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The Dynamics of Interactive Audience Behavior on Digital News Platforms: An Analytical Study of Usage Patterns and Motivations for Engagement on Platform (X)

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Abstract: This study examines audience engagement on Platform (X) by analyzing the interplay between technical determinants like attention algorithms and users' psycho-social motivations to understand how users transition from passive recipients into interactive gatekeepers who co-manage the flow of news. Adopting a descriptive-analytical approach, the researchers administered a validated questionnaire to a purposive, non-probability sample of 100 individuals selected based on job titles, utilizing advanced statistical modeling via SPSS including Pearson correlation, simple linear regression, and one-way ANOVA to test the hypotheses. Demographically, the sample exhibited unique characteristics as 76% held postgraduate degrees and 43% were aged 60 or older. The key findings revealed a predominant pattern of silent interaction where users actively consume and follow news daily but prefer lurking or reposting over active commenting, while confirming that content quality and perceived credibility serve as the core behavioral contract driving digital participation with content quality alone explaining 23.3% of the variance in interaction behavior. Conversely, hypotheses relating to platform design and usability were rejected as they did not statistically influence engagement levels, and interactive behavior did not vary significantly by age or news interests although it did differ based on users' digital experience. The study concludes that digital audiences practice conscious selectivity to fulfill cognitive and social gratifications, recommending that news organizations shift from a traditional news industry to an engagement industry by optimizing visual formats and digital editorial strategies tailored to active users.

Keywords: Audience Dynamics, Digital News Platforms, Platform X, Digital Interaction.

1. The Introduction:

Digital news platforms, particularly Platform X, play an increasingly crucial role in shaping public opinion, making digital engagement a key indicator of reader interests. While existing studies acknowledge that modern news consumption patterns encompass diverse traditional and digital models (Al-Sukkarī & Sa'd, 2025), a significant research gap remains in the Arab context regarding the hidden dynamics of audience behavior. Most literature focuses primarily on quantitative interactions without sufficiently distinguishing between active and passive engagement. Furthermore, while digital channels offer personalization (Amponsah & Atianashie,

2024) and rich audience-producer interactivity (Abdel-Hamid, 2024), user behavior is often shaped by external variables. For instance, emotional tone may influence reach, as negative content is disproportionately shared on social networks (Watson et al., 2024). This sharing behavior is prominent among Arab audiences and is often driven by a motivation to communicate and share knowledge (Şalāh, 2022). However, continuous analytics are required to map changing generational preferences (Abū al-Khayr, 2023), especially since algorithmic technologies can influence public opinion (Al-Asal, 2025). Accordingly, this study seeks to provide a deeper analytical reading of digital interaction patterns by linking content quality, credibility, platform determinants, and users' digital experience. Audience dynamics: In this research, this refers to the psychological and social processes that drive audience behavior.

Digital news platforms: In this research, this refers to electronic environments and integrated communication systems that rely on the internet to produce, publish, and distribute news content.

Platform X: This is a global social network and microblogging site that allows users to share text messages, photos, and videos.

Digital interaction: This refers to the process of communication and information exchange between users and digital platforms through actions such as following, liking, commenting, reposting, and sharing.

1. Research Problem:

Despite the widespread prevalence of digital news platforms, our understanding of audience engagement behavior and the mechanisms of digital participation remains limited, particularly with regard to how users interact with news content on platforms such as X. There is a need for a systematic study to monitor interaction patterns and identify the factors influencing digital engagement, thereby enabling accurate conclusions about the dynamics of the digital audience and their impact on news dissemination.

2. Research questions:

- 1- To what extent do patterns of interactive audience behavior differ across digital news platforms, with a focus on the X platform?
- 2- What factors influence the level of digital engagement of the audience on the X platform?
- 3- To what extent does the X platform influence patterns of audience interaction?
- 4- What is the relationship between content quality and the nature of the audience's digital interaction on the platform?

3. Study objectives:

1. To identify patterns of interactive audience behavior on digital news platforms, with a focus on Platform X.
2. To analyse the mechanisms of digital engagement and understand the motivations for interacting with news content.
3. To understand the factors influencing the level of audience engagement.

4. Methodology:

The study adopted a descriptive-analytical approach, in which a validated questionnaire was developed, subjected to reliability and validity tests, and administered to a purposive sample of 100 individuals. Explanatory modelling techniques and advanced statistical analysis using SPSS were employed to test the hypotheses and measure the relative weight of the study variables.

The results revealed the predominance of the ‘silent interaction’ pattern as a mechanism for coping with the massive flow of news. The analyses demonstrated a statistically significant positive correlation between ‘perceived credibility’ and the decision to interact, whilst content quality was found to explain approximately 23% of the variance in interactive behavior, thereby reinforcing the role of content as a decisive variable in the digital environment.

The study concludes that the digital audience engages in ‘conscious selectivity’ aimed at enhancing their digital presence and gaining cognitive satisfaction, which requires news platforms to rethink their editorial strategies to align with the psychology of the ‘active user.’

5. Research population and sample:

The research population consists of active users of Platform X who engage with news content through comments, likes, reposts, following, or other forms of digital engagement. The study sample consisted of 100 participants selected using a purposive, non-probability sampling approach. Therefore, the findings should be interpreted within the limits of the selected sample and should not be generalized statistically to all Platform X users.

All active users on the X platform who engage with news content, whether through comments, likes, reposts, or any other forms of digital engagement.

Given that the study aims to analyse audience behavior and understand the mechanisms of digital engagement, the most appropriate academic approach is the descriptive-analytical method, which allows for a detailed description of audience behavior patterns and a precise tracking of digital interactions. It enables the analysis of factors influencing interaction and the interpretation of digital engagement mechanisms.

Appropriate data collection tools: digital observation tracking interactions on the X platform (comments, likes, reposts).

In addition to the description and analysis of digital content: examining the nature of the published content and its impact on interaction.

Online surveys or interviews to understand the audience’s motivations and behaviors from their personal perspective.

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To ensure the highest levels of scientific originality and impartiality, the study tool underwent ‘content validity’ testing by being reviewed by specialist referees, and was distributed both in the field and electronically to ensure sample representativeness. Explanatory modelling in data processing, where the analysis went beyond a descriptive presentation of tables to infer deep correlational relationships using Pearson’s correlation coefficient and statistical significance tests, ensuring that the results move from the realm of general observation to that of statistically proven scientific fact.

6. Research hypotheses:

1. There is a statistically significant relationship between the quality of news content and the nature of audience engagement on the X platform.
2. Factors relating to platform design and usability influence the level of audience digital engagement.
3. Patterns of audience interaction vary according to user characteristics such as age, digital literacy and news interests.

7. Previous studies:

1. Al-Sukkarī and Saad (2025)

Al-Sukkarī and Saad (2025) examined the attitudes of readers from various social strata towards news presented via digital portals, analyzing public news-seeking behavior within the context of multiple platforms and changing news values. Employing reception theory and a survey methodology, the researchers administered a questionnaire to a sample of 600 news portal readers across Egypt's governorates. The findings revealed a distinct diversity in news consumption patterns despite the overarching shift to digital environments. Specifically, three primary consumption models emerged: the digital model, the traditional model, and an integrative model that combines both digital and traditional patterns when interacting with news portals.

2. Al-Asal (2025)

Al-Asal (2025) investigated the role of artificial intelligence (AI) in maximizing the impact of social media platforms as soft power tools for states, institutions, and individuals. The study highlighted how advanced technologies—such as smart recommendations and predictive analytics—amplify this influence, while simultaneously critically evaluating the associated ethical challenges, including privacy violations and public opinion manipulation. The paper concluded by emphasizing the urgent need to establish professional, structured frameworks to ensure responsible AI utilization, while outlining a strategic future vision for communicators operating within this evolving digital landscape.

3. Watson et al. (2024)

Watson et al. (2024) explored whether negative material from external news sites is widely disseminated on social media through increased user sharing, thereby incentivizing journalists to adopt a more negative tone. The researchers conducted a large-scale data analysis spanning four US and UK news sites (95,282 articles) and two major social media platforms (over 579 million posts on Facebook and Twitter). The results demonstrated that social media users are 1.91 times more likely to share links to negative news articles. While this impact varied across platforms and outlets, the tendency to share negative political articles was significantly amplified when the content referred to opposition political groups.

4. Amponsah and Atianashie (2024)

Amponsah and Atianashie (2024) provided a comprehensive review of the dynamic integration of artificial intelligence in journalism, tracing its evolution from computer-assisted reporting to automated content generation and AI-assisted editorial decisions. Through various case studies, the authors analyzed how AI improves media efficiency, personalization, and data reporting, while explicitly addressing critical challenges such as potential job losses, misinformation risks, and algorithmic bias. The study concluded that a balanced approach is required to harness AI's capabilities effectively, ensuring that technological progress remains aligned with journalistic integrity, transparency, and ethical accountability.

5. Abdel-Hamid (2024)

Abdel-Hamid (2024) investigated the motivations driving Arab audiences to consume podcast content, their interaction patterns, and how their perception of podcast richness influences their view of traditional radio's future. Grounded in media richness theory, the study utilized a survey methodology and administered a questionnaire to a purposive sample of 400 podcast listeners in the Arab region. The empirical findings revealed a statistically significant correlation between the public's perception of a podcast's media richness and their evaluation of the producer's adherence to professional standards. Furthermore, statistically significant differences in the perceived richness of podcasts were observed based on demographic variables, namely age, gender, and frequency of exposure.

6. Abū al-Khayr (2023)

Abū al-Khayr (2023) sought to identify the defining characteristics of digital audiences and their relationship with user interaction patterns on news platforms. The researcher employed a survey methodology combining fieldwork with systematic comparison, utilizing a questionnaire completed by a sample of 320 digital audience members (general internet and social media users), categorized into Generations Z, Y, and X. The findings indicated that there were no statistically significant differences based on gender regarding audience preferences for specific social media pages or accounts. Consequently, the study recommended that news organizations utilize digital analytics tools continuously to capture the fluid and shifting preferences of their audiences.

7. Ṣalāḥ (2022)

Ṣalāḥ (2022) analyzed the phenomenon of news sharing and circulation on social media among Arab audiences, focusing on the subjective and objective factors that shape how individuals perceive current events. Using an online questionnaire, data was collected from an available sample of 246 Arab social media users. The results indicated that sharing and reposting news content represents a dominant, established behavioral pattern for the vast majority of the sample. Furthermore, the study determined that the primary catalyst driving this sharing behavior is altruistic—specifically, the motivation to achieve the "public good" by making crucial knowledge available to others and fostering community communication.

Transformations in the digital landscape:

The media landscape has undergone radical transformations driven by the development of digital platforms, with the public no longer acting as passive recipients but becoming active participants in the production and circulation of content. Digital interaction is one of the most prominent aspects of this transformation, reflecting various forms of engagement such as liking, commenting and sharing, which are indicators of the audience's involvement in the communication process.

Digital news platforms, including the X platform, constitute a dynamic environment that enables immediate and continuous interaction, thereby helping to reshape the relationship between the media and the public and reinforcing the concept of 'interactive media.'

Uses and Gratifications Theory: This theory is one of the most important frameworks for explaining audience behavior in the digital environment, as it posits that individuals use media consciously to achieve specific gratifications, such as obtaining information, entertainment, or social interaction. In the context of digital platforms, this theory explains the motivations for interaction, whereby users seek to follow or share news to satisfy their cognitive and social needs,

which aligns with the study's findings highlighting the role of cognitive and social motivations in stimulating digital participation .

Gatekeeping theory in the digital environment: Gatekeeping theory refers to the role played by the communicator in selecting and filtering information before its publication. However, the digital transformation has reshaped this role, with the public itself now practicing a form of 'interactive gatekeeping' by reposting or ignoring news.

In this context, the algorithms of digital platforms play a new role as 'digital gatekeepers', controlling the ordering and display of content, thereby influencing the level of engagement and its reach.

8. Credibility of media content:

Credibility is a crucial factor in explaining audience behavior, as studies indicate that users' trust in content directly influences their decisions regarding engagement and sharing. In the digital environment, the importance of credibility is increasing due to the spread of fake news, making users more selective in their interactions, which is consistent with the study's findings confirming the role of reliability in stimulating engagement.

Silent engagement: The concept of silent engagement refers to the behavior of users who consume content without actively participating, such as by commenting or sharing. This pattern is common on digital platforms, where many users prefer to follow without direct engagement, a finding confirmed by the study's results, which showed that this pattern dominates audience behavior.

9. Field Study (Questionnaire)

Study Population and Sample:

The study population refers to the broader group to which the research problem is related, namely users of Platform X who engage with digital news content. The empirical sample consisted of 100 participants selected through a non-probability convenience sampling technique based on their relevance to the research topic and their experience with digital platforms. A total of 100 questionnaires were distributed to the targeted group, and all were returned. The 100% response rate reduces non-response bias within the selected sample; however, the use of a non-probability sample limits the statistical generalizability of the results.

Research tool:

In order to obtain the preliminary information and data for this study, a questionnaire was designed for the study entitled 'The Dynamics of Interactive Audience Behavior on Digital News Platforms: A Descriptive and Analytical Approach to Understanding Patterns of Digital Engagement on the X Platform'

The questionnaire: is a well-known method for collecting field data and is characterized by its ability to gather information from multiple individuals within the study sample, which is then analyzed to arrive at specific results. The researcher endeavored to formulate the questionnaire items whilst maintaining as much neutrality as possible, avoiding meanings that are difficult to understand or ambiguous.

Accordingly, the questionnaire was designed to meet the requirements of the study population and the selected sample. The final version of the questionnaire was prepared and comprised two sections:

Section One: This section included basic data on the sample participants, such as gender, age, educational level, experience in using digital platforms, and news interests.

Section Two: This section contained 22 statements, and members of the study sample were asked to rate their responses to each statement on a five-point scale (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree). These statements were distributed across the study's themes.

The respondents' answers were also coded to facilitate their entry into a computer for statistical analysis, as follows:

Table (1): Five-point Likert scale

Statement	Number
Strongly agree	5
agree	4
Neutral	3
disagree	2
strongly disagree	1

Hypothetical mean = total of the weights / number of weights = $5+4+3+2+1/5=3$.

The purpose of the hypothetical mean is to compare it with the actual arithmetic mean of the statement; if the actual mean exceeds the hypothetical mean, this indicates the respondents' agreement with the statement, whereas if it is less than the hypothetical mean, this indicates the respondents' disagreement with the statement.

10. Statistical methods:

To achieve the objectives of the study and verify its hypothesis, the statistical software SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) was used, as well as Excel to produce the graphs required for the study.

This was to utilize the results of the following statistical methods:

- A. Frequency distribution of percentage responses.
- B. Weighted mean and standard deviation.
- C. Regression test.
- D. One-way

Hypothesized mean = total weights / number of weights = $5+4+3+2+1/5=3$.

The purpose of the hypothetical mean is to compare it with the actual arithmetic mean of the statement; if the actual mean exceeds the hypothetical mean, this indicates the respondents' agreement with the statement, whereas if it is lower than the hypothetical mean, this indicates the respondents' disagreement with the statement.

To achieve the objectives of the study and verify its hypothesis, the statistical software SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) was used, as well as Excel to produce the graphs required for the study.

This was done to utilize the results of the following statistical methods:

A. Frequency distribution of percentage responses.

11. Evaluation of measurement tools:

First: Content validity tests for the apparent scale:

Content validity testing of the scale items was conducted by assessing the conceptual validity and the validity of the questions in terms of wording and clarity, which may be due either to differences in meaning according to the culture of the society or as a result of translating the scales from one language to another.

The researcher presented the questionnaire to a number of academic reviewers in the field of study and from various professional backgrounds and academic disciplines to analyse the content of the scale items and to determine the degree of consistency between the items of each scale, followed by the acceptance or modification of certain items. After the questionnaire was returned by the reviewers, the suggested amendments were implemented, whilst the remaining reviewers indicated that the questionnaire, in its current form, met the requirements of the study.

12. Reliability and internal consistency:

Test reliability refers to the measure yielding the same results when administered more than once under similar conditions. Reliability also means that if a test is administered to a group of individuals, their scores are recorded, and the same test is then re-administered to the same group, the test is considered fully reliable. Reliability is also defined as the degree of accuracy and consistency of the measurements obtained from the test .

Among the most commonly used methods for assessing scale reliability are:

- a. The split-half method using the Spearman–Brown formula.
- b. The Cronbach's alpha formula.
- c. The test-retest method.
- D. The equivalent forms method.

Validity, on the other hand, is a measure used to determine the degree of honesty of respondents through their answers on a specific scale. Validity is calculated in various ways, as it represents the square root of the reliability coefficient. The reliability and stability values range between zero and one, and the Cronbach's alpha coefficient was calculated for all the dimensions included in this questionnaire; the following table illustrates the results of this procedure:

Table (2): Reliability Statistics

Number of sentences	Reliability	Validity
22	0.826	0.908

It is clear from the table that the reliability (Cronbach's alpha coefficient) of the questionnaire items was 26, i.e. 0.908, confirming the validity of the study's themes. This means that the scale yields the same results if used more than once under similar conditions, which confirms the questionnaire's validity for measurement.

Data analysis:

12.1. Personal data:

This section analyses personal information to determine the degree of homogeneity and heterogeneity within the research sample, in order to ensure that it is representative of the population. It also aims to identify correlations between personal data, specifically gender, age, educational level, experience in using digital platforms, and news interests.

1/ Gender: The following table shows the frequency distribution of the study sample according to the gender variable.

Table (3): The number of males to females

Statement	Frequency	Percentage
male	53	%53
female	47	%47
%100	100	%100

From the table above, we can see that 53% are male, which is the higher percentage, followed by 47% who are female, which is the lower percentage.

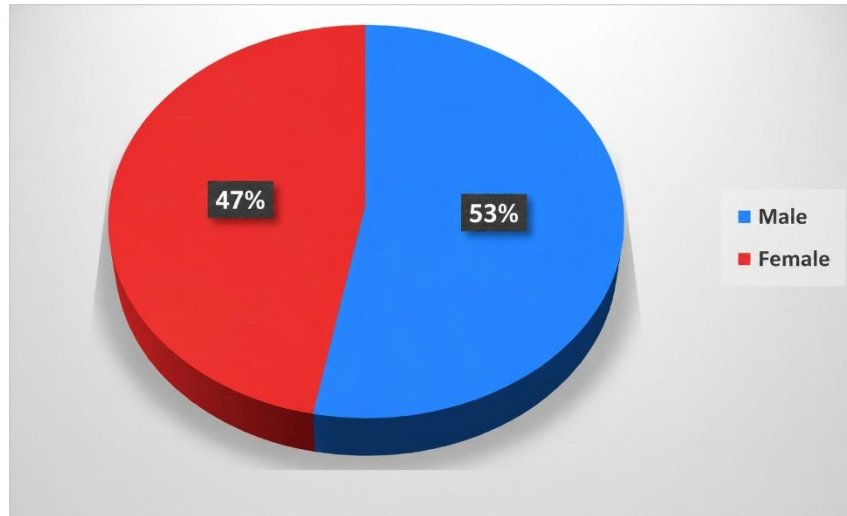


Figure 1: Distribution of respondents by gender

2. Age: The following table shows the frequency distribution of the study sample according to the age variable

Table (4): The frequency and Percentage

Statement	Frequency	Percentage
30-20	11	11%
40-30	33	33%
50-40	8	8%
60-50	5	5%
60 years or more	43	43%
Total	100	%100

From the table above, we can see that the highest Percentage (43%) is for those aged 60 and over, followed by the 40–30 age group at 33%, then the 30–20 age group at 11%, and the 50–40 age group at 8%, followed by the 50–60 age group at 5%, which is the lowest Percentage.

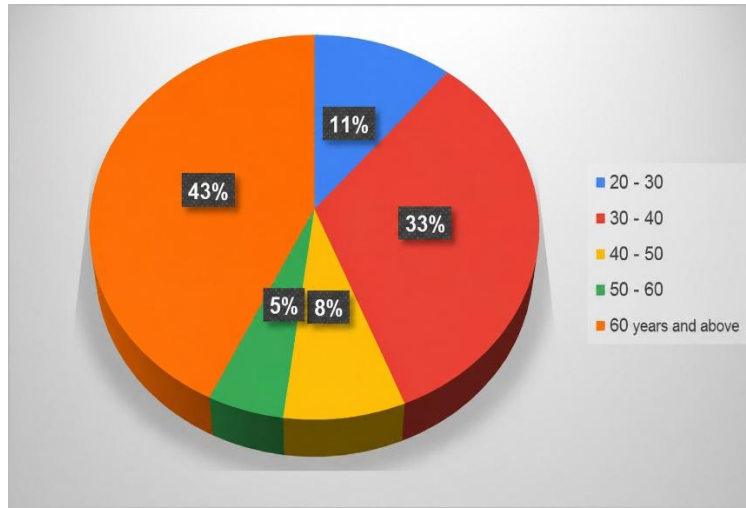


Figure 2: Distribution of respondents by age

3. Educational level: The following table shows the frequency distribution of the study sample according to the variable of educational level

Table (5): the frequency distribution of the study sample according to the variable of educational level

Statement	Frequency	Percentage
Secondary	1	1%
Undergraduate	23	23%
Postgraduate	76	76%
Total	100	100%

The table above shows that 76% have completed higher education, which is the highest Percentage, followed by 23% who have completed university education, and 1% who have completed secondary education, which is the lowest Percentage.

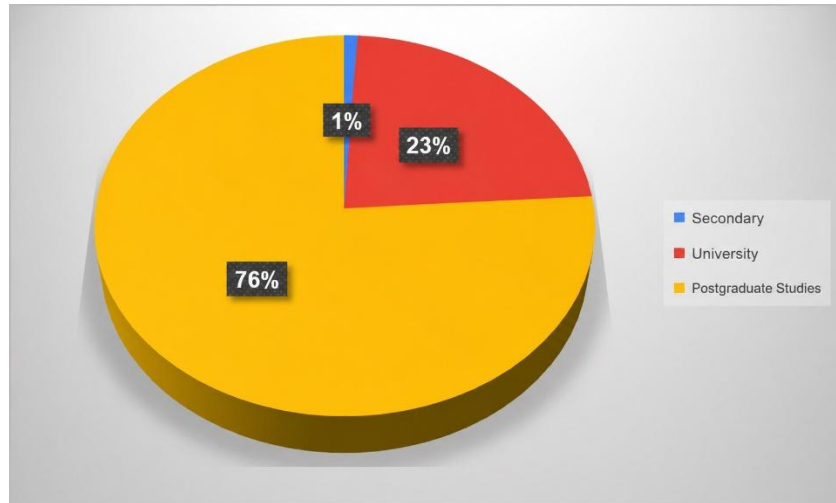


Figure 3: Distribution of respondents by educational level

4. Experience in using digital platforms: The following table shows the frequency distribution of the study sample according to the variable of experience in using digital platforms

Table (6): The frequency distribution of the study sample according to the variable of experience

Statement	Frequency	Percentage
expert	15	15%
Advanced	56	56%
Average	29	29%
Total	100	100%

The table above shows that the ‘Advanced’ category accounts for 56%, which is the highest Percentage, followed by ‘Intermediate’ at 29%, and ‘Expert’ at 15%, which is the lowest Percentage.

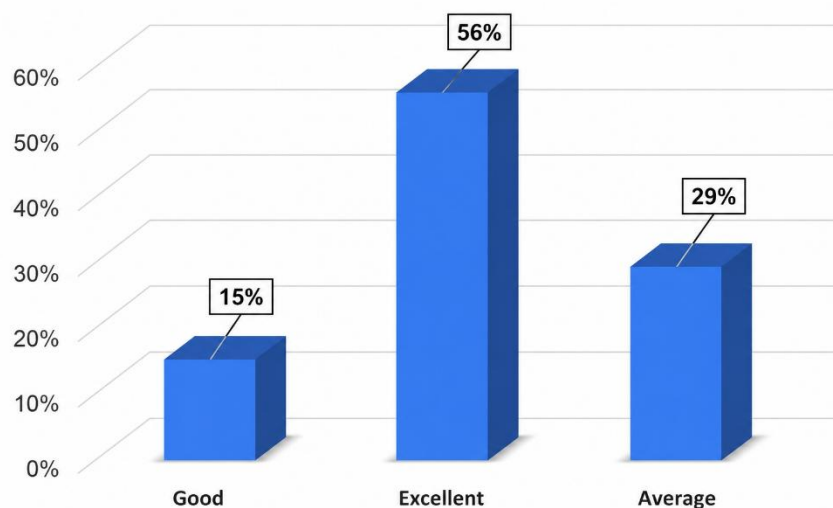


Figure 4 : Distribution of respondents by level of experience in using digital platforms

.5News interests: The following table shows the frequency distribution of the study sample according to the variable of news interests

Table (7): the frequency distribution of the study sample according to the variable of news interests

phrase	repetition	Percentage
technology	21	21%
policy	34	34%
Culture and Arts	19	19%
economy	11	11%
Public health	5	5%
sports	10	10%
Total	100	100%

The table above shows that (34%) is 'politics', which is the highest percentage, followed by 'technology' at 21%, then 'culture and the arts' at 19%, followed by 'economics' at 11%, then 'sport' at 10%, and finally 'public health' at 5%, which is the lowest percentage.

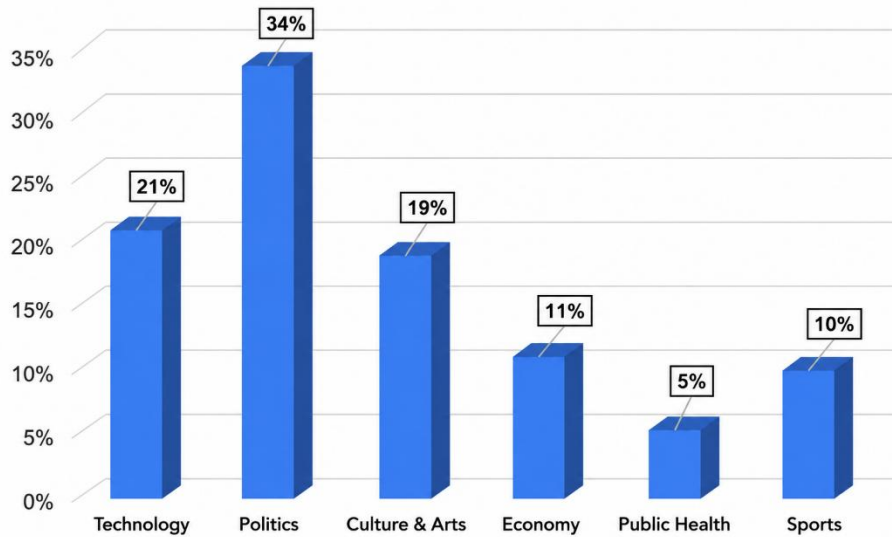


Figure 5: Distribution of News Topics by Percentage

Second: Basic data:

This section addresses the research hypotheses and contains a total of 22 statements. Members of the sample were asked to indicate their response to each statement using a five-point Likert scale consisting of five levels (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree)

A. Frequency distribution of responses.

B. Percentages.

Analysis of the primary study data: This section involves an analysis of the primary study data to enable a discussion of the research hypotheses, in accordance with the following steps:

1- The relative frequency distribution of the responses from the surveyed units to the survey questions:

This is achieved by summarizing the data in tables, which show the values for each variable in order to highlight the key characteristics of the sample's responses, presented as figures and percentages for the study's statements.

2. Descriptive statistics:

To determine the direction of the statements based on the number of respondents who agreed and disagreed with the study's statements, by comparing the arithmetic mean of the statements with the study's hypothetical mean (3)

Table (8): Descriptive statistics for the first axis: patterns of interaction behavior on the X platform

Phrase direction	standard deviation	arithmetic mean	Strongly disagree	Disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree	Statement	
agree	0.899	3.83	1	7	23	46	23	F	.1 I follow the news on the X

			1%	7%	23%	46%	23%	%	platform every day
agree	0.774	3.92	0	6	16	58	20	F	2 -I share news based on my personal interests
			0%	6%	16%	58%	20%	%	
agree	1.012	3.81	1	14	14	45	26	F	3/ Important or trending news stories are reposted
			1%	14%	14%	45%	26%	%	
neutral	1.085	3.15	6	23	32	28	11	F	4/I commented on the news to express my opinion
			%6	%23	%32	%28	%11	%	
agree	0.748	3.90	0	5	18	59	18	F	5/I sometimes follow the news without engaging
			0%	%5	%18	%59	%18	%	
agree	1.123	3.49	6	14	23	39	18	F	6/ The quality of the content influences my decision to engage
			%6	14%	%23	%39	%18	%	
agree	0.958	3.52	1	16	27	42	14	F	7 /The way the news is presented influences my desire to engage
			%1	%16	%27	%42	%14	%	
agree	0.937	3.36	3	16	30	44	7	F	8/ The platform's design and ease of use
			%3	%16	%30	%44	%7	%	
agree	0.569	3.62	The general direction of the first axis						

1/ The percentage of those who agree and strongly agree (69%), the percentage of those who disagree and strongly disagree (8%), and the percentage of those who are neutral (23%), with an arithmetic mean of (3.83) and a standard deviation (0.889) for the statement 'I follow the news on Platform X daily', which indicates a general trend of agreement with this statement.

2/ The percentage of those who agree and strongly agree (78%), those who disagree and strongly disagree (6%), and those who are neutral (16%), with a mean of 3.92 and a standard deviation (0.774) for the statement 'I share news based on my personal interests', which indicates a general trend of agreement with this statement.

3 /The percentage of those who agree and strongly agree (71%), those who disagree and strongly disagree (15%), and those who are neutral (14%), with an arithmetic mean of 3.81 and a standard deviation (1.012) for the statement 'I repost important or trending news', which indicates a general trend of agreement with this statement.

4 / the percentage of those who agree and strongly agree (39%), those who disagree and strongly disagree (29%), and those who are neutral (32%), with an arithmetic mean of 3.15 and a standard deviation (1.085) for the statement ‘I comment on the news to express my opinion’, indicating a general trend of neutrality towards this statement.

5/ The percentage of those who agree and strongly agree (77%), those who disagree and strongly disagree (5%), and those who are neutral (18%), with an arithmetic mean of 3.90 and a standard deviation (0.748) for the statement ‘I follow the news without interacting sometimes’, which indicates a general tendency towards agreement with this statement.

6/ the percentage of those who agree and strongly agree (57%), those who disagree and strongly disagree (20%), and those who are neutral (23%), with a mean of 3.49 and a standard deviation of 1.123

Table (9): Second axis: Motives for interaction:

Phras e directi on	standard deviation	arithm etic mean	Strongly disagree	Disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree	Statement	
Agre e	1.009	3.54	2	16	24	42	16	ك	1/ I share news for reasons related to following important news.
			2%	16%	24%	42%	16%	%	
Agre e	1.013	3.39	2	22	22	43	11	ك	2 .I share news to express my personal opinion.
			2%	22%	22%	43%	11%	%	
Agre e	0.727	3.58	0	8	32	54	6	ك	3 .I share news to share content with others.
			0%	8%	32%	54%	6%	%	
Agre e	1.055	3.41	2	23	21	40	14	ك	4. I share news because it's popular among my friends.
			%2	%23	%21	%40	%14	%	
neut ral	0.967	3.15	2	27	32	32	7	ك	5 .I share news as a result of the influence of my friends or social network.
			%2	27%	32%	32%	7%	%	
Agre e	0.592	3.41	General direction of the second axis						

From Table 9 above

1/ The percentage of those who agree and strongly agree (58%), those who disagree and strongly disagree (18%), and those who are neutral (24%), with an arithmetic mean of (3.54) and a standard deviation (1.009) for the statement ‘I share news for reasons related to following important news’, which indicates a general trend of agreement with this statement.

2/ the percentage of those who agree and strongly agree (54%), those who disagree and strongly disagree (24%), and those who are neutral (22%), with an arithmetic mean of 3.39 and a standard deviation (1.013) for the statement ‘I share news to express my personal opinion’, which indicates a general trend of agreement with this statement.

3/ The percentage of those who agree and strongly agree (60%), those who disagree and strongly disagree (8%), and those who are neutral (32%), with an arithmetic mean of 3.58 and a standard deviation (0.727) for the statement ‘I share news to share content with others’, which indicates a general trend of agreement with this statement.

4/ The percentage of those who agree and strongly agree (54%), those who disagree and strongly disagree (25%), and those who are neutral (21%), with a mean score of 3.41 and a standard deviation (1.055) for the statement ‘I share news because the content is popular among my friends’, indicating a general trend of agreement with this statement.

5/ The percentage of those who agree and strongly agree (39%), those who disagree and strongly disagree (29%), and those who are neutral (32%), with a mean score of 3.15 and a standard deviation (0.967) for the statement ‘I share news as a result of the influence of my friends or my social network’, which indicates a general trend of neutrality regarding this statement.

Table (10): Axis 3: Assessment of the impact of content

Phrase direction	standard deviation	arithmetic mean	Strongly disagree	Disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree	Statement	
Agree	0.858	3.53	1	12	29	49	9	ك	1/ My interaction with the news has an impact on others.
			1%	12%	29%	49%	9%	%	
Agree	0.930	3.68	2	10	22	50	16	ك	2/ The news content on the platform aligns with my interests.
			2%	%10	22%	50%	16%	%	
Agree	0.958	3.48	3	12	31	42	12	ك	3/ I share news that I consider reliable.
			3%	12%	31%	42%	12%	%	
Agree	1.046	3.42	3	22	22	42	13	ك	4/I share news based on content type (political, sports, cultural, etc.)
			3%	22%	22%	42%	13%	%	
Agree	0.726	3.52	General direction of the third axis						

The table above (10) shows that:

1/ The percentage of those who agree and strongly agree (58%), the percentage of those who disagree and strongly disagree (13%), and the percentage of those who are neutral (29%), with an arithmetic mean (3.53) and a standard deviation (0.858) for the statement ‘Interacting with the news has an impact on others’, which indicates a general trend of agreement with this statement.

2 / The percentage of those who agree and strongly agree (66%), those who disagree and strongly disagree (12%), and those who are neutral (22%), with a mean score of 3.68 and a standard deviation (0.930) for the statement ‘The news content on the platform meets my interests’, indicating a general trend of agreement with this statement.

3 / The percentage of those who agree and strongly agree (54%), those who disagree and strongly disagree (15%), and those who are neutral (31%), with an arithmetic mean of 3.48 and a standard deviation of (0.958) for the statement ‘I share news that I consider reliable’, indicating a general trend of agreement with this statement.

4/ The percentage of those who agree and strongly agree (55%), those who disagree and strongly disagree (25%), and those who are neutral (22%), with an arithmetic mean of 3.42 and a standard deviation (1.046) for the statement ‘I share news based on the type of content (political, sporting, cultural, etc.)’, which indicates a general trend of agreement with this statement

Table (11): Axis 4: Overall assessment of the platform

Phras e direct ion	standa rd deviati on	arithme tic mean	Stron gly disagr ee	Disagr ee	neutra l	agree	strongl y agree	Statement	
Agree	0.808	3.82	0	8	19	56	17	ك	1 / The X platform provides a good user experience.
			%0	8%	19%	56%	17%	%	
Agree	0.816	3.80	0	9	18	57	16	ك	2 /I find it easy to access news on the platform.
			%0	%9	%18	%57	%16	%	
Agree	0.792	3.83	0	8	17	59	16	ك	3/ I would like to see improvements in the quality of the news.
			%0	8%	17%	59%	16%	%	
Agree	0.800	3.81	0	8	19	57	16	ك	4/ The interaction tools (like, comment, share) are sufficient
			%0	8%	19%	%57	16%	%	
Agree	0.856	3.79	1	8	19	55	17	ك	5 / I find the platform useful for following digital news
			%1	8%	19%	%55	%17	%	
Agree	0.766	3.81	General direction of the fourth axis						

The table above (11) shows that:

1/ The percentage of those who agree and strongly agree (73%), the percentage of those who disagree and strongly disagree (8%), and the percentage of those who are neutral (19%), with an arithmetic mean of (3.82) and a standard deviation (0.808) for the statement ‘Platform X provides a good user experience’, which indicates a general trend of agreement with this statement.

2/ The percentage of those who agree and strongly agree (63%), those who disagree and strongly disagree (9%), and those who are neutral (18%), with a mean of 3.80 and a standard deviation

(0.816) for the statement ‘I find it easy to access news on the platform’, which indicates a general trend of agreement with this statement.

3 / The percentage of those who agree and strongly agree (75%), those who disagree and strongly disagree (8%), and those who are neutral (17%), with an arithmetic mean of 3.83 and a standard deviation (0.792) for the statement ‘I would like to see improvements in the quality of the news’, which indicates a general trend of agreement with this statement.

4/ The percentage of those who agree and strongly agree (63%), those who disagree and strongly disagree (8%), and those who are neutral (19%), with a mean score of 3.81 and a standard deviation of (0.800) for the statement ‘Interaction tools (likes, comments, shares) are sufficient’, indicating a general trend of agreement with this statement.

5/ The percentage of those who agreed and strongly agreed (72%), those who disagreed and strongly disagreed (9%), and those who were neutral (19%), with a mean score of 3.79 and a standard deviation (0.856) for the statement ‘I find the platform useful for following digital news’, indicating a general trend of agreement with this statement.

"A close reading of Tables 8–11 shows that ‘content quality’ and ‘credibility’ constitute what is known as the behavioral contract between the platform and the audience; the higher

Table (12): Simple Linear Regression Analysis of the Effect of News Content Quality on the Nature of Audience Interaction

Decision	Significance level	Df	t-value	B coefficient	R2 coefficient	Correlation coefficient r	Axis
accept the hypothesis	0.000	99	5.450	0.378	0.233	0.482	The quality of news content and the nature of audience interaction

From Table 12 above, it is clear that:

The results of the table indicate that the correlation coefficient (R) was (0.482), reflecting a moderately strong positive relationship between the quality of news content and the nature of audience interaction. The coefficient of determination (R^2) was (0.233) this means that the independent variable (content quality) explains 23.3% of the variation in the dependent variable (interaction behavior), whilst the remaining percentage is attributed to other factors.

The results showed that the calculated t-value was 5.450, with a significance level of 0.000, which is lower than 0.05. This confirms the statistical significance of the model in predicting the effect of news content quality on audience engagement. The regression coefficient (B) was 0.378, indicating that a one-unit increase in perceived news content quality is associated with an increase of 0.378 units in the level of engagement. Based on the above, the hypothesis that there is a statistically significant relationship between news content quality and the nature of audience engagement on Platform X is accepted.

Hypothesis 2: Factors relating to platform design and ease of use influence the level of digital engagement:

To ascertain the trends in respondents' opinions regarding the extent to which the study's hypotheses are supported, simple linear regression will be tested and compared with the significance level; the following table illustrates this :

Table (13): Simple Linear Regression Analysis of the Effect of Platform Design and Ease of Use on the Level of Digital Participation

decision	Significance level	df	t-value	B coefficient	R2 coefficient	Correlation coefficient R	axis
reject the hypothesis	0.096	99	1.681	0.123	0.028	0.167	Factors related to platform design and ease of use influence the level of digital participation.

From Table 13 above, it is clear that:

The results indicate that the correlation coefficient (R) was 0.167, reflecting a weak positive relationship between factors related to platform design and ease of use and their impact on the level of digital engagement. The coefficient of determination (R^2) was 0.028 This means that the independent variable (factors related to platform design and ease of use) explains 2.8% of the variation in the dependent variable (level of digital engagement), whilst the remaining percentage is attributed to other factors.

The results showed that the calculated t-value was 1.681, with a significance level of 0.096, which is greater than 0.05. This indicates that the model is not statistically significant and is not suitable for predicting changes in digital engagement based on platform design and usability alone.

It is clear from the regression coefficient (B), which was 0.123, that for every 12.3% increase in the factors related to platform design and ease of use, the level of digital engagement increases by 12.3%. Based on the above, the hypothesis that factors related to platform design and ease of use influence the level of digital engagement is rejected.

Hypothesis 3: The patterns of interactive audience behavior vary according to user characteristics such as age, digital experience and news interests.

To determine the trends in respondents' opinions regarding the extent to which the study's hypotheses are supported, a one-way ANOVA will be conducted and compared with the significance level; the following table illustrates this:

Table (14): Interactive audience behavior by age

decision	Significance level	value of F	Average of squares	degrees of freedom	Sum of squares	Source of variation	axis
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Reject the hypothesis.	0.746	0.486	0.161	4	0.645	Among the groups	Audience interaction behavior by age
			0.331	95	31.480	Within the groups	
				99	32.124	Total	

From Table 14 above, it is clear that:

The table shows that there are no statistically significant differences at the 0.05 level in interactive audience behavior according to age, as the significance level (0.746) is higher than 0.05. This indicates that interaction patterns do not differ significantly across age groups within the study sample.

Table (15): Interactive audience behavior by digital experience

Decision	Significance level	F-value	Average of squares	Degrees of freedom	Sum of squares	Source of variation	Axis
Accept the hypothesis.	0.030	3.623	1.116	2	2.233	Among the groups	Interactive audience behavior based on digital experience
			0.308	97	29.892	Within the groups	
				99	32.124	Total	

From the table above (15) it is clear that:

It is evident from Table 15 that there are statistically significant differences at the 0.05 level in interactive audience behavior according to digital experience, as the significance level (0.030) is lower than 0.05. This means that users' digital experience contributes to differences in patterns of interactive audience behavior.

Table (16): One-Way ANOVA Results for Differences in Interactive Audience Behavior Based on News Interests

Decision	Significance level	F-value	Average of squares	Degrees of freedom	Sum of squares	Source of variation	Axis
Reject the hypothesis	0.052	2.288	0.967	5	3.485	Among the groups	Interactive audience behavior based on news interests
			0.305	94	28.639	Within the groups	
				99	32.124	Total	

It is clear from Table 16 above that:

It is evident from Table 16 that there are no statistically significant differences at the 0.05 level in interactive audience behavior according to news interests, as the significance level (0.052) is slightly higher than 0.05. This indicates that news interests did not produce statistically significant differences in engagement behavior within the study sample.

Linking the results to the theoretical framework:

The study's results reveal clear consistency with the adopted theoretical frameworks, as patterns of interactive audience behavior on the (X) platform can be interpreted in light of a set of communication theories that contribute to understanding the dynamics of digital interaction.

In light of the Uses and Gratifications theory, the results confirm that the audience engages with the platform consciously to achieve cognitive and social gratifications, as the study showed that following important news and sharing content with others represent the primary motivations for interaction. This is consistent with the theory's assumptions that the audience is active in choosing the medium and content that meets their needs, and the positive attitude towards using the platform reflects the medium's ability to effectively satisfy those needs.

As for the gatekeeping theory, the results showed that the quality of news content is the most influential factor in interaction behavior, reflecting a shift in the role of the 'gatekeeper' from traditional media organizations to a combination of digital algorithms and user preferences. Users do not merely consume content; they play a selective role in reposting it, thereby becoming part of the process of filtering and directing the flow of information, which is consistent with the modern formulation of the gatekeeping theory.

Linking the findings to the study's objectives:

This study seeks to achieve a set of objectives related to understanding the dynamics of interactive audience behavior on digital news platforms, and the findings showed clear consistency with these objectives, thereby enhancing the explanatory value of the study.

With regard to the first objective, which is to identify patterns of interactive audience behavior on Platform X, the results revealed a general positive trend towards using the platform to follow the news, with the majority of respondents tending to follow daily and to interact to varying degrees, reflecting a pattern of intensive and regular exposure to news content. The results also showed that interaction behavior is predominantly indirect in nature, with users preferring to repost and follow

news rather than comment on it, which indicates the predominance of a ‘silent interaction’ pattern. This finding has significant interpretative implications, as it demonstrates that interaction is not measured solely by overt engagement, but extends to implicit forms of digital interaction.

The findings of this study intersect with the Uses and Gratifications theory in its updated digital form, as interaction on Platform X is not merely an automatic reaction, but rather behavior aimed at achieving cognitive and social gratifications and reinforcing the user's digital presence. The dominance of reposting reinforces the concept of interactive gatekeeping, whereby the audience contributes to determining the visibility and circulation of news, indicating a shift in communicative power within the digital space.

As for the second objective, which relates to analyzing the mechanisms of

Digital engagement and understanding the motivations for interaction, the results showed that cognitive motivations, such as following

The study’s research questions to its recommendations:

The study’s recommendations stem from its research questions; these recommendations represent a direct practical response to the issues the study sought to unpack and analyse, thereby reinforcing the interpretative and practical dimensions of the research.

With regard to the first research question concerning the extent to which patterns of interactive audience behavior differ across digital news platforms, with a focus on Platform X, the results highlighted the prevalence of indirect interaction patterns. This was reflected in the recommendations calling for the promotion of active interaction patterns, particularly through comments and discussions, by providing safe and stimulating interactive environments. Linked to this question is the recommendation regarding the development of users’ digital skills, given that improving digital literacy contributes to the transition from passive to more meaningful, positive interaction.

As for the second question concerning the factors influencing the level of digital engagement, the recommendations clearly reflected the centrality of these factors, emphasizing the need to improve the quality of news content as the most influential determinant, alongside a call to develop digital editorial strategies that take public interests into account. Other recommendations linked to this question included strengthening news verification mechanisms and developing content display algorithms, thereby ensuring the delivery of reliable and engaging content that enhances engagement levels.

Regarding the third question on the extent to which the X platform influences audience engagement patterns, the recommendations reflected an awareness of the digital environment’s importance in shaping this behavior. They called for improving content display mechanisms and integrating technical and editorial dimensions into platform design, thereby contributing to a more effective and impactful user experience. This vision was further reinforced by the recommendation to expand

Study findings:

- 1 .The study findings revealed a generally positive attitude towards using the X platform to follow the news, with the majority of respondents tending to follow the news on a daily basis and engage with it to varying degrees.
- 2 . It was found that interaction behavior is predominantly indirect in nature, as users prefer to repost and follow news items rather than comment on them, reflecting a pattern of ‘silent interaction.’
3. The results revealed that the quality of news content is the most influential factor in interaction behavior, as a statistically significant moderate positive correlation was found between content quality and the level of interaction ($R = 0.482$).
4. The results showed that cognitive motivations (following important news) and social motives (sharing content with others) represent the primary drivers of interaction behavior.
- 5.The study showed that the influence of social networks and friends on sharing behavior was neutral, indicating relative independence in the decision to interact.
- 6 .The results confirmed that credibility is an important factor in sharing behavior, as users tend to share news that they believe to be reliable.
7. The results indicated that the news content on the platform meets the audience’s interests to a good degree, which reinforces continued use of the platform.
- 8 .The study showed that engagement behavior does not vary by age, indicating relative homogeneity in usage patterns across age groups.
- 9 .No statistically significant differences in engagement behavior were found attributable to the news interest’s variable.
10. Conversely, the results showed statistically significant differences attributable to the digital experience variable, confirming the importance of technical skills in shaping interaction patterns.
11. The overall assessment showed that Platform X is a suitable environment for following digital news, although improving content quality and credibility remains necessary to enhance meaningful engagement.

Study recommendations:

1. At the institutional level:

News organizations should shift from merely producing news to building sustainable engagement, by adopting clear, credible, and visually appealing formats that encourage meaningful audience interaction.

2. At the research level:

Future longitudinal studies should monitor shifts in audience behavior as artificial intelligence algorithms evolve on digital platforms and measure their impact on digital public opinion formation.

3. The need to focus on improving the quality of news content in terms of accuracy, depth and credibility, as this is the most influential factor in stimulating engagement.

4. Working to develop digital editorial strategies that take into account the audience's interests and preferences, thereby boosting engagement rates.
5. Encouraging media organizations to promote forms of active engagement, particularly comments and discussions, by providing safe and stimulating interactive environments.
6. The need to develop users' digital skills through training and awareness programs, given the impact of digital literacy on engagement behavior.
7. Guiding digital platform operators to improve news content display mechanisms to increase its appeal and stimulate interaction.
8. Strengthening fact-checking mechanisms to limit the spread of unreliable content and increase public trust.
9. Developing content display algorithms that prioritise news quality rather than reach rates alone.
10. Work to integrate technical and editorial considerations into platform design, so that development is not limited to ease of use alone.
11. Encourage future studies addressing the psychological and social factors influencing digital interaction.

Limitations of the Study

The study has several limitations. First, the sample consisted of 100 participants selected through a non-probability sampling approach, which limits the statistical generalizability of the findings. Second, the study focused only on Platform X, and therefore the results may not fully represent engagement behavior on other digital news platforms. Third, the study relied mainly on self-reported questionnaire data, which may not capture all forms of actual digital behavior. These limitations should be considered when interpreting the findings and when designing future studies.

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Declaration of Conflict of Interest:

The author expressly declares that there is no conflict of interest whether financial, professional or institutional that could directly or indirectly affect the objectivity of this research or the conclusions drawn from it, and the author undertakes to maintain complete impartiality in the presentation and discussion of the data.

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