Information Sciences Letters
An International Journal

The Role of Social Media Platforms in Confronting Intellectual Extremism from Majmaah University Students' Perspective

Sarah Abdullah S. Al-Amer*, Munirah Suliman A. Alessa, Raheema H.Said Khan, and Samah Abdel-Karim I. Mohammed

Department of English Language, College of Sciences and Humanities, Al-Ghat, Majmaah University, P.O. 66 Majmaah, 11952, Saudi Arabia

Abstract: The present study aims to investigate the role of social media platforms in confronting intellectual extremism among Majmaah University students. The researchers conducted the descriptive analytical approach and applied a 20-item questionnaire to a randomly selected sample of (213) students. The results showed that Tik Tok and Snapchat were ranked first among the study sample. Also, there was a moderate negative impact of social media on intellectual security, with a mean of (2.99). This is due to the nature of the content published on networks and its impact on the subscribers. It indicated the importance of social media, more specifically Tik Tok and Snapchat, among the sample of the study. It can be attributed to gender since females are more interested in social networks to publish and share photos. Moreover, the results revealed that social media platforms played a moderate role in resisting intellectual deviation among the participants, with an average mean of (2.96). There were no statistical differences in the impact of social media platforms on young people's intellectual security and their role in resisting intellectual extremism due to responses to the study questions. The findings of the study call for the necessity of activating the positive role of social media by exploring new approaches to evolve effective alternatives in dealing with social networks by enhancing young people's media literacy.
Contribution/Originality: This study contributed to the existing literature by identifying the role of social media in combating intellectual extremism from the perspective of students at Majmaah University, Saudi Arabia. It also explored the most popular social media platforms among university students and their impact on students' intellectual security.

Keywords: Intellectual extremism, Intellectual security, social networking sites, Majmaah University students, social media platforms.

1. Introduction

The twenty-first century has witnessed the emergence of some groundbreaking information technologies that have revolutionized all aspects of life- social, economic, political, educational, and industrial. As a result, various social networking sites have evolved, and the entire world has become a small village with people interconnected together without being bound by spatial and temporal barriers. It allowed rapid and effective communication, sharing and exchanging information so rapidly and effortlessly until it became an indispensable necessity of life.

The communication and information revolution resulted in the emergence of the so-called electronic media through which the user can send, receive, inquire, comment, publish, and exchange information without restrictions and as quickly as possible using different social media such as blogs, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, and other social networks on the Internet that provided space for expressing opinions. [1]

Young people are the most members of society who are heavily influenced by social media platforms and exposed to cultural invasion, which may affect their identity and values. Extremist groups may exploit the involvement of young people in the Internet world by influencing their intellectual attitudes, behaviors, and beliefs to attract them, taking advantage of unemployment, emptiness, social alienation, and the economic conditions that young people suffer from to achieve their goals and objectives. Hence, globalization became the most fundamental and underlying challenge to educational systems in the world in general, and in the Arab and Islamic world in particular. [2]

Many previous studies indicated that the social network played a positive role in society, by enhancing social relations between individuals and exploring cultures and interests among its users [3].

On the other hand, social networks are fiercely attacked by extremist groups that spread their strange and destructive ideas among young people. This intellectual extremism is the major challenge to intellectual security in Islamic societies. In this context, raising awareness of the dangers of intellectual deviation is everyone's responsibility, ranging from family, school, university, and civil society institutions to social media as the most popular social, educational, and cultural

---

*Corresponding author e-mail: 411202872@s.mu.edu.sa

platform in young people's lives.

1.1. Statement of the Problem

The world's countries and Islamic societies, in particular, suffer from the phenomenon of extremism and the intellectual and moral invasion that has targeted young people over time. This phenomenon may be due to hostile and anti-Muslim ideas that attempt to achieve strategic purposes in order to dominate the orientations of some countries in terms of economic, political, and religious aspects [4].

A study conducted by Al-Qarni (2011, 87) found that social networking sites played a prominent role in the protests that took place in many Arab countries and became a platform for some opposition and extremist groups that incite against the security of society [5]. In addition to being a means of exchanging ideas and visions through written communication via the Internet, which may lead to the development of digital literacy skills among users. [6]

On the other side, some recent studies emphasized the importance of social networking sites, as Al-Sharnoubi (2013, 193) pointed out their effective role if used positively in community service. [7]

Intellectual security is associated with national security. It achieves the stability of the state and plays a vital role in the preservation of national unity, beliefs, and identity, which undoubtedly contributes to social cohesion between the segments of society. This reflects positively on the security and safety of the country and individuals. Due to the fact that the positive use of social networking sites is an integral part of security awareness in light of the continuous development of procedures for combating cybercrimes. In this context, Al-Zahrani (2013, 772) states that the phenomenon of intellectual extremism is one of the phenomena that most attract the interest of researchers because it is related to the life and security of society [8].

In view of the above, the role of social media and its impact, positive or negative, on the attitudes and cultural identity of society members was revealed. As social networking sites have become a key instrument of dialogue among all members of society, the current study aimed to clarify the role of social media in confronting intellectual extremism from the perspective of Majmaah University students, in Saudi Arabia.

1.2. The Study Questions

The present study seeks to answer the following questions:

- What role can social networks play in confronting intellectual extremism from Majmaah University students' perspective?

- What are the most widely used social media platforms among students?

- What is the impact of social media on the intellectual security of young people from the perspective of male and female students at Majmaah University?

- To what extent can variables (e.g., gender, preferred social media, and time spent on social media) affect students' attitudes toward the impact of social media in confronting intellectual extremism among young people?

1.3. Objectives of the Study

The study aims to measure the impact of social media in confronting intellectual extremism among Majmaah University students through the following:

- Identifying the most widely used social media platform by Majmaah University students.

- The impact of social media on the intellectual security of young people from the perspective of male and female students at Majmaah University?

- The effect of variables (e.g., gender, preferred social media, and time spent on social media) on students' attitudes toward the impact of social media in confronting intellectual extremism among young people.

- Submitting recommendations and proposals on increasing the use of social networks in combating intellectual extremism among young people.

1.4. Significance of the Study

The importance of the research's topic highlights its significance. The current study concentrates on investigating the prominent role of social networking sites in combating intellectual extremism. The current age of technological revolutions was reflected in the thought and culture of society and caused enormous educational stresses and challenges, which require confronting by all categories of society. This study targets university students who grew up with the

emergence of this technological upheaval and its effect in creating an exotic culture incompatible with their Arab and Islamic culture and identity. It focuses on the university as a social educational institution that embraces young people in the most dangerous stages of their life in which they need proper guidance and protection against intellectual deviations in particular.

Intellectual security is the basis of society's security and maintaining security through confronting cultural alienation and invasions of cultures is the preservation of the unity of societies and their political stability. This study is expected to fill the gap in the literature regarding the role of social media in facing intellectual extremism among university students. It can provide a great benefit to social networking users, especially young people, in an attempt to take advantage of its positives and negatives regarding their intellectual security. Moreover, the current study can pave the way for future researchers to create new insights related to the same field.

2. Review of Related Literature

2.1. Literature Review

Extremism is a global phenomenon that is almost pervasive in most societies. It could be political, moral, behavioral, intellectual, or religious extremism [9]. It is defined as "a tendency or destructive behavioral deviation, in which principles are distorted and opposite values. It is abnormal behavior or a deviation from moderation and mediation. As indicated by Al-Dughaim (2006, 17), it is the behavior that does not adhere to religious rules, traditions, customs, and social systems prevailing in society [10].

2.1.1. The Concept of Intellectual Extremism

Al-Zahrani (2013, 780) defined extremism as a state of fanaticism in opinion and deviating from moderation in adhering to the teachings of the Islamic religion and exaggerating in implementing God's commands and prohibitions, clinging to one's wrong opinions, not recognizing others' views, accusing them of disbelief, and resorting to methods of violence and terrorism.

In sociology, extremism refers to political, religious, ideological, or intellectual extremism. It means the extreme intensity of an individual's behavior toward a subject or the views s/he espouses [11]. Burai (2002) defines it as an: "Exaggeration in clinging to one's thought or behavior with a set of ideas that may be religious, ideological, political, economic, literary or artistic" [12]. This creates a gap between the individual and the social fabric in which s/he lives and belongs; and leads to self-alienation that occurs when a person feels like a stranger to him/herself, accompanied by an emotional distance feeling among others and impedes him/her from involving in the social interactions that make him/her a productive individual.

From the researcher's point of view, intellectual extremism can be defined as a deviation from the true teachings of Islam. It is one of the major phenomena that threaten the security of societies, particularly young people's identity. "Nations depend for their renaissance and stability on young people, and therefore efforts have to be done to protect them from all forms and dangers of intellectual extremism" [13]. Societies have not been free from the emergence of extremist ideas and intellectual deviation among the youth, the most important of which can be traced back to economic and social inequality, the inability to define identity, and the search for a means of salvation for the crises experienced by young people. [14]

2.1.2. Causes of Intellectual Extremism

The crisis of human societies is not only economic; but moral as well. Due to the difficult circumstances in the world's communities, those who suffer from a state of anarchy and disintegration are increasing. The state of deterioration of social and moral values results from an unusual technological boom, and intellectual extremism is one of the manifestations of this disintegration.

Therefore, governments and societies worldwide are increasingly facing a fundamental question: how to deal with the causes of violent – often religiously motivated – extremism. In this context, the current study sheds light on the most fundamental causes of intellectual extremism:

1. Intellectual Causes

Islam today is facing challenges from the internal and external world. This is clearly noticed in the emergence of different intellectual divisions. One of the most prominent of these currents is Secularists. Those who believe that religion should not be involved with the ordinary social and political activities of a country, and advocate the separation of the state from religious institutions. The other is the extremist religious trend whose followers commit extremely violent acts in the name of religion. These two antagonistic movements reject and resist each other, which affect negatively the security and stability of society. [15]

2. Religious Causes

The religious factor plays a significant role in extremism's emergence. This is due to the contradiction of intellectual and religious trends without moderation. Each group rejects the other's views. Such a state can lead to radicalization, particularly, when a community is oppressed by another; or when the governments of some countries practice religious persecution against other religions or sects by preventing them from practicing their religious rituals, this leads to acts of terror against civilians. [16]

3. Social Causes

Family disintegration is the tendency for society to decline or disintegrate over time, perhaps due to the lapse or breakdown of traditional social support systems. In this regard, the family has an important influence on deciding an individual's success or failure in life since it provides a support system and source of encouragement. In the absence of the family's role, the influence of bad company on emotionally unstable individuals appeared when they began to deteriorate the relationship between the individual and family on one side, and the relationship between the individual and community on the other side.

Moreover, social media is bursting with millions of ideas shared every second worldwide. Knowing how to critically evaluate and understand where this information is coming from has become an important part of recognizing violent extremists and terrorist groups.

These groups use social media as a platform to spread opposing propaganda and attract sympathizers and new recruits. The threat of their activities has only amplified during the COVID-19 pandemic. With the social restrictions imposed as a means of eliminating the virus, reliance on social media and the internet has increased. This has paved the way for groups with violent extremist and terrorist agendas to further exploit insecurities in society and undermine trust in government responses for dealing with this pandemic.

In light of the above, the researcher views that the above causes all negatively influence the recipient due to a number of factors such as personal vulnerability, inability to meet the various challenges or a result of an individual's willingness to adopt this ideology. Such an embrace is not due to his belief in that ideology, but an escape from reality in which they are exposed to bad experiences.

2.1.3. The concept of intellectual security for university students

Al-Juhani (2005) has defined intellectual security as "a commitment, moderation, and a sense of belonging to the nation's culture and values and protecting reason and thought" [17].

University education is one of the fundamental instruments that contribute to consolidating the identity of society and crystallizing its features over time. It is the only sure way to the preparation of manpower that sustainable development requires. The significance of intellectual security for university students can be illustrated through the following:

1. Intellectual security is a protection of the most important national gains and the nation's religion and beliefs.

2. Intellectual security needs to protect every mind from penetration as much as possible.

3. Nation's security is the responsibility of the society in all its categories, but intellectual security is more specific than that, as it is everyone's responsibility.

4. The importance of intellectual security is due to the fact that it derives from the nation's creed, defines its identity, and takes into account its advantages and characteristics. [18]

From the researchers' perspective, protecting intellectual security effectively contributes to the nation's overall security as it provides an appropriate environment for the integral development of the country. Moreover, it can redress negative phenomena such as crime, addiction, violence, deviation, and terrorism. Therefore, achieving intellectual security reflects positively on social stability and prosperity.

2.1.4. Social Media

Due to the evolution of Information and communications technology, societies now have new ways of interacting, exchanging, publishing, and sharing information. The term social media refers to "a computer-based technology that facilitates the sharing of ideas, thoughts, and information through virtual networks and communities"[19]. Social media is an internet-based platform that gives users quick electronic communication of content, such as personal information, documents, videos, and photos. There are more than 4.5 billion social media users around the world. The largest social media networks include Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn, TikTok, Snapchat, blogger, and forums.

In a report given by Simon Kemp (2022) January 2022, There were 34.84 million internet users in Saudi Arabia in January

2022. Saudi Arabia's internet penetration rate stood at 97.9 percent of the total population at the start of 2022. The following table reveals the most widely used social media platforms in Saudi Arabia according to social media statistics in 2022:

Table 1: The most widely used social networking sites in Saudi Arabia in 2022

Platform	No of users	Percentage	Users by gender	
			Male	Female
Youtube	29.30 million	82.3%	60.1%	39.9%
TikTok	22.37 million	64.2 %	60.9 %	39.1 %
Snapchat	20.20 million	56.8 %	49.6 %	50.1 %
Instagram	15.45 million	43.4 %	58.4 %	41.6 %
Twitter	14.10 million	50.4 %	---	----
Facebook	11.40 million	32 %	76.1%	23.9 %
LinkedIn	6.10 million	17.5 %	77.8 %	22.2 %

As shown in the above table, Youtube and TikTok are the most widely used platforms among the other social networks in Saudi Arabia. [20]

Social networking sites have different uses according to their users' purposes. Those purposes could be religious, commercial, political, educational, literary, recreational, or emotional. The development of technology and social interaction increased the value system and social views and affected them positively and negatively, requiring a system of values and standards for each society necessary for maintaining its identity, security, and stability.

Social media networking sites are utilized by students of Majmaah University to interact with each other or with other members off-campus and to create profiles based on their interests to share ideas and information or discuss common issues.

2.2. Previous Studies

Due to the significance and effectiveness of social networks, a lot of studies have been conducted on the impact of social media from different perspectives. Some studies emphasized the negative effect of social networking sites on spreading terrorism, violence, and intellectual deviation. Others have concentrated on the impact of social media on social value systems among university students. Therefore, the current study can fill the gap as the literature review indicated the scarcity of studies that deal with the role of social media platforms in confronting intellectual extremism from university students' perspectives.

Al-Jehani (2019) conducted a study, which aimed to investigate the impact of social media on the value system (especially citizenship, time respect, others' privacy respect, family communication, and communication values) among the students at Princess Nourah bint Abdulrahman University. It utilized the descriptive approach and applied a 40-item questionnaire covering (5) domains to a randomly selected sample of (142) students. Results revealed a positive impact of social media on citizenship and communication values, a moderately negative impact on time respect, and a poor impact on others' privacy respect and on family communication. [21]

A study (Al-Zoubi, et al. 2016) entitled "The Role of the social media 'Whatsapp' in spreading terrorism among university students" aimed to draw attention to the dangers of using cell phones, identify cybercrime, and educate surfers of WhatsApp service from spreading terrorism. It also investigated the way young people deal with the virtual reality provided by social networks, specifically WhatsApp by using the cell phone. [22]

A study conducted by Al-Soyan (2014) investigated the negative impact of social media on the value system of Saudi university students, including separation from reality, being attached to the virtual one, which negatively affects their language, the habit of telling lies and wasting time. [23] In contrast, another study conducted by Al-Shahry (2014) revealed that social media can impact youth both positively and negatively. The negative effects of social media on King Abdulaziz University's students are the lack of interaction with the family while positive effects include easy expression of opinions and intellectual attitudes, strong friendships, open-mindedness, and cultural exchange. [24]

A study (Al-Tayyar, Fahd 2013), entitled "The Impact of Social Media on Values among University Students: Twitter as a Model,' aimed to demonstrate the positive and negative effects of the use of social media networks. The study showed that social networks play a moderate role in The phenomenon of intellectual confusion among young people. [25]

Al-Otaiby and Al-Rashedy (2012) have investigated the most significant positive and negative effects of social media on ethical values in the Arab world. The negative effects are the addiction that causes dysfunction in the youth's daily life, which includes staying up late. The positive ones included that social media are the best tool to inculcate good manners, affirm social communication, build a good society, and maintain Islamic values and principles. [26]

A study conducted by Abed (2012) aims at identifying "the role of social networks in orienting public opinion towards political and social change". The descriptive method has been used to measure the role of social networks in guiding public opinion toward political and social change and distributed among (500) students of Palestinian universities in Gaza. The study revealed that the most effective social network is email. [27]

Al-Namlh (2007) has conducted a study to identify the role of media in raising security awareness and the obstacles that face it. The study has revealed that there is a need to guide a variety of media messages to suit different ages and social groups. On the other hand, there are no qualified journalists and specialists specialized in dealing with terrorism phenomenon, also there is a need to provide media speech that is not based on media theories. [28]

3. Research Method

3.1. Study Design

This analytical cross-sectional study has been conducted among students of Majmaah University. Those participants aged more than 18 years, are able to grasp and answer the data collection tool and are willing to participate and convey their attitudes towards the impact of social networking sites on intellectual security. The researchers have checked the validity of the instrument as it was designed in accordance with previously published literature and the first draft of the survey was reviewed and grammatically checked by professional staff members to provide feedback and then modified into its final form. The survey was conducted in English and took about 3 minutes to be completed.

3.2. Data Collection Tool

A self-administered questionnaire was distributed online using Google Forms. Communication between the researchers and the participants was conducted if needed. The questionnaire consisted of three main sections; the first portion focused on the demographic characteristics which were nationality (Saudi, non-Saudi), gender (male, female) of the participants, preferred social media platforms, and time spent on social media. They are explanatory/independent variables. The second portion consists of 5 items which are used to measure the participants' level of awareness and attitude toward the effect of social networking sites on intellectual security among Majmaah University students. The third section involves 15 items measuring the respondents' attitudes toward the role of social networking sites in confronting intellectual extremism. It was based on a four-point Likert scale (always, sometimes, rarely, never). Accordingly, all the data were collected through one survey with different portions. Participants who did not consent to participate in the study, and/or did not answer the questions of the study, were excluded from the study. Also, participants were given the freedom to terminate at any time.

3.3. Data Collection Technique

The survey was distributed online on social media sites (WhatsApp) to be filled out personally. It has a brief introduction explaining the nature of the research and the confidentiality of the information that is given to participants. All data was entered, prepared, examined, and analyzed by means of statistical procedures for accounting and analysis.

3.4. Study Variables

- The Independent Variable: Majmaah University students. This variable includes nationality (Saudi, non-Saudi), gender (male, female), preferred social media, and period of use (Less than an hour, one-two hours, three-four hours, five or more than five).

- The Dependent Variable: the responses of a random sample of Majmaah University students to the questionnaire.

4. Findings

4.1. Demographic Analysis

The data below were extracted from the participants' responses and statistically analyzed by calculating frequency and percentage.

4.1.1. Identity

Table 2 reveals that the participants, Saudi and non-Saudi students were rated (82.6%), and (17.4%) respectively.

Table 2: The identity of the participants

Nationality	Frequency	Percent %
Saudi	176	82.6

Non-Saudi	37	17.4
Total	**213**	**100.0**

4.1.2. Gender

The sample of the study consists of (213) male and female students at Majmaah University. The sample is selected through a simple random method. Table 3 shows the frequencies and percentages according to the study variables. It illustrates that female participants were ranked first with 73.2 percent, whereas males were rated only 26.8 percent due to the fact that women are more likely to participate than men [29].

Table 3: Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	57	26.8
Female	156	73.2
Total	**213**	**100.0**

4.1.3.   Preferred Social Media Platform

Table 4 clarifies the participants' preference for social media platforms (e.g. YouTube, TikTok, Snapchat, Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn) that were rated (33.3%), (54.5%), (49.8%), (42.7), (41.3%), (16%), and (0.9%) respectively.

Table 4: The Preferred social media platform

Preferred social media platform	Frequency	Percent
YouTube	71	33.3
TikTok	116	54.5
Snapchat	106	49.8
Instagram	91	42.7
Twitter	88	41.3
Facebook	34	16
LinkedIn	2	0.9

4.1.4. Time Spent on Social Media

Table 5 illustrates that university students who spend less than an hour, one to two hours, three to four hours, and five or more than five hours daily on social media platforms were (3.8%), (26.3%), (38%), and (31.9%) respectively. As shown in the table below, the participants spend between three to four hours on social media platforms with a mean of (2.018). This indicates that their use of social networks was moderate.

Table 5: Time spent on social media

Time spent on social media	Frequency	Percent	Mean	Std. Deviation
Less than an hour	8	3.8		
One - two hours	56	26.3		
Three - four hours	81	38	**2.018**	**0.735495**
Five or more than five hours	68	31.9		

4.2. Analysis of Research Questions

4.2.1. The impact of social media on intellectual security among university youth

Table 6: Means of participants' responses to the questions regarding the impact of social media on intellectual security

Item	Mean	Std Deviation	Response	Percent
Social media is a powerful vehicle for shaping public opinion.	**3.28**	**0.4034458**	**Always**	**82.2**
Social networking sites are a fertile medium for spreading destructive ideas among young people.	**3.24**	**0.3859066**	**Sometimes**	**81.2**
Social media inculcate negative attitudes among young people towards their society.	**2.94**	**0.4402073**	**Sometimes**	**73.6**
Social networking sites depreciate science and scientists.	**2.55**	**0.7288511**	**Sometimes**	**63.9**
Social media contribute to spreading the factors leading to intellectual extremism.	**2.95**	**0.5072194**	**Sometimes**	**73.8**
Overall Mean	**2.99**	**0.49312604**		**74.94**

As revealed in the above table, the items that had the highest mean levels with respect to the negative impact of social

media on young people's intellectual security are as follows:

- Social media is a powerful vehicle for shaping public opinion, with a mean of (3.28).

- Social networking sites are a fertile medium for spreading destructive ideas among young people, with a mean of (3.24).

This illustrates that the participants rather agree with the items with a mean of (2.99, accounting for 74.94% of the overall sample. To conclude, the negative impact of social networking sites on young people's intellectual security was moderate.

4.2.2. University students' perspective on the role of social media in combating intellectual extremism

Table 7: Means of participants' responses to the questions regarding the role of social media in combating intellectual extremism

Item	Mean	Std Deviation	Response	Percent
Social media clarify the methods and strategies for confronting intellectual extremism.	2.88	0.52498	Sometimes	72.2
Involving youth to participate in solving their society's problems through social networking sites.	2.92	0.620958	Sometimes	73.00
Providing youth with the necessary skills to confront intellectual extremism through social networking sites.	2.79	0.617504	Sometimes	69.8
Setting norms and criteria for publishing and exchanging information related to community security through social networking sites.	2.87	0.74329	Sometimes	71.8
Religious awareness is provided to young people through social networking sites.	3.13	0.643015	Sometimes	78.3
Social networking sites have a prominent role in confronting misguided ideas and incitement that threaten the security of society.	2.98	0.650589	Sometimes	74.5
Holding forums through social networking sites to integrate young people in the field of community service and modify their negative attitudes towards their society.	2.84	0.603242	Sometimes	71.1
Young people's problems are monitored through social networking sites by conducting surveys on their intellectual views.	2.73	0.781823	Sometimes	68.3
There are spaces dedicated to religious and social counseling available on social media	3.08	0.694836	Sometimes	77.2
Social networking sites seek to promote intellectual dialogue among all segments of society and the culture of difference and acceptance of others.	2.99	0.716893	Sometimes	74.8
Social networking sites promote the rights of non-Muslims in the Muslim community and how to deal with them in accordance with Islamic law.	2.90	0.660953	Sometimes	72.7
Social networking sites have an outstanding role in inculcating the values of tolerance, peace, pride in religion, citizenship, and national affiliation among young people.	3.01	0.754363	Sometimes	75.5
Social media advocate the obligation of obedience to Muslim rulers and denounce rebellion against a Muslim ruler.	3.18	0.70985	Sometimes	79.7
Social networking sites play a prominent role in encouraging young people to work and produce.	3.02	0.782222	Sometimes	75.7
Social media display models of tolerance in dealing with non-Muslims as a cardinal principle of Islam.	3.08	0.666534	Sometimes	77.2
Overall Mean	**2.96**	**0.67807**		**74.12**

The results in Table 7 indicate that the items with the highest mean levels regarding the positive role of social media platforms in confronting intellectual extremism are as follows:

- Social media advocate the obligation of obedience to Muslim rulers and denounce rebellion against a Muslim ruler, with a mean of (3.18).

- Religious awareness is provided to young people through social networking sites, with a mean of (3.13).

- There are spaces dedicated to religious and social counseling available on social media, with a mean of (3.08)

- Social media display models of tolerance in dealing with non-Muslims as a cardinal principle of Islam, with a mean of (3.08).

In contrast, the items with the lowest mean levels are as follows:

- Young people's problems are monitored through social networking sites by conducting surveys on their intellectual views, with a mean of (2.73).

- Holding forums through social networking sites to integrate young people in the field of community service and modify their negative attitudes towards their society, with a means of (2.84).

5. Discussion

The study is based on two main variables: social media platforms and intellectual extremism among young people. The significance of these variables is due to the fact that young people are the most likely to use social media, and their impact cannot be denied. In light of the current study, the researcher analyzed and explained some of its results in an attempt to figure out the role social media networks can play in confronting intellectual extremism. The results showed that Tik Tok and Snapchat were ranked first among the students (54.5%, and 49.8% respectively). University students spend 3-4 hours a day. For students, social media was the most influential instrument for shaping public opinion, with a high mean of (3.28). Also, there was a moderate negative impact of social media on intellectual security, with a mean of (2.99). This is due to the nature of the content published on networks and its impact on the subscribers. It indicated the importance of social media, more specifically Tik Tok and Snapchat, among the sample of the study. It can be attributed to gender since females are more interested in social networks to publish and share photos.

Moreover, the results revealed that social media platforms played a moderate role in resisting intellectual deviation among the participants, with an average mean of (2.96). This indicated that the study participants are more aware of the need to activate the role of social media in combating intellectual extremism among youth, this could be achieved through 1) conducting an opinion survey to gather insights about young people's attitudes, behaviors, problems, and intellectual perceptions, 2) modifying the negative attitudes of young people towards their society, and 3) empowering youth with the preventive skills that help them confront extremism and develop their competence to be able to distinguish between Islamic moderate thought and radical Islamist ideas.

6. Conclusion

The study investigated the role of social media platforms in resisting intellectual extremism from the perspective of a random sample of students at Majmaah University, Saudi Arabia. The study was based on two variables: Independent (e.g. Gender, Time spent on social media and the preferred platform), and dependent (students' responses). The results revealed that the gender factor had a prominent role in shaping the attitude toward the role of social media platforms in combating intellectual deviation since women are more likely to participate than men. The results showed that social media platforms had a moderate role in countering intellectual deviation. Moreover, there were no statistical differences in the impact of social media platforms on young people's intellectual security and their role in resisting intellectual extremism due to responses to the study questions. The findings of the study call for the necessity of activating the positive role of social media in this respect by exploring new approaches to evolve effective alternatives in dealing with social networks by enhancing young people's media literacy. In this regard, it is necessary for users to be aware of the risks and benefits of social media and to be trained on the best ways to deal with these platforms positively so as not to be a victim of extremist ideology.

7. Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher recommends that the role of social media in combating extremist ideologies needs to be increased. This can be accomplished through a number of points:

1. Avoiding sharing information that promotes the spirit of despair and frustration among youth, which can lead them to deviation.

2. Developing positive trends, attitudes, values, and ideas through the information circulated.

3. Raising young people's awareness of the impact of social media, positively and negatively, on intellectual security through virtual conferences and forums conducted by scholars and thinkers.

4. Introducing topics in school curricula to educate students about the uses of social networks and the dangers they

encounter during use.

5. Employing social media in an appropriate way to provide effective, positive, and ethical content.

6. Utilizing social networks in raising awareness of the dangers of intellectual extremism, its manifestations, causes, and how to prevent it.

7. Monitoring what is published online, especially with regard to religious fatwas that have to be limited to specialists.

8. Encouraging and motivating faculty members to provide training courses for their students to develop their skills in facing the negative effects of social networking sites with regard to their national affiliation and intellectual security.

Acknowledgments

Conflict of interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict regarding the publication of this paper.

References

[1]   Radwan, Hanan Ahmed and Ramadan, Salah El-Sayed Abdu and Abd El-Wahhab, Iman Juma Mohamed. (2010). The Role of Modern Communication Technology in the Development of Freedom of Expression among University Students in the Light of a Postmodern Society, Research Submitted to the First Scientific Conference of the Department of Fundamentals of Education, Education in a Postmodern Society, 21-22, Faculty of Education, Benha University.

[2]   Salem, Muhammad. (1425). Arab Educational Systems Interact with Globalization. Knowledge Magazine, issue 109, Riyadh.

[3]   Beaudoin, C. E. (2008). Explaining the Relationship between Internet Use and Interpersonal Trust: Taking into Account Motivation and Information Overload. Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication.

[4]   Huraiz, Muhammad Al-Habib. (2005). The Reality of Intellectual Security, Naif Arab University of Security Sciences, 102-76, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

[5]   Al-Qarni, Ali. (2011). New Media, King Fahd Library of Publishing, Riyadh.

[6]   Simpson, J. (2005). Learning Electronic Literacy Skills in an Online Language Learning Community, Computer Assisted Language Learning, Vol. 18, No. 4, EJ. 721878.

[7]   Al-Sharnoubi, H. S. Ibrahim. (2013). The Effectiveness of Employing Social Networks via the Internet Associated with Educational Sites and Patterns of Electronic Messages in Achievement and Skills Development: Operation and Use of Modern Educational Devices and Electronic Moral Values among Students of Educational Technology in Colleges of Education. Arab Studies in Education and Psychology - Saudi Arabia, p. 34, p. 113- 226.

[8]   Al-Zahrani, Mohsen Jaber. (2013). The Role of Social Media in Solving Problems Facing Students of Practical Education and their Attitudes toward it, Unpublished Master Thesis, Umm Al-Qura University, College of Education, Department of Curricula and Teaching Methods.

[9]   Al-Huqail, Sulaiman. (2001). The Reality of Islam's Position on Extremism and Terrorism. Al-Humaid Press.

[10] Al-Dughaim, Muhammad (2006). Intellectual Deviation and its Impact on National Security in the Gulf Cooperation Council Countries. Riyadh: General Secretariat of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf.

[11] Al-Youssef, Abdullah. (2006). Social Patterns and their Role in Combating Terrorism and Extremism: An Analytical Study of Saudi Society. Riyadh, Naif University - Center of Studies and Research.

[12] Burai, Wafaa Muhammad. (2002). The University's Role in Confronting Intellectual Extremism. University Knowledge House.

[13] Farrag, R. (2021). The Professional Intervention Program in Social Work by Using a Preventive Approach to Protect the University Youth from the Factors that Lead to Extremism. Journal of the College of Social Work for Social

Studies and Research, 23(1).

[14] Abu Al-Roos, A. (2001). Terrorism, Extremism, and Violence in the Arab Countries. Egypt: Modern University Office.

[15] Al-Dhaheri, Khaled bin Nahedh. (2002). The Role of Islamic Education in Terrorism, Khaled Al-Dhaheri, World of Books House, Riyadh.

[16] Fakira, Jalal Ibrahim. (2003). Western Perception of Islamic Civilization, Journal of International Studies, No. (20), University of Baghdad.

[17] Al-Juhani, A. F. (2005). Research Centers and their Role in Resisting Security Threats. Studies and Research Center, Intellectual Security, 194-175, Naif Arab University of Security Sciences, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

[18] Al-Luhaiq, A. M. (2005). The Concept of Intellectual Security and its Controls, 53-76. Naif Arab University of Security Sciences, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

[19] Dollarhide, M. (2021, August 31). Social media. Investopedia. https://www.investopedia.com/terms/a/artificial-intelligence-ai.asp

[20] https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2022

[21] Al-Jehani, Hanan A. (2019). The Impact of Social Media on Social Value Systems among University Students in Saudi Arabia. International Journal of Education and Practice.

[22] Al-Zoubi, et al. (2016). The Role of Social Networks in Spreading Terrorism among University Students: WhatsApp as a Model. Zarqa University, Jordan.

[23] Al-Soyan, N., 2014. Impact of Social Media on the Social Culture of Saudi Youth: A Field Study on a Sample of University Students. Journal of Middle East Research, 34(2): 645-676.

[24] Al-Shahry, H., 2014. Impact of Using Social Media on Social Relations "Facebook and Twitter as a model": A Field Study on a Sample of the Students of King Abdulaziz University in Jeddah (MA. Thesis). Faculty of Arts and Humanities, King Abdulaziz University, KSA.

[25] Al-Tayyar, F., 2013. Social Media and their Impact on Values among University Students: Twitter as a Model. The Arab Journal of Security Studies and Training, 31(61): 193-226.

[26] Al-Otaiby, B. and S. Al-Rashedy, 2012. Challenges Imposed by the Internet and Social Media on the Values of the Arab World. International Interdisciplinary Journal of Education, 2(9): 861-870.

[27] Abed, Z., 2012. The Role of Social Communication Networks in Mobilizing the Palestinian Public Opinion Toward Socio-political Change. Al-Najah University Journal for Research – Humanities, 26(6): 1387-1428.

[28] Al-Namlh, S., 2007. The Role of Media on Developing Security Awareness against Terrorism. Un-Published M.A Thesis, Naif Arab Faculty of Security Sciences, King Saud University, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

[29] Curtin, R., Presser, S., & Singer, E. (2000). The Effects of Response Rate Changes on the Index of Consumer Sentiment. Public Opinion Quarterly 64: 413–428.