

The Impact of Social Media on Shaping Public Opinion and Legislation about Women Rights in Gulf Countries

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Abstract:

Social media is gaining attention as an essential part of life in the dynamic world. An increasing number of social media platforms, along with information technology development, are also bringing an effective way of interaction among people to share information and express ideas. The current study aims to assess the impact of social media on shaping public opinion and legislation about women rights in Gulf countries. This study design integrates a mixed-methods approach, incorporating qualitative and quantitative research methods to explore the impact of social media on public opinion and legislation about women rights in Gulf countries. The research questions are: How does social media influence public opinion in Gulf countries? What role do social media platforms play in shaping legislation in Gulf countries? What are the implications of social media's influence on public opinion and legislation about women rights for future policymaking in Gulf countries? Social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, TikTok, and Instagram play a vital role in shaping public opinion in most of the Gulf countries due to increased awareness and empowered information of the public. However, state actors can control the public by enriching social media with every type of news regarding women rights legislation, where they can assess the public point of view regarding various perspectives. Social media also plays a strong role in shaping legislation in this way, as the public always acts promptly whenever they observe a change in legislation, which acts as stimuli for governments to make changes or introduce new legislation because of public opinion that is formed through the use of social media.

Keywords: Social media (SM), Public Opinion, Women Rights, Legislation, Communication, Interaction, Trends, Gulf countries.

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تأثير وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي في تشكيل الرأي العام والتشريعات المتعلقة بحقوق المرأة في دول الخليج

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ملخص الدراسة:

تُعد وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي جزءًا أساسيًا ومتناميًا في الحياة اليومية ضمن عالم سريع التغير. ومع تزايد عدد هذه المنصات وتطور تقنيات المعلومات، باتت توفر وسيلة فعالة للتفاعل بين الأفراد، تُمكنهم من تبادل المعلومات والتعبير عن آرائهم وأفكارهم. تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تقييم تأثير وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي على تشكيل الرأي العام وسن التشريعات المتعلقة بحقوق المرأة في دول الخليج. وتعتمد الدراسة على منهجية متعددة الأساليب، تجمع بين الأدوات الكمية والنوعية، لاستكشاف هذا التأثير بعمق. وتسعى الدراسة للإجابة على الأسئلة التالية: كيف تؤثر وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي على الرأي العام في دول الخليج؟ ما الدور الذي تؤديه هذه المنصات في تشكيل التشريعات؟ وما هي انعكاسات هذا التأثير على حقوق المرأة وصناعة السياسات المستقبلية في المنطقة؟ تلعب منصات مثل فيسبوك، وتويتر، وتيك توك، وإنستغرام دورًا محوريًا في توجيه الرأي العام في معظم دول الخليج، وذلك نتيجة لزيادة وعي الجمهور واتساع نطاق وصوله إلى المعلومات. وفي الوقت ذاته، يمكن للدول أن توظف هذه المنصات لنشر الأخبار والمعلومات المتعلقة بتشريعات حقوق المرأة، مما يُتيح لها رصد توجهات الرأي العام. وتُسهم وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي في التأثير على التشريعات من خلال سرعة تفاعل الجمهور مع التغييرات القانونية، ما يدفع الحكومات إلى الاستجابة عبر تعديل القوانين أو إصدار تشريعات جديدة استنادًا إلى الرأي العام الذي يتشكل من خلال هذه المنصات.

الكلمات الدالة:

وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي، الرأي العام، حقوق المرأة، التشريعات، الاتصال، التفاعل، الاتجاهات، دول الخليج.

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Chapter I - Introduction

1.1 Background

Social media is gaining attention in society as an inseparable element and the popularity of these social media (SM) is increasing globally due to increased internet users. They have direct access to the internet, and increased penetration of SM networking sites is consistently increasing the number of SM users in Gulf countries (Zaid, et al., 2022). The reports conducted by Statista (2023) have found 5 billion SM users globally, including 1 billion in China, 308 million users in the US, 860 million from India, 680 million users from Europe, and the smallest numbers were found in Central America and Central Africa (Statista, 2024). The number of Internet users in Saudi Arabia increased over time, as almost 87% of users had a WhatsApp account (Statista, 2024). As per the news from Digital Gravity (2024), nearly 11.5 million SM identities were found in the UAE, which is 112.30% of the UAE from 2023. The total population of UAE is 10.24 million, and the total number of internet users is 99% in 2024.

A lot of media platforms developing on social media (SM), such as Facebook, Instagram, X (Twitter), and TikTok, have brought fundamental changes to how information is shared and how people express viewpoints (Ausat, 2023). In response to growing concerns, SM platforms began active fact-checking in May 2020, removing content that violated the policies including presidential content (Christenson, et al., 2021). Alhaimer (2023) suggested the Aaker model due to its congruence with the voter's self-concept and brand personality, which is important for candidate preferences in Kuwait, where religious affiliations impact the self-concept about the vote.

SM is gaining attention as an essential part of life in the dynamic world. An increasing number of SM platforms, along with information technology development, are also bringing an effective way of interaction among people to share information and express ideas. SM has the power to amplify public opinion, leading to both opportunities and challenges in the region (Alhaimer, 2023). It directly empowers citizens like youth to raise their voices about their opinions, advocate for change and engage in debates. This can be assessed from the

movement that is advocating women's rights, environment sustainability and labour reforms (Li, et al., 2021). It is also assessed that misinformation and disinformation proliferate quickly, which leads to societal division and misconceptions, and this complicates the process of policymaking.

Women in the Gulf countries are facing the cultural and legal restrictions that shapes the patriarchal traditions and Islamic law interpretation, particularly mobility, guardianship, marriage, divorce and employment (Rizvi & Hussain, 2022). The global developments are coming with growing momentum of reforms in the legislations based on modern agendas and discourse of global human rights (Blaydes et al., 2021). SM is playing its role to increase the voices of women through viral campaigns like #IAmMyOwnGuardian and #Women2Drive that were helpful to push the guardianship laws and driving rights in public spotlight (Hurley, 2022). Responding towards such public opinions and campaigns, GCC governments has introduced reforms like in UAE and Saudi Arabia new family laws were introduced to increase legal autonomy of women (Rizvi & Hussain, 2022). However, challenges are still present in the form of gender equality and resistance from conservative society.

However, state actors can control the public by enriching SM with every type of news regarding legislation, where they can assess the public point of view regarding various perspectives (Gorwa & Guilbeault, 2020). For example, the laws amendments about women rights in the Gulf countries are observed to be changed as per advancements like in 2018 women gained the right to drive, women are allowed to travel abroad without the permission of their guardians and women were allowed for voting in 2015 as well as they can run in the municipal elections (Özoral, 2022). SM also plays a strong role in shaping legislation in this way, as the public always acts promptly whenever they observe a change in legislation, which prompts governments to make changes or introduce new legislation because of public opinion that is formed through the use of SM. Al-Billeh (2023) added that SM impact on legislation due to its multifaceted aspects. Legislatures and governments' interest in monitoring SM is increasing to gauge public opinion and sentiments that can directly shape policy

responses. This can also increase the responsiveness and transparency of the policy but the risk of misinformation and disinformation (Aïmeur, et al., 2023). However, the pressure can be created through SM-driven issues that can lead to policy decisions without considering the complexities. Moreover, the SM influence and legislative process also raise concerns about external interference and potential manipulation of foreign actors and public opinions that can undermine national stability and sovereignty.

1.2 Problem Statement

The digital landscape is evolving in the Gulf countries due to the popularity and development of Facebook, Twitter, TikTok and Instagram (Allahverdi, 2022). These SM were playing a role in rapidly spreading the news about COVID-19 in the Arab world, including UAE, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Jordan, Oman, Iraq, Morocco and Egypt (Khalifa, et al., 2020). SM was most used to obtain information about the coronavirus as compared to other media like radio, newspapers, television and other news sites, which is due to the ready availability of the news and entertainment at a place. The unprecedented access to information through these platforms and spaces present for diverse voices has raised significant concerns about the impact on the democratic processes leading to policymaking and legislation. Zhuravskaya et al. (2020) assessed SM impact in shaping political autocracies and democracies. Moreover, the research also elaborated that traditional media like radio, TV, and newspapers have a direct impact on the political consequences as they provide political news and entertainment all the time. As per Persily et al. (2020), a complicated relationship was found between the democratic process and SM, and it has been determined that SM platforms influence public opinion, spread misinformation and political participation. There have been elaborated the potential threats that such platforms pose towards democracy like echo chambers, foreign interferences and polarisation. Women's rights and legislation are not developed in favour of women within GCC, as the rights for driving and guardianship are reformed, but the resistance from conservative groups is making it difficult to employ. The women voices were raised through SM to maintain their rights as per their personal will.

However, the role of SM is under consideration to assess the outcomes about legislations.

Terren and Borge-Bravo (2021) added that the algorithms applied by SM are contributing to the echo chambers creation, where users are also exposed to their viewpoints that, lead to aligning the existing beliefs. When it comes to the Gulf countries, the social and political issues are mostly sensitive, and such echo chambers can worsen polarisation by hindering constructive dialogue. Such polarisation through SM specifically is of main concern for the lawmakers and legislatures who were finding it challenging to distinguish the true sentiments of the public and respond to concerns and needs of the constituents.

1.3 Research Aim and Objectives

The purpose of this study is to assess the impact of social media (SM) on shaping public opinion and legislation about women rights in Gulf countries. This study design integrates a mixed-methods approach, combining both quantitative and qualitative research methods to explore how SM influences public opinion and legislation in Gulf countries. SM platforms including Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, play a prominent role in shaping public opinion in most of the Gulf countries due to increased awareness and empowered information of the public.

1.3.1 Research Objectives

- i. To evaluate social media's influence on individuals' thought processes by shaping their attitudes and beliefs and influencing the formulation of laws and decisions in Gulf countries.
- ii. To assess the benefits, challenges, and opportunities of using social media to influence public opinion and laws about women rights in Gulf countries.
- iii. To identify rules about social media help, manage its impact on public opinion and laws about women rights in Gulf countries.
- iv. To determine the role social media play in shaping legislative decisions and policies within the unique socio-political context of the Gulf region.

1.3.2 Research Question

- i. How does social media influence individuals' thought processes by shaping their attitudes and beliefs and influencing the formulation of laws and decisions in Gulf countries?
- ii. What are the benefits, challenges, and opportunities of using social media to influence public opinion and women rights laws in the Gulf countries?
- iii. How do rules about social media help manage its impact on public opinion and laws about women rights in Gulf countries?

To address the research questions, I have selected three key theories that will guide the exploration of social media's impact in Gulf countries. These theories are Agenda-Setting Theory, Media Regulation Theory, and Diffusion of Innovations Theory. Each theory brings unique insights, aiming to uncover how social media influences public thinking, shapes laws, and impacts legislative decisions and considerations, and this will assist in tackling every question in my paper. Integrating these theories will enrich the methodology by providing comprehensive perspectives on the impact of social media on shaping public opinion and legislation in Gulf countries.

1.4 Conceptual Framework

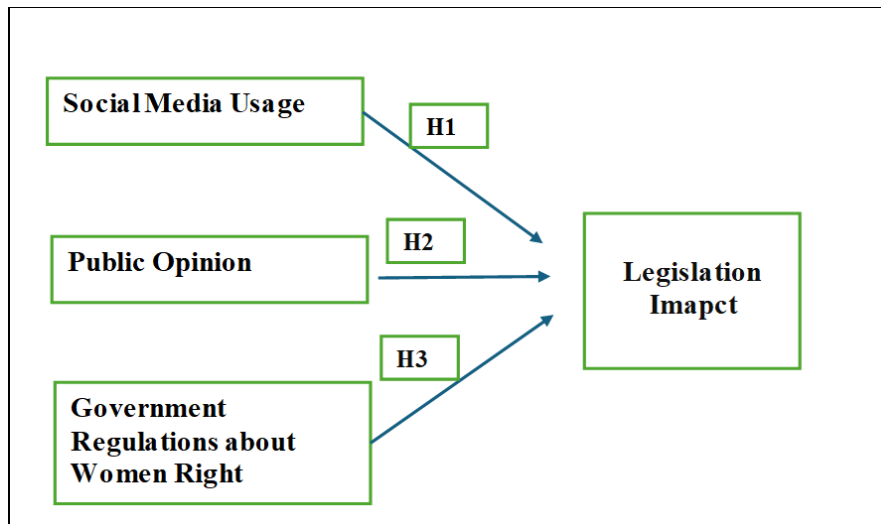


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

1.4.1 Hypothesis

H1: Social media has a significant and direct relationship with legislation impact

H2: Public opinion significantly influences the legislation impact

H3: Government laws about women rights significantly related to the legislation impact

1.5 Main Terms

1.5.1 Social Media (SM)

SM are websites and applications that assist users in sharing and creating content and to contribute in social networking (Verduyn, et al., 2020). SM are characterised by the ability to facilitate real-time communication, the formation of online communities and user-generated content on the basis of activities, interests and relationships (Auxier & Anderson, 2021). Aïmeur et al. (2023) explained that SM platforms enable users, organisations and communication to readily communicate, build and collaborate with the help of sharing texts, videos, images and other content from multimedia.

1.5.2 Public Opinion

Public opinions are collective beliefs, attitudes, and views based on a significant proportion of the population regarding a specific topic, issue, or individual (Han, et al., 2020). These are shaped by numerous aspects like cultural norms, media, education, influential figures and personal experiences (Alvarez & Brehm, 2020). Furthermore, public opinion is found to influence economic, social, and political decisions as these often play a vital role within democracies in which institutions and governments can see how to align policies following the popularity of views (Christenson, et al., 2021).

1.5.3 Legislation

Legislations are laws that are formally implemented by government officials like the legislative assembly and parliament (Da Costa, et al., 2020). The laws are developed to regulate behaviour and to secure responsibilities and rights by providing specific guidelines that are helpful to make the laws functional in society. These legislations can

have a wider range, like criminal justice laws, civil rights laws, economic policies, women rights, children rights and public health laws. Legislation development is based on various stages like drafting the bill, discussion about lawmakers, amendments, and approval of the enactment by the government body.

Chapter 2 - Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The literature review chapter presents the existing studies and their explanation for the concepts that are utilized in the current research. The data is collected from existing research articles, research reviews, previous reports, and books to understand the SM in the GCC, SM (SM) shaping public opinion, and the impact of SM on legislation. The literature is explained to determine the research gap and then the aim of the study is explained to indicate how it will fill the gap in the current literature.

2.2 Social Media in Gulf Countries

The estimated global SM was 2.7 billion in 2019, and the predictions were to increase to 3 billion users within the next two years (AlSadrah, 2021). This indicates a high penetration of SM globally in developed and developing countries. An increase in such a high number shows it is becoming challenging to ignore the potential role of campaigns and trends on SM platforms. Another factor is the expensive nature of public media campaign and their inconsistency that can directly attract SM platforms, including Facebook, Snapchat, Twitter (X), YouTube, and Instagram, due to their emerging and competitive aspects in various global markets. Another study by Zowawi et al. (2015) assessed the geographical place, including GCC countries (Qatar, UAE, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, and Oman), where the population was 50 million in 2015, and they were rapidly adopting these SM. The most used platforms in GCC were Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter, which are spread in the GCC due to the highly efficient communication and networking infrastructure.

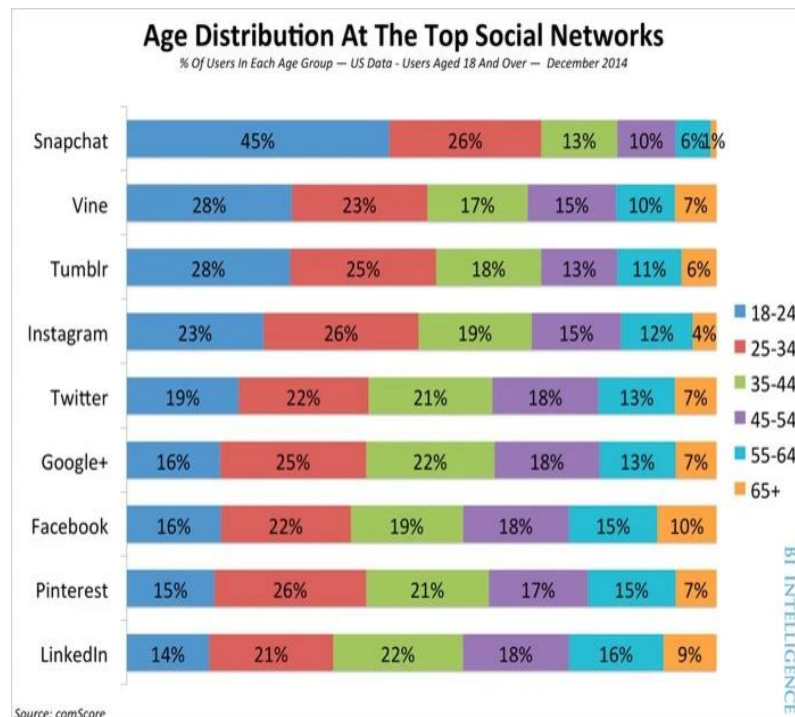


Figure 1: Age Distribution of Top SM (Big Data , 2024)

As per **Belle Wong & Bottorff (2024)**, the reports from 2023 were showing 4.9 billion global SM users across the world; however, the number was expected to jump to 5.85 billion by 2027. The high SM penetration indicates ubiquity as the SM platforms, including Twitter, Snapchat, WhatsApp, Instagram, and YouTube, are massively popular within GCC. As per **Parvez (2019) and Alwari (2024)** Youth engagement in the GCC is based on demographics, specifically through SM. The platforms are used for entertainment, communication, humanitarian, political, and social participation, education, activism, and networking. The trends are changing rapidly as the societies are shaping the mind with different methods in the region and how the individuals get a place in specific countries in the GCC. In the Gulf societies, conventional societies are weak compared to the virtual civil societies that are created through SM outlets like blogs, Twitter, YouTube, Facebook, and Instagram (**Lim, 2023**). These media sites provide power and structures. Such a SM experience leads to a sense of youth empowerment and this allows them to actively participate in the civil virtual societies that are

developed through SM platforms (**Parvez, 2019**). Such an experience and strengths of the virtual civil society that is said to be an illusion of the civil society made up of a combination of the conventional society that was weak, and this is reinforcing political organisations leading to a false sense of identities, delusion, and opposition.

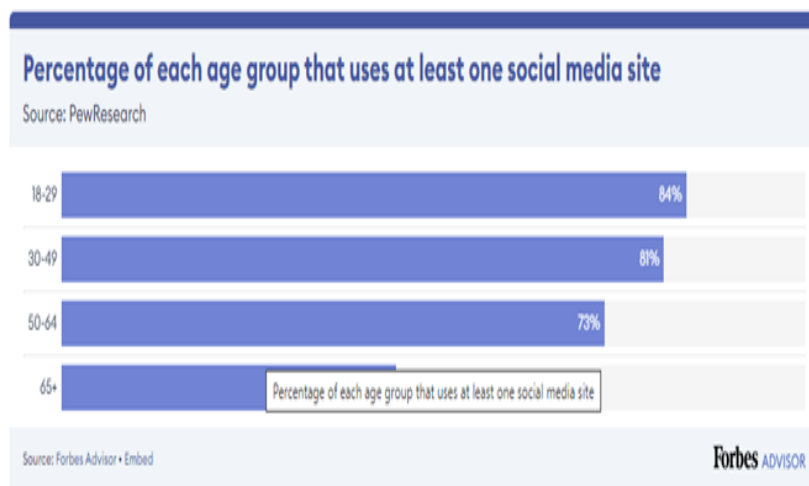


Figure 2: SM Sites Users Age Distribution (Belle Wong & Bottorff, 2024)

The SM emergence is dominating the election campaigns, as observed by **Alhaimer (2023)** in Kuwait. The parliamentary elections of 2012 in Kuwait were based on the candidates that utilized Twitter to the electorate. Such platforms are useful for shaping the candidate's brand personality by empowering and showcasing their attributes with voters. As per **Antwi-Boateng and Alhashmi (2022)**, the concern about SM usage is increasing in different countries where SM is acting as an interactive platform to increase engagement. The concern is increasing its impact as the SM tool acts as a weapon for the state actors to command public opinion, and this becomes interference in the democratic process. This indicates that power is among the most important instruments for implementing and determining ideology, politics, cultural direction, foreign policy, and globalization. **Elareshi et al. (2021)** assessed how political parties in Bahrain are using SM to run election campaigns. It is beneficial for female candidates as they can manage their political tasks more effectively than traditional media in Arab countries (**Mohd, 2025**). Politicians in Bahrain are

largely dependent on Twitter for election campaigns and to reinforce the mobilization and support for political engagement. However, the results by **Elareshi et al. (2021)** also indicated that two candidates selected by the public were not interacting with supporters from SM. The impact of SM on shaping public opinion and influencing legal reforms in some cases has become a subject of increasing interest in Gulf countries and how SM platforms can prompt changes in public perception of any discussion and case on these platforms.

The widespread use and popularity of SM in GCC is happening due to tremendous telecommunication development and infrastructure of the internet in GCC countries (**Beissinger, 2017**). Another important factor in the declining costs of SM and ease of use of services among high-income and young populations is that such factors attract the use of these SM. Consequently, GCC youth are increasingly adopting SM and nurturing avenues for relatively free self-expression, global connectedness, and relative economic empowerment. Youth have exceeded the older generations in technology-based experiences by creating a generation-based gap in a few ways. Youth has surpassed the older generations in the technological experience and they are also creating a gap in some ways (**Alsharekh, 2016**). **Beissinger (2017)** elaborated on the "Growth of SM in the Gulf," which was a video by Chatham House indicating the world is in the Gulf youth pockets. The ultimate aspect is showing that they can do everything through the online process, and they have created radical change due to this factor. The factor is that they can apply everything that has created the SM-based challenges and communication hierarchy in GCC. Furthermore, **Alsharekh (2016)** has noted that the traditions and rules related to communication have overcome SM-based issues. Moreover, SM usage is also associated with specific types of social networking websites like Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube.

2.3 Social Media Shaping Public Opinions

According to a study conducted by **McGregor (2019)**, SM users reflect the electorate; the press reports the online trends and sentiments in the form of public opinion that acts as a horse service and complements the survey quotes and polling. Such practices are also based on the professional routines in which the journalists assess

SM to reflect public opinion, specifically for media events in the form of debates. An overreliance on SM was also assessed by journalists from the extremely curated feeds of Twitter (**McGregor, 2019**). Hybrid information flows between campaigns, journals, and organizations of SM notified the public opinion conception .

Gorodnichenko et al. (2021) asserted that the rise of the internet has transformed the communication way of people and their process of acquiring information. Furthermore, the consumption of traditional media and news has declined in recent years. However, the number of online news users has also increased (**Asad & Parker, 2025**). In various types of media based on the internet, social networks are found to be the essential source of information for various people (**Gorodnichenko, et al., 2021**). With the help of SM, people can instantly have open access to the narratives and news that can build networks to share opinions and interact easily. A quantitative study by **Dubois et al. (2020)** from a sample size of 1500 individuals examined citizens' perceptions of journalists' SM information usage. They demonstrated that people found the appropriate journalists to apply the aggregate of the SM data as compared to the personally identifiable data. Furthermore, users on more SM were likely to perceive positive acceptance of emerging journalism practices that suggest the citizens want to hear publicly through SM and others do not practice it (**Dubois, et al., 2020**). It shows that political posting is directly linked with acceptance of emerging journalistic practices that show citizens want to hear things on SM and publicly.

A study by **Karamat and Farooq (2020)** has found that online networking is turning into an efficient way to get more information. It has further adopted the stage of Twitter and Facebook. Furthermore, SM has been transformed into a serious asset, and it impacts aggregated activity preparation, creation, association, and usage of SM empowerment globally. This has become a medium for up-to-date information regarding socio-political happenings, to get and share the information. It has also turned into a platform for individuals to express their political views.

Gilardi et al. (2022) conducted the study by applying a machine learning (ML) technique for classifiers to categories of 2.78 million

news articles from 84 newspapers, 6500 tweets from official accounts, and 210,000 tweets that politicians posted through accounts from 2018 to 2019. The results show the traditional media agenda and the agenda of politicians influencing one another. However, the agenda through SM was further predictive of the agenda of traditional media. As per **Rao and Kalyani (2022)**, social networking sites have dual effects, including a positive side, and these social networks can also act as valuable tools to manage professionals. They are achieving this through young professionals in a market where there are skills, and they can seek more opportunities. Furthermore, social networking sites are said to work efficiently. However, the negative effects are internet-based bullying, uncontrolled cybercrime, and harassment that are applied to prototyping and managing business opportunities. Electronic technology brings a platform where youth are able to present their agenda and perspective that can be successful, but harassment and related issues are not under control due to a lack of awareness.

The quantitative study by **Yuan et al. (2023)** from a sample size of 5050 responses observed that trust in technology, privacy concerns, and reachability impact Chinese positively to influence digital participation. Additionally, the perception of trust and information quality in SM is based on a significant positive impact on government-based SM engagement. The research also provides strategic and practical recommendations to government agencies for effective SM communication platforms to increase the participation of the citizens in digital initiatives by the government. As per **Guo et al. (2021)**, it is essential for the government in the current situation to use SM and facilitate the digital initiative diffusion ad policies that can promote positive media sentiments. It also educates the public regarding government digital initiatives and policies to promote positive sentiments and to educate the public regarding government digital initiatives for sustainability. It is more impactful during crisis management.

The study by **Leber and Abrahams (2019)** assessed the role of state actors in manipulating the discourse on SM like Twitter with the help of direct interventions, offline operations, selecting the existing SM

influencers, including online statements, mass production and using bot accounts. Further evidences is added that such manipulation was aimed at securing the organic participation of the supportive public. As **Al-Badi (2014)** assessed, the government agencies in the GCC have adopted SM platforms. It has highlighted the importance of SM as a tool to increase the importance of SM as a tool of communication, information dissemination, and engagement in the public sector. The study indicated that adoption of SM in GCC agencies is increasing, and it is driven by the need for greater transparency, efficient service delivery, and citizen engagement. **Al-Badi (2014)** also added the advantages of SM, such as the real-time communication of political leaders with the public, high accessibility to government agencies, and increased public participation in governance practices. Furthermore, the challenges associated with such aspects are privacy, security, managing public perception, and ensuring information accuracy is disseminated from various platforms. **Manzar (2024)** elaborated on SM playing a role to transform the societal attitudes regarding advancement of gender equality. It further added that both positive and negative views on social media shapes public perceptions, challenge the stereotypes and promote empowerment of women. The presentation in news, entertainment and advertisement can reinforce traditional gender roles that can serve as catalyst to bring a change.

2.4 Impact of SM on Legislation and Political Decision Making

As per **Sutan et al. (2021)** research findings, the social movement on Omnibus Law protection was followed by mobile activities and actions and the spread of voice of crucial issues circulating about public policy debates. The study also indicated the Indonesian public demands and implications of changing necessary items of Omnibus law. **Shabir et al. (2014)** have highlighted the key role that SM can present in increasing awareness about laws. Among various issues related to SM, the main aspects are related to the negative impact of SM on youth in Pakistan as it deteriorates their health due to over-dependence on SM and their trust, which leads to negative consequences (**Yousaf et al., 2024**). As per **Karpman and Drisko (2016)**, the increasing importance of SM in education of social work and the need for clear policies can guide the usage. SM is a good

source of increased user engagement, like social work programs, that can significantly impact robust policy development by addressing the issues in society.

Bou-Karroum et al. (2017) have found the positive impact of SM to suggest the impact of accountability tools that can lead to prioritizing and initiating policy-based discussions and increasing awareness to adopt policy and complaints. However, media-generated attention can also have a negative impact on the advocacy of a policy because it leads to mobilizing the opponents to defeat bill passage that is advocated for media interventions. **Alkiviadou (2019)** examined the issue about to hate speech on SM and the requirement for a regulatory response. This is due to challenges that have global reach, and such rapid dissemination of the content on social platforms also amplified the hate speech spread globally. The inadequacy of the existing frameworks regarding current regulations can help address online complicates with speech. The study also regulates the multi-faceted regulatory frameworks, including clear definitions regarding the responsibilities of SM platforms and collaboration between technology companies to control the negative impact of hate speech (**Alkiviadou, 2019**).

Persily, et al. (2020) explored the relationship between the complicated relationship of SM and democratic aspects in the future. It explains the SM platforms that have directly transformed political communications, election dynamics, and public discourse on dynamic elections that can positively and negatively impact. **AlKhalifa and Farello (2021)** analyzed the Instagram activities of such accounts that show two main aims: building legitimacy and changing perceptions. These aims were targeted with the help of four different mechanisms: sporting, SM, and soft power, increasing formal ties, involvement in campaigns, hosting, technical displays, and community engagement. Instagram was popular in the Arab world. This declares the direct relationship of assessing sports as a means to exercise soft power by leading SM, and this can be an instrument to support sports diplomacy in the Arab region.

The study by **Dan et al. (2021)** found that SM tends to increase due to visual information that comes with an implicit guarantee to be closer

to the truth than other communication forms. This shows that visual dis and misinformation can be influencing, and this can also damage democratic governance. In this case visual data can be deployed, or it can be assessed as out of context, and this can be used with a credible proof type like politicians' deep fakes (Dan, et al., 2021). Furthermore, the latest multimodal information forms are also disseminated quickly and seamlessly through SM decision-making and political attitudes. As per **Miller and Vaccari (2020)**, SM and other digital instruments are used to spread misinformation, and these are posing a key threat to polarise public opinions and weaken trust in democratic institutes. The main impact is found to be on the political discourse, elections, and civic engagement. Miller and Vaccari (2020) have also added potential challenges, remedies, and stronger SM platforms that are directly increasing digital literacy due to increasing algorithm-based transparency.

The research conducted by **Lindner and Aichholzer (2020)** asserted that e-participation plays a vital role in the concept building of internet-based citizen typology and e-democracy conceptions. It can further structure the diversity in the regions as it is related to Web 2.0 and SM. That can directly support democratic functions, public communication, legitimacy, and integration. Another study by **Sobieraj et al. (2020)** has found that legal cases challenge politicians to block bar and speaker selection. Politicians use SM for easy transmission of their messages publically to indicate transparency where the electorate and citizens can ask questions. This is a source of increasing accountability to make the political power stable among rivals.

A study by **Saud and Margono (2021)** conducted a survey in Indonesia to examine the impact of digital media on youth and their political engagement with the help of digital platforms. The study has also assessed the massive number of students and the results in Indonesia to find the reaction and correlated the objective with youth perspective and common beliefs within public spheres. The study by Reisach (2021) and Shami & Kippels (2024) targeted and profiled SM platforms that can be used to advertise and target propaganda. By tracking the algorithm and online behavior through SM platforms,

there can be created profiles of the various users (Gilbert et al., 2023). Furthermore, such profiles can be used to promote propaganda among targeted groups. This can directly influence the decision-making power of the public. It directly shapes the opinions of various political leaders.

2.5 Research Gap

The explanation of the existing literature describes the SM's impact on changing public perception. However, the major link is not created with the impact of these SM on shaping. Moreover, a few research papers are available on countries like Kuwait, UAE, and Saudi Arabia, but Gulf countries as a whole are not being observed regarding the social impact of shaping public opinion and legislation. The current will be following to assess the SM impact on public opinion and legislation in Gulf countries. The literature has presented various existing studies that have determined the SM impact on various types of policies. These have also indicated the youth involvement in SM and the way they determine their ultimate factors of development through campaigns. The literature has also determined the SM-related challenges and opportunities that youth and government agencies can use to manage their operations. The studies were collected from various regions, including the Arab region, where the main factors of SM usage were observed, like the impact of the SM campaign on health policy, as explained by Karpman and Drisko (2016). However, the SM impact to shape public opinion and legislation in the GCC is not explained effectively. This ensures the need for the current study based on a pertinent gap found in the literature. The current study aimed to assess the impact of SM on shaping public opinion and legislation in Gulf countries.

Chapter 3 – Theoretical Framework

3.1 Introduction

The theoretical framework offers a structural basis to clarify the effect that SM has on shaping public opinion and legislation in the Gulf countries. In the context of such a unique sociopolitical environment in the region, theories of communication, public opinion formation and creation of political decisions are most needed to understand what

the role of digital platforms has and will continue to have in determining public discourse and policy outcome. In this chapter, key theories from communication, sociology, and political science are discussed in order to explain the interaction between SM, public sentiment, and legislative changes in Gulf countries. It also contextualizes the Gulf's affairs within a socio-political milieu where respect to law, censorship, impunity and hierarchical social structures and this preponderant power has always been the state of affairs.

3.2 Social Media and Communication Theories

Communication theories explain why using SM platforms leads information to flow and shape the individual and collective beliefs. Existing theories, including Two Step Flow Theory, Uses and Gratifications Theory, Agenda Setting Theory, provide a framework to explain how SM affects users' engagement, political messages' spread and ultimately the influenced policy and legislation.

3.2.1 Two-Step Flow Theory

Lazarsfeld, Berelson, and Gaudet's (1944) Two-Step Flow Theory assumes that media influence is filtered through opinion leaders who connect themselves with the media, read what is communicated, and pass it on to others. Within the domain of SM, opinion leaders, also known as influencers, activists, and influential people are using their platforms to frame the content around them (Katz & Lazarsfeld, 1955). This theory helps explain how the information on issues of a political and legislative nature is spread in the Gulf across SM platforms, especially in an environment in which direct criticism towards the Government was not allowed.

In Gulf countries, SM influencer, religious, or even state endorsed public figures are key, prestigious opinion leaders who interpret and disseminate among masses political and social issues related information. In terms of how opinion leaders on Twitter and Instagram commented on debates about social reforms in Saudi Arabia, they used this platform to influence how their followers would see changes to policies regarding women's rights and economic policy (Alhaimer, 2023). These are the platforms where particular opinion

leaders, as opposed to attracting direct conflict with the state, successfully circumvent delicate issues to influence public opinion.

In addition, the proliferation of opinion leaders on the Gulf's SM landscape acts as a 'filter' for political and legislative information about women rights, so to say. These influencers have the power to define political debate in a manner that fits with their social and political aims, mediating the tie in between public and legislative bodies.

3.2.2. Uses and Gratifications Theory

With Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT), individuals are categorized as using and gratifying what they are doing and receiving (Katz et al., 1973). SM is explained by UGT as the reason Gulf citizens used to visit the channel for political causes, entertainment, or to express their opinion on legislative issues. In places where traditional media is frequently state controlled or blacked out, SM provides a relatively freedom of speech medium for users to express their political opinions, campaign for policy alterations and even to discuss governance (Verduyn et al., 2020).

In most of the Gulf countries, Twitter, Instagram, and TikTok are used as SM platforms to talk about social problems like economic reforms, labour rights and gender equality. At the same time, SM contributed to the mobilization of public opinion for labor reforms in Qatar, in particular in the face of international visibility ahead of the World Cup 2022 FIFA (AlBadi, 2014). SM is additionally utilized by users that could possibly not be able to access to conventional media outlets to converse, take a part in Online developments, and try to wield effect on leaders to perform a change. Since traditional media is often controlled and restricted and also considered a one-way communication that ignores listening to the public and their reactions.

The theory also explains why there is no unity of audiences or motivations in the Gulf SM platforms. SM users may want either identity formation or social interaction, or they may want to learn information and get involved in politics. It serves as an active engagement and at one wherein expression of the political is significantly restricted in the region.

3.2.3 Agenda-Setting Theory

According to Agenda -Setting Theory (McCombs and Shaw 1972) the media does not persuade people what to think, but rather what to think about. Public discourse' shaping has traditionally been taken care of by traditional media focusing on specific issues. Yet, with the growth of SM, this power has migrated to the users and influencers, who may choose one topic, frame them in a certain way and attract the gaze accordingly (Gilardi et al., 2022).

In the context of the Gulf, SM enables users to create and decide the political agenda by raising discussion of vital legislative and policy topics. This is particularly evident in debates on environmental sustainability, economic diversification and labor reforms, which have elicited a response from some governments more quickly than would have otherwise (Alhaimer, 2023). Placing these kinds of issues in public discourse through social media on platforms like X (Twitter) and Facebook will get some attention, which then can spur legislative or policy responses. Moreover, Twitter announced their new policy to increase the character limit to 10,000 for Twitter Blue users. This change gives the chance and allows twitter users to express their thoughts and ideas more by using twitter, which can influence the public opinion and give more right for people to express their thoughts (Business Standard, 2023). **“The new Twitter policy is freedom of speech, not freedom of reach.”** — Elon Musk (Economic Times, 2022)

Additionally, SM provides an interactive form of agenda setting. Traditional media only allows one way communication, whereas SM gives users to contribute and actually shape discussions. The feedback here is crucial in the Gulf countries, where government officials also sometimes turn to SM to assess public sentiment. For instance, Saudi Arabia's leadership has employed SM platforms to disclose new initiatives and to gauge the public's response to reforms under Vision 2030 (Antwi-Boateng & Alhashmi, 2022).

3.3 Digital Political Participation

Digital platforms particularly SM are considered to play vital roles to encourage citizens to be politically (Digital Political Participation

theory; Saud & Margono, 2021). SM in the UAE and other Gulf countries is often the only available space to speak out, advocate for the change in policy and even make political leaders answer before the public.

The UAE government has used SM platforms to promote some of the national initiatives and to solicit the public's voice on a range of affairs. For example, the government sought public opinion on the SM during the planning stages of Expo 2020 Dubai: it captured the event as a national accomplishment demanding citizen participation (Antwi-Boateng & Alhashmi, 2022). This did give the UAE a chance to foster a sense of digital civic engagement, a space where Gcitizens could feel they were part of the process of decision making however, for the most part, the participation of citizens was to a certain extent symbolic.

Platforms like Instagram and Twitter are used by citizens and residents to talk about social problems, the policies for the environment, and for gender equality. Despite being rare, due to government censor laws, these platforms have opened a door for citizens to talk about politics in ways not previously possible. In some cases, digital engagement led the government to make changes, for example, labor law reform and promoting sustainability (Elareshi et al. 2021).

In the UAE, digital political participation parallels a larger Gulf phenomenon: SM platforms offer a vital arena for public participation in a managed political environment. SM has opened new types of participation channels enabling citizens to influence legislation without any barriers with the government that welcome which welcome all ideas and opinions.

3.4 Government Using Social Media

SM in terms of communicating with citizens and residents is a very active area for UAE government. From Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum to Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, leaders often update social media with announcements of new government initiatives, new policies and national events. This direct communication allows for transparency and responsiveness, and

shapes public perception and Feedback of proposed law (Antwi- and Alhashmi, 2022).

Also, the government uses SM as a tool to supervise public opinion. Government agencies can see how the public reacts to legislative proposals and economic reforms, simply by tracking which discussions are happening on Twitter or Instagram. For example, labor reforms leading up to Expo 2020 received a great deal of attention in the SM and the government accommodated international and domestic demands given both the national and international scrutiny (Beissinger, 2017). It shows that SM became one of lawmakers' most important pieces of feedback in the UAE allowing them to develop policies appropriate to public sentiment yet keep political power.

3.5 Citizen Led Social Movements

Political engagement in the UAE primarily aligns with the government's objectives and legal framework. Nevertheless, social media has emerged as a platform for public discussion focused on social issues, such as gender equality, labor rights, and environmental sustainability. For instance, digital campaigns advocating for women's leadership positions and equal pay on platforms like Instagram and Twitter have gained increasing popularity (AlBadi, 2014' Akpuokwe et al., 2024). These movements, while not politically disruptive, have contributed to shaping public debates and fostering legislative reforms aligned with the UAE's modernization goals and gender inclusivity initiatives.

Moreover, social media has played a significant role in amplifying environmental awareness, enabling advocates to promote sustainability efforts and call for stronger environmental protections. These conversations have influenced national policies, including the UAR's Green Agenda and its pledge to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050 (Antwi-Boateng & Alhashmi, 2022). While aligned with government priorities citizen-driven efforts on social media demonstrate how digital platforms can indirectly shape legislative advancements in the UAE.

3.6 Conclusion

This chapter outlines the theoretical framework on which the role of SM plays in influencing legislation and shaping public opinion in the Gulf countries, with particular attention placed on the UAE. The theories of Two-step flow, Uses and Gratifications and Agenda Setting, explain how information is spread and interpreted over these SM platforms. These theories offer insight into how public discussion on social issues gains traction and how social media shapes public opinion and influences legislative developments.

SM provides a valuable channel for governments to understand public opinion, adjust and adapt policies, and strengthen engagements with citizens. At the same time, it enables individuals to engage in discussion and express perspectives that may contribute to positive social developments.

In the UAE, SM serves as a dynamic force that empowers both the state and citizens to contribute to shaping policies through digital engagement and public discourse. The UAE's aspiration to become modern rests on digital tools and the role of SM in forming public opinion and influencing policies will likely increase, making it a critical field of study for understanding governance in the Gulf.

Chapter 4 – Research Methodology

4.1 Research Philosophy

Research philosophy describes a pattern of beliefs and assumptions regarding knowledge development bequeathes a research choice with respect to research approach, methods and techniques used in a study (Kirono & Odoyo, 2020). Choice of research philosophy is the most important factor which decides what is overall research strategy and how the data is collected, interpreted and analyzed (Khatri, 2020). The major research philosophies are positivism, interpretivism, realism, and pragmatism.

This research philosophy is pragmatism which is selected as a guiding research philosophy in this study. The philosophy of pragmatism is about being flexibly and practically, and for this reason the researchers can adopt both subjective and objective methods to solve

complex research problems (Kelly & Cordeiro, 2020). According to James (2020) pragmatists argue that knowledge is created by interweaving empirical evidence and lives' experiential contexts. In particular, in the context of this research, pragmatism is appealing because it offers the opportunity to use a mixed methods (both the quantitative and qualitative elements) to understand how social media (SM) is influencing the shape of public opinion and legislation in Gulf countries.

Positivism, interpretivism and pragmatism are chosen over because a full picture is needed that includes numerical data (quantitative analysis) and descriptions from the survey participants (qualitative insight from open-ended responses). The balance between the empirical measurement of SM usage and the contextual interpretation of its effects, along with the subsequent balance of democratization and reification constitute the basis for sufficient comprehension of how SM has impacted legislation and public opinion.

4.2 Research Approach

The systematic plan in the collection, analysis, and an interpretation of the data is known as the research approach (Mehrad & Zangeneh, 2019). There are two most common research approaches which are deductive and inductive. For example, a theory or hypothesis is used in the deductive approach and empirical data is used; whereas, the inductive approach is collecting data to create new theories or generalizations (Opie, 2019).

In this study, I adopt the deductive approach. Since the research will be testing specific hypotheses pertaining to the impact of SM in reshaping public opinion and legislative changes in Gulf countries, the deductive approach is applicable. This corresponds with pragmatism as it allows the researcher to try out the existent theories (such as the role of SM in public discourse) by means of empirical data collection (Leavy, 2022). Surveys have the advantage of testing preconceived hypotheses about whether Gulf citizens do or don't engage with SM platforms to discuss legislative matters and how that engagement reflects on public opinion. In addition, case studies will provide additional context by showing specific situations where social media

has influenced legislations by bringing these cases into public opinion through social media.

The research employs a deductive approach whereby broader theoretical assumptions about how SM affects legislation are drawn from, constrained to particular hypotheses that the research then tests with quantitative data. The collected survey data can be used to directly test the hypothesis that youth in the Gulf use SM more and so will be more likely to advocate for policy reforms.

4.3 Methodological Choices

Methodological choice is used as a term in research that specifies the decision about the use of using qualitative, quantitative or mixed methods to address research problems (Pandey & Pandey, 2021). A mixed methods approach is applied for this study by combining quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques. The use of a mixed method approach fits with the pragmatic research philosophy and this approach allows the researcher to capture a more holistic understanding of the phenomenon being studied (Kelly & Cordeiro, 2020).

1. **Quantitative Methods:** In this study, quantitative data collected by means of **structured surveys are used predominately**. Measures of how much SM is used and how it affects public opinion and legislative processes are taken by quantitative methods. What data collected in numerical form allows, is for statistics which makes it easier and more reliable to draw conclusions (Pandey & Pandey, 2021).
2. **Qualitative Methods:** The analysis includes elements of the qualitative data, **through case study explanation**. However, the focus remains on quantitative data. This study lends itself well to a mixed methods approach as it gives us a complete look at how the SM influences as well as what those influences mean to the participants.

4.4 Research Strategy

A research strategy is an overall plan, known as a 'how', of how the research will be carried out. Selection of methods and techniques appropriate for research objectives is involved (Pandey & Pandey,

2021). Data for this research strategy are collected from a sample of people across Gulf countries using a survey questionnaire.

1. **Survey Method:** The survey method is the first choice of data collection method as it is able to collect data from a large population quickly and conveniently. One particularly useful set of data collection instruments used in behavioral, attitude and perception studies on a broad scale are surveys (Harris & Brown, 2019). In this case, the data collection will be about SM use frequency, SM used platforms, SM used topics discussion and SM perceived usage impact on legislation and public opinion.
2. **Survey Design:** The survey is designed with closed questions to gather data from participants. SM usage and its effect is gauged through a series of close ended questions with a five point Likert scale of agreement with a set of statements. This is because Likert scale is privileged for measuring the attitude towards SM's contribution in public discourse and legislative changes. The qualitative findings are more in depth than had they been expounded by open ended questions.

A survey strategy permits the research to obtain structured data that can be statistically analyzed. This pragmatic philosophy suggests combining the best tools that can be identified to solve the research problem, which is the same approach taken here.

3. **Case Study Approach:** In addition to the survey, a case study approach will be taken at specific cases of how social media has influenced legislation and public opinion in the Gulf countries. This approach provides qualitative knowledge of the situation and results.

The survey provides structured data for statistical analysis, while the case study offers depth. Together, these approaches effectively manage the research work.

4.5 Population and Sampling

Individuals residing in Gulf countries from Gulf countries nationalities, from private as well as from public sectors, serve as a population of this study. These participants are a cross section of SM users who are participating on the content of public opinion and

legislative issues. It is a sample drawn from active individuals using SM platforms – Facebook, Twitter (X), Instagram, Snapchat and TikTok.

1. **Sampling Method:** To make sure everyone from the population gets an equal chance to be chosen from, a simple random sampling method is used. Selection of simple random sampling was made since the chances of bias in a sample will be reduced and that sample will represent a broader population (Daraz and Khan, 2021). The sampling process is captured without adherence to any form of selection criteria other than SM usage and hence it is unbiased and inclusive of most demographic.
2. **Sample Size:** The survey is followed up with 300 participants. It is split 1:1 with the sample split into private (150 participants) and public (150 participants) forums. The division of the study into threads helps study and examine the impact of SM on both sides, in terms of dimension. The sample size is sufficient to make the results statistically significant and trustable even it is still manageable for data collection and analysis (Daraz & Khan, 2021).
3. **Inclusion Criteria:** Participants are selected based on their active usage of SM, aged 18-50, and their willingness to discuss public opinion and legislative processes in Gulf countries. Participants must be nationals of GCC countries and fluent in both Arabic and English. This ensures the sample being studied is pertinent to the research objectives and the data obtained reflect SM engagement.

4.6 Data Collection

In this study data is collected through an online survey sent to respondents in the Gulf region. The survey is designed to gather information on the following key areas:

1. **Demographics:** Educational level, nationality, gender, employment sector and age. The findings and number of demographics in SM users along in the Gulf are contextualized.

2. **Social Media Usage:** Types of platforms you use (FB, IG, X) for SM, frequency of SM usage, nature of interaction (political discussions, social justice discussions, entertainment).
3. **Public Opinion and Legislative Influence:** It asks participants to rate how much SM shape's public opinion, advocating for and effecting Legislative changes, or influencing government decisions.

We distribute the survey online using a popular survey platform for the public share it via WhatsApp for private participants, making it accessible to participants around the Gulf. Over the course of three months the data is collected, allowing enough time for responses, and exclude anyone who did the survey for this study from a country other than the Gulf countries.

4.7 Data Analysis

The quantitative data analysis in this study is done using **SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences)** that is widely accepted as reliable and accurate in handling quantitative data (Pandey & Pandey, 2021). The following analytical techniques are employed:

1. **Descriptive Statistics:** To summarize the basic features of the data in descriptive analysis is used. Also included here is the calculation of mean, median, mode and standard deviation for the quantitative data collected through Likert scale response. By help in descriptive statistics to give a sense of the general patterns of SM use and how those influences public opinion and legislation.
2. **Inferential Statistics:** The hypotheses oriented to the SM impact on public opinion and legislative influence are tested through the application of inferential statistical methods. Relationships explored between variables such as SM usage frequency and perceived influence on public policy (e.g. факторы) are explored through techniques such as correlation analysis, regression analysis, and t tests.
3. **Graphical Representation:** The findings are represented with graphs, pie charts and bar charts to ease interpretation of trends and comparisons in the data. In particular, visual representation

is great for highlighting key patterns in SM engagement between different demographic groups.

Qualitative Data Analysis: Thematic analysis is used to analyze open ended responses. Looking at recurring patterns of the participants' responses, themes are identified, and they show how people see that SM plays a part in the formation of public opinion and legislation. The quantitative findings dovetail with those of this qualitative analysis and help explain the complexities of SM driven public discourse.

3.8 Ethical Considerations:

Responsible and considerate research with ethical considerations, is important because it's done with adequate respect for the rights of participants. The following ethical protocols are followed in this study:

1. **Informed Consent:** All participants are told the purpose, procedures, and their rights as a participant, in clear terms. Participants are required to consent and give informed consent before participation in the survey.
2. **Confidentiality:** Participants, always anonymous, have data safely stored. Sharing or publishing of identifiable information is not done in order to protect the privacy of the participants.
3. **Voluntary Participation:** The nature of this study is completely voluntary, and participants are in no way obligated to continue beyond the point that they choose to end participation.
4. **Data Protection:** Data are stored in compliance with relevant data protection regulation; the data are available to the research team not open access.

4.8 Limitations

The chosen methodology provides a solid framework with which to answer the research questions, while simultaneously being constrained. Finally, a significant reliance on survey data means that participants may otherwise not accurately recall or report the SM usage. Moreover, the sample size is sufficient, though in not capturing all nuances among various Gulf countries, including differences in cultural attitudes and political environments.

4.9 Conclusion

For the methodology chapter, the research philosophy, approach, strategy and methods that was employed to investigate the effect of SM on public opinion and legislation in the Gulf countries are outlined. A pragmatism guiding philosophy is used to support a mixed methods approach that combines quantitative and qualitative insights. All collected data with structured survey methods are analyzed using SPSS to meet rigor and accuracy. Specifically, ethical issues are respected in order to protect the rights of participants and to maintain the integrity of the research process. The resulting application of this methodological framework for addressing the research goals and producing reliable, meaningful evidence adds a strong foundation.

Chapter 5- Results and Analysis

5.1 Descriptive Analysis

Descriptive statistics includes a set of methods applied to summarize and explain the primary features of the datasets (Siedlecki, 2020). The goal of the statistics is to provide and present data in an appropriate way to increase its understanding. It measures frequency, central tendency, percentage, and cumulative percentage.

5.1.1 Gender

The gender statistics show a total sample size of 300, and no one is missing in the responses, including 45.3% males and 54.3% females, and one person preferred not to say. The mean is 1.55, which shows the average value of gender, indicating more females. The mean is 2, which shows the middle value of gender that is mostly opted by respondents. The mode is 2, indicating the most frequent value selected was 2 (females). The standard deviation is 0.505 which indicates the responses are close to the mean.

Table 1a: Gender Statistics

N	Valid	300
	Missing	0
Mean		1.55
Median		2.00
Mode		2
Std. Deviation		.505

Table 1b: Frequency Distribution of Gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Men	136	45.3	45.3	45.3
	Women	163	54.3	54.3	99.7
	Prefer not to say	1	.3	.3	100.0
	Total	300	100.0	100.0	

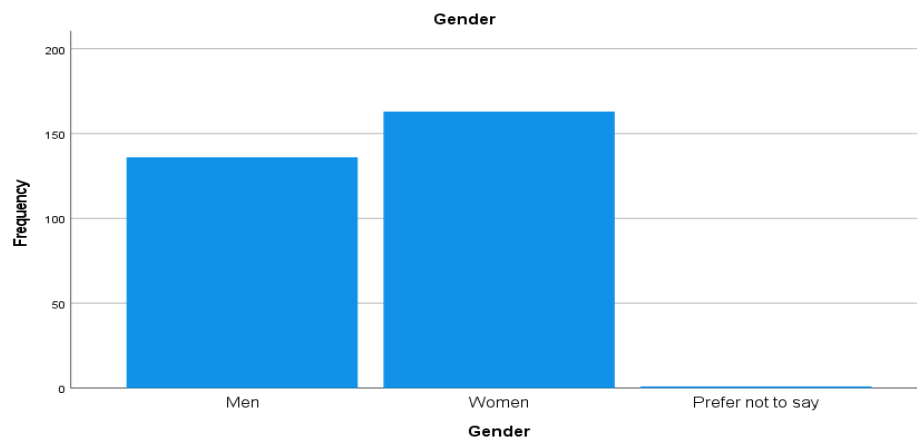


Figure 1: Gender Demographics

5.1.2 Age

The age statistics show 8.7% of respondents were falling in the age group of 20 to 25 years, 38% were in the 26 to 30 years age group, 38.3% were from 31 to 36 years, and 15% were above 40 years. The mean is 2.60 which shows most of the respondents selected valued at second and third number. The median is 3, indicating half of the respondents fall in or lower than category 3. Furthermore, the mode is

3 which is an indication that the most frequent age group is category 3. The standard deviation is 0.846 which indicates the variability extent is close to the mean of the results.

Table 2a: Age Statistics		
Age		
N	Valid	300
	Missing	0
Mean		2.60
Median		3.00
Mode		3
Std. Deviation		.846

Table 2b: Age Frequencies					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	20 - 25 Years	26	8.7	8.7	8.7
	26 - 30 Years	114	38.0	38.0	46.7
	31 - 36 Years	115	38.3	38.3	85.0
	41 and above	45	15.0	15.0	100.0
	Total	300	100.0	100.0	

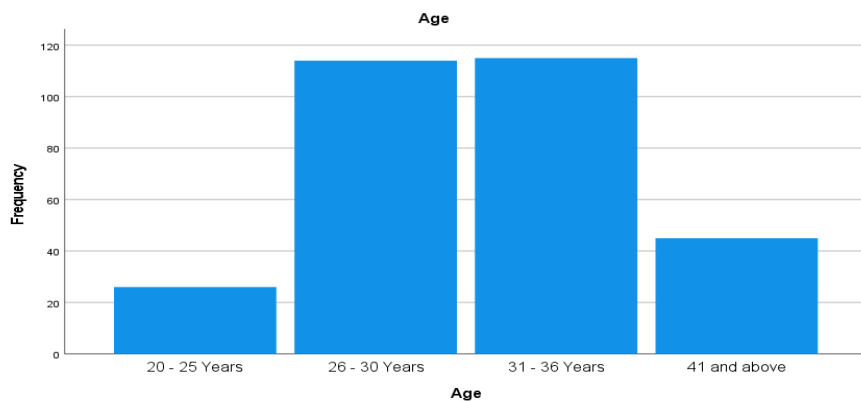


Figure 2: Age Demographics

5.1.3 Highest Education Level

When it comes to the highest level of education of the social media users, 16 had senior school education, 47 were diploma holders, 82 were bachelors, and 29 were postgraduates. The mean is 2.31, which

shows the average education level of the participants is close to category 2, which shows more participants tend towards an undergraduate degree and a little less having a bachelor's degree. Furthermore, median 2 presents the middle value 2, which shows half the participants having an education level below category 2, which is a diploma. Mode 2, showing the frequently occurring education level was diploma holders, is 2nd category. The standard deviation is 0.853, showing the education variability level as it is less than 1 which shows most respondents selected education level is around category 2.

Table 3a: Education Level Statistics

Highest Education Level		
N	Valid	300
	Missing	0
Mean		2.31
Median		2.00
Mode		2
Std. Deviation		.853

Table 3b: Highest Education Level

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Senior High School	48	16.0	16.0	16.0
	Diploma	141	47.0	47.0	63.0
	Bachelor	82	27.3	27.3	90.3
	Postgraduate	29	9.7	9.7	100.0
	Total	300	100.0	100.0	

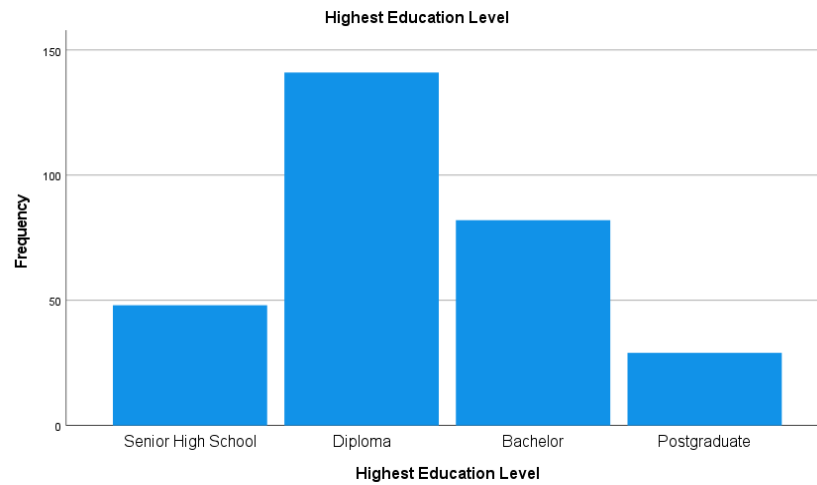


Figure 3: Education level demographics

5.1.4 Social Media Usage

The descriptive statistics of social media usage elaborated that 15% of respondents were using from 1 to 3 hours, 52% were using from 4 to 6 hours, 24% were using from 7 to 9 hours, 8.7% were using more than 9 hours, and 0.3% were missing. Moreover, the average use the social media was 2.6 indicates that the participants, on average, use social media slightly more than 2nd category. The median is 2, indicating almost half of the respondents use social media for 4-6 hours; that is the 2nd category. The value of mode is 2, which was among the most common responses for social media usage. A standard deviation of 0.819 indicates that there is present variation regarding social media usage responses, but mostly responses are closer to the average value.

Table 4a: Social Media Usage Statistics

Social Media Usage		
N	Valid	299
	Missing	1
Mean		2.26
Median		2.00
Mode		2
Std. Deviation		.819

Table 4b: Social Media Usage Frequencies

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1 - 3 Hrs.	45	15.0	15.1	15.1
	4 - 6 Hrs.	156	52.0	52.2	67.2
	7 - 9 Hrs.	72	24.0	24.1	91.3
	10 Hrs. and above	26	8.7	8.7	100.0
	Total	299	99.7	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.3		
Total		300	100.0		

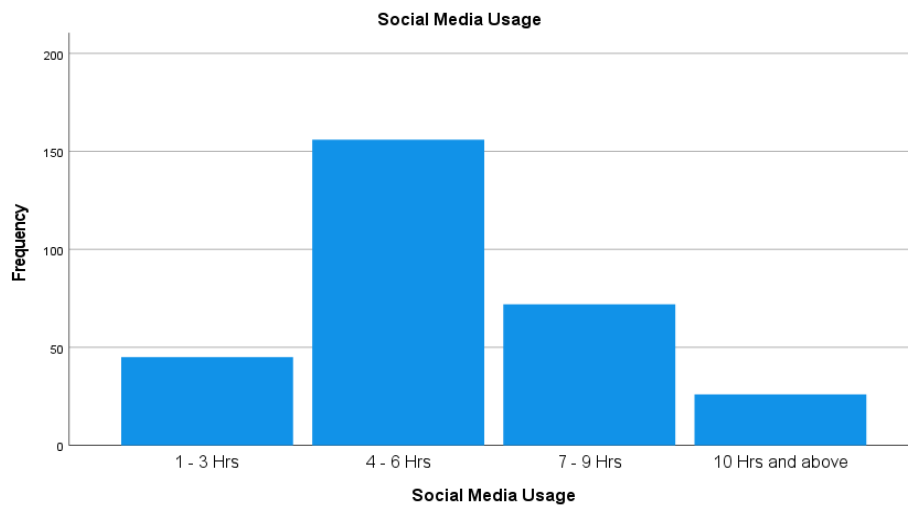


Figure 4: Social media usage time

5.1.5 Social Media Platforms Used

The social media platform used by respondents were Snapchat 17.7%, Twitter/X 49%, telegram 22.7%, Facebook 8.3% and others 2.3%. The frequency measures show the mean was 2.29, which indicates the average participants were falling close to degree 2 of Twitter/X. The median was 2, which indicates almost half participants were using 2nd category social media platforms that were also dependent on platform categorization. The mode was 2, indicating the commonest number of platforms that participants were using was in category 2. The standard deviation of 0.931 shows moderate variability in the social media

platform usage, but most of them were clustered around the 2nd platform.

Table 5a: Social Media Platforms Statistics

Social Media Platforms Used		
N	Valid	300
	Missing	0
Mean		2.29
Median		2.00
Mode		2
Std. Deviation		.931

Table 5b: Social Media Platforms Used

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Snapchat	53	17.7	17.7	17.7
	X/Twitter	147	49.0	49.0	66.7
	Telegram	68	22.7	22.7	89.3
	Facebook	25	8.3	8.3	97.7
	Others	7	2.3	2.3	100.0
	Total	300	100.0	100.0	

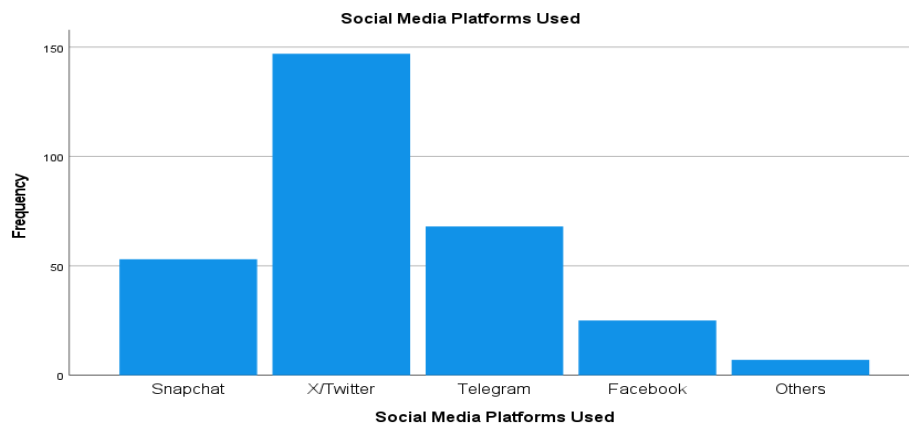


Figure 5: Social Media Platforms Used

5.2 Variables Analysis

5.2.1 Social Media Usage

The responses about social media usage indicated that 7.3% strongly agreed, 38.3 agreed, 19.7 neutral, 24.7 disagreed, and 10% strongly

disagreed. This shows more respondents agreed on social media usage. The mean of social media usage was 2.92, showing most of the respondents fall in categories 2 and 3. The median value is 3, which shows half of the participants were lying above category 3. The mode was 2, which shows value 2 was frequently occurring in which respondents agreed about social media usage. A standard deviation of 1.149 indicates a fair spread of the social media usage responses.

Table 6a: Social Media Usage Statistics

N	Valid	300
	Missing	0
Mean		2.92
Median		3.00
Mode		2
Std. Deviation		1.149

Table 6b: Social Media Usage

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agreed	22	7.3	7.3	7.3
	Agreed	115	38.3	38.3	45.7
	Neutral	59	19.7	19.7	65.3
	Disagreed	74	24.7	24.7	90.0
	Strongly Disagreed	30	10.0	10.0	100.0
	Total	300	100.0	100.0	

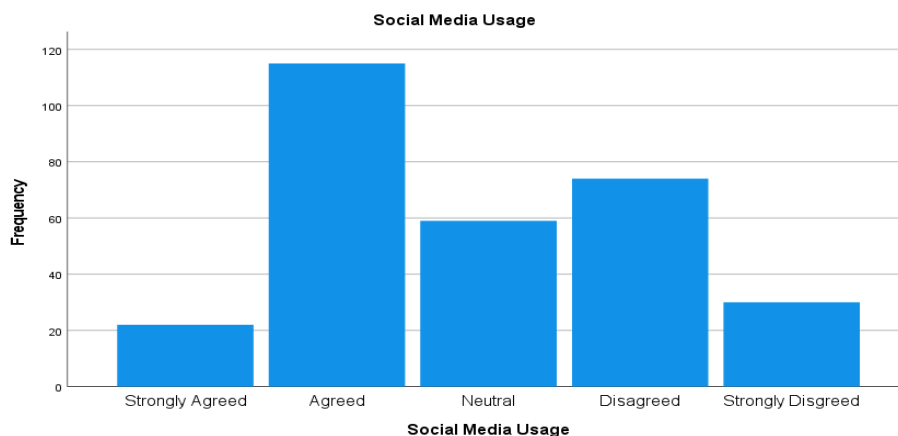


Figure 6: Social Media Usage Responses

5.2.2 Public Opinion

When it was asked about the public opinion of respondents, 13% strongly agreed, 37.3% agreed, 18.7% neutral, 17.3% disagreed, and 13.7% strongly disagreed. The mean was 2.81, showing the average public opinion results were falling in categories 2 and 3, that is, agreed and neutral. Moreover, the media is 2, which indicates that almost half participants were expressing tier opinions at or below category 2. The mode is 2, which is a frequently occurring value that is agreed upon. The standard deviation is 1.258 which shows a comparatively huge spread of the public opinion responses.

Table 7a: Public Opinion Statistics

N	Valid	300
	Missing	0
Mean		2.81
Median		2.00
Mode		2
Std. Deviation		1.258

Table 7b: Public Opinion

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agreed	39	13.0	13.0	13.0
	Agreed	112	37.3	37.3	50.3
	Neutral	56	18.7	18.7	69.0
	Disagreed	52	17.3	17.3	86.3
	Strongly Disagreed	41	13.7	13.7	100.0
	Total	300	100.0	100.0	

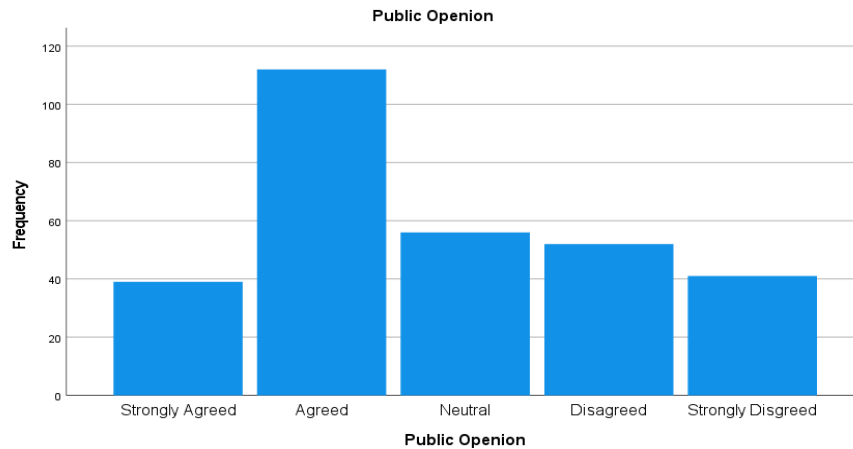


Figure 7: Public opinion responses

5.2.3 Government Regulations About Women Rights

The results for government regulations about women rights show that 15.7% strongly agreed, 39.7% agreed, 18% neutral, 16.7% disagreed, and 10% strongly disagreed. The mean value is 2.66, which shows the average response is in category 2, which is agreed, and three, which is neutral. Furthermore, the median is 2 that is, almost half of the participants' responses were below 2 degrees, ranging from neutral to strongly disagreed. The standard deviation of 1.215 indicates that the responses spread about the public opinion regarding government regulations about women rights are varying significantly.

Table 8a: Government Regulations Statistics

N	Valid	300
	Missing	0
Mean		2.66
Median		2.00
Mode		2
Std. Deviation		1.215

Table 8b: Government Regulations

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agreed	47	15.7	15.7	15.7
	Agreed	119	39.7	39.7	55.3
	Neutral	54	18.0	18.0	73.3
	Disagreed	50	16.7	16.7	90.0
	Strongly Disagreed	30	10.0	10.0	100.0
	Total	300	100.0	100.0	

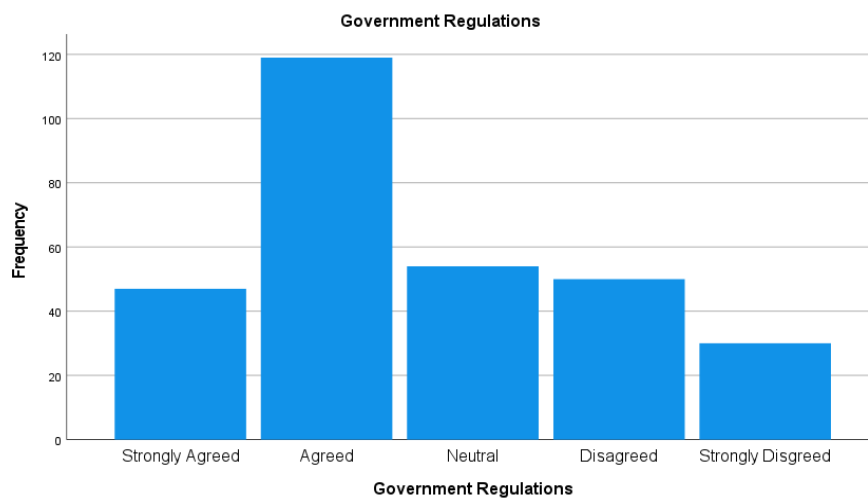


Figure 8: Government Regulations about Women Rights

5.2.4 Legislation Impact

The legislation impact responses show that 14% strongly agreed, 44.7% agreed, 17.3% neutral, 17.7% disagreed, and 7% strongly disagreed. The value of the mean is 2.58, which is the average, showing the perception of the participants and its impact on the legislation falling in the 2 and 3 categories that are agreed and neutral. The median is 2 showing that half rate the impact of legislation at and below category 2. However, the mode is 2, which shows the most frequent response was 2 that was agreed. The standard deviation was 1.135, showing a moderate variability level of the participant responses.

Table 9a: Legislation Impact Statistics

N	Valid	300
	Missing	0
Mean		2.58
Median		2.00
Mode		2
Std. Deviation		1.135

Table 9b: Legislation Impact

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agreed	42	14.0	14.0	14.0
	Agreed	134	44.7	44.7	58.7
	Neutral	52	17.3	17.3	76.0
	Disagreed	51	17.0	17.0	93.0
	Strongly Disagreed	21	7.0	7.0	100.0
	Total	300	100.0	100.0	

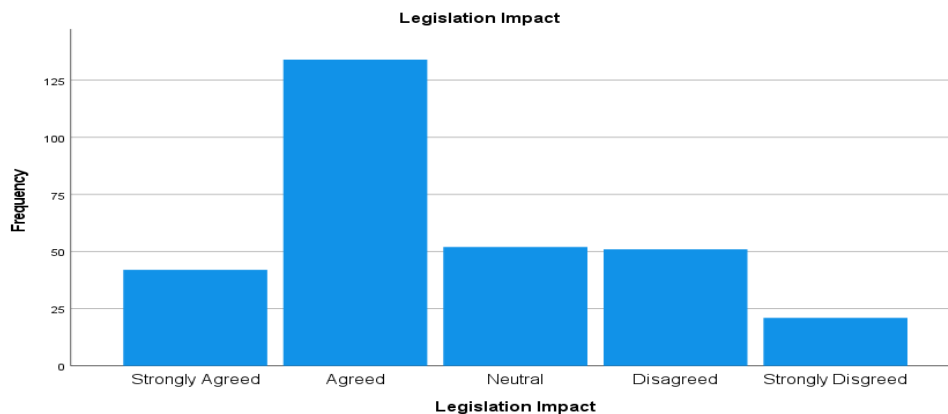


Figure 9: Legislation Impact

5.3 T-Test

The t-test is a statistical tool that is applied to find if there is a significant difference among the means of two groups (De Winter, 2019). It is usually applied in case of a small sample size, and the standard deviation of the population is not known. The t-test assists in testing the hypothesis through t-value calculations that show how the group means are different and related to the variability in the group

(Mishra, et al., 2019). When it comes to social media usage, the mean was 2.92, which shows individuals were using social media at a higher tendency, leading the tendency towards increased engagement. The public opinion means it is 2.81, indicating favorable and neutral opinions of the participants. The results for government regulations about women indicate the participants were more inclined to agree or neutral about the effectiveness of the government regulations. However, of legislation impact, the mean is 2.58, indicating on average, respondents are inclined towards agreed about perceived impact. The standard deviation of the variables shows that participants had strong opinions as the responses were varied, specifically about government regulations and public opinion. The low standard deviation means samples are a good estimate of population means.

Table 10a: One-Sample Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Social Media Usage	300	2.92	1.149	.066
Public Opinion	300	2.81	1.258	.073
Government Regulations about women rights	300	2.66	1.215	.070
Legislation Impact	300	2.58	1.135	.066

Table 10b: One-Sample Test

	Test Value = 0					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Social Media Usage	43.957	299	.000	2.917	2.79	3.05
Public Opinion	38.720	299	.000	2.813	2.67	2.96
Government Regulations about women rights	37.862	299	.000	2.657	2.52	2.79
Legislation Impact	39.436	299	.000	2.583	2.45	2.71

Table 10c: One-Sample Effect Sizes

		Standardizer ^a	Point Estimate	95% Confidence Interval	
				Lower	Upper
Social Media Usage	Cohen's d	1.149	2.538	2.305	2.770
	Hedges' correction	1.152	2.531	2.299	2.763
Public Opinion	Cohen's d	1.258	2.236	2.023	2.447
	Hedges' correction	1.262	2.230	2.018	2.441
Government Regulations about women rights	Cohen's d	1.215	2.186	1.977	2.394
	Hedges' correction	1.218	2.180	1.972	2.388
Legislation Impact	Cohen's d	1.135	2.277	2.062	2.491
	Hedges' correction	1.137	2.271	2.056	2.485
a. The denominator used in estimating the effect sizes. Cohen's d uses the sample standard deviation. Hedges' correction uses the sample standard deviation plus a correction factor.					

5.4 Pearson's Correlations

Pearson's correlation is a statistical tool used to measure the direction and strength of linear relationships among continuous variables (Sedgwick, 2012). It shows the correlation r that ranges from -1 to 1, as -1 indicates a negative correlation, and 1 shows a perfect positive correlation. The correlation of social media usage with public opinion is 0.373, which is a low to moderate relation, and $p < 0.01$ shows a significant correlation. The relationship between social media usage and government regulations is 0.394, and $p < 0.01$ indicates a significant relationship. However, the social media usage relationship with legislation about women rights impact is 0.494, which is a moderate positive relationship and $p < 0.01$, showing the significance of the results. The relationship between public opinion and women rights government regulations is 0.645, which is a positive relationship, and $p < 0.01$ indicates the results are significant. Furthermore, the relationship between public opinion and legislation impact is 0.697 and $p < 0.01$, which is a significant and strong positive relationship. The government regulations have a strong positive

correlation with legislation impact that was 0.847, and $p < 0.01$ shows significant results.

Table 11: Correlations

		Social Media Usage	Public Opinion	Government Regulations	Legislation Impact
Social Media Usage	Pearson Correlation	1	.373**	.394**	.494**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000
	N	300	300	300	300
Public Opinion	Pearson Correlation	.373**	1	.645**	.697**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000
	N	300	300	300	300
Government Regulations about women rights	Pearson Correlation	.394**	.645**	1	.847**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000
	N	300	300	300	300
Legislation Impact	Pearson Correlation	.494**	.697**	.847**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	
	N	300	300	300	300
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).					

5.5 Regression Analysis

Regression analysis is a statistical method applied to assess the relationship between dependent and independent variables. This shows how a change in one variable impacts another variable (Mooi, et al., 2018). The model summary shows the key regression statistics in Table 12a, where social media usage, government regulations, and public opinion are the main predictors. The value of r is 0.881 which is a multiple of the correlation coefficient, showing overall relationship strength among the dependent variable and predictor. The result for r^2 is 0.777, which is a coefficient of determination indicating

variance proportion among social media usage, government regulations, and public opinion. However, the adjusted r^2 is 0.774, showing strong positive results. The std. is 0.539, which shows the better fit of the model.

Table 12a: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.881 ^a	.777	.774	.539
a. Predictors: (Constant), Government Regulations, Social Media Usage, Public Opinion				

Table 12b: ANOVA^a

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1					
Regression	298.926	3	99.642	342.989	.000 ^b
Residual	85.991	296	.291		
Total	384.917	299			
a. Dependent Variable: Legislation Impact					
b. Predictors: (Constant), Government Regulations, Social Media Usage, Public Opinion					

For social media usage, the significance is 0.000 for each unit as each unit increases in social media usage, and legislation impact increases by 0.156 units. Social media usage has a positive but a smaller effect on legislation impact. In the case of public opinion, the significance is 0.000, as for each unit increase the public opinion, the legislation is impacted by 0.205 units. The value of Beta shows public opinion has a moderate positive impact on legislation impact. The significance level of government regulation about women rights is 0.000 showing a strong and significant relationship. The value of beta is 0.638, and the government regulations have the strongest positive impact on legislation impact. This shows the hypothesis “*H1: social media has a significant and direct relationship with legislation impact*”, “*H2: Public opinion significantly influences the legislation impact*,” and “*H3: government regulations about women rights significantly related to the legislation impact*” are all accepted due to their significant relationship with each other.

Table 12c: Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-.030	.097		-.310	.757
	Social Media Usage	.156	.030	.158	5.212	.000
	Public Opinion	.205	.033	.227	6.222	.000
	Government Regulations about women rights	.596	.034	.638	17.342	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Legislation Impact						

5.6 Non-Empirical Analysis

5.6.1 Case Studies: United Arab Emirates

Passing the Wadeema Law represented a major legislative step after the UAE's public became aware of child rights problems following the case that illustrated the need for better child safety measures. Different aspects which build a foundation of child welfare are detailed in the UAE legislation (United Arab Emirates Government, n.d.). Twitter and Instagram together with other social media networks have boosted public recognition of child protection matters while simultaneously optimizing public sentiments towards these matters. Al-Muaini (2021) explains how child protection cases that gained more visibility on social media platforms caused widespread public outrage that forced government leadership to adopt stronger action measures. Public discussions concerning the Wadeema Law exposed child rights protection to be matters of both legal and widespread public concern. The increased public interest in the law's performance compelled the government to make child protection initiatives more significant and start working alongside communities (Al-Baz & Khamis, 2020). Through the Wadeema Law the UAE delivers its dedication to protecting children's rights. Through public pressure on social media government officials introduced new laws which responded to issues expressed by constituents. Therefore, social media drives amendments in lawmaking processes. Success at using social media platforms by child rights advocates in persuading public discourse about child

protection policies has fortified the legal framework for child protection in the United Arab Emirates (Al-Hammadi, 2019).

5.6.2 Case Studies: Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

In 2018 Saudi Arabia ended its prohibition against women drivers which brought forward unprecedented social progress in Saudi society. Alhajri (2020) presents comprehensive advocacy evidence in his dissertation about Saudi Arabian women's perspectives on social transformation according to his study. Activist Manal al-Sharif managed #Women2Drive campaign on Twitter to defend driving rights for women and support Saudi Vision 2030 labor force expansion (TED, n.d.). The law's implementation made transportation convenient for women while raising their employment rate in the workforce beyond the projected 30% to reach 35.8% in the year's second quarter (Financial Times, 2024). The power of digital activism proved how it can successfully drive social change within Saudi Arabia according to NPR (2018).

The Saudi Arabian struggle for female driving rights received its strongest advocate when Manal al-Sharif emerged as a central figure. Manal al-Sharif presented her journey through *Becoming A Saudi Woman Who Dared To Drive* at her TED Talks speech from 2013 (TED, n.d.). Through her daring actions both behind the wheel and on social media she ignited talks about social transformation (International Bar Association, 2018). Through her activism she proved that digital campaigning could direct vital dialogues about policy changes while staying within Saudi Arabian cultural values and development plans (Amnesty International, 2018).

5.6.3 Case Studies: Kuwait

The video recorded a Kuwaiti man stabbing his girlfriend inside her car while she sat in the vehicle during 2021. Social media viewers watched the video widely so the incident created both a public backlash against the attacker and demands for legal consequences (BBC News, 2021). The public outrage towards this violent incident accelerated the existing campaign for expanded women protection measures against harassment and violence in Kuwait. The harassment problems that women face drew attention through the #أسكت_لن (Lan

Asket "I will not be silent") campaign launched earlier in that year. The prosecution has charged him with first-degree murder and the Kuwaiti legal system allows execution as the penalty for this offense. According to the Kuwait Times from 2024 the family of Farah disclosed the suspect was unfamiliar to them and they had already filed a harassment complaint against him previously. Social media enabled the family to share their statements with the public thus demonstrating its vital role in information dissemination and truth clarification.

5.6.4 Case Studies: Qatar

Social media-driven changes have substantially affected Qatar's labor rights legislation because of the FIFA World Cup 2022 taking place in Qatar. The FIFA World Cup acted as a worldwide event to showcase Qatar's advancements in worker rights reforms for its migrant labor population (Karam, 2020). Through social media platforms activists carried out awareness campaigns about labor problems which helped build public backing and high-level labor standard dialogues (Mazzarol, 2022). The combination of digital advocacy brought meaningful changes to the Kafala system when workers obtained enhanced rights coupled with mobility because it enhanced accountability (Frenzel & Gasser, 2021; Cunningham, 2021). The World Cup and social media together demonstrated their power to drive public opinion that eventually led to legislative change which matches the research concepts explored in this document.

5.6.5 Case Studies: Bahrain

Social media played a crucial role in advancing Bahrain's traffic law reform movement as demonstrated by recent events. The population of Bahrain used Twitter and Instagram in 2021 to notify others about mounting traffic accidents which then catalyzed public backing for tougher traffic management laws. Twitter users activated the #BahrainRoadSafety hashtag which prompted government representatives to establish petitions and organize community discussions that resulted in administrative changes. Significant changes to traffic regulations were introduced after citizens received

increased penalties and stricter enforcement measures (AlBahrani 2021 and AlKhalifa 2021).

5.6.6 Case Studies: Oman

During 2021 the unemployment situation in Oman grew worse as COVID-19 affected primarily the young Omani workforce (Al-Mahrouqi, 2021). The employment situation gained attention from activists who activated social media with hashtags #OmaniJobs and #YouthEmploymentOman for displaying job challenges and available employment opportunities (Al-Balushi 2021). The heightened labor market visibility led the Ministry of Labor to deploy new initiatives and legislative measures intended for advancing job opportunities for Omani nationals (Oman News Agency, 2021). A revised employment legislation required businesses to give priority hiring to Omani nationals thus intensifying the Omanization policy (Al-Farsi 2021). The Ministry accomplished its job search objective by creating skills training workshops and online job fairs to help job seekers find employment with potential employers (Ministry of Labor, 2021).

CHAPTER 6 – DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

6.1 Introduction

The discussion chapter includes a discussion of both quantitative and qualitative studies. It includes a discussion of quantitative study by restating the research question and hypothesis. Key findings of the study are summarized, and the interpretations are also explained. Furthermore, the findings are linked to the literature and the principle of generalizability is also elaborated. The chapter also includes the limitations of the study. However, for the qualitative study discussions it includes restating the research question, summaries and interpreting key findings, linking to theory, implications and limitations, and suggestions for future work.

Additionally, the chapter includes a discussion of case studies from GCC countries, analyzing their relevance to the research topic. Each case study is examined in relation to the broader themes of study, highlighting key insight and regional differences. The findings from these case studies are linked to the existing literature and theoretical

framework, providing a comprehensive understanding of the social media impact on public opinion and legislations.

6.2 Discussion for Quantitative Study

When it comes to “*H1: Social media has a significant and direct relationship with legislation impact*” the results show a significance level of 0.000 that indicates the social media has a significant and direct relationship with legislation. The hypothesis is accepted in the Gulf Countries. The results are supported by McGregor (2019), who indicates that social media users impact the elections as public opinion matters, and it also acts as a horse service and compliments the polling and survey reports. Journalists usually reflect public opinion particularly for media events. Twitter was highlighted by McGregor (2019) as a widely spread media where users over reliance on the feeds creations. The demographics results show that social media usage is increasing among youth in the Gulf Countries that are showing Increasing social media usage by youth can directly indicate public opinion, and it can impact legislative and government regulations. The results are also supported by Parvez (2019), about youth engagement on social media being linked with demographics while using their favorite social media platforms. The use of such platforms is increasing for communication, entertainment, political purposes, humanitarian, education, social participation, networking, and activism. Such trends are also changing societies and shaping a mindset that is triggered in the GCC. The study by Sutan et al. (2021) also indicated the social movement on Omnibus law protection that was followed by mobile activities and action in the form of spreading the voice of essential issues. This is circulating about the debates of public policy. Furthermore, it also elaborates how the Indonesian public demands and implications of changing the necessary part of Omnibus law. In another study by Shabir et al. (2014), the key role of social media is indicated as an increased awareness about laws. However, it can be liked with the negative impact of the law. Karpman and Drisko (2016) indicated the use of social media can help to manage education based policies that can guide the usage. This is also linked with the increased importance of education and social work with clear policies that ca also guide the usage. Furthermore,

social media is a good source of increasing engagement among youth, like for the social work program that can impact on policy and development by addressing the issues in the society.

The hypothesis “*H2: Public opinion significantly influences the legislation impact*” is accepted as the significance value $P < 0.000$, indicating the public opinion influence on the legislation impact in GCC. The hypothesis was accepted. The results are supported by Bou-Karroum et al. (2017), Alkiviadou (2019), Persily et al. (2020), and AlKhalifa and Farello (2021). Bou-Karroum et al. (2017) elaborated that SM has a positive impact on the accountability tools that can lead to prioritizing and starting a policy-based discussion, and this leads to increased awareness about complaints regarding policy development and adoption. However, media-generated attention can also have a negative impact on policy advocacy as it leads to increased mobilization and defeats the bill passage that is narrated for media interventions. Another study by Alkiviadou (2019) added that the issues can be examined about social media speech and regulatory response requirements. This can happen due to the challenges of global reach, and this kind of rapid dissemination of content on social media can amplify the spread of speech globally. This shows the word can be spread about legislation and these can also be changed. For example, an inadequate framework of the current regulations can assist in addressing the complaints about speech. Alkiviadou (2019) also elaborated on the multifaceted nature of the regulatory frameworks, like clear definitions of social media platform responsibilities and collaboration among technology companies to control hate speech and its negative impact. The study by Persily et al. (2020) added about the relationship between social media and the democratic future aspect. It determines that social media platforms can have a direct and transforming impact on the election dynamics, political communication, and public discourse on elections that can have both positive and negative impacts. Another study by AlKhalifa and Farello (2021) also supported the results by indicating the Instagram activities of social media accounts that show the main aims of changing perceptions and building legitimacy. Such aims are targeted through different mechanisms like campaigns, formal ties, community engagement, soft power, and technical displays. Instagram

is also popular in the Arab world, and in GCC countries, which is also an instrument of supporting diplomacy.

The hypothesis, “*H3: Government regulations about women rights significantly related to the legislation impact,*” was accepted as the $p < 0.000$ that, shows significant results. The results have determined that government regulations have the strongest positive effect on the legislative impact. This shows the government regulations can change the legislative impact as the government regulations also serve to manage the detailed guidelines of how the legislative practices are implemented. The absence and presence of particular regulations can determine the scope, strength, and consequences of the laws made for the women based on campaigns. Consequently, the impact of a women rights laws also depends on the regulatory framework that can restrict or support the enforcement. The study by Miller and Vaccari (2020) added that the main impact of the government is found in the form of political discourse, civil engagement, and elections. Furthermore, Miller and Vaccari (2020) also determined the remedies, potential challenges, and stronger social media platforms that can also increase digital literacy about algorithm transparency. Another study by Lindner and Aichholzer (2020) also observed the concepts for regulations are built on the basis of internet-based citizen typology and e-democracy. As per Lindner and Aichholzer (2020), the legal cases and challenges of politicians can block the speaker selection. Politicians utilize social media for easier transmission, and their messages can be publically shown on platforms where the public can ask questions that lead to increased accountability.

6.3 Discussion for Qualitative Study

The social media role in politics and government censorship is about the social media platforms like TikTok, Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Furthermore, the public interest is the main feature and type of information they like to observe when it becomes a regulation. The main issues related to the news are considered true even if they are fake due to word of mouth and the spread of the news in a short time in Pakistan. This shows social media can also have misinformation, but it also depends on the demographics. This is supported by the Public Sphere Theory which was defined by

Habermas (1962), showing the space for people to come and debate for the public issues free of hustle. In this case, social media are platforms that are known as the new public sphere where the citizens can have more engagement towards political discussions, legislative amendments, expression of opinion, and criticizing policies by the government. Social media platforms are not very controlled in the GCC, and these are providing a more decentralized way to manage public discourse. Another theory supporting the case study is the Two-Step Flow Theory, which indicates the power of opinion leaders who are influencers on social media who communicate their actions to their followers. The activists or influencers frame the content. The theory explains the information about political and legislative issues that are transferred by the influencers toward followers to set the trend. When it comes to the case study, the influencers also shape the public interest towards specific aspects that determine how they are acting against or in favor of government legislation. Agenda setting theory also supports the case study that shows the media cannot persuade them what they have to think and public discourses are shaped traditionally by emphasizing the issues. As per Gilardi et al. (2022), social media growth has brought the power that is migrated to the influencers as they select one topic and then frame it as per the agenda to attract the political gaze.

6.4 Implications

The results have determined the practical implications as it direct that social media can develop public opinion about legislative practices and also raise awareness among the public about laws. The policy makers can assess the public opinion which is important to bring transparency and accountability about women rights in the GCC. The results have highlighted the public opinion that can be recorded as per social media, and laws can be changed as examples of the laws showing how the public can speak about the laws in the GCC, where the social media power is also increasing. The lawmakers and government can observe the type of aspects that are highlighted by the public to increase accountability in the legal aspects and to reduce the campaigns against laws in the GCC. These can be related to the women rights in public sector, family issues and status of guardians.

The implications in the case of the qualitative study show that social media news and information need to be tracked as the misinformation spread is possible due to the uncontrolled nature of social media. The influencers are able to set agendas against policies that are not in favor of the public, and GC country's populations have an edge in managing the righteous policies. The political leaders can observe the sentiment, and they can take action accordingly to raise their power as er the public opinion.

6.5 Limitations

The main factor is the methodology, as the quantitative research is conducted from 300 respondents from the GCC, which shows small sample size, and results cannot be effectively generalized about the social media impact on the population opinion regarding legislative and government frameworks. The results have determined the results where social media impacts public opinion and legislation in the Gulf countries. The results conducted from a huge population can give the reason for generalizability. Due to the mixed methods approach, there can be assessed the case study as only one case study is selected. The social media public opinion in Pakistan and its impact on government cations is also indicating that misinformation spread is possible and influencers handle the agenda. The case supports the results as the quantitative and qualitative results are similar, indicating the validity of the results conducted for the current study.

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