus more on these types of news. -The intention to look at <i>The New York Times</i> is a way to investigate a reputable newspaper brand in the West to learn what types of news it provides to readers and to find out if similarities exist between readers' interests and types of news between the West and Saudi Arabia. -The only similarities between the US and Saudi Arabia (news types provided/news accessed most by readers) is local news accessed on Facebook, as readers of each country look for news about their specific city on Facebook. Yet there are far more differences between the two cultures regarding readers' interests in the types of news consumed on social media platforms.		
Credibility of the traditional print newspaper and its online format	-Many studies found that readers who consider the traditional print format of a newspaper to be credible are more likely to perceive its online version to be credible.	-My survey found that participants who access news from a traditional print newspaper also perceive its online version to be credible.
Observations and comments		
-A similar trend regarding credibility is found among readers from the West and readers from Saudi Arabia.		
Credibility of news sources online and their dominant features	-American readers do not regard hypertextuality as an important predictor to perceive the credibility of news on Yahoo News, nor did it	-The surveyed participants consider hypertextuality to be one of the most important factors in measuring the credibility of news provided on the

	contribute to the credibility of one of the main online newspaper websites (<i>The New York Times</i>).	Internet, including online newspapers, Yahoo News, Google News, news on Facebook, and news on Twitter).
Observations and comments		
-Differences exist between US readers and Saudi readers in regard to their perceptions of credibility of news provided on Yahoo and online newspapers. Saudi readers consider hypertextuality as an important factor that contributes to the credibility of news provided online, while American readers do not perceive hypertextuality as an indicator of the credibility of online news.		
Rogers's adoption of innovation factors in reading news online	-One of the most important factors that compel Americans to read news online is the ease of use of the website or application.	-The surveyed participants put more emphasis on factors related to the relative advantage that they may get from reading the news online, such as by accessing the news more easily anywhere and at any time, saving them time and effort, and by finding a wider variety of news from multiple providers, as well as factors related to, such as learning to read news online will be easy and will not be a frustrating experience.
Observations and comments		
-Different factors are evident between Saudis and American readers as ease of use is considered an important predictor for Americans to read news online, while it does not hold any significance for Saudi readers.		

8 Conclusion and recommendations

This chapter provides some overall conclusions, the study significance, and offers recommendations for future research, while also noting the limitations of this study.

8.1 Conclusion

In response to recent challenges that have significantly affected media businesses around the world, many newspapers are rethinking their business strategies. The purpose of this study was to provide a better knowledge of how newspapers in Saudi Arabia are dealing with the changes in the industry by focusing specifically on one of these newspapers, *Okaz*, as a case study. The paper began by presenting and comparing the main challenges and strategies of newspapers in the Western world, and identifying the similarities and differences between Western media and media in Arab countries with a focus on Saudi Arabia. This comparison helped to better understand the current state of the newspaper business in different parts of the world, and to assess how the media industry in Saudi Arabia can adapt to circumstances that are already occurring worldwide. This study relied on the review of existing literature, the observations of interviewed specialists from *Okaz* newspaper, and the survey results from newsreaders in Saudi Arabia. By bringing all these sources together, one can see that media organizations in all nations are facing a similar difficult situation regarding the ongoing economic and technological challenges they face, as well as attempting to modify their business and marketing practices to correspond with the shifting consumption habits of their readers. While some countries encountered these challenges before others, they will inevitably affect the media industry everywhere in the world. Yet it is important not to generalize the way certain regions attract new readers and generate income, because each country has its own unique characteristics and thus the strategies they use must reflect this

individuality. In addition, each newspaper has its own way of presenting news that differentiates it from others.

This dissertation has sought to explore the general state of the newspaper business in Saudi Arabia by comparing the Western news media with the media in Arab countries to clarify what similarities and differences exist and how these may affect whether certain marketing strategies might be transferable from the West to the Arab world. The use of *Okaz* newspaper as a case study offers a firsthand account of a newspaper that is facing unprecedented challenges and the steps it is taking to overcome the complexities of this new media environment, and thus it may aid future researchers who are studying media brands and the media industry in Saudi Arabia. Although focusing on one case study does not provide a complete picture of the situation in Saudi Arabia, it provides a deeper understanding of the *Okaz* newspaper situation and how this established news organization is coping with the changes and challenges in the Saudi environment.

Although there may be as many differences as there are similarities between the West and Saudi Arabia, the objectives of journalists remain the same—to enlighten readers with news and information—as do the financial goals of the newspaper—to generate revenue. However, the newspaper businesses are now focusing more on readers' perceptions of the news and the broader role that newspapers must undertake to attract these same readers, as well as the newspaper's ability to harness the full potential of the technology to maximize and maintain advertising revenues. Thus, the study focused on readers' orientations and motivations behind consuming news by understanding and considering their gratification needs when accessing news, while using one or more component of Ansoff's matrix to help decide which path to choose in expanding the newspaper business with the goal of grabbing readers' attention and generating income from readers and advertisers.

Certainly, technological advancements such as the Internet and social media platforms have presented newspaper businesses with an opportunity to reach new markets in addition to the challenges created by these technological changes. It is now easier for newspapers to research, edit, and deliver news to a larger potential audience without the limitations of geographical boundaries, although new players that have appeared in the industry are also competing for these same readers. The variety that the Internet provides to readers goes beyond introducing new and existing players in the market who only present news; it also includes other players such as chatrooms, personal blogs and forums, games and many more who seize the attention and time of current and potential readers.

Similarities in business and marketing strategies can be found among newspapers in the US and in Saudi Arabia. For instance, newspapers in both countries promote their brand names and content with the help of the paper itself, by creating eye-catching headlines on the front page, and through the use of social media and other news providers on TV and on the radio, whether or not they are connected to the newspaper. Yet the main differences can be found in the way that countries utilize the Internet from a business perspective. For instance, one can see that well-known and well-respected newspapers in the West have been able to generate additional revenue online through subscriptions to the online version of their paper, yet many Saudis refuse to pay for such services and show little willingness to change their position in the future.

Additionally, Saudi Arabian newspapers still believe in the future of the traditional print format and continue to provide special offers, prizes, and discounts to readers who subscribe to the print version of the newspaper. This phenomenon can be observed not only at *Okaz*, but also among virtually all Saudi newspapers in the Kingdom. The online environment of the newspaper business in Saudi Arabia has yet to be fully developed, though this is partially due to the fact that the media industry in Saudi Arabia is not yet ready to

implement a pay model for its online version, which will involve cooperation from all newspaper companies in the KSA. I interviewed specialists at *Okaz* newspaper, and conducted a survey of newsreaders by analyzing their responses and by running additional analyses using the Latent Class Model to determine readers' orientation and intention to pay for news online. However, all of the data gathered and analyzed for my study revealed that there are far more people who are not willing to pay for news compared to those who have the intention or the willingness to pay for news online, which supports a similar trend found around the world. Of those who are willing to pay for news online, they mostly fall under three out of the four segments that I generated, known as All-Source News Seekers, Online News Seekers, and News Avoiders. Focusing on providing these segments what they need and what types of news interest them may lead to a more successful chance of adopting the paywall model in Saudi Arabia, in addition to the full collaboration between news organizations in implementing such strategy. However, additional studies are recommended for other variables to fully grasp and understand these specific segments.

This study has attempted to provide some insight into the Arab media business, and that of Saudi Arabia in particular, by addressing the needs and motivations of Saudi readers and their willingness to pay for news online. It has taken an in-depth look into *Okaz* newspaper to get a sense of how a business which has long been at the forefront of the industry perceives the current and future state of news media, and how *Okaz* could rethink its business strategies to place more emphasis on readers' wants and needs. The study has employed a comparative approach to present and assess the situation in the West and to use their experience as a guide to better understand the current situation in Saudi Arabia's newspaper industry. Furthermore, this study enhances general understanding of the Saudi media market and Saudi readers' changing habits in getting and reading news from traditional print, electronic, and social media applications, and could serve as the basis for future

research, while further research might help to identify and explain additional factors that influence people's willingness to pay for online news.

8.2 Significance of the Study

The changing trends in traditional news media consumption are simultaneously a media business issue and a societal problem. According to a Reuters Institute report (2017), some 51% of Americans claim they use social media for news (Newman, Fletcher, Kalogeropoulos, Levy, & Nielsen, 2017). Traditional news media from many parts of the world have seen a decline in newspaper consumption, circulation numbers, and advertising revenues. According to the PEW Research Center (2018), the circulation for U.S. daily newspapers declined 11% in 2017 compared with 2016, and advertising revenue fell 10% during the same period. This decline is directly related to technological innovations that are contributing to changes in reader consumption habits and altering the face of advertising. To date, the bulk of the research about these industry changes have tended to focus on the West and, to a lesser extent, southwest Asia. Very little is known about the situation in the Middle East and far less about the Saudi Arabian media market.

This study is an important research project on an important research area that crosses the boundaries of business and media studies aimed at leveraging understanding of the changes shaping the non-Western media market, highlighting the Saudi newspaper market. This study sheds light on the Saudi newspaper media market with a specific focus on the *Okaz* newspaper. The in-depth exploratory case study of *Okaz* allows the researcher to understand one of the major newspaper businesses in Saudi Arabia and to advance observations about this specific organization. It also contributes to media studies, business, and marketing research by exploring unknown user consumption habits and motivation to help inform this struggling industry in Saudi Arabia. Also, this study contribute to the uses and gratification

theory by although this theory was largely developed in North America, my study findings support that this theocratical frame can be apply across cultures.

8.3 Limitations

The main limitation of this study is its relatively small sample size (212 participants). This might impact the generalizability of results, as the sample is too small to speak about the Saudi Arabian readership at large. Yet, the response rate of 212 participants out of 774 is consider as a great response rate (27%) that can be added to the prose of this study. The other primary limitation of this study is that I only was able to obtain permission to interview and collect data from *Okaz* newspaper. My initial intention was to interview specialists working in different most popular local newspapers across the Kingdom, in which are intended to target Arabic language speakers. Thus, I contacted *Okaz* newspaper, *Al-Madinah* newspaper, *Al-Riyadh* newspaper, *Al-Jazira* newspaper, *Al-Youm* newspaper, and *Al-Watan* newspaper. However, I only got permission from the most circulated newspaper across the Kingdom *Okaz* newspaper, and thus my plan was changed to only consider *Okaz* newspaper. Moreover, the time constraints of collecting responses from participants (both newsreaders and news specialists) may have prevented me from receiving more responses, and the length of the survey distributed to readers deterred more participants from completing it. However, the intention of this survey was to obtain as much as information as possible about readers' intentions, motivations, and perceptions of the news media in Saudi Arabia from which they get their news.

The dispute that occurred between Canada and Saudi Arabia at the time that the researcher was interviewing *Okaz* newspaper specialists also prompted the researcher to postpone the process of distributing the survey. Moreover, the length of time available to the researcher and the lack of permission accorded to the researcher by other newspapers limited my case study to that of *Okaz* and no other newspapers in the KSA. Considering one

newspaper does not allow me to fully represent the newspaper industry in the Kingdom, as it prevent the researcher from generalizing beyond the specific case examined, thus, I cannot generalize the results of my study to all newspapers in Saudi Arabia, as one case study cannot reflect the entire situation in the industry, nor I cannot compare one case study that is found in Saudi Arabia with the general situation that is happening elsewhere in the West. Considering one case study it does not enable the researcher to advance any conclusions about any other Saudi media organizations and/or Saudi media markets more broadly. However, it at least gives a fair understanding and picture of the current situation that faces this particular branded newspaper, and acts as a guide for future research to be conducted in Saudi Arabia.

The other limitation of this study is that I first asked participants to rank eight news providers in regards to their consumption of news on these platforms (traditional print newspapers, online newspapers, Yahoo News, Google News, Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, and Instagram), but then I provided them with detailed questions for only the first six news providers, as I excluded Snapchat and Instagram in my survey. Although this is a limitation of the study, the reason I have largely excluded Snapchat and Instagram is due to the length of the survey and because my intention was to focus on the main news providers and a few social media platforms.

In spite of its limitations, the current study still provides a detailed examination of the challenges faced by the main departments of *Okaz* newspaper and the strategies that the newspaper implemented to deal with them. It also looks at the challenges and the changes in the business from two different aspects, the readers' aspect and the newspaper aspect, in efforts to tackle the subject from two different angles and perspectives, thereby adding valuable information to the current literature. As stated before, it is not possible to generalize the results of this one case study for the whole kingdom; however, it offers researchers the

concept of an actual newspaper brand that is encountering the same challenges experienced by newspapers all over the world. Additionally, the quantitative survey provides some insight into Saudi Arabian readers' motivations, consumption habits, and willingness to pay for news online. Moreover, the Latent Class Model that I consider in my analysis allows me to understand readers' different motivations, which may then lead them to pay for news online.

8.4 Suggestions for future research

Although a very large amount of literature exists that examines the current state of the media industry in countries all around the world, there is a scarcity of research related specifically to the Arab media industry, and particularly the Saudi Arabian media industry. Thus, there is a need for additional quantitative and qualitative studies on this subject, which must be conducted on newspapers from the various different regions of Saudi Arabia. More data and a greater sample of respondents is necessary to fully comprehend how newspaper businesses are being impacted, what steps and procedures are being considered to overcome the challenges, and what measures may be omitted or overlooked by newspapers that could lead to a better outcome. This would be the most effective way to illustrate the complex changes that are present in the industry and to provide a better understanding of how Saudi Arabian newspapers can remain in business, capture the attention of more readers, and even generate greater revenues and income in this environment.

It would also be interesting to conduct a similar study four or five years in the future to see if there has been a shift in readers' motivations and intention to pay for news online, as well as to obtain readers' opinions about the trustworthiness and newsworthiness of different media providers. From my analysis, I found that the three main sources for getting and accessing news are Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat. However, as previously mentioned, I excluded Instagram and Snapchat in my detailed questions due to the length of the survey. Further research could consider a broader investigation of these two platforms, which now

provide more convenient options for readers who are searching for breaking news and quick news. A shorter focused version of the survey may also lead to more findings, as participants may be more willing to answer surveys that include fewer questions. Additionally, considering other variables in the Latent Class Model may reveal additional factors that might prompt different segments of readers to be willing to pay for news online. Thus, understanding these segments of readers would enable newspaper businesses to focus their efforts more in attracting readers from these specific segments.

Furthermore, in regard to the news media companies themselves, in light of the Covid-19 pandemic that is affecting the world, it would be interesting to learn the magnitude of the challenges that newspapers are facing from it—both print and online versions—and how it is impacting the speed, accuracy, and trustworthiness of reporting and information in different parts of the world and especially in Saudi Arabia. It would also be interesting to learn whether the implementation of the paywall model for the online version of newspapers in Saudi Arabia would be a proper decision to take at this time under these circumstances when the pandemic is further disabling economies around the world. In other words, will the impact of Covid-19 be the proverbial “straw that broke the camel’s back” and kills any last hopes of survival of print newspapers in Saudi Arabia?

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Appendix

Appendix 1 Box-whisker plots

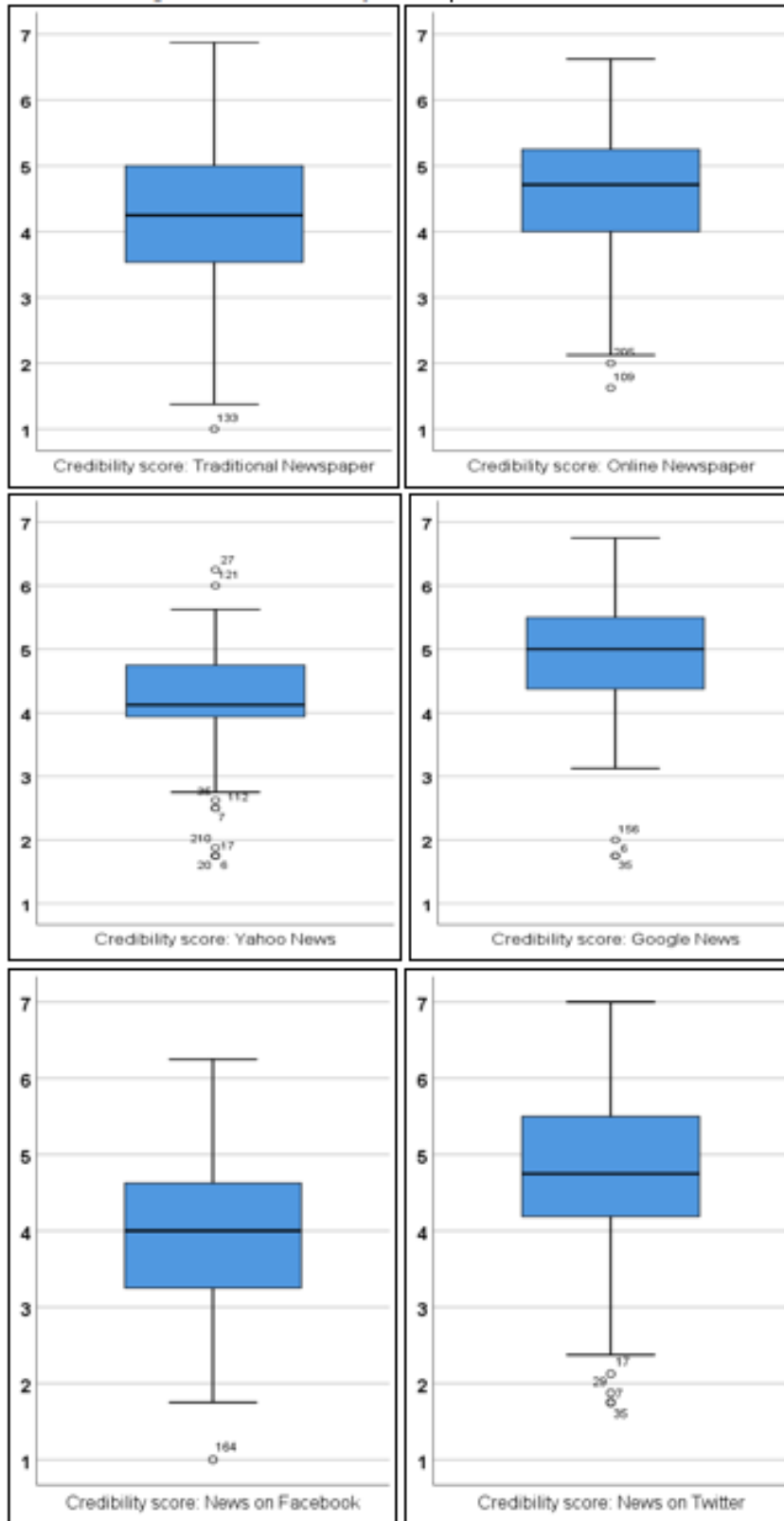


Figure 28 Box-whisker plots for credibility scores

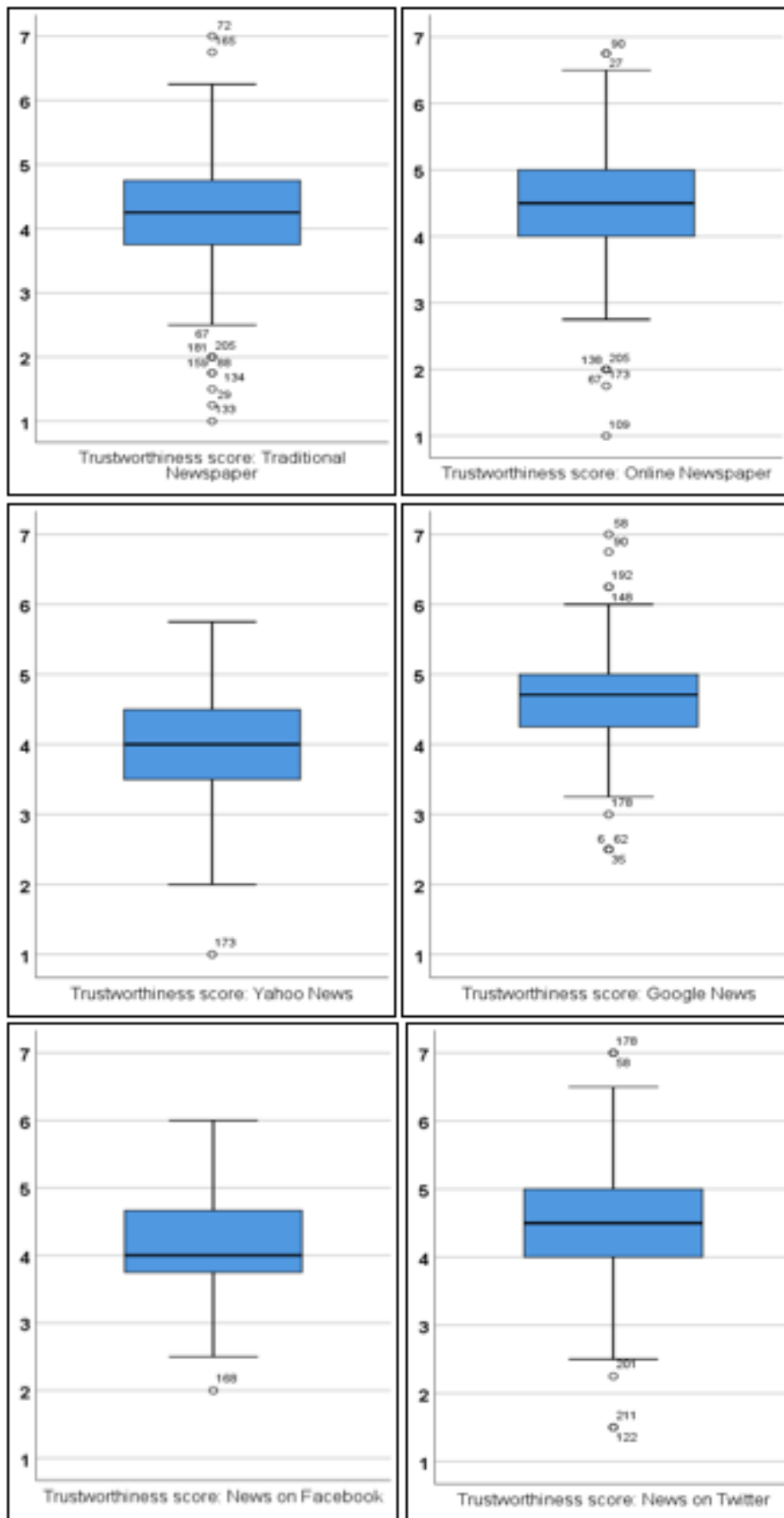


Figure 29 Box-whisker plots for trustworthiness scores

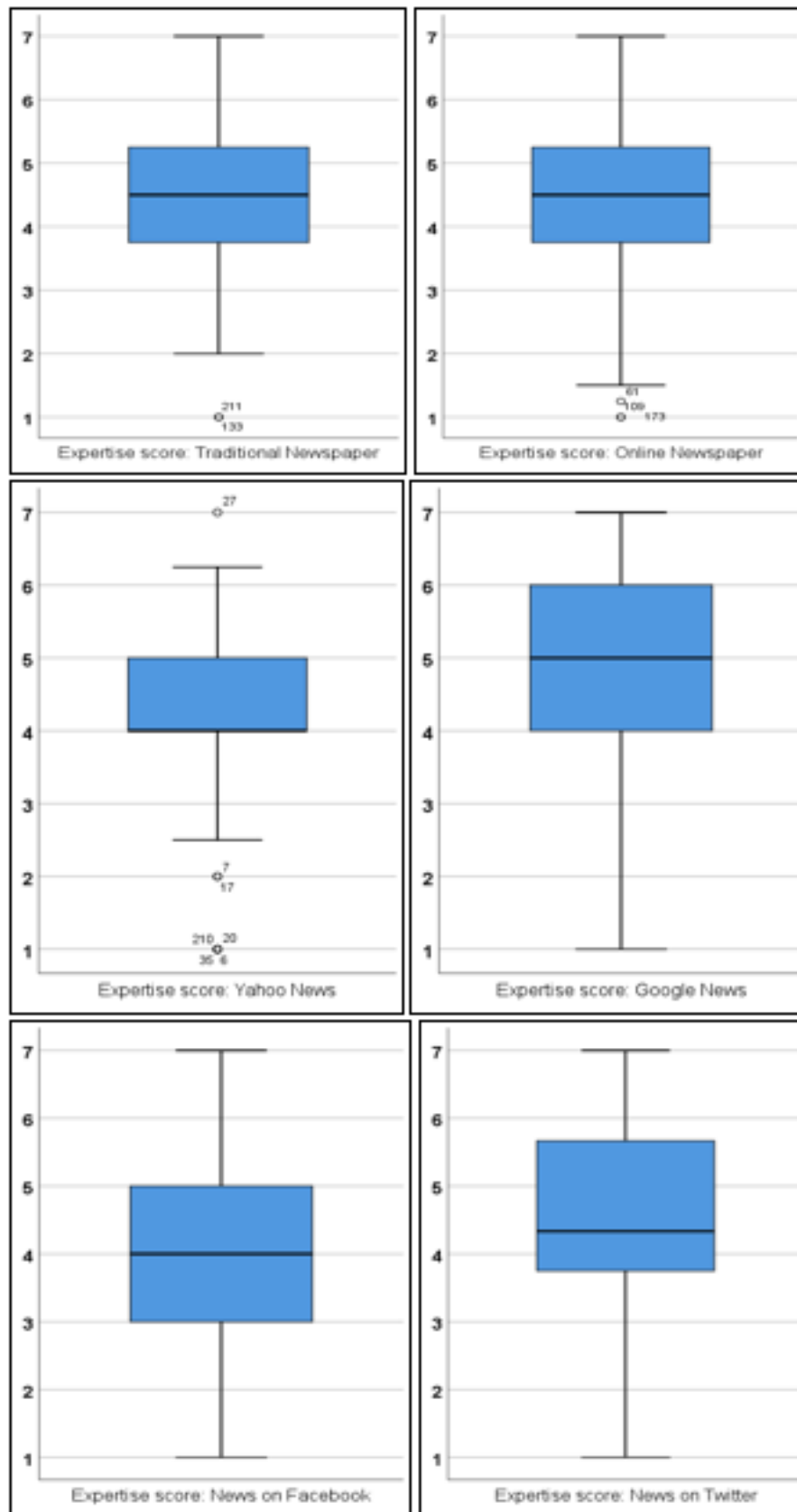


Figure 30 Box-whisker plots for expertise scores

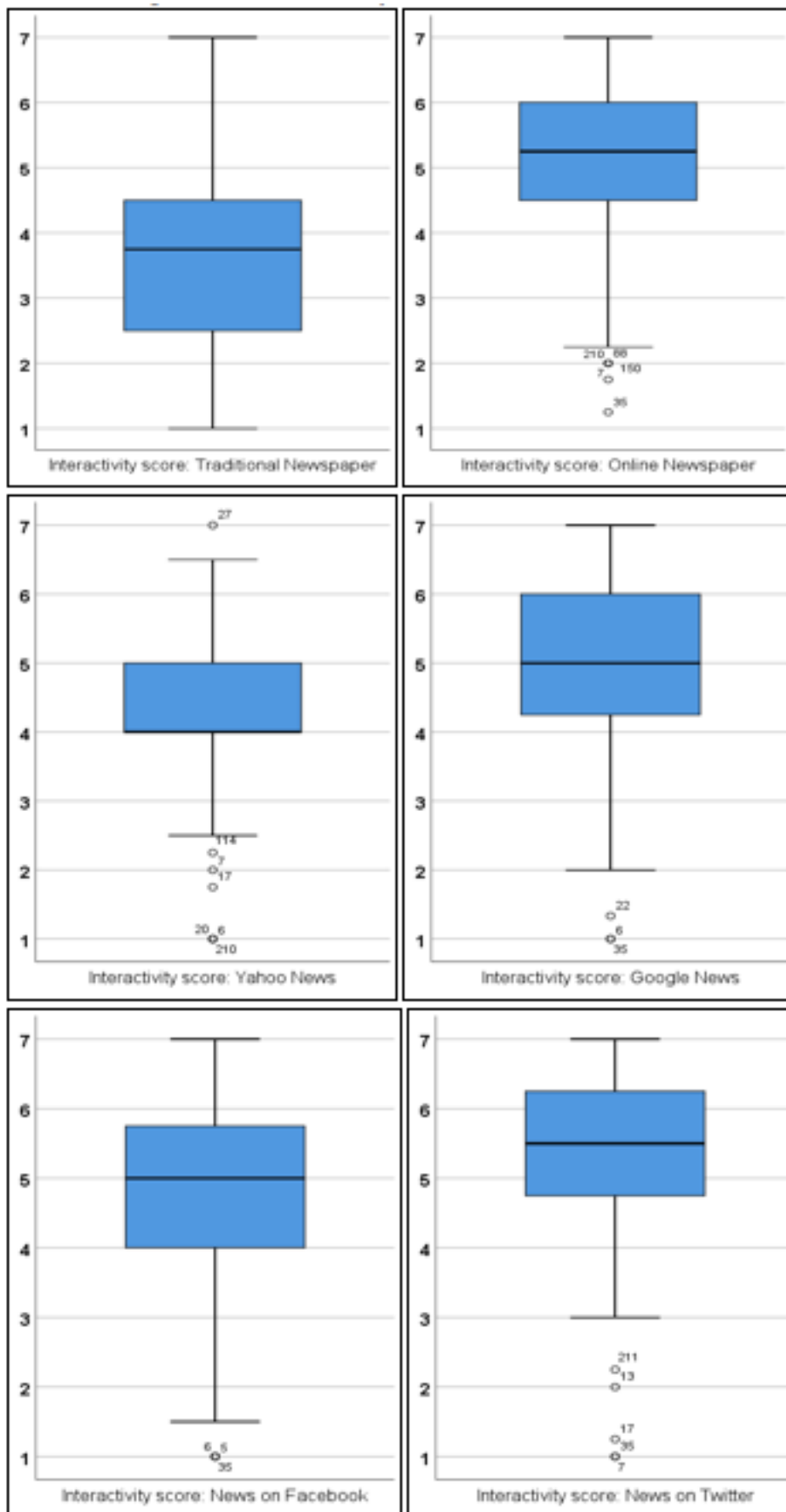


Figure 31 Box-whisker plots for interactivity scores

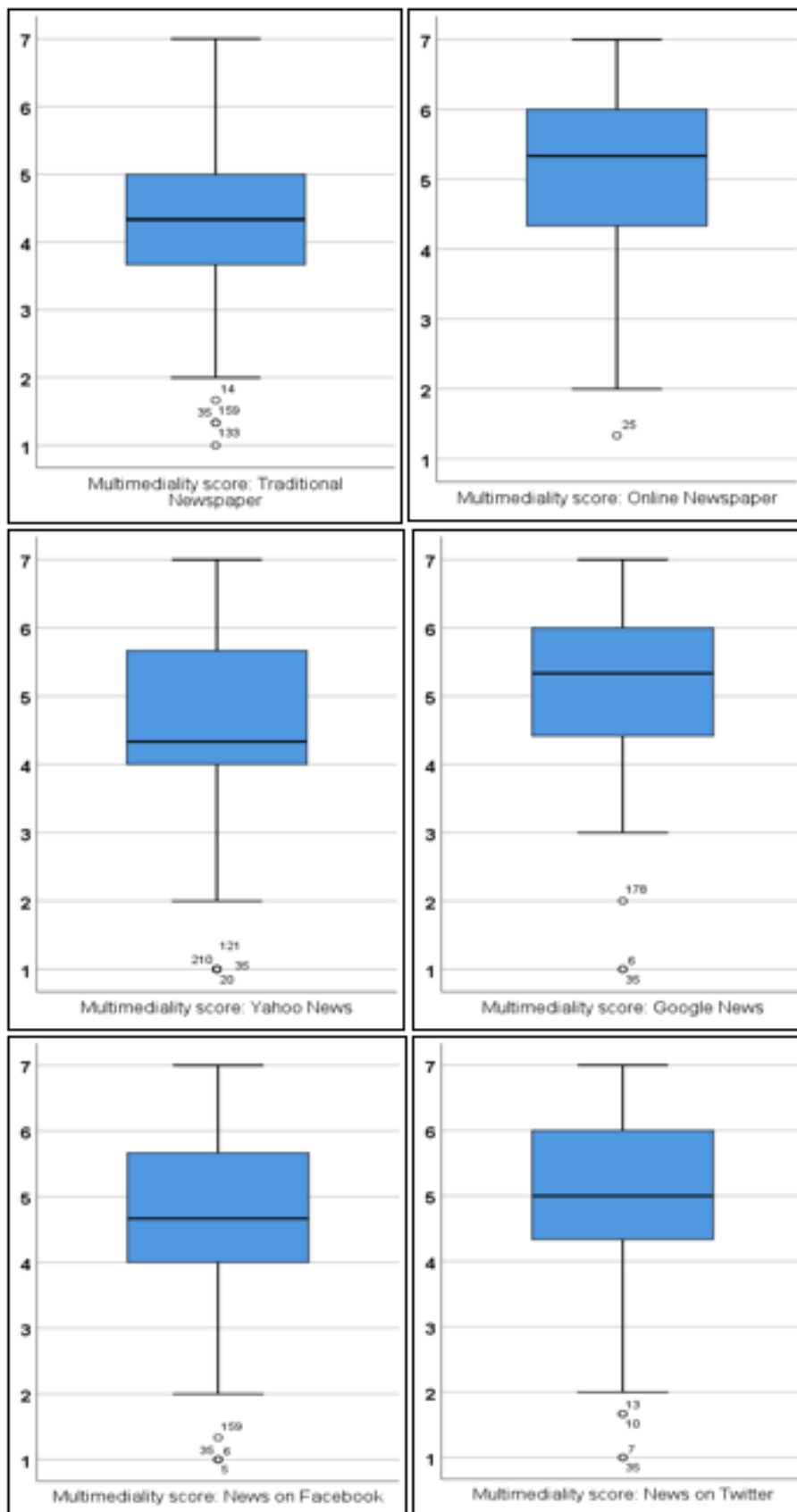


Figure 32 Box-whisker plots for multimediability scores

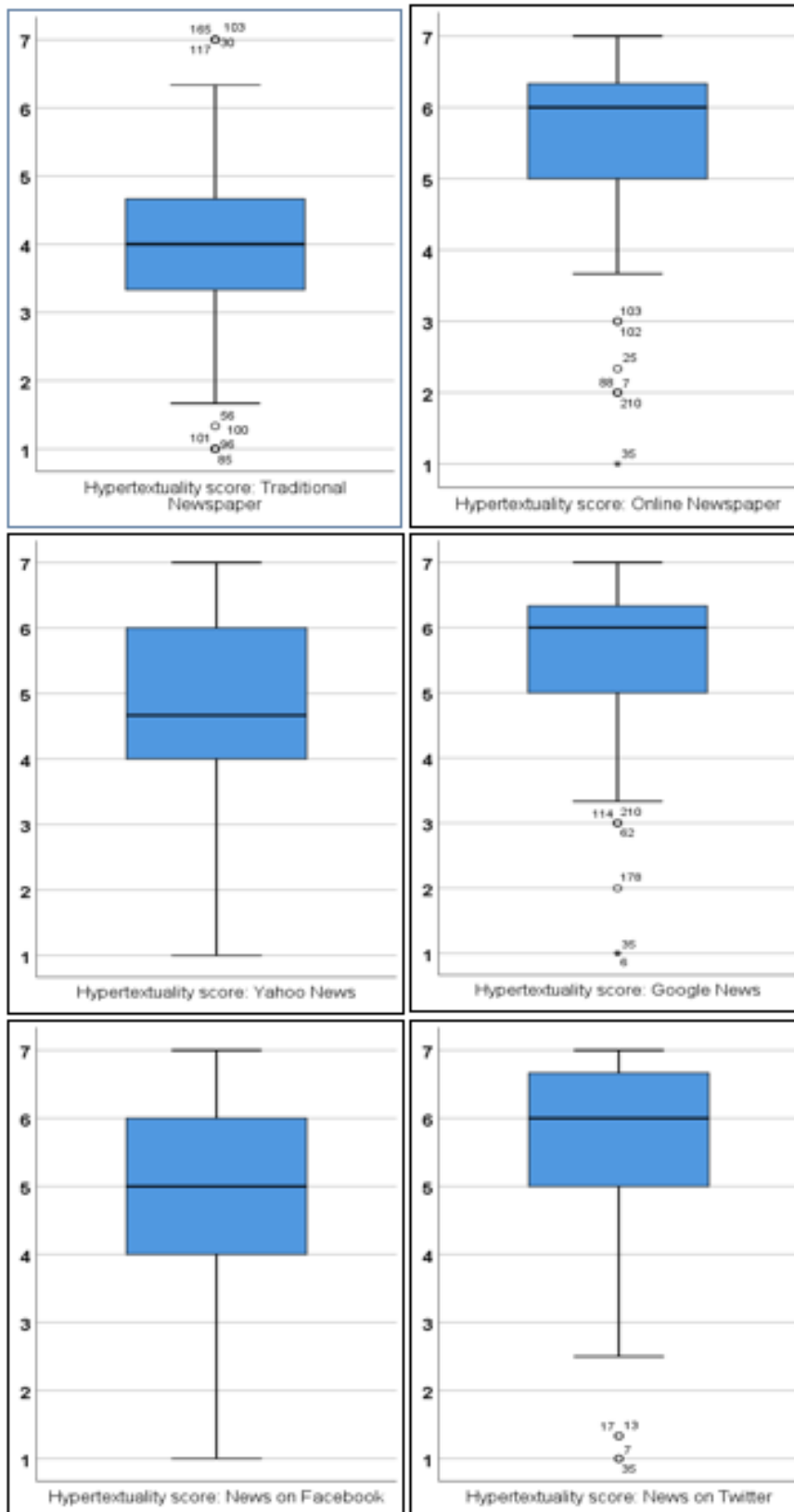


Figure 33 Box-whisker plots for hypertextuality scores

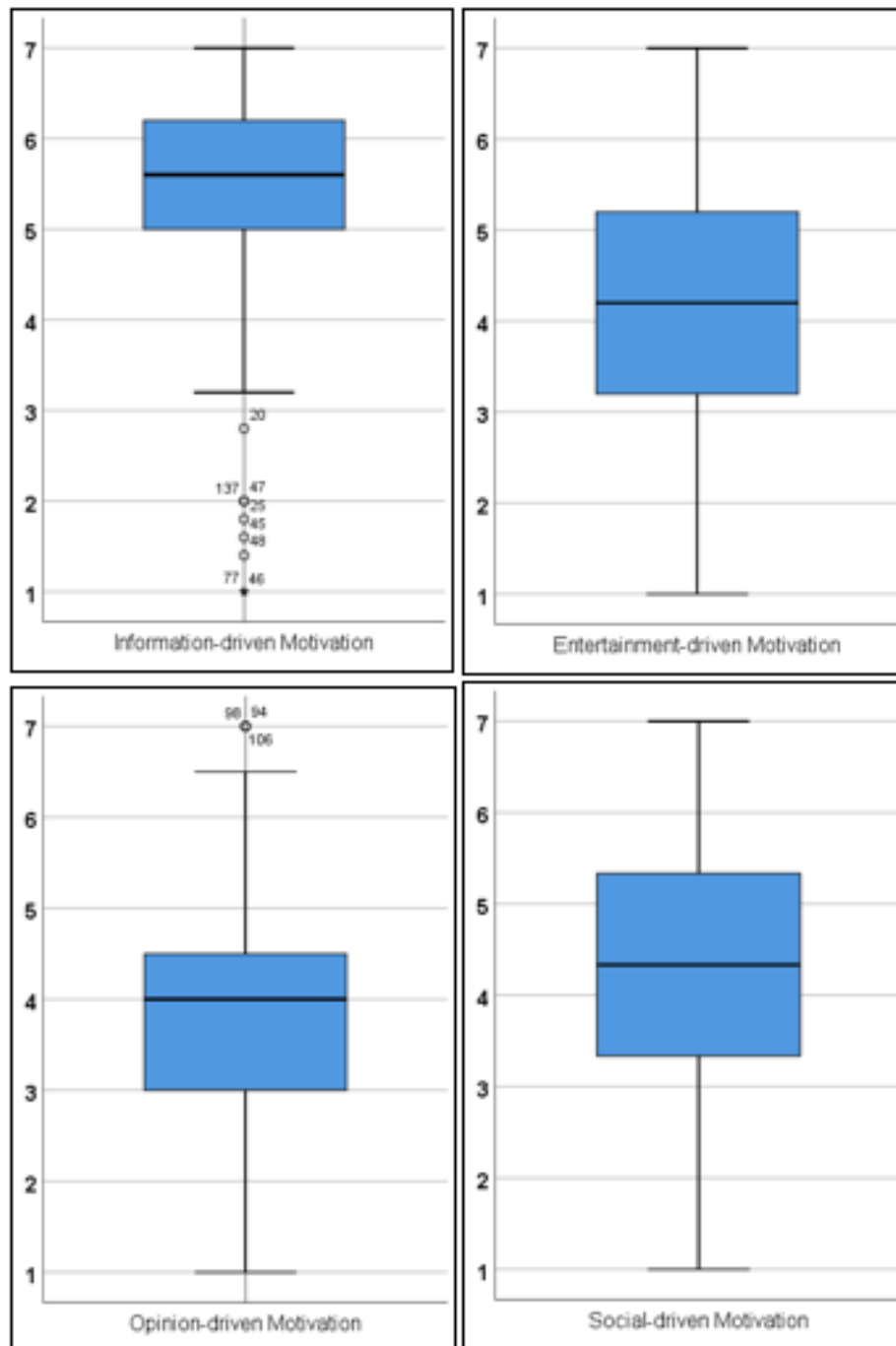


Figure 34 Box-whisker plots for motivation scores

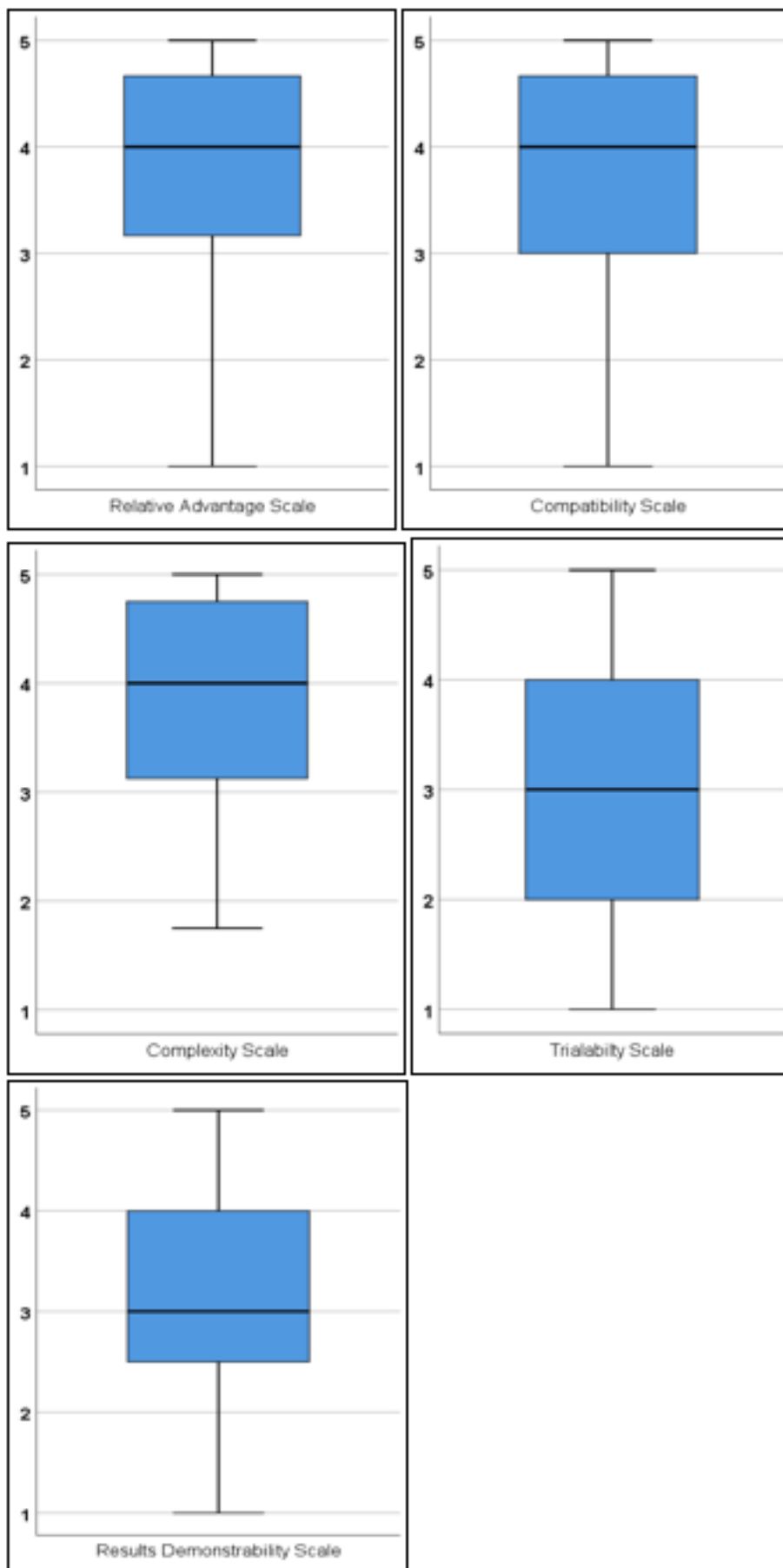


Figure 35 Box-whisker plots for adoption of innovation scores

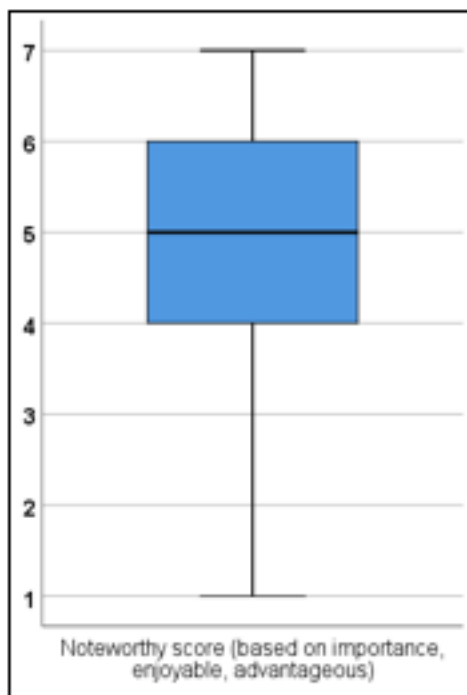


Figure 36 Box-whisker plots for noteworthiness scores

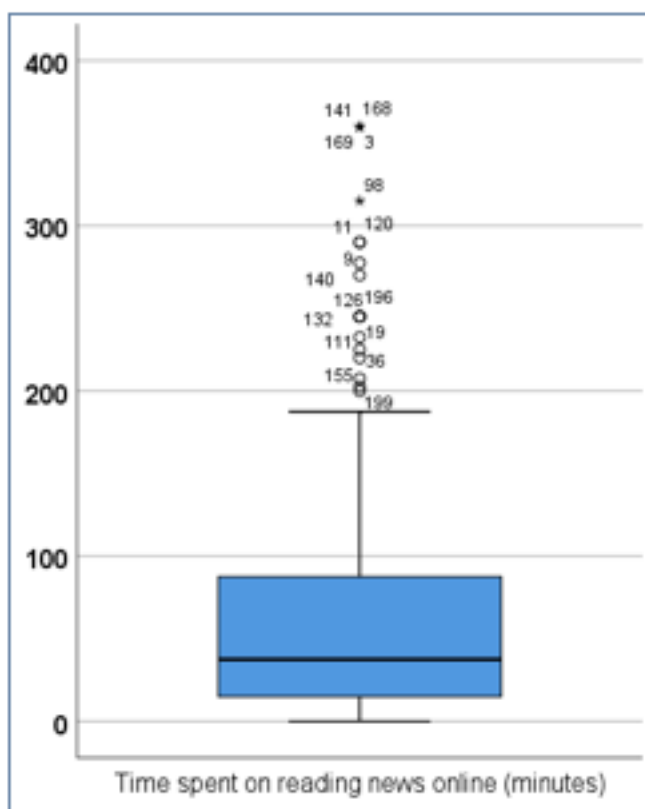


Figure 37 Box-whisker plots for time spent reading online news scores

Appendix 2 Reader's Questionnaire

Reader's Questionnaire

Reader's Questionnaire (English Version)

Dear Participant,

Please note that this survey is for research purposes only.

With the advent of new technology, many news organizations are losing a significant number of their readers, which is negatively affecting the news business financially. As many readers have shifted to more convenient means of accessing news, many newspaper organizations are adapting to this new media environment and are implementing technological innovations to meet their readers' expectations and need for gratification in their search for value in the information they receive from media organizations.

This study is intended to understand readers' perceptions of value, gratification needs, reading practices and habits, the rationale behind their patterns of news consumption, as well as their future intentions in consuming and paying for online news.

This survey will take about 35–45 minutes. Please make sure that you answer all of the questions.

NOTE: *After completing the survey, you will be asked to provide your email address for a chance to enter the draw to win a \$50 prize. The winner will be contacted by email to collect the reward.*

Thank you...

The questions start here...

1. Age: To which age group do you belong?

☐ 18 – 25 years old	☐ 46 – 55 years old
☐ 26 – 35 years old	☐ 56 years old and over
☐ 36 – 45 years old	

2. Gender:

☐ Male	☐ You don't have an option that applies to me. I identify as (please specify) _____
☐ Female	

3. Marital Status:

☐ Single / Never married	☐ Widowed
☐ Married	☐ Divorced

4. **What is your monthly income?**
- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ No income | ☐ Between 10,001 and 15,000 SR |
| ☐ Less than 2000 SR | ☐ Between 15,001 and 20,000 SR |
| ☐ Between 2001 and 5000 SR | ☐ More than 20,001 SR |
| ☐ Between 5001 and 10,000 SR | |
5. **Level of Education:**
What is the highest level of education you have completed?
- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ No schooling | ☐ Doctorate Degree |
| ☐ High school or less | ☐ Other (please specify) |
| ☐ College / University degree | |
| ☐ Master's Degree | |
6. **Occupation:**
- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ Student | ☐ Stay-at-home (mom) |
| ☐ Self-employed | ☐ Retired |
| ☐ Employed | ☐ Other (please specify) |
| ☐ Unemployed | |
7. **Language:**
- | | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| ☐ Arabic | ☐ Both Arabic and English |
| ☐ English | ☐ Other (please specify) |
8. **How often do you access the Internet?**
- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ Every day | ☐ About once a week |
| ☐ 2 – 3 days a week | ☐ Less often |
| ☐ 4 – 6 days a week | ☐ Never |
9. **Average time spent on the Internet:**
- | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| ☐ Less than 10 minutes | ☐ 1 – 2 hours |
| ☐ More than 10 minutes but less than 30 minutes | ☐ 2 – 3 hours |
| ☐ More than 30 minutes but less than 1 hour | ☐ 3+ hours |
| | ☐ Other: |
10. **Where do you usually access the Web? (Please choose all applicable answers)**
- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ A computer/laptop at work | ☐ Internet café |
| ☐ A computer/laptop at university | ☐ Cell phone |
| ☐ A computer/laptop at home | |
11. **Based on the previous question:**
- You mainly access the Web from
12. **Please rank the following activities from 1 to 14 according to what you most frequently use the Internet for, at both home and work: (As 1 represent highest and 14 lowest)**

Activity	Ranking Number (Home) from 1 to 14	Ranking Number (Work) from 1 to 14
Working		
Pleasure		
Research		
Checking email		
Education		
Paying bills and fees online		
Gaming/playing games		
Banking		
Online shopping		
Making travel arrangements		
Reading news on a newspaper's website		
Reading news on a social media website		
Reading news on search engines		
Sharing news		

News Consumption

13. **On a 5-point Likert scale, where 1=Never, and 5=Always, how frequently do you use the following media in accessing and reading news:**

	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
Traditional print newspaper	1	2	3	4	5
Online newspaper	1	2	3	4	5
Yahoo News	1	2	3	4	5
Google News	1	2	3	4	5
Facebook	1	2	3	4	5
Twitter	1	2	3	4	5
Snapchat	1	2	3	4	5
Instagram	1	2	3	4	5

14. **What is your main source for getting news? (Please choose only one answer)**
- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Print newspaper | ☐ Search engines such as Google, Yahoo News |
| ☐ Online newspaper | ☐ Other (Please write your answer) |
| ☐ Twitter | |
| ☐ Facebook | |

Motivations, Beliefs (Attitudes), Evaluation and Importance

15. Think back to the main sources from which you get your news (traditional print newspaper/social media/online newspaper/search engines). On a 7-point scale, and based on your **Motivations, Beliefs, Evaluation and Importance**, how much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

I read news:

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
To find out what is going on in the world	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
To keep up with the way my government functions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
To keep myself informed	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
To pass time	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Share information with other people	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
To compare my own ideas with other commenters	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
To occupy myself during leisure time	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Primarily because of the writer	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
To find more detailed news and information	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
It provides entertainment	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Because it is exciting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Because it is a habit that I have	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
To appear more informed to those around me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
To make me more sociable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

and to feel part of a community							
To get breaking news and to follow up on news stories	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Because news is important to me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Getting the news is enjoyable to me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Getting the news is advantageous to me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

16. Do you read print newspapers or online newspapers?

- ☐ Printed newspaper
☐ Online newspaper
☐ Both
☐ Neither

17. Which print newspaper do you read most often?

- ☐ I do not read a print edition of a newspaper
☐ I read (please type the name of the newspaper)

18. Is there one online newspaper you read more often than any others?

- ☐ No
☐ Yes (please type the name of the newspaper).....

19. How often do you access the news online?

- ☐ Every day
☐ 1 – 2 days a week
☐ 3 – 4 days a week
☐ 5 – 6 days a week
☐ Not regularly
☐ Never

20. How long have you been reading news online?

- ☐ Less than 3 months
☐ 3 months to less than 1 year

- ☐ 1 – 2 years
- ☐ More than 2 years
- ☐ Never

Media Use:

21. **What part of the day and how much time on average do you spend on the Internet reading news:**

	5 minutes or less	6 – 10 minutes	11 – 30 minutes	31 – 60 minutes	More than 60 minute	Never
Morning	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Afternoon	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Evening	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Night	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

22. **What part of the day you interact with media and what type of media you interact with?**

	Morning	Afternoon	Evening	At night	Most of the time	All the time	Never
Traditional Print Newspaper	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Online Newspaper	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Google News	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Yahoo News	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
News on Facebook	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
News on Twitter	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

23. **How would you rate online news in terms of the following? (Kindly select Not Applicable if you do not use one or more of the following news providers)**

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Very Poor	Not Applicable
Online Newspaper						
Navigating in general	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Downloading time	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Content updating	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Commenting	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Yahoo News						
Navigating in general	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Downloading time	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Content updating	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Commenting	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Google News						
Navigating in general	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Downloading time	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Content updating	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Commenting	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
News on Facebook						
Navigating in general	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Downloading time	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Content updating	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Commenting	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
News on Twitter						
Navigating in general	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Downloading time	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Content updating	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Commenting	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

24. **What is the most important feature for you when reading an online newspaper? (If your answer is not within the following choices please choose the most applicable answer to you, Please choose only one answer).**

- ☐ It is free
- ☐ I cannot get the printed copy
- ☐ I prefer to read the online version
- ☐ It is always available when I want to read it
- ☐ I can access it on multiple devices
- ☐ To get real time news (instant news)
- ☐ I do not read online newspaper

Paying and Paying Intent

25. **For each of the following types of media, please indicate whether you have a subscription or pay for it on a regular basis, or not. (if you do not use any of the following media type please choose “Not Applicable”)**

	Free (Not paying)	Buy/Occasional	Buy/Always	Subscription	Not Applicable
Traditional print newspaper	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
(Digital) Online newspaper	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
News app on your Smart Phone	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

26. **Please provide the most suitable answer that indicate the reason behind your payment.**

- ☐ It provides me with something extra that would be worth paying for.
- ☐ There is an app that allows me to identify specifically which topics interest me and are relevant to me.
- ☐ I receive immediate information.
- ☐ I receive quality information

- ☐ Other (please provide your answer).....
- ☐ I do not pay for news
27. **Would you be willing to pay a fee to cover the costs of reading your favorite online newspaper?**
- ☐ Yes (please go to question #30)
- ☐ No (please go to question #28 then question # 30)
- ☐ Yes, but only if... (Please go to question #29 then question # 30)
28. **If your answer was “No”, kindly choose the most suitable answer below to describe why: (only one answer)**
- ☐ I can get free news somewhere else
- ☐ It should be free
- ☐ I cannot afford it
- ☐ I already pay for my Internet connection
- ☐ I have no specific reason
- ☐ Other reason (please specify).....
29. **If your answer was “Yes, but only if”, please choose the most suitable answer below to describe why: (only one answer)**
- ☐ It provides me with something extra that would be worth paying for.
- ☐ There is an app that allows me to identify specifically which topics interest me and are relevant to me.
- ☐ I receive immediate information.
- ☐ I receive quality information
- ☐ Other reason (please specify).....
30. **In the future, would you consider paying for online news?**
- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Not Sure
31. **Based on your perceptions of news media credibility, kindly indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements. Please choose one answer for each criterion: A.**

Traditional Print Newspapers	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Not Applicable
It is clear	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It is fair	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It is timely	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It is biased	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It is believable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It can be trusted (trustworthiness)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It tells the whole story	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It is accurate	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It is interactive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Its writers are known for their expertise	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It is objective	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It delivers a wide	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

diversity of expertise								
It is professional	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It has in-depth coverage	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Articles are written by professional journalists	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Commenting on stories is easy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It is easy to add information	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It represents users' wants	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It makes good use of graphics, figures, or photos	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It is eye-catching	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It is flashy (it has a highly contrast color)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It is easily shared with others via a link	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Presenting other news stories simultaneously	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
News stories/publications are easy to access via clicking on a link	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

B.

Online Newspapers	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Not Applicable
It is clear	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It is fair	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It is timely	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It is biased	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It is believable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It can be trusted (trustworthiness)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It tells the whole story	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It is accurate	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It is interactive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Its writers are known for their expertise	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It is objective	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It delivers a wide diversity of expertise	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It is professional	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It has in-depth coverage	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Articles are written by professional journalists	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Commenting on stories is easy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It is easy to add information	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It represents users' wants	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It makes good use of graphics, figures, or photos	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It is eye-catching	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It has a flashy website	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It is easily shared	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

with others via a link								
Presenting other news stories simultaneously	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
News stories/publications are easy to access via clicking on a link	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

C.

Yahoo News	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Not Applicable
It is clear	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It is fair	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It is timely	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It is biased	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It is believable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It can be trusted (trustworthiness)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It tells the whole story	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It is accurate	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It is interactive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Its writers are known for their expertise	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It is objective	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It delivers a wide diversity of expertise	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It is professional	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It has in-depth coverage	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Articles are written by professional journalists	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Commenting on stories is easy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It is easy to add information	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It represents users' wants	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It makes good use of graphics, figures, or photos	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It is eye-catching	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It has a flashy website	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It is easily shared with others via a link	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Presenting other news stories simultaneously	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
News stories/publications are easy to access via clicking on a link	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

D.

Google News	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Not Applicable
It is clear	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It is fair	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It is timely	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It is biased	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It is believable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It can be trusted (trustworthiness)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It tells the whole	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

story								
It is accurate	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It is interactive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Its writers are known for their expertise	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It is objective	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It delivers a wide diversity of expertise	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It is professional	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It has in-depth coverage	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Articles are written by professional journalists	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Commenting on stories is easy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It is easy to add information	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It represents users' wants	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It makes good use of graphics, figures, or photos	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It is eye-catching	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It has a flashy website	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It is easily shared with others via a link	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Presenting other news stories simultaneously	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
News stories/publications are easy to access via clicking on a link	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

E.

News on Facebook	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Not Applicable
It is clear	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It is fair	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It is timely	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It is biased	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It is believable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It can be trusted (trustworthiness)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It tells the whole story	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It is accurate	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It is interactive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Its writers are known for their expertise	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It is objective	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It delivers a wide diversity of expertise	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It is professional	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It has in-depth coverage	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Articles are written by professional journalists	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Commenting on stories is easy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It is easy to add information	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It represents users' wants	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It makes good use of graphics, figures, or	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

photos								
It is eye-catching	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It has a flashy website	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It is easily shared with others via a link	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Presenting other news stories simultaneously	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
News stories/publications are easy to access via clicking on a link	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

F.

News on Twitter	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Not Applicable
It is clear	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It is fair	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It is timely	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It is biased	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It is believable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It can be trusted (trustworthiness)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It tells the whole story	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It is accurate	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It is interactive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Its writers are known for their expertise	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It is objective	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It delivers a wide diversity of expertise	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It is professional	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It has in-depth coverage	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Articles are written by professional journalists	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Commenting on stories is easy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It is easy to add information	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It represents users' wants	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It makes good use of graphics, figures, or photos	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It is eye-catching	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It has a flashy website	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It is easily shared with others via a link	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Presenting other news stories simultaneously	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
News stories/publications are easy to access via clicking on a link	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

Believability

32. On a 5-point scale, how believable are the following media sources in your opinion? (If you don't use one or any of the following media sources please choose "Not Applicable")

	Not believable at all	Not believable	Neutral	Believable	Very believable	Not applicable
Traditional Print Newspaper	1	2	3	4	5	6
Online Newspaper	1	2	3	4	5	6
Yahoo News	1	2	3	4	5	6
Google News	1	2	3	4	5	6
News on Facebook	1	2	3	4	5	6
News on Twitter	1	2	3	4	5	6

33. Kindly indicate what application do you have in you cell phone that provide news? (Including social applications that you follow news on them such as Snapchat and Instagram... etc.)

.....

34. Kindly indicate your frequency in accessing different types of news from the following news sources:

Traditional Print Newspaper						
	Never	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Once in a While	Yearly
Local news	1	2	3	4	5	6
International news	1	2	3	4	5	6
Technology news	1	2	3	4	5	6
Economic news	1	2	3	4	5	6
Political news	1	2	3	4	5	6
Fashion news	1	2	3	4	5	6
Sports news	1	2	3	4	5	6
Health news	1	2	3	4	5	6
Gaming news	1	2	3	4	5	6
Online Newspaper						
	Never	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Once in a While	Yearly
Local news	1	2	3	4	5	6
International news	1	2	3	4	5	6
Technology news	1	2	3	4	5	6

Economic news	1	2	3	4	5	6
Political news	1	2	3	4	5	6
Fashion news	1	2	3	4	5	6
Sports news	1	2	3	4	5	6
Health news	1	2	3	4	5	6
Gaming news	1	2	3	4	5	6
Yahoo News						
	Never	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Once in a While	Yearly
Local news	1	2	3	4	5	6
International news	1	2	3	4	5	6
Technology news	1	2	3	4	5	6
Economic news	1	2	3	4	5	6
Political news	1	2	3	4	5	6
Fashion news	1	2	3	4	5	6
Sports news	1	2	3	4	5	6
Health news	1	2	3	4	5	6
Gaming news	1	2	3	4	5	6
Google News						
	Never	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Once in a While	Yearly
Local news	1	2	3	4	5	6
International news	1	2	3	4	5	6
Technology news	1	2	3	4	5	6
Economic news	1	2	3	4	5	6
Political news	1	2	3	4	5	6
Fashion news	1	2	3	4	5	6
Sports news	1	2	3	4	5	6
Health news	1	2	3	4	5	6
Gaming news	1	2	3	4	5	6
News on Facebook						
	Never	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Once in a While	Yearly
Local news	1	2	3	4	5	6
International news	1	2	3	4	5	6
Technology news	1	2	3	4	5	6
Economic news	1	2	3	4	5	6
Political news	1	2	3	4	5	6
Fashion news	1	2	3	4	5	6
Sports news	1	2	3	4	5	6
Health news	1	2	3	4	5	6
Gaming news	1	2	3	4	5	6
News on Twitter						
	Never	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Once in a While	Yearly
Local news	1	2	3	4	5	6

International news	1	2	3	4	5	6
Technological news	1	2	3	4	5	6
Economic news	1	2	3	4	5	6
Political news	1	2	3	4	5	6
Fashion news	1	2	3	4	5	6
Sports news	1	2	3	4	5	6
Health news	1	2	3	4	5	6
Gaming news	1	2	3	4	5	6

35. Please circle the appropriate number indicating how truthfully this statement expresses your views.

Statement	Not at all True	Some What True	Often True	Very Often True	Very True
Reading news online allows me to find news more easily	1	2	3	4	5
Using technology (the Internet) to get news online is useful for saving time and effort	1	2	3	4	5
Using technology (the Internet) to get news online allows me to get to know different news provider better	1	2	3	4	5
Using technology (the Internet) to get news online will be more convenient for me because I can't get the traditional paper all or most of the time	1	2	3	4	5
Using technology (the Internet) to get news online will help me when I need to get news at anytime and anywhere	1	2	3	4	5
Using technology (the Internet) to get news online allows me to get to know a wider variety of news	1	2	3	4	5
Using technology (the Internet) to get news online is convenient for me because I am online most of the time	1	2	3	4	5
Using technology (the Internet) to get news online fits well with my reading style	1	2	3	4	5
Using technology (the Internet) to get news online suits me because I mostly communicate with the people I know online	1	2	3	4	5
An online news web is difficult to use	1	2	3	4	5
Learning to read news online would be easy for me	1	2	3	4	5
It would be easy for me to become skillful at reading news online	1	2	3	4	5
Using technology (the Internet) to get news online would be a frustrating experience for me	1	2	3	4	5
I know that I can take a site tour to	1	2	3	4	5

see the online news website before I decide to subscribe to the website					
I know that I can read some articles on the online news site before I decide to subscribe.	1	2	3	4	5
It is easy to communicate to others the consequence of using an online news websites	1	2	3	4	5
It is obvious to me whether an online news web source is beneficial or not	1	2	3	4	5
It is difficult to explain why reading news online may or may not be beneficial	1	2	3	4	5

36. Do you have any additional comments or suggestions?

.....
.....
.....

37. Please type your email for a chance to win the \$50 gift prize.

.....
.....

Please Note: After you finish filling out the questionnaire, please insert your responses into the envelope and seal it before you submit it to the receptionist.

This is the end of the survey. Thank you for your participation.

Compensation or Incentive

To thank you for your contribution to the research project, you will be given the option to enter your email in a draw to win \$50 US cash.

The draw is open to all research participants who enter their email in the draw, regardless of whether they decide to withdraw from further participating in the research project.

Upon completion of the study, each survey will be given a number. The number will be randomly selected amongst those who have entered and the person whose number is drawn will be informed by email. If the person cannot be reached within 14 days from the date of the draw, the prize will be awarded to the second number that is randomly selected and so on until the prize has been awarded. The odds of winning a prize will depend on the number of eligible entries received. The prize must be accepted as awarded or forfeited.

Your email that you provide when you enter the draw is collected for the purposes of contacting you if your number is selected in the draw. The contact information you have provided will be kept confidential and then destroyed once the prizes have been awarded.

*The draw is governed by the applicable laws of Canada.

Appendix 3 Interview for newspaper specialists

Interview for newspaper's specialists

(English Version)

Participant #: _____

Date: _____

Start Time: _____

End Time: _____

Gender: _____

Hi, my name is **Nidaa Shawli**. I am a full-time student at the University of Ottawa in Canada. Before we begin our interview, may I ask you, what name would you like me to call you? Thank you, Mr/s _____.

First of all, I would like to thank you for taking part in this study. Let me start by telling you the purpose of this study. As you know, newspapers around the world are facing many challenges (technological changes, economic uncertainty, shifts in readers' consumption habits) These challenges are observed differently around the globe, as traditional media in some countries have suffered huge consequences, as is the case in the US, while others have suffered only minimal impacts, such as in Malaysia. Many studies have been conducted in the Western world regarding both the challenges and the strategies being adopted by media in response to these challenges, yet there is a lack of equivalent literature and in-depth analysis on the Saudi newspaper market. Our study will seek to draw comparisons between the Western world and the Arab world; thus, we need to understand the current situation of the *Okaz* newspaper including the impacts of technology, its daily circulation, the number of subscribers it has, and successful marketing strategies it has developed to promote itself in this digital era. I would like to include your experiences and opinions in this interview. Moreover, this interview will also help me understand how all of these changes have affected the business in general and, more specifically, its marketing practices.

I would like to inform you that I will be recording this interview only for the purpose of this study, so that I do not miss any important information. Kindly note that this recording will not be published or distributed in any way, and that only I will have access to the recording devices. All the recordings will be destroyed after I have completed analyzing the data. Please do not hesitate to ask me during the interview if you would like me to turn off the recording at any time. Your name and responses will remain secure. The interview will take about 40–60 minutes depending on the length and depth of the answers provided. Please feel free to give in-depth responses to my questions. (Then I will hand the interviewee the consent form to read and sign, and I will explain the content of it, and ask if the interviewee has any concerns.)

Let's begin...

I will start first by asking you some background questions before we move to more specific questions about the newspaper business.

1- To which age group do you belong?

- ☐ 19 – 28 years old
- ☐ 29 – 39 years old
- ☐ 40 – 50 years old
- ☐ 51 – 60 years old
- ☐ 60+ years old

2- What is your position at the newspaper?

3- How long have you been working for the newspaper?

4- What is your daily work technique?

A- Is there a routine, a regular way of dealing with news?

B- In updating and posting news online?

Now let's move on to questions related more to the business:

5- Does the online edition of the newspaper compete against or complement the traditional print version? And how does that affect the number of readers?
(For instance, does it increase interest in the print copy, decrease interest in the print copy, have no impact, not clear on the impact, or other reasons)

6- Does the online newspaper affect circulation numbers of the printed version?
(If yes, kindly provide me with numbers.)

7- What are the demographics for both your online and traditional print newspaper?

8- In your opinion, what does reader search in news? What does they expect?

9- In your opinion, what does the readers need? What does they expect to get from the newspaper? Is what they expect is the same as what the newspaper provides?

10- What are your plans and strategies for marketing the traditional print newspaper to each demographic? What about the online version?

11- How do you promote the newspaper, both the traditional print and online versions?

12- In your opinion, what distinguish your newspaper than other competitors (other newspaper? other social media website? other online news provider?)

13- In your opinion, what strategies should the newspaper consider to stay competitive in the market?

14- What do you do to attract readers to each of the following? (online version, traditional print format, social media websites)?

15- Do you estimate the number of daily visitors to your online newspaper?

- ☐ No
☐ Yes (If so, how?)

16- Has the newspaper conducted any marketing studies that measure the size of your audience?

17- What factors prevent/deter your readers from paying for online news, and what can you do to change such attitudes?

18- During the past decade, what have been the main challenges facing the newspaper business? Could you please rank them from highest impact to lowest impact?

19- How do you advertise your newspaper? What strategies that you follow to attract and retain readers?

20- What are the strategic practices that have been applied to overcome those challenges? Kindly provide me with the specific strategies for each challenge? (I would like you to mention all strategies, both successful and unsuccessful)

21- Were any of those strategies successful and are they still in effect?

22- Regarding technological innovations and the advent of new players in the media market (such as social media and search engines), what marketing strategies have been adopted to compete against these new players? And what are the other preparations in collaborating with them?

23- Do you charge subscription fees for access to your online newspaper?

- ☐ No, why not?
- ☐ Yes. If yes, how often do subscribers pay?
 - ☐ Daily
 - ☐ Monthly
 - ☐ Every six months
 - ☐ Yearly
 - ☐ Other. Please specify.....

24- Who does not pay for news? And why not?

25- What makes readers pay for news?

26- Do visitors have to register before reading the newspaper?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

27- What about commenting on the news? Do the readers must have an account with the newspaper?

28- What contents does the website include? Is it similar or different from the traditional print format and in what way?

29- Do you make a profit from your online newspaper? How? And what features does the website have?

30- Do you think that online newspapers will ultimately replace print newspapers? Why?

31- What additional services do you offer to your visitors?

32- Do you have any specialist employees working exclusively for the online edition? In other words, do you have the same editors and journalists working on the print edition as well as for the online edition and on your social media sites?

33- How often do you update your online newspaper?

34- In what way(s) does your online paper differ from the print version?

35- Do you have plans to invest more resources (human or financially) into your online version? What about the traditional print newspaper? How?

36- Do you know the most common problems facing the readers of your newspaper? How do you react to them, both the problems and the readers?

37- To what extent do you think that strategies adopted by your newspaper are similar or different from other strategies addressed and implemented by other newspapers around the world? Can you provide an example?

38- Do you have any additional comments?

This is the end of our interview. Thank you for your participation.