Digital divide and its impact on news consumption among Generation Y Millennials :A field study

Randa Saleh Zaki Toulan[*]

Supervised by Dr. Hanaa Farouk Saleh[**]

Abstract:

This research sought to address the impact of digital divide on the news consumption among millennials. By using the survey tool, the researcher investigated to what extent different respondents of Gen Y adapt with technology (access, usage, digital literacy skills), and their attitude toward digital news. Through using the uses and gratification theory, this research shed light on understanding how Gen Y engages with the news media, their motivations to read news and the gratifications obtained. Besides, and whether they have different perception of news sources credibility.

The results showed that social media platforms are the most popular sources of news, making up 72.1% across all respondent, followed by online news sources or apps with a total percentage of 57.6%, reflecting a growing reliance on digital platforms. In addition, education-related news is the most preferable news content among respondents, with a mean score of 2.34 and RI 78%. Political news and health/wellness ranked second, as the majority of respondents reported that they "sometimes" consume them. There's a clear preference among respondents for traditional news sources. While Social media platforms and influencers/content creators garnered the least trust, news apps and online news websites occupy an intermediate level. The research also found out that staying informed about current events and trends ranks as the most significant motive, with a high mean score of 2.45 and RI (81.8%). Over half of the respondents (52%) "always" engage in this activity.

Also, more than half of respondents 51.1% show an interest in using mobile devices for news. Besides, a considerable percentage of respondents (38%) across all respondents use their mobile devices "occasionally" for news. This suggests that even individuals who do not consider mobile devices their primary device for consuming news, still turn to them at times for updates or breaking news, emphasizing its convenience.

Keywords: generation, Millennials, Digital Divide, News consumption, digital literacy skills

---

[*]Assistant lecturer at the college of Language and Communication Arab Academy of Science, Technology and Maritime Transport

[**] Professor at Journalism department - Faculty of Mass Communication - Cairo University

الفجوة الرقمية وتأثيرها على استهلاك الأخبار لدى جيل الألفية
"دراسة ميدانية"

ملخص الدراسة:

يهدف هذا البحث إلى دراسة تأثير الفجوة الرقمية على استهلاك الأخبار بين جيل الألفية. وباستخدام أداة الاستطلاع، سعت الباحثة إلى معرفة في مدى تكيف مختلف المبحوثين من جيل الألفية مع التكنولوجيا (Access, usage and digital skills)، وموقفهم تجاه الأخبار الرقمية. ومن خلال استخدام نظرية الاستخدامات والإشباعأت، سلط هذا البحث الضوء على فهم كيفية تفاعل جيل الألفية مع وسائل الإعلام الإخبارية، ودوافعهم لقراءة الأخبار والإشباعات التى يحصلون عليها. إلى جانب ذلك، معرفة ما إذا كان لديهم تصور مختلف لمصداقية مصادر الأخبار.

أظهرت النتائج أن منصات التواصل الاجتماعي هي أكثر مصادر الأخبار شيوعًا، حيث شكلت 72.1% من إجمالي العينة، تليها مصادر الأخبار أو التطبيقات الإلكترونية بنسبة إجمالية بلغت 57.6%، مما يعكس الاعتماد المتزايد على المنصات الرقمية. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، فإن الأخبار المتعلقة بالتعليم هي المحتوى الإخباري الأكثر تفضيلاً بين المستجيبين، بمتوسط 2.34 و 78% من المستجيبين. وجاءت الأخبار السياسية وأخبار الصحة في المرتبة الثانية، حيث أفاد غالبية المشاركين في الاستطلاع أنهم يستهلكونها "أحيانًا". هناك تفضيل واضح بين المستجيبين لمصادر الأخبار التقليدية. بينما حازت منصات وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي والمؤثرون/منشئو المحتوى على أقل مستوى من الثقة، واحتلت تطبيقات الأخبار والمواقع الإخبارية على الإنترنت مستوى متوسط. كما وجدت الباحثة أيضًا أن البقاء على اطلاع على الأحداث والاتجاهات الحالية يحتل المرتبة الأولى كأهم الدوافع، بمتوسط درجات مرتفع بلغ 2.45 و (81.8%). ويشارك أكثر من نصف المجيبين (52%) في هذا النشاط "دائمًا". كما أظهر أكثر من نصف المبحوثين (51.1%) اهتمامًا باستخدام الهاتف المحمول للحصول على الأخبار.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الأجيال، الفجوة الرقمية، استهلاك الأخبار، مهارات المعرفة الرقمية

Digital divide and its impact on news consumption among Generation Y Millennials
A field study

Introduction:

The digital divide represents a significant and growing gap between people who have access to modern information and communication technologies and those who do not. This disparity is not only limited to physical access of electronic devices; such as computers and smartphones, but also involves the quality of internet connections, digital literacy, and the socio-economic factors that influence technology adoption and usage.

Today, Internet has become an international information space with a multitude of users, and the way people consume news has changed over the past few decades, leading to a significant generation gap in news consumption habits. Digitalization has shaped the news consumption of different generations; especially for Gen Y/ Millennials, in the existing online environment, as an increasing amount of people nowadays utilizes the Internet and mobile technologies for obtaining news information.

Generation Y are characterized by their extensive use of digital media and technology. Born between 1981 and 1996, this generation has grown up alongside the internet and mobile technology, making them particularly adept at navigating digital landscapes. Valkama (2015) mentioned that the new media enjoy perceived competitive advantage as a result of better variety of content and higher quality possessed by the new media. Especially easiness of use, fast speed, and user-friendly search engines have been noted to be factors that appeal to young people in terms of information search in digital media.

In addition to the changes in the consumption of traditional news media, also online news sources have undergone notable changes. Firstly, the use of mobile devices as a mean of obtaining news information is on the rise among generations. Secondly, the importance of social networking sites as news platforms has increased significantly and play a massive role in the digital lives of today's youth.

In this context, social media has grown to play a significant role in young people's life nowadays, serving as a platform for much more than merely connecting with others about personal matters. The majority of social media users are members of the digital natives, and social media frequently takes precedence over other activities in their lives. Recently, social media has begun to play an important role as an information delivering medium and an entertainment channel. Millennials get news frequently from social media, but also use a wide range of sources; including traditional news outlets. They follow a variety of news topics every day, including so-called "hard news" (The Media Insight Project, 2022, Aug. 21, para.2).

Research significance:

This study gains its importance from different perspectives:

- The research focuses on a more significant subject that addresses the intersection of age, media preferences and news habits, referring to the differences among generations, especially Gen Y/ Millennials in their engagement with news and media.

- Researches into media usage and practices and its evolving environment have proved to be a remarkable prospect in the field of media studies and is considered a significant contribution to journalism research.

- Knowing how people use news media and respond to it, is important to comprehensive understanding of their behaviors.

- By understanding media consumption among Gen Y, the researcher can clarify how generational factors influence the popularity and relevance of various media channels.

- The study uses two theoretical frameworks: the digital divide and uses and gratifications (U&G) theories, to better understand respondents' patterns in news consumption.

- Technology and means of communication created new different patterns of communication and interaction among generations, causing shifts in Generation Y's preferences, attitudes and perception.

The problem statement:

The digital divide is considered as a challenging factor in today's modern era, shaping how people access, use and engage with media technology and information coming through.

Generation Y, also called millennials represents a pivotal demographic in news consumption; as they are more likely than baby boomers to access online news using electronic devices, making them particularly adept at navigating digital landscapes. They are considered tech-savvy and digitally connected, however the differences in the digital access and literacy within members of this generation may limit their engagement with news content and being informed citizens.

Despite a growing attention has been given to the generational gap concept and how this issue has widened in different societies for various reasons, affecting people's perception, preferences, attitudes and their pattern of media use, limited attention has been given to how it impacts news consumption habits and preferences among Generation Y. So, this research sought to address a significant question: what is the impact of digital divide on the news consumption among Gen

Y/ millennials. By using a quantitative data tool, represented in survey, the researcher will examine to what extent different members of generation Y adapt with technology (access, usage, digital literacy skills), and their attitude toward digital news. Through using the uses and gratification theory, this research will help in understanding how Generation Y engages with the news media, their motivations to read news and the gratifications obtained. Besides, and whether they have different perception of news credibility.

Literature review:

The researcher paid significant attention to the relevant Arabic and English studies in order to create a strong background that can help understanding enough about the topic, choose the proper methodology, data collection tools and theories. The literature review was categorized into three main dimensions: the first one tackles the digital divide, the second dimension focuses on news consumption across multiple media platforms, and the third dimension discusses generational differences in news consumption.

A) The first dimension: Studies that tackle the digital divide

The digital divide continues to be a significant and long-lasting problem that exacerbates current socioeconomic inequalities, creating challenges for marginalized communities in obtaining essential resources such as schooling, medical care, job opportunities, and chances for civic participation. In his study, Kem (2024) added that this gap does not only concern unfair internet access but also mirrors broader structural disparities related to wealth, education, and geography.

The study revealed that giving people internet access without ensuring affordability or providing devices without proper training on how to use them continues the cycle of digital exclusion. To close this divide successfully, it is necessary to have a thorough and extended plan that goes further than just infrastructure and also emphasizes digital skills and purposeful interaction with technology. This involves providing people with the ability to navigate, assess, and produce in the digital realm, enabling them to actively engage in contemporary society. Additionally, it is essential to tackle the underlying reasons for the divide, including economic inequality, differences in access to education, and geographic separation.

Access to Internet is becoming increasingly important for all generations. However, a digital gap in Internet use remains between younger and older individuals as well as within the elderly population itself. König, et al. (2018), therefore, aimed to investigate internet use among elderly Europeans. Representative data across 17 countries were examined. Analyses were based on

the responses of 61,202 Europeans aged $\geq$ 50. The researcher depended on the diffusion of innovation theory as a theoretical framework.

Alongside individual indicators, such as age, gender, and social class, results indicated that previous experience with computers during one's time in the workplace is positively associated with Internet use in old age. Furthermore, private Internet use among older Europeans is driven by personal resources, prior experiences with technology, social salience as well as contextual influences.

Similarly, Friemel (2014) focused specifically on the so-called 'grey divide', a divide among seniors of age 65+ years. Based on a representative survey in Switzerland, it is found that Internet use is strongly skewed in this age group leading to a partial exclusion of the old seniors (70+). Moreover, the social context appears to have a manifold influence on Internet use. Encouragement by family and friends is a strong predictor for Internet use, and private learning settings are preferred over professional courses.

Shedding light on the relationship between new media and generation gap, Xiao-hon (2016) highlighted that modern mass media play a crucial role in shaping an open society, which has led to a noticeable intergenerational gap. This gap is primarily characterized by the divide between "digital immigrants" (those who adapted to digital technology later in life) and "digital natives" (those who have grown up with digital technology). The research also discussed the "digital divide," which refers to the disparities in access to and usage of digital technologies. This divide not only affects the quantity of information accessed but also the quality of usage, leading to different experiences and understandings of media.

The study found that these two groups exhibit significant differences in their methods of information retrieval. Digital natives tend to be more adept at navigating online platforms, while digital immigrants may struggle with the same technologies. Furthermore, the research revealed that intergenerational gap has profound implications for values, life attitudes, and the ability to participate in society. The differences in media consumption and information processing can influence how each generation perceives social issues, engages in civic activities, and even their opportunities for survival in a rapidly changing world. Overall, the results underscore the importance of understanding these generational differences as vital social factors that contribute to cultural return, shaping how societies evolve and interact in the digital age.

Different studies described today's young people as digital generation who are completely different from adults in their ways of thinking, working and living. Therefore, a study conducted by Kim (2013) explored the concept "media generation gap" and sought to identify how young people in South Korea construct their generational identity in relation to new media, particularly within the context

of their relationships with teachers. The study raised the following questions: in what ways and for what reasons do young people use new media? Is there really a 'media generation gap' between young people and adults, especially in a school setting?

The finding showed that the 'media generation gap' is more about attitudes towards media than the types of media used. Young people use new media to construct and perform their identities as youth and students. They deliberately choose media based on their lifestyles and generational identities. However, their lifestyles are also affected by the technological characteristics of the new media. Therefore, 'young people' and 'new media', both socially constructed, discursively co-construct each other.

Research on the Arab youth generation and its engagement with technology revealed the intensity of their Internet interaction, as well as their usage of mobile devices and smart phones to access the Internet and social networking sites. In this context, a study published in the Egyptian Journal of Public Opinion Research aimed to identify the attitudes of young people at the age of (19-20 years) towards self-identity and its impact on their interaction with new media. In addition to determining the extent of the generational gap between youth and other generations, due to their involvement in social media compared to their exposure to traditional means.

The study found a difference in the culture of new generations which threatens to widen the gap between the new generations and the rest of the spectrum of society. In addition, the digital generation expose themselves to new and diverse platforms which are different from the traditional ones. Besides, the new generation feels a relative separation from society due to their integration into the social networks that spread and diversify, and this generation sees itself marginalized and excluded from the decision-making process (Fahmy, 2017).

With the penetration and popularity of mobile phones among different generations, the problem of mobile phone addiction has become a new focus of academic attention. To explore the characteristics of mobile phone addiction and its inter-generational differences between elderly migrants and adolescents, Dou and Karim (2023) used the grounded theory and constructs a generational difference theory model.

The study revealed that mobile phone addiction in elderly migrant's addicts are prone to consume because they fear "withdrawing" from the world. However, adolescents' addiction is the product of "entering the new world to create", and they believe that they can control the online world at the cognitive level, while the elderly say they cannot completely "deal with" it. In addiction dependence, "emotional" dependence is basic need for elderly migrants, while the youth are "functionally" dependent. In addition, mobile phone addiction will deepen inter-

generational conflicts. Interestingly, elderly migrant often compromises to avoid conflicts.

B) The second dimension: Studies that tackle news consumption across multi-platforms:

Many English and Arabic studies discussed news consumption and revealed that it has been undergoing massive changes due to advances of digitization. In the same context and through applying the uses and gratification theory, Olympio (2020) examined the news consumption preferences of University of Ghana students, including their preferred news types, patterns of news engagement, and the gratifications they derive from consuming news. The study used a quantitative, descriptive survey approach.

Findings showed that entertainment, sports and political news were the top most preferred news types. The main use of news to students was to get information. Findings showed that the preferred channel for news consumption by the sampled students was online news but this did not exclude the use of traditional news.

For years traditional and digital media have played an essential role of disseminating news and information to keep their target audience always updated about what is happening nationally and internationally. In this context, a study in 2019 conducted by Maphiri, examined news consumption patterns among the rural youth in South Africa. The study used a self-administered questionnaire and semi-structured personal interview to collect data from youth aged between 18-34 years. Youth participants were randomly selected using convenience non-probability sampling. The researcher applied the uses and gratification and the media system dependency theories.

The study results agreed with Olympio (2020) as it revealed that most youth highly preferred to access and consume news through online media more than television and newspapers because digital media are cheap, easily accessible and affordable. The findings further indicated that most youth highly preferred to consume news through television channels because it is a credible and reliable source of news.

It is also highlighted that most youth preferred to consume entertainment news more than business, political and sport news because they find the former interesting and relaxing. Also, most youth did prefer to discuss entertainment news with family members and friends and that there are positive relationships between media credibility and news consumption which tend to influence family and friends' news discussions.

Prior to that, Thom (2016) explored how young Canadians are making decisions about what news to consume and what news to believe. Through a series of focus groups, interviews, and diaries, the participants in this study reported that they use

factors like interest, source, and experience to decide if they will read or follow a story. Participants determined news believability by trusting the source, finding the story logically plausible, and seeing corroboration from other sources. This study resolved that though many young people identify social media as a source of news, it acts more as a gateway to mainstream news that is considered more trustworthy and believable.

Social media platforms/sites (SNS) have gained considerable attention among scholars who studied them in different contexts, focusing on its effect on knowledge acquisition, dependency on SNS as a news medium in addition to the consumption patterns. For example, Boukes (2019) investigated how the use of Twitter and Facebook affects citizens' knowledge acquisition, and whether this effect is conditional upon people's political interest.

By using a panel survey design, this study demonstrated that more frequent usage of Twitter positively affects the acquisition of current affairs knowledge while the opposite is found for Facebook. This negative effect of Facebook usage occurred particularly for citizens with less political interest, thereby, amplifying the existing knowledge gap between politically interested and uninterested citizens.

Various studies sought to investigate the Egyptian youth reliance on social media platforms as news sources for current events and for political knowledge acquisition (Alsagheer, 2019; Magdy, 2018 & Ibrahim, 2016). In his study, Magdy sought to identify the role of web pages on social media in providing young people with political information, and the extent of their dependence on them to obtain information about current events, in addition to identifying the levels of interactivity in these pages and their impact on young people's attitudes and opinions on various issues.

The study found that the majority of Egyptian youth follows the news and topics on social networking sites. The study confirmed that the most distinguishing features of news pages on social media, which are increasingly relied upon in times of crises, are the immediate coverage of events, the high degree of its credibility, diversity and objectivity in presenting news.

Shedding light over how social media sites have widely changed the manner in which news is consumed, Ahmed, et al. (2018) sought to identify the factors determining students' news consumption patterns. Using a stratified random sampling procedure, the study compiles a sample from higher education institutions in a Sub-Saharan African country. The findings suggested that students' attitude towards news consumption via SNS platforms is influenced directly by perceived usefulness, perceived enjoyment and subjective norms.

**Digital divide and its impact on news consumption among Generation Y Millennials
A field study**

Under the framework of media system dependency (MSD) and the microeconomic consumption (MEC) theories, Ha, et al. (2013) investigated social network sites (SNS) users' time allocation behavior among various traditional and new media. Specifically, it examines the difference in degree of dependency on SNS between the young generation and the general population as a new form of news medium. The results revealed that SNS, along with other online media are the preferred news sources for young people and they are more likely to be interested in soft news than hard news. Besides, females were also likely to indulge in SNS use than males were.

Besides, Omar, et al. (2018) examined the role of demographic variables, mobile and social media use for news, perceived news credibility and users' motivations for news in explaining online consumption of public affairs news in the setting which is known for its tight media control. An online survey was employed to collect data from Malaysian Internet users, aged between 18 and 64, who regularly read news online. The findings of the study suggest that digital immigrants, or older news users, are more likely to consume public affairs news than young ones. Malaysians read public affairs news which they perceive to be highly credible to fulfill their information and social needs.

Having a mobile device continuously within an arm's reach has changed everyday life and patterns of news consumption. Both Galal (2019) and Saad, et al. (2021) sought to study smartphone usage as news sources. Galal's research has built its theoretical framework on the Uses and Gratifications Theory, as well as The Media Richness Theory to identify the motives of the Egyptians for using the news Apps on smartphones to access news, as well as their reading habits and their preferred types of news. The findings showed that the Egyptians use the "Social Media Apps" the most (92.2%), while the news Apps were ranked the 5th (45.4%) among the preferred App categories. The ease of use and the ability to follow the news anywhere were the main reasons among the respondents for using their smartphones in following the news through the news Apps.

There are several reasons to look at the impact of trust following the recent changes brought about by the growth of online news consumption, therefore Fletcher and Park (2016) explored the impact of individual trust in the news media on source preferences and online news participation behavior, in particular sharing and commenting, across 11 countries.

The results showed that those with low levels of trust tend to prefer non-mainstream news sources like social media, blogs, and digital-born providers, and are more likely to engage in various forms of online news participation. Seeking alternative views and attempting to validate the credibility of news may be among the motivations behind these associations. The previous result supports what

Lancaster, et. al. (2012) reached out to in their study as they mentioned that youth regard mainstream news as lacking credibility and their attitudes toward news media is dependent on individual's characteristics, the relevant of formats, content to their needs and their perceptions of trustworthiness of news media as source of information.

C) The third dimension: Generational differences in news consumption

By employing a nationally representative survey from the United States, Diehl, et al. (2019) developed an index of multi-platform news use which is validated by testing age group differences in the way people participate in politics. Results showed that Millennials are more likely to rely on multiple platforms for news. Multiplatform news is also positively related to alternative modes of political engagement. Thus, it is reasonable to infer that multi-platform news dependency broadens an individual's information repertoire, which in turn offers alternative opportunities for participation in political life.

The Internet and social media platforms have disrupted consumption, making it evolve from a solid to a liquid state, particularly among younger generations. This disruption deeply impacted news consumption, with consumers moving away from traditional media towards digital media. In his study, Lehuidoux (2018) sought to investigate how has the liquid era and Facebook impact Millennials' consumer behavior and engagement when it comes to news consumption, in addition to understanding the motives behind consumers' news selection, consumption and engagement with the news in the digital era.

Using a qualitative approach based on in-depth interviews of fourteen participants, it is found that Canadian Millennials are strongly emotionally attached to their smartphones, computers and tablets as they are mediators and access bottlenecks to liquid consumption. It is also revealed that consumers fulfill their news-related needs through assessing worthwhileness, uses and gratification, convenience, as well as their interest in soft or hard news. The study also highlighted that digital media turned news into a conversation, allowing consumers to easily read it, share it, and engage with it at any given time and place, based on their personal motives and interests.

Before that, a study by Valkama (2015) through using semi-structured interviews sought to identify the factors that drive the news consumption habits of the digital natives. The results indicate that digital natives want to have control over the news they consume and what they pay for. They expected to be provided with alternatives and do not want a ready-made package, they want to customize. Digital natives place a high priority on fast speed and easiness of use when consuming news and expect all components in their news consumption process to fulfill such characteristics.

According to this study, both mobile and social media nowadays play an important role in digital natives' news consumption. News content can be seen to highly impact digital natives' willingness to pay, as they are more interested in subscribing to news which is related to their lives.

Millennials are a very smartphone dependent generation, which has an effect on how much the generation is involved with social media. Quiroz (2015) sought to explore the relationship between the Millennial Generation, (18-35) years of age, and their preferences in news sources. Particularly, in the form of social media networks and viral news videos that gain large scale media attention and cultivate mass social discussion. The researcher aimed to study how and why they choose certain social media news outlets to consume information from.

The study found out that social media is a social way to connect, but it is also very mobile, offers constant news information and is free to use. Millennials value financially safe decisions, sociability and learning, which are all present in social media. Besides, they are particularly interested in breaking news and real time events. This preference showed in their social media decisions like Twitter and its trending topics. Another finding is that viral videos are popular with the millennial generation because they represent the epitome of how they value news: breaking, instant, time valuable, visually stimulating and shareable to social media sites, such as Twitter and Facebook which are extremely important in the generation's overall news culture.

Prior to that, Torres (2013) aimed to understand the differences in online news-seeking behavior among 3 generational cohorts: Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Generation Y. Results showed that Generation Y used Twitter the most for news, followed by Baby Boomers and Generation X. Generation Y accessed Twitter due to retweeted news, while Generation X looked for trending topics, and Baby Boomers used it to find news of personal interest. The frequency of Twitter usage varied among the generations.

On the other hand, a study by Mangold et al. (2021) challenges the common assumption of a significant generational gap in online news use. By analyzing browsing histories of German Internet users, they found a smaller gap than expected. Short news website visits were influenced by infrastructural factors, while longer visits were shaped by preferences. Social media played a role in reducing news avoidance and diversifying news sources.

As the digital media landscape continues to evolve, comprehending the unique preferences of Gen Z and Millennials is indispensable for news organizations seeking effective audience engagement. In order to understand how generational disparities influence news consumption habits and attitudes, particularly in the context of mobile news experiences, Joshi (2023) investigated the shifting

landscape of news consumption among Gen Z, the first "digital natives," and Millennials, often referred to as "digital immigrants." It also explored their unique relationships with the digital world and their distinct motivations for engaging with news, focusing on mobile platforms.

The study revealed that generational differences in news consumption motivations emerged as a pivotal factor, with younger individuals seeking causes, personal growth, and self-actualization through the information they consumed, while older generations leaned toward traditional news sources and institutional politics. The advent of mobile devices, particularly smartphones, further accentuated the generational gap, with Gen Z and Millennials primarily using smartphones to access news via social media platforms. Their news consumption was characterized by intermittent and serendipitous engagement, emphasizing the need for visually engaging news formats and easily digestible content.

General conclusion on the literature review:
- Reviewing the literature in the 1st dimension deepened the current study research problem and gave the researcher a great background about the phenomenon and the factors that cause this gap among different cohorts.
- The frequently used data collection tools in studies of that dimension were: survey, in-depth interviews, semi-structured interviews, focus group and content analysis.
- Unlike the 1st dimension, the second one is rich with English and Arabic studies that tackled news consumption patterns, habits, consumers' attitudes toward news trust, social media as a news source and mobile news consumption among young people. The studies pointed out to the changes that happened as a result of digitization and the high-choice media environment.
- The main theories used to study consumers' consumption patterns and attitudes are media systems dependency and uses and gratifications theories, this helped the researcher to choose the suitable theory of the current study.
- Some studies shed light on traditional and new/digital news media consumption among people of all ages (Bergstrom, 2020), and others focused on social platforms as a mean of knowledge acquisitions and political participation among youth (Boukes, 2019).
- No Arabic studies deepened its investigation to mention or evaluate Egyptians news consumptions of different types of news and in what context people seek consumption of soft and hard news.
- Research suggested that age is the most important socio-demographic factors behind news consumption in today's environment, others pointed out to the political interest and age as important predictors of increasingly diversified and polarized news consumption.

- Reviewing these studies helped the researcher determine the main dimensions of the current study.

Research objectives:

This research aims mainly at exploring the digital divide among Generation Y and how it impacts their news consumption across various media platforms.

It aims also to achieve a number of sub-goals, as follows:

- Investigating the news consumption patterns and behaviors among Generation Y, focusing on their preferred platforms and formats.

- Exploring the type of news content that Gen Y looks for and prefers to consume.

- Analyzing the motivations behind news consumption among Gen Y, and the gratifications obtained from news media sources.

- Assessing how the digital divide affects news consumption behaviors among Gen Y, particularly focusing on access to technology and digital literacy.

- Exploring disparities in attitude towards digital news and how digital platforms influence the type of news consumed and the perceived credibility of those sources.

- Figuring out incidental news consumption behaviors among people of Gen Y.

Research questions:

The research aims mainly at answering the fundamental question of: what's impact of digital divide on news consumption among Generation Y/ Millennials?

There is some other sub-question, as follows:
- How does the digital divide influence the news consumption habits of Generation Y?
- How do they differ in their choices of media platforms with which to consume news?
- What are the motivations that intrigue people of Generation Y to consume news?
- What are the differences in news consumption patterns of Gen Y in the context of digital media?
- What news is of primary interest to respondents and what news is not?
- How does the perception of news credibility differ among respondents of Gen Y? And how does this affect their consumption choices?
- To what extent do respondents of Gen Y trust news sources?
- To what extent do respondents of Gen Y engage with the news content?
- How does incidental exposure to news affect the overall engagement among respondents of Gen Y?

Operational definitions:

Digital divide: The digital divide refers to the gap between individuals in terms of access to and use of digital technologies, particularly the internet, and digital devices such as computers and smartphones.

News: news is information about political, economic, historical, social or cultural events that recently happened around the world, considered interesting enough to be distributed to the public via diverse media sources.

News consumption: the researcher defines news consumption as the sum of information and entertainment content taken in/ absorbed by individuals or groups and the active media consumers have the ability to judge, criticize and understand news content.

Generation: Downs (2019) defined generations based on groups of individuals that share actions and representations because they are all around the same age and have lived during the same period (p.2). In this context, the researcher defines generations as group of people who were born and raised around the same period of time, often sharing similar cultural experiences, values, and social conditions. Thereby, they are shaped by the events and arisen technologies of its era.

Generation Y: Gen Y, also known as "Millennials" and "Next Generation", born between 1981 and 1996, grew up during the rapid expansion of the internet and digital technology. Consequently, they have a natural affinity for technology and are often referred to as digital natives.

Theoretical framework:

The researcher used 2 theories: the digital divide and the uses & gratifications theories to better understand the impact of digital divide on news consumption among Gen Y.

▪ **The digital divide Theory**

The digital divide can appear in various forms, including differences in internet access and usage, device ownership, and digital literacy, often influenced by socioeconomic status, educational level and age. Employing the digital divide theory provides valuable insights into understanding the differences among respondents in accessing and using technology in addition to evaluating their digital literacy skills. This theory also used to analyze how media habits evolve with technological advancements, and the attitudes of respondents towards digital news.

- **The Uses and Gratification theory**

Applying the uses and gratifications theory is very practical as it aims to investigate the media consumption habits and patterns among respondents in the current research sample. In addition, the researcher can utilize U&G theory to categorize the motivations behind the news consumption among Gen Y, and the types of preferred content. The theory suggested that technologies shape people's patterns of media consumption. So, the researcher could measure to what extent Gen Y adapts with technology, the reasons behind their usage of certain media outlets and to what extent respondents trust media sources.

The study methodology:

Survey research:

The survey methodology is widely used in the mass communication field. The research uses it to survey respondents of Gen Y in the Egyptian society around their news consumption patterns and preferences. Survey research was an appropriate method for this study as it has the potential to gather information from a large number of participants which in turn can be generalized to the study population. This descriptive study can effectively study the digital divide in news consumption by examining how Gen Y deal with technology and engage with news sources.

The study sample:

To effectively study the digital divide in news consumption among Gen Y/ Millennials, the researcher used the convenient sampling which is a type of non-probability sampling technique where the researcher selected participants who are easily accessible, readily available, or willing to participate.

Data collection tools:

This research uses a quantitative data collection tool; Survey (Questionnaire). Survey provides a structured way to gather quantitative data from a large number of respondents. This allows the researcher to analyze trends and patterns in news consumption among Gen Y, making it easier to identify significant differences in preferences, habits, and sources of news across multiple platforms. The survey was conducted during Dec. 2024 and January 2025 on a sample of 229 respondents of the Egyptians belonging to Gen Y.

Validity and Reliability:

- **Validity of measures**

Validity determines whether the research truly measures what it was intended to measure or how truthful the research results are. To measure the validity of the

survey results, the questionnaire was reviewed and evaluated by a number of academics and experts in the field of mass communication*. According to their recommendations, some adjustments were made regarding the choices in some questions until we had the final form of the survey that was ready for the fieldwork.

- **Reliability**

Reliability refers to the consistency of a measure. A test is considered reliable if the same result was got repeatedly. To gauge reliability in the present study, the questionnaire was conducted twice at two different points in time by administrating a test twice. Because test-retest reliability is best used for things that are stable over time. A Pre-test was conducted on a sample of 30 respondents to make sure that all questions are clear, understandable.

Tab. No. (1): Scales

Variables	Cronbach Alfa	Internal Validity
Online news consumption	0.817	0.904
Level of digital literacy	0.735	0.857
Motivations behind consuming news	0.791	0.889
Gratifications obtained	0.706	0.840
The availability of mobile devices	0.750	0.866
Incidental news consumption	0.713	0.844
The level of trust in news sources	0.822	0.907

The table indicates high alpha coefficient values for the study's scales targeting the digital divide and its impact on news consumption among millennials.

The research results

Tab. No. (2): Sample characteristics

Demographics		Generation	Y (n=229)
Gender	Male	F	119
		%	52.0%
	Female	F	110
		%	48.0%
Educational Level	Lower than medium level education	F	4
		%	1.7%
	Medium level education	F	12
		%	5.2%
	University education	F	119
		%	52.0%
	Postgraduate	F	94
		%	41.0%

Digital divide and its impact on news consumption among Generation Y Millennials
A field study

Demographics		Generation		Y (n=229)
Current professional status	Student	F		11
		%		4.8%
	Working	F		200
		%		87.3%
	Not working	F		18
		%		7.9%
The monthly income of the family	Less than 3000 pounds	F		12
		%		5.2%
	From 3000 to less than 6000 pounds	F		36
		%		15.7%
	From 6000 to less than 10,000 pounds	F		70
		%		30.6%
	10,000 or more	**F**		**111**
		%		**48.5%**

The table shows the demographic characteristics of respondents, as follows:

- Males constitute the largest portion of the respondents with 52%, while females were 48%.

- Most of the respondents were university graduates with a percentage of 52%, followed by 41% of the respondents from the postgraduates. Few respondents were less educated with 5.2% with a medium level education and just 4 respondents received lower than medium level education.

- The results highlights workforce-dominated respondents, with a relatively minor representation of students and non-working individuals. Individuals who are working represent 87.3% (200 respondents) of the total sample. While those who are not working represent a smaller proportion with 7.9% (18 respondents), and students make up the smallest group, with 4.8% (11 individuals).

- The majority of respondents earn relatively high monthly income, with 48.5% have a monthly income of 10,000 pounds or more. Additionally, 30.6% (70 respondents) earn from 6000 to less than 10,000 pounds. In contrast, 15.7% of the respondents earn from 3000 to less than 6000 pounds, and only 5.2% (12 respondents) earn less than 3000 pounds.

First Dimension: Digital Divide

A) The gap in accessing technology:

Tab. No. (3): The devices owned and have accessed to

Devices	Generation	Y (n=229)
Smartphone	F	218
	%	95.2%
Laptop	F	140
	%	61.1%
Desktop computer	F	67
	%	29.3%
Smart TV	F	98
	%	42.8%
Tablet	**F**	**50**
	%	**21.8%**

It's clear that smartphones are the most widely used device among respondents of Gen Y, as 95.2% of the total sample owns and has access to it. Laptop is the second most common device by 61.1%. This ensures that respondents of the study sample prefer the portable devices more than stationary ones like desktop. This is because laptop has some similar features of smartphones, like being a portable device and can be used anytime and anywhere. Smart TV came in the third place by 42.8%, followed by desktop computer 29.3%, and finally tablet came in the last place by 21.8%.

Tab. No. (4): The generation respondents think is more adept at using technology

Thinking	Generation	Y
The younger generation than me	F	174
	%	76%
My generation	F	49
	%	21.4%
The older generation than me	F	6
	%	2.6%
Total	**F**	**229**
	%	**100%**

The table shows how Gen Y respondents view themselves in relation to accessing technology. 76% of respondents view "the younger generations than themselves" to be more adept at using and accessing technology, followed by 21.4% of respondents who believe that "their generations" to be active and adept in accessing technology. A low percentage (2.6%) of the total sample (only 6 out of 229 respondents) thinks that older generations are adept at using technology.

Tab. No. (5): Facing barriers in accessing technology

Facing Generation		Y
Yes	F	101
	%	44.1%
No	F	128
	%	55.9%
Total	**F**	**229**
	%	**100%**

Respondents of the study sample were asked about if they face any barriers in accessing technology. The majority of respondents (55.9%) reported facing no barriers, compared to 44.1% who claimed to face barriers in accessing technology. This may be due to their upbringing during the rapid expansion of the internet and digital technology.

Tab. No. (6): Barriers to be faced in accessing technology

Barriers Generation		Y (n=101)
Cost of device or internet	F	29
	%	28.7%
Lack of technical skills or knowledge to use technology effectively	F	42
	%	41.6%
Lack of access to devices	F	12
	%	11.9%
Concerns about online privacy and security	F	48
	%	47.5%
Lack of interest or perceived need for technology	F	18
	%	17.8%
Internet connectivity issues	**F**	**21**
	%	**20.8%**

The table highlights the barriers to accessing technology among Gen Y, with a total sample size of 101 respondents. The most significant barrier across respondents is "concerns about online privacy and security", with a total percentage of 47.5%. The second most notable barrier is "the lack of technical skills or knowledge to use technology effectively" with a total percentage of 41.6%.

Other barriers include "the cost of devices or internet", which came in the third place, impacting 28.7% of the total sample. Then, "Internet connectivity issues" ranked fourth by 20.8%, followed by "lack of interest or perceived need for technology" with 17.8%, and finally "Lack of access to devices" is the least significant barrier, impacting only 11.9% of the total sample.

A) The gap in technology usage:

Tab. No. (7): Weekly days to use technology

Weekly days \ Generation		Y
1-2 days	F	15
	%	6.6%
3-4 days	F	20
	%	8.7%
5 days or more	F	194
	%	84.7%
Total	**F**	**229**
	%	**100%**

The table shows the frequency of weekly days Gen Y respondents use technology. Technology usage is significantly higher with 84.7% of the total sample (194 respondents) reported using technology "5 days or more". The researcher concludes that this pattern emphasizes how widespread technology is in daily life, especially for younger generations. Besides 8.7% of respondents in the study sample reported using technology "3 - 4 days" a week, which represents a moderate level of engagement. A small proportion of respondents (6.6%) reported limited use of technology, from 1-2 days a week.

Tab. No. (8): Daily hours to use technological devices

Daily hours \ Generation		Y
Less than an hour	F	4
	%	1.7%
1 to less than 2 hours	F	29
	%	12.7%
2 to less than 3 hours	F	33
	%	14.4%
3 hours or more	F	163
	%	71.2%
Total	**F**	**229**
	%	**100%**

The table shows the daily hours spent on using technology among respondents of the study sample. The majority of respondents (71.2%) reported using technology "3 hours or more" a day, followed by those who use technology "2 to less than 3 hours" a day with 14.4% of the total sample. 12.7% of respondents reported using technology "1 to less than 2 hours". A minor proportion of respondents (1.7%) reported spending less than an hour. The researcher concludes that there is a strong

tendency among respondents towards longer periods of engagement with technology.

Tab. No. (9): The primary purpose for using the internet

The primary purpose	Generation	Y (n=229)
Communication (messaging apps, social media platforms or emails)	F	183
	%	79.9%
Online shopping	F	103
	%	45%
Accessing news and current events	F	178
	%	77.7%
Research and information gathering	F	161
	%	70.3%
Entertainment (through Streaming videos, music or gaming)	F	138
	%	60.3%
Other	**F**	**21**
	%	**9.2%**

The table outlines the primary purposes for which respondents use the internet. The most common purpose across all respondents is communication (through messaging apps, social media platforms or emails) with a total percentage of 79.9%. This indicates that communication is the most dominant online activity among respondents of the study sample. Accessing news and current event came in the second place with 77.7% of the total respondent. In addition, research and information gathering is another significant activity with 70.3% of the respondents use that the internet for that purpose.

Entertainment through streaming videos, music or gaming, ranked fourth with 60.3% of the total sample, followed by online shopping as 45% of the total sample use the internet for this activity.

B) Digital literacy gap

Tab. No. (10): Respondents' perceptions of their digital literacy skills

Feeling	Generation	Y
No	F	11
	%	4.8%
Somewhat	F	99
	%	43.2%
To a large extent	F	119
	%	52%
Total	**F**	**229**
	%	**100%**

This table presents data on respondents' perceptions of their digital literacy skills in relation to their personal and professional needs. Digital literacy refers to the ability to effectively navigate, evaluate, create, and communicate information using a variety of digital platforms and tools. It encompasses a range of skills necessary for engaging with technology in a meaningful and responsible way.

More than half respondents of the total sample (52%) reported that their digital skills are "to a large extent" adequate for their personal and professional needs. 43.2% of respondents feels that their digital skills are "somewhat" adequate for their personal and professional needs. This is because younger cohorts have grown up in a highly digitalized world and is more likely to feel comfortable and competent with digital technologies, compared to older generations, who may have had less exposure to digital technologies in their formative years. Conversely, only 4.8% feels that their digital skills aren't adequate.

Tab. No. (11): The digital literacy skills respondents feel they lack

The skills	Generation	Y (n=229)
Basic computer skills	F	48
	%	21%
Internet navigation skills (e.g. searching for information and using search engines effectively)	F	11
	%	4.8%
Online communication skills	F	20
	%	8.7%
Digital content creation	F	122
	%	53.3%
Cybersecurity knowledge and awareness (e.g., online privacy, safe browsing)	F	140
	%	61.1%

The table provides insights into the perceived gaps in digital literacy across respondents of Gen Y. Cyber security knowledge and awareness is the most frequently cited skill gap with 61.1%, highlighting a common concern among individuals regarding online privacy and security in today's increasingly interconnected world where online threats are constantly evolving. Digital content creation ranked second by 53.3% of the total sample. Besides, 21% of the total sample reported lacking basic computer skills. Online communication and internet navigation skills ranked last among the skills respondents reported lacking, with (8.7% and 4.8%, respectively).

Tab. No. (12): The barriers respondents face in improving their digital literacy

The barriers		Generation Y (n=229)
Lack of access to digital devices (smartphones, computers, tablets)	F	15
	%	6.6%
Limited or unreliable internet access	F	41
	%	17.9%
Lack of time to dedicate to learning or training	F	127
	%	55.5%
Lack of support or guidance from others	F	50
	%	21.8%
Difficulty understanding or navigating digital tools	F	35
	%	15.3%
No interest or perceived need for improving digital skills	F	79
	%	34.5%
Lack of financial resources	F	50
	%	21.8%

The table highlights the barriers respondents face in improving their digital literacy skills. It shows that the most significant barrier is, the lack of time to dedicate to learning or training by 55.5%. Another significant barrier is the lack of interest or perceived need for improving digital skills with a total of 34.5% respondents.

Both "lack of support or guidance from others" and "lack of financial resources" came in the third place among various barriers respondents face with an identical percentage (21.8%), followed by Limited or unreliable internet access with a total percentage of 17.9%, then "difficulty understanding or navigating digital tools" which was reported by 15.3% of respondents. Finally, Lack of access to digital devices such as smartphones, computers and tablets, is less commonly identified as a barrier with an overall percentage of 6.6%.

C) Technology and its impact

Tab. No. (13): Believing that technology has changed the way the generation communicate

Believing		Generation Y
No	F	1
	%	0.4%
Somewhat	F	28
	%	12.2%
To a large extent	F	200
	%	87.3%
Total	**F**	**229**
	%	**100%**

This table shows a strong consensus across all respondents that technology has significantly changed the way they communicate. The majority of responders (87.3%) believe that their communication patterns have been altered by technological advancements. 12.2% of respondents reported that technology has change somewhat the way people communicate. On the other hand, only one respondent of the total sample (n=229) believe that technology has no impact on how people communication. Those people may have been less impacted by technology due to factors such as limited technology access.

Tab. No. (14): The biggest drawbacks of technology for the generation

The drawbacks	Generation	Y (n=229)
Increased screen time, leading to health issues	F	160
	%	69.9%
Information overload and stress	F	62
	%	27.1%
Decreased face-to-face interaction	F	160
	%	69.9%
Overreliance on devices and internet services	F	139
	%	60.7%
Privacy and security issues	F	115
	%	50.2%
Isolation or disconnection from real life relations	F	165
	%	72.1%
Reduced attention span and focus	F	120
	%	52.4%

The table highlights the perceived drawbacks of technology usage across respondents. The most frequently reported issue is " Isolation or disconnection from real-life relations", with an overall percentage of 72.1%. Both "decreased face-to-face interaction" and "decreased face-to-face interactions", ranked second as another widely recognized drawbacks of technology usage, affecting 69.9% of the total sample. Similarly, "overreliance on devices and internet services" was identified by 60.7% of participants overall. More than half or respondents reported "reduced attention span and focus" as another drawback of technology usage, with 52.4%, followed closely by "Privacy and security issues" with 50.2%. Finally, "Information overload and stress" was the least reported drawback, impacting only 27.1% of respondents overall.

D) The gap in attitude towards digital news

Tab. No. (15): The daily hours respondents consume news from digital sources

Generation / Daily hours		Y
Less than an hour	F	77
	%	33.6%
1 to less than 2 hours	F	60
	%	26.2%
2 to less than 3 hours	F	36
	%	15.7%
3 hours or more	F	56
	%	24.5%
Total	**F**	**229**
	%	**100%**

The table reveals the daily hours respondents spent in consuming digital news. The results show variation in the consumption among respondents of the study sample. 33.6% of respondents spend less than an hour in consuming digital news. This indicates that Gen Y are more likely to consume news in shorter periods. In the same context, 26.2% of the total respondents reported following digital news for 1 to less than 2 hours daily. Then, 24.5% of respondents reported consuming the digital news for 3 hours or more daily. Finally, 15.7% of respondents reported consuming it for 2 to less than 3 hours.

Tab. No. (16): The digital platforms respondents primarily use to get news

Generation / The digital platforms		Y (n=229)
News websites or apps	F	97
	%	42.4%
Social media platforms	F	188
	%	82.1%
News aggregators (Google news)	F	63
	%	27.5%

This table reveals the digital platforms respondents of Gen Y primarily use to get/ consume news. Social media platforms are the most common source of news across all respondents with an overall percentage of 82.1%. News website or apps came in the second place by 42.4% of the total respondents. Finally, news aggregators such as Google news are the least used platforms, with an overall percentage of 27.5%.

Tab. No. (17): The rate of trust in news sources among Gen Y (n=229)

Sources	Rate	I trust completely	I Trust somewhat	I Don't trust	Mean	RI
Traditional news sources	F	65	126	38	2.12	70.6%
	%	28.4%	55%	16.6%		
Social media platforms	F	15	146	68	1.77	59%
	%	6.6%	63.8%	29.7%		
News apps	F	40	155	34	2.03	67.5%
	%	17.5%	67.7%	14.8%		
Online news websites	F	46	147	36	2.04	68.1%
	%	20.1%	64.2%	15.7%		
Influencers/ content creators	F	10	106	113	1.55	51.7%
	%	4.4%	46.3%	49.3%		

The table provides data on the level of trust Gen Y (n=229) has in various news sources. Traditional news sources, such as newspapers, are the most trusted news sources among respondents of Gen Y with a mean trust score of 2.12 and RI (70.6%). A majority of respondents (55%) expressed "somewhat" trust in these sources, while 28.4% trust them "completely" and 16.6% "don't trust" them.

Online news websites and news apps showed similar levels of trust among respondents, with mean trust scores of (2.04 and 2.03, respectively). Both had a majority of respondents (64.2% and 67.7% respectively) expressing "somewhat" trust, while a smaller proportion (20.1% and 17.5%, respectively) "completely" trust them. Conversely, social media platforms rank lower in trust, with a mean score of 1.77 and RI (59%). These sources are trusted "completely" by a significant minority (6.6%). Influencers/content creators had the lowest mean score, 1.55 and RI (51.7%). Only 4.4% of respondents "completely" trust them, while a significant percentage (49.3%) "don't trust" them.

Overall, the table highlights a clear preference for traditional news sources among Gen Y respondents. While Social media platforms and influencers/content creators garnered the least trust, news apps and online news websites occupy an intermediate level.

Tab. No. (18): The biggest challenge of consuming news digitally

The biggest challenge	Generation	Y (n=229)
Overload of information	F	69
	%	30.1%
Misinformation and fake news	F	180
	%	78.6%
Loss of privacy	F	93
	%	40.6%
Lack of depth in reporting compared to traditional media	F	88
	%	38.4%
Intrusive ads	F	119
	%	52%

Respondents were asked about the challenges they face in consuming digital news. Misinformation and fake news came in the first place with an overwhelming percentage (78.6%), identifying it as their biggest concern. Similarly, intrusive ads ranked second by 52% of the total sample. Loss of privacy is another major issue with a total percentage of 40.6%. In the same context, 38.4% of the total sample reported lack of in-depth reporting as one of the challenges in consuming news digitally, but less so than other issues. Finally, overload of information is ranked last by 30.1% of overall respondents.

Tab. No. (19): The ways to engage with news content on digital platforms

The ways	Generation	Y (n=229)
I read the headline only	F	54
	%	32.7%
I usually read the entire news story	F	99
	%	60%
I share news links with others	F	36
	%	21.8%
I comment or engage with posts	F	48
	%	29.1%
I watch the video, if available	F	91
	%	55.2%
I View the photo album, if available	F	59
	%	35.8%
I click on the link for more details	F	47
	%	28.5%

The table reveals the different patterns of engagement with news content among respondents of Gen Y. Reading the entire news story came in the first place with

60%, of the total sample. Respondents reported "watching the video, if available" as another method to engage with the news content with a total percentage of 55.2% across all generations.

In addition, viewing the photo album ranked third by a total sample of 35.8%. A significant percentage of respondents (32.7%) demonstrated "reading only the headline" as another pattern of engagement with the news content. As for "commenting or engaging with posts" through like, 29.1% reported using this method of engagement. This suggests that Gen Y respondents prefer to consume news rather than interacting with it. Clicking links for more details was mentioned by 28.5% of the total sample. This ensures the idea that younger generations may be more satisfied with the headline or a quick overview. Finally, sharing news links with others was less commonly identified as a way to engage with the news content through digital platforms with 21.8%.

Second dimension: patterns of news consumption, motives and obtained gratifications

A) Patterns of news consumption

Tab. No. (20): The primary source of news

The sources	Generation		Y (n=229)
TV		F	94
		%	41%
Radio		F	33
		%	14.4%
Print newspapers		F	40
		%	17.5%
Online news sources or apps		F	132
		%	57.6%
Social media platforms		F	165
		%	72.1%
Word of mouth (family and friends)		F	64
		%	27.9%

Respondents were asked to identify the primary sources they rely on to consume news. Social media platforms like Facebook, X, Instagram, and others are the most popular sources of news, making up 72.1% across all respondent. Online news sources or apps are also another dominant news source with a total percentage of 57.6%, reflecting a growing reliance on digital platforms. TV as a traditional medium, remains also a significant source of news for all respondents with a total percentage of 41%. Besides, Word of mouth ranked fourth by 27.9% of the total respondents.

On the other hand, print newspapers show a diminishing role, with a total percentage of 17.5%. Finally, Radio exhibits a steep decline across respondents, as it's only used by 14.4% of the total sample.

Tab. No. (21): The type of news content Gen Y prefers to consume (n=229)

Types \ Preference		Always	sometimes	rarely	Mean	RI
Political news	F	86	104	39	2.21	73.5%
	%	37.6%	45.4%	17%		
Business and economy	F	53	97	79	1.89	62.9%
	%	23.1%	42.4%	34.5%		
Health and wellness	F	80	117	32	2.21	73.7%
	%	34.9%	51.1%	14%		
Sports news	F	81	60	88	1.97	65.6%
	%	35.4%	26.2%	38.4%		
Technology and science	F	72	112	45	2.12	70.6%
	%	31.4%	48.9%	19.7%		
Entertainment and celebrity news	F	50	89	90	1.83	60.8%
	%	21.8%	38.9%	39.3%		
Crime and safety	F	31	84	114	1.64	54.6%
	%	13.5%	36.7%	49.8%		
Education	F	105	97	27	2.34	78%
	%	45.9%	42.4%	11.8%		
Environmental issues	F	31	95	103	1.69	56.2%
	%	13.5%	41.5%	45%		

The table provides data on the types of news content Gen Y prefers to consume. Education-related news is the most preferable content among respondents, with a mean score of 2.34 and RI 78%. The majority of respondents (45.9%) reported that they "always" consume it. Political news and health/wellness ranked second with a mean score of 2.21 and RI (73.5 and 73.7%). The majority of respondents in this category reported that they "sometimes" consume them.

Technology and science, closely followed with a mean score of 2.12 and RI (70.6%). A higher percentage of respondents (48.9%) claimed that they "sometimes" consume it, making it another area of interest. Sports news ranked fourth with a mean source of 1.97 and RIs 65.6%, showing a balanced interest among respondents in their consumption patterns.

On the other hand, business and economy news, followed closely with entertainment and celebrity news, with mean scores of (1.89 and 1.83,respectively).

Both, environmental issues and crime and safety fall in the lower end in the preference list, with mean scores of (1.69 and 1.64, respectively). Overall, the table highlights varying levels of respondents' interest in different types of news content. Education, political, and health/wellness news are significantly valued, while environmental issues, celebrity news, crime/safety receive less attention from respondents.

Tab. No. (22): The preferred format for consuming news

The format	Generation	Y (n=229)
Written articles (online/ print)	F	133
	%	58.1%
Short-form videos	F	165
	%	72.1%
Audio news/podcasts	F	61
	%	26.6%
Infographics	F	49
	%	21.4%
Social media posts	F	120
	%	52.4%

The table illustrates the preferred formats for consuming news across respondents of the study sample. Short-form videos emerged as the most preferred format with an overall percentage of 72.1%. The widespread popularity of short-form videos highlights a growing preference for concise and visually engaging content. Written articles, whether in print or online, ranked second with 58.1%, followed by Social media posts with a total percentage of 52.4% across all respondents.

26.6% of the total respondents reported their preference for audio news/podcasts. This format is less dominant compared to short-form videos or written articles, but it remains a viable option for a segment of news consumers. On the other hand, Infographics received the lowest preference among all formats, with only 21.4% of Gen Y selecting it, indicating a limited interest in this format for news consumption.

Tab. No. (23): Feeling about consuming news on mobile devices

Feeling	Generation	Y
I prefer to consume news on my mobile device	F	117
	%	51.1%
I use my mobile device occasionally for news	F	87
	%	38%
I rarely consume news on mobile devices, I prefer other methods	F	20
	%	8.7%
I don't consume news on mobile devices at all	F	5
	%	2.2%
Total	**F**	**229**
	%	**100%**

The table shows how different generations feel about consuming news on mobile devices. More than half of respondents 51.1% show an interest in using mobile devices for news. Besides, a considerable percentage of respondents (38%) across all respondents use their mobile devices "occasionally" for news. This suggests that even individuals who do not consider mobile devices their primary device for consuming news, still turn to them at times for updates or breaking news, emphasizing its convenience. However, there is a smaller subset of respondents (8.7%) who rarely consume news on their mobile devices. Finally, only 2.2% of all respondents reported not consuming news on mobile devices at all. This indicates that some people prefer other methods of consuming news, such as television, print media, or desktop computers.

Tab. No. (24): Incidental news exposure among Gen Y (n=229)

Statements	Preference	Always	sometimes	rarely	Mean	RI
do you read or even click on news you encounter incidentally on your mobile device	F	63	139	27	2.16	71.9%
	%	27.5%	60.7%	11.8%		
does incidental news consumption on your mobile device lead you to actively seek out more information on the issue/topic	F	55	133	41	2.06	68.7%
	%	24%	58.1%	17.9%		
do you avoid or discard news that you incidentally come across while using different apps or platforms	F	42	139	48	1.97	65.8%
	%	18.3%	60.7%	21%		
do you share or discuss the news you come across with friends or family	F	37	131	61	1.90	63.2%
	%	16.2%	57.2%	26.6%		
do the news you come across incidentally affect your awareness of current events and your understanding of political issues	F	64	123	42	2.10	69.9%
	%	27.9%	53.7%	18.3%		

The table measures the incidental news consumption across Gen Y respondents. Reading or even clicking on incidental news people encounter on mobile devices came in the first place with a mean score of 2.16 and RI (71.9%). The majority of respondents (60.7%) reported encountering news incidentally and sometimes engaging with it by reading or clicking on it, with a smaller portion (27.5%) doing so "always". Beside, incidental news does influence awareness and understanding of current events and political issues, with more than half of respondents (53.7%) saying it "sometimes" impacts them, and 27.9% noting it affects them "always", at a mean score of 2.10 and RI (69.9%).

A higher percentage of respondents (58.1%), at a mean score of 2.06 and RI 68.7%, reported that incidental news consumption "sometimes" leads them to actively seek additional information on the issue or the topic. However, only 24% of respondent do so "always". On the other hand, a significant portion of respondents (60.7%) "sometimes" tends to discard or avoid incidental news, with only 18.3% doing so consistently.

Sharing or discussing news with friends and family, ranked last with a mean score of 1.90 and RI (63.2%), as fewer respondents reported frequent engagement, with only 16.2% "always" sharing. This could reflect a more passive consumption pattern. 57.2% sometimes share or discuss news and a considerable segment (26.6%) rarely shares or discuss the news they come across incidentally.

A) News consumptions motivations and obtained gratifications

Tab. No. (25): The primary motives for consuming news among Gen Y (n=229)

Motives \ Preference		Always	sometimes	rarely	Mean	RI
To stay informed about current events and trends	F	119	95	15	2.45	81.8%
	%	52%	41.5%	6.6%		
To engage in social conversations	F	48	119	62	1.94	64.6%
	%	21%	52%	27.1%		
To fulfill a habit or routine	F	56	118	55	2.00	66.8%
	%	24.5%	51.5%	24%		
For entertainment	F	39	119	71	1.86	62%
	%	17%	52%	31%		
To stay updated about global issues and international events	F	117	89	23	2.41	80.3%
	%	51.1%	38.9%	10%		
To find solutions for current issues	F	55	104	70	1.93	64.5%
	%	24%	45.4%	30.6%		
To gain insights into political or social issues	F	115	90	24	2.40	79.9%
	%	50.2%	39.3%	10.5%		
To fulfill a sense of obligation as a citizen	F	82	103	44	2.17	72.2%
	%	35.8%	45%	19.2%		

The table shows the motives of consuming news among respondents of Gen Y. Staying informed about current events and trends ranks as the most significant motive, with a high mean score of 2.45 and RI (81.8%). Over half of the

respondents (52%) "always" engage in this activity, indicating a strong preference for staying updated and being aware of what's happening around them in the world.

Staying updated about global issues and international events ranked second in importance, with a mean score of 2.41 and RI (80.3%). Over half of respondents (51.1%) "always" engage with news for this reason, and 38.9% do so "sometimes". Gaining insights into political and social issues has a high mean score of 2.40 and RI (79.9%). About half of the respondents (50.2%) "always" engage for this reason, and 39.3% do so "sometimes". This indicates that respondents prioritize knowledge acquisition and civic awareness.

Fulfilling a sense of obligation as a citizen has a mean score of 2.17 and RI (72.2%). A significant proportion (45%) "always" engage for this reason, and 35.8% do so "sometimes". This highlights a sense of duty driving many individuals' engagement with information. Then, fulfilling a habit or routine ranked fifth with a mean score of 2.00 and RI (66.8%). Over half of respondents (51.5%) "sometimes" engage with news for that reason, 24.5% do so "always". On the other hand, engaging in social conversations in addition to finding solutions for current issues, both have lower mean scores (1.94 and 1.93, respectively). As for finding solutions for current issues, only 24% of respondents "always" pursue this goal, while most engage "sometimes" (45.4%). This suggests that finding solutions is a relevant but secondary motive. In the same context, over half of respondents (52%) "sometimes" engage for social conversations, while 21% do so "sometimes".

Finally, entertainment has one of the lowest mean score (1.86) and RI (62%), with only 17% "always" engage with news content for this reason. A significant percentage of respondents (31%) "rarely" seek news for entertainment. This reveals that entertainment is less prioritized compared to other motives.

Tab. No. (26): The gratifications obtained from consuming news among Gen Y (n=229)

Gratifications	Preference	To a large extent	somewhat	No	Mean	RI
Information and knowledge acquisition about current events	F	152	72	5	2.64	88.1%
	%	66.4%	31.4%	2.2%		
Social interaction with others about news topics	F	78	115	36	2.18	72.8%
	%	34.1%	50.2%	15.7%		
Feeling connected to the community through shared information	F	91	110	28	2.28	75.8%
	%	39.7%	48%	12.2%		
Understanding different perspectives of issues	F	107	104	18	2.39	79.6%
	%	46.7%	45.4%	7.9%		
A sense of empowerment	F	52	112	65	1.94	64.8%
	%	22.7%	48.9%	28.4%		

Gratifications \ Preference		To a large extent	somewhat	No	Mean	RI
Escaping boredom or passing time	F	40	118	71	1.86	62.2%
	%	17.5%	51.5%	31%		
Fostering civic engagement	F	43	120	66	1.90	63.3%
	%	18.8%	52.4%	28.8%		
Monitoring trends	F	91	110	28	2.28	75.8%
	%	39.7%	48%	12.2%		

The table provides an analysis of the gratifications obtained from consuming news among Gen Y. Among the various gratifications, information and knowledge acquisition about current events stands out as the most significant. 66.4% of respondents indicated a preference for this gratification "to a large extent," with only 2.2% not prioritizing it at all. This is further supported by its high mean score of 2.64 and RI value of 88.1%. The second most important gratification is understanding different perspectives of issues, with 46.7% of respondents prioritizing it "to a large extent" and a relatively low percentage (7.9%) not considering it important. The mean score of 2.39 and RI of 79.6% reflect Gen Y's emphasis on gaining diverse viewpoints through news consumption.

Similarly, feeling connected to the community through shared information and monitoring trends are another significant gratification. Both gratifications share an RI value of 75.8%. As for feeling connected to the community, 48% of respondents indicated a preference for this gratification "somewhat," 39.7% of respondents prioritizing it "to a large extent", with only 12.2% not prioritizing it at all. In the same context, 39.7% of respondents value monitoring trends "to a large extent", with 48% to "somewhat". These findings indicate that while knowledge and diverse perspectives are top priorities, a sense of community and staying updated with trends also play meaningful roles in Gen Y's news consumption habits.

Social interaction with others about news topics is another notable gratification, with a mean score of 2.06 and an RI value of 68.8%. About 54.5% of respondents value it "to a large extent". This highlights that although social interaction through news is significant, it is not as significant as acquiring knowledge or obtaining diverse perspectives. On the other hand, gratifications such as a sense of empowerment, fostering civic engagement and escaping boredom or passing time, have lower levels of significance among Gen Y. For instance, only 22.7% of respondents value empowerment "to a large extent," resulting in a relatively low mean score of 1.94 and RI of 64.8%. Fostering civic engagement, with a mean score of 1.90 and an RI of 63.3%, is also less prioritized. Similarly, escaping boredom or passing time has the lowest mean score of 1.86 and an RI of 62.2%.

References:

1) Ahmed, I., IDID, S. & Ahmad, Z. (2018). News Consumption through SNS Platforms: Extended Motivational Model. Media Watch, 9(1), 18-36. DOI: 10.15655/mw/ 2018/v9i1/49280

2) AlSagheer, H. (2019). Public's reliance on social media as a source of political knowledge and its relationship to tolerance (Master's thesis), Faculty of Mass Communication, Cairo University

3) Boukes, M. (2019). Social network sites and acquiring current affairs knowledge: The impact of Twitter and Facebook usage on learning about the news. Journal of Information Technology & Politics, 16(1), 36-51. https://doi.org/10.1080/19331681.2019.1572568

4) Diehl, T., Barnidge, M. & Zúñiga, H. (2019). Multi-Platform News Use and Political Participation Across Age Groups: Toward a Valid Metric of Platform Diversity and Its Effects. Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly, 96(2), 428–451. DOI: 10.1177/1077699018783960

5) Dou, H. & Karim, A. (2023). intergenerational differences in mobile phone addiction between elderly migrants and adolescents: a grounded theory study. International Journal of Academic Research in Economics and Management Sciences, 12(4), 94-112. http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/ ijarems/v12-i4/19615

6) Fahmy, A. (2017). Youth exposure to social networking sites and its relationship to the identity of the net generation and the generation gap. The Egyptian Journal of Public Opinion Research, 16(2), 51-104. DOI: 10.21608/joa.2017.80440

7) Fletcher, R. & Park, S. (2016). The Impact of Trust in the News Media on Online News Consumption and Participation. Digital Journalism, 5(10), 1281-1299. Retrieved from: https://doi.org/10. 1080/21670811.2017.1279979

8) Friemel, T. (2014). The digital divide has grown old: Determinants of a digital divide among seniors. New Media Society, 1–19. DOI: 10.1177/1461444814538648

9) Galal, N. (2019). Smart Mobile Phones as News Sources for the Egyptians: A Field Study on the Uses and Gratifications and the Effects (Unpublished Master's thesis). Faculty of Mass Communication, Cairo University

10) Ha, L., Yoon, K. & Zhang, X. (2013). Consumption and Dependency of Social Network Sites as a News Medium: A Comparison between College Students and General Population. School of Media and Communication Faculty Publications. 11. https://scholarworks.bgsu.edu/smc_pub/11

11) Ibrahim, M. (2016). Egyptian university youth's reliance on social media as a source of news: A study on Twitter and Facebook (Master's thesis). Faculty of Mass Communication, Cairo University

12) JOSHI, N. (2023). Beyond Breaking News: Designing Mobile-News Experience for Gen Z and Millennials (Master's thesis), KTH Royal institute of technology. https://kth.divaportal.org /smash/get/diva2:1836929/FULLTEXT01.pdf

13) Kem, D. (2024). Digital divide: Examining socioeconomic inequalities in internet access and usage. IJFMR, 6(6), 1-8. Doi: 10.36948/ijfmr.2024.v06i06.30386

14) Kim, A. (2013). The 'Media Generation Gap' between Teachers and Students in Secondary Schools in Korea (doctoral dissertation). https://shorturl.at/7Pxhr.

15) König, R.; Seifert, A. & Doh, M. (2018). Internet use among older Europeans: an analysis based on SHARE data. Universal Access in the Information Society, 17, 621–633. Available at:

https://doi.org/10.1007/s10209-018-0609-5

16) Lehuidoux, M. (2018). Social Media and News Consumption Among Canadian Millennials (Master's Thesis). Concordia University. https://spectrum.library.concordia. ca/id/eprint/983655/

17) Magdy, M. (2018). Egyptian youth reliance on news web pages on social media as a source of information about current events (Master's thesis), Faculty of Mass Communication, Cairo University

18) Maphiri, f. (2019). An Investigation into The Patterns of News Media Consumption Among South African Youth (PHD dissertation). University of Limpopo. http://hdl.handle.net/10386/2922

19) Olympio, A. (2020). News Consumption Preferences of University of Ghana Students (Master's thesis). University of Ghana. Available at: http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh/handle/123456789/36374

20) Omar, B., Ismail, N. & Ng, S. (2018). Understanding online consumption of public affairs news in Malaysia: A strategic approach. Journal of Asian Pacific Communication, 28(1), 172-194. DOI:10.1075/japc.00009.oma

21) Quiroz, E. (2015). News to the millennial generation: The power of viral videos and social media (Master's thesis). California State University. https://scholarworks.calstate.edu/ downloads/h989r4323

22) Saad, H. & Hamza, M. (2021). Patterns and motivations predicting mobile hard news and soft news consumption: The case of the UAE. International Journal of Customer Relationship Marketing and Management, 12 (3), 49-66. DOI: 10.4018/ijcrmm.2021070104

23) The Media Insight Project (2022, August 31). Fatigue, traditionalism, and engagement: the news habits and attitudes of the Gen Z and Millennial generations. Available at: https://shorturl.at/XjRW5

24) Thom, J. (2016). Believing the News: Exploring How Young Canadians Make Decisions About Their News Consumption. Electronic Thesis and Dissertation Repository. https://ir.lib.uwo .ca/etd/4269

25) Torres, I. (2013). Online News-Seeking Behavior among Three Generational Cohorts: Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Generation Y (Master's thesis). College of Liberal Arts. https://repository.rit. edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1968&context=theses.

26) Valkama, S. (2015). The news consumption of digital natives (Masters' thesis). University OF Jyväskylä. Retrieved from: https://jyx.jyu.fi/handle/123456789/48373

27) Xiao-hon, Z. (2016). Intergenerational Gap in Cultural Return and Media Influence. The Journal of Jiangsu Administration Institute, 63-70.

*Names of the professors who evaluated the questionnaire (In alphabetical order):

1- Prof. Dr. Al-Shymaa Ali AbdelAziz, Head of the Mass Communication and Culture Research Department at the National Centre for Social and Criminological Research (NCSCR).

2- Prof. Dr. Amani Omar Elhusseini, Vice Dean for Post Graduate and Research Affaires, Faculty of Mass Media and Communication Technology, Misr University for Science and Technology

3- Prof. Dr. Mehrez Ghaly, professor at Journalism department, Faculty of Mass Communication, Cairo University.

4- Prof. Dr. Nagwa El-Gazzar, Vice Dean of the Faculty of Linguistics and Media for Graduate Studies and Research, Misr International University

5- Prof. Dr. Naila Hamdy, Associate dean for the graduate studies and research, School of Global Affairs and Public Policy, The American University in Cairo.

6- Dr. Naila Toulan, Associate Professor at Sociology department, Faculty of Arts, Ain Shams University.

7- Prof. Dr. Nermeen Al-Azrak, Professor at Journalism department, Faculty of Mass Communication, Cairo University.

8- Prof. Dr. Saleh Soliman, Professor at Sociology department, Faculty of Arts, Ain Shams University.

9- Prof. Dr. Soheir Osman, head of Journalism department- FMC- Ahram Canadian University. And Professor at Journalism department, Faculty of Mass Communication, Cairo University.