

The Role of Television and Social Media News Videos in Raising the Socio-political Awareness of Jordanian University Students

Abd Allah Sultan Al-Jalabneh

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School of Film and Journalism

Faculty of Arts, Creative Industries and Education

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# Abstract

The development of satellite television and social media in the Arab world has produced new avenues to access the news. This thesis explores Jordanian university students' perceptions of the socio-political news presented by television (National Jordanian Television (JRTV) and Satellite television) in comparison to online news videos on social media. It employs both quantitative and qualitative approaches in the analysis of data taken from a sample of 703 Jordanian students from the University of Jordan.

The findings of the study indicate that more time was spent watching social media than television for news in general and socio-political news. The mean points based on the Likert scale for students' interest in local, national, Arab, and international socio-political news were higher on social media than on television. The study reveals that JRTV remains an important source of socio-political news information. However, it needs to recognise the gaps that exist in its current model of broadcasting news in general and socio-political news to bring in more improvements to satisfy the needs of Jordanian youth.

The study employed the assumptions of the uses and gratifications theory and found that university students in Jordan are actively searching for socio-political news on both television and social media. Quantitatively, the mean points for the reasons why students watch socio-political news were between high and moderate for both television and social media. The reasons for such choices can be grouped into three types of motivations; seeking information, engaging in social interaction, and forming an opinion. Qualitatively, the motivations students frequently reported were for seeking information, and forming an opinion about both television and social media.

This research also reveals that social media had the greatest influence in bringing socio-political awareness, followed by satellite television and JRTV. Social media were regarded as convenient, accessible, and more engaging through commenting and sharing, but not always as trustworthy as television, which means that students are aware of the false news spread over social media.

Overall students' engagement in discussing socio-political news with their family was the highest on television because television is still watched in a familial setting in Jordan. This research also reveals that socio-political news can lead students to different forms of participation and engagement. However, the mean points for forms of participation and engagement where an individual's name or identity can be revealed were the lowest on both television and social media.

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## List of Abbreviations

TV:	Television
JRTVC:	Jordan Radio and Television Corporation
MENA:	Middle East and North Africa
PSM:	Public Service Media
ICT:	Information and Communication Technology
ANN:	Arab News Network
CNN:	Cable News Network
BBC:	British Broadcasting Corporation
MBC:	Middle Eastern Broadcasting Centre
ART:	Arab Radio and Television Network
LBC:	Lebanese Broadcasting Corporation
EBU:	European Broadcasting Union
TRC:	Telecommunication Regulatory Commission
UWE:	University of the West of England
SMS:	Short Message Service

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# Chapter One: Introduction

## 1.1 Introduction

The link between television and social media news and its impact on socio-political awareness, participation and engagement is a relatively unstudied subject. Although there have been several studies on the role of social media in socio-political awareness, participation and engagement, the study of video coverage of news events through both television and social media platforms has been relatively understudied.

The Annual Arab Youth Survey 2016, which explores “attitudes among Arab youth in 16 countries in the Middle East and North Africa” showed that television still has the largest news reach among young Arabs. However, online news sources and social media continue closing the gap at the expense of other media platforms (ASDA'A BCW, 2016). Having considered the importance of television news among Arabs today, the subsequent section moves on to look closely at television as a source for consuming news and information.

In the Arab world, social media has become the dominant source for news among youth over the past five years, while online news portals are now on a par with television. More young Arabs get their daily news on Facebook (50%) and online news portals (39%) than television news channels (34%) and newspapers (4%). Nine out of ten young Arabs say they use at least one of the major social media channels daily (Arab Youth Survey, 2019).

At the time of this research, a prominent regional problem emerged, a political issue which was mainly connected to a dispute over the control of information across the Arab region. This came after a hack of Qatar's state-funded news channel Al Jazeera. According to the Qatari government, the incident resulted in a political blockade. On the fifth of June 2017, four Arab states: Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Egypt, imposed sanctions and blockades on Qatar. These Arab states created a list of demands of the Qatari government, including to scale down diplomatic ties with Iran, to close the Iranian diplomatic missions in Qatar, to expel members of Iran's Revolutionary Guard and to cut off military and intelligence cooperation with Iran. On top of that, the list also included a demand to shut down a Turkish military base which is currently under construction on Qatari soil, and halt military cooperation with Turkey inside Qatar (Aljazeera.com, 2019). The most important demand was probably the full closure of Al

Jazeera and its affiliate stations, the Qatari-funded media network which, for years, has been critical of other Arab regimes. However, the Qatari government has resisted pressure to curb the activities of the network.

The dispute over the control of information across the Arab region which led to the international political blockade has become a major part of this political problem. Among the list of demands, the request to shut down Al Jazeera can be considered the odd one out among other political issues. So why did they make the request for the news agency to be shut down? From the demand, it can be seen that, in fact, the other Arab states clearly feel challenged by the pan-Arabic satellite station and that it is undermining their sovereignty. This example is relevant as it emphasises the role of television and how it still can challenge governments just by the content broadcast to the public. Although social media has broken many barriers in this regard, an established channel like Al-Jazeera, which also disseminates content on social media can still bring awareness and have so much influence over the audiences. Similarly, it is remarkable that closing a channel like Al-Jazeera may lead to a greater desire for more politically neutral news coverage and information on significant events in the Arab world.

In Jordan, people still get news more often from television than online sources (Northwestern University in Qatar, 2017). however, the penetration of the Internet in Jordan has risen dramatically over the past five years (Northwestern University in Qatar, 2017). Similarly, there has been a general increase in social media with high use of Facebook (Northwestern University in Qatar, 2017). Social media platforms' use for news varies by country across the Arab region. YouTube, for example, was most commonly used for news among three Arab countries and Jordan was one of three countries that topped the list for YouTube which came second to Facebook as the most dominant social media platform for news among Jordanians (Northwestern University in Qatar, 2017).

Two important news stories about events in Jordan show how Jordanians use social media for information sharing, expression and raising awareness, where the institution of television lacked in-depth and critical news coverages and communication channels for such important news events. I present the two news stories below as examples to show how television coverage of national and local events in Jordan led to an increase in the usage of social media for more news.

Firstly, on Thursday, October 25, 2018 a catastrophic event happened in Jordan. Flash floods in the region of the Dead Sea swept away a school bus, killing 21, mostly school students (Namrouqa, 2018). The event gained massive attention across the country. However, the lack of in-depth and critical coverage of the story on national television sources led to an explosion in social media platforms to report the event amongst ordinary Jordanians. For example, the families of the victims were streaming live on social media explaining their narratives of the story. This is important because people now have more space to express awareness and information about significant events.

Secondly, in early June 2018, Jordan had witnessed a wave of protests which surpassed those seen during the Arab Spring in 2011 (Schiffer, 2018). Such was the size and impact of the protests that they led to the resignation of Prime Minister Hani Mulki and his cabinet. The demonstrations were fuelled by anger due to the dreadful economic situation that hit the country because of the high level of influx of Syrian refugees, accompanied by accumulated economic distress and austerity measures. In May 2018, the government announced a new tax reform which came along with an increase in oil prices. This move triggered people to join the wave of demonstrations that swept the country across all the cities (Schiffer, 2018). The interesting aspect of this news story was that young people in Jordan had used social media heavily through streaming live and posting videos from the streets to encourage other people to join the protests, in which they succeeded. The story has gained much attention from the media. However, the absence of full clarity by the national media, including the television channels, led many people to join the protests and even find out more about the new tax law through social media platforms.

These examples demonstrate how the lack of clarity and in-depth television coverage of news led to more engagement with social media. Later in the interviews phase of this research, I will explore further how university students in Jordan interacted with these two news stories to gain a better understanding about their evaluation of both television and social media coverage. I will also show how their exposure to these news stories translates into political participation and engagement.

Social media have permeated many aspects of people's lifestyles across the globe, as attested by the large numbers of users who access social media websites of various

genres for a variety of reasons. According to Ghannam (2011, p.4) “These social networks inform, mobilise, entertain, create communities, increase transparency, and seek to hold governments accountable”.

Sweis and Baslan (2013) stated that in Jordan, social media such as Facebook had allowed Jordanians to not only seek out news stories about their country and their own community but also as a platform to interact with each other and join groups.

From the 1970s onwards, an increasing number of Jordanians received news stories broadcast by the Jordan National Television (JRTV). However, “it was faced with criticism from citizens and media experts that it was lagging behind other Arab networks in performance and capabilities” (Sweis and Baslan, 2013, p. 27). Jordan Radio and Television Corporation (JRTVC) officials have attempted different types of reform over the last decade, the last of which was incorporating the private sector into the board of directors. Due to the growing size of the satellite TV market as well as social media, JRTV aimed to compete with other satellite channels by upgrading its performance level through restructuring while maintaining their viewership base (Sahafi.jo, 2007), while recently, JRTV has started to have a presence on social media.

Several proposals were also raised for all restrictions to be removed from the public corporation’s media message so JRTV could be changed from a television controlled by the government into a public broadcaster in which all political and social interests can be broadcast on the basis of equality and full transparency (Sahafi.jo, 2007).

Ipsos Media Executive Mohammad Dahleh stated that the decrease in JRTV viewership since the early 2000s could be due to fragmentation of the media. The fact that there are more satellite stations, providing more attractive entertainment and better programming, including news, has caused people to lose interest in watching JRTV. He also added, “This (competition from satellite stations) should make the people in charge change and improve the programmes (of JRTV) to keep attracting an audience” (Sahafi.jo, 2007).

By keeping track of peak hours of viewership, JRTV aims to focus on the programmes viewers prefer. For instance, the daily morning programme “*Yawm Jadeed*” is viewed most during the day and in the evening at 7 pm, viewership reached 18.7 per cent falling back to 2 per cent at 10 pm (after the evening series). Dahleh asserted that this shows

Jordanian viewers like talk shows which deal with their daily lives, and therefore JRTV should focus more on such programmes. Moreover, bringing in properly trained and acceptable presenters or talk show hosts would also help boost viewership (Sahafi.jo, 2007).

Yet with the advent of the era of satellite channels, a considerable change took place in the world of media as people including the Jordanian youth could access news content from different perspectives than that of the government-owned Jordan National Television (Darouny, 2007). In 2010, satellite ownership in Jordan had risen to 96.9 per cent, which is considered a dramatic increase from 50.5 per cent in 2005. This high level of ownership showed television's accessibility to the whole population (Sweis and Baslan, 2013).

Subsequently, the internet brought a revolution in the media, affecting the lives of many Jordanians (Guthrie and Adely, 2012). This study comes at a time of socio-political upheaval in the Arab world with the downfall of some regimes and the rise of others. Such upheaval has never been detached from the media, which has been playing a significant role in accounting for and even leading these events.

Recently the Islamic Middle Eastern and North African (MENA) countries have experienced common unrest across the region by means of civil resistance, anti-government demonstrations, civil disobedience and riots. Social media in this respect played a role in mobilising and communication discourse due to some governments' lack of response to protesters (Shirazi, 2012). The uprisings have been extensively talked about on the internet, particularly in popular blogs, social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter, video sharing sites such as YouTube and other international media and news agencies. Throughout MENA's history, the people have never so broadly and publicly expressed their desire for freedom and democracy with such intensity and magnitude.

My research focuses on the role and impact of television and social media news videos in influencing socio-political awareness, participation and engagement in Jordan. It attempts to show how they participate in the heart of events that shape socio-political change. My research has two aspects. Firstly, I look at news from terrestrial and satellite

television channels. Secondly, I look at news videos on social media platforms such as Facebook and YouTube since they are the predominant platforms used in Jordan.

## 1.2 The changing dynamic between traditional media and new media in relation to political knowledge and action

Many studies have been conducted to measure the role that traditional media play in forming opinion, and it is evident from these previous studies that the media have influenced the public and made them change their perceptions about many issues that affect their lives. Television, for example, through talk shows, has played an important and fundamental role in raising socio-political awareness in many nations (Naz *et al.*, 2014).

Social media created new avenues to gain knowledge and news information, for instance, new actors, activists and journalists can use it to produce rich content and information (Lotan *et al.*, 2011; Turcotte *et al.*, 2015). It also helped by ordinary citizens in many instances acting as channels for producing news that can feed both news consumers and journalism producers of news (Papacharissi and de Fatima Oliveira, 2012). This has happened during times when television channels had to close their foreign offices due to financial problems or during times when other channels of information were either controlled or restricted by some governments (Papacharissi and de Fatima Oliveira, 2012). Furthermore, social media platforms brought new affordances which can allow the users to move from one platform to the other by just simply clicking a hyperlink which can take you from Facebook to YouTube or from Twitter to Instagram or a blog, or you may be hyperlinked to educating websites that support learning in which you can gain knowledge and information about a particular news story (Gleason, 2013).

Also, the new dynamic brought by digital media into journalism has its influence over political knowledge and participation, for example, the work of Kaufhold, Valenzuela and Gil de Zuniga (2010) looked at the dynamic between professional journalism and citizen journalism in the United States and its role in democracy, political knowledge and participation. They emphasised the deep-rooted role of journalism in producing knowledge and informed democracy, adding that professional news media that come from established television, radio, print newspapers, and online newspapers are producing increases in knowledge and offline participation. They confirmed that there is

a positive and strong relationship between citizen journalism when it comes to online and offline participation but a negative relationship to the knowledge of the national political figures when the respondents were asked four questions related to public figures.

As social media is part of young Jordanians' lives, this research tries to understand firstly how young people (university students) in a peaceful country like Jordan in the middle of neighbouring countries which have much upheaval perceive socio-political news on these different media platforms particularly traditional media (television) and social media in terms of their views of its trustworthiness, relevance and interest to gain more understanding into how they form their opinions on a local, national, regional and international level. Secondly, it investigates whether their perception leads to significantly increased levels of knowledge, engagement and participation socio-politically. Therefore, this research is relevant as it explains whether students are interested in socio-political news and if so then what motivates them to watch this news and what types of news they consume that may have an impact on their socio-political awareness, participation and engagement.

With the penetration of social and print media globally, social media has also become an area of benefit for organisations and activists that use the platforms for sharing their ideas and messages with the entire world at a cost and effort that is well below that required for reaching such a large audience by any other means. The world has over the years experienced and participated in the impact that social media campaigns have generated with the apprehension and utilisation of the social media power by political parties. A prime example is the 2008 United States presidential elections, where the world witnessed the power of using social media in political campaigns (Payne, 2009).

In the same elections (2008), both candidates, John McCain and Barack Obama engaged young people by answering their questions and addressing their concerns on social media. Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, dedicated websites and various other social networking platforms were engaged, such that Obama had 112,000 followers that tweeted for him to get elected, whereas McCain had 4,600 followers. The BarackObama.com channel, through videos and other interactive blogs, attracted



115,000 subscriptions with over ninety-seven million views. On the other hand, McCain had 28,000 subscriptions and just over two million views (Roudi, 2011).

Moreover, for some enthusiasts, technology can have a role in reshaping political opportunities and help to connect people together and mobilise them to action (Lawson, 2015). The Arab Spring was an example where social media was used by many of the protesters as an organisational vehicle for sharing and coordinating throughout the 2011 protests (Lawson, 2015). This is important as it demonstrated how social media could be utilised for raising socio-political awareness and mobilisation of communities for a greater cause (Shehabat, 2014; Lawson, 2015). However, it's important to mention that the networked linkages between broadcast media and social media are what made events such as the self-immolation of Mohamed Bouazizi on December 17, 2010 which was captured by a video recorded on a smartphone then got picked by mainstream broadcast news become a motivating cause for people in Tunisia to protest for change (Hänska Ahy, 2016).

The events of the Arab Spring or the Occupy movement show the potential of social media; however, the democratic dangers of social media are another concern to be taken into consideration. A research study done by Kidd and McIntosh (2016) puts into perspective the different sides of social media's potential in social change. They examined previous research conducted on social media and its use in promoting activism leading to participation offline. They argued that research and opinion are classified into three categories: the first category is the optimistic approach which essentially argues for the favour of social media and its potential in social change; the second approach is pessimistic considering social media as not having the potential and acting as a hindrance to good change. Lastly, the third category is the ambivalent approach which stands in the middle, considering the wide use of social media and how it can be used and also, the fact that the role of social media in bringing about positive change is difficult but possible at the same time. The democratic role of social media in events such as the Arab Spring as well as the emerging concerns of the democratic dangers of social media will be discussed in chapter three (section 3.6). Similarly, within the context of this research, the concepts of political awareness, participation and engagement will be discussed.

In 2013, following the wave of the Arab protests that spread over many Arab countries, a study in Jordan was conducted on a sample of students taken from seven private universities to explore the impact of social media on university students' cultural, social and political orientations. The study's importance stemmed from the increasing use of social media amongst the youth of the country in which they also described social media as an alternative media. The study found that there is an impact from social media on determining students' cultural, social and political orientations (Husein *et al.*, 2013).

### 1.3 Significance of the Research

The relationship between social media and traditional media has been afforded considerable discussion. Various youth movements have proceeded with supporting social media over traditional media for enhanced interaction with the public and higher socio-political awareness for issues both domestically and internationally.

While a large amount of research has been conducted to analyse this relationship between traditional mainstream media and social media, and while further evaluating the significant impact this has on the socio-political awareness of young adults and students, this existing research does not seem to have gained priority among Jordanian media academics.

Before delving into the contribution of this research to knowledge, it's important to highlight that this research is using self-reported tools to collect the data and therefore, participants in this type of research may overreport their "news exposure" or give an estimate of their exposure as they can't exactly remember or because of difficulty the of keeping track of their exposure (Prior, 2009, p. 130,138).

Theoretically, the research embodies in this thesis will fill a gap in television and social media research in Jordan by using the ideas of the uses and gratification, public sphere, news credibility, socio-political awareness, participation, and engagement research within the context of media and news audiences in Jordan. It's expected that analysing the data on these fields from the perception of news audiences will provide a model or understanding of how television and social media are being used and coexist as news sources, and how relatively important they are in the lives of young Jordanians. This

research also aims to explore if there is any empirical evidence that greater use of social media is associated with less use of television. The collected data through self-reported tools (questionnaire and interviews) used in this study will then help analytically in producing original information about young people's perceptions (university students) across six key areas: 1) consumption patterns related to the time spent watching the news on television and news videos on social media; 2) consumption patterns when in relation to the types of socio-political news videos on social media that appeal most to university students in Jordan; 3) consumption patterns related to interests in socio-political news and issues locally and internationally; 4) consumption patterns related to reasons that motivate university students to watch socio-political news on television and social media; 5) students' perception regarding the credibility of news content on television and social media; 6) consumption patterns which indicate socio-political awareness and action.

This thesis will argue that this study comes at a critical time, especially in a volatile region that has seen many social and political events taking place and unfolding before and during the time this research was carried out. Therefore, understanding how young people perceive and interact with news is important as it will give an indication of how they may act socio-politically in the real world.

The importance of this study also stems from the targeted sample employed, which is university students, an age group that is active and plays a significant role in society and tries to build it and be prepared for the future.

Finally, in its study of the role of television and social media news videos in raising the socio-political awareness of the youth, the research helps to draw a social, psychological, and political map about young Jordanians' sentiments and perceptions. Therefore, it presents a vision of an age group in the society that is still not fully explored by the researchers and policymakers in the fields of social, political, and media in Jordan.

## 1.4 Statement of the research problem

While research on the interaction between traditional media (television), new media (social media), politics and behavioural science (perception) is still scarce in Jordan. Only a few studies have been conducted on similar subjects such as Husein *et al.* (2013) on

“the impact of social networking sites to determine students’ orientations: a field study on Jordanian private universities”. Whereas, Jarrar and Hammud (2018) conducted a study of the “role of social media in developing social responsibility and political awareness of the Jordanian youth”. Although these two studies contributed to knowledge about the role of social media in the lives of young Jordanians, the scope of these two previous studies is more restricted. Moreover, my research will provide empirical evidence and a more comprehensive framework about the role of both social media and television (JRTV and Satellite television) in Jordan as news sources and their relation to socio-political awareness, engagement and participation.

Although media platforms continue to develop in terms of content or technical aspects, television has its unique features and still plays a role in developing societies as it retains influence over its populations and thus this thesis investigates whether television in Jordan still has as great an impact and role especially since the revolution of social media when it comes to providing news socio-politically.

My study also comes after the emerging concerns over the issue of ideological segregation that can be created by the social media personalisation algorithm which has been described as a “filter bubble” (Flaxman, Goel and Rao,2016; Scholar, 2017). Likewise, the debates around “fake news” (Nielsen and Graves, 2017, MBR School of Government, 2017). My research is relevant as it will describe the current situation in Jordan, which shows how young people still perceive the trustworthiness of the news content on these platforms (social media, satellite television, and JRTV) and likewise the role these platforms still play in relation to socio-political awareness, participation, and engagement.

In Jordan, various attempts at revolutionising JRTV have been made, including changing the corporation’s status from government-owned to privately owned with shares held by the private sector, and various means of incorporating transparency and improving the production values of the media broadcast on the channel. However, with the advent of social media and various other news portals, the younger generation in Jordan now are exposed to more venues that offer news. Thus, the place and role of JRTV as the main government news channel provider in the country may have been challenged by digital media.

Moreover, the thesis will argue that while their interaction with the media exposes the younger generation to avenues of knowledge which impact their socio-political awareness, it is also influencing their perspectives on many other local and international issues.

In a nutshell, the problems that this study is trying to address are first, understanding the dynamics of how young people in Jordan perceive the trustworthiness of news coming from social media and television (satellite television and JRTV as considered the country's main channel). The second is understanding which platform among the three contribute more significantly than the other ones in increasing levels of socio-political awareness, participation and engagement based on their perception. Thirdly, it attempts to understand the reasons that lead young Jordanians to prefer one platform more than the others in the context of socio-political news.

## 1.5 Background to the Study

The Jordanian constitution under Article 15 guarantees freedom of speech and the press, stating: "The state shall guarantee freedom of opinion. Every Jordanian shall be free to express his opinion by speech, in writing, or by means of photographic representation and other forms of expression, provided that such does not violate the law." (ICNL, 2015; the Constitution of Jordan, 2011).

At the present time, Jordanians have the choice of watching Arabic television channels which are all the Arab countries' channels on satellite that broadcast a wide spectrum of socio-political issues. One of the mainstream channels, Al Jazeera, has even become a household name, known in almost every home in Jordan (Habis, 2012). The success of Al Jazeera is largely due to the fact that it understands the media market and its viewers. The viewers' desires are expensive to satisfy, but because Al Jazeera has no need to make profits and is particularly well-funded by the Qatari state, it is able to provide extensive coverage of political issues and international news where other stations are unable to do so (Telhami, 2013). Unfortunately, the Qatari government has paid the price, in terms of significant pressure from almost every other government in the region at some point offended as a result of Al Jazeera's extensive coverage. For example, the accusation of agitation by Al Jazeera from the United States and the action which was taken against Al Jazeera English in 2012 by China over their coverage (Telhami, 2013). However, as a

result of its ability to obtain broad and timely coverage, Al Jazeera has become a news network feared by the governments of the countries it reports on. Therefore, in comparison, it is evident that the proportion of political information provided via the Jordan National Television was far too limited to satisfy the appetite of the public audience (E'weimer, 2013).

From the information provided by most liberal channels and young people's opinions on certain socio-political issues, the younger generation has taken and shared their perspectives through the internet and social media, including YouTube. Some Jordanian satellite channels like Ro'ya television, which is deemed to have better production values than JRTV, has been slowly pushing back the limits of freedom of expression in the country's television sector (Sweis & Baslan, 2013). These changes allow the opportunity for this study to look at how social media sites such as Facebook and YouTube open the door to all kinds of information to be available to the public and how they facilitate the interaction of ideas and opinions among Jordanian youth. On the other hand, this study also tries to highlight the various factors that have played a role in hindering the performance of JRTV and how the varied socio-political awareness among the generations within Jordan comes into play within its society.

Arab countries differ among themselves in their manner of philosophical thinking and their political viewpoints, although they share the same history, language, religion, and culture. However, social media in the Arab region has over the decade been at the heart of socio-political upheavals, which have played a major role in the planning, acceleration, and even the preparation of some of the uprisings and revolutions that took place in the Middle East (Hassan, 2015).

## 1.6 Aims and Objectives

The existence of socio-political awareness is essential for youth in society, and it should be accompanied by positive actions as it leads individuals to work to better their society. In developing countries this is of particular significance as this awareness is the responsibility of the mainstream media, which are considered the main source of information and knowledge for the Jordanian youth. We should emphasise here that social media is not the only tool for seeking information and positive change in society,

but it is still a medium that is used by many young people in Jordan and many parts of the world.

In this regard, it is important to formulate the objectives of this research in order to bring clarity to the issue of television and social media while assessing the quality of the content provided through these platforms from the perspective of young Jordanian university students.

The research aims to do the following:

1. Identify watching habits of television and online news videos in social media by university students.
2. Identify the sources that the students rely on when seeking to watch socio-political news on television and social media.
3. Illustrate the students' reasons for watching the news, whether on television or via online news videos on social media.
4. Explore the impact of watching either JRTV, Satellite channels or online news videos on raising the students' socio-political awareness.
5. Identify the trust level of the students regarding the socio-political news coverage of JRTV, Satellite channels or online news videos on social media.
6. Conclude by illustrating the types of actions the students may take when watching socio-political news either on television or social media.

## 1.7 Research Questions

This study looked at a sample of university students at the University of Jordan that had access to both television and online news videos on social media. To accomplish the aim of the study, the following research questions have been addressed.

1. How do Jordanian university students perceive socio-political news presented by national television and satellite television and online news videos on social media?

2. To what extent do Jordanian university students perceive that television and online news videos on social media contribute to raising their socio-political awareness?

3. How do Jordanian university students perceive the impact of television and online news videos on social media in terms of socio-political action?

Theories pertaining to interaction with the media will first be explored in the following chapter with an emphasis on the public sphere, uses and gratifications as well as other media audiences and media theories that might be used for or against the study.

The anticipated novel contributions to knowledge include the following. Firstly, this research will assess the degree of interaction between television and social media from the perspective of young educated Jordanians. This examination will be in terms of how and from where they get their socio-political news information about local or international issues when looking at their news consumption between television and social media. Secondly, it will inform the extent to which the above audience theories hold true in the Jordanian media in a volatile region at the socio-political level with regimes and social systems hanging in the balance. Thirdly, it will provide a suggested model for the role of television and social media in raising socio-political awareness among the youth of developing countries such as Jordan. Fourthly, it tries to define the impact of television or social media news on the manner in which the public will take action in the future. Young and literate Jordanians are chosen as the target group due to the fact that university students in Jordan are highly exposed to satellite channels and social media (Al-Ghalailat, 2009). This study looks at a sample of university students at the University of Jordan. Chapters five and six address the research questions in full detail.

## 1.8 Research Approach and Scope

The research study focusses on the perceptions/opinions of Jordanian students towards the role that is played by traditional media: JRTV, satellite television and online news videos on social media; it comprises four main components: the theoretical concepts of traditional and social media, the interpretation of the notion of socio-political awareness, the researcher's analysis of the concepts of socio-political awareness with traditional media and broadcast content, and an analytical approach between traditional mainstream media (JRTV and satellite television) and social media for recommendations for a way forward for the country.



Other studies about media within the middle eastern context looked at the relationship between new media, particularly the internet and social media networks like Twitter and Facebook, and the so-called “Arab Spring” revolutions, examining the role of such media on the Arab political structures (Nassif, 2013). However, my study is different as it looks at the use of television and social media for news as part of the daily activities young Jordanians do and get exposed to for knowing what is going on around them locally, nationally, and globally at large.

There is a body of research in Arabic that has been done that covers similar aspects or a particular part of this research such as studies on the role of Jordan Radio and Television (JRTV) or satellite television in political socialisation, or the impact of social media networks on society (Alnuaimi, 2014; Al-Eweemer,2013; Al-dbaysi and Al-tahat, 2013). This study intersects with some of these studies and at the same time differs in many aspects. My study provides a comprehensive comparative overview of the current situation of the media landscape related to television and the most used social media networks in the country. Also, it provides a continuation to the studies that it intersects with while contributing to the debate by analysing how television and social media content in Jordan is consumed, particularly news. My research attempts to provide a comparative investigation to understand how significantly television “JRTV and satellite television and social media such as Facebook and YouTube” contribute significantly to raising more socio-political awareness among university students.

The researcher aims to employ the use of a qualitative and quantitative methodology through an intensive literature review, data sampling and data analysis. A descriptive and analytical approach is best used in this scenario to describe the characteristics of the study and determine the correlations among the study variables and analyse the study in a quantitative and qualitative manner to reach a conclusion and recommendations that contributes and helps in understanding the current study and its implications.

## 1.9 Structure of the thesis

This thesis is divided into seven chapters. The first chapter has introduced the research and consisted of an introduction and background to the study. It presents the significance of the research and its research questions, the problem statement, and objectives. It explains the research approach and scope. There is also a section on the dynamics

between traditional media television and social media in relation to political knowledge and action.

Chapter two describes Jordan's media landscape, the history of the media in Jordan, and the Arab world. It discusses the media environment after the independence of the Arab states with further focus on the development of television broadcasting in Jordan. It also highlights the era of satellite television in Jordan and its use as a source of news and information.

Chapter three presents the subjects that represent the theoretical framework of the research. It highlights the popular social media platforms that are mostly used in Jordan. Afterwards, it revisits the debates around social media as news sources. It also looks at the emergence of and debates on the use of social media as news sources and the news credibility on these sources. Given its interest in news consumption, the study discusses the uses and gratification approach, the elements of this approach, and previous applications in similar studies. Then, it reviews the concept of the public sphere and social media, highlighting the potentials and dangers of social media as a public sphere. It further looks at the similarities and differences between the concepts of awareness, participation, and engagement. Finally, it highlights the impact of social media in the Arab world on political participation and action.

Chapter four describes the research methodology, and the whole procedures and approaches followed to collect and analyse the data. It followed two phases, starting with a survey as a first phase then followed by interviews as a second phase. It discusses in detail the reasons for selecting the methods, the sampling, population and location, the data collection procedures, the language used in obtaining the data, and the research ethics that were taken into consideration in the study.

Chapter five explains the findings and results of the data collected through the survey questionnaire. It shows the profile of respondents, response rate, demographics, and data that answers the whole survey and research questions.

Chapter six merges and discusses the data findings from the survey with the interviews to allow a comprehensive discussion between the two sets of data as they complement each other. It then discusses the results from the two sets of data with previous studies. The chapter discusses students' average daily viewing of television and social media for

news in general and socio-political news. It then explores the sources of news videos that university students in Jordan interact with on social media. It also examines student's perception of the trustworthiness of the news on satellite television, JRTV, and social media, followed by looking at their level of interest in socio-political news. It also discusses young people's (university students) motivations behind watching socio-political news. It also compares between young people's perceptions of their perceived awareness towards the use of JRTV, satellite television, and social media. Finally, it compares between young people's perceptions of the different actions they may take after watching the news on both television and social media.

Chapter seven concludes the study by providing the research's contribution to knowledge and the way the research questions were addressed to serve the main goal of the whole thesis. The chapter also provides a summary of the main findings of the study, which includes students' consumption habits as well as the role of social media news and television in raising socio-political awareness and then followed with limitations, recommendations, and further future research work.

## 1.10 Summary

The beginning of this chapter presented some stories and news events that took place at the time of this research and helped to motivate the main goal of this research. The first event was on the role of television and how such a television network like Al- Jazeera, which is known for its heavy coverage on socio-political news and the role it plays in raising the Arab's awareness on so many issues, which was part of a political dispute among countries in the region. The other news events reflect real examples of the interplay between the media and young citizens, which can lead to forms of social and political participation and engagement in the real world.

The other parts of the chapter included a brief background on the nature of this research, including an overview of the use of both social media and television by the Jordanian public and the channels that are part of their daily lives; it also highlighted the dynamic between traditional media and social media in terms of socio-political knowledge and action. The chapter also presents the research questions, the significance of the research, and its aims and objectives. The next chapter will present a historical background on the media and its developments in the region and Jordan. This review will explain the current

media landscape in the country in order to understand and draw a fuller picture into young people's perceptions of the current media trends and the whole media environment as large.

# Chapter Two: Media Development in Jordan

## 2.1 Introduction

My research is looking at television and social media together. However, this chapter is dedicated to traditional media in Jordan; particularly television as it tries to provide a fuller picture into the existing media landscape and news sources that are available in Jordan.

As much as the press in the past two centuries has assisted in creating a political reading public, in more recent decades, television was the medium that contributed and allowed individuals in different communities and different cultural backgrounds to know more about others (Fiske and Hartley, 2003).

Historically, in 1952, television for the first time played a significant role in politics, in the outcome of the united states elections for the presidential race which ended with the won of the Republican Dwight D. Eisenhower, the television networks then realised that television could be a platform for news and political events that can attract a large percentage of audiences, as more than 61% of the population in America spent time watching the coverage of the national elections on television (Cashmore, 1994, p. 174 & 175). In 1960, televised political debates became part of the American presidential elections, and when the debate between John F. Kennedy and Richard Nixon took place, television was believed to have swung the elections for the benefit of Kennedy over Nixon as he appeared healthier with his tanned look in comparison to his opponent (Cashmore, 1994).

Similarly, as present television is in our lives, Fiske and Hartley (2003) stated that television is part of our civil society which exists in the fabrics of everyday life and culture, as well as it has contributed to the life of youth and political debates. It can be seen as a mass media as a way to “stabilise prevailing opinions, set priorities, elevate events and issues, sometimes change opinions, and ultimately limit options” Paletz and Entman (1981, p.189). In summary, television continues to be an important platform for news information, and its impact is still apparent in audiences’ lives (Jones & Salter, 2012).

In line with these observations, it is significant for any research related to the media in the Arab region to take into consideration its complex dynamics, and regional, transnational ties. Therefore, this research will take this aspect into account.

Arab television now refers to the hundreds of private channels alongside the long-established governmental, local channels in every Arab country. Most of the private channels came into existence between the advent of satellite television in the region in the early 1990s and today. Remarkable achievements happened in this era; not only the increasing number of these channels but also the impact they brought to politics and economies (Kraidy, 2007). Political developments have driven media growth in the Arab world; the conflicts in the region were always looked at as stimuli to media development and growth in the region and researchers usually examine these developments in relation to the political history of the region. For example, World War II, which has been looked at often as a factor in the growth of the media in the 1950s. Later, in the 1990s, the Gulf War was seen as a reason for the expansion of satellite television in the Arab world which will be discussed in the following section alongside, other developments that have shaped the media landscape in Jordan nowadays (Kraidy, 2007, p.141).

This chapter reviews some developments in the media environment in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region and also describes Jordan's media landscape, and its broadcasting institutions. In order to do this, in this chapter, I present the Jordanian media as part of the Arab media landscape, and that is because Arab countries share many cultural and political similarities. This chapter looks at media advancements as well as institutional media developments in the country, particularly the advent of satellite television and social media, which are most directly relevant to the study. It briefly summarises the development of the media in Jordan before and after the advent of satellite television. It then highlights the era of satellite television in the region and how it revolutionised the media landscape, leading to a flood of media content such as channels designated as only news or entertainment and others catering to and targeting different audiences. This arguably has led to more freedom of speech. Finally, it looks at how television content in Jordan is consumed, particularly news, as my research aims to compare the exposure

of university students to social media (online news videos) and television news in relation to audience's perception of this news when looking at the concepts of credibility, uses and gratification, awareness, participation and engagement which will be discussed in this chapter and the following chapter.

## 2.2 History of the Media in the Arab World

Before moving on and discussing television in the Arab world, it is important to define the meaning of the Arab world which is sometimes called the MENA region and stretches from the Atlantic Ocean to the Indian Ocean, including several countries in the Arabian Peninsula, the Levant region and North Africa. It generally refers to a group of countries that share, to some extent, a common history of language, culture, traditions, values, religion, economic, media and political developments. The definition also encompasses the sense of shared identity, psychological ties and sense of belonging. However, in spite of these similarities and shared history and background, most Arab countries, after independence and the end of colonialism in each state, gained a new sense of nationality and shared identity among the individuals in the nation. Also, each country had witnessed varying and different levels of political, economic and educational prosperity (Rugh, 2004).

This section briefly summarises the state of Arab media prior to the development of satellite television. After that it examines how media structures changed with the introduction of satellite television. The whole section will be mainly based on the work of some of the prominent Arab media scholars such as Douglas Boyd (1999); Naomi Sakr (2001, 2007); Marwan Kraidy (2002); El Mustapha Lahlali (2011).

Lahlali (2011) cites the work of Ayish (2001) who traced the existence of news media in the Arab societies as far back as 1797 to the time of the Western colonisation of the Middle East and which continued to flourish during and after the colonial period. During the colonial phase, the colonising powers worked to develop media technologies in order to promote their propaganda messages. However, the post-colonial period was different in terms of their message, as they worked to promote independence, national transformation and political institutionalisation (Lahlali, 2011, citing the work of Ayish, 2001).

When looking at the development of the Arab press, it is important to highlight that each country had separate media laws, press environment, and time of launching their media institutions. For example, in Egypt the first newspaper was established in the 1800s, however, in other Arab countries such as Kuwait, the first publication was launched in 1928, whilst in Bahrain, it was in 1939. Similarly, it can be argued that literacy rates varied from one country to another in the region, which made it challenging for the media to flourish in some states. Yet, a common shared feature was the way in which the state and national media specifically television was used as a means of producing what is called “imagined community” amongst a wide variety of individuals (Mellor, 2008; Phillips, 2013). With regard to the concept of imagined community, Anderson (2006) has developed this concept to talk about nationalism which essentially means how a group of people perceive and identify themselves within their nations and also the role that the media can play in creating imagined communities. The Arab national media message was to boost their peoples’ national identity and sense of belonging to their state, and their perception of a shared land within their country. Alongside the proliferation of satellite channels, state-run television channels continued their nation-building and pedagogical style (Rinnawi, 2006).

World War II had less impact on the press in comparison to World War I in the Middle East region; however, the impact of the war was felt on an economic level (Ayalon, 1995). During wartime, stiff censorship measures were imposed everywhere in the region. Alongside censorship, difficult licensing procedures were applied to discourage the private sector from establishing journals. However, privately run journals and newspapers started as commercial businesses and did not have the aim of challenging governments but instead serving those governments’ messages to their audiences (Ayalon, 1995). The press environment was not fully free. Also, private journals had to focus on revenues in order to survive and keep running.

In the area across the Jordan River from Palestine, which used to be called “Transjordan”, the press was not as developed as the rest of the other Arab nations until World War II, when the press started to develop in the same manner as the rest of the countries in the region. In March 1921, a new political entity was forged under the name of Jordan, and a new press era started to exist. Before this, newspapers did not exist in the area. The publication of the first newspaper in the country, called *Al-Urdenn*, was in 1927, which



started as a weekly newspaper, then became a daily in 1949 and lasted well into the second half of the century (Ayalon, 1995). *Jazirat al-'Arab* ("The Arab Peninsula"), *Sada al-'Arab* ("Arab Echo"), and *Al-Shari'a* ("The Holy Law") were among the few weekly newspapers that launched in Amman during the 1920s and 1930s, alongside a few periodicals, some of which did not last long. Some of these periodicals were *al- Wafa'* ("Loyalty"), *Al-Hikma* ("Wisdom"), and *Al-Jazira al-'Arabiyya* (Ayalon, 1995).

Whereas, looking at the development of Arab state broadcasting from its inception until the coming of satellite television, starting with radio, according to Boyd (1999) radio broadcasting was established in the early 1920s, predominantly in the Arab states that they were under European colonisation. Radio was mostly used as a tool to promote the state agendas and political messages (Mellor *et al.*, 2011).

Mellor *et al.* (2011) argued that the monopoly of the state over radio broadcasting was exercised from the 1920s until early 1990s which afterwards started to weaken due to the presence of commercial and nonstate broadcasters which established a new content agenda and an entirely new era for radio broadcasting. The content shifted from a very governmental formal style of radio content to a wide range of entertainment, social and cultural radio content offerings.

In Transjordan (Ayalon, 1995), radio broadcasting was started in 1936 by the British mandate authority. On the other hand, Gunter and Dickinson (2013) stated that the first Arab country to have a radio station was Algeria in 1925, followed by Egypt in 1926 and Tunisia in 1935 and then Jordan 1936.

Gunter and Dickinson (2013) stressed that radio news was faster than newspapers in its delivery of the latest developments and in the 1950s, radio even appeared to be a force that could be used in politics in the Arab world, for example, during the revolution in Egypt, radio was used as the main platform to reach the people (Gunter and Dickinson, 2013).

Whereas, according to Gunter and Dickinson (2013), television in the Arab countries began in the mid-1950s. Mellor *et al.* (2011) stated that television broadcasting in the Arab world was not any different to radio and the broadcasters delivered the state agenda and version of national and international issues until the late 1980s. Gunter and Dickinson (2013) stated that television broadcasters were affiliated to government

ministries of information and that the news format, stories and coverage were not comprehensive. Also, when looking at the content provided in these news stories, Sakr (2001) similarly added that national and international visits by heads of states alongside with the performance of the government and its policies were what televised news was mostly about. However, Ayish (2001) stressed that television was seen by the governments as a medium that could be used for the progress of the Arab nations in terms of nation-building and cultural integration.

After that period, television broadcasting in the Arab world has witnessed considerable changes as the private sector came into the picture to change the landscape and the quality of the television content offerings. Guaaybess (2013) emphasised that states exercised their dominance over institutions that ran broadcast media. However, Lebanon was argued to be an exception in the Arab world (Althusser, 1976). Generally, television in the Arab states has developed from terrestrial national television in each country to a global and regional market (Mellor *et al.*, 2011).

On the other hand, when looking at the technological aspect of the media and particularly television development in the Arab countries, Lahlali (2011) believed that media technologies kept developing from a moderate base; however, the prominent shift in the media landscape in terms of technology, style and content approach came after the Gulf War in the early 1990s. During the war, it was clear that CNN had dominance over the flow of information to the world in general and the Arab world in particular. This led Arab countries to invest heavily in the development of their media institutions for their political interests as well as in order to keep the interest of their audiences. This happened at the same time as the appearance of satellite services which opened up a new era of diversity, and the encouragement of the private sector to be part of this transformation in the media landscape. Therefore, this period witnessed the proliferation of satellite channels which became an essential part of the media environment and media sphere that many Arabs share through their exposure to the content on these new global channels (Lahlali, 2011).

Examples of these active privately-owned satellite channels are the London-based Middle Eastern Broadcasting Centre (MBC), the Arab News Network (ANN), the Arab Radio and

Television Network (ART), the Lebanese Broadcasting Corporation (LBC), and Al Arabiya (Lahlali, 2011).

These channels broadcast from different countries inside and outside the Middle East; according to Lahlali (2011): “The dissemination of news information had gone beyond the geographical boundaries of these channels headquarters”. He continued that:

The advent of these satellite channels has put Arab state television under enormous pressure. Arab governments have found it extremely difficult to control the flow of unfiltered information generated by these satellites. (p.12).

To sum up, this section has reviewed a brief historical background about the media landscape development in the region, particularly Jordan, highlighting the prominent shift that happened to the media, especially television as a news source, in the early 1990s after the Gulf War which as a result made Arab governments start investing heavily in their television news institutions ultimately resulting in a proliferation of a new breed of Arab satellite channels which in my opinion is hard to control. The next section will discuss the media environment and freedom of expression in the region in order to gain a better understanding of how young people in Jordan consume news on television.

## 2.3 The Public and Media Environment after the Independence of the Arab States

The media environment and the freedom of the media in the Arab world can only be understood when it is put in within its wider cultural, social and political context (Lahlali, 2011). According to Amin (2002), most Arab states witnessed independence after the ending of the multi-party system which in turn became the rule of one-party in most of the countries which limited freedoms and also led to an impact on the press and media environment in the region from the mid-1950s until the mid-1980s. Arab states for decades had controlled the substance and content of information aired to the public. However, there is no doubt that emergence of digital media and satellite television has loosened up the restrictions over the media outlets and allowed new waves of freedom of the press and expression to become possible (Hamdy, 2009).

Similarly, Tassopoulos (2007), argued that in the last two decades, a new wave of freedom of expression and press has occurred, such as the journalistic practices used by Al Jazeera, which has made some governments worried about its impact on their countries.

Lahlali (2011) believed that the media environment after the independence of most Arab states was under tight control by regimes and governments. However, the role of the media, either print or audio-visual, was essential to the development of each Arab country, as it had played a part in safeguarding the culture and unity of almost all Arab states. On the other side, many argued (Lahlali, 2011; Kirchner, 2001 and Fandy, 2008) that the media had been employed to promote and support governments' domestic policies and the daily activities of governments and regimes, such as in Syria and Iraq. Jordan's media laws are, however, less strict by comparison to other neighbouring countries, with greater freedom of operation of the privately-owned media. This is partly due to the desire by the Jordanian government for increased inward investment in the sector, resulting in a mixture of media ownership models in the country (Amin, 2001).

When looking at media progress in the Arab world, Lahlali (2011), argued that media progress in the Arab world is regarded as slow because of political, cultural and social factors. However, he also stressed that it had developed considerably over the last decade. Having said this, he observed that insufficient resources have resulted in the absence of consistently high-quality reporting, with an abundance of errors and the enduring presence of bias.

Lahlali (2011) believed that after independence many countries have also launched media outlets to fight stereotypes facing their culture and values and to reach out to more global audiences, justify and market their foreign policies, or improve the image of their owners globally, which as a result benefited the media landscape in many aspects such as creating a more competitive media environment. Lahlali (2011) further argued that in the Arab region, many countries have established media outlets to promote their policies in the region, and also to address their concerns over the impact of the international media on the Arab public sphere. Thus, many Arab media channels have developed new formats, styles and approaches in their broadcasts, so they can compete with the highly advanced Western media (Lahlali, 2011).

However, regarding the media content and its influence over Arab audiences, Lahlali (2011) argued that the media and the state are the main two powers which have played a role in mobilising the Arab public over the last decade in the Arab world, the media trying to influence people to have an active role in society and the state trying to keep them under its control.

Abdelmoula (2012) argued that the launch of the satellite broadcaster Al Jazeera, for example, was phenomenal as it has generated social and political debates among Arabs. Miles (2006) believes that the success of Al-Jazeera in the Arab world was due to its talk shows in which they extensively and freely covered all subjects of religion, social, political and economic matters for the Arab people.

Many Arab satellite channels have played an important role in shaping broader Arab public opinion and unified Arabs during many events; the demonstrations that took place in support of Palestinians across the Arab world during the second Palestinian intifada which is also called the Al Aqsa intifada, that started in September 2000 can be seen as an example of this unity and the mobilisation of the Arab public through media (Zayani, 2005; Lynch, 2006).

Regarding news content that is being provided by satellite television and the way young Arabs consume news on the media, Lahlali (2011) stressed that it is important first to mention that Arab countries have a large young population, within which many are adopting a Western lifestyle, such as music and the way they dress. Their presence on online forums shows their courage in expressing their voices and having them heard without shying away; therefore, they act in the same way when consuming news (Lahlali, 2011).

Although Lahlali (2011) claimed that young Arabs in some Arab countries are adopting a western lifestyle in different aspects of their life, Lynch (2006) argued that Arab public opinion does not get affected by external influence or pressure as Arabs hold on to strong values extended from the culture and religion. On the other side, Arab media can have an influence especially when it is related to Arab issues and concerns, as Lahlali (2011) believed it had played a role in mobilising public opinion on issues of Arab concern, such as the live coverage by Al Jazeera of the events in Iraq which led to street protests in many Arab countries in support of the Iraqi government against the occupation of Iraq in 2003,

similar to the protests in support of the Palestinians. The variety of news content offered by the Arab media beyond national boundaries has promoted a space and a public sphere for debates on issues of importance to the Arab audience which, it has been argued, the Arab public had been missing for a long time (Lahlali, 2011). The fact that “controversial issues” are being discussed on television reflects an engaged audience that is passionate about their beliefs and opinions but also an audience that holds a respect for others’ views. The heated debates that happen on television present a wide range of views that come from different schools of thought, which reflects an audience that holds a range of social and political orientations (Lahlali, 2011).

Politically, Lynch (2006) stated that the impact of satellite television was unique as it played a role in encouraging Arab citizens to become politically involved. He also argued that the non-active role of domestic publics as well as the lack of active domestic democratic politics led Arab citizens to be more optimistic and engaging with independent media and have a minimal interest level in state-run television channels. Similarly, Bennett (2004) argued that satellite channels for the first time focused on main issues of Arab concern such as Iraq and Palestine alongside other issues that were neglected in the state-run channels such as issues of local politics, citizen activism, public policy, political debates and deliberations. However, Lynch (2006) concluded that although satellite television has succeeded in gaining the attention of Arab citizens, the translation of what is being discussed on those channels still remains detached from political outcomes and policy avenues.

This section briefly discussed the role of media institutions in the development of Arab countries. It also considered the history from nationally defined media institutions to transnational media companies and audiences leading to the new freedoms of expression and private ownerships that have brought in changes to the media environment. As a result, more channels and content were available, which created more social and political debates among Arabs. In the following section, key issues are considered with regard to the development of television in Jordan.

## **2.4 The Development of Television Broadcasting in Jordan**

As we have seen, the Arab world has witnessed the emergence of radio and television after the independence of each state. They were initially controlled by states and used as

means of communication with the public. However, in the last two decades, Arab governments have allowed the private sector to come on board to allow diverse media outlets, which have demonstrated a new culture of disseminating information where taboo and sensitive issues are brought up and debated in public (Amin, 2001; Lahlali, 2011).

In the Middle East, long before radio and television, newspapers gained popularity mainly in the cities and urban areas; they were less widespread in rural areas due to low rates of literacy, distribution difficulties and prices in these areas (Rugh, 2004). Conversely, television and radio were more able to disseminate content in an easier way across the Arab world due to cheaper transistorised receivers which made them more affordable and accessible.

In terms of television viewing, Lebanon and Iraq were the first countries to launch television transmitters in the late 1950s. Non-Arab colonial military zones and headquarters had, to some extent, limited access to the same services (Rugh, 2004).

Historically, economic and political factors have influenced the development and dissemination of Arab mass media. The press suffered in many Arab countries especially the lower population nations due to slow economic growth and low incomes that affected circulations, and as a result, did not allow newspapers to make enough revenue to thrive and in some cases, forced them to seek financial support from their governments (Rugh, 2004). The same thing happened to electronic media, which led them to be biased platforms on the side of governments rather than the people (Rugh, 2004).

To better understand the development of broadcasting and the place of JRTV within the Jordanian context, I will now look at the history of the medium itself in the country and how it started and developed over time.

The institution of television broadcasting in Jordan was founded at the same time as the introduction of the medium into the country in the late 1960s, under the name Mu'asassat al Iza'a Wal Television al-Urdunniya in the Arabic language. However, Radio and television were separate institutions which were merged under the name JRTV in 1985 (Ali, 2013).

Historically, radio was introduced to the country first; the first radio transmission can be traced back to September 1948 when the Jerusalem radio station began transmitting as the Hashemite Jordanian Radio of Jerusalem. Soon after the unification of the territories on the two shores of Jordan on 24 April 1950, the station was termed the Radio of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, and this name has remained until today. Six years later, the second radio station transmitting from Amman was inaugurated by King Hussein in October 1956 (Aqrabawi, Zaidah and Kuttah, 2006).

Two decades later the transmission of television in Jordan commenced on 27 April 1968, under the name Jordan Television Corporation (JTV) which initially started with four hours per day, from 7 p.m. until 11 p.m., and shortly after increased to cover 24 hours a day. A year later JTV was admitted into the European Broadcasting Union (EBU). Several years after this, in 1972, JTV set a minor milestone to become one of the first in the region to have a second channel. The second channel transmitted programmes in English and French, including a specific news broadcast edition in both languages. In 1985, Jordan Radio and Jordan Television merged to form JRTV. By this time, JRTV had six studios and had done since 1974. JRTV is considered to be the first television network to have adopted the system of colour transmission in the Arab region (Ali, 2013).

Afterwards, as the corporation started to grow, the need for new radio and television studios was inevitable; therefore, a new building was built in 1997 to cater for JRTV's needs. From then onwards, JRTV has transmitted two terrestrial channels (JTV 1 and JTV 2) and the satellite television channel Al-Urdunniyah, launched in 1993 (Ali, 2013).

The financial and administrative management of JRTV is dependent and decided by the government (Council of Ministers), so the state has had a great influence over the channel. More comprehensively, the Council of Ministers nominates JRTV's board of directors to reflect the country's diversity, and currently, there are nine members overall. These directors steer the national Jordan Television to ensure that it is pluralistic and portrays all segments of society and that its programmes represent everyone, especially marginalised voices such as people who live in villages far from the cities, people with special needs, or those with different political beliefs. There is the possibility that the president of the board of directors may be a government minister (article 6 of Law No. 35 of 2000). However, the mandate of the president may be revoked through a decision



of the Council of Ministers at the recommendation of ministers (United States Department of State, 2011).

Similar to most of the Arabic public satellite channels, Al-Urdunniyah takes programmes and drama series from other terrestrial and satellite channels and rebroadcasts them. Al-Urdunniyah's mission, as a general channel, is to broadcast news and entertainment to the Jordanian public and also connect Jordanian citizens abroad with the culture and the daily life of their country. Some of the channel's programmes are transmitted in English even though the public language used is Arabic (Ali, 2013).

Having described the advent and development of television in Jordan, particularly JRTV as the state channel, the next section moves on to highlight the era of satellite television in the region especially Jordan which started in the early 1990s.

#### 2.4.1 The Era of Satellite Television in Jordan

The development of Arabic satellite television has restricted the ability of national governments to control the flow of information across the region. Furthermore, these channels have allowed more people and more voices on their shows which air a wide range of views on even controversial topics, a significant innovation. Kraidy (2002, p.5) stated that:

Satellite television talk-shows serve as a catalyst for a democratic renewal, where Arab audience members would mobilise as citizens and become increasingly interested in participation in democratic politics.

The era of free satellite television began in the early 1990s and has transformed the landscape of regional televisual media from being inherently national, to being global or pan-Arabic. It has also brought competition among television stations in the region (Sakr, 2001). *The Economist* (2005) described satellite television in the region as "a kind of virtual Arab metropolis" which created a sense of belonging and at the same time, a new shift happened in which people had more sources of news and information. Satellite television has also become a source of news in the region (Khatib, 2009).

Kraidy (2002) argued that satellite television had brought a shared pan-Arab identity strengthened through the shows and platforms that allowed the discussion of various issues of mutual regional interest. Many critics claimed that "pan-Arabism" ended in the

late 1970s as a result of political defeats and the collapse of Arab unity in the early 1960s Ajami (1978). However, according to Phillips (2013), the concept of Arabism is still alive, especially among Arabic speaking countries. The satellite channel Al Jazeera, for example, provides citizens from 22 different Arab states a shared public platform to discuss and debate issues of national concern which potentially can strengthen the cultural ties between the Arab countries (Phillips, 2013). Citizens in many Arab countries, including Jordan, have taken to the streets during the times of war in Iraq and Palestine to express solidarity with the affected civilians in these countries (Phillips, 2013).

Both the Egyptian satellite system NILESAT and the satellite THURAYYA were launched in 2000, augmenting the existing satellite ARABSAT, dating back to 1976, in the provision of information to both the public and private sectors (Lahlali, 2011).

With the transformation has come competition between the regional television stations with the likes of Al Jazeera and Al Arabiya. In order to compete with other regional channels and countries, Jordan has taken steps to end the government monopoly over the ownership of television licences, thus granting more freedom in the media landscape. In 2002, a number of private radio and television stations were established after the public monopoly on broadcasting was brought to an end, extensively increasing the diversity of media output available to Jordanians. Simultaneously, a few proactive measures to promote media diversity were included in the overall framework for the media (UNESCO, 2015). In this regard, it is worth mentioning that JRTV in Jordan is a national channel that covers international, Arab and national Jordanian news and other content such as drama and talk shows unlike Al Jazeera or Al Arabiya which only cover and broadcast news bulletins and programmes twenty-four hours a day.

Regarding the media scene in Jordan after ending the government monopoly over license holding, the country has seen the establishment of various new privately-owned television and radio stations due to the liberalisation process following the passing of the 2002 Audio-visual Law (Alisal, 2015). This law governs the granting of private licenses for television and radio broadcasters and oversight of the licensing process. It also deals with content restrictions as well as additional licensing fees for news or political broadcasting (Alisal, 2015).

The second stage of liberalisation was founding the Audiovisual Media Commission of Jordan in the same year to regulate the audio-visual media sector in accordance with the criteria of transparency, independence and diversity. It also grants licenses for the equipment and technical means used for radio and television, in coordination with the Telecommunications Regulatory Commission (TRC). The law, therefore, opened the media sector to private ownership (Alisal, 2015).

However, due to the fact that stations which wished to feature news had to pay a license fee premium of fifty per cent over the standard licence fee, although this was abolished in 2012, it is obvious that the licensing framework originally privileged entertainment over news. As a result, television stations which wish to broadcast terrestrially still suffer significant obstructions as a result of licensing fees which are extremely high, and this serves as part of the reason for all of the new television broadcasters transmitting via satellite (OECD, 2013).

Jordan now has forty-five licensed satellite television channels. Seventeen of these are owned by and directed at Jordanians, while the rest are Saudi and Iraqi channels (UNESCO, 2015). Two of the Jordanian channels are public, one owned by Jordan Television while the other belongs to the Royal Cultural Centre, and fifteen are private. All of these channels broadcast from Jordan Media City. In terms of content, only eight of the private channels broadcast locally produced programmes and, of these, four broadcast a variety of social and entertainment programmes, and current affairs talk shows and programmes, but only three, Ro'ya television, Al-Haqiqa Al-Dawliya, and AlMamlaka television broadcast news.

The other nine Jordanian satellite channels are called "slide television", depending largely upon scrolling advertisements displayed at the bottom of the screen, with static images accompanied by songs on the main part of the screen. These channels do not have their own studios, in contrast to traditional television stations. A number of these stations broadcast without a licence, and dozens are shut down each year, according to Jordan Media City Director Amjad Al-Qadi (UNESCO, 2015).

According to Al-Qadi, terrestrial television broadcasting is only owned by the government, as it is more expensive to establish a terrestrial than a satellite television station. Terrestrial channels in Jordan consist of JTV's two channels: Jordan Television

and the Sports channel, which also broadcasts sessions from the Jordanian parliament's Lower House (UNESCO, 2015).

The services provided to Jordanian homes are analogue, digital terrestrial television, cable and direct-to-home satellite services. Digital television services are provided through satellite operators and video-digital radio broadcasting operators using the satellite multipoint video distribution system DVB-MS. In 2001, Jordan merged the two terrestrial radio broadcasting services, Jordan 1 and 2, into its satellite channel called Jordan Space Channel due to considerable financial losses (Ali, 2013). Jordan now has a terrestrial television channel which is also transmitted directly to individuals via satellite.

Similar to the Arabic and the rest of the southern Mediterranean cities, each urban household in Jordan has the opportunity to have access to a satellite dish which provides over nine hundred free channels. It is considered the most widespread means of transmission, the most effective and the most preferred by Jordanian households. In 2010, Jordan had 1,028,000 television-owning households, 1,002,000 of which are equipped for satellite reception, i.e. 97.4 per cent of television-equipped households, according to the statistics published by the European operator Eutelsat (Ali, 2013).

Sweis and Baslan (2013) reported that ninety per cent of the population in Jordan have satellite reception with nearly six hundred channels available free by satellite.

Jordan uses HotBird to transmit to Europe and Telestar to transmit to North America; the Egyptian Nilesat satellite and the Arab Arabsat satellite ensure the transmission of Jordanian channels to the Arab world. For internet viewers, Jordanian channels are available online; they can be found on web sites such as Global Internet television and IPTV Guide. Jordan's Audiovisual Commission currently gives a licence to one terrestrial channel and thirty-eight satellite channels (Ali, 2013). Whilst this section highlighted the proliferation of satellite television in Jordan, the following section will discuss how television today brings in varied news stories and information to the Arab public, especially Jordanians.

### 2.4.2 The Popularity of Television in Jordan Today

Since decades ago, and even until today, television has been an important device for most people due to the fact that it is the means through which information is transmitted to the public.

In 2013 a survey report conducted by Northwestern University in Qatar on media use in the Middle East, including Jordan, found that television remained the most popular medium, followed closely by the internet. Nearly every household watched television. The survey further stated that adults in the Middle East spend an average of just over three hours a day in front of a television (Northwestern University in Qatar, 2013). In Jordan, ninety-seven per cent of households have a television set, and of those, ninety per cent have satellite dishes (Dimou, 2014). It is now possible to access information with ease via cable or satellite, providing people with every kind of information they need, be it for entertainment, work, education or even as a hobby. It is also extremely easy to watch, as stated by Selby and Cowdery (1995, p.1):

television is just moving pictures in the corner of the room as it is considered an easy medium to watch for many people without requiring a great deal of effort from the viewer

Since television has become a mass medium, it has been playing a considerable role in people's lives on many levels, including informing viewers about current affairs that involve both social and political factors (socio-political issues) which is the concern of my study. There have been great developments in television broadcasting ranging from open to air television, to cable television, to satellite television. Of these, satellite television in the context of Jordan has brought a revolution in the way in which news and stories are broadcast. It is clear that television now offers many more choices to viewers, and this range of choices produces questions about the authority of television.

### **2.4.3 Television as A Source of News and Information in Jordan**

As part of this research looks at the role of television in Jordan in raising young Jordanians socio-political awareness, television news is considered a major content that contributes to providing the public with the knowledge and information that fulfils their needs.

In order to understand how the Arab public and Jordanians in particular, consume news, research has to consider the wider picture in terms of the news sources that are available and the news providers in the region. We can then understand the position of JRTV within all the other media environments and television channels in the context of Jordan and the perspective of Jordanian audiences. According to Lahlali (2011) and Kirchner (2001), Arab television is divided into state-owned media and transnational media. They defined

the state-owned media as a platform that is run and administered by the state of the country. Geographically, its reach is limited to within its borders; in terms of the target audience and content, its main focus is local citizens, and it broadcasts domestic issues that concern locals. They also added that it is used as a tool to promote government policies.

The second type is the transnational Arab media, which they categorised as television that reaches beyond the geographical boundaries of individual Arab states. Satellite channels such as Al Jazeera, Al Arabiya and Alhurra are clear examples of this type of news and information dissemination to the Arab public. They target not only audiences in the countries in which they are based, but Arab world audiences at large. Their content is dedicated to the entire Arab public. Al Jazeera among these three channels has the ability to disseminate its news and information to the whole world, as it has a second version that broadcasts in English. These channels have broken down barriers, borders and taboos by adopting a new style of disseminating the news. They have also motivated the Arab public to participate in their coverage and in many cases, have relied upon and involved the public as citizen journalists during the time of the Arab Spring and afterwards (Lahlali, 2011; Kirchner, 2001).

When looking at Jordanians in this context, it can be seen that Jordanians get their news from different sources. Although these large channels such as Al Jazeera dominate news coverage in the Arab region, JRTV still exists in Jordanians' daily lives and many Jordanians still watch it.

JRTV, Roya television and Al-Mamlaka television are the current popular channels in Jordan; JRTV is the state-owned broadcast television which was launched in 1989. Roya television is an independent satellite channel concentrating on entertainment shows and programmes, with also news programmes and bulletins. Al-Mamlaka television is a news dedicated channel that was recently founded in mid- July 2018. However, as mentioned earlier, regional and global channels do exist on satellite, and most Jordanians have access to these channels. According to El-Nawawy (2006, p.29), the advent of Al Jazeera caused a change, with a lack of bias as one of its stated aims; the channel's motto is "The Opinion and the Other Opinion" (El-Nawawy, 2006, p.29). This novel approach has been well-

received by both the public and those observing the media. According to El-Nawawy (2006, p.30), Al Jazeera has said that:

public discourse can only be equitable and effective if all possible opinions and views are expressed and demonstrated equally, whether they are Israeli, Palestinian, American or Turkish

Al-Jazeera follows a fairness policy where governments, individuals and all bodies in society are dealt with equally. It brought to the discussion table Israeli officials to talk about the Arab-Israeli conflict and invited American officials as guests to explain their foreign policy in the Middle East and their presence in Iraq to the Arab public (Lahlali, 2011).

According to El-Nawawy (2006), Al Jazeera works on challenging anti-Arab misrepresentations by interviewing Western officials, discussing with them issues of concern, and facing the challenges of the Western perception of Arabs on channels like BBC and CNN.

Zayani (2005) argued that the full coverage by Al Jazeera of the events during the War in Afghanistan in 2001 had given the Arabs an alternative news channel that discussed issues and matters of concern to them, which at the same time ended an era of monopoly by the Western media which used to have the upper hand over the news in the region. In the Arab world, Abunimah and Ibish (2001) argued that the channel's practices bring to the Arab public the best international standards of production values and also presents democracy and openness on issues that matter to all voices in the Arab world.

Finally, at the end of this section it is worth highlighting that when evaluating the ways in which young Jordanians consume news, issues of news credibility and objectivity will be looked at in this research as a way to evaluate media impartiality in Jordan, and also to evaluate the decrease in news watching on JRTV. Objectivity is a concept that has been almost absent from some Arab media outlets due to their constant support for their governments (Lahlali, 2011).

## 2.5 Summary

Because of the advent of new media alongside the evolution in the technology by which television content is delivered today, audiences have more access to news information in different formats and on different platforms, but the question remains, how do Jordanian youth perceive and interact with all these different avenues of news information and also to what extent does all this diversity in platforms and formats contribute to a high level of knowledge among the Jordanian youth in the context of socio-political issues.

In summary, this chapter highlighted the historical background of the media landscape developments in the Jordanian context. It then reviewed the advent and development of television in Jordan before and after the era of satellite television. Finally, it highlighted the popular national or international television channels that Jordanians watch and from which they get their news. The next chapter will review the current trends in media consumption in Jordan, highlighting the most popular social media platforms used for news in the country. Then it will review the literature around issues of media consumption and news credibility. Similarly, it will review the relevant literature on the use of the theory of uses and gratifications in the context of news consumption. It is followed by a review of the concept of the public sphere and the role of the media in communication. Then it will briefly highlight the impact of social media in the Arab world and political participation before concluding by presenting the similarities and differences of concepts awareness, participation, and engagement.



# Chapter Three: Review of the Literature

## 3.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the emergence and nature of social media networks on the internet. It considers the importance of social media networks particularly as news sources, specifically looking at online news videos and the significant role that social media networks such as Facebook and YouTube can play as alternatives to mainstream news sources. Social media networks were established to connect people to one another. However, the use of social media networks has expanded to provide a source of news for audiences as we have seen in recent years. These new services have changed the landscape of how people connect to, receive information and use traditional mainstream media, including television, which used to have a monopoly over news information and other genres. Social media has brought a new landscape where content and news information has become available to its users in new ways. However, the availability of such a scale of information brings in whole new issues to be discussed. One of these issues, for example, revolves around how much trust media users place in the news on television compared to social media.

Firstly, this study attempts to understand how Jordanian university students in Jordan deal with these news sources (television and social media news videos) and the perceived effect of this on their daily lives and the way they take actions socio-politically that matter to their everyday life and future. To achieve this goal, this analysis employs the uses and gratifications audience model, the public sphere, the concepts of political awareness, engagement and participation, and the concept of trust in the news as a comprehensive theoretical framework to the study. In Jordan, there is a body of research that has been done in similar areas; however, the main scope and aims of each study are different, as will be demonstrated below.

Second, this chapter looks at social media and its role around the concepts highlighted above. However, it's important to highlight that the whole study looks at television news

on satellite and JRTV and online news videos on social media to investigate how they are used, the role they play in raising socio-political awareness, the dynamics of both in the daily lives of young Jordanians and their effect on young people's engagement and participation socio-politically in society, and finally, how much credibility they hold according to the perception of young people who use them in Jordan, particularly university students. The current chapter aims to fill the gap in this field of research in this specific area in Jordan.

## 3.2 Popular Social Media Platforms in Jordan Facebook and YouTube

This section looks at Facebook and YouTube. Facebook is included as it has many multimedia features that include texts, pictures, and news videos, which are one focus of this study. Facebook, with about 156 million users by early 2017, representing a penetration rate of 39 per cent, is the most popular social media website in the MENA region by some margin. This was an increase from 115 million users in 2016 (MBR School of Government, 2017). The other part of this section looks at YouTube as another popular platform in Jordan (TNS, 2015).

The social media networking site Facebook has expanded into a range of areas since its beginnings. It started as a way of connecting family and friends together, and this is still a prominent feature of Facebook (Lenhart, 2015). However, many people use it for other purposes such as businesses, education and news. Many people now use it as a news source through either posting news in the form of text or videos or getting their news feed from it (Pew Research Center, 2013; Anderson and Caumont, 2014; Pew Research Center, 2019). Jordanians are no different and are active users of Facebook in their daily lives. In the Middle East including Jordan, news consumption through digital media is relatively high and keeps growing; however, Jordanians still get their news more regularly from television than digital sources (Northwestern University in Qatar, 2017).

Because of the lack of regular existing reports produced by institutions such as the Pew Research Center and Ofcom in the Middle East, it is a challenge to uncover the regular statistics of the trends of social media use, for example news consumption. However, the Arab Social Media Report of 2015 included Jordan. The report highlighted that social media networks Facebook, WhatsApp and YouTube are the most popular and used social

media networks in the kingdom of Jordan. The percentages are as follows: 89 per cent use Facebook, while 71 per cent use WhatsApp, with YouTube used by 66 per cent (TNS, 2015).

However, In June 2018, the Pew Research Center released a global report on social media adoption by country which included Jordan. Interestingly, the report showed that the use of social media in the Middle East is relatively high compared with other regions around the globe. The part of the report that investigated the use of social media among the users of the internet highlighted the fact that there are some countries in which their share of social media use has “skyrocketed” among internet users in comparison to countries with advanced economies. Jordan was at the top of the countries with an outstanding figure that shows 94% of internet users are also on and using social networking sites (Poushter, Bishop and Chwe, 2018).

The media landscape in the Middle East is constantly changing, and Facebook is leading the way in terms of news consumption over television, print and online news sources (Arab Youth Survey, 2017). A report by Ogilvy Media Influence stated that Facebook is the number one gatekeeper in terms of news, pushing out existing sources of media and growing faster than competitors Twitter and YouTube (Ogilvy Media Influence, 2017). The annual global report identified Facebook as particularly dominant in the Middle East regarding news, in a survey of more than 250 editors and reporters. According to a recent report by IpsosJo, Facebook is the leading social network in Jordan among the 93 per cent of Jordanian internet users who access social networks, with 79.9 per cent of users using the network (*The Jordan Times*, 2016). When broken down by gender, it was found to be used by 95.9 per cent of male, and 88.7 per cent of female Jordanian Internet users.

Like Facebook, YouTube has developed into another popular social network all over the world, and Jordan is not an exception. The Arab social media report (2015) revealed that Jordan was the highest country among all the other Arab states for users who access YouTube on a regular daily basis.

The layout of YouTube is different from Facebook. Since its creation in 2005, YouTube has played a role in the dissemination of information through its videos. A study by Madden (2007) showed that most people are more interested in simply watching videos on YouTube than frequently logging on to the website to create and upload videos.

However, a smaller number of YouTube users consider YouTube a social network than consider Facebook a social network (Boyd and Ellison, 2007).

With reference to young people, Drotner (2013) stressed that through their involvement in YouTube, they might be learning skills in new media. Likewise, Jenkins *et al.*, (2006, cited in Burgess and Green, 2009) explained that based on the media literacy framework young people might learn to be more critical of media messages through their active and creative participation.

YouTube has served as an alternative to television but has also provided young people with the chance simultaneously to create their own stories. As an alternative to television during the political uprisings, activists and media organisations benefitted from YouTube. For instance, Al Jazeera followed the updated videos related to protesters which were recorded and uploaded onto YouTube. Through its features, YouTube provides such as accessing, viewing, commenting, and circulating through other social media networks, for example, Facebook and Twitter. YouTube also allows audiences to engage equally in informational activism by distributing the content online (Arif, 2014).

A survey paper conducted by Haddad *et al.* (2011) showed that YouTube is one website which has been gaining popularity rapidly, as more and more people access it every day, hence grasping its purpose of becoming a commercial site.

The next section reviews various audience perception theories to understand people's consumption habits when using social media within the context of this research.

### 3.3 The Debates around Social Media as News Sources

#### 3.3.1 Consumption of News Videos on Social Media

This subsection focuses on social media as news sources. It revisits briefly some perception models to highlight and understand the current trends and consumption patterns within the context of traditional media, social media and specifically online news videos on social media. News can be defined as:

the main form in which current information about public events is carried by media of all kinds. News frequently originates from officials, experts, news

agencies and organisations. There is a great diversity of types and formats as well as cross-cultural differences, but defining characteristics are generally held to be timeliness, relevance and reliability.

Gottfried and Shearer (2016) argued that users of social media obtain their news from a range of different platforms and each platform has news from various sources such as websites, local television stations, and sometimes from other social media platforms, which also means that traditional media news is still being used on social media. Since this research looks at how youth in Jordan perceive the news on social media and television, it is essential to define clearly what is meant by news in the context of this research. The definition of news in the context of this research is adopted from that of McQuail (2005, p.562, cited by Berkowitz, 2009) which defined news as:

the main form in which current information about public events is carried by media of all kinds. News frequently originates from officials, experts, news agencies and organisations. There is a great diversity of types and formats as well as cross-cultural differences, but defining characteristics are generally held to be timeliness, relevance and reliability.

In the use of social media as news sources in the United States for instance, according to Perrin (Perrin, 2015), nearly two-thirds of American adults (65 per cent) use social networking sites, and young adults (ages 18 to 29), at 90 per cent, are the most likely to use social media. Younger Americans, i.e. the Millennial generation (born from 1981 onwards), obtain news about politics and government mainly from social media. The percentages are high, with 61 per cent of Millennials reporting obtaining political news from Facebook in a given week, as compared to a low of 37 per cent from the local television; the results for Facebook are much larger than those for any other news source (Barthel *et al.*, 2015; Perrin, 2015). Similarly, Prensky (2010) stated that nowadays, a large portion of time spent by many young Americans on media is consumed by watching YouTube rather than broadcast or cable television. This phenomenon can be seen in young Jordanians at the present time as well, where they spend more time on social media networks such as Facebook rather than on traditional media (Al-Sharif, 2015).

Changing patterns of media consumption habits in the past developed in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, beginning with radio and followed by television, which became significant media

to broadcast information in the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Wyrwoll, 2014, p.26). The same happened to newspapers with the advent of the internet; as more readers have shifted from printed newspapers to online news media, this has therefore changed the consumption patterns of news (Von Krogh and Andersson, 2016). Regarding the consumption of news itself, a study by Krogh and Andersson attempted to highlight the differences between online readers and print readers. They found that online readers tend to look at the front page of the edition and focus on a “limited number of subjects” (p. 1058), while print readers concentrate on the “editorial sections” (p. 1058) inside the newspaper; they also show more varied reading abilities. Therefore, it may be argued that although social media provide new platforms for consuming news, the patterns of news consumption on these platforms are different from those on traditional media, which can lead to different manners of perceiving information and awareness of certain subjects read about on these platforms.

Social media helped in the transformation of the possibilities of communication and information dispersal, which led to an increase in the number of people disseminating information; therefore, the amount of information has increased immensely. This also allowed greater freedom of selection of content to be available to the user. Wyrwoll (2014) claimed that on social media “Due to the number of users contributing content, news can spread faster around the world than through any other media.” (p.28).

It is clear from what happened in some countries in the Middle East during the Arab Spring, as Norris (2012) stated, that social media can work effectively in countries that are more authoritarian as a way to bypass mainstream media. It can increase awareness and publicise news among the public. It has served as an eyewitness news update feed to professional journalists, such as those working for the BBC World Service and Al Jazeera (Norris, 2012).

In the same vein, Ghannam (2012) argued that social media and online contributors are impacting the way news is being consumed in the Arab region. Social media have allowed greater freedom of expression and plentiful online news information; therefore, content creation and news sharing have influenced the existing “information channels” all over the region (p.8).

In contrast to the traditional approach of editorial departments and news agencies deciding which news is delivered by newspapers, radio and television, social media lack centralised decision-making bodies, with users determining newsworthiness by their interaction and sharing. The choices made by users influence the worldview of those they interact with. Similarly, regarding state censorship over the news which is used in countries lacking freedom of the press to control citizens, social media, on the other hand, have contributed to democracy movements. In contrast, traditional media have not been able to play the role of helping reform (Wyrwoll, 2014).

Then again, online news videos have become a prominent feature on the different platforms of social media such as Facebook and YouTube that is being used in many countries (Kalogeropoulos, 2018). Given the importance and growth of this feature, research on news videos on social media and its impact is still limited. On the other hand, broadcasters and print organisations had no choice but to follow the trend giving the large number of news audiences that are using these platforms. Organisations such as CNN are increasing the number of short news video-clips posted on the social media platform Facebook (Kalogeropoulos, Cherubin and Newman, 2016). In Jordan, different segments of society including news organisations, both broadcasters as well as offline and online print, are following the trend of using social media as platforms to upload their content and reach out to the audiences. My survey is going to explore the most common types of news video sources that the young generation is exposed to on social media in Jordan as well as the sources of these news videos that appeal the most to them.

Inter-media fragmentation refers to the “growth of new delivery platforms” and intra-media fragmentation “refers to choices that subdivide choices within media technologies” (Napoli 2011, p.55, 56). Online video is a clear example that encompasses both inter-media and intra-media fragmentation (Napoli 2011). YouTube and video on demand (VOD) services have become popular (Matrix 2014). In order to proceed with the subject of consumption, we must first discuss the necessary claims used by various perception models and theories, such as niche theory, displacement theory, news credibility and consumption patterns of news. Displacement theory encompasses the notion that a new medium can substantially displace the use of an already existing medium, rendering the latter outdated and inconsequential (Ha and Fang, 2012; Kayany and Yelsma, 2000). With specific reference to this research, the study evaluated the possibility of satellite

television displacing the already existing news services. Therefore, with the emergence of a new source of television channels with a higher satisfaction value, it is likely to replace the previous news channel as the favoured medium for broadcast news, as pointed out by Gunter (2010). It is further observed that these subsequent displacements, specifically with regard to the media industry, are likely to be prevalent where two or more specified media are serving the same purpose. The increased competition leads to customers favouring one channel over the other and thereby the displacement effect (Gunter, 2016). For a new source or medium of news to displace a pre-existing television channel providing news, it is necessary for the newer channel to engage in a system of gratification, especially where there is a substantial overlap in the services provided by both channels, and then only the channel providing more gratification to consumers will have a dominant position. A revisiting of uses and gratification theory will be provided in this chapter to delve further and understand the kind of gratifications each of television and social media offers to young people in Jordan.

On the other hand, if there are observed to be two different television news channels with different sets of specialised news, then they both could be said to be operating in a niche market (Dimmick, Kline and Stafford, 2000). Simply put, the two television news channels can only both survive in harmony when each satisfies different functional needs of media consumers. Niche theory itself delves into more in-depth details of the overlapping content and the outcomes with regard to the audience. The theory explains the ways in which a newer medium can co-exist with older media of broadcast news among the audience in question. Dimmick, Kline and Stafford (2000) state that in order for a new medium to make space for itself within the market where older media are present, the new medium must present itself in a way that is distinct from the others so that a new position can be created. The new medium or source is now in competition with the older source of broadcast news and therefore must not only provide gratification or customer satisfaction but also compete for consumer time spent on the medium (Elareshi, 2013). Where the new medium is specifically catering for one gratification need that is the same as the pre-existing medium, then the newer medium will displace the old medium since the latter is now viewed as less satisfactory in the presence of the newer one (Gunter, 2010).



Another theory that may be applicable is remediation theory; in order for digital technologies to flourish, there is a need for newer media to make use of old cultural and aesthetic practices and produce them in a better-refashioned manner (Bolter and Grusin, 1998). It has been argued that recent visual media are encompassed by the theory of mediation applicable to the current digital age, and the only way new media can attain preference is if the existing media content is refashioned, termed remediation. Bolter and Grusin (1998) give examples of earlier works of media, including vaudeville, television, films, photography, and radio, indicating that all of these were refashioned so as to make space for the newer media content. If this theory is applied to the current television disconnect in Jordan, it would appear that the only way for newer broadcast content to achieve precedence over the older content, in this case, private media channels versus the older public media broadcast content, is to refashion the older style and content. It can be argued that this has been conducted, and then put to the audience for their interpretation and judgement.

YouTube causes disaggregation of information which can cause audiences to focus on 'hits' and niche videos which has a dramatic impact on the media industry and dissemination of news (Napoli, 2011). It was found that video posts on Facebook were natively shared on YouTube as well as links: 70% of videos have been found to be posted natively. Furthermore, the consumption is also increasing (Griffith, 2015). Hence, platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, YouTube and Snapchat have driven the usage of videos on social media platforms.

In summary, this section introduced and identified the relevant perception theories in relation to traditional media and social media use. However, the following sections are going to look in more depth into the more relevant theories in the context of this research.

### 3.3.2 Issues of Credibility Around the Use of Social Media as A News Source

This subsection focuses on the concept of credibility within the context of news on the media. The study of audience trust in news media on a general level is relevant as the absence of trustworthy news channels could lead audiences to search for other avenues of knowledge and news information elsewhere such as on social media which could bear false news.

Globally, the scale of usage of social media networks, which started as social communication, has increased over the past decade. The use of social media for news has become a reality. The influence of social media news on some national and international events in the last decade was apparent, whether politically, socially or at the public policy level. The sophistication of use of these platforms continues to grow as technology keeps developing, which is reflected in public activities, views and behaviours. Regarding news, in 2016, social media provided a flood of “fake news” to the public. Arguably, “fake news” penetrated public opinion in the United States and Europe, which resulted in playing a role in manipulating public perceptions and beliefs at significant levels (MBR School of Government, 2017). The debate around “fake news” has increased after the 2016 US presidential elections but also generated discussions in Europe, especially in the United Kingdom (Nielsen and Graves, 2017). The term is seen as “misinformation from different sources”, and it encompasses different aspects such as poor journalism, propaganda (hyper-partisan content and politicians lying), some advertising (ads and pop-ups), and false news (Nielsen and Graves, 2017, p.3). However, Sullivan (2017) argued that it is time to retire from using the term “fake news”, which she describes as an imprecise term which means different things to different people.

As a result, this affected the trustworthiness of the news reports circulating on social media, particularly on Facebook, as it has the highest number of shared false news stories (Silverman, 2016).

“Objectivity” of the news can be looked at as an essential component in the media news profession. News professionals must practice objectivity in gathering, presenting and circulating news information, as it can have an impact on the trust audiences have when they see the news. It encompasses “factual accuracy, lack of bias, separation of fact from comment, transparency about sources, and not taking sides” (McQuail, 2010, p.565).

According to Westerstahl (1983), the definition of news objectivity is news content that does not contain bias and is factual. Factuality, in his sense, relates to “truth and relevance” whereas impartiality consists of “neutrality and balance”. That news and journalism practitioners follow the full standards of the concept is debatable. For example, Singer (2008, p.72) stated that

“Journalists praise the virtues of remaining completely unbiased in covering the news, but they acknowledge that doing so is humanly impossible. Being even-handed in providing information is a plus, but ‘he-said-she-said’ reporting is a disservice to the public. Accurately reporting the facts is a journalistic virtue, but failing to pursue ‘the truth behind the facts’ is a shortcoming”.

There are three criteria in measuring the “truthfulness of news” proposed by McQuail (1992). He proposed separating facts from opinions, interpretations or comments as well as media output containing vagueness and redundancy which he calls “factualness”. News information that contains names, numbers, times, attributions and places he refers to as “accuracy”. Finally, the presence of a sufficient amount of information that is relevant he terms “completeness” (McQuail, 1992).

The concept of credibility can be seen as an aspect of news objectivity (Prueksuralai, 2014). Credibility is not a judgment that is only measured by the source (Berlo, Lemert, and Mertz, 1969) but also through the validity of other range of aspects which includes accuracy, completeness, fairness, believability, depth, and bias (Metzger *et al.*, 2003; Gaziano & McGrath, 1986). Similarly, credibility means “judgments made by a perceiver (e.g., a message recipient) concerning the believability of a communicator” (O’Keefe, 1990, p. 130-131). The term credibility is also sometimes used interchangeably with the term trust (Kohring and Matthes, 2007; Hellmueller and Trilling, 2012).

Overall, credibility is a multifaceted and multidimensional concept (Burgoon, Burgoon, and Wilkinson, 1981), and it is more sophisticated in the online sphere than in previous media contexts (Sundar, 2008). Social and cultural contexts can play a significant role in shaping media credibility within the nation (Saleh, 2016). Therefore, my research needs to consider it carefully.

Previous studies looked at media credibility and assessed it from different perspectives (Kang, 2010). The most common domains in this respect were source credibility and medium credibility (Kioussis, 2001). In the same vein, other researchers treated it and categorised it into three domains: content credibility, source credibility and medium credibility (Metzger *et al.*, 2003). Content credibility or message credibility is assessed as the quality of the information in the message, the level of accuracy and the content itself (Metzger *et al.*, 2003). Whereas, source credibility is discussed in the context of

trustworthiness and expertise of the source (Armstrong and Nelson, 2005). Lastly, medium credibility deals with the channel through which the message is given as such as radio, television, newspaper or internet (Gantz, 1981; Newhagen, 1997; Sundar and Nass, 2001).

It is vital that mainstream media organisations adopt professional standards in terms of credibility, accuracy and impartiality in the news they provide to their audiences. On the other hand, social media users consume news through social media networks. This exposure to these networks raises questions about the quality of the sources accessed and the trustworthiness of information on these networks. Thus, this research investigates these issues from the perspective of news consumers, which in the case of my research are the University of Jordan students.

Overall, this section reviewed a few key aspects of the definitions of credibility and trustworthiness and objectivity of the news on mainstream channels as well as social media. It also highlighted the emerging concerns about the spread of fake news across social media, given the example of the United States presidential elections in 2016. The following section presents the debates and existing literature around the application of the theory of uses and gratification within the context of news on television and social media in Jordan.

### 3.4 Understanding Television and Social Media Users' Motives (behind watching the news): A Uses and Gratifications Approach

An overview of the uses and gratifications approach follows, discussing the current literature related to television and social media networks users, in particular online news videos on social media. For many years this theory has been used as a reference by many scholars in the field of media and communication to gain more understanding into what and why audiences use or do with the media (Kay and Johnson, 2002; Whiting and Williams, 2013; Musa, Azmi and Ismail, 2016).

The uses and gratifications approach is “the idea that media use depends on the perceived satisfaction, needs, wishes or motives of the prospective audience member” (McQuail, 2005, p.423). Blumer and Katz (1974) explain that choosing a particular type of media differs from one user to another as they have various types of media platforms to select.

Historically, the theory of uses and gratifications emerged from the field of mass communication when researchers became interested in the reasons behind the engagement of audiences in various forms of media (Wimmer and Dominick, 1987). This theory can be considered as an old approach; however, the dawn of computer mediated communication technologies, as well as social media, had given it a new birth and importance (Musa, Azmi and Ismail, 2016; Karimi *et al.*, 2014; Ruggiero, 2000; Sheldon, 2015). This theory appears to be an essential approach that can be used in understanding news audiences and their consumptions (Lee, 2013). Therefore, this research employs this theory to understand university students' consumption of television and social media.

It is important to highlight the shift and transformations that have happened in the media landscape alongside the ways news audiences use the media (Chyi, 2009). This change has allowed news audiences to be active in searching for news or interacting with the news by sharing or commenting on the news and even giving them more control of what they want to watch. Ballard (2011) stated that the theory is a useful approach in understanding the audience's usage of the media, their exposure and media effects. Therefore, Lee (2013) argued that the study of news audiences and these patterns of news consumption is greater now than ever.

Uses and gratification theory fits the research in my thesis best, as it argues people seek out specific media to satisfy particular needs. Furthermore, my research is trying to find out the rewards and motivations of young Jordanians for watching television and online news videos on social media socio-politically. Therefore, this study is trying to understand Jordanian university students' behaviours and reasons when using television and social media for socio-political news and the effects of that on the way they shape their opinions which may lead to mobilisation on socio-political issues of their concern. A questionnaire section has been developed and built based on this theory as well as some interview questions to elicit and understand respondents' views and perceptions on the different needs for using either platform (television and social media) for watching socio-political news.

Uses and gratification theory (Katz, Blumler and Gurevitch, 1973) has been applied in many studies to understand the effects of media and why people use specific media

(Palmgreen, Wenner, and Rayburn, 1980; Sheldon, 2015; Karimi *et al.*, 2014). Ruggiero (2000, P.3) argued that this theory “has always provided a cutting-edge theoretical approach in the initial stages of each new mass communications medium: newspapers, radio and television, and now the Internet”. The theory also has been widely used by media researchers in the Arab world based on Maslow's hierarchy of needs to discern the reasons behind the audiences watching certain shows for example (Karim, 2012) or to offer an understanding of news recipients (Pavlik and McIntosh, 2011).

It is argued that this theory has shifted the focus of audience research from effects to causes. Working on this theory involves looking at the motives behind certain viewing habits and how they are relevant to the needs that a certain show or programme could achieve (Carey and Kreiling, 1974). It is important to note that the use of this theory has developed over the years as scholars in the 1960s worked on measuring the effects media have over people and the way they use the media. However, in the 1970s, they expanded this by studying the consumption habits of the media by audiences (Stevenson, 2002). The theory assumes that media users are active audiences. Moreover, they are aware of their needs to communicate and seek information. Thus, users select suitable media that gratify their needs (Katz, Blumler, Gurevitch, 1974).

The theory has been used on media platforms to discover the habits of young adults, and why they are drawn to one medium over another as a means for satisfying their need to communicate with one another (Grellhesl and Punyanunt-Carter, 2012). A number of media studies that looked at audiences and their interaction with new media and their motives behind these interactions have theoretically discussed and empirically investigated these motives using the theory of uses and gratifications (Prueksuralai, 2014).

Theoretically, McLeod and Becker (1981) and Haridakis and Whitmore (2006) pointed out that there are five significant assumptions that this theory operates under: 1) the media audience is active; 2) the audience has a goal and choice behind using a specific medium; 3) the media is engaged in competition with other sources of need gratification; 4) the audience must be aware and capable of communicating their exact motives for media choice and usage; and 5) only audiences can decide the value of the content.

On a practical level, the identified uses and gratifications that other similar studies have highlighted are: entertainment, socialisation, information seeking and sharing, passing the time, surveillance, social interaction and communication, relaxation, education and self-expression (Musa, Azmi and Ismail, 2016; Whiting and Williams (2013). Similarly, another study by Lee (2013) emphasised the following news consumption gratifications: 1) information and surveillance-motivated news consumption; 2) entertainment-motivated news consumption; 3) opinion-motivated news consumption (i.e. opinion formation, affirmation, and avoidance); social-motivated news consumption. Interestingly, a study by Karimi *et al.* (2014) argued that cultural differences among countries could play a role in determining what kind of needs people seek based on the culture they live in, and therefore my research tries to understand the needs and gratification for university students behind watching socio-political news in Jordan.

The debate and application of uses and gratification theory in media studies, especially social media, have gained wide scholarly attention over the last decade. The following part of this section will now consider other studies that intersect with my study to draw a fuller picture into the different needs, reasons and gratifications users obtain from using traditional and online media. However, it is important to mention that my research on using this theory will be to compare between television and social media in order to create a model to predict the different needs that the two platforms offer to young people in the context of socio-political news in Jordan.

As an example of the use of social media, Ballard (2011) argued that uses and gratification theory could be used as an efficient approach to examine Twitter as a social media network. The results of Ballard's study revealed Twitter users achieve greater gratifications from the "passive functions" such as searching, retweeting and following other users of Twitter rather than its "active functions" such as Tweeting, mentioning other users and directly messaging other users.

Another example in which the assumptions of the theory were applied to discern the gratifications obtained from using Facebook is research conducted by Quan Haase and Young (2010, p.350) comparing the gratifications obtained from Facebook and instant messaging. This found that Facebook was used to "pastime, affection, fashion, share

problems, sociability, and social information”, while instant messaging was used more for “relationship maintenance and development”.

This is in line with the opinion put forth by Shao (2009, P.18), in which he argued that users consume social media platforms in different ways for different reasons. Shao investigated User-generated media such as YouTube from the perspective of uses and gratifications. He divided his conclusions into three parts. Firstly, he argued it acted to fulfil different needs which he categorised as information, mood management, and entertainment. He stated that entertainment could be more of a leading factor in the use of User-generated media. Secondly, it fulfilled the need for social connection by interacting with other people. Thirdly, he added that users consume the media content on these platforms to fulfil the need for “self-expression and self-actualisation” in which he argued that both needs could have an impact on shaping users’ personal identity. Similarly, Froget *et al.* (2013, p.134) explored the different motivations Mauritians gain from using Facebook in which he identified eight sets of motivations: “use to meet people, use for entertainment, use to maintain relationships, use for social events, use to share media product, use for product inquiry, use for discussion, and the use for information”. These items were tested on a sample of 392 Facebook users in Mauritius. The study concluded that there were positive correlations between the use of Facebook with all the eight items identified. “Use for entertainment” was the highest need followed by the “use for discussion” in second and “use to meet people” in third.

In relation to politics, Park *et al.* (2009) conducted a survey of college students to explore how the gratifications Facebook groups users obtained impacted on their civic and political participation offline. The study examined recreational uses and informational uses of Facebook in relation to civic and political action in which they found that informational uses were more correlated to civic and political action than other uses.

In summary, this section highlighted the relevance of this theory in the context of news consumption on television and social media. It reviewed some of the studies that used the theory to try to understand audiences’ reasons and needs behind their usage of the media. This theory will be employed in my research to understand the different uses and gratifications university students in Jordan seek to obtain from using television and social media for socio-political news.



### 3.5 Development of Public Sphere and the Role of Social Media for Communication

*The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* by Habermas (1989) provides an influential basic model for looking at the interaction of communication processes, media within the arena of politics. He described a structural transformation that is deemed significant and which led to replacing the critical-rational sphere of the public at the beginning of the 20th century from the advent of mass circulation of newspapers and the continued growth of radio broadcasting services onwards.

Following from this, Habermas (2006) has identified seven actors that form public opinion in the political public sphere, so that the mediated political communication is carried out by elites. In this model the two main groups who play a role on the virtual stage of the public sphere are politicians who practise and represent public opinion and the media, comprising journalists who collect and publish the news. Other groups that take part on this virtual stage are lobbyists, advocates, experts, moral entrepreneurs and intellectuals.

Habermas's interpretation of the public sphere has been used as a reference by contemporary media theorists such as Fraser (1990) and Hallin (1994) whose work criticised Habermas's work on the public sphere. Fraser, for example, raised the matter of inequalities in society between wealth and power and whether that the public sphere can actually be realised in this context. Whereas Hallin (1994, p.2) stressed that Habermas's account of the relation of the public and private spheres has been criticised for obscuring the political significance of gender. "His account of the later history of the public sphere is extremely thin ... He jumps abruptly from the salons of the eighteenth century to the mass culture of the 1950s, which he understands according to the simplistic model of early critical theory".

The emergence of the internet has added social media as one of the institutions that function in the public sphere. The public sphere theory developed in 1962 is discussed here as a means of demonstrating what social media can democratically make possible and whether it serves its users as a new space like the other spheres that existed before

the time of broadcasting for seeking news information, knowledge and deliberative democracy (Habermas, 1989).

Habermas defined the “bourgeois public sphere” as:

the sphere of private people come together as a public; they soon claimed the public sphere regulated from above against the public authorities themselves, to engage them in a debate over the general rules governing relations in the basically privatised but publicly relevant sphere of commodity exchange and social labour (1989, p.27).

Habermas (1989) traced the public sphere before the development of the traditional mainstream media, for example, radio and television, today. He has described how the public or citizens between the seventeenth and mid-twentieth century used to gather in public places such as salons, coffee houses and theatres to reach an understanding and have deliberations that were independent of state interferences. The public sphere was taking place in spaces for the middle class and private citizens who could come to these spaces together as a public to talk about issues of public concern. Citizens’ sources in these organic gatherings and discussions were free from any political forces and commercialised media institutions.

Habermas argued that the aim of the public sphere was about people getting together to discuss matters of their own and then throughout the years it developed to allow people to get involved in criticising the practices of the state (Stevenson, 2002) as it practically expanded out of the places they used to gather in such as the coffee houses and salons. It was only male members of certain classes that were allowed to get involved in these conversations such as the nobles, intellectuals and bourgeoisie. They met to discuss works of literature which shifted afterwards into political critique and discourse (Stevenson, 2002). Women and others such as servants used to be looked at as inferiors and therefore had no access to the political public sphere at this time and their influence was discounted by Habermas (Gripsrud, 2009).

The structure of the public sphere has continued to develop over time, and a new socially complex public sphere came into existence with the era of industries as well as the rise literacy rates, more schools and improved education. All of this made it possible for more

people to be involved in public discourse (Gripsrud, 2009). This new socially complex sphere which contributed to the fragmentation of the public sphere came to include small and large social spaces; these small spaces included “the union, the tee-total society, the party, the suffrage club, the sports club, the religious and missionary associations” and large ones such as “labour movement, the Christian grass-roots movement”(Gripsrud, 2009, p.11). Later, the public sphere became more noticeable with the rise of radio broadcasting as it represented a much more inclusive message and space that can reach a wide range of the public. Television later contributed largely to the overarching public sphere, similarly the case with satellite and cable television which have changed the broadcasting landscape by bringing more competitions among these channels. Likewise, to a greater extent with the world wide web which brought within an open virtual space which contributed to a more segmented public sphere (Gripsrud, 2009).

The Habermasian public sphere has been discussed by many academics such as Dahlgren, and McQuail. However, in a further development of the concept, Dahlgren (1993, p.3) defined the public sphere as “a special social space that offered the possibility of citizens to engage in discussion on the state’s exercise of power”; McQuail (2010, p. 569) defined it as:

the conceptual space that exists in a society outside the immediate circle of private life and the walls of enclosed institutions and organizations pursuing their own (albeit sometimes public) goals.

The public sphere has also been regarded as a forum allowing universal access by citizens for communication and debate on issues of social importance (Gripsrud, 2009).

Splichal (2002, p. 8) has argued that the social function of the media is at the centre of the conceptualisations of the public sphere. He points to the notion of “Publicity” in the media as a continuation of people’s right to freedom of opinion and expression. He then discusses the power and control of the media as a fourth state, also its freedom to have access and broadcast information, which is subjected to attempts at distortion by the government and private sectors in order to impose their agenda.

The advent of communication technologies such as the internet and digital media networks made democratisation of the media more possible and made it a more realistic

tool for the realisation of the public sphere. Many people can now gain access online and get involved and participate from anywhere and at any time they choose using either laptops or mobile phones (Prueksuralai, 2014; Bowman and Willis, 2003). This technology allows people to gather publicly and engage in discussion on issues concerning them (Boyd, 2007a, p. 2). The emergence of a virtual sphere 2.0 was further suggested by Papacharissi where social media such as blogs and YouTube allowed citizens to express discussions actively (Papacharissi, 2009). This has led to the rise of a new public sphere which is novel as new communication protocols exist between different communication processes (Castells, 2009). Interestingly, some authors also argue that social media platforms such as YouTube are a form of cultural public sphere since it enables encounters between individuals of different cultural identity to unite politically (Jean Burgess and Joshua Green, 2009). Fuchs (2014) further challenges the idealism of the public sphere and argues for a materialistic understanding and revision of Habermas' original concept to embrace the view of critical political economy in the analysis of social media. Social media creates a medium that blurs the lines between the public and private sphere. Fuchs and Trottier (2013) further illuminate the liquefaction of the boundaries by explaining how social media integrates sociality and social roles whereby convergence of cognition, communication and cooperation coexist in the creation of a personal profile. This itself is neither positive nor negative. However, the neoliberal framework logic, private profit and state power colonise systems of economy and state which ultimately leads to commodification and bureaucratisation (Fuchs 2014). The current way social media is used which includes consenting to use private information of users for advertisements and business is conflicting with Habermas' principles which has the potential to depoliticise the public sphere (Habermas, 1991). Fuchs cites Marx's (1843) opinion that a capitalist media is ultimately commercial, which can never truly constitute a public sphere. The justification is that the commercial media is an inequality in opportunity itself to those who do not possess money and political influence. Overall, Fuchs (2014, p.89) argues that contemporary social media creates three main antagonisms:

- a) the economic antagonism between users' data and social media corporations' profit interests,
- b) the political antagonism between users' privacy and the surveillance-industrial complex as well as citizens' desire for accountability of

the powerful and the secrecy of power, c) the civil society antagonism between the creation of public spheres and the corporate and state colonization of these spheres.

Hence, contemporary social media does challenge classical liberalism's major assumptions, and in Habermas' terms it has the potential to be a public sphere; however, a public service social media is the only way to serve the public interest and transcend antagonism to truly create a public sphere (Fuchs, 2014).

Various researchers have treated the concept of the public sphere as presented by Habermas to be a building block which contributed significantly to the layman's understanding of deliberation and communication. While the public sphere is "a construct of its time", the mass media environment which dominated the public sphere can be argued according to Habermas to have also segmented the public sphere. Yet it also allowed more overlapping and complex publics and systems of communications (Bruns and Highfield, 2015, p.98). Having a compelling analysis of the subsequent impact of social media within public spheres requires moving beyond the prescribed orthodox model of the public sphere, which can then allow for a more complex and dynamic conceptual framework which can recognise the varying forms of public communication with specific regard to online communication (Bruns and Highfield, 2015).

Bruns and Highfield (2015) argued that detachment from Habermas's view is also observed by theorists, such that the term public sphere itself is a concept that has resulted in conceptualizations in competition with each other in a similar fashion to community, culture or society. It may be helpful to delve into the various definitions of publics, and the public sphere, as proposed by various scholars before a space within social media, can be construed.

On a general level, Bruns and Highfield (2015) have mentioned that various scholars have envisioned the separation of the public spheres, as Webster and Ksiazek (2012) and Dahlgreen (2009) both refer to the public sphere as political, whereas Hartley and Green (2006) refer to the public sphere as cultural amongst other connotations of public spheres which may include a sports public sphere, a business public sphere amongst many others. Then there are examples of technologically driven and operated public spheres which operate through their communication as the chief medium, such that

Benkler (2006) put forward the idea of a networked public sphere, which works through communication platforms online and other similar public spheres, though partial, which include television, print or radio.

Social media could represent a virtual public sphere for its users that might seem to facilitate the potential of participative democracy. In line with this, a study by Loader and Mercea (2011, p.757) discussed:

the potential of social media to facilitate more participative democracy while acknowledging its disruptive value for challenging traditional interests and modes of communicative power

On the other hand, other studies have highlighted the exaggeration and optimism about democracy that social media presents such as the study by Iosifidis (2011), which discussed the traditional Habermasian concept of the national public sphere created by the mass media, and also highlighted the public sphere built around the internet and social media. The study argued that there are some reasons behind the exaggeration in which:

the open participation of the Internet can turn chaotic; there is a problem of inclusiveness; censorship might be an issue; the Internet has become a major arena for corporate activity; the Internet's content is highly partisan; and above all, extensive dialogue and critical discussion (the very essence of the public sphere) is often absent on the Net. (Iosifidis, 2011, p.619)

He also claimed that:

open-platform Public Service Media (PSM) are capable of developing more comprehensive and inclusive social frameworks than online providers. Despite the growing financial gulf between PSM and their commercial competitors, public institutions should be free to expand online and into different platforms. (Iosifidis, 2011, p.619).

In the same vein, the US elections in 2016 are an example of how fake news on the internet and social media could determine the outcome of the presidential elections. A study by (Gunther, Beck and Nisbet, 2018) concluded that fake news might have a potential effect on how significant voters make decisions.

Regarding the role of social media and democracy in Jordan, Malkawi (2012) claimed that social media networks, including Facebook, play a role in expanding the boundaries of democracy in the country as they allow people to express their beliefs and ideas, as well as giving them the freedom to organise and communicate.

In her study, Vendetti (2012) tried to understand how the Jordanian youth access political news in the country as well as understand the level of awareness young people had regarding the constitutional reforms that happened in the country following the Arab Spring. The study found that youth in Jordan had limited awareness about the reforms and amendments that took place in the country and that their political news sources are government-affiliated which reflects the poor political public sphere for youth in the country. She also claimed that “A significant political reform is unlikely to develop without a more open and robust political public sphere” (Vendetti, 2012, p.3). This concern paved the way for this research to question young people about to what extent social media networks can help in increasing their awareness in regard to their local socio-political issues. The next section reviews studies on the potential of social media as a tool for activism and action in implementing social and political change in the real world.

To conclude, it is instructive and valuable to focus on Facebook and YouTube as contemporary platforms of mass social media to allow for the exploration of internal structures that are diverging and as pointed out by Papacharissi (2010, p.140), “social network sites expand the number and range of individuals who may enter the privately public space of the private sphere.”

It is noted that social media encourages varying degrees of engagement through or with participation within civil communication, public and affective publics (Papacharissi, 2015), which brings forth an alternative perspective to the notion of personal public spheres (Schmidt, 2014). Across these platforms and across the entire range of both public and private forms of communication, enables evidence for the post-public sphere divergence that has been constructed so far to be made available (Bruns and Highfield, 2016).

### 3.6 The Concepts of Participation, Engagement and Awareness Through the Lens of Digital Media

*“Political beliefs and actions spring from assumptions, biases, and news reports. In this critical sense politics is a drama taking place in an assumed and reported world that evokes threats and hopes, a world people do not directly observe or touch.... The models, scenarios, narratives, and images into which audiences for political news translate that news are social capital, not individual inventions. They come from works of art in all genres: novels, paintings, stories, films, dramas, television sitcoms, striking rumours, even memorable jokes. For each type of news report there is likely to be a small set of striking images that are influential with large numbers of people, both spectators of the political scene and policymakers themselves.” Murray Edelman, *From Art to Politics*, p. 1.*

Building on this quotation taken from Edelman, politics is a mediated experience such that political actions and attitudes are a result of the interpretations of newly available information through a lens of preconceived notions and assumptions, which have been constructed from a range of socially shared cultural sources. While this has always been the case, it may be safe to state however that this is not a mere coincidence but is supported through artificial but far-reaching structures and social practices of the researchers, media and the political elite, which basically distinguishes between opinions and facts, citizens and experts, public affairs and culture amongst other things.

As this research is concerned with political awareness, discussing political knowledge first facilitates a better understanding of the complex concept that defines political awareness, as political knowledge leads to political awareness.

Researchers have continuously found that political knowledge can be forecasted by mass media, also, within the political knowledge sphere, most research is predominantly within traditional outlets of mass media and news consumption (Lee and Cappella, 2001; Bekkers *et al.*, 2011). However, the novelty of new media and its subsequent impact still needs more academic attention (Shafi and Vultee, 2016). The academic discussion of the use of digital media which encompasses the internet and social media and its impact on political knowledge and participation is divided into two parts, a part which argues for the strong potential and positive effects of both on political knowledge and participation



(Dimitrova *et al.*, 2014 cite the work of Hendricks & Denton, 2010; Norris, 2001; Papacharissi, 2002) and the other part which argues that factors other than technology have more influence on political knowledge and participation (Dimitrova *et al.*, 2014 cite the work of Baumgartner & Morris, 2010; Bimber, 2001; Prior, 2007; Putnam, 2000). The study of Dimitrova *et al.*, (2014) however, investigated the use of different forms of online media and their effects on political knowledge and participation and concluded that the effects of digital media on political knowledge and participation are limited. However, they found, for example, that the use of some online news sites can lead to higher levels of political knowledge while the use of social media and political party websites has only little impact on political knowledge. Recent research on the use of social media and its effects on political knowledge can be seen through the work of Lee and Xenos (2019) which was conducted on two sets of survey data collected during the time of presidential elections in 2012 and 2016 in the United States of America; they concluded that social media use in politics has no significant impact on political knowledge. Similarly, but specifically in the consumption of news via social media, the study of Cacciatore *et al.* (2018) which was conducted on Americans use of social networking sites, specifically Facebook, found that consumption of news information through Facebook did not relate to political knowledge.

Empirical evidence and studies of social media news consumption and its relation to political knowledge and politically informed citizens are still scarce (Cacciatore *et al.*, 2018). My research tries to fill this gap in the context of Jordan unlike most of the other scholarly works which are focused within the American context. I also argue that the study and understanding of social media news consumption and its impact on political knowledge is an important subject to be addressed in academia especially in a country like Jordan in the midst of other countries in turmoil, social media is used as a source of news information that can shape public opinion which may translate into participation, engagement or action online and offline.

Similarly, Boulianne (2015) highlights that studies of the impact of media use on knowledge and civic awareness are still limited and therefore, he argues in this regard that someone's awareness of what is going on around them and the world could be shaped by exposure to traditional media news sources as well as social media news sources which increases their knowledge. He also adds that this increased knowledge

about what is happening in the world will create a sense of interest to become eventually involved in the political process. Similarly, when looking at the use of online news, civic awareness and engagement, Boulianne's (2015) research results found that online news is indirectly affecting engagement through increasing civic awareness and also that these forms of engagement are more pronounced when it comes to voting and boycotting in comparison to signing petitions.

To best understand the meaning of the concept of political awareness, Delli Carpini and Keeter (1996, cited by Amer, 2009, p. 359) defined it as "how much factual information voters have about politics." Similarly, the work of Amer (2009, p. 359) which explains the concept as "a function of acquiring knowledge about politics". Amer (2009) stated that the term political awareness has been used and discussed in previous academic studies using various concepts such as political knowledge, political information, political expertise, and political sophistication. Amer (2009) also cites the work of Fiske *et al.* (1983) as they define political awareness as a combination of interest, knowledge, and participation.

For my research, socio-political awareness is taken as being knowledgeable about and aware of socio-political issues in the local community, the country as a whole, and the world at large. It also involves an individual's understanding of their role in society and the impact of their subsequent actions. Whereas socio-political news issues are looked at as news issues that have purely political elements or have elements of both political and social factors together such as conventional current affairs, crime, health, flash floods, and environmental issues that are broadcast in news programmes and bulletins.

In the context of Jordan, research on the effects of social media on political awareness is still scarce; however, a recent study by Jarrar and Hammud (2018) has explored the use of social media and its role in political awareness and social responsibility in a sample of students at Philadelphia University in Jordan. They found that there is a significant relationship between the use of social media and increased levels of political awareness and social responsibility.

Of the studies that have looked at the concept of political awareness and social media news, Reuter and Szakonyi (2015) investigated political awareness obtained from social media in non-democratic regimes which covered the electoral fraud in Russia's

parliamentary elections in 2011. They argue that political awareness increases if social media news is politicized by elites.

Political awareness gained from online political discussion is "a significant type of political participation that has been facilitated by social media" (Molaei, 2014, p.120). Media can stimulate social participation by providing knowledge through different types of information and agendas. News about social and political matters is part of the information that the media provide (Pasek *et al.*, 2006).

On the other hand, as Putnam (2000) argues, political knowledge can be promoted by the media. The traditional media, among other spheres such as books and the internet, can promote political awareness and help people to learn about different matters. However, the time and energy spent engaging with these different types of media means that young people will be less likely to be engaging in political activities.

In the same context, before moving the discussion into the concept of political participation, I will consider the concept of political sophistication, discussed in the previous literature as part of political awareness (Amer, 2009). However, the term itself, which has been discussed in great detail by Shafi and Vultee (2016), is defined as the capacity to provide intelligent and informed opinions by the public on the issue of national and public interest, with the underlying assumption that an informed sophisticated public contributes to the strengthening of the political democracy. In my research, I argue that social media are new mediums to be used as political communication sources among highly informed individuals, which can enrich political sophistication. They can be used as platforms to interact with the public and disseminate news information (Kushin and Yamamoto, 2010). Additionally, there have been studies which provide empirical evidence of the positive relationship between the use of the potential of the internet and political knowledge, efficacy, involvement, and participation (Kaye & Johnson, 2002; Nisbet & Scheufele, 2004; Hardy & Scheufele, 2005; Tedesco, 2007; Xenos & Moy, 2007; Gil de Zu'ñiga *et al.*, 2009).

Theoretically, the concept of participation is complex, and from a semantic and political-ideological standpoint, a struggle to grasp. Macroscopically, we can look at participation as both partial participation and full participation. Partial participation can be defined as "a process in which two or more parties influence each other in the making of decisions

but the final power to decide rests with one party only." (Pateman 1972, p. 70), whereas, full participation is defined as "a process where each individual member of a decision-making body has equal power to determine the outcome of decisions" (Pateman, 1972, p.71). Microscopically, we can delve deeper into analysing whether participation is authentic or "pseudo participation." This brings into consideration the archetypical models, the minimalist model, and the maximalist model. The minimalist model has been defined as one in which "democracy is confined to processes of representation, where participation is limited to elite selection through elections and the political to the domain where political elites organise their decision-making processes" (Carpentier *et al.*, 2007, p.107). On the other hand, in the maximalist model, "democracy is seen as a more balanced combination of representation and participation, and the political is articulated as a dimension of the social" (Carpentier *et al.*, 2007, p.107). Which model takes precedence is partly subject to our practices (minimalist or maximalist) which ultimately shape the organisation of our political reality (Carpentier *et al.*, 2007).

Some researchers such as Kwak *et al.* (2010) found that there is a link between the use of social media for news information and users' political participation. Similarly, de Zúñiga, Molyneux and Zheng (2014, p.613) found that "even relational uses of social media may lead people to express themselves politically, thereby putting them on a pathway to participation." However, Brady (1999) claims that political participation must be observable actions in which people freely participate. Furthermore, Vera and Nie (1972) specified four types of political participation, including voting, contacting officials, campaign activity, and collective activities which define political participation. Teorell, Torcal, and Montero (2007) included a broader typology which had five activities: electoral participation, consumer participation, party-based activity, protest activity, and contact activity. However, these typologies have been criticised by other authors. Barrett and Zani (2015) argue political participation takes more varied forms including non-conventional forms such as signing petitions, writing blogs and daubing political graffiti on buildings. Furthermore, Ekman and Amna (2012) have suggested that these typologies have failed to consider latent forms of political participation, such as being members of charity organisations or watching the news on television. In light of recent behavioural changes, a more flexible and broader definition of political participation is necessary as the younger generation has abstained from traditional forms of politics. The

transformation from conventional/formal/traditional forms of participation to alternative/non-conventional/informal types of participation breeds a new type of citizen. The modern era citizen supports fundamental democratic values but is sceptical of conventional systems of representation and resorts to more autonomous means of participation. My survey addresses alternative forms of participation in the younger generation, which includes observing the role of online platforms such as social media news in political participation.

Political engagement has been defined in various ways by different scholars. It differs from political participation, as Carreras (2016, P.161) argues, because the concept itself is broad, and it includes various attitudes and behaviours. He then goes beyond that to distinguish between two types of engagement, specifically cognitive and active political engagement. Cognitive political engagement refers to "citizens' psychological attachment to the political systems; this includes being politically interested, seeking political information, and being attached to one of the political parties.". Active political engagement refers to a more action-based engagement such as "contacting politicians, attending meetings of political parties, and participating in town meetings." Another way of looking at it, for instance, is that of McCartney, Bennion, and Simpson (2013, p.14), whose analysis added another perspective to the definition by differentiating between political engagement and civic engagement. They argue that political engagement springs from civic engagement, but they are different as civic engagement is a broader term that entails participating actively to make an influence in the community regardless of the set of motivations someone is driven by. Civic engagement encompasses an "individual's activities, alone or as part of a group, that focus on developing knowledge about the community and its political system, identifying or seeking solutions to community problems, pursuing goals to benefit the community, and participating in constructive deliberation among community members about the community's political system and community issues, problems, or solutions".

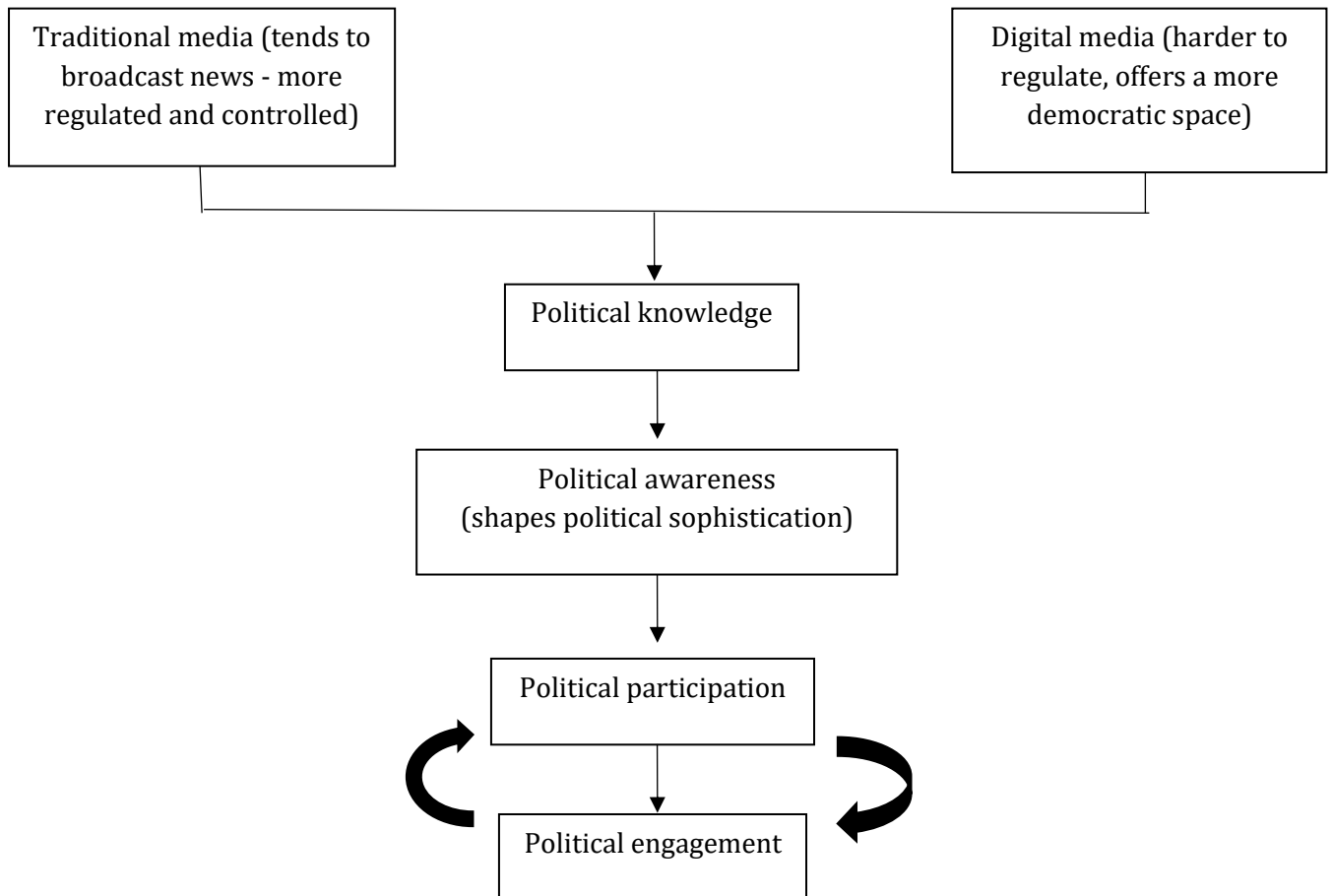
Political engagement, however, refers to the effort made, or activities driven to make an impact on issues, relationships, systems, and structures that are purely political in nature. However, McCartney, Bennion and Simpson (2013, p.14) point out that the set of activities that an individual can do may overlap between these two terms. They give two examples that illustrate the difference and overlap. Civic engagement could be

"participating in a community recycling program". An individual's activity here may not have a pronounced political driven goal, however, it could have political implications. For it to become political engagement it would be "working to enact community laws regarding recycling". Voting, they argue, could fall into both categories of engagements. Conroy, Feezell, and Guerrero (2012, p.1536) suggest political engagement should be defined as "offline conventional forms of political participation and political knowledge" with the caveat that increase in offline participation does not equate to increase in political knowledge.

More recent definitions have argued that political engagement has also taken place on an online platform with terms such as 'e-participation' and 'digitally network'. However, Christensen (2011) defined 'slacktivism' as "political activities that have no impact on real-life political outcomes but serve to increase the feel-good factor of participants' when referring to online participation and engagement". This term was meant to highlight the lack of political substance of online platforms which is deemed politically ineffective by some authors. Therefore, online platforms may have a role in improving knowledge, but the community online may lack authentic political engagement. Hence, Emler's (2011) proposal that political engagement of individuals should be seen as a developmental process which requires attentiveness which eventually shapes political information and results in political knowledge forming more stable political identities. Attentiveness as a concept can be applied both online and offline. Barrett (2012), on the other hand, contended that political engagement is a precondition to participation, and there is an element of behavioural attachment that needs to be present to constitute political engagement. Otherwise, individuals may engage cognitively and emotionally; however, lack of participation in any overt actions towards the polity would suggest a lack of being behaviourally engaged. My questionnaire was designed to assess this aspect to test the effectiveness of behavioural elements via interviews, both online and offline.

In summary, this section has looked at the concepts of awareness, knowledge participation, and engagement within the context of traditional and social media use among the younger generation. The definitions are constantly evolving with time and to consider which state Jordanian youth fall in, my research considers this aspect by asking the participants to self-report their watching habits for television and online news videos on social media which can give an indication of how their exposure translates into socio-

political knowledge, awareness, participation, and engagement. The following sections are going to look at various examples of participation and activism within the context of social media.



**Figure 1: The interplay and dynamics of awareness, knowledge, participation and engagement**

Figure 1 summarises the model of the interplay and dynamics of awareness, knowledge, participation and engagement in the real world that this research will employ.

### 3.7 Digital Democracy and Social Media Interaction

The original vision of the potential of the internet for expansion and deepened democratic involvement is continually compelling. The vastness of the internet sphere makes it easy for political discussions to develop within the online communication, such that there can be an unexpected breakout of politics over social media which could go viral (Hindman, 2008). A few years ago, it was inconceivable that material from protests uploaded on

social media such as YouTube, and subsequently Twitter and Facebook, would become integral institutions contributing towards the formation of political opinions (Pateman, 2018). However, the literature discussed above generally observes that the use of the internet and specifically social media for political engagement is low on the list of activities that an individual may want to do on the internet. Moreover, Dahlgreen (2012) points out that the inherent density of the internet within the media contemporary landscape leads to colossal competition for seeking the attention of the audiences. This attention is not just limited to political affairs, but it is integral to all actors on the internet, especially social media.

Hindman (2018) in his latest work restates these principles while leading us to the conclusion of that while it may be easy to speak and interact over social media, it is still challenging to be heard by the relevant authorities.

Recent work continues to argue for the democratic potential of social media. Gil de Zúñiga, Huber and Strauß (2018, p.1173) have discussed the impact of social media in facilitating democracy based on evidence from the literature, by highlighting three areas namely: “political expression, political participation, and political learning”. They argue that the layout and interactivity features of social media platforms could allow its users to express themselves in a different way from the offline way of interaction with other people. This is supported by Barnidge *et al.* (2018) who argue that citizens tend to express themselves more politically on social media. Similarly, Yu and Oh (2018) claimed that these platforms have the potential to promote democratic citizens. Research has shown that the active or incidental exposure of citizens to the news on social media is positively correlated to political participation (Saldaña; McGregor; Gil de Zúñiga, 2015; Kim; Chen; Wang, 2016).

In addition, the younger generation is using social media in new and creative ways for interaction (Carpentier and Dahlgreen, 2011). The current media landscape, known as the Web 2.0, does not only allow sending spoken or written words but goes further to include remixing, linking, sharing, uploading and producing material in both complex and collaborative ways. Various scholars including Lovink (2011) and Baym (2010) have conducted detailed analysis into the reach of digital media, including their interaction, social cues, progressive structures, mobility and other factors that have an impact on



facilitation of social connections. Social media itself is embedded within the larger internet sphere, which in turn is surrounded by a broader society with its inherent patterns of power, ideological currents, and hierarchy. As people are becoming more fluent in how they use the evolving technologies for communication, they are also, within the online sphere, developing their own civic practices. The tools for communication available today are not only greater in quantity and variety, but are also more effective, cheap and efficient in comparison to a few years ago (Dahlgren, 2012) which is in turn leading to easier collaboration and access.

As the previous section revealed, social media and political participation are complex ideas to formulate. Fuchs (2014) further explores the concept of participatory democracy, describing it as an understanding that includes areas beyond voting such as the culture, the economy, and the household. Therefore, it flows from this that it is difficult to find compatibility between participatory democracy and the capitalist economy. He further questioned whether corporate social media are really participatory.

While there are many positives in social media, scholars have a growing concern that social media is replacing face-to-face interactions and civic discussion. Hence, the exact impact of social media on political sophistication is doubtful and vague since social media already has a very negative effect on the psychology and sociability of the interacting audience (Shafi and Vultee, 2016). Social media has penetrated up to 90% of the population in some countries. In the Arab Social Media Report 2017 survey involving the Arab countries, 46% of people had multiple accounts on at least one social media platform. This has given misleading demographic data, which caused flawed representation (MBR School of Government, 2017).

Gil de Zúñiga *et al.* (2017) argued that social media has started a 'news-find-me perception' and has created 'news-find-me effects.' While citizens can view political news information through social media, citizens start to perceive that they will be exposed to the relevant news via social media, which halts political learning. In 'post-truth' era of policymaking, diplomacy and political communication media 'bots' have played an active role in influencing the public opinion globally on both minimalist and maximalist levels (Arab Social Media Report, 2017). These 'bots,' arguably, have manipulated the public with 'fake news,' false propaganda or inadequate accuracy of political knowledge which

has had an influential outcome on a global level (Arab Social Media Report, 2017). Furthermore, the users of multiple social media accounts may have a varied representation of their views on each of these accounts. Reasons for these in Arab countries might include cultural restrictions or contrasting objectives that exist for people using social media platforms (Arab Social Media Report, 2017). Various scholars highlighted a significant flaw that social media brings misinformation of political knowledge, which tends to influence and replace real-life politics and social activities of users (Shafi and Vultee, 2016). Besides that, the Arab Social Media Report, 2017 states that 15% of people were reported to use false information, with 61% having a fake name when accessing social media platforms. This makes segmenting people's views, behaviours, and sentiments based on demographic information a challenge for policymakers.

Fuchs (2014, 2017) studied different mediums of social media that demonstrated the line between actual political news and entertainment is now blurred because a vast majority of the audience interacts with socio-political news through the entertainment modes of published news which therefore critically impacts their knowledge while also circumventing effective participation into media forums that are benefitting the elite only. However, Dimitrova *et al.* (2014) provides an opposing view that social media and political use have no interrelationship. Therefore even if audiences are just following a political elite over social media, or interacting through comments on political blogs and articles, this suggests that social media does increase political awareness (Reuter and Szakonyi, 2015) but essentially does not contribute to the understanding of political institutions and procedures and in fact is just idle commenting and sharing.

For instance, the Arab Social Media Report, 2017 stated 76% of people express their opinion by clicking 'like,' 'dislike' or 'favourite.' 50% express their views using 'emoticons,' 'emojis' or 'smileys' and 30% across the regions use Arabic texts and characters. Fuchs (2014) takes this theory forward by delving into notions of participatory social media while emphasizing that does not reveal participation of the entire audience because social media serves the cause of political elites or big corporations.

Furthermore, the public also tends to abandon their social media accounts. It was reported that 44% of the Arab population had abandoned at least one social media account in 2016 (Arab Social Media Report, 2017). This creates a challenge in understanding if the 'voice' of the public is underrepresented (or overrepresented) as the actual opinions and sentiments are fluid with time and encourage 'pseudo participation' (Arab Social Media Report, 2017). This poses the question of whether political learning is subject to actively seeking news or if people can still obtain knowledge and learn through incidental exposure (Shehata *et al.*, 2015). With the onset of smart technological devices and forums in which participants obtain information, it has sparked the question, does social media bring about change in the interactor's knowledge of political events?

The discussion around the benefits and potential of social media in information and political participation has gained much scholarly attention since the inception of these networks. For example, McClurg (2003) argued that social interactions with these networks could give citizens opportunities to accumulate political information which will likely increase their political participation in the condition of the number of political deliberations that take place on these social networks. Similarly, social media is arguably influencing the individual's social and political attitudes towards participation (Mushtaq, Baig, and Suleman, 2018; Effing, Hillegersberg and Huibers, 2011) or utilised in the form of political participation to coordinate action or movements such as the Arab Spring (Bennett, 2012; Castells, 2015).

However, the existence of algorithmic curation systems designed by social media companies to personalise content for users can pose emerging concerns and dangers about the role of social media in democracy as these mechanisms can create ideological polarisations and decrease the flow of heterogeneous perspectives on news content. Some scholars described it as a "filter bubble," which essentially places users in a bubble created by the personalization systems designed by these companies (Scholar, 2017; Haimk, Graefe and Brosius, 2018; Bechmann and Nielbo, 2018). One of the dangers posed by these systems is arguably its impact in limiting individuals' exposure to a wider spectrum of political ideas (Borgesius *et al.*, 2016).

The debates around the issue of the "filter bubble" have sparked scholarly attention. Scholars' views on this matter are divided into two opinions as some argue for the

benefits of increased exposure to diverse perspectives and discovering news online while others express worries around the issue of the “filter bubble” and the ideological segregation users can experience (Flaxman, Goel and Rao, 2016). The crux of this debate has intensified after the 2016 US presidential elections as well as the United Kingdom - European Union membership referendum due to selective news filtering and fake news content on social media (Scholar, 2017). My research tries to understand if the youth in Jordan that live in a volatile region like the Middle East are aware of these issues when using social media.

In summary, this section discussed the potential of social media in democracy and facilitating political participation. It also reviewed some of the emerging concerns of the democratic dangers of social media in creating ideological segregation. The following section discusses the application of the theory of uses and gratification within the context of news in the media in Jordan.

### 3.8 Social Media and Activism- The Modern Protest Culture

It is pertinent to discuss the engagement of the larger audience through social media and its impact on political protest movements. Various researchers (Cammaerts (2015), Jordan and Taylor, 2004; Cammaerts, 2005; Van Laer and Van Aelst, 2010; Bennett and Segerberg, 2012) have identified core logic for using social media within protest and activist movements which include, organize, network, recruit; coordinating direct action through mobilization; dissemination of movement frames; deliberate, debate, decide and discuss; attacking ideological enemies; surveillance of the surveilled and preservation of artefacts from the protest.

Cammaerts (2015); Mansell and Hwa (2015) highlight the various benefits of political engagement for mobilization through social media. It is observed that social media use leads to lower transactional costs through asynchronous participation but does not necessarily lead to a higher level of political participation. Cammaerts (2015) cites the work of Gillian *et al.*, 2008 which through the example of Global South demonstrates the use of social media and mobile phones in political mobilization and communication, such that the Philippine President Joseph Estrada was forced to resign in 2001 based on the

SMS mobilization by activists. Moreover, social media is known to allow activists to be facilitators of internal debate. Social media inherently acts as a repository of audio-visual contents with symbolic memories relating to ideas, tactics, organizations and protests (Cammaerts,2015; Mansell and Hwa 2015). Moreover, movements through social media are known to transfer knowledge and have a further impact on future movements which is known to be the movement 'spillover'.

Social media began to be seen as a major influence on mass uprisings in the Arab world in early 2011 when the popular rebellion which became known as the Arab Spring burst out in the Middle East and North Africa. The people undoubtedly relied on social media to organise and network with one another (Lawson, 2015). Social media platforms were also used to share information and used for coordination during the pro-democracy movements in the Arab world. Unrest in the Arab world continued for two and a half years, with social media continuing to act as its backbone and support. Apart from activists, influential public figures from the government have also greatly utilised social media for their own ends. With technological advances and extensions, the potential reach of social media can be extended to social movements in general, and obstacles such as language barriers can be easily broken down with the automatic translation tools on social media platforms such as Facebook (Diehn, 2013).

The rapid diffusion of occupying symbolic spaces publicly is most predominant within the Arab nations, such as the protests arising in Tunisia spreading around to Syria, Yemen, Egypt and Libya (Cammaerts, 2015; Mansell and Hwa, 2015). For example, Nanabhay and Farmanfarmanian (2011, p.573) have emphasised the significant role of social media in how events took shape in Egypt and that this particularly occurred through the wide dissemination of videos among lay people. Therefore, these videos were more consumed on social media networks than "mainstream media footage", especially during the early days of the Egyptian revolution, leading to more online traffic, and thus "bypassing mainstream media as the traditional gatekeeper of news". Similarly, according to Sander (2011), even though the exact number of protesters could not be estimated, a large presence in Cairo, Alexandria, and other Egyptian cities can be seen in photographs and videos which were posted numerous times on social media. Throughout the eighteen days' protest, Egyptians were called on to protest through Twitpic, Facebook, and

YouTube by internet-savvy protesters who provided minute-by-minute tweets regarding assembly points in an effort to outwit police (Sander, 2011).

The inherent difference from the protests that occurred before the Arab Spring was the use of social media to coordinate, communicate, mobilise communities, and create awareness among the masses. The use of blogs, Twitter, and Facebook provided activists with opportunities to spread their campaigns through Facebook events, YouTube video sharing, blogs, and articles on personal opinions shared throughout the networking websites. Research conducted after the Arab Spring concluded that nine out of every ten Tunisians and Egyptians used social media to respond to a poll and organise protests while also spreading political awareness (Dubai School of Government, 2011; Roudi, 2011). The Egyptian government reacted by banning the internet across the country so that the activists could not engage with the public; however, this did not significantly hamper the protests since they had already been organised and prepared (Lawson, 2015). While the chief reason for the protests was widespread dissatisfaction with the government, social networking platforms provided people with the opportunity to address their concerns and coordinate protest effectively. The Arab Spring is a prime example of how political activists can nurture social media networks to optimise their ability to reach an audience and create a significant impact.

Another example which demonstrates the use of Facebook in activism in Jordan was the Save Bergesh Forest campaign group which was created on Facebook on 29 April 2011 to halt proposals to build a new military institution in the region of Bergesh Forest, near the city of Ajloun in Jordan's north. The campaign attracted members from different interests, disciplines, and intellectual backgrounds to protest against the project, which they regarded as devastating (Harris, 2015).

A broader regional study by Khondker (2011, p.675) demonstrated that social and political factors, along with the new media, were the reasons behind the Arab Spring. However, new media, including social media networks, played an essential role, particularly in the absence of a free, open media and civil society. Another point to make here is that many states had promoted the development of the new media due to "economic compulsion" which led to consequences for society and politics in these countries.

Facebook videos' audiences in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region are growing rapidly at a rate in the region of twice the global average. Audiences in the MENA region embrace visual communication as a significant tool; people prefer to send visual messages than those in text form (Ciobanu, 2016). Educated young adults are shaping public opinion and are becoming more aware of socio-political events, which they play a significant part in leading and mobilising.

Markham (2014) provides an in-depth analysis of the political subjectivities associated with the use of social media within the Arab Spring. Soon after Ben Ali's fall in Tunisia and Mubarak in Egypt, various commentators began to avoid the use of the term Arab Spring. It seemed that it reflected an awareness of coherent and swift transition by the Middle East towards western-based democracy which was not only unlikely but also the weight of the term Spring pointed to an era that was emerging from the darkness and was therefore deemed politically incorrect. The role of social media within the Arab Spring and other recent protest and political movements such as the 2009 elections in Iran or the 2018 elections in Pakistan and the massive protests against the new income tax law in Jordan is incumbent and pivotal.

A study by Arafa and Armstrong (2016, p.73) highlighted that the technical infrastructure that social media provided to youth in the Arab Spring was a factor in these activities flourishing and developing. They examined "how Arab hunger for decentralized news and information paved the road for the organic growth of a new breed of Arab citizens journalists."

A softer version of the promotion of social action by the use of social media comes from Sheldon (2015, p.2 and p.65) who distinguished between the

formal participation that social media can affect such as voting and the informal civic engagement such as volunteering, activism, and participation in community-driven initiatives

where he emphasises that this type of engagement could be with either politics or social issues

He further argued that social media allowed citizens to express their voices, share information and disagree with things posed by governments as well as "raise awareness of civil society, disseminate courage, and provide support". Similarly, Frangonikolopoulos

and Chapsos (2012) claimed that it brought people together in demanding more change and democracy.

In addition to promoting social action, social media can also play a role in raising public awareness of social matters. For example, Lindsey (2013) argued that social media, through ordinary citizens sending out to the world content on Facebook and YouTube, helped Syrians, for example, to gain international attention, sympathy and support. In line with this, Beckett (2011) argued that social media gave people the ability to get together more closely by empowering them in achieving their cause.

On the other side, a study by Barrons (2012, p.54) argued that the power of social media within the popular uprisings was overrated and that social media “did not constitute the revolution itself, nor did it instigate it”. He further claimed that the focus and attention given to social media over the personal risks that Egyptians had taken, for example, is neglecting these efforts.

It is further pointed out by Rinke and Roder (2011) that while a lot of weight is given to social media blogging interaction in the five years leading up to the Arab Spring, the blogging data itself was predominantly apolitical. However, futile chatting (Hodheinz, 2011) should not be discredited since the primary purposes of engaging with social media is network, socializing and entertainment. Markham (2014) further reinforces that while it may be prudent to judge the seriousness of social media in a lighter vein, the absence of seriousness in social media should not be interpreted as political vacuity. Also, there is no real evidence that points to the depoliticized nature of Facebook, however, Lewinski and Mohammed (2012) through their surveys demonstrate how easy it is for an apolitical status to be converted into a political status by a comment by any single friend. Whereas, Kuebler (2011) draws a clear distinction between campaigners that originated in the Egyptian Kefaya reform era and between those participants that simply participate because they would like to know what is going on around them. Markham’s (2014) analysis states that the statements tweeted by the journalists during milestones in the Arab Spring were varying between banal comments extending support for democratization and straightforward news reporting, whereas other research had suggested that this switching between two communicative techniques of mundane and profound were harder for amateurs than professional tweeters.



Social media encompasses a certain aspect of tangibility, such that it is organic in its development while also being elusive. Various academics have used normative terms to describe the impact that social media has on the protest culture, which includes, empowering (Keubler, 2011); energizing (Agathangelou & Nevzat Soguk, 2011); liberating (Christensen, 2011) and galvanizing (Lynch, 2011), all of which suggest the association of an agency attached to social media.

In summary, this section discussed with examples from Jordan and other Arab countries how social media was used to fight against tyranny and how it is also clear all over the world that social media have had an impact on mainstream news, affecting the way people consume news content, which ultimately can have an impact on their awareness and action on issues concerning their lives.

### 3.9 Summary

In summary, this chapter reviewed related studies that highlight the popularity of and the current trends in media consumption and social media in Jordan. It presented the debates around media consumption and news credibility. It discussed the various and most relevant perception models and theories that this research is drawn based upon. It reviewed the relevant literature on the use of the theory of uses and gratifications in the context of news consumption to employ the assumptions of the theory in order to make a comparison to understand students' motives for watching socio-political news on television and social media. It was followed by a review of the concept of the public sphere and the role of the media in communication to reflect on the interplay between the media and audiences in Jordan and what the current media institutions in Jordan offer to Jordanian audiences and their contributing role to facilitate democracy in the real world.

The chapter also highlighted the impact of social media on political participation by giving examples of the use of social media to make a change in events inside Jordan and outside, such as the Arab Spring. The chapter also acknowledges that social media can be a disaster for political sophistication and participation through presenting the emerging concerns about and dangers of social media for democracy after analysing the potential of social media in information and political participation. The chapter also reviewed the debates around the similarities and differences of the concepts of awareness,

participation and engagement to help understand the role of the media in increasing political awareness, participation and engagement. It also highlighted the role of internet and social media in democracy, political engagement and participation. Overall, understanding the role of social media news consumption and its impact on political knowledge, participation and engagement is essential, especially in a country like Jordan in the midst of other volatile countries, where social media is used as a source of news information that can shape public opinion which may translate into participation, engagement or action online and offline.

The following chapter will be discussing the theoretical aspects of the methodology used in this research as well as the methods conducted during the implementation of this research.

# Chapter Four: Methodology

## 4.1 Introduction

This chapter will provide the methodological basis of the present study by presenting the two methodological techniques that were used to address the research questions. It was designed to explore the perception of Jordanian university students of their news consumption habits, in relation to the use of different news sources on social media and television in Jordan and the impact of these media on their socio-political awareness and action. This research aims to investigate five elements – first, patterns of news media consumption on television and social media; second, students' interest in socio-political news; third, students' motivations for watching socio-political news videos on television and social media; fourth, students' views of the trustworthiness of the news content coverage on television and social media; and fifth, the role of television in comparison to online news videos on social media in the context of socio-political awareness, participation and engagement.

To best address these elements, the research will use a mixed-methods research design, which can give a more comprehensive approach in collecting data to answer the research questions and achieve the primary goals of the study. This research presents empirical evidence based on data generated by a survey questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. Therefore, this chapter will highlight and discuss these approaches used in research, the benefits of using these approaches, and the way they fit into answering the research questions. The chapter will also explain the methods and procedures of the research design and sampling, ethics, and data collection procedures the research had put in place while collecting the data. Finally, it will also discuss in detail the rationale for the selection of these research methods considering the pros and cons of using these methods.

## 4.2 Research Design

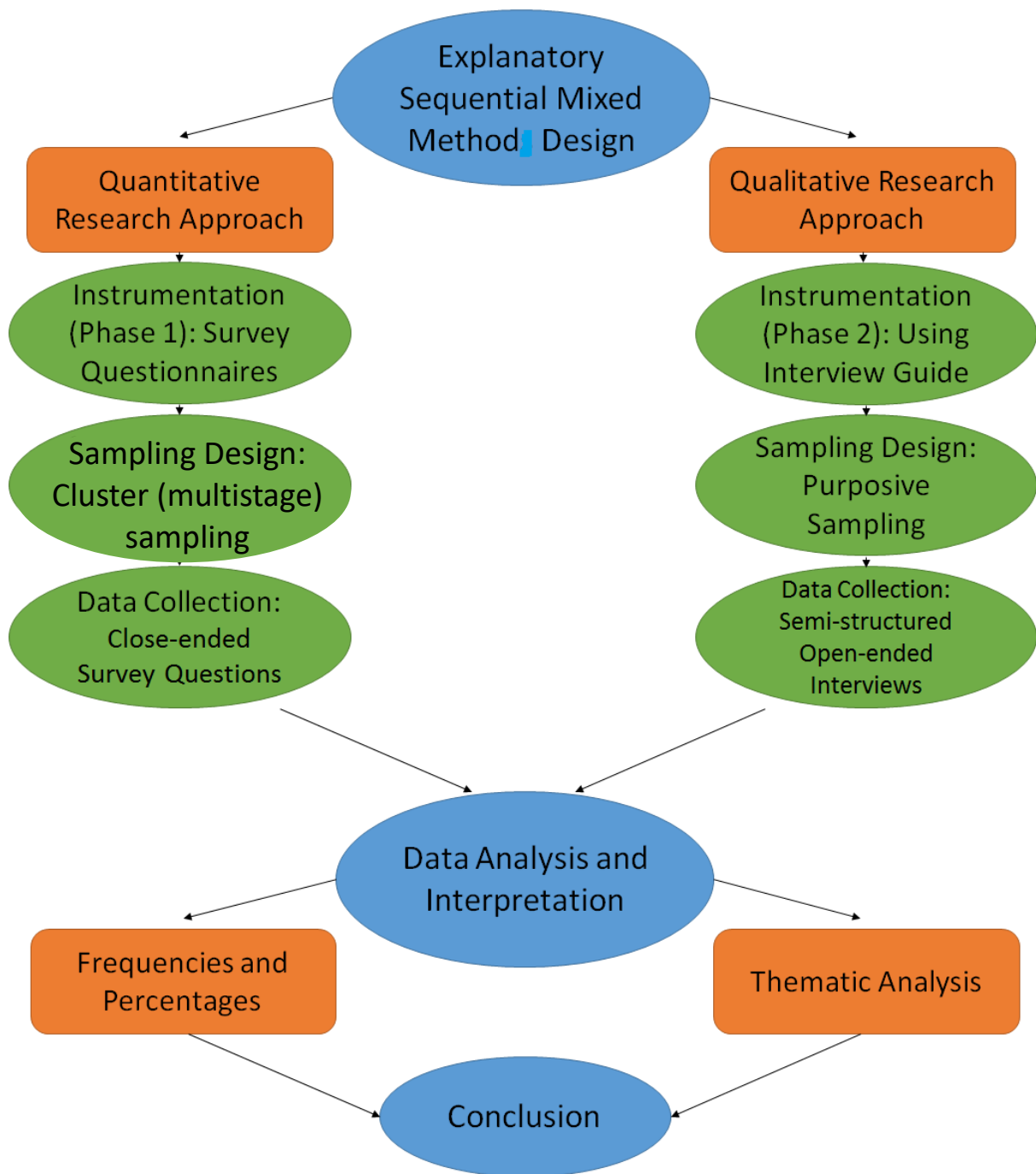
Creswell (2012) argues that research design is a process for collecting, analysing and reporting research in quantitative and qualitative research. The researcher collects diverse types of data that provide more understanding of the research problem. (Creswell, 2012, p.19).

I used an explanatory sequential mixed method design as I was interested in conducting this research in two phases: the first phase being the main study which is the design of a survey questionnaire and the second phase a follow-up study through designing an interviews guide inspired and informed by the first phase in order to collect in-depth data that can enrich and give more comprehensive answers to the first phase (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011). This was the action plan that was used to direct the entire research process, from the research formulation stage through to data collection and reporting within a specified timeframe (Punch, 2005).

This approach suggests that the objective is formulated with the aim of gathering quantitative and qualitative data. However, as explained above, it:

places a priority on quantitative data collection and analysis. This is done by introducing it first in the study, and having it represent a major aspect of data collection. A small qualitative component typically follows in the second phase of the research (Creswell, 2012, p.542).

In my research, I followed a procedure beginning with broad survey design and distribution, followed by conducting semi-structured interviews. The following diagram presents the procedural steps that each phase of the study followed in order to reach the main conclusions of the research.



**Figure 2: Explanatory Sequential Mixed Method Design**

### 4.3 Mixed Methods Research Approaches

To achieve the aim of this study and to best answer the research questions, I used a sequential triangulated mixed methods design.

The concept of triangulation is defined by Denzin (1978) as "the combination of methodologies in the study of the same phenomena" (p. 291).

Researchers who have written about methodologies had different names for this type of research approach (mixing methods), but the main purpose is the same. Synonymous names include methodological triangulation (Morse, 1991); integrated or combined methods (Stecker *et al.*, 1992); combined research (Creswell, 1994); and mixed methodology (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998).

Mixed methods approaches have shown their efficiency in social sciences research. Creswell (2013) argued that using mixed methods in research will enrich our understanding of the research problem more than using one of the approaches alone, adding that this type of research methodology will incorporate elements of both quantitative and qualitative data and therefore, the researcher may be using different philosophical approaches and unique designs.

According to Sheperis, Young and Daniels (2017), although conducting mixed methods approach can be more challenging than using either quantitative or qualitative methodological approaches, the benefits in terms of expanding our exploration of the phenomenon and using varied data sources outweigh its difficulties.

The researcher in this regard embarks on one approach during the first stage, for example, quantitative research, and then uses another in the second stage, for example, qualitative research. Thus, the data gathering stages in this research are intended to combine elements comprising a survey questionnaire and in-depth follow-up interviews. They will, therefore, serve as valuable tools for generating comprehensive empirical data about the viewing habits of Jordanian University students of television and online news videos on social media, students' views of the trustworthiness of the news content coverage on television and social media, and the ways in which they interact with these platforms, in order to understand their socio-political awareness and involvement in activities such as protests, campaigns, votes, and joining of political parties. Finally, I

explore the motivations behind watching socio-political news on television and social media (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009).

The reason for using a quantitative approach in this research is to try to understand the consumption patterns of university students in Jordan of socio-political news they watch on television and social media; this will lead to an understanding of the impact of these platforms in regard to socio-political awareness, participation and engagement. Furthermore, it is also used to quantify their habits and attitudes in using these platforms, whereas the qualitative data is used to give more explorations for understanding these consumption habits, behaviours and uses in greater depth.

## 4.4 Data Collection

The study went through several stages to gather and collect data about television and online news videos viewing habits, the types of online news videos students watch on social media, the level of interest in socio-political issues, the level of interest in the type of socio-political news on television and social media, reasons for watching socio-political news on television and social media, students' views of the trustworthiness of the news content coverage on television and social media, and lastly, to gather data on the students use of television and social media in relation to increasing awareness, participation and engagement, Thus, this section will take a closer look at the research instrument used, and the ethics and procedures involved in gathering and analysing the data.

Hence, this study opted to apply the survey methodology due to the targeted large sample population, students from the University of Jordan, in order to cover the diversity of the population inside the university with respect to students' culture and behaviour. Personally, administering the questionnaire allowed the researcher to note participants' reactions to the research questions, and through applying the follow-up interview method, respondents could be encouraged to answer every question as accurately as possible, which is what this study aimed to achieve in data collection (Babbie, 1995; David and Sutton, 2004).

### 4.4.1 Research Instruments

According to Rea and Parker (2014, p.31) "The development of the survey instrument or questionnaire is a crucial component of the survey research process". They also state that

the researcher at this point “must devise a series of unbiased, well-structured questions” that will systematically achieve the aim of the study in obtaining the information required. According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000), a questionnaire is an easy and practical means of gathering data from a large population. The development process of the questionnaire tool can be very time-consuming and require a lot of focus on detail, the wording of questions, questionnaire length, costs associated with its implementation, and most importantly formatting of the instrument, as this varies based on whether the survey is an in-person interview, or a mail-out, web-based, or telephone survey (Rea and Parker, 2014, p.31).

The use of a questionnaire in this study enabled me to collect data on a large number of participants as discussed above. It was designed carefully, taking into consideration the research questions of this study. Thus, the questionnaire was grouped into five sections. Section one was designed to capture data on the demographic characteristics of the respondents, and it included gender, age, and student’s faculty.

The sections from two to five captured data regarding the main research questions. Section two deals with consumption and viewing habits relating to television and online news videos on social media. The respondents were asked about the number of hours they spent watching television on a daily basis. Regarding television, the questionnaire listed a group of the most common television channels that provide socio-political news so the participants can tick all the television channels that they usually watch to consume socio-political news. Regarding online news videos on social media, they were asked about their viewing habits of the different types of sources of online news videos that they usually watch on social media.

Section three starts with a question about their level of interest in socio-political issues. Then it moves on to ask the respondents on their level of interest in the types of socio-political news on television in one section and then another section on social media.

Section four stemmed from uses and gratification theory, and it included two sections that ask the respondents about the reasons that motivate them for watching socio-political news on television in one section and in another section they are asked the same questions about the reasons that motivate them to watch socio-political news on social media. The respondents were asked to respond to statements such as “To be able to form



my own opinions about different issues” and the answers they were to choose from ranging from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree).

Section five included three topics. Questions 14, 15 and 16 covered the aspect of socio-political awareness on the three different platforms of satellite television, JRTV and social media, whereas question 17 asked about the level of trustworthiness of the news content on the three platforms. The last two questions, 18 and 19, included the actions which the respondents may have taken after watching television news or online news videos on social media. The respondents were given statements such as “Speaking to a member of the family about the socio-political news you watch” and “Joining a political party”, the answers they were given to select from ranging from 1 (Never) to 5 (Always). Likert-type responses such as from 1 (Strongly agree) to 5 (Strongly disagree), from 1 (Always) to 5 (Never), and from 1 (Completely) to 5 (Not at all) were used in other sections throughout the questionnaire. For additional details, see Appendix 1. The questionnaire had to be easily understood, internally consistent, and must lend itself to appropriate and meaningful data analysis (Rea and Parker, 2014, p.31).

The interviews were structured by key themes to give a degree of organisation and flow while allowing for some flexibility in asking additional questions. The themes were ordered rationally. However, this order could be changed if the conversation developed differently during the interview.

## 4.5 The Survey and Interview Approach

For primary research, it is common to gather information through observations, surveys and interviews and they are all outstanding methods for collecting data when conducting primary research, however, unlike observation which can be categorised as a first-hand tool for collecting data, surveys and interviews are self-reported data tools and therefore, it is important to note that respondents may be naturally biased about their attitudes and behaviours while filling out the questionnaire or giving out information during the time of the interview (Driscoll, 2011). Therefore, the research will keep this aspect in mind while analysing and discussing the data in chapter six.

Data for this study were gathered from a combination of survey questionnaire responses and semi-structured interviews from the study sample. The survey was the main tool to

gather information from the study sample, then followed by the interviews as a complementary source of information. The interview outline consisted of the main topics and questions to serve as a guide. Its construction allowed the interviewees the freedom to discuss relevant topics without the obligation of following the order of the set questions.

The interviews were conducted separately to the questionnaires from students at the University of Jordan, all of whom had Jordanian nationality. All the questions that were asked in the interview were drawn from the main research aims and objectives as well as the survey questions, including issues that have been arisen from the survey.

#### 4.5.1 The Survey Approach

According to Gunter (2000), surveys include a great deal of preparation and management in order to collect rigorous data. They are often used to investigate people's attitudes, habits, and beliefs towards a particular phenomenon the researcher intends to study. Similarly, according to Hansen *et al.* (1998), the questionnaire is the tool of data collection in surveys. Blair *et al.* (2013), indicated that surveys use a structured questionnaire with standardised questions in order to gather self-reported data from the sample of the study. Hence, in order to extract primary data from the respondents, University of Jordan students, a structured self-reported instrument was designed based on the study objectives, which contained only closed-ended questions. The primary rationale for using a self-reported questionnaire was that questionnaires provide an opportunity to ask a patterned set of questions to the intended participants in order to establish the consistency of answers to specific types of questions (Berger, 2000).

Colton and Covert (2007) stated that an instrument such as the survey questionnaire could usually be employed to obtain information in support of observations, measure attitudes, and assess views and theories across a mixture of subjects and areas. These instruments are designed to carry out such tasks. However, the name of the instrument can differ depending on the aim and respective fields and subjects they are used on. Names include, for instance: polls, survey questionnaires, and attitude scales to name but a few (Colton and Covert, 2007).

Rating scales are often included in survey questionnaires; these are self-reporting instruments as they also often comprise open-ended questions, which provide flexibility to the data. Surveys can employ specific sampling strategies to obtain answers which usually represent the combined sample population of interest (Colton and Covert, 2007).

Often, using a survey is the standard procedure when planning to examine the attitudes and beliefs of the intended sample. The data collected does not represent truthful or untruthful information, and that is because the researcher's interest only lies in the character of respondents' ethics, viewpoints, philosophies, beliefs, and feelings; these are information that surveys are best suited to yield (Colton and Covert, 2007).

According to Dörnyei, (2009), there are three types of information which survey questionnaires can gather about the respondents, namely: factual data, behavioural data, and attitudinal data (Dörnyei, 2009). Firstly, factual data mainly cover the subject description. They usually include details consisting of demographic backgrounds such as age and gender, marital and social status, area of residence, education level, association, occupation, and financial status. These data show personal details as well as any other background information signifying each respondent, which may be relevant to better understanding the findings of the survey (Dörnyei, 2009). Behavioural data are gathered to learn about respondents' actions, and choices in the past or present and also could include personal lifestyle history. Behavioural questions in the survey of this research, for example, included television watching habits, time spent online, actions, and activities (Dörnyei, 2009). The third kind of information which can be obtained in the surveys is attitudinal data. These types of data provide insights into the sample's perceptions, viewpoints, and beliefs on the matter of interest. Attitudinal data can provide a vast array of findings concerning moral values, ethics, attitudes towards a particular issue, respondents' principles and interests, and so forth (Dörnyei, 2009).

In the context of my research, I developed and designed a survey questionnaire based on principles derived from the literature review above containing closed-ended and open-ended questions, with the majority of the questions being closed-ended to elicit information to answer the research questions and achieve the primary goal of the study. The questionnaire was exposed to amendments and refereed by specialists in the field.

The categories of questions asked were derived from the aims and objectives of the study such as determining the primary reasons of youths in watching socio-political

news on television and social media, as well as the types of online news videos the sample watch on social media. Further questions explore students' views of the trustworthiness of the news content coverage on satellite television, JRTV, and online news videos on social media. It included other questions that stimulate responses in order to explore the overall trends of socio-political participation, engagement, and awareness of Jordanian youth, in the context of interacting with online news videos and television in Jordan.

#### 4.5.2 The Advantages of the Survey Approach for the Study

As discussed in Colton and Covert (2007), the research survey methodology is a unique process for data collection, which can be used to obtain sensitive information. It is a well-known fact that people are often reluctant to disclose personal information, especially information which is sensitive, such as financial status, legal or political involvement, or even lifestyle habits (Colton and Covert, 2007).

Respondents are no different, and usually, in an interview or focus group they are prone to refuse disclosure of such information. For example, an interviewee who is an employee may sometimes be unwilling to disclose details regarding their employer or company, that could be for fear of retaliation or other reasons. However, surveys tend to provide absolute anonymity which alleviates the discomfort of sharing such details through generalised "tick boxes," for instance. Proper surveys normally ensure confidentiality and anonymity to address such complications (Colton and Covert, 2007).

Bulmer's (2004) study showed that within the field of social sciences, a survey questionnaire is a well-established instrument for obtaining information regarding respondents' social characteristics, habitual behaviour, standards, attitudes, and principles and reasons for action with respect to issues regarding the research (Bulmer, 2004).

The findings from surveys may appear to be meaningful, but at times it is the case that additional information cannot be found in the preselected survey variables. Hence, surveys are frequently combined with other data collection methodologies to elicit more detailed results (Colton and Covert, 2007).

Dörnyei (2009) stated that a survey questionnaire's efficiency is unmatched in any other tools of collecting data in terms of information gained for a given time, effort, and financial

resources. When conducting a survey among a particular group of people in a short time, the surveyor can collect a large number of facts in the time frame, with only a fraction of the resources and investment required, compared with interviewing the same sample population. Moreover, the cost-benefit ratio can be significantly lower for a well-constructed questionnaire, due to the fact that data analysis can prove to be fast and relatively straightforward with the aid of technology and software (Gillham, 2000; Dörnyei, 2009). Apart from cost-effectiveness being an advantage of questionnaires, they are also very adaptable, judging by the fact that they can be successfully administered to a variety of participants, in a variety of situations, targeting a range of research areas (Dörnyei, 2009).

Experts and researchers have long supported the advantages of the survey method. For example, Singleton and Straits (2002) identified that surveys, amongst all the methods of research for social research, are one of the most effective means of social explanation when it comes to large and heterogeneous populations, and are able to provide detailed and precise information. In addition, survey research is flexible in normal settings, which provides an easy gathering of information, as it also allows for coverage of an extensive range of materials and it can examine and apply a variety of research questions to the participant. Due to such flexibility, surveys are able to gather large amounts of information from large sample populations (Singleton and Straits, 2002). A study from Hansen *et al.* (1998) also supported the survey as a methodology that allows researchers to achieve a substantial quantity of data rapidly from a large number of people, and at the same time at a relatively low expenditure per respondent. Besides the strengths of the survey instruments, it is important to acknowledge its limitations. Araujo *et al.* (2017, P.173) for example, argued that “the increasingly fragmented and ubiquitous usage of internet complicates the accuracy of self-reported measures.” Similarly, Prior (2009) indicated that sometimes participants might over-report their media consumption habits, and that is because of the reliance on their memory in which they may not remember exactly their media exposure. This research adopted the survey methodology because of its suitability for the large size of the sample population, students from the University of Jordan, in which it could cover the diversity of the population inside the university with respect to students’ culture and behaviour.

### 4.5.3 The Interview Approach

In the area of qualitative research, interviews appear as the methodology most widely recognised and established; Burgess (1984) noted that they are a fundamental way to elicit information with a purpose. From Kvale's (1996) report, it is stated that the literal translation of an interview is an "inter-view," implying the inter-change of views between two parties conversing regarding an issue or matter of interest.

Qualitatively, interviews are one of the most popular communication tools in research. However, interviews can pose some challenges, as Berger (2000) stated that it is hard to know a great deal of information about individuals' past experiences. He further commented that it is also challenging to keep observing them for lengthy periods. However, what is only possible is asking them questions about their activities and experiences. Furthermore, researchers are able to obtain valuable data that uncover central themes participants have in their lives via narratives (Gilbert, 2008). Hence, interviews are an invaluable technique that should be utilised.

Seidman (2006, p.9) stated that: "At the heart of interviewing research is an interest in other individuals' stories because they are of worth," while Vanderstoep and Johnston (2008, p.224) claimed that conducting interviews demands a great deal of "knowledge, experience, skill, and finesse."

Interviewing makes it possible for the researcher to have access to the interviewee's behaviour and the meaning of that behaviour (Seidman, 2006). It is considered an effective method to understand the experience of people's social issues whose lives form a mirror to those issues through gaining an insight into those issues being studied by the researcher (Seidman, 2006, p.14). Interviews can allow the researcher to explore individuals' experiences, and it is a good way to understand the meanings behind these experiences (Seidman, 2006).

However, it is also important for the researcher to keep in mind and acknowledge the limitations of collecting data through self-reported tools such as interviews. Data gathered from respondents in a face to face conversation is a strength as respondents' emotions and beliefs cannot be observed otherwise (Dodd-McCue and Tartaglia, 2010). However, some respondents may report to the researcher things they think the researcher wants to hear or they may not even remember events accurately which can

be a limitation to be taken into consideration while conducting and analysing the interviews (Prior, 2009).

Seidman (2006) states that researchers have to establish access and build good connections with possible respondents who it is unlikely they have ever met before. He adds that the process of conducting the interviews can be challenging as some participants may feel shy to express themselves or hesitate to accept to be interviewed in a phone call as the manner of starting the interviews can be daunting.

However, it is a very satisfying achievement when the researcher overcomes these issues and completes the first set of interviews. Seidman (2006) states that If researchers are interested in eliciting pieces of information about individuals' stories, then interviewing is a profoundly gratifying method to collect these pieces of information.

Interviews are generally categorised as being either structured, semi-structured, or unstructured. The semi-structured interview technique is chosen for this research because of its ability to produce in-depth data and perceptions for the study. The semi-structured interview provides the researcher with the ability to check for reliability, validity, and accuracy of the data. It generates data based on the opinions and experiences of interviewees (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill, 2003). The use of different techniques, known as triangulation, is very useful in all cases and helps the study to ensure the validity and reliability of the data collected (Jankowicz, 2005).

According to Roulston (2010), the semi-structured interview is a type of interview with an active exchange of ideas, based on open-ended questions about areas of interest but aided by probes which are used to stimulate details and explanations about a certain topic (Roulston, 2010). Using the semi-structured interview method always requires the interviewer to prepare an interview guide in advance, which includes a set of questions that are usually open-ended, helping to stimulate the topic of interest. After each respondent answering an interview question, the interviewer will follow up with probes seeking further details and description regarding their respective replies.

Roulston (2010) stated that every semi-structured interview has similar introductory questions. However, the interview material can vary based on the answers given by each individual and the types of follow-up questions asked by the researcher at the time of the interview.

While conducting a semi-structured interview, the interviewer must be ready to listen carefully in order to determine whether the respondent has provided relevant replies to the research questions and also to be able to monitor the time and manner when and in which to ask further follow-up questions (Roulston, 2010). Questions in the semi-structured interview guide may be loosely sequenced and can be rearranged or restructured as long as the point remains the same in response to interviewee participation (Kvale, 1996).

#### 4.5.4 The Advantages and Rationale of the Interview Approach for the Study

Another intention of the current research was to examine the participants' perceptions of social media and television to address the research questions by conducting semi-structured interviews. Using interviews as methods of data collection implies a view of knowledge as generated between people, through conversations and the use of language (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2000). The semi-structured interview provided an opportunity for the researcher to gain an in-depth understanding of the participants' perceptions about social media and television news consumptions, and their opinions about their preferences between social media and television for socio-political awareness. The researcher used the interview questions to encourage consistency in data collection, which was significant to the internal validity and reliability of the findings.

At the time of the interviews, I sat face-to-face with every interviewee, and the purpose and usefulness of the study were explained to them. I also explained to them all the ethical issues in case they wanted to withdraw from the study and gave them the freedom to choose the venue they felt most comfortable in to conduct the interview. Thus, although this method took me more time and effort, it led the interviewees to be more serious about expressing their opinions on the topics being discussed in the interview. Hence, it was found that face-to-face interviews allowed respondents to show their expressions and feelings, which led the researcher to understand better the respondents and to intervene with follow up questions where the researcher deemed this useful (Singletary, 1994).



## 4.6 Language of the Instrument

The survey questionnaire and the interview guides were first written in English and then translated into the Arabic language, as the majority of Jordanian citizens are native speakers of Arabic. The translated version was then submitted to an instructor in the English Department and compared with the original instrument for consistency, and to ensure that the text had maintained an accurate meaning. Arabic-English speakers Dr. Abdelbasit Shaheen and Dr. Amjad Safouri, both of whom lecture in the mass communication and Media faculty in Zarqa University, Jordan, also checked the Arabic translations. The questionnaire translation was also checked by Busrah Muslam and Michael Al-Tamimi, Ph.D. students from Jordan and Saudi Arabia in English Literature and Translation from the University of the West of England, Bristol. They also helped in testing the length and time of completion of the questionnaire, which was around 15 minutes, which was considered acceptable for students to fill in the questionnaire forms. The questions were written in clear and straightforward language to hold respondents' attention and make it easy for them to answer the questionnaire without any difficulties. Regarding the interview guides, the same procedure was followed in writing the questions to ensure the meaning was clear, and the researcher made sure during the interviews that the respondents understood the questions by repeating them if necessary.

## 4.7 Sample Population

The population of the study consisted entirely of university students above the age of eighteen registered at the University of Jordan during the academic year 2018. Only Jordanian students were included in the results of this study, regardless of their gender, specialisation, and academic level.

The university is located in the heart of its capital city, Amman. The age range chosen for the sample was due to the fact that eighteen is the legal age at which students are allowed to express their opinions without the necessity for consent from their guardians. The university was chosen for the collection of the study sample due to its representation of all segments of society in Jordan. This is because the university adopts a representative enrolment structure, whereby students in Jordan from every city, region, and tribe are selected or invited; hence, it is the ideal sample pool. Additionally, examining university students is suitable because they access the internet heavily for social interaction (La

Rose and Eastin, 2004; Pew Research Center, 2002). A study by Quan-Hasse and Young (2010) also found that regarding social networking sites, university students adopt them easily into their lifestyles. Furthermore, university students comprise the significant segment which uses social media networks in the country (Al-dbaysi and Al-tahat, 2013), thus, making them good representative samples for the study.

#### 4.7.1 Sample Size

When deciding the size of the sample, researchers need to consider selecting a sample that is “an approximate microcosm of the working population” (Rea and Parker, 2014, p.30). Similarly, consideration of choosing a representative sample is required.

Also, when it comes to selecting the size of the sample, “larger samples generally yield a higher degree of accuracy than smaller ones”. At the same time, the researcher needs to consider and “weigh the desired degree of accuracy against the increased time and cost that a larger sample size entails.” (Rea and Parker, 2014, p.31). After this, the researcher can look at the available procedures to decide on the type of the sample that can be applied. Generally, it is one of the following: simple random sampling, systematic random sampling, stratified random sampling, and cluster (multistage) sampling (Rea and Parker, 2014, p.31).

The survey size was determined using a simple sample size calculator which generates appropriate sample sizes based on two widely accepted formulas for the purpose, namely the Sample Size Calculation and the Finite Population Correction.

According to Rea and Parker (2014, p.163), the researcher must take into account “two interrelated factors with specificity before proceeding with the selection of sample size: level of confidence and confidence interval”. They also explained that:

The level of confidence is the risk of error the researcher is willing to accept in the study, given time requirements, budget, and the magnitude of the consequences of drawing incorrect conclusions from the sample

They also state that “the researcher will typically choose either a 95 per cent level of confidence (5 per cent chance of error) or a 99 per cent level of confidence (1 per cent chance of error)”, adding that the “confidence interval determines the level of sampling accuracy that the researcher obtains”.

For this study, the formulation of the study's sample size was based on the standard confidence level of 95% and a realistic 5% margin of error, with around 40,000 as the population size representing the number of students in the University of Jordan including both male and female students. Therefore, via the sample size formulae, 381 respondents are the sample size suggested by the calculation (Penwarden, 2014). However, for my research, 1,000 questionnaires were distributed among the students of the University of Jordan to increase the accuracy rate and to avoid receiving fewer valid responses than the required sample size. Out of 1,000 distributed questionnaires, 703 completed questionnaires were collected, resulting in a 70.3 per cent return rate. The anonymity of all respondents was preserved.

In addition, thirty semi-structured interviews were conducted to enrich the data in analysing responses from the survey questionnaires as part of my interest in the students' stories around the topics and research questions this research studied.

#### 4.7.2 Sample Type

Sampling aims to have the ability to generalise the results based on a sample that has been scientifically chosen from a larger population (Rea and Parker, 2014). Sampling generally makes it easier for the researcher due to the lack of a requirement to seek information from every individual of a population (Rea and Parker, 2014).

Conducting probability sampling methods requires both resources and time to be applied appropriately (Sakshaug, 2010). Researchers are still recommended to conduct probability sampling methods, despite them only permitting the estimation of the representativeness and generalisability to the population of a study (Shum, 2007). In the present study, therefore, the cluster (multistage) sampling was used to draw respondents from each faculty at the university. This process was supported by the Department of Admission and Registration, which had been contacted, informed, and had agreed in advance to assist with research data collection in any way suitable.

In large sampling populations, it is common to have a number of sampling stages to collecting the data. A Cluster sample, in general, can be defined as a sample plan that contains "clusters of listing units" (Levy and Lemeshow, 2008, p. 224). This definition is the simplest way to look at cluster sampling, whereas in the case of my research, more than one stage was drawn. In multistage sampling, sampling goes through stages to

extract smaller subunits from the cluster at each level or stage. The selection of these subunits is based on the use of random sampling (Mirakhmedov, Jammalamadaka, and Ekström, 2015).

According to Levy and Lemeshow (2008), there are places when performing more than one stage is better and more efficient and that is when dealing with massive clusters and also when the listing units within the cluster are homogeneous, so it becomes redundant actually to sample every single listing unit from the large cluster.

To demonstrate the way the sample sizes and how the students from each faculty were chosen in my research, the sample plan was formulated in four stages. The University of Jordan has nineteen faculties and ninety departments and hundreds of classes. Therefore, I had brought three boxes for the first three stages. The first box was for faculties which were shuffled several times to choose the faculties being selected. The second box which was the second stage was for the departments that fall within the faculties being randomly selected from the first stage. These were shuffled several times to identify the departments that were going to be selected. The third stage was a third box which was shuffled to choose the classes that were going to be visited and sampled. Finally, the fourth stage was the selection of the students from the classes identified from the previous stage and the selection was done through systematic random sampling. This method provides all individuals with the same probability of being selected as part of the sample (Sekaran and Bougie, 2010; Gay and Diehl, 1992).

## 4.8 Ethical Considerations

Regarding the ethical implications of conducting a survey, Bradburn, Sudman, and Wansink (2004) state that:

Survey research is intrusive in the sense that the privacy of respondents is violated when they are selected to participate in the survey and then asked a series of questions. It is critically important to be aware of respondents' right of privacy.

Therefore, all ethical issues concerning privacy and protection have to be considered. According to Punch (2005), in conducting research on human subjects, researchers need to minimise harm and risks and uphold respect for human dignity, privacy and autonomy,

take special safety measures with susceptible groups and try to divide the advantages and responsibilities of research fairly. Therefore, to conduct my study, ethical approval, as well as institutional consent, was sought from the University of the West of England and the University of Jordan. Also, issues such as informed consent and autonomy, the confidentiality of shared information, anonymity of research participants, and reciprocity were upheld throughout the study.

Despite the fact that all of the sample participants were above the age of majority, there were factors which needed to be considered for appropriate permission to be obtained. Ethical considerations of confidentiality and voluntary and informed consent were consciously upheld throughout the study. This was also achieved by the fact that all the questionnaires included had an introduction and summary of the essence and intentions of the study. The introductory statement contained some indications about the value and benefits of the study. Importantly, the respondents were given the full right to withdraw from participating at any time, even during the filling out of the questionnaire. In this respect, the respondents were willing to and voluntarily filled out the questionnaire. Finally, the research promised and ensured that the data gathered would be utilised only for academic purposes. This is because, according to Gregory (2005), the decisions arrived at by individuals to participate in a study should be free of undue and unnecessary pressures.

Also, the researcher cooperated with the respondents on the use of the data provided, since the use of the data for what was not agreed upon with the respondents is a violation of a fundamental ethical precept in research. It is argued that confidentiality involves crystal-clear cooperation between the researcher and the respondents regarding the value to be produced of the data provided. Additionally, numbers were assigned to participants instead of using names to identify participants, making them anonymous and ensuring confidentiality.

Regarding the survey and interviews, the most important factors to take into account were confidentiality and anonymity; in addition, the participants were aware of their right to end the interview at any time they wished. All participant information sheets and transcripts were stored in a locked cabinet inside a secure room.

## 4.9 Pilot Test

Rea and Parker (2014, p.316) define the pilot test as “A small-scale implementation of the draft questionnaire used to assess such critical factors as questionnaire clarity, comprehensiveness, and acceptability”. More specifically (Rea and Parker, 2014, p.31) assert:

After a draft questionnaire has been prepared and the researcher believes that the questions will obtain the information necessary to achieve the goals of the study, it is important to pre-test the instrument under actual survey conditions.

They also suggested that:

during the course of the pre-test, poorly worded questions will be identified and the overall quality of the survey instrument refined. Based on the experience of the pre-test, the questionnaire will be fine-tuned for use in the actual survey process

Bradburn, Sudman, and Wansink (2004) claim that during this stage, the researcher becomes able to eliminate unclear items, or revise them, to make them clearer or easier to understand. They also state that the pilot test will also provide very useful information on what to drop and what to keep, and the length of the interview within time and budget constraints.

The sample size for pilot tests is usually in the range of twenty to forty respondents (Rea and Parker, 2014, p.38), or ten to fifty cases (Bradburn, Sudman, and Wansink, 2004). However, for very large sample surveys, it is generally unusual for a pilot test to contain a bigger sample and the focus at this stage is on feedback regarding the overall quality of the questionnaire’s construction and not on statistical accuracy (Rea and Parker, 2014, p.38). Consequently, the researcher need not be concerned about selecting them through a random sampling procedure (Rea and Parker, 2014, p.38).

According to Pallent (2001), the goal at this point is to make sure that the instructions, items, and scale items are obvious and clear. Also, the pilot should be conducted on a population similar to that of the real study. It can then be used to help the researcher develop related lines of questioning and to detect any flaws in the questioning and correct

them prior to the main survey (Yin, 1994). Sapsford and Jupp (1996, p.102) explain this as follows:

Piloting of drafts of questionnaires on samples which are representative of the target population is essential both to gauge the length of time which it takes and to investigate whether the questions are properly understood by the respondents.

The questionnaire for this study was pilot tested on about sixty students at the University of Jordan with the intention that the feedback from the participants would contribute substantially to strengthening the instrument. The purpose of the pilot study was to refine the instrument by checking the clarity of the items, eliminating ambiguous items and checking the time taken to complete the questionnaire. As a result of the pilot-test, some questions were dropped, and others incorporated, which helped greatly in fine-tuning the instrument.

#### 4.9.1 Reliability Test

Reliability of an instrument is a measure of the extent to which similar results are obtained upon repetition, under similar conditions, of a study using the instrument (Pallant, 2001).

Cronbach's alpha measures the closeness of the relationship between a group of items, that is, their internal consistency or reliability. It is technically a coefficient of consistency, not a statistical test. The Cronbach's alphas for section four, questions 12 and 13 about the reasons that motivate you behind watching socio-political news on television and social media were 0.88 and 0.83 respectively, whereas it was 0.79 for section five, question 14, JRTV raising socio-political awareness. While question 15 from the same section, about satellite television raising socio-political awareness, was 0.87. Question 16 from section five on online news videos raising socio-political awareness was 0.76. Finally, Cronbach's alphas for section five, questions 18 and 19 on actions which you may have taken after watching television news or online news videos on social media were 0.90 and 0.86, respectively.

The Cronbach's alpha for all sections can be seen in Table 5 below. The reliability coefficient Cronbach's alpha was calculated to establish the reliability of all variables used

in the survey instrument in the study. All values were accepted since the alpha value for all variables was more than 0.60 (Malhotra, 2004, Hair *et al.*, 2006). Therefore, confirmation of the reliability of all items was accomplished.

In order to make sure the instrument reliability, the internal consistency coefficient (Cronbach's Alpha) was calculated and shown in the table below on a survey sample from outside the original study sample, which amounted to 60 students from Jordan University.

Table 1: Cronbach's Alpha for Sixty Respondents

<b>Table 1: Cronbach's Alpha</b>		
<b>#of Dimension</b>	<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>
12	the reasons that motivate you behind watching socio-political news on television	0.88
13	the reasons that motivate you behind watching socio-political news videos on social media	0.83
14	JRTV raising socio-political awareness	0.79
15	satellite television raising socio-political awareness.	0.87
16	online news videos raising socio-political awareness	0.76
18	actions which you may have taken after watching television news.	0.90



19	actions which you may have taken after watching online news videos on social media	0.86
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#### 4.10.2 Validity and Reliability of the Study Tool (Survey Questionnaire)

The reliability of the instrument employed in this research was tested using Cronbach's alpha on the SPSS 22 model.

To verify the accuracy of the questionnaire, it was shown to five academic judges who were specialists and experts in the field of television and media studies. The approval of the judges of the content of each item was considered an indication of the accuracy of the study. All of the judges made suggestions to amend and re-formulate some items. This provided an indication of the quality of each item in the questionnaire, and some spelling and grammatical mistakes in the instrument were corrected.

The study tool was applied to sixty students for the pilot test, followed by the whole sample, which was 1,000 students. The reliability coefficient was calculated using the Cronbach's alpha equation and resulted in values which were an indication of the reliability of the tool as applied.

Because the instrument was not adapted but developed by me, there was the urgent need for an assessment of its validity. According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000), the validity of an instrument is the extent to which the instrument contains and measures what it intends to measure. To ensure the validity of the survey questionnaire, I used two techniques: content validity and face validity. The content validity of the survey was assured by giving the instrument to experts in the field of media and television. It was submitted to three lecturers from Zarqa University in Jordan alongside my supervisors, as well as two professors in the department of statistics at the University of the West of England for them to make critical comments on the design and content of the questionnaire. Also, face validity was guaranteed by relying on the judgment of the piloted students from the University of Jordan when they were asked to give their

feedback on the clarity of the questions and items in the instrument while filling out the questionnaire. The feedback from the experts, my supervisors, and the students helped in fine-tuning the questionnaire.

#### 4.11.3 Validity and Reliability of the Study Tool (Interview): Establishing Trustworthiness

The interview questions were designed to understand in greater depth the issues around their news viewing habits, trust, socio-political awareness, and motivations when watching online news videos on social media.

Processes contributing to establishing the trustworthiness of the interview guide were similar to the steps undertaken in the first study phase. The interview guide was shown to a few academics in the field for feedback on the design and quality of the questions the researcher envisioned asking. This study also aimed to enhance credibility through a process of peer debriefing and to gain feedback from “critical friends.” Peer debriefing was conducted throughout the study during regular meetings between a few colleagues in my department and me, as well as informal discussions and testing on a one-to-one basis with colleagues from similar research areas and backgrounds to make sure that the questions were clear.

My supervisors gave me guidance on the research process, reviewed data, and challenged assumptions, for example, questioning my interpretations of the results (Creswell and Miller, 2000). Furthermore, I was offered feedback on and critique of the results of these data collecting processes (Smith and Caddick, 2012).

Kvale and Brinkmann (2007) suggest that the process of pilot testing could help the researcher in finding errors, therefore refining them before implementing the interviews. They also state that the pilot test must be applied to a sample with participants that have the same perceptions and interests of the participants in the actual study.

I started this process with two interviews as a pilot test for the interviews, and I later included them in the research findings as the participants provided interesting views and experiences.

A summary report was also sent back to participants as a form of member checking to check my interpretations with the participants. Reports were received positively, and no changes were suggested.

#### 4.10 Procedure for conducting the survey questionnaire

In order to conduct the survey successfully, a notification letter with a cover letter from my supervisor at UWE was sent to the president of the University of Jordan requesting permission, which was granted as I had already spoken to some of the administrative staff who had shown their willingness to help in this research beforehand.

It was essential first to obtain entry permissions and obtain a cover letter which enabled me to speak with the heads of faculties and departments that were part of the sample in order to explain the purpose of the study. Assurances were provided that participation in the survey would not affect students' or lecturers' timetables. The survey was conducted over November, and December 2018. I distributed the questionnaires personally and provided a verbal explanation to the respondents prior to the questionnaire starting to be filled in. After the survey was given to the selected sample, they were also filtered according to whether they watched the media stated in the survey. This technique in distributing the questionnaires personally helped me to assist respondents in overcoming difficulties with the questions if any. In addition, during the distribution of the questionnaires, the respondents were assured that their answers and personal information would not be used for any purposes apart from the academic study, and signed participant consent forms were obtained. As mentioned earlier, each questionnaire included brief information about the study's aims and how respondents were to complete it. Several respondents were given pens to use in completing the questionnaire, and the researcher was available to help anyone who needed further assistance. The facilitation of distributing the questionnaire was with the help of deans of faculties and some heads of departments. The average time spent on the questionnaire was between twelve and fifteen minutes, with some respondents taking as long as twenty minutes. The majority of the questionnaires were filled in at the beginning or at the end of lectures, depending upon lecturers' preferences; after completing the questionnaire, the respondents were thanked for their responses to the study.

## 4.11 Data Gathering Period and Venue

The distribution of all survey questionnaires was in lecture halls in each faculty at the University of Jordan. The interviews were conducted inside or outside lecture halls at the University of Jordan campus, based upon student preferences and comfort. Some interviewees felt more comfortable being interviewed outside the lecture halls. The majority of the participants highlighted that it was interesting for them to participate in such a survey. Hence, only 297 respondents from a total of 1000 cases were excluded, either because their questionnaires were incomplete or unreturned, or because they were foreigner respondents.

## 4.12 Procedure for Conducting the Interviews

All interviews were conducted either in classrooms or food canteens inside the university campus at the convenience and during the free time of participants, either before or between their lectures, or afterwards. This process was adopted from Creswell (2007), who recommended interviewing participants who would be willing to give their views and feelings on their stories, involvement, and experiences. Therefore, the researcher interviewed a sample of the surveyed students who were willing and interested to participate further in the research.

The total number of participants was thirty, and the length of the interviews varied between 30 to 60 minutes. The researcher tried to balance between the number of males and females. To make an interview successful, the researcher must put effort into the preparation process; hence, during the course of conducting the interviews, I tried to go through the following steps, as suggested by McNamara (2009): deciding on settings and venues with less noise and distraction in the course of the interviews, explaining the purpose of the interview to all interviewees as well as the assurance of privacy, and explaining the format the interview would take and the possible duration of the interview.

## 4.13 Summary

This chapter demonstrates the strength of this study in adopting a mixed-methods approach, whose design was based on two kinds of instruments, namely a survey

questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. The quantitative approach was used due to the fact that it is an important and popular choice for this type of research, and it is an efficient method for collecting large sets of data. In addition, the qualitative approach was used to elicit information and more views from the participants about the role of socio-political news on television and social media concerning their awareness, participation, and engagement socio-politically in society. The chapter also explained the data collection procedures of both the qualitative and quantitative aspects of the research methodology. The next two chapters will present the findings of the fieldwork carried out in the form of survey questionnaires and interviews. They will discuss all the research questions relating to the data collected from students at the University of Jordan.

# Chapter Five: Survey

## Findings and Analysis

### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter displays the results of the survey data. It first discusses the profile of the respondents in the survey questionnaire phase of the research. Then, it includes an analytical description of the demographic and characteristics of the study sample, followed by a comprehensive analytical presentation of the study questions and some statistical analysis at the end of the chapter. The number of questionnaires distributed to the sample of the study was 1,000. The number of questionnaires received and valid for the purposes of analysis was 703 with a 70.3% rate of recovery. The questions and design of the survey were deployed to reflect and elicit data on the role of television and online news videos in increasing the socio-political awareness, participation and engagement of the youth, and also their viewing habits of news on social media and television with a specific focus on analysing their interaction with television and online news videos on social media which will also be explored in the following chapter within the interviews data.

### 5.2 Data Analysis

The collected data were entered into the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). The survey data were analysed by computer using the SPSS version 22. Frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations, were the statistical analysis measurements used to analyse the data collected.

## 5.3 Response levels

The researcher adopted the Likert / Five Point Scale to determine the level of responses in the study instrument by marking the answer that reflects the degree of respondents' approval with an X to show whether they strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree and strongly disagree. Mean responses were classified as follows.

In subsequent tables

A mean of 1.0 to 1.80 is classed as "Very low."

A mean of 1.81 to 2.60 is classed as "Low."

A mean of 2.61 to 3.40 is classed as "Moderate."

A mean of 3.41 to 4.20 is classed as "High."

A mean of 4.21 to 5.0 is classed as "Very high."

The range of the category is calculated by the following equation:

Upper limit – lower limit/number of levels

Category range =  $(5-1) / 5 = 4/5 = 0.80$

## 5.4 Section one: Profile of respondents (The demographics of the study sample)

Sections one and two form the foundation for all the other work in this study to decipher the interest, trust and awareness level of Jordanian students on socio-political issues. Therefore, I am going to link the variables age, gender and student's faculty with the level of interest in socio-political news in general and interest at the level of local, national, Arab and international news, and finally with their trust in each platform. To find if there are any significant differences, for example between males and females, the following demographic information was collected, and they will be further statistically analysed with the interest and trust variables later in this chapter (see section 5.18). Tables 2,3 & 4 which follow display the demographic and characteristics of the study sample by age, gender and student's faculty.

### 5.4.1 Age of the respondents

Table 2 below shows the frequencies and percentages of the students' age as follows:

Table 1: Frequencies and percentages of the students' age

Table 2: Age					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	From 18 to less than 20	543	77.2	77.2	77.2
	From 20 to less than 22	132	18.8	18.8	96.0
	From 22 to less than 24	20	2.8	2.8	98.9
	From 24 to less than 26	2	.3	.3	99.1
	26 and above	6	.9	.9	100.0
	Total	703	100.0	100.0	

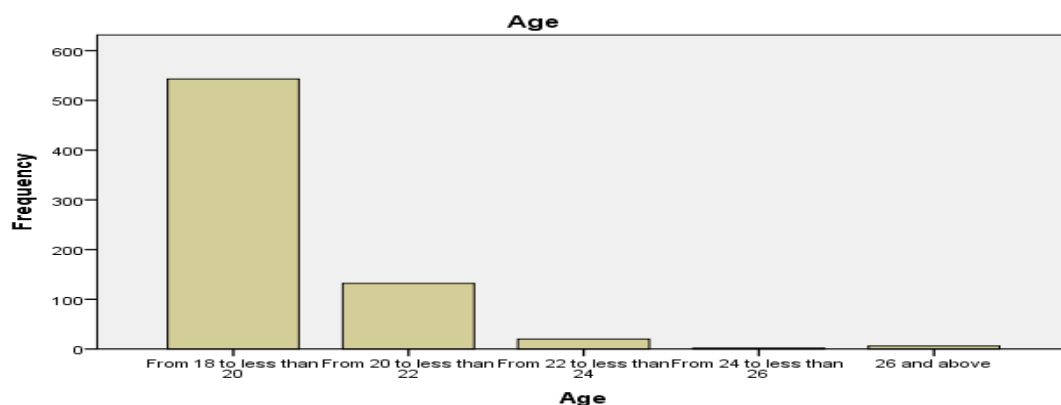


Figure 3: Distribution by age

The survey group chosen ranged primarily between the ages of 18 and 25, with some above 26. Table 2 shows that out of a total of 703 of the respondents, 543 participants were students aged between 18 to less than 20 years, amounting to 77.2% of the total survey sample. The age category from 20 to less than 22 years comes second with 132 respondents, amounting to 18.8 %, while the category 26 years and above came last with six respondents, amounting to 0.9 %. The findings are also presented in Figure 3.



## 5.4.2 Sex of the respondents

Table 3 below shows the frequencies and percentages of the students' gender.

Table 2: Frequencies and percentages of the students' gender

Table 3: Gender					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	154	21.9	21.9	21.9
	Female	549	78.1	78.1	100.0
	Total	703	100.0	100.0	

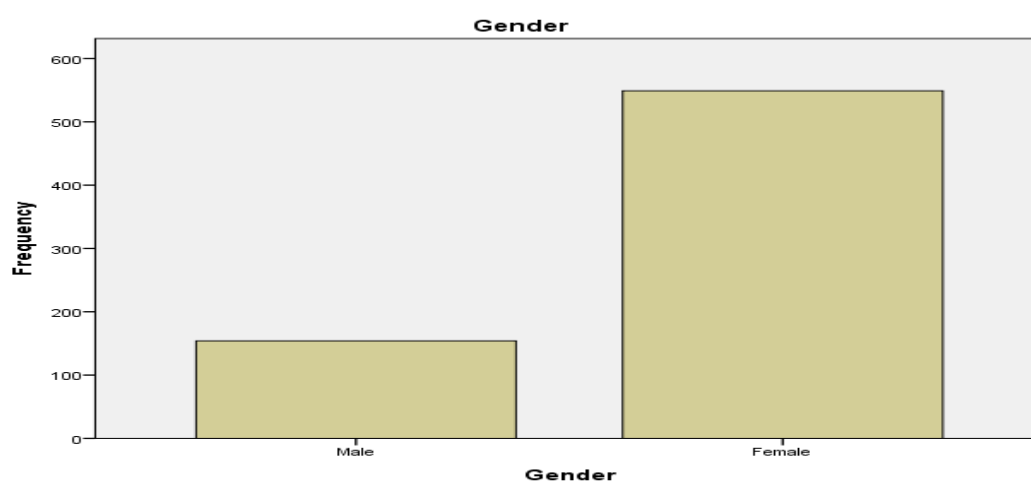


Figure 4: Distribution by Gender

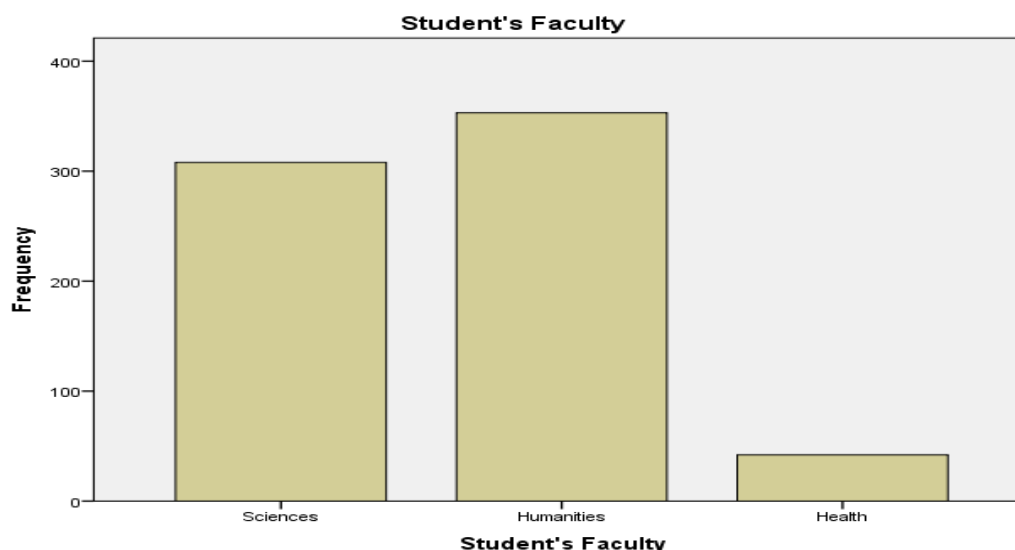
It is obvious from Table 3 that 549 participants are females, amounting to 78.1 % of the sample group, and 154 participants are males, amounting to 21.9 % of the total sample size. Figure 4 displays these results graphically as well. The number of female participants is much higher than the number of male participants in total, which was unanticipated as the departments selected through the cluster sampling appeared to have had more females than males. This could be due to the type of subjects as some subjects attract more female than male students.

### 5.4.3 Student's faculty

Table 4 below shows the frequencies and percentages of the student's faculty as follows:

Table 3: frequencies and percentages of the student's faculty

Table 4: Student's Faculty					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Sciences	308	43.8	43.8	43.8
	Humanities	353	50.2	50.2	94.0
	Health	42	6.0	6.0	100.0
	Total	703	100.0	100.0	



**Figure 5: Distribution by Faculty**

Table 4 demonstrates that the participants varied between three main disciplines: sciences, humanities and health. The highest number of students were from the humanities departments, 353 students, amounting to 50.2 % of the total sample size, followed by 308 participants from the sciences, amounting to 43.8% of the total sample size. The student participants from the health discipline were the fewest, with 42 participants, amounting to 6 % of the total sample size. These results are also shown in Figure 5. The number of participants in the health faculty is much smaller, which was unanticipated. This is due to the class sizes being much smaller in the departments which were selected in the random selection of the departments in the cluster selection.

## 5.5 Section two: Amount of media use

This section describes and tracks the trends in media use across the types of platforms that my research is investigating. It will also be used to examine and understand what platforms university students watch for socio-political news and what the dynamic is like in terms of the type that satisfy their needs more in terms of socio-political.

### 5.5.1 Average viewing of television news

Table 5 below shows the frequencies and percentages of the average hours spent watching the news on television on an average day.

Table 4: Average viewing of television news

Table 5: Television - news					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Less than 1 hour	212	30.2	30.2	30.2
	From 1 hour to less than 3	332	47.2	47.2	77.4
	From 3 hour to less than 5	132	18.8	18.8	96.2
	From 5 hour to less than 7	22	3.1	3.1	99.3
	7 hours and more	5	.7	.7	100.0
	Total	703	100.0	100.0	

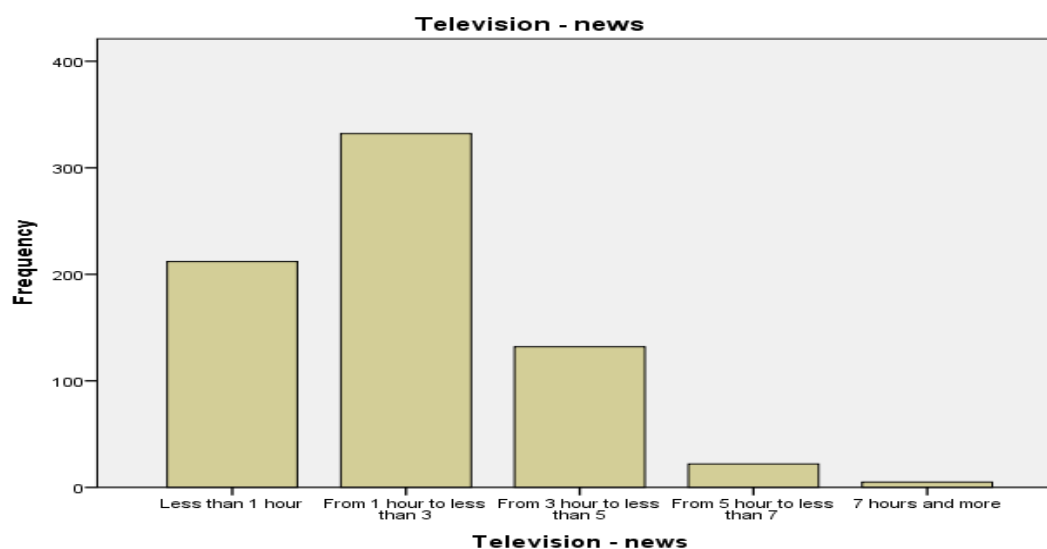


Figure 6: Television - News

Table 5 and Figure 6 show that 332 students, amounting to 47.2 % of the total sample size watch television news daily from 1 to less than 3 hours. This is followed by students watching less than 1 hour of television per day, which were 212 participants, amounting to 30.2 % of the total sample size, thus making their interaction with television news minimal. It also shows that the category of students watching television news 7 hours and more coming last with five students only, amounting to 0.7 % of the total sample.

### 5.6.2 Average viewing of news videos on social media

Table 6 below shows the frequencies and percentages of the average hours spent watching news videos on social media on an average day.

Table 5: Average viewing of news videos on social media

<b>Table 6: News videos on Social media - news</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Less than 1 hour	178	25.3	25.3	25.3
	From 1 hour to less than 3	298	42.4	42.4	67.7
	From 3 hour to less than 5	159	22.6	22.6	90.3
	From 5 hour to less than 7	60	8.5	8.5	98.9
	7 hours and more	8	1.1	1.1	100.0
	Total	703	100.0	100.0	

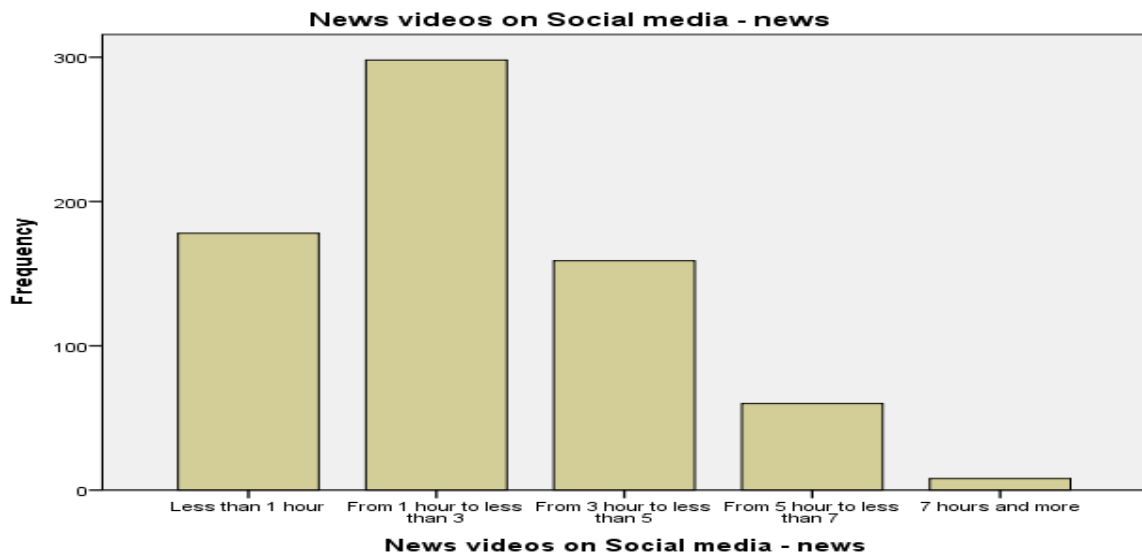


Figure 7: News videos on Social media - news

Table 6 displays the findings that the largest category was participants who watched news videos on social media from 1 to less than 3 hours, 298 students, amounting to 42.4 % of the total sample size. Students watching daily less than 1 hour of news videos on social media were second with 178 participants, amounting to 25.3 % of the total sample size. The findings also show that the category of students watching news videos on social media 7 hours and more was last with the fewest participants, only eight students, amounting to 1.1 % of the total sample. Figure 7 also shows these findings.

### 5.6.3 Average viewing of socio-political issues on television

Table 7 below shows frequencies and percentages of the average hours spent watching socio-political issues on television on an average day.

Table 6: Average viewing of socio-political issues on television

<b>Table (7): Television - socio-political</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Less than 1 hour	359	51.1	51.1	51.1
	From 1 hour to less than 3	294	41.8	41.8	92.9
	From 3 hour to less than 5	41	5.8	5.8	98.7
	From 5 hour to less than 7	6	.9	.9	99.6
	7 hours and more	3	.4	.4	100.0
	Total	703	100.0	100.0	

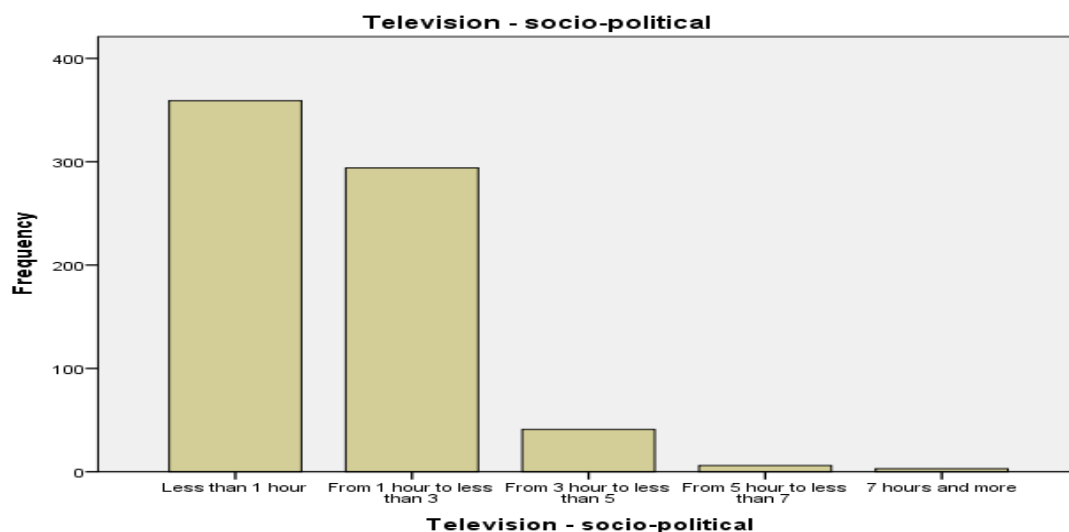


Figure 8: Television - Socio-political

Table 7 demonstrates that 359 students watch socio-political news on television for less than 1 hour, amounting to 51.1 % of the total sample size, which was followed by 294 participants, amounting to 41.8 % of the sample watching the news from 1 to less than 3 hours. The fewest participants, only 3, fall within the category of watching the news on television from 7 hours and more, amounting to 0.4 % of the total sample size. These results are displayed in Figure 8.

### 5.6.4 Average viewing of socio-political issues on social media

Table 8 below shows frequencies and percentages of the average hours spent watching socio-political issues on social media on an average day.

Table 7: Average viewing of socio-political issues on social media

<b>Table 8: Social media - socio-political issues</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Less than 1 hour	302	43.0	43.0	43.0
	From 1 hour to less than 3	280	39.8	39.8	82.8
	From 3 hour to less than 5	93	13.2	13.2	96.0
	From 5 hour to less than 7	20	2.8	2.8	98.9
	7 hours and more	8	1.1	1.1	100.0
	Total	703	100.0	100.0	

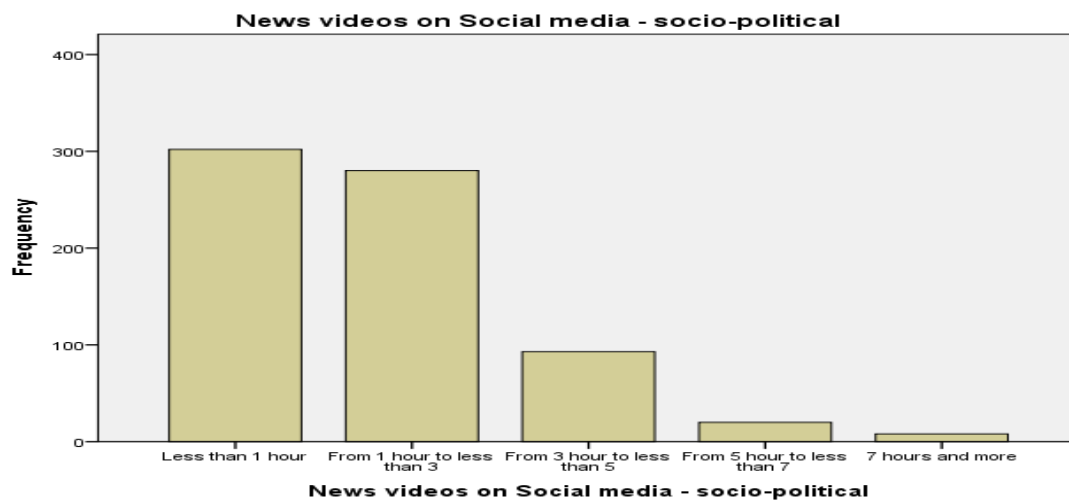


Figure 9: Social media - socio-political issues

Table 8 shows that the respondents in the category less than 1 hour are the most frequent with 302 participants, amounting to 43.0 %, followed by the category from 1 hour to less than 3 hours with 280 respondents, amounting to 39.8 % of the total sample size, while the category 7 hours and more was last with eight respondents, amounting to 1.1 %. The findings also are presented in Figure 9.

### 5.6.5 Average viewing of socio-political news on JRTV

Table 9 below shows the frequencies and percentages of average hours spent watching socio-political news on JRTV on an average day by students as follows:

Table 8: Average viewing of socio-political news on JRTV

<b>Table 9: watch socio-political news on JRTV</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	One hour or less	237	33.7	33.7	33.7
	Over 1 hour and up to 3	419	59.6	59.6	93.3
	Over 3 hours and up to 5	38	5.4	5.4	98.7
	Over 5 hours and up to 7	8	1.1	1.1	99.9
	Over 7 hours	1	.1	.1	100.0
	Total	703	100.0	100.0	

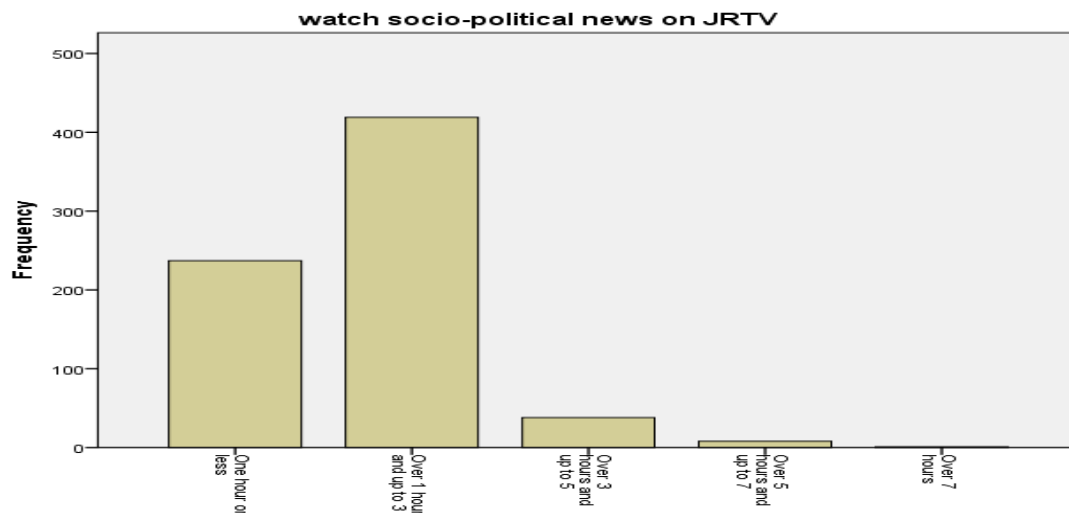


Figure 10: watch socio-political news on JRTV

Out of 703 participants 419 students, amounting to 59.6 % of the total sample size, watched socio-political news on JRTV for over 1 and up to 3 hours, which was followed by 237 participants, amounting to 33.7 % of the sample, watching the news for 1 hour or less. As the time allotted to watching television increased, the student sample size decreased, with 38 participants, amounting to 5.4 % of the sample size, watching socio-political news for over 3 hours and up to 5. This was followed by 8 participants, amounting to 1.1 %, watching the news on JRTV for over 5 and up to 7 hours of the total sample. The fewest participants, only 1, fell within the category of watching the news on JRTV for over 7 hours, which was just 0.1 % of the total sample size. Figure 10 also displays these results.

In the presentation of the findings below the questionnaire questions will be merged with the main research questions and displayed as the following:

1. How do Jordanian university students perceive socio-political news presented by television “National television and Satellite television” and online news videos on social media?

This question is divided into the following sub-questions:

- (i) What are the types of online news videos on social media watched by Jordanian university students?
- (ii) What is the level of students’ views of the trustworthiness of the news content coverage on Satellite television and JRTV and their news videos on social media, and online news videos that are coming from other sources?
- (iii) What is the level of students’ interest in socio-political issues in general?
- (iv) What is the level of students’ interest in the type of socio-political news on television?
- (v) What is the level of students’ interest in the type of socio-political news on social media?



2. What are the reasons that motivate students behind watching socio-political news on television?
3. What are the reasons that motivate students behind watching socio-political news on social media?
4. To what extent do Jordanian university students perceive that JRTV, satellite television and online news videos on social media contribute to raising their socio-political awareness?
5. How do Jordanian university students perceive the impact of television and online news videos on social media in terms of socio-political action?

## 5.7 Types of online news videos that students usually watch on social media

Question 1 of the questionnaire was: How do Jordanian university students perceive socio-political news presented by television “National television and Satellite television” and online news videos on social media?

It was split up into the following sub-questions:

- (i) What are the types of online news videos that are mostly watched by Jordanian university students?

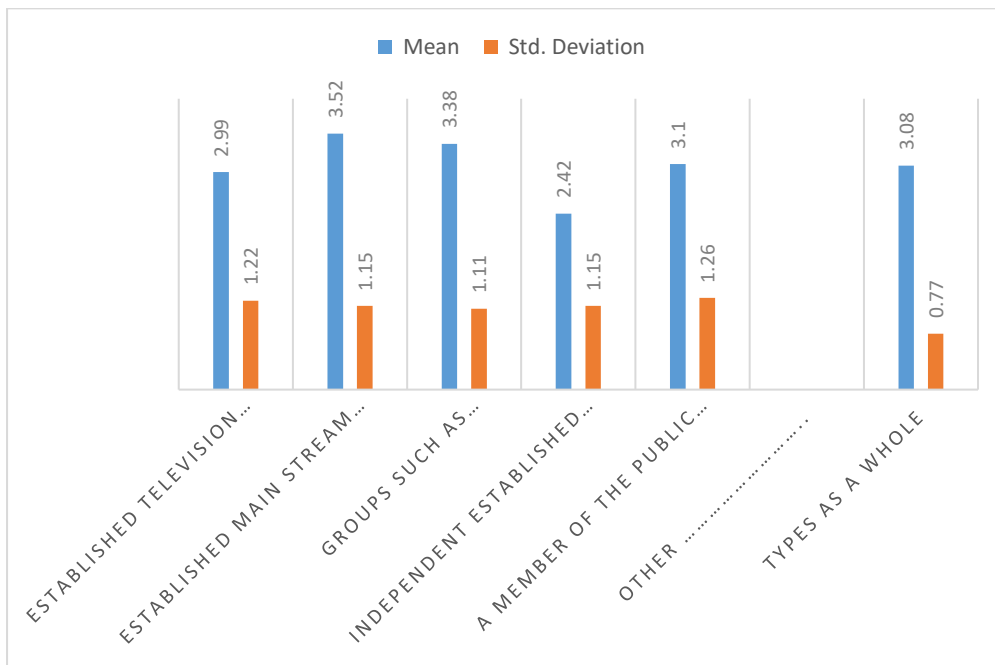
In order to answer this question, means and standard deviations of different types of online news videos on social media by Jordanian university students were calculated, and Table 10 below presents the results.

Table 9: Online news videos on social media

<b>Table (10): Types of online news videos that students usually watch on social media</b>				
N	Items	Mean	Std. Deviation	The Level (Likert scale)
1	Videos that come from established television sources (mainstream television broadcasters)	2.99	1.22	Moderate

2	Videos that come from other established mainstream news sources (Print and online newspaper sources) such as Ad-Dustour newspaper	3.52	1.15	High
3	Videos that come from groups such as campaigners, NGOs, or lobbyists	3.38	1.11	Moderate
4	Videos that come from independent established high-profile content producers	2.42	1.15	Low
5	Videos that come from a member of the public such as a friend	3.10	1.26	Moderate
6	Other .....			
	<b>Types of online news videos as a whole</b>	3.08	.77	Moderate

**Figure 11**



**Figure 11: Online news videos on social media**

Table 10 and Figure 11 display the findings that the general level of watching different types of online news videos on social media by Jordanian university students was moderate with a mean of 3.08. On the other hand, the videos that come from other established mainstream news sources, print and online newspaper sources such as Ad-Dustour newspaper, were the most watched on social media by students, with the highest mean 3.52 and a high level. The second most-watched type of videos that was reported from the survey data was videos that come from groups such as campaigners, NGOs, or lobbyists, with a mean of 3.38 and a moderate level. However, the videos that come from independent established high-profile content producers came last among the other types on online videos, with a mean of 2.42 and a low level.

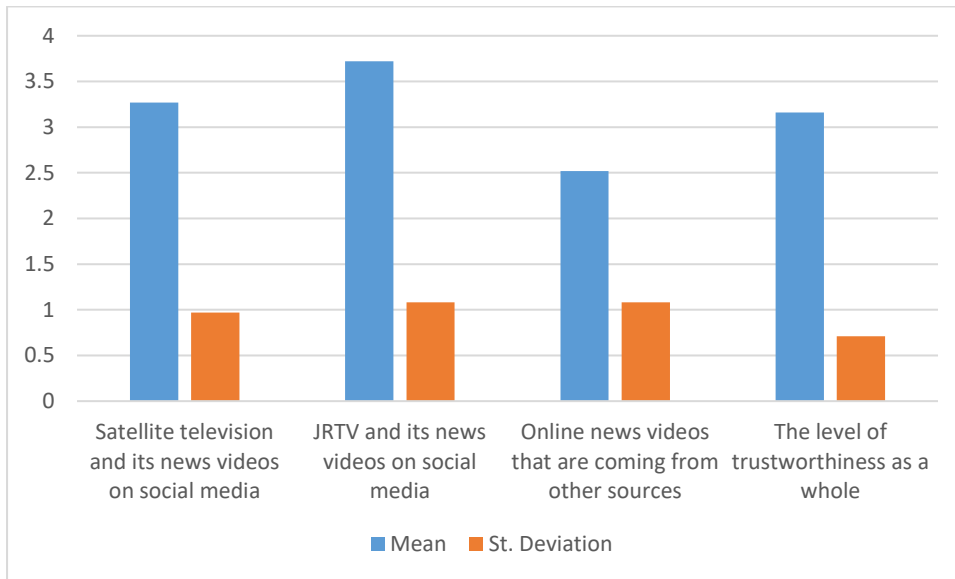
## 5.8 The level of trustworthiness of the news content coverage

(ii) What is the level of students' views of the trustworthiness of the news content coverage on Satellite television and JRTV and their news videos on social media, and online news videos that are coming from other sources?

In order to answer this question, means and standard deviations of the level of students' views of the trustworthiness of the news content coverage were calculated, and these are presented below in Table 11.

Table 10: Student's views of trustworthiness

<b>Table 11: The level of trustworthiness of the news content coverage</b>				
N	Items	Mean	St. Deviation	The level (Likert scale)
1	Satellite television apart from JRTV and its news videos on social media	3.27	.97	Moderate
2	JRTV and its news videos on social media	3.72	1.08	High
3	Online news videos that are coming from other sources	2.52	1.08	Low
	<b>The level of trustworthiness as a whole</b>	3.16	.71	Moderate



**Figure 12: Students' views of trustworthiness**

The results presented in Table 11) and the figure (12) show that the level of students' trustworthiness of the news content coverage on Satellite television and JRTV and their news videos on social media, and online news videos that are coming from other sources as a whole is moderate since the mean was 3.16. The means for all the items range between 2.52 and 3.72, whereas it is clear that the item "JRTV and its news videos on social media" comes with the highest level of trustworthiness with a mean of 3.72 and a high level, whilst the item "Online news videos that are coming from other sources" comes last with a mean of 2.52 and a low level. The table and figure above also show that the standard deviations of items were .97 and 1.08.

## 5.9 Interest in socio-political issues

(iii) What is the level of students' interest in socio-political issues in general?

In order to answer this question, frequencies, percentages, the mean and standard deviation of students' interest in socio-political issues, in general, were found, and Table 12 below shows that.

Table 11: interest in socio-political issues

<b>Table 12: interest in socio-political issues</b>						
		Frequency	Percent	Mean	Std. Deviation	The Level
Valid	Not interested at all	48	6.8	2.70	0.87	Moderate
	Slightly interested	234	33.3			
	Moderately interested	329	46.8			
	Very interested	66	9.4			
	Extremely interested	26	3.7			
	Total	703	100.0			

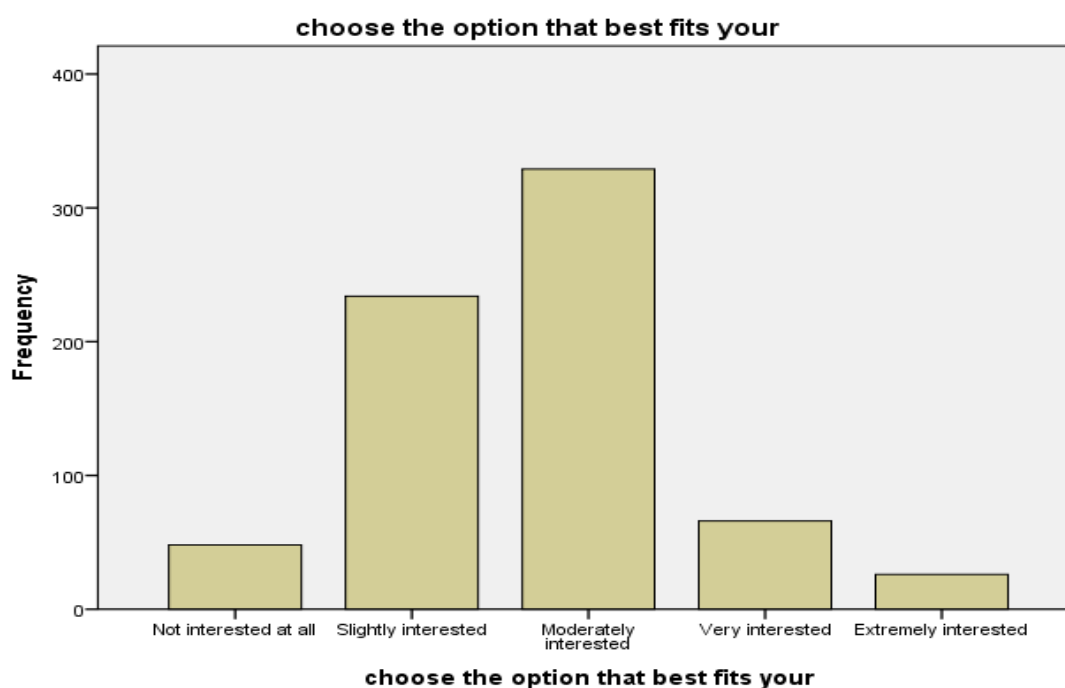


Figure 13: Interest in socio-political issues

Table 12 demonstrates that the level of students' interest in socio-political issues, in general, was moderate, with a mean of 2.70. The results showed a differentiated interest in socio-political issues. The highest number of participants, 329 (46.8%), were moderately interested in socio-political issues, which was followed by 234 students who were slightly interested in socio-political issues, amounting to 33.3 % of the total sample size. The third highest category of the number of participants, 66 (9.4%), were very interested. The second last category was 48 participants, amounting to 6.8% out of the total sample who reported that they are not interested at all in socio-political issues. The

last category with the lowest number of participants, 26 (3.7% of the total survey sample) were extremely interested in socio-political issues.

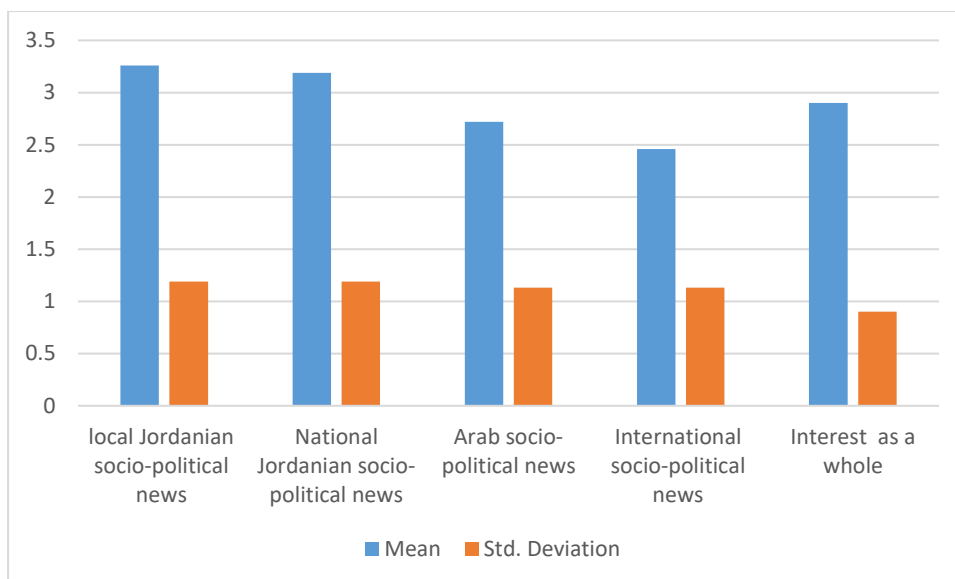
## 5.10 The interest level in the local, national, Arab and international socio-political news on television

(iv) What is the level of students' interest in the type of socio-political news on television?

In order to answer this question, means and standard deviations of students' interest in the type of socio-political news on television were calculated, and are presented in Table 13 below.

Table 12: interest in socio-political news on television

<b>Table 13: interest in the type of socio-political news on television</b>				
N	Items	Mean	Std. Deviation	The level (Likert Scale)
1	local Jordanian socio-political news only.	3.26	1.19	Moderate
2	National Jordanian socio-political news and not on local nor Arab or international level.	3.19	1.19	Moderate
3	Arab socio-political news and not on national neither international level.	2.72	1.13	Moderate
4	International socio-political news and not on Arab level.	2.46	1.13	Low
	<b>Interest in the type of socio-political news as a whole</b>	2.90	.90	Moderate



**Figure 14: interest in socio-political news on television**

According to the findings shown in Table 13 and Figure 14, the general level of students' interest in the type of socio-political news on television as a whole is moderate, as the mean is 2.90. The means range between 2.46 and 3.26, as the item "local Jordanian socio-political news only" comes first with the highest mean (3.26) and a moderate level, followed by the item " National Jordanian socio-political news and not on local nor Arab or international level." which sits second with a mean of 3.19 and a moderate level. Last is the item " International socio-political news and not on Arab level", with a mean of 2.46 and a low level. The table and figure above show that the standard deviations were 1.13 and 1.19, and that refers to the response's convergence of the study sample about the items.

## 5.11 The interest level in the local, national, Arab and international socio-political news on social media

(v) What is the level of students' interest in the type of socio-political news on social media?

In order to answer this question, means and standard deviations of students' interest in the type of socio-political news on social media were calculated and are presented in Table 14 below.

Table 13: interest in socio-political news on social media

Table 14: interest in the type of socio-political news on social media				
N	Items	Mean	Std. Deviation	The level (Likert scale)
1	local Jordanian socio-political news only.	3.41	1.21	High
2	National Jordanian socio-political news and not on local nor Arab or international level.	3.31	1.13	Moderate
3	Arab socio-political news and not on national neither international level.	2.87	1.08	Moderate
4	International socio-political news and not on Arab level.	2.65	1.20	Moderate
	<b>Interest in the type of socio-political news as a whole</b>	3.05	.89	Moderate

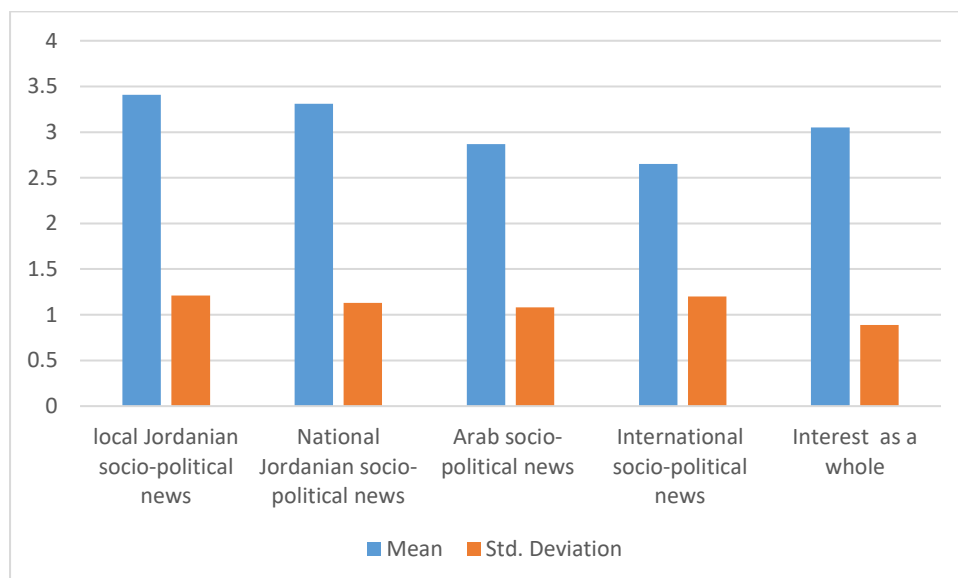


Figure 15: Interest in socio-political news on social media

The results in Table 14 and the Figure 15 illustrate that the general level of students' interest in the type of socio-political news on social media as a whole is moderate, with a mean of 3.05. The mean for all the items ranges between 2.65 and 3.41. The item "local Jordanian socio-political news only " takes the lead with the highest mean (3.41) and a



high level. Second is the item "National Jordanian socio-political news and not on local nor Arab or international level" with a mean of 3.31 and a moderate level, whereas the item " International socio-political news and not on Arab level" comes last with a mean of 2.65 and a moderate level. The standard deviations range between 1.08 and 1.21, which shows the responses convergence of the study sample about the items.

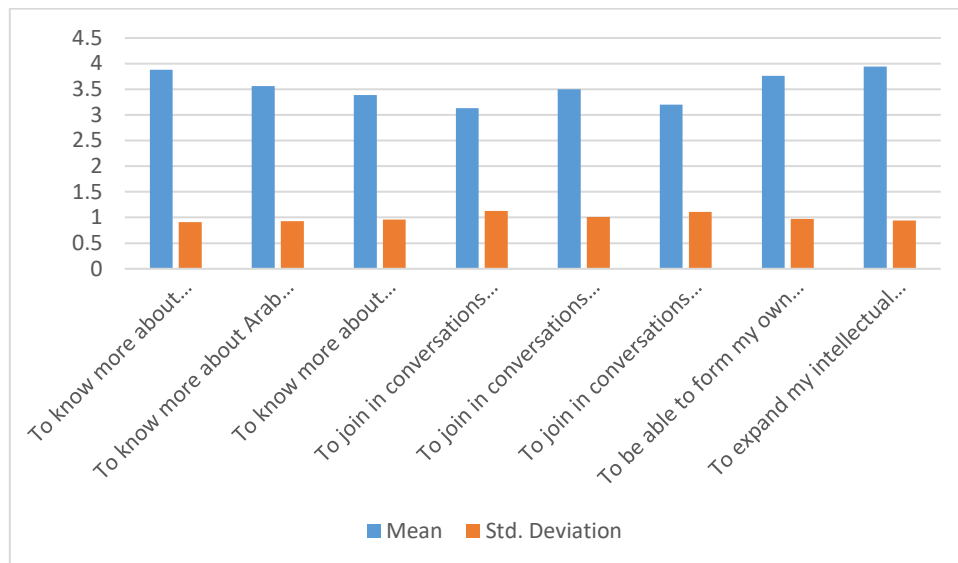
5.12 The reasons that motivate students behind watching socio-political news on television.

2. What are the reasons that motivate students behind watching socio-political news on television?

In order to answer this question, means and standard deviations of the reasons that motivate students behind watching socio-political news on television were calculated and are presented in Table 15.

Table 14: students' reasons behind watching socio-political news on television

<b>Table 15: of the reasons that motivate students behind watching socio-political news on television</b>				
N	Items	Mean	Std. Deviation	The level
1	To know more about Jordanian socio-political news	3.88	.91	High
2	To know more about Arab socio-political news	3.56	.93	High
3	To know more about international socio-political news	3.39	.96	Moderate
4	To join in conversations with my friends	3.13	1.13	Moderate
5	To join in conversations with my family	3.50	1.01	High
6	To join in conversations with my colleagues	3.20	1.11	Moderate
7	To be able to form my own opinions about different issues	3.76	.97	High
8	To expand my intellectual horizons	3.94	.94	High



**Figure 16: reasons that motivate students behind watching socio-political news on television**

Based on the results in the Table 15 and Figure 16, the mean for all the items ranges between 3.13 and 3.94. The reason with the highest level is “To expand my intellectual horizons” with a mean of 3.94 and a high level, whereas the item “To know more about Jordanian socio-political news” is second with a mean of 3.88 and a high level. At the bottom is “To join in conversations with my friend” with a mean of 3.13 and a moderate level. The standard deviations range between 0.91 and 1.11, which shows the responses convergence of the study sample about the items, except items 4,5 and 6.

### 5.13 The reasons that motivate students behind watching socio-political news on social media.

3. What are the reasons that motivate students behind watching socio-political news on social media?

In order to answer this question, means and standard deviations of the reasons that motivate students behind watching socio-political news on social media were calculated and are presented in Table 16 below.

Table 15: students' reasons behind watching socio-political news on social media

<b>Table (16): the reasons that motivate students behind watching socio-political news on social media</b>				
N	Items	Mean	Std. Deviation	The level
1	To know more about Jordanian socio-political news	3.87	.93	High
2	To know more about Arab socio-political news	3.60	.98	High
3	To know more about international socio-political news	3.54	.93	High
4	To join in conversations with my friends	3.36	1.13	Moderate
5	To join in conversations with my family	3.58	1.01	High
6	To join in conversations with my colleagues	3.34	1.13	Moderate
7	To be able to form my own opinions about different issues	3.91	.84	High
8	To expand my intellectual horizons	3.99	.88	High

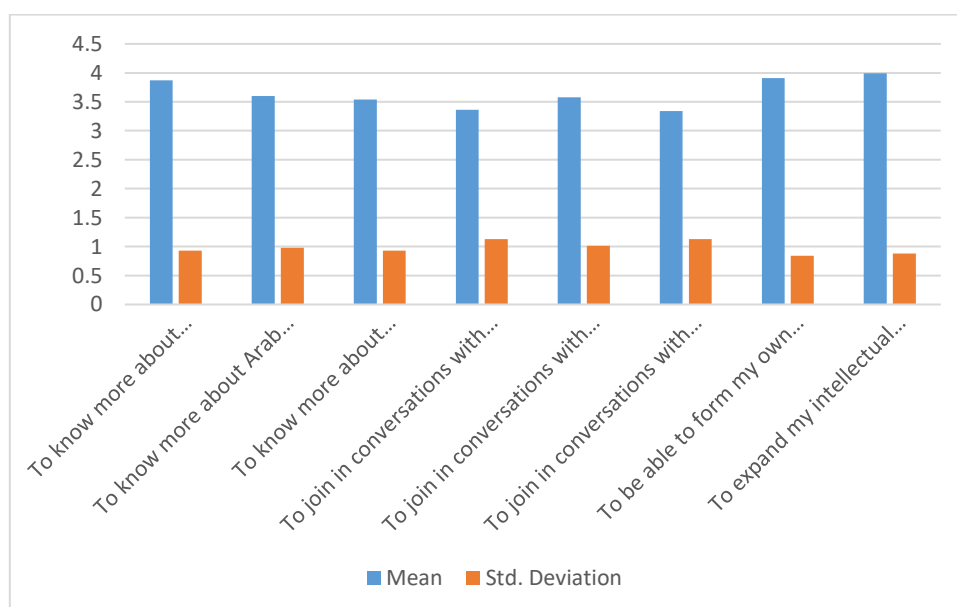


Figure 17: the reasons that motivate students behind watching socio-political news on social media

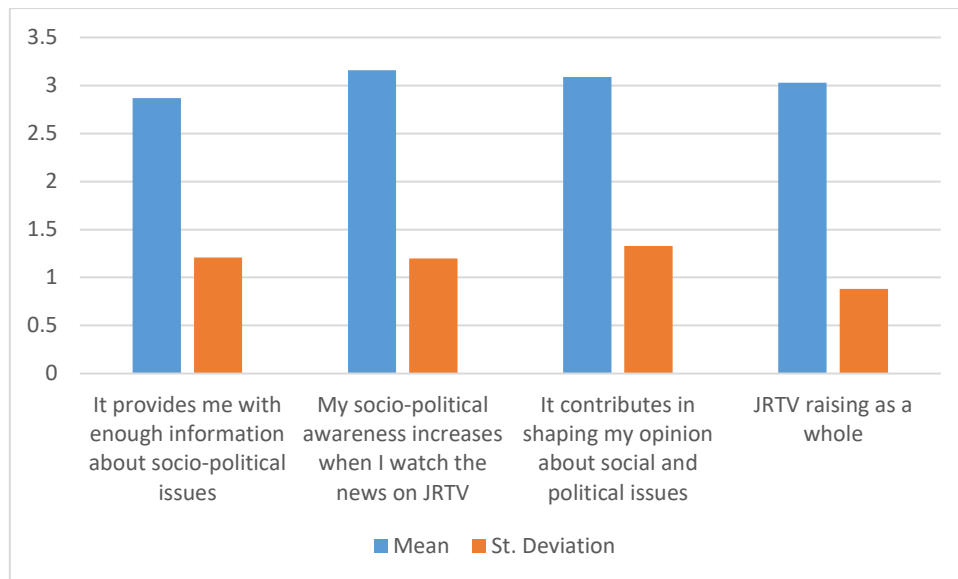
The results presented in Table 16 and Figure 17 illustrate that the mean for all the items ranges between 3.34 and 3.99. The item “To expand my intellectual horizons” comes first with a mean of 3.99 and a high level, whereas “To be able to form my own opinions about different issues” comes second with a mean of 3.91 and a high level. “To join in conversations with my colleagues” comes last with a mean of 3.34 and a moderate level. The standard deviations range between 0.84 and 1.13, which shows the responses convergence of the study sample about the items, except the items 4,5 & 6.

4. To what extent do Jordanian university students perceive that JRTV, satellite television and online news videos on social media contribute to raising their socio-political awareness?

In order to answer this question, means and standard deviations of the extent of contributing JRTV, satellite television and online news videos on social media to raising the socio-political awareness of Jordanian university students were calculated and the four following tables 17,18,19, 20 present the findings.

5.14 Table 16: JRTV raising socio-political awareness

<b>Table 17: JRTV raising socio-political awareness</b>				
N	Items	Mean	St. Deviation	The extent
1	It provides me with enough information about socio-political issues	2.87	1.21	Moderate
2	My socio-political awareness increases when I watch the news on JRTV	3.16	1.20	Moderate
3	It contributes in shaping my opinion about social and political issues	3.09	1.33	Moderate
	<b>JRTV raising as a whole</b>	3.03	.88	Moderate



**Figure 18: JRTV raising socio-political awareness**

The results in the Table 17 and Figure 18 reveal that the role of JRTV in raising socio-political awareness of Jordanian university students as a whole was moderate, as the mean was 3.03. The mean for all the items ranges between 2.87 and 3.16. The item "My socio-political awareness increases when I watch the news on JRTV" comes first place with the highest mean (3.16) and a moderate extent, whereas "JRTV provided them with enough information about socio-political issues" comes last, with a mean of 2.87 and a moderate extent. The standard deviations range between 1.20 and 1.33, which refers to the response's convergence of the study sample about the items.

## 5.15 Satellite television apart from JRTV, raising socio-political awareness

Table 17: Satellite television raising socio-political awareness

Table 18: Satellite television raising socio-political awareness				
N	Items	Mean	St. Deviation	The extent
1	It provides me with enough information about socio-political issues	3.90	.86	High
2	My socio-political awareness increases when I watch the news on satellite television.	3.75	.89	High
3	It contributes in shaping my opinion about social and political issues	3.76	.97	High
	<b>Satellite television raising as a whole</b>	3.80	.77	High

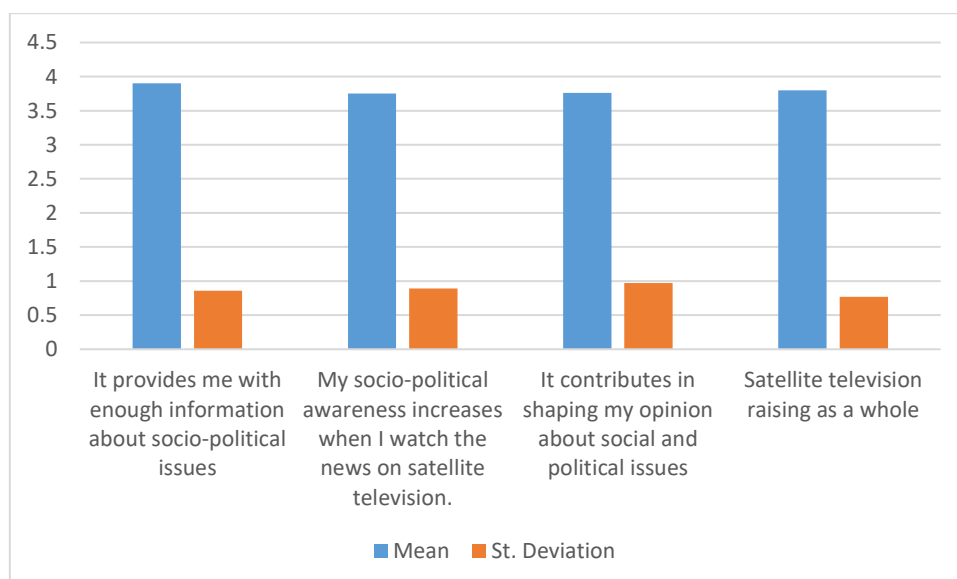


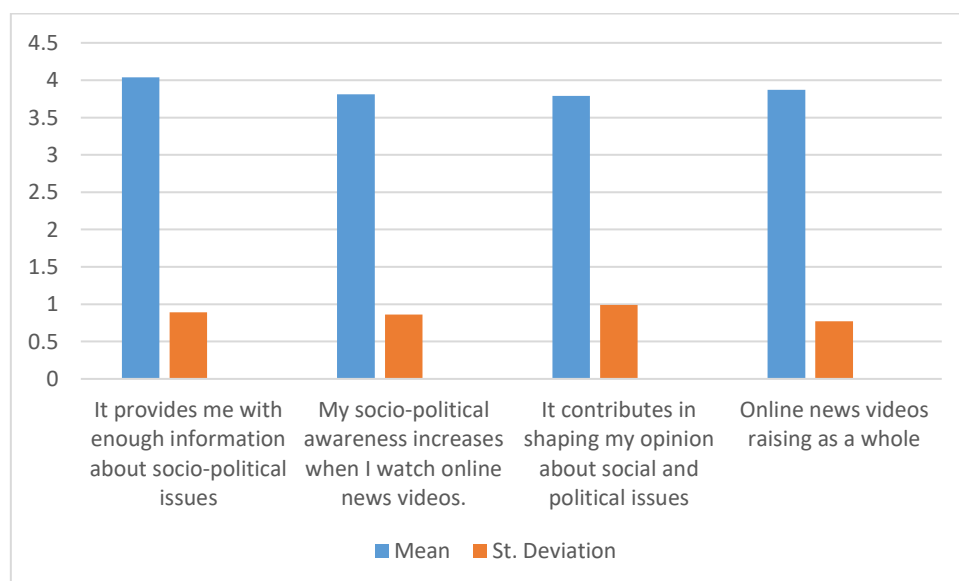
Figure 19: Satellite television raising socio-political awareness

The results in Table 18 and Figure 19 reveal that the role of satellite television in raising the socio-political awareness of Jordanian university students as a whole was high, as the mean was 3.80. The results show that the means for all the items range between 3.75 and 3.90. The item "It provides me with enough information about socio-political issues" comes first with a mean of 3.90 and a high extent, whereas "My socio-political awareness increases when I watch the news on satellite television", comes last with a mean of 3.75 and a high extent. The standard deviations range between .86 and .97 which indicates the response's convergence of the study sample about the items.

## 5.16 Online news videos raising socio-political awareness

Table 18: online news videos raising socio-political awareness

<b>Table 19: online news videos raising socio-political awareness</b>				
N	Items	Mean	St. Deviation	The extent
1	It provides me with enough information about socio-political issues	4.04	.89	High
2	My socio-political awareness increases when I watch online news videos.	3.81	.86	High
3	It contributes in shaping my opinion about social and political issues	3.79	.99	High
	<b>Online news videos raising as a whole</b>	3.87	.77	High



**Figure 20: online news videos raising socio-political awareness**

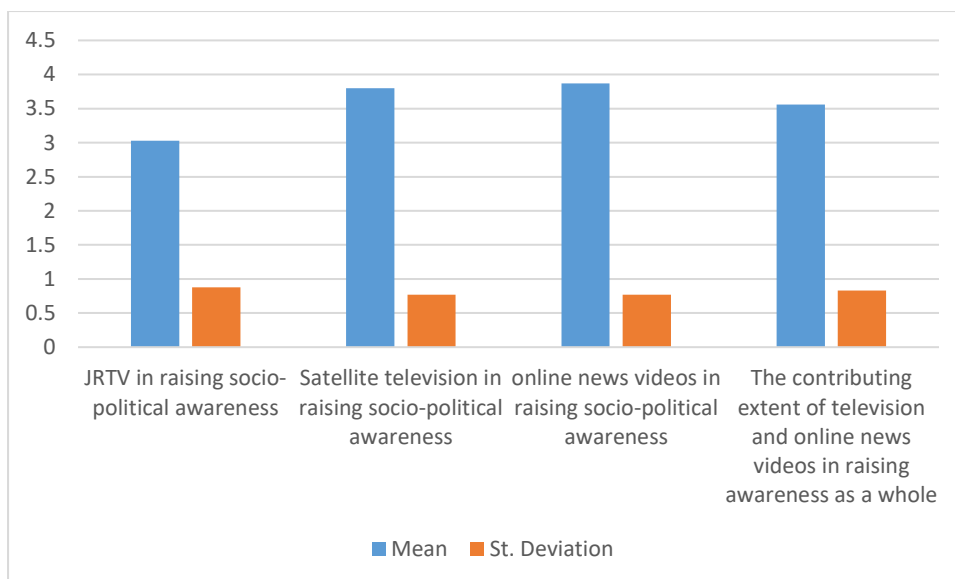
According to the results presented in the Table 19 and Figure 20, it is clear that the extent to which online news videos contribute to raising socio-political awareness of Jordanian university students as a whole is high, as the mean amounted to (3.87). The mean for all the items ranges between 3.79 and 4.04, as the item " It provides me with enough information about socio-political issues" comes first with a mean of 4.04 and a high extent, whereas " It contributes in shaping my opinion about social and political issues " comes last with a mean of 3.79 and a high extent. The standard deviations range between .86 and .99, which indicates the response's convergence of the study sample about the items.

In summary, the following table illustrates the extent television and online news videos contributed in raising socio-political awareness as a whole:

Table 19: Contributing extent of television and online news videos in raising socio-political awareness

<b>Table 20: Contributing extent of television and online news videos in raising socio-political awareness</b>				
N	Dimensions	Mean	St. Deviation	The extent
1	Contributing JRTV in raising socio-political awareness	3.03	.88	Moderate
2	Contributing Satellite television in raising socio-political awareness	3.80	.77	High
3	Contributing online news videos in raising socio-political awareness	3.87	.77	High
	<b>Contributing extent of television and online news videos in raising awareness as a whole</b>	3.56	.83	High





**Figure 21: television and online news videos in raising socio-political awareness**

Table 20 and Figure 21 show that the extent to which television and online news videos contributed to raising awareness of Jordanian university students as a whole is high, since the mean is 3.56. The results reveal that the mean for all sections as a whole range is between 3.03 and 3.87. The "contributing online news videos in raising socio-political awareness " comes first with a mean of 3.87 and a high extent, while the dimension "Contributing Satellite television in raising socio-political awareness" comes second with a mean of 3.80 and a high level. At the bottom is "contributing JRTV in raising socio-political awareness " with a mean of 3.03 and a moderate extent.

## 5.17 Actions which the students may have taken after watching television news and online news videos on social media

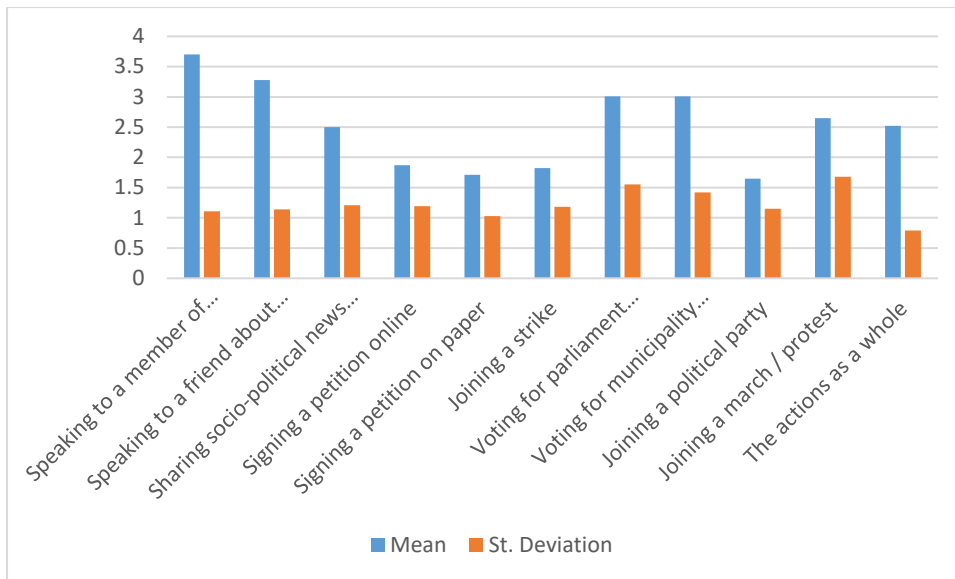
6. How do Jordanian university students perceive the impact of television and online news videos on social media in terms of socio-political action?

In order to answer this question, means and standard deviations of the actions which the students may have taken after watching television news and online news videos on social media were calculated and are presented in Tables 23 and 24 below.

### 5.17.1 Actions after watching television

Table 20: Actions after watching television

<b>Table 21: Actions which the students may have taken after watching television news</b>				
N	Items	Mean	St. Deviation	The level
1	Speaking to a member of the family about the socio-political news you watch	3.70	1.11	High
2	Speaking to a friend about the socio-political news you watch	3.28	1.14	Moderate
3	Sharing socio-political news on my social media accounts	2.50	1.21	Low
4	Signing a petition online	1.87	1.19	Low
5	Signing a petition on paper	1.71	1.03	Very Low
6	Joining a strike	1.82	1.18	Low
7	Voting for parliament elections	3.01	1.55	Moderate
8	Voting for municipality elections	3.01	1.42	Moderate
9	Joining a political party	1.65	1.15	Very Low
10	Joining a march/protest	2.65	1.68	Moderate
	<b>The actions as a whole</b>	2.52	.79	Low



**Figure 22: Actions after watching television**

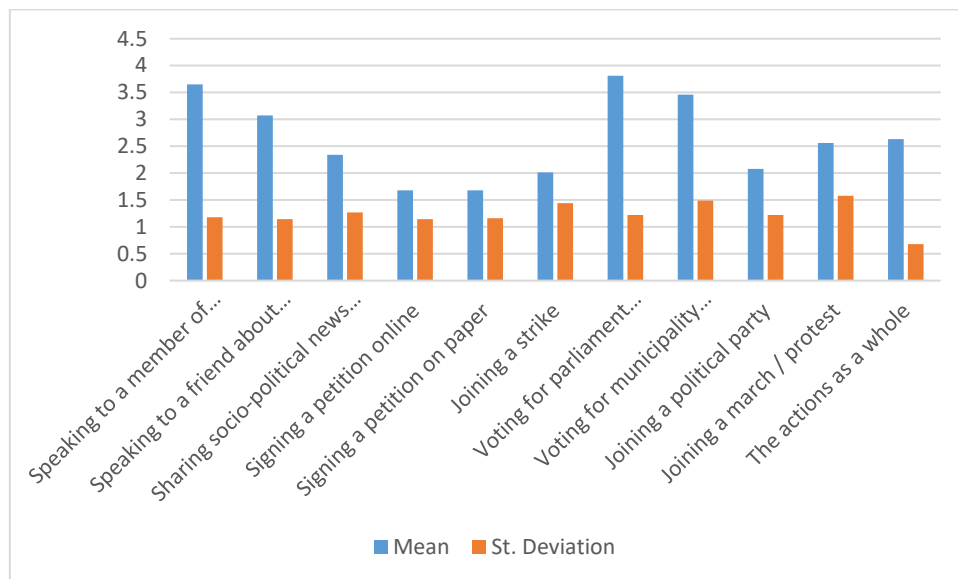
The results demonstrate that the level of students' perception to the impact of television in terms of socio-political action as a whole is low, since the mean is 2.52. The mean for all the items ranges between 1.65 and 3.70. The item "Speaking to a member of the family about the socio-political news you watch" comes first with a mean of 3.70 and a high level, followed by the item "Speaking to a friend about the socio-political news you watch" with a mean of 3.28 and a moderate level. The bottom item is "Joining a political party" with a mean of 1.65 and a very low level. The standard deviations range between 1.03 and 1.68.

### 5.17.2 Actions after watching online news videos on social media

Table 21: Actions after watching online news videos on social media

<b>Table 22: Actions which the students may have taken after watching online news videos on social media</b>				
N	Items	Mean	St. Deviation	The level
1	Speaking to a member of the family about the socio-political news you watch	3.65	1.18	High
2	Speaking to a friend about the socio-political news you watch	3.07	1.14	Moderate
3	Sharing socio-political news on my social media accounts	2.34	1.27	Low

4	Signing a petition online	1.68	1.14	Very Low
5	Signing a petition on paper	1.68	1.16	Very Low
6	Joining a strike	2.01	1.44	Low
7	Voting for parliament elections	3.81	1.22	High
8	Voting for municipality elections	3.46	1.49	High
9	Joining a political party	2.08	1.22	Low
10	Joining a march/protest	2.56	1.58	Low
	<b>The actions as a whole</b>	<b>2.63</b>	<b>.68</b>	<b>Moderate</b>



**Figure 23: Actions after watching online news videos on social media**

According to Table 22 and Figure 23 the level of students' perception to the impact of online news videos on social media in terms of socio-political action as a whole is moderate, with a mean of 2.63. The mean for all the items ranges between 1.68 and 3.81. The item "Voting for parliament elections" comes first with a mean of 3.81 and a high level, followed by the item "Speaking to a member of the family about the socio-political news you watch" with a mean of 3.65 and a high level. The items " Signing a petition on

paper "and "Signing a petition online" come last with a mean of 1.68 for both and a very low level of actions. The standard deviations of items range between 1.14 and 1.58.

## 5.18 Statistical analysis

In this section of the study, statistical analysis of the survey results will be undertaken to determine any effect of gender, age or faculty on the level of students' interest in socio-political news in general and in their interest in socio-political issues at levels from local to international for both television and social media. I will also look at students' views of trustworthiness of socio-political news on satellite television, JRTV, and online videos on social media. The two tests that will be used to serve this purpose are: (i) the T-Test which is used in order to show the significance of statistical differences between means, the "T" test is used for variables containing two categories; (ii) the One- Way ANOVA test which is used in order to demonstrate the significance of statistical differences between means too. The "One- Way ANOVA" test will be used for variables containing more than two categories.

**I. Null Hypothesis one:** There are no statistically significant differences at the level of significance ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) in the level of students' interest in socio-political issues in general, attributed to the variables (age, gender, and students' faculty).

In order to test this hypothesis, means and the standard deviations of the opinions of the study sample were extracted in light of the variables age, gender and students' faculty. In order to illustrate the significance of the statistical differences between means, the T-Test was used for gender and the One-Way ANOVA for age and students' faculty. The results are presented in the tables below.

## 1. Interest in socio-political issues by age

### Survey Q. 8: How interested are you in socio-political issues?

Table 22: One-Way ANOVA for age

Table 23: One-Way ANOVA for age												
From 18 to less than 20		From 20 to less than 22		From 22 to less than 24		From 24 to less than 26		26 and above		F	sig	
Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation			
Q.8	2.66	0.83	2.72	0.89	3.20	1.15	2.00	0.00	4.00	0.89	5.72	0.000

Table 23 showed that there are statistically significant differences at the level of significance ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) for the impact of age on interest in socio-political issues. However, the only significant difference was that the category of mature students aged 24 and above were more interested than the other age categories, but the numbers of mature students were very low, and therefore any conclusions based on such low numbers would be risky.

## 2. Interest in socio-political issues by gender

### Survey Q. 8: How interested are you in socio-political issues?

Table 23: T-Test for gender/ interest in socio-political issues.

	Table (24): T-Test for gender					
	Male		Female		t	sig
	Mean	Std.Deviation	Mean	Std.Deviation		
The interest in socio-political issues.	2.99	0.96	2.62	0.82	4.83	0.29

Table 24 shows that there are no statistically significant differences at the level of significance ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) for the effect of gender on students' interest in socio-political issues in general. In other words, the level of interest in socio-political issues is equal, regardless of gender, whether males or females. Therefore, the hypothesis is accepted related to gender.

### 3. Interest in socio-political issues by student's faculty

#### Survey Q. 8: How interested are you in socio-political issues?

Table 24: One- Way ANOVA for student's faculty/ interest in socio-political issues

	Table 25: One- Way ANOVA for student's faculty							
	Sciences		Humanities		Health		F	sig
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation		
The interest in socio-political issues	2.68	0.805	2.68	0.93	2.90	0.75	1.26	0.280

The results presented in Table 25 illustrate that there are no statistically significant differences at the level of significance  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  for the effect of student's faculty on interest in socio-political issues. Thus, the null hypothesis of no differences is accepted in reference to the student's faculty.

**II. Null Hypothesis two:** There are no statistically significant differences at the level of significance  $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) in the level of students' interest in the type/level of socio-political news **on television**, attributed to the variables age, gender and students' faculty.

In order to test this hypothesis, means and standard deviations of the opinions of the study sample were extracted in light of the variables age, gender, and students' faculty. In order to illustrate the significance of the statistical differences between means, the T-Test was used for gender and the One-Way ANOVA for age and students' faculty.

### 1. Interest in the type of socio-political news on television by age

#### Survey Q. 9: level of interest in the type of socio-political news on television.

Table 25: One-Way ANOVA for age/ Local, National, Arab and International news

Table 26: One-Way ANOVA for age												
	From 18 to less than 20		From 20 to less than 22		From 22 to less than 24		From 24 to less than 26		26 and above		F	sig
	Me an	Std. Deviatio n	Mea n	Std. Deviatio n	Mea n	Std. Deviatio n	Mea n	Std. Deviatio n	Mea n	Std. Deviatio n		
Local news	3.18	1.21	3.43	0.99	4.20	1.15	2.00	0.00	2.00	1.36	5.23	0.000
National news	3.07	1.17	3.48	1.10	4.20	1.15	1.00	0.00	5.00	0.00	12.77	0.000
Arab news	2.64	1.11	2.88	1.07	3.5	1.23	1.00	0.00	4.33	0.516	8.15	0.000
International news	2.34	1.09	2.80	1.12	3.1	1.41	1.00	0.00	4.00	0.89	10.11	0.000
level as a whole	2.81	0.88	3.14	0.82	3.75	1.11	1.25	0.00	4.25	0.22	14.10	0.000



The results presented in Table 26 demonstrate that there are statistically significant differences at the level of significance  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  for the effect of age on all the items and in the level of interest in the type of socio-political news on television as a whole. For local news, the significant difference between age groups was that those aged 24 and over were less interested than the younger groups. The other types of news (national, Arab and international) are harder to interpret as the numbers of respondents aged 24 and over was low, with only two respondents aged 26 and over. This analysis leads to a general conclusion that the ages from 18 to less than 20 and from 20 to less than 22 did not differ in their interest level in any types of news. Those aged from 22 to less than 24 were in general more interested in all types of news. No conclusion about the categories from 24 to less than 26 and 26 and above should be made given the low number of respondents. Therefore, the hypothesis is rejected in all the items (local, national, Arab and international news) and in the level as a whole.

## 2. Interest in the type of socio-political news on television by gender

### Survey Q. 9: level of interest in the type of socio-political news on television.

Table 26: T-Test for gender/ Local, National, Arab and International news

	Table (27): T-Test for gender					
	Male		Female		T	sig
	Mean	Std.Deviation	Mean	Std.Deviation		
Local	3.19	1.04	3.28	1.22	-0.75	0.002
National	3.36	1.24	3.15	1.17	1.95	0.035
Arab	3.28	1.11	2.57	1.08	7.15	0.61
International	2.94	1.14	2.33	1.09	6.08	0.65
level as a whole	3.19	0.91	2.82	0.89	4.46	0.59

Table 27 shows that there are statistically significant differences at the level of significance  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  by gender in interest in local Jordanian socio-political news only, and the difference was that females were more interested than males. Also, there are statistically significant differences at the level of significance  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  by gender in interest in national Jordanian socio-political news, and the difference was that males were more interested than females. Therefore, the hypothesis is rejected in these items. However, there are no statistically significant differences at the level of significance  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  by gender in the rest of items and the level of interest in the type of socio-political news on television as a whole. Hence the hypothesis is accepted in these items and the general level related to gender.

### 3. Interest in the type of socio-political news on television by student's faculty

#### Survey Q. 9: level of interest in the type of socio-political news on television.

Table 27: One-Way ANOVA for age/ Local, National, Arab and International news

	Table 28: One Way ANOVA for student's faculty							
	Sciences		Humanities		Health		F	sig
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation		
Local	3.49	1.01	2.97	1.27	3.95	1.01	24.92	0.00
National	3.34	1.11	3.00	1.24	3.76	0.93	12.22	0.00
Arab	2.85	1.19	2.55	1.17	3.19	1.04	9.90	0.00
International	2.53	1.17	2.35	1.03	2.98	1.40	6.77	0.001
level as a whole	3.05	0.82	2.71	0.93	3.47	0.80	20.98	0.00

The results presented in Table 28 show that there are statistically significant differences at the level of significance  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  for the impact of student's faculty on all the items and in the level of interest in the type of socio-political news on television as a whole;

therefore the hypothesis is rejected in these items and in the level as a whole regarding student's faculty.

**III. Null Hypothesis three:** There are no statistically significant differences at the level of significance  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  in the level of students' interest in the type of socio-political news on social media, attributed to the variables age, gender and student's faculty.

In order to test this hypothesis, means and the standard deviations of the opinions of the study sample were extracted in light of the variables age, gender and student's faculty. In order to illustrate the significance of the statistical differences between means, the T-Test was used for gender and the One-Way ANOVA for age and student's faculty. The results are presented in the table below.

### 1. Interest in the type of socio-political news on social media by age

#### Survey Q. 10: level of interest in the type of socio-political news on social media.

Table 28: One-Way ANOVA for age/ Local, National, Arab and International news

	Table 29: One-Way ANOVA for age											
	From 18 to less than 20		From 20 to less than 22		From 22 to less than 24		From 24 to less than 26		26 and above		F	sig
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation		
Local news	3.33	1.26	3.57	0.98	4.2	0.89	2.00	0.00	4.33	0.51	4.89	0.001
National news	3.18	1.09	3.65	1.17	4.40	0.68	1.00	0.00	4.67	0.51	14.63	0.00
Arab news	2.72	1.02	3.31	1.13	3.80	1.00	1.00	0.00	4.0	0.89	15.80	0.00
International news	2.52	1.12	3.07	1.34	3.40	1.46	1.00	0.00	3.33	0.51	9.33	0.00
level as a whole	2.93	0.86	3.39	0.87	3.95	0.80	1.25	0.00	4.08	0.34	17.54	0.00

The results presented in Table 29 demonstrate that there are statistically significant differences at the level of significance  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  for the impact of age on all the items and in the level of interest in the type of socio-political news on social media as a whole. The age group from 18 to less than 20 years is significantly less interested in all types of news on social media (local, national, Arab and International) than the next two groups from 20 to less than 22 and from 22 to less than 24 years. The older groups from 24 to less than 26 years, being based on such low numbers appear to say that they are very uninterested and that age 26 and above are very interested, but no weight should be given to these conclusions. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected in all the items and in the level as a whole.

## 2. Interest in the type of socio-political news on social media by gender

### Survey Q. 10: level of interest in the type of socio-political news on social media.

Table 29: T-Test for gender/ Local, National, Arab and International news

	Table 30: T-Test for gender					
	Male		Female		T	sig
	Mean	Std.Deviation	Mean	Std.Deviation		
local news	3.34	1.14	3.42	1.23	-0.78	0.14
National news	3.45	1.16	3.27	1.12	1.72	0.71
Arab news	3.19	1.09	2.78	1.07	4.14	0.33
International news	2.92	1.10	2.58	1.21	3.17	0.01
level as a whole	3.22	0.91	3.01	0.88	2.58	0.36

Table 3 showed that there are statistically significant differences at the level of significance  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  for the effect of gender on the interest in international socio-political news level and the difference was that males were more interested than females. Therefore, the hypothesis is rejected in this item. However, there are no statistically significant differences at the level of significance  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  for the effect of gender in the

rest of items (local, national and Arab news) and in the level of interest in the type of socio-political news on social media as a whole. Thus, the hypothesis is accepted in these items and at the general level.

#### 4. Interest in the type of socio-political news on social media by student's Faculty

#### 5. Survey Q. 10: level of interest in the type of socio-political news on social media.

Table 30: One Way ANOVA for student's faculty/ Local, National, Arab and international news

	Table 31: One Way ANOVA for student's faculty							
	Sciences		Humanities		Health		F	sig
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation		
Local news	3.52	1.17	3.2	1.25	3.86	0.84	11.35	0.00
National news	3.44	1.16	3.17	1.11	3.48	1.06	5.13	0.006
Arab news	2.97	1.18	2.77	0.98	3.00	1.12	3.02	0.049
International news	2.57	1.28	2.69	1.09	2.95	1.41	2.22	0.10
Level as a whole	3.13	0.92	2.95	0.86	3.32	0.88	5.27	0.005

The results presented in Table 31 showed that there are no statistically significant differences at the level of significance  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  for the effect of students' faculty on the fourth item (international news). Thus, the hypothesis is accepted in this item. While there are differences in the rest of the items (local, national and Arab news) and in the level of interest in the type of socio-political news on social media as a whole, therefore the hypothesis is rejected in these items and in the level as a whole.

**IV. Null Hypothesis four:** There are no statistically significant differences at the level of significance  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  in the level of students' views of the trustworthiness of the news content coverage on Satellite television and JRTV and their news videos on social media, and online news videos that are coming from other sources, attributed to the variables age, gender and student's faculty.

In order to test this hypothesis, means and the standard deviations of the opinions of the study sample were extracted in light of the variables age, gender and students' faculty. In order to illustrate the significance of the statistical differences between means, the T-Test was used for gender and the One-Way ANOVA for age and students' faculty. The tables below present the results.

### 1. The level of trustworthiness of the news content coverage by age (question number 16 in the survey)

Table 31: One- Way ANOVA for age/ Satellite, JRTV, Online

	Table (32): One- Way ANOVA for age											
	From 18 to less than 20		From 20 to less than 22		From 22 to less than 24		From 24 to less than 26		26 and above		F	sig
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation		
Satellite	3.30	0.97	3.24	0.93	3.00	1.02	3.00	0.00	2.33	1.36	1.97	0.97
JRTV	3.69	1.13	3.78	0.91	4.10	0.55	3.00	0.00	3.33	0.51	1.22	0.30
Online	2.57	1.09	2.28	0.98	2.75	1.11	3.00	0.00	2.00	0.89	2.64	0.033
level as a whole	3.18	0.72	3.10	0.69	3.28	0.75	3.00	0.00	2.55	0.62	1.65	0.16

The results presented in table (32), showed that there are no statistically significant differences at the level of significance ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) for the impact of age in the first two items and in the level of students' views of the trustworthiness of the news content coverage on Satellite television and JRTV and their news videos on social media and online news videos that are coming from other sources as a whole, while there are statistically

significant differences in the third item for the favour of the age group (24-26), but as the numbers were very low, therefore, any conclusions based on such low numbers would be risky. Therefore, the fifth hypothesis is accepted in these items and in the level as a whole related to age while there are statistically significant differences in the third item.

## 2. Survey Q. 16: The level of trustworthiness of the news content coverage by gender

Table 32: T-Test for gender/ Satellite, JRTV and Online

	Table 33: T-Test for gender					
	Male		Female		T	sig
	Mean	Std.Deviation	Mean	Std.Deviation		
Satellite television and its news videos on social media	2.97	1.04	3.36	0.94	-4.34	0.46
JRTV and its news videos on social media	3.63	1.16	3.74	1.05	-1.11	0.15
Online news videos that are coming from other sources	2.51	1.09	2.52	1.07	-0.16	0.89
Level of trustworthiness of the news content coverage as a whole.	3.03	0.80	3.20	0.68	-2.59	0.06

The results in Table 33 illustrate that there are no statistically significant differences at the level of significance  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  for the effect of gender on all items and on the level of students' views of the trustworthiness of the news content coverage on Satellite television and JRTV and their news videos on social media, and online news videos that are coming from other sources as a whole. Therefore the null hypothesis is accepted in these items and in the level as a whole related to gender. There is no difference in gender here so they either trust equally or they don't trust given that the mean response was just above or just below three which is the neutral point on the scale in the survey.

### 3. Survey Q. 16: The level of trustworthiness of the news content coverage by student's faculty

Table 33: One- Way ANOVA for student's faculty/ Satellite, JRTV and Online

	Table 34: One- Way ANOVA for student's faculty							
	Sciences		Humanities		Health		F	sig
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation		
Satellite television and its news videos on social media	3.32	1.02	3.25	0.91	3.05	1.05	1.56	0.21
JRTV and its news videos on social media	3.87	1.01	3.56	1.12	3.88	0.99	7.37	0.001
Online news videos that are coming from other sources	2.58	1.03	2.5	1.13	2.19	0.86	2.49	0.08
Level of trustworthiness of the news content coverage as a whole.	3.25	0.65	3.10	0.75	3.03	0.76	4.39	0.013

The results in Table 34 show that there are no statistically significant differences at the level of significance  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  for the impact of students' faculty on satellite television and its news videos on social media thus, the hypothesis is accepted in this item. Whereas there are statistically significant differences in the second item in the level of students' trust in the news content coverage on Satellite television and JRTV and their news videos on social media, and online news videos that are coming from other sources as a whole, hence this hypothesis is rejected in these items.



## 5.18 Summary

The questionnaire survey was designed to allow me to gain an insight into the perceptions of the students and their subsequent level of awareness gained through social media, satellite television and JRTV. This chapter provides findings in relation to the way in which Jordanian university students claim to consume the news on television and social media. It has presented findings on students' level of interest in socio-political news as well as findings to demonstrate their level of interest in local, national, Arab and international socio-political news. These were followed by findings on students' motivations behind watching socio-political news on television and social media. Finally, the chapter considered the findings about students' perceptions of the impact on their perceived socio-political awareness by JRTV, satellite television and social media alongside with set of actions students may have taken after watching the news on television and social media.

# Chapter Six: Discussion

## **Discussion of the Research Findings and Recommendations**

### 6.1 Introduction

This study has contributed to a greater understanding of the consumption of news and media amongst Jordanian youth. Specific focus was given to online news videos on social media, as well as JRTV and satellite television services originating from both within and outside Jordan. Along with this was an examination of the profile of the consumption of news, while keeping in mind the rapid changes in the landscape of broadcast news.

This discussion chapter will put forward the researcher's perspective and examine the various research questions that were discussed in the earlier chapters. Along with the rest of the thesis it will make comparisons between the findings of the current research and research that was conducted previously, pertaining to the same area.

The study itself raises several areas that require discussion and also suggestions for future studies. The current chapter will combine various variables to provide a more comprehensive picture. Within the study, students from the University of Jordan were asked about their patterns of news consumption and their perceptions regarding their choices of the news sources on television and social media. They were also questioned about issues of credibility, to understand the factors playing a role in affecting their media consumption habits. Types of online news videos viewed by students on social media were also asked about, to gain information about distribution channels they used to access these sources. Additionally, questions were asked to gauge their socio-political interest in news, and their motivations behind watching socio-political news on television and social media. Finally, interviewees were asked questions about political awareness and their actions after watching television and social media news.

This research comes at a critical time in a volatile region, and while it is located at the intersection of traditional media (television), new media (social media), politics and behavioural science (perception), this thesis will establish a framework for subsequent research, and the results of this study are essential for policymakers, government officials and media content producers. Therefore, the importance of this research in

understanding socio-political news consumption and its impact within Jordan is substantial. This chapter is divided into ten sections. Each section is divided into three subsections: firstly, a presentation of the findings from the quantitative data; secondly the themes and excerpts from the interview data; and finally a discussion that combines these data with other studies. This chapter is followed by a summary of the findings of the survey combined with the interviews, with a focus on the contributions and implications of the stated findings.

Academic research on the impact of news consumption on socio-political awareness, participation and engagement is still scarce in Jordan; this research contributes to filling this gap. It provides a more thorough investigation into the sources used by young people in Jordan when watching the news in general and socio-political news in particular, the ways they choose news sources, and the different platforms they interact with to satisfy their needs in this context. This chapter will explore all these issues by discussing the results of data, both from the survey and interviews, to give a fuller picture of these issues.

While the study does not represent the entire student population within Jordan, let alone the entire country's perceptions, the respondents form part of an important section of Jordanian society. Gunter (2010) stated that these educated individuals will be responsible for leading the country in the future and comprise a group of people that display an interest in published news.

The significance of the current research further springs from the fact that there has been an interference by foreign news channels. This sparks a further debate on the future of news broadcasting produced within Jordan. These new news broadcasting services have gained attention and become popular in Jordan, especially among the younger generation. Questions then arise as to what the role of national Jordanian news channels can be in the face of competition from foreign news broadcasters such as Al Jazeera, and what the national news channels can do to maintain the loyalty and interest of the people, in order to satisfy the needs of Jordanians and also be a mirror of the country to the world.

Before the researcher delves into the crux of this chapter, it is important to acknowledge the fact that the data informing this dissertation were generated from self-reported tools (a survey questionnaire and interviews).

## **Results related to the questionnaire and interviews questions**

### **6.2 Television and Social Media (News watching habits)**

The following represents the survey findings about news consumption in general which will be followed by the survey findings about the consumption of socio-political news and the themes extracted from the interviews data to bring in a more comprehensive discussion of the results afterwards.

#### **The results concerning television news**

The study findings referred to the fact that 332 students (47.2 %) of the total sample watched television news daily from 1 hour to less than 3 hours. This was followed by students watching less than 1 hour of television per day, which amounted to 212 participants (30.2 %) of the total sample, thereby making their interaction with the television minimal. The findings also showed that the category of students watching television news for 7 hours or more represented the fewest participants, only 5 students (0.7 %) of the total sample. This result is interesting since television is still well watched and followed among young people even in the context of the spread of the internet and the lack of interest in watching television in general as it was before.

#### **The results concerning news videos on social media**

The study findings revealed that the most frequent category was those who watched news videos on social media from 1 hour to less than 3 hours, amounting to 298 students, 42.4 % of the total sample. Students watching less than 1 hour of news videos on social media daily ranked second with 178 participants, 25.3 % of the total sample. The category of students watching news videos on social media 7 hours or more was last with the fewest participants, only 8 students, 1.1 % of the total sample. These results demonstrate the current average hours spent among young people on social media and the Internet.

## 6.3 Television and Social Media (news watching habits regarding socio-political issues)

### Results related to news regarding socio-political issues on television

The study findings demonstrated that 359 students watched socio-political issues on television for less than 1 hour, 51.1 % of the total sample, which was followed with 294 participants, 41.8 % of the sample, watching the news from 1 hour to less than 3 hours. The fewest participants, 3, fell within the category of watching the news on television for 7 hours or more, which was just 0.4 % of the total sample.

### Results related to news regarding socio-political issues on television

The study findings showed that the respondents in the category (less than 1 hour) were the most frequent totalling 302, 43.0 % of the total sample, then the category (from 1 hour to less than 3 hours) with 280 respondents at 39.8 %, while the category (7 hours or more) was the smallest one with 8 respondents, only 1.1 %.

**Table 35: Average of time spent on each type of media**

Table 34: Time spent watching Television and Social media

	<b>Television</b>	<b>Social Media</b>
<b>All News</b>	2 hours	2 hours 24 minutes
<b>Socio-Political News</b>	1 hour 21minutes	1hour 48 minutes

The average consumption of social media use for watching all news was about 2 hours 24 minutes, while the average consumption of television was 2 hours. Similarly, the average consumption of social media use for watching socio-political news was about 1 hour 48 minutes, while the average consumption of television was 1 hour 21 minutes.

## Qualitative Data

Reflecting on the two sections above, qualitatively, the respondents were asked about their preferences for either television or social media and their views in regard to their consumption habits of both news in general and socio-political news issues. One of the themes that emerged was **“social media are more present within younger age groups”** than older people.

Participant 2, a 21-year-old male studying Humanities, shared his opinion: “I think for our age group I would say social media is more preferable and that’s because our phones are always in our hands and we keep checking our social media all the time, so yeah, we’re so connected to it unlike television which only dominates when we get home from university as it’s located in the middle of the living room surrounded by all the family members”. Another participant stated, “Me and my friend are 20 years old, we always use social media, so we always see the news on it, but my father watches television channels all the time, and social media is not a thing for him.” (Participant 5, 22 years old, male, Humanities).

Another theme that emerged from the interviews was **“Television is related to family time and bonding”**. A respondent stated, “Oh...social media might be popular but among young people mainly, but I watch television with my family and we still heavily rely on it as our source of news and other important things as well. Also, I think most families in Jordan sit by the television to bond and relax.

She added “You can never find a better-quality time in the week than watching the show *“Yes'ed Sabahak”* on Friday morning with the whole family around. Also, for me, I watch *“Youm Jadid”* with my mother in my days off during the week. Hence, yeah, I can tell you we get most of our information and knowledge from television.” (Participant 15, 21 years old, female, Humanities). Similarly, another respondent explained, “We always have the television on at home, you know I go to university every day during the week, so the only time I have during the evening is like an hour to pass the time, so I use it for sitting with my family while we are all watching television at the same time”. He added, “Families in Jordan always tune in to news channels for many hours, so as a student while I spend time with my family in the living room, I have to watch the news and therefore I’m usually updated about what is happening in Jordan and outside.” (Participant 11, 24 years old,

male, Health).

Another respondent said: “Well, my family always tuned in to the Aljazeera channel and the only time the television got turned off is when we went to bed. I grew up not liking watching television that much because my dad always watched the news carefully and switched from one channel to another to just see the different views on the same story. I remember I found it to be very boring, but as I entered university I realised that all my friends talked a lot about news and politics and then I started watching more to keep updated and not feel left out, not knowing what is going on around me.” (Participant 19, 18 years old, male, Health).

However, another respondent provided a contrasting view and mentioned, “Well, I’m not comfortable with television news in general, but I still watch television with my family, and I believe that every television channel has its own perspectives and agendas. They don’t usually give you a hundred per cent truth about the story.” (Participant 14, 24 years old, female, Humanities).

Respondents were also asked to explain their personal preferences when it came to watching socio-political news, either on television or social media, and the majority noted that to some degree **“television usually covers varied news stories”**, whether locally or globally, on topics that respondents sometimes did not see on social media. The respondent’s views on this were:

“I watch political news almost every day; you know people in our culture talk so much about politics and watch political stuff on television almost all the time” (Participant 21, 19 years old, male, Sciences).

“Our region is always heated with politics; people here grew up watching and talking about politics; there are always so many political shows on satellite.” (Participant 17, 20 years old, female, Sciences).

Likewise, another participant indicated that “News reports and production styles keep improving on popular satellite channels like Russia Today, for example, they use visual effects mixed with real footage taken by drones. It’s just much more stimulating for the eyes to watch, so I would say the satellite channels have so much to offer and they can be

educating about many aspects of politics and other subjects and what is always going on around us.” (Participant 6, 21 years old, female, Humanities).

Similarly, “You know we Jordanians are quite serious about politics, and we talk about politics a lot, and I can say television has a wide range of reporting on many subjects and not only politics.” (Participant 30, 23 years old, male, Humanities).

### **Other themes:**

A theme that emerged from the interviews was “**Facebook as a dominant social media platform among Jordanian university students.**”

A respondent stated, “I feel television gives you all the news information about everything and it’s enough, but you know these days people check their phones all the time so whenever I go to my Facebook I scroll down and it’s all news again” (Participant 28, 22 years old, male, Sciences).

Similarly, another respondent reported, “I check my Facebook all the time and I always get to know about what is happening from my Facebook before I even watch it on television so when I see it on television, I already know about it. But to be honest, I even enjoy it more, because I already had read or looked briefly at a video clip about it from one of these news channels on Facebook” (Participant 1, 21 years old, male, Sciences).

Another theme emerged, “**social media provides convenience**”. As one of the participants indicated, “Social media has changed people’s watching habits like we consume more news content now because you just open your Facebook and you have the news. Also, actually, for me I feel like people in general or even my friends don’t post on Facebook as much as they used to in the past, unless they have something exciting to tell the world, such as getting a job or getting married, so my Facebook is all news” (Participant 18, 19 years old, male, Health).

In the same way, another respondent mentioned, “People use social media on their mobile phones, so it’s just very easy to read the news or watch short news videos, unlike in the past. You know someone can only concentrate for short periods I just do not like



the idea of sitting in front of the television for long hours I just cannot concentrate” (Participant 27, 23 years old, male, Health).

In a similar fashion, another participant shared, “I love social media. I live in the north, so I have to sit on the coach for nearly four hours every time I come to university, so all I do is spend my time on Facebook and read or watch the news on it.” He added, “I don’t feel the journey anymore; social media is interesting, and it makes life very easy and you can kill so much time” (Participant 9, 23 years old, male, Sciences).

Another theme that emerged was “**social media news as an informative source**”. One participant stated, “Well, I don’t know, but I feel I’m always informed enough from social media about what is happening in the country” (Participant 3, 20 years old, male, Sciences). Similarly, another respondent mentioned, “I can tell you that these days all the television channels have pages on Facebook. They keep uploading videos on their pages, and they pop up straight away when I open my Facebook.” (Participant 4, 21 years old, female, Health). Likewise, another participant stated, “Social media saves you time compared to waiting for the bulletins at the end of the day” (Participant 20, 19 years old, male, Health).

Participant 9, a 23-year-old male studying Sciences, shared a similar view: “Well, I would say, of course, I like technology and Facebook, of course, keeps improving. Something important to mention here is that in Jordan, everyone and everything is available on Facebook; you can know and access news about the authorities, governmental departments, businesses and other institutions. Also, if you want to express your opinion, you can simply write a comment or share it on your wall, so you can also know your friends’ opinions on it if they comment on it as well.”

Another theme that emerged was “**social media as a quick source of news**”. One of the respondents stated that “I check my social media straight away when there is breaking news or a hot topic going on, either inside Jordan or globally” (Participant 13, 19 years old, female, Health). Similarly, another respondent explained, “You know I have three social media accounts, and I can scan through media services quickly with my phone wherever I am”. He added, “When I wake up in the morning the first thing I do is to go

through my Facebook and Twitter accounts while still lying on my bed, before even switching on the television or the radio” (Participant 12, 22 years old, male, Health).

Likewise, a respondent mentioned, “I cannot focus on watching the news for longer than an hour I just lose my concentration so for me social media is a quick source of information since most of the information is reported in near real-time” (Participant 16, 20 years old, female, Sciences). Participant 27, a 23-year-old male studying Health, also shared that, “Personally, I use social media to check the highlights and decide which television channel I’ll watch for the full news at the top of the hour”.

Another theme that emerged was **“social media can contain unverified news”**. As a respondent reported, “I would look at social media for updates but would wait for the main channels like television news to verify the information”. He also added that “Information from unfiltered sources on social media may spread false news and propaganda” (Participant 10, 20 years old, male, Sciences). Similarly, another informant stated, “Usually I update myself quickly with social media, but I have more confidence in television or radio” (Participant 29, 18 years old, male, Humanities). Likewise, another participant said, “I just want to say that social media often reports misleading or biased news videos or even written articles which you do not even know the source or you have never heard of the website’s name that is publishing it”. He added, “I sometimes come across and read so many news articles from websites that I have never heard of before, and sometimes you can tell that it is misleading news or has no substance in it but just to trick you to read it and that’s all” (Participant 8, 20 years old, male, Humanities).

### **A summary of the themes:**

**“Social media are more present within younger ages groups.”**

**“Television is related to family time and bonding.”**

**“Television usually covers varied news stories.”**

**“Facebook as a dominant social media platform.”**

**“Social media provides convenience.”**

**“Social media news as an informative source.”**

**“Social media as a quick source of news.”**

**“Social media can carry unverified news.”**

### **Discussion of this section**

The average consumption of social media was higher than that of television as reported quantitatively. In more detail, the consumption patterns of Jordanian university students generally were that they watched a variety of news, with most in the category of one hour to less than three hours and one hour to less than three hours on both television, 47.2 %, and social media, 42.4 %. With regard to the consumption of socio-political news on television and social media specifically, it was found that the majority (51.1 %) spent less than an hour watching the news on television, followed by the second most popular category from one hour to less than three, 41.8 %. For social media consumption, the most popular category, less than one hour, was the same, amounting to 43.0 %, as was the second most popular, from one hour to less than three hours, at 39.8 %. Television is reported to be slightly more popular compared to social media in terms of news consumption, with highest peaks for general news in the one hour to less than three category and specifically socio-political in the less than one hour category. This is possibly because the broadcasting of bulletin news is typically within a limited time frame during the day, with most families and students watching the news at these hours. Furthermore, students generally are busy and may have classes to attend during the day, which is why television may be seen as a break to pass the time.

The popularity of social media and television both peaked at from one hour to less than three which supports the idea that some people are only able to concentrate for this length of time, and also coincides with the use of television to pass the time as some of the respondents reported. Interestingly, social media gains popularity in the categories three hours to less than five; five hours to less than seven; and more than seven hours. This shows that students may participate more in watching television but be more engaged with social media. The reasons for this is that television news is only broadcast during certain hours of the day but also that television in Jordan is part of the family social setting in the middle of the living room, whereas social media is accessible at any time.

This would dictate the differing patterns of news consumption on the two platforms. Addictive behaviour towards social media such as Facebook has been shown (Ryan *et al.*, 2014) and could explain the long hours spent watching some categories of video on social media. Other reasons could include critical individuals who spend time beyond television to read comments and contribute their own views on social media, which could result in the prolonged use of social media compared to television. A quantitative survey study conducted in Jordan by the United Nations and the European Union on how young people between the ages of 18 and 29 perceived the media, showed that the internet and social media are the most important sources of news and current affairs, followed by television, with newspapers coming last (UNESCO, 2015).

Furthermore, unemployment and other economic problems have recently increased in Jordan (World Bank, 2019). As some students have part-time jobs, this may have led to a growth in the use of social media to pass the time. Lastly, students researching these areas of interest could be a factor in social media being used more than television sources. Another qualitative report conducted in Jordan a year later by the United Nations and the European Union, on youth issues in Jordan and the media, showed that unemployment and finding jobs were the topics of greatest concern among young people in Jordan, followed by political engagement and education. The report highlighted that traditional media outlets in the country were not addressing these issues enough (UNESCO, 2017).

This consumption pattern seems to not have changed much since 2016 in the case of Jordanian youth. The Annual Arab Youth Survey 2016 which explored “attitudes among Arab youth in 16 countries in the Middle East and North Africa” showed that television still has the largest news reach among young Arabs. However, online news sources and social media continue to close the gap in consumption with print media (ASDA'A BCW, 2016). Likewise, my survey results also show that university students in Jordan on average spend a considerable amount of time watching the news, whereas a decade ago, a study by Al-Galilat (2009) found that the vast majority of university students in Jordan watched satellite channels mostly for movies and entertainment. Similarly, El-Hasan's (2008) study found that MBC1 was the most preferred satellite channel among Jordanian university students, followed by MBC2, then the Al Jazeera news channel; Jordanian National Television came at the bottom of the list. However, it seems that this pattern of

watching television has changed based on the level of instability in the region. News has become increasingly widely consumed by Arabs; for example, my findings on news consumption agree with Karim's (2012) study on Jordanian audiences in which he found that 75.0 % of the sample watched the news, followed by 61.7 % who watched speech debates, 51.7 % who watched religion and 56.7 % who watched entertainment. Note that each participant could select more than one programme type.

A qualitative discussion follows, exploring the themes that emerged regarding television and social media. To start with television, "Television is related to family time and bonding". This theme concurs with the work of Silverstone (1994, p.29), in relation to the role of television in daily life. He stated that:

Television is part of home - part of its idealisation, part of its reality. The dimension of home that involves positive feelings of security and belonging is both challenged and reinforced by a medium that brings the world into the interior.

Silverstone is suggesting here that television acts as something which is both familiar and routine, and also global in the way in which it brings the world into the home. Although television is increasingly fragmented and young people turn to online sources for news, there is still a very wide viewership of television within the family environment in Jordan, which this section is going to discuss.

This routine that makes people feel secure, but which is also a way of experiencing things from outside of domestic life, is what can be seen in Jordanian households when they wake up on Friday morning to the sound of television playing the "*Yes'ed Sabahak*" show, which is broadcast on Jordanian National Television every Friday morning, at 9 a.m., for three hours. It started in 1994 and has run until now, showing different segments about culture, traditions, arts, historical places, and success stories, as well as the weather forecast for the whole of the coming week. It also promotes Jordan as a tourist destination. In addition, the show focuses on humanitarian and charity work, as it leads a monthly charitable campaign in collaboration with different institutions and companies. It also highlights the achievements that have occurred throughout the history of Jordan until today, to raise the awareness of Jordanian youth regarding the importance of development, connecting the past with the future of Jordan. The show has been

presented by only seven television presenters so far. Lana Qsous is the current screenwriter and presenter of the show.

Television provides a link between home and national identity in a number of ways. Dreher (2000, p.132) indicates that it is one of the most widely available cultural resources for negotiating "identity and community as it reflects an important part in negotiations of 'home', in understanding and constructing feelings of belonging and community". The daily show "*Youm Jadid*", alongside "*Yes'ed Sabahak*", on JRTV is a good example of this, as these shows are a staple for many Jordanian families from eight to ten every morning. In 2008, a study of 600 Jordanians over the age of 15 from across the country showed that "*Yes'ed Sabahak*" (Friday Morning Show) was the most-watched show on JRTV, followed by the daily news programme at 8 p.m. It also revealed that 52.2 % of Jordanians watched JRTV for news (Harb, 2008).

On the other hand, the themes that emerged regarding social media included: "social media news as an informative source", "social media as a quick source of news" or "social media can contain unverified news". These themes seem to have a pattern that suggests the pros of social media, but also negatively how the spread of false news over social media can influence public opinion (Scholar, 2017). Social media use and penetration in Jordan is on the rise. A report published by the Pew Research Center highlighted the fact that Jordan is one of the countries in which the consumption of social media is increasing rapidly, with 94 % of internet users using social media networking sites (Poushter, Bishop and Chwe, 2018). When considering the consumption of news specifically on social media in Jordan, a report in 2017 on six Middle Eastern countries, including Jordan, showed an average of 79 % of Arab nationals getting their news and information from social media, while 66 % did so daily. Also, the same report revealed that on average, 70 % said social media was an important source for news and information. However, fewer than half trusted the information they got from social media, another aspect discussed in the trust section below (Northwestern University in Qatar, 2017).

These reports have shown that a considerable proportion of Arab nationals get their news from social media; an explanation for this could be that social media has provided citizens with the freedom not only to comment but to share news, which traditional media outlets could not previously offer their audiences (Kumpel, Karnowski, and Keyling,

2015). Similarly, Soils (2007) stated that social media has brought about a transition in how news and information flow, illustrating that the previous one to many monologue has become a many to many dialogue, resulting in a shift in the way citizens read, discover and share the news. In the case of Jordan, social media users have gone beyond using these platforms for communication with relatives and friends, using them as a tool for driving change and exposing themselves to news and even other cultures (Abu-Shanab and Al-Tarawneh, 2013). As well as the positive side of social media as a news source, there are also downsides to it. For example, the role played by social media in influencing public opinion, such as the spreading of false news on Facebook in the United States and Europe during 2016, which may arguably have had an impact on public opinion (MBR School of Government, 2017).

## 6.4 JRTV (socio-political news watching)

### **Quantitative data**

Out of 703 participants, 419 students, 59.6 % of the total sample, watched socio-political news on JRTV for over 1 hour and up to 3 hours, followed by 237 participants, 33.7 % of the sample, watching the news for 1 hour or less, meaning that about 94 % watch JRTV for less than three hours. This is reasonable, as there is not much more than two hours of socio-political news per day. As the time allotted to watching television increased, the proportion of the sample decreased, with 38 participants, 5.4 % of the sample, watching socio-political news for over 3 hours and up to 5 hours. This was followed by 8 participants, 1.1 % of the total sample, watching the news on JRTV for over 5 hours and up to 7 hours. Only 1 participant fell within the category of watching the news on JRTV for over 7 hours, which was just 0.1 % of the total sample. These results will be followed by the data drawn from the interviews and both will be analysed together.

### **Qualitative Data**

A theme that emerged from the interviews was “**JRTV connected to participants’ emotions and sentiments**”. Most of the interviewees stated that they watched JRTV for news. However, a few highlighted mixed thoughts on JRTV and its news coverage. The following excerpts illustrate this:

“I like JRTV; it’s been trying to improve over the last few years, and now we can see young faces sometimes, and new shows and even their news has improved.” (Participant 11, 24 years old, male, Health).

“JRTV is the mirror of our street to us and also our presentation to the world; my parents like it and switch on it all the time for the news.” (Participant 15, 21 years old, female, Humanities).

“Oh...JRTV is fun and entertaining. I actually watch it a lot, but when it comes to politics, I’m not sure they cover as much as I would like them to.” (Participant 30, 23 years old, male, Humanities).

However, the following excerpts show participants with mixed thoughts in which they pointed out the problems with JRTV from their perspective:

“JRTV’s problem is not on the news side. I would say I think people just exaggerate sometimes. The problem is Just their old-fashioned style of programming, reporting and even the type or aesthetic type of presenters.”

She added, “To me, I can watch the news on JRTV, but I can’t bear it when it’s a social, economic, or political show; honestly, it’s not as appealing as other global channels” (Participant 6, 21 years old, female, Humanities).

Interestingly, other respondents narrated similar experiences: “JRTV, oh no, I don’t watch it and the reason why is because the programmes on JRTV make you feel that you’re living in the past, and also when there is a major news event happening in the country you switch on the channel, and you find nothing there about it. You only see irrelevant stuff and nationalistic songs there.” (Participant 5, 22 years old, male, Humanities).

“I watch Al-Jazeera, Al-Arabiya, BBC Arabic and JRTV sometimes...well, that’s because whenever there is a problem in Jordan, JRTV doesn’t seem keen to talk about it; they play national songs or broadcast old shows and neglect the problem or talk about it after all



the other channels have already talked about it.” (Participant 19, 18 years old, male, Health).

“JRTV I’m not interested in watching, they only cover what they want, and they never cover the negative side of Jordan. Al-Jazeera is great, I love the news on it. It’s factual and accurate to me, and there is nothing wrong about it, and it’s also worldwide.” (Participant 7, 18 years old, female, Humanities).

### **Discussion of this section**

These results show a good majority of the sample watch JRTV (59.6%) in the category of over 1 hour and up to 3 hours quantitatively. However, the qualitative data gathered from participants in the survey sample who were willing to be interviewed show opposing views that demonstrate a negative sentiment towards JRTV. This shows the majority of students may participate in watching JRTV news, but they may not be satisfied by the socio-political information provided. The reasons stated by the participants suggest that this primarily stems from an overly positive portrayal of Jordan, with little discussion of the problems and negative events happening in the country. This is unlike Al-Jazeera, Al-Arabiya and BBC Arabic. Other respondents found JRTV only broadcast nationalistic songs and a sense of living in the past. This shows that the younger generation is not adapting well to the old style and biased news broadcasted by JRTV. This reflects how some students can find some shows interesting and useful to watch, such as “*Yes’ed Sabahak*” which boosts their sense of national identity and home. However, the over glorifying of the positive side of the country and neglecting to report some events that happen in the country at the expense of broadcasting good quality socio-political news content is what makes students less satisfied about the JRTV.

This is consistent with a study done by Alnuaimi (2014) on the role of political talk shows on JRTV in creating political awareness among university students. In a sample of 400 students, he found that there was lower satisfaction among the sample regarding the political shows on JRTV; the results also showed a medium to a low degree of viewing of political shows on the channel, which reflected the many young, educated Jordanians who got their news information from other sources. Overall, JRTV is likely to be the preferred channel in most households where students are living at home, as it would be the choice of the older generations, so the time spent watching JRTV by the students surveyed may

not have been their main choice.

## 6.5 The types of online news videos that university students in Jordan usually watch on social media

### **Quantitative Data**

Quantitatively, the participants were given a list of different types of online news videos on social media. On a five-point Likert scale, they were asked to report how much they watched each type. The findings revealed that the general level of watching different types of online news videos on social media by Jordanian university students was moderate, with a mean of 3.08. On the other hand, videos from other established mainstream news sources, including print and online newspaper sources such as the Ad-Dustour newspaper, were the most watched on social media by students. These had the highest mean at 3.52 and a high level. The second most-watched type of videos were videos that came from groups such as campaigners, NGOs or lobbyists, with a mean of 3.38 and a moderate level. The videos coming from independent established high-profile content producers came last among the other types of online videos, with a mean of 2.42 and a low level. These results will be followed by the quantitative results of the trust section then followed by the qualitative data. All data will be grouped together in a comprehensive discussion section afterwards.

## 6.6 The results concerning the level of trustworthiness of the news content coverage on JRTV, Satellite and news videos on social media

### **Quantitative Data**

Based on the survey findings, the level of students' trust in the news coverage on Satellite television and JRTV, and news videos on social media, as well as online news videos from other sources, was moderate. The overall mean was 3.16, whereas JRTV and its news videos on social media were the highest in terms of being regarded as trustworthy, with a mean of 3.72. This was followed by Satellite television and its news videos on social media, with a mean of 3.27. Online news videos coming from other sources came last, with a mean of 2.52.

## Qualitative Data

Qualitatively, a theme which emerged was “**popular online newspapers participants access through Facebook**”. These included *Garaa news*, *Khaberni news*, *Saraya news*, *Ammon news*, *Petra news*, and *Jafra news*.

A participant mentioned, “I only follow news about Jordan, and my news feed on Facebook mainly comes from online newspapers such as *Garaa news*. I like their style, and they just post everything that happens around the country, and sometimes news about celebrities which I like following as well, but I also want to say they publish scientific news which can be really useful and insightful.” (Participant 8, 20 years old, male, Humanities).

Another respondent stated, “I like *Khaberni news* the most; they are really informative, and they even keep publishing news about so many small issues that matter to us in our daily lives. But yes, I follow other online newspapers pages on Facebook, such as *Saraya news* and *Petra news*, but *Khaberni news* pops up the most every time I scroll down on my Facebook.” (Participant 13, 19 years old, female, Health).

Another participant mentioned, “If you want to know about Jordan, just follow *Ammon news* or *Jafra news*, and that would be more than enough. You don’t need to even watch television or read newspapers anymore; it’s just cool; everything seems to come to you on Facebook these days.” (Participant 16, 20 years old, female, Sciences).

It was also observed at the time of conducting the interviews that the majority of the respondents did not report good experiences with social media personalities or influencers. For example, “When it comes to sources that are coming from stand-up comedians or influencers, I don’t want to be represented by a stand-up comedian that talks about politics. No thank you, I don’t think that they tell the truth or know much about politics either.” (Participant 11, 24 years old, male, Health). Similarly, another respondent said, “I understand that social media influencers sometimes highlight some good issues or problems in the country, but they are biased most of the time in my opinion” (Participant 17, 20 years old, female, Sciences). Likewise, another interviewee explained, “I follow Ahmad Massad. When he started, he was

really entertaining; he discussed very controversial social or political matters in Jordan. But as he continued, he became very critical about religion and other issues and didn't stay amusing; he became not entertaining at all to me, but his popularity increased over time." (Participant 28, 22 years old, male, Sciences)

Another theme from the interviews was "**popular channels participants watch both online and offline**". During the interviews, the participants were asked about their socio-political news sources on television. Participants reported the following channels as being their socio-political news sources.

Participant 22, an 18-year-old male studying Sciences, mentioned, "I watch Al- Jazeera to educate myself about news in general. I honestly prefer satellite channels to local Jordanian channels, and the reason is that they are more experienced, and their news programmes are more stimulating to watch and much more interesting in terms of the experience they have in presenting, reporting and everything really. But you know they don't broadcast much about our internal daily affairs, and that's why you would still need to tune in to local channels in Jordan to know what is going on around here in Jordan."

Another participant stated, "For me when I hear breaking news about Jordan if I'm home I would immediately tune in to JRTV because I want to know the official narrative on it from the government itself." (Participant 11, 24 years old, male, Health).

Similarly, another respondent mentioned, "When I want to double-check any news related to Jordan, I quickly switch to JRTV, then switch again to Al-Mamlaka television and then Roya television and read their news at the bottom of the screen, compare what they all say in my head and make my own judgments on things." (Participant 15, 21 years old, female, Humanities).

However, regarding regional news, one of the participants mentioned, "when it comes to news, I tend to like watching television. If I want to know the news about neighbouring Arab countries in the Middle East I watch a channel called Al-Mayadeen." (Participant 6, 21 years old, female, Humanities).

Another respondent stated, "I usually watch BBC English and Arabic when I want to know the news about Western countries. When I want to know the news about the Gulf

countries, I watch Al-Jazeera, but the problem with Al-Jazeera is that sometimes they give themselves too much credit, which I believe they don't sometimes deserve as they exaggerate and put some irrelevant emphasis when reporting some stories." (Participant 28, 22 years old, male, Sciences).

Other respondents highlighted more than one channel, for example, "I watch Al-Jazeera, Al-Arabiya, BBC Arabic and JRTV as well" (Participant 30, 23 years old, male, Humanities).

Additionally, another theme emerged, "**professionalism, reputation and official personalities reflect and contribute to more trust in television sources**". As an example, Participant 12, a 22-year-old male studying Health, mentioned, "You know when you watch the news on television, you will see the hard work put in by all these professional reporters from the style of presentation and the way they talk". Similarly, another respondent stated, "The news reports on television, such as on Al-Jazeera, are gathered by professional media reporters who have so much experience presenting and speaking in public, unlike news on social media which sometimes come from a phone camera and a layman, and are then shared by the public." (Participant 19, 18 years old, male, Health). In a similar fashion, another participant explained, "The news that comes from television channels is generally trusted, as they bring government officials to discuss or comment on the stories and therefore it's trustworthy in my opinion." (Participant 10, 20 years old, male, Sciences).

Also on this theme another respondent stated "All channels provide similar coverage and reporting on any news; the only difference, in my opinion, is how they treat and discuss the story, and the wording they use sometimes. The conclusion is that I watch all these channels, including JRTV of course, but I take what I want and ignore what I'm not convinced about." (Participant 30, 23 years old, male, Humanities). In the same way, one of the participants shared, "Some channels don't have the same unbiasedness or amount of time in covering the same story as other channels, or even ignore it completely sometimes, so it all depends on the policies of the channels at the end of the day." (Participant 17, 20 years old, female, Sciences).

Another theme that emerged from the interviews was although many respondents preferred to obtain news content through social media networks, they did not fully trust the news online, and the theme was **“social media is trusted if the source is known.”**

As an example, Participant 15, a 21-year-old female studying Humanities, explained, “I would trust political news videos on social media if they are coming from official sources like a ministry page on Facebook or a well-known channel”.

Another participant mentioned, “You know I want to tell you something. If the video is coming from a channel like Al-Jazeera, then there is no need to question the source, and you would know it’s true and not false news, but the only thing that is left to think about is their analysis of the stories sometimes and whether that is biased or not.” (Participant 19, 18 years old, male, Health). Similarly, another respondent stated, “For me, if the source on social media is official then yeah I trust it immediately. I don't even think about questioning it” (Participant 12, 22 years old, male, Health).

In a similar fashion, another respondent reported, “I only feel sceptical if a video looks strange or is shared by a source which I can’t remember I subscribed to. Then, I may watch it but not sure if I would trust it” (Participant 7, 18 years female, Humanities). Another participant used the feedback on online news to judge its veracity: “I would say I mostly trust all the news on social media after reading the comments and engagement from people on these news videos, you can see the comments made by normal people like us, and sometimes they go live. I think we are very smart these days to differentiate between what’s right and what’s wrong.” (Participant 10, 20 years old, male, Sciences).

One participant shared his own experience of a particular news story: “In my experience, social media shows part of the truth or let’s say the whole truth but with a huge number of rumours or lies around it. For example, when the flash flood story happened, there were a huge number of lies told on Facebook by ordinary people, for example, people would say this person is dead, and they share an image or fake video of a person and everything. Then a brother of this person comes in and says this is my brother and he is with me right now. I really saw this with my own eyes through my engagement on videos’ comments.” (Participant 29, 18 years old, male, Humanities).

In contrast, another participant highlighted, “Well, we use social media subconsciously these days, so you wouldn’t really pay much attention to issues such as the source of the

news, or at least for me I do not pay attention, so I do not know about others.” (Participant 16, 20 years old, female, Sciences). Another participant supported this, “The only time I pay attention to the source is the time when I start hearing from my friends’ different sides of a news story, and in my head, I know something else. Then I start thinking about where they get their news sources from.” (Participant 13, 19 years old, female, Health).

A theme that emerged related to JRTV was **“JRTV trust is related to Jordanians’ sense of nationalism, culture and identity”** which the following excerpts explain. As an example, one of the participants mentioned, “To be honest, there are always positive and negative feelings towards JRTV, but I do trust their news. It’s our mirror on the world, and also I must say during festivals or national holidays and while all the family is around, we usually switch on JRTV, and everyone in the family watches it.” (Participant 11, 24 years old, male, Health).

Another interviewee, explained, “When it comes to trust, I would say some of it is cultural, so if you go to the rural areas in Jordan I would say they don’t watch anything else apart from JRTV, and this goes back to the fact that they feel safe with this channel, they are used to it, and they don’t watch anything else.” (Participant 17, 20 years old, female, Sciences). In the same way, another respondent stated, “Well, there are other channels that can offer an alternative to JRTV, but I like JRTV, it’s our country’s main channel, and as you know every channel has got its own policy and style anyway.” (Participant 15, 21 years old, female, Humanities). Another participant suggested, “I think Jordanians tune in to JRTV because it’s the official channel of the country that sometimes presents news about holidays or important or urgent news that matters for the Jordanian public.” (Participant 26, 20 years old, female, Sciences).

In contrast, another participant expressed doubts: “I do watch JRTV, but I’m not sure about trust. We do not think about that. I think we just accept it the way it is” (Participant 29, 18 years old, male, Humanities). Likewise, another respondent mentioned, “So, for me, I watch JRTV news sometimes, and I take it into account, but I still do check with other sources because JRTV is very formal style and don’t show much details”. He added, “Also, the way you are being brought up as a person is a factor definitely, so let’s say if I were growing up in a family of parents who like JRTV and tell me that it’s trustworthy, I would

still consider watching it, even though my experiences with it show me otherwise.”  
(Participant 9, 23 years old, male, Sciences).

#### **The list of themes:**

**“Popular online newspapers participants access through Facebook.”**

**“Popular channels participants watch both online and offline.”**

**“Professionalism, reputation and official personalities contribute to more trust in television sources.”**

**“Social media is trusted if the source is known.”**

**“JRTV trust is related to Jordanians’ sense of nationalism, culture and identity.”**

#### **Discussion of this section**

The section on trust was included to gain more understanding of students’ trust in the news media they consumed (JRTV, satellite television, social media), and the sources they accessed online on social media, as there is a large volume of these videos online that come from established television channels.

Quantitatively, the results relating to the trust section show that JRTV had the highest level of trust among the three platforms, followed by satellite television and finally online videos on social media. Quantitatively, the participants who reported watching online news videos can be interpreted and discussed in different ways. Firstly, the volume of online videos that come from mainstream television channels is relatively higher than the volume of videos that come from mainstream newspapers, yet the mean trust in news videos that came from newspapers was 3.52, whereas the mean for news videos coming from mainstream television broadcasters was 2.99. Another observation is that the mean for trust in videos that came from campaigners, lobbyists or members of the public such as friends, was even higher than for videos coming from mainstream television broadcasters. These results could be attributed to a number of factors. Firstly, videos that came from newspapers being most trusted could be due to the trust the surveyed students had in the official sources. This could be because they were established earlier than other mainstream media sources, or because of the good reputation of these newspapers. It could also be attributed to the fact that they are professional in dealing



with information and the news they report. The second factor to consider in interpreting these results could be around issues of self-reported data. Prior (2009, p.130) discussed issues relating to self-reported data, highlighting the fact that this is a large body of research which relies on self-reported exposure to measure media effects, in which he concluded that there is a “severe reporting of news exposure”. The third factor is that, if the responses were accurate, this may suggest that the participants did not know where their online news videos were coming from or did not pay much attention to their sources. This may be linked to other aspects of incidental news exposure (Kaiser, Keller and Königslöw, 2018). The last point is that, for the types of video that come from influencers to have lowest mean trust, could be attributed to either trust issues in these influencers or bias in the content presented by them, which could not meet the expectations of young people or address their concerns, especially university students.

Qualitatively, the responses from the interviews suggested that popular regional television channels were still more desirable to watch for socio-political news than local channels in Jordan, in terms of style and production values. However, the fact that they did not report much about local affairs about Jordan made Jordanian local channels more in demand when it came to discovering issues or news about Jordan. On the other hand, when participants wanted to know about other countries, they identified other channels that they would watch for news.

The T-Test level of trustworthiness of the news content coverage by gender was conducted and found that there were no differences between male and female students when it comes to trust in watching socio-political news. However, the One- Way ANOVA for students’ faculty showed that humanity students have significantly less trust in JRTV than the other two. While, oddly, on social media, trust is lower on health than the other two. One may speculate that social media may carry inaccurate health news or articles which made them trust social media less when it comes to socio-political news.

## 6.7 Students’ interest in socio-political issues

### Quantitative data

When the participants were asked about socio-political issues, the findings demonstrated that the level of students' interest, in general, was moderate, with a mean of 2.70. The results showed a variation in the interest in socio-political issues. The highest number of participants, 329 or 46.8 %, were moderately interested in socio-political issues. This was followed by 234 students who were slightly interested in socio-political issues, amounting to 33.3 % of the total sample. The third largest category of participants, 66, amounting to 9.4 %, was very interested. The second smallest category was 48 participants, or 6.8 % of the total sample, who reported that they were not interested at all in socio-political issues. The category with the lowest number of participants, 26 or 3.7 % of the total survey sample, were extremely interested in socio-political issues.

## 6.8 The interest level in the local, national, Arab and International socio-political news on television and social media

### **The results related to the level of interest in the type of socio-political news on television**

The survey findings showed that the general level of students' interest in the type of socio-political news on television as a whole was moderate, with a mean of 2.90. Interest in local Jordanian socio-political news only on television was the statement or category of news with the highest level of interest, with a mean of 3.26 and a moderate level, followed by interest in national Jordanian socio-political news and not on the local, Arab or international level, which was second with a mean of 3.19 and a moderate level. The lowest level of interest was in international socio-political news only on television, with a mean of 2.46 and a low level.

### **Results related to the level of interest in the type of socio-political news on social media**

The study results found that the general level of students' interest in the type of socio-political news on social media as a whole was moderate, with a mean of 3.05. The greatest interest was in the local Jordanian socio-political news only on social media, which had a mean of 3.41 and a high level, followed by interest in national Jordanian socio-political news, not on a local, Arab or international level, which had a mean

interest of 3.31 and a moderate level. Interest in international socio-political news not on an Arab level came last, with a mean of 2.65 and a moderate level.

### **Qualitative Data**

The participants in the interviews were shown and asked about two news stories in the second part of the interview. These news stories happened during the few months preceding the date of the interviews. They happened in Jordan and were covered by the media. The two news stories were Jordan's flash floods and Jordan's new income tax law.

Almost all the participants were highly engaged when talking about and giving opinions on these news stories. For instance, Participant 16, a 20 year-old female studying Sciences stated, "Yes I was very interested to know about the flash flood story and to be honest, I only followed it on social media because I live in the university accommodation and I don't have a television in my room." Another respondent mentioned, "Well, I think every person in the country would be interested to know all the details about this story. I followed the story very carefully on television with my family, and also by myself on social media." (Participant 6, 21 years old, female, Humanities). Participant 13, a 19 year-old female studying Health, stated, "I first saw a news clip on my Facebook that there was a flash flood, then I searched more on Google to get, read or watch any more details about it". Another participant explained, "I actually followed the Dead Sea event because it was all over social media; every person in Jordan was talking about it, so you would feel like you were forced to keep up with the news because it was all around you." (Participant 9, 23 years old, male, Sciences)

Also, when asked to elaborate more on the media coverage of the story, most participants highlighted that the media coverage was dramatic on the local television channels, and then went on to give more details about the story, such as blaming the authorities for giving permission for such trips, knowing that the weather would be bad on that day and expecting that flash floods may happen. "I can definitely tell you that it's all the fault of the authorities and people in charge, the police checkpoints on the way to the Dead Sea for sure saw the bus full of children, why didn't they stop it?" (Participant 15, 21 years old, female, Humanities). Another respondent blamed the school, stating, "I would say it's the school's fault, like why would you take small children to this dangerous area? It's

really crazy to do this knowing that the weather is going to be like that on that day.” (Participant 12, 22 years old, male, Health). Similarly, another participant stated, “I’m really interested in finding out what’s going to happen afterwards and whose fault it was, as all these government officials who come on television blame each other, and some blame the school, and the school blames the officials.” (Participant 22, 18 years old, male, Sciences). Another said: “I followed the story very closely on many different sources such as the national television, Roya news on their Facebook page and Al Wakeel news on their Facebook page; there were many contradictory narratives on the story.” (Participant 24, 20 years old, female, Sciences).

On the story of Jordan’s new income tax law, a similarly high level of interest and interaction was evident in participants. For example, Participant 23, a 21 year-old male studying Humanities, stated,

I saw different videos from random people; these videos were shared by friends on Facebook, then when I got home, I asked my dad. He told me all about it, then when I kept seeing more videos on social media or the news on television, it all made sense to me, which is one of the reasons that encouraged me to join as well. Another participant was engaged by the variety of coverage from online media: “Well, I came to know about the income tax story on social media because it was heavily covered. You saw videos, live streams, posts and everything from varied and different sources on it, unlike local television channels which covered it only briefly.” (Participant 1, 21 years old, male, Sciences).

### **Discussion of the section**

Overall, 80.1 % of participants were slightly interested (33.3 %) or moderately interested (46.8 %) in socio-political issues. This interest was further analysed to gauge the relative levels of interest in television and social media specifically. It was found that Jordanian students had the highest interest in local news, followed by national news and finally international news. This pattern was observed in both television and social media.

This could be attributed to young Jordanians’ primary concern for their daily problems, such as the difficult economic situation that the country has been dealing with over the last few years (Idris, 2016). Therefore, the interest in news at the global level has declined, as it does not impact them as much.

Secondly, a point to highlight is that social media offer user-friendly platforms, with, for example, YouTube and Facebook allowing users to search for specific news that interests them. However, the problem is that in some cases these videos are unfiltered, and some news reports may be biased, which can misinform students rather than give them the facts about a news story. On the other hand, it is worth highlighting that television news is filtered but is not user friendly, in the sense that the viewer does not have control of what they watch unless they specifically switch to a channel that only broadcasts Arab or global news. Qualitatively, the interviewed sample of students showed high levels of interaction with the two stories given, which reflected the interest young Jordanians had in these socio-political issues.

Additionally, the statistical T-Test for gender regarding television showed that females had a significantly higher level of interest in local Jordanian socio-political news than males, and vice versa for the national Jordanian socio-political news level. However, there were no significant differences for Arab and International socio-political news levels, whereas the T-Test for gender regarding social media showed only differences at the level of international news and males were more interested than females to know about international socio-political news through using social media. These findings are interesting as they show that female students watch television to know more about their local community. However, speculations around the exact reasons behind these differences would be risky, which is a limitation for future research.

The statistical One-Way ANOVA test was conducted to find if there are differences in watching socio-political news on television by faculty. Humanities students showed a lower level of interest in local, national, Arab and international news than either science or health students who had a similar level of interest. This was a surprising conclusion as one might have thought that humanities students would be more interested in political matters. However, for social media, it can be observed that there was a pattern for local, national, and Arab news as science, and health students were similar and significantly more interested than humanities students. Again, this was a surprising conclusion as one might have thought that humanities students would be more interested in socio-political matters.

## 6.9 The motivations behind watching socio-political news videos on television and social media

### **The findings related to the reasons that motivate students behind watching socio-political news on television**

The most common reason was to expand students' intellectual horizons, with a mean of 3.94 and a high level, whereas students' desire to know more about Jordanian socio-political news placed second with a mean of 3.88 and a high level. The least important reason was to join in conversations with their friends with a mean of 3.13 and a moderate level.

### **The results concerning the reasons that motivate students behind watching socio-political news on social media**

It was obvious from the results regarding this dimension that students' desire to expand their intellectual horizons was the most important reason making them watch socio-political news on social media, as the mean amounted to 3.99 and a high level, whilst the ability to be able to form their own opinions about different issues was second with a mean of 3.91 and a high level. The findings also showed that the least important reason was in order to join in conversations with their colleagues, with a mean of 3.34 and a moderate level.

## **Qualitative Data**

The following excerpts highlight a theme that **“social media gave the participants a platform to be more active with the news and socio-political issues”** they encountered over the different social media platforms they used.

For example, Participant 2, a 21-year-old male studying Humanities, mentioned, “I search for political news stories on social media to compare between the different news I watch and find more details about the truth”. Similarly, another participant stated, “You know television presents a short clip about the event, like for example on the story of the children who died in the Dead Sea, you switch on JRTV and they keep repeating the same

news reports and nothing new, and you switch it on again the next day, and it's the same clips, so I definitely needed to look and search for other sources." (Participant 4, 21 years old, female, Health). Another participant mentioned, "Luckily the internet and social media have made it much easier to look for the truth these days. For example, the story of the Dead Sea; my classmates shared videos of the parents or even the parents live on Facebook talking in detail about exactly what happened, what the government response was, and how they are reacting to it." (Participant 13, 19 years old, female, Health). Likewise, another respondent explained, "Yeah, I would definitely say that I search for news all the time. But also, with social media, things are even easier, and news comes to you, and sometimes you learn about things didn't think you'd learn about on Facebook. I'm subscribed to many organisations, and I keep seeing videos on different things, which is really useful." (Participant 18, 19 years old, male, Health).

Participant 25, a 21-year-old female studying Sciences, felt that an important aspect was the ability to interact: "I always leave my opinion. It's very satisfying making your voice heard". As did another respondent: "Sometimes, I leave a comment because I disagree with other people's opinions and I want them to realise something they got wrong" (Participant 14, 24 years old, female, Humanities). In the same way, Participant 26, a 20-year-old female studying Sciences, mentioned, "Sometimes you read the comments on a video, and you don't agree with what people say, so you have to leave a comment to explain things to people". On this topic, another participant stated that it was part of his civic duty, "I always write comments on the municipality news videos or posts. I'm glad that social media allows us to do that; it's a good way to communicate to them effectively, so they know our opinions as citizens." (Participant 27, 23 years old, male, Health).

Participant 7, an 18-year-old female studying Humanities, talked about the choices she made when sharing posts: "I only share news which I think will have some kind of impact on our lives, or has very meaningful content to be shared with others. Otherwise, people would think you're sharing nonsense".

Another predominant theme that emerged was that "**participants watch social-political news for information, surveillance and opinion formation**". The following excerpts demonstrate some of the participants' opinions and experiences.

For example, Participant 11, a 24-year-old male studying Health, explained, “If I’m watching political news it would be to catch up with what the government is doing, why they are doing it and what their motives are. Sometimes I watch short segments of parliamentary discussions on the news, and it’s good to see how they reflect the opinions of the general public as politicians.” Another respondent claimed, “Yeah, I watch socio-political news all the time, and that is because it’s just there all around you in this country. It’s the subject in common that everyone can talk about. You know we are a small country, so any politics around our country affect us and our daily lives straight away, not like in big countries which are fully independent.” (Participant 19, 18 years old, male, Health). He added, “Our economy relies heavily on the help of other countries around us, so any global political decision related to the Middle East affects us. Any political decision from Saudi Arabia regarding its policies in the region will have an immediate impact on us. This is what we have been watching on the news.”

Another participant picked out a different motive: “To be honest, I just want to be updated and know what is going on around me, and also to contribute and not to seem that I know nothing around my friends” (Participant 29, 18 years old, male, Humanities). Similarly, another respondent explained, “To know more about different topics and different viewpoints around these topics” (Participant 8, 20 years old, male, Humanities). Likewise, another participant stated, “Honestly, if I don’t find anything interesting on television, I switch to news channels to keep up with what’s happening around the world” (Participant 17, 20 years old, female, Sciences). In the same way, another respondent mentioned, “I watch and follow political news to judge the political climate in the country, like politicians in my home town, parliamentarians and to know what to support or vote for at the time of elections.” (Participant 23, 21 years old, male, Humanities). Here, another participant stated, “Well, you know you are part of the society, and it concerns you what is always going on around you. You know we all have fears around several issues and problems locally and globally, and we all want to know what politicians say to offer solutions to our problems.” (Participant 19, 18 years old, male, Health).

### **Discussion of the section**



Drawing on the theory of uses and gratifications, this research has tried to understand the link between university students' motivations and their news consumption, to give a fuller picture and insight into the varying reasons and motivations behind watching the news from television and social media. Looking at other similar studies and approaches into the theory, Lee (2013), as discussed in the literature review above, four gratifications for which news audiences consume news were identified: firstly, information- and surveillance-motivated news consumption; secondly, entertainment-motivated news consumption; thirdly, opinion-motivated news consumption, that is, opinion formation, affirmation, and avoidance; and fourthly, social-motivated news consumption. Similarly, the work of Whiting and Williams (2013) and also Musa, Azmi and Ismail (2016) identified entertainment, socialisation, information seeking and sharing, passing the time, surveillance, social interaction and communication, relaxation, education and self-expression as the gratifications behind the use of social media. In the context of the present research, Statement 7, to be able to form my own opinions about different issues, and Statement 8, to expand my intellectual horizons, both fell into the category of opinion formation in both the television and social media results. These were rated the most important reasons by respondents, which reflected that university students in Jordan are at the stage of forming their opinions on many socio-political issues. They are also keen to seek socio-political news, information and knowledge which can influence their opinion on many issues. This could also translate into various forms of participation and engagement. Furthermore, it is important to highlight that opinion formation was slightly higher for the use of social media for socio-political news than it was for television. The results revealed that the students surveyed used social media and relied on it as a source to form their opinions more than they did for television. This could be connected to the quality of the news sources students were exposed to, and how credible and reliable these news sources were. Also, another reason could be their perceptions that there are a variety of sources they can have on social media which may give them the opportunity to cross-check the information they get exposed to and see more perspectives on a news story.

The second additional gratification after opinion formation was statements drawn from the information and surveillance category: Statement 1, to know more about Jordanian socio-political news, Statement 2, to know more about Arab socio-political news, and

Statement 3, to know more about international socio-political news. Again, respondents rated these statements slightly higher in relation to social media than in relation to television.

As can be observed from the survey results, students in Jordan rely on social media to gain information and form their opinions on different subjects. These results can be discussed in two ways as the opinions on the quality of news on social media its role in increasing knowledge is divided into two broad lines. Many scholars argue for the potential of social media news to impact on political knowledge and opinion formation. However, other researchers argue that social media brings misinformation of political knowledge which is a significant flaw (Shafi and Vultee, 2016). Besides that, the Arab Social Media Report, 2017 states that 15% of people were reported to use false information, with 61% of citizens using fake names when accessing social media platforms. Likewise, the algorithmic curation systems designed by social media companies to personalise content to the users can be another concern about the use of social media news and its role in democracy as these systems can prevent the spread of different opinions which can place the users in a “filter bubble,” (Scholar, 2017; Haimk, Graefe and Brosius, 2018; Bechmann and Nielbo, 2018).

Finally, the last set of gratifications students reported included: Statement 4, to join in conversations with my friends, Statement 5, to join in conversations with my family, and Statement 6, to join in conversations with my colleagues. These statements were also rated more highly in relation to social media, which reflected the socially-driven motivation for news consumption: the need to be able to talk about or appear to be informed in front of others in social contexts. Qualitatively, it was observed that social media could offer a space for the participants to be active in participating with the news. In addition, the strongest two motivations behind watching socio-political news and issues were for information or surveillance, and opinion formation. Fitting these results within the bigger picture of my research, a study by Park *et al.* (2009) on the relationship between the use of Facebook groups and civic and political action found that users who seek information are more likely to participate in civic and political activities. Similarly, a study carried out by Gil de Z'uniga, Jung and Valenzuela (2012) on the influence of social media news use in relation to social capital, civic engagement and political participation

taken from a survey conducted in the US found that informational use of social media has an impact on individual's engagement, civic and political action. The subsequent sections will discuss the role of television and social media in political participation.

## 6.10 JRTV, Satellite Television and Social media in relation to socio-political awareness

### **The findings concerning JRTV raising socio-political awareness (quantitative results).**

The survey results demonstrated that the role of JRTV in raising the socio-political awareness of Jordanian university students as a whole was moderate, as the mean was 3.03. The statement "My socio-political awareness increases when I watch the news on JRTV" had the highest mean Likert score, 3.16, and a moderate extent, while the fact that JRTV provided them with enough information about socio-political issues had the lowest, at 2.87 and a moderate extent. The results indicated that JRTV played a role in increasing these university students' awareness.

### **The findings concerning satellite television raising socio-political awareness (quantitative results).**

The results revealed that the role of satellite television in raising the socio-political awareness of Jordanian university students as a whole was high, as the mean amounted to 3.80. The students' opinion on the statement about satellite television providing them with enough information about socio-political issues came first with a mean of 3.90 and a high extent, whereas their opinion on the statement "my socio-political awareness increases when I watch the news on satellite television" came last with a mean of 3.75 and a high extent.

### **The findings related to online news videos raising socio-political awareness (quantitative results).**

The study results demonstrated that the role of online news videos in raising socio-political awareness of Jordanian university students overall was high, as the mean amounted to 3.87. The statement on online news videos providing them with enough information about socio-political issues came first with a mean of 4.04 and a high extent, whereas their opinion on the statement that online news videos contributed to shaping their opinion about socio-political issues came last, with a mean of 3.79 and a high extent.

### **Qualitative Data**

A theme that emerged from the qualitative interviews is **“awareness may have been actively or passively sought from television sources; however, the youth tend to participate and engage with their opinions on social media as they share information on there”**.

As an example of this, Participant 25, a 21-year-old female studying Sciences, stated, “The flash flood in the Dead Sea, I did watch this news story on JRTV, but I didn’t realise that 37 students were affected. I actually remember that I shared it online on my Facebook. I think it was such a tragedy.”

Another respondent stated, “New tax law? Well yeah, I did pay attention to it, and I can tell you, it got even more dramatic when the Prime Minister got replaced. It was heavily covered over Roya television, and so many people were upset for all of this to happen.” (Participant 24, 20 years old, female, Sciences). In the same way, another participant shared, “The new income tax law, my dad keeps talking about it at home saying how our livelihood is going to be affected because this tax will reduce the overall wage he takes home. I shared it on Facebook, and I know many of my classmates did too.” (Participant 5, 22 years old, male, Humanities).

### **Discussion of this section**

Quantitatively, the contribution of television and online news videos to raising the socio-political awareness of Jordanian university students as a whole was high, since the mean amounted to 3.56. However, the contribution from online news videos in raising socio-

political awareness was higher, with a mean of 3.87 and a high extent. The contribution of satellite television in raising socio-political awareness fell between these two, with a mean of 3.80 and a high level. Finally, the contribution of JRTV in raising socio-political awareness was lowest, with a mean of 3.03 and a moderate extent.

Additionally, the results indicated that the Jordanian students interviewed spent more time on social media - for longer than 3 hours - than they did watching news - for longer than 3 hours. The response categories above 3 hours were: from 3 hours to less than 5 hours, from 5 hours to less than 7 hours, and 7 hours or more. If time spent correlates to greater political knowledge and information gained, one may argue social media brought greater political awareness to the respondents. A number of authors discussed in Chapter 3 have supported this idea (Lee and Cappella, 2001; Bekkers *et al*, 2011; Shafi and Vultee, 2016). However, others have put forward opposing opinions (Dimitrova *et al.*, 2014; Cacciatore *et al.*, 2018; Lee and Xenos, 2019).

Also as noted earlier from the qualitative data in Section 2, information from unfiltered sources on social media may spread false news and propaganda which indirectly contributes to incorrect political information a user may have which leads to false political knowledge. Jarrar and Hammud (2018) have also confirmed this when testing trends of political awareness. They found in their research that the statement "Social networks provide the chance to express political opinions frankly and freely" had the highest approval grades, with an arithmetic mean of 4.04 and a standard deviation of 0.775. However, the statement "Social network sites contributed in showing the real picture of the political situation" had the lowest approval grades, with a mean of 2.61 and standard deviation of 1.267. In that study, the survey respondents determined how much knowledge they thought they had, although the actual accuracy of their knowledge was not tested, which was a limitation of the research. To reiterate this point, Cacciatore *et al.* (2018) observed the consumption of news via social media by Americans' use of social networking sites, specifically Facebook. They found that consumption of news information through Facebook did not relate to political knowledge.

Whereas JRTV and television are filtered sources, and while they had the largest number of respondents in the categories of less than 1 hour and from 1 hour to less than 3 hours, the news and political information from these sources is filtered and accurate. However,

JRTV may be more tightly regulated, allowing only information that supports the existing government to be broadcast, while satellite television covers a myriad of channels such as Al Jazeera and Al Arabiya, which are more liberal in discussing the full extent of political realities (Johnson and Fahmy, 2010). Furthermore, social media platforms allow searching for a wide range of specific knowledge, while JRTV and satellite television broadcast only a fixed amount of political knowledge.

In conclusion, based on all the domains looked at, JRTV overall was found to have a moderate influence compared to satellite television and social media, which showed high perceived information and knowledge gain. The importance of this finding is its demonstration that users heavily relied on social media as a source of political knowledge, which may have been giving students false assurance that the knowledge they gained was accurate. Hence, this study suggests that the widespread use of social media and international satellite channels for the dissemination of news content has contributed over time to the raising of awareness among the Jordanian public, making them more aware of the nature of the political and social life around them. Despite this, a caveat must be mentioned that false knowledge and a false 'bubble of awareness' are possible. However, I would disagree with the idea that social media is a platform that does not lead to political knowledge and awareness. The credibility of social media has been discussed in earlier sections.

My results also agree with the study of Al-Dbaysi and Al-Tahat (2013), which was conducted in Jordan. It highlighted the widespread use of social networking sites among students, and how these networks had become a source of access to news and information that influenced the formation of public opinion and competed with traditional media and online journalism. Some information had positive results, such as strengthening national spirit and loyalty, and others negative results, such as an attempt to link events in neighbouring countries with Jordan's internal situation, doubting the credibility of local and semi-official media broadcasts, stirring up demonstrations, protests or strikes, and using religious factors to provoke the behaviour of the community or to call people to boycott all activities and events which the government supported. Similarly, the PhD study of Hasan (2013) showed that the use of the internet, social media and the watching of television were positively correlated with political involvement. His

results also indicated that the Internet, newspapers, and television had a significant influence on political knowledge, political involvement and political interest among Bahraini school students. He found that the internet obtained the highest score in forming political knowledge, 90.5 per cent, followed by television which had 82.5 per cent, with radio (62.5 per cent) and magazines (62.0 per cent) scoring the lowest. He claimed that “The Internet plays a major and significant role in young people’s lives, particularly as the main source of information and in political participation in Bahrain”. In addition, he added that the use of different social media networks such as Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube could become more influential in the following few years.

## 6.11 The results related to actions which the students may have taken after watching socio-political news on television and social media

### **Quantitative data (Television)**

The results demonstrated that the level of the students’ perception of the impact of television in terms of socio-political action as a whole was low, as the mean amounted to 2.52. The most common action which the students may have taken after watching television news was speaking to a member of their family about political news or political affairs, with a mean of 3.70. This result can be interpreted in light of the high levels of confidence students felt in their families when expressing their views on political and social issues. Speaking to a friend about socio-political news was the second highest-scored action, with a mean of 3.28, while joining a group or political party after watching television was the lowest scored action, with a mean of 1.65. These results could be attributed to students’ lack of trust in the political parties in Jordan, due to their weak role in the political and social life of young people in the country.

### **Quantitative data (Social Media)**

The results showed that the level of students’ perception of the impact of online news videos on social media in terms of socio-political action as a whole was moderate, as the mean is 2.63. Voting in parliamentary elections after watching online news videos on social media was the first action students might take, with a mean of 3.81 being

considered as a high-level action students may take, followed by speaking to a member of the family about the socio-political news you watch with a mean of 3.65 and a high level. Finally, the least action students may take, signing a petition on paper and signing a petition online with a mean (1.68) for both, is considered a very low level of actions. This can be attributed to the weakness of students' belief in the usefulness of such actions to make a change in society.

### **Qualitative data**

A theme which emerged in this area was **“forms of action students have taken after interacting with television and social media”**.

#### **“On the Dead Sea flash floods story.”**

One example of an action taken came from Participant 21, a 19-year-old male studying Sciences, who stated, “Everyone in the country was so saddened and wanted to know the truth of this matter, and I felt similar sentiments, so I shared a post on my Facebook wall giving my condolences to the families affected.” Similarly, another respondent explained, “I came to know about it as I noticed all my faculty friends on Facebook posting and commenting about it. By the time I got home after university, I saw it on the news, and my family and I were speaking about it at home too.” (Participant 24, 20 years old, female, Sciences). Likewise, another participant mentioned, “The 25<sup>th</sup> of October will always be a sad day for Jordan, and I don't think our local television channels gave it fair coverage. Since I work in the radio department at the university, I did a quick shout out to make my peers aware of this.” (Participant 20, 19 years old, male, Health).

#### **“On the income tax law story.”**

One of the participants shared, “I saw many pictures and posts on Facebook about joining the protest around the fourth circle in Amman. Then I decided to join as well” (Participant 14, 24 years old, female, Humanities). In the same way, another respondent stated, “Everyone said if the prime minister stays then the new tax law will go ahead. Then I decided to join the protests demanding the prime minister resign. Also, everyone was talking about and how badly it was going to influence our parents' incomes and the repercussions on our future income.” (Participant 5, 22 years old, male, Humanities).



In a similar fashion, another participant shared, “After seeing a YouTube video with powerful narration on it, and seeing so many people joining the protest, and the injustice behind the law, I decided to join as well and raise my voice too.” (Participant 3, 20 years old, male, Sciences).

### **Discussion of this section**

The survey results for both television and social media show varying levels of participation and engagement in different domains. Overall students in Jordan engaged in moderate to high levels in discussing socio-political views with family and friends. This could be because students tend to watch the news with family and spend most of the time with them. Furthermore, in a tertiary education environment such as a university, there are bound to be intellectual discussions between friends regarding politics. The large amount of time students spend together at university also makes the exchange of ideas likely. Furthermore, it is a safe environment to discuss ideas where judgement is less likely, compared with platforms of participation and engagement, which involves signing petitions and sharing information on social media. These are more intimidating, as there is a fear of officially speaking negatively against the government of Jordan. While Jordan has made progress in making its system of government more democratic, culturally, the fear instilled from previous generations, though diminishing, is still present (Alazzam, 2008). Students seem confident in voting for parliamentary and municipal elections because the process is done anonymously. In this as well, there is influence from family and friends as to which candidates are voted for.

Overall, the mean points for the actions that involved voting after watching social media were high for both television and social media and significantly higher for social media which agrees with the work of Effing, Hillegersberg, and Huibers(2011) that social media can lead to political participation such as voting. Although not all forms of participation were high for both television and social media, especially the forms of participation where the name or identity of the individual is revealed, however, I argue that the act of participation in voting alone is a significant aspect of political participation, which agrees with other researchers who have also argued that the active or incidental exposure of citizens to the news on social media is positively correlated to political participation (Saldaña; McGregor; Gil de Zúñiga, 2015; Kim; Chen; Wang, 2016).

As discussed in Chapter 3, Habermas (1989) emphasised that television had segmented the public sphere, but nonetheless had also contributed to the overarching public sphere, which has increased participation (Gripsrud, 2009). Furthermore, social media has also been said to have created a virtual public sphere which is a form of “online participation/e-participation” (Cantijoch, Cutts and Gibson, 2016). On the other hand, Fuchs (2014) critiqued social media, claiming it has altered the contemporary definition of the public sphere. Fuchs argued against an idealistic interpretation of Habermas and for a cultural-materialist understanding of the public sphere concept, that is grounded in political economy. It concluded that the colonisation of social media should be countered politically, such that it becomes driven by public service to truly encompass the public sphere (Fuchs, 2014).

Various authors discussed in Chapter 3 have contributed to the ever-evolving definitions of participation and engagement (Barret, 2012; Emler, 2011; Christiensen, 2011; Carpentier *et al.*, 2007; Teorell, Torcal and Montero, 2007; Vera and Nie, 1972; Pateman, 1970). Hence, I would like to categorise the forms of participation and engagement into primary: discussing with friends and family; secondary: signing petitions, joining protests and strikes; and tertiary: voting, with respect to their potential for change. For instance, rates of primary participation, such as speaking to family and friends, are higher than those of secondary or tertiary participation, but the direct translation to change is minimal. Despite this, the influence of primary participation and engagement leads to participation and engagement at the tertiary level, such as voting, which in turn leads to a higher likelihood of change. This shows a “domino effect”, in which participation and engagement at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels all have the potential to initiate changes in government policy. All forms of participation and engagement are equally important, as an interplay at the primary level could potentially impact tertiary levels. Further research can be conducted to look into the forms of primary and secondary participation and engagement, and their effect on tertiary forms. This is interesting as my research found secondary forms of participation and engagement due to television and social media were generally low, which can be attributed to the fact that these actions may involve a person’s name or identity being revealed. From this, one can hypothesise that primary forms of participation and engagement have the greatest impact on tertiary

forms of participation and engagement, namely voting, within Jordan.

## 6.12 Summary

This chapter discussed the main findings of the study from both quantitative and qualitative phases of the study then discussed the findings with the more comprehensive and previous literature on news consumption, trust, uses, and gratifications obtained from watching the news, concluding with a discussion of social media and television news in relation to socio-political awareness, participation, and engagement. The chapter addressed in full the main research questions and aims and objectives of the study. The next chapter will discuss the contribution of the study to knowledge, the limitations, and recommendations for future research.

# Chapter Seven: Conclusion

## 7.1 Introduction

This chapter will provide an overall conclusion to the study by presenting the research's contribution to knowledge in the field of media in Jordan. Similarly, as this research intersects with other fields such as politics and behavioural sciences, its contribution and findings can be useful to academia, policymakers, government officials, and media content producers. Finally, the chapter will conclude with the limitations and recommendations for future research.

## 7.2 Contribution to knowledge

This dissertation explored Jordanian university students' use of television and online news videos on social media and the effects of this on raising their socio-political awareness. It also investigated the role of television and social media use in relation to socio-political participation and engagement, by proceeding through a structured problem statement, aims and objectives, and research questions.

This research comes at a critical time in a volatile region, and while it is located at the intersection of traditional media (television), new media (social media), politics and behavioural science (perception), this thesis has established a framework for subsequent research and the results of this study are important for policymakers, government officials and media content producers. Therefore, the importance of this research in understanding socio-political news consumption and its impact within Jordan is substantial.

The main aim of the present study was to provide a plausible explanation, with regard to the Jordanian youth and their interaction with news media, for the subsequent impact on their socio-political awareness, and its translation into action. The focus and aim of the research were rooted in the recent scholarly interest and publications regarding the impact of satellite television and social media on young people in the Arab world.

The study went through several stages, collecting data in order to address the aims of this study. It gathered data on both television and online news video viewing habits among university students, and the types of online news videos students watched on social

media. Data were also collected on their level of interest in socio-political issues, the level of interest in the type of socio-political news on television and social media, and their reasons for watching socio-political news on television and social media. In addition, the credibility of the news that respondents were exposed to on satellite television, JRTV and online news videos on social media were investigated. Lastly, data were gathered on the students' use of television and social media in relation to increasing their awareness, participation and engagement. The findings, highlighted in the previous two chapters, demonstrated the avid consumption of socio-political news by Jordanian university students through JRTV, Satellite television and social media.

Furthermore, three specific sets of research questions (perception questions) were identified, formulated, and divided into sub-questions, in order to address the problem statement while contributing to the aforementioned aims of the dissertation. The researcher employed the use of quantitative and qualitative research methodologies to draw up a comparative analysis between the use of satellite television, Jordanian National Television, and online social media platforms within Jordan. The aim of this analysis was to understand the contributions these media had made in raising the socio-political awareness of Jordanian university students. The last factor this research examined was the attitudes of the Jordanian university students towards the impacts that flow from both traditional mainstream media and online social media networks, in terms of their socio-political perceptions and subsequent actions.

Studies on the impact of media use on knowledge and civic awareness are still limited (Boulianne, 2015), likewise, on social media news consumption and its relation to political knowledge and opinion formation (Cacciatore *et al.*, 2018). My research contributed to filling these gaps by attempting to understand the influence of traditional media television and social media socio-political news in raising socio-political awareness, and how this may translate into participation and engagement. My research also contributed to filling the gaps in the literature by investigating both television and social media in Jordan through using the ideas of the uses and gratification approach, public sphere, news credibility, socio-political awareness and participation and engagement.

Alongside the use of a mixed methodological approach, the literature review provided background around the current situation and trends in the media landscape in Jordan,

including discussions on social media networks as news sources. It also looked into public sphere debates about the media, particularly social media, within the context of this research. It also contained a review of the differences and similarities of the concepts of awareness, participation and engagement. The theory of uses and gratifications was also used to illuminate the discussion of the motivations of the sampled participants when using the platforms included in this research. The findings of the research reinforced the assumptions of uses and gratifications theory in presenting the audience as active consumers of the media.

The research itself was also motivated by a multitude of events, most predominant among which was the pressure on the Qatari government to shut down Al-Jazeera and its subsidiaries, which led to a political blockade on Qatar by four Arab states: Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Egypt. The Arab states around the region had various demands, one of which included the shutting down of the news channel Al-Jazeera, which was the primary regional source of news with the advent of satellite media across the Arab states.

Another two events that occurred in Jordan were the catastrophic flash floods in the region of the Dead Sea and the protests at the tax reform laws. The floods swept away a school bus, killing 21 people, mostly school students. The story did not have a critical coverage on JRTV, which led to an explosion in social media platforms to report the event amongst ordinary Jordanians, including amongst the families of the victims. The wave of Jordanian protests in early June 2018 surpassed those witnessed during the Arab Spring in 2011 due to the dreadful economic situation and the introduction of new tax reform laws in the country. Many people in Jordan used social media heavily during this event. Ordinary citizens uploaded many videos onto social media from different cities across the country.

This research provides information on how young people consume the media in Jordan, and therefore can first help the government to understand better young people's perceptions of socio-political news watched on satellite television, JRTV and social media, as well as their views on how they may act politically in the real world through their perceptions of trust to the news on these three media platforms and the knowledge gained from the news viewed on them. Secondly, this research can also be used to give

JRTV broadcasters in Jordan a greater understanding of the habits and needs of the younger generation and cater to them.

The findings of the study can be summarised as follows. Firstly, the quantitative results indicated that the students relatively consume a high level of news on an average day for both all news (news in general) and socio-political news. It found that the sample spends on social media an average of 2 hours 24 minutes, for all news, and an average of 1 hour 48 minutes for socio-political news, whereas, for television, they averagely spend 2 hours for all news, and 1 hour 21 minutes for socio-political news.

The qualitative data revealed that young people in Jordan are turning to social media as a news source because it is immediate and convenient. However, television is still present, particularly satellite television, as the quantitative results indicated. Television seemed to be slightly more popular than social media for news consumption, with the most common response category of time spent watching general news being from one hour to less than three hours. For socio-political news specifically, the less than one-hour category was the largest. The largest categories for both social media and television were from one hour to less than three hours. In addition, more respondents viewed social media in the categories of from three hours to less than five hours, from five hours to less than seven hours, and more than seven hours.

Secondly, in light of the results of this research, qualitatively, social media was gaining popularity among those interviewed, as they spent a substantial amount of time on their mobile phones during the day. In contrast, television seemed to be consumed more around family. Television was also regarded as containing greater nationalistic sentiment, and quantitatively was more trusted in terms of its content. Social media was considered as a quick informative source for news, but the young people interviewed generally believed that social media carried unverified or unfiltered news.

This overall pattern of news consumption suggests that social media will not replace television but that the two platforms are in synchronisation with each other and exist symbiotically; that is to say, they interpenetrate one another with news generated by traditional institutions still the most trusted source of news content, whilst the speed and

convenience of social media together with its interaction potential makes it a more attractive option for some modes of viewing. However, the essential role of television within a strongly family-oriented culture such as Jordan is still strong, though this evidence suggests that the regional satellite stations have stayed the 'go-to' for many families.

Thirdly, JRTV was still important to them culturally, and as part of living at home, still had a role to play in national and cultural identity. My findings show that although respondents watched JRTV in large numbers, they were not necessarily satisfied by the socio-political news broadcast on it. Therefore, JRTV needs to recognise the gaps that exist in its current model of broadcasting news; that it is perceived as being biased and in needs to address this perception. These issues should be addressed in the greater public interest. These improvements could include enhancing their content, production values and the style of presentation.

Fourthly, 80.1% of participants were generally slightly interested (33.3%) or moderately interested (46.8%) in socio-political issues. Qualitatively, interviewees reacted with high levels of interest to the two socio-political news stories they were shown. Quantitatively, this interest was further analysed to gauge interest in television and social media specifically. It was found that participants had the most interest in local news, followed by national news and finally international news, on both television and social media.

Fifthly, my research showed qualitatively that the students were active users of the news they consumed, primarily through social media, which gave them a platform to search, comment, and share the story they consumed. This agrees with the essence of the uses and gratifications theory. Also, quantitatively, my research gathered together the motivations that the students had for consuming the media they did. Predominantly, the results show that Jordanian students' motive was to increase their intellectual horizons and to know more about socio-political news when watching television. The motivation for watching socio-political news on social media had similar findings. However, although expanding intellectual horizons was the primary motivation, the students were also highly motivated to watch news in order to form their opinion about different issues, and to join in conversations with colleagues. These results show that students rely on both traditional media television and social media to expand their socio-political knowledge



and form their opinions on different issues formation. Although, the means for both items expanding intellectual horizons and forming views on various matters were higher on social media, however, they were still high on television too which indicates that both platforms' socio-political news plays a role in students increasing knowledge and forming opinions about socio-political issues. The overall pattern for students' motivations for watching socio-political news on both television and social media can be summarised into three themes of motivations which were information or surveillance, social and opinion formation. Quantitatively, the Likert scale means for the reasons students watch socio-political news were between high and moderate for both television and social media, whereas, qualitatively, the motivations that were highly reported were information or surveillance, and opinion formation on both television and social media.

Sixthly, social media were regarded as convenient and accessible, but not always as trustworthy as television. Quantitatively, my results showed that participants' trust in television was still higher than their trust in social media; JRTV was the most trusted platform among the three platforms asked about.

Seventhly, my research verified that satellite television, JRTV and social media news videos did increase political knowledge and political awareness. However, the accuracy and authenticity of the knowledge and awareness gained were thought of as questionable by respondents due to the lack of filtering of news or the spread of false news. My research concluded that social media had the highest influence in bringing socio-political awareness, followed by satellite television and JRTV.

Awareness was high when it came to social media; however, the trust factor was highest towards JRTV, then satellite television. These results contradict with previous studies (Johnson & Kaye, 2000; Stavrositu & Sundar, 2008), which indicated that individuals who relied on a news source rated it as a more credible source of information.

However, in the case of my study, the students had more access or exposure to social media rather than television; therefore, it is still an essential source of news for them. Tsfaty and Cappella (2005, p.251) stated that "many news skeptics report moderate to high levels of mainstream news exposure, despite their mistrust of mainstream news"

which reinforces the point that many people would still use or watch sources of news they do not trust.

Students also reported that trust was something linked to official television sources as this may mean if they want to confirm a piece of news they have seen on social media they would cross-check it with other sources online. Alternatively, they rely on television and what they watch on it more than what they see on social media. Students' views on awareness and trust is an exciting finding as if we link it to awareness; it might imply that the interactivity offered by social media enhances the idea of awareness. In other words, users felt themselves becoming more 'aware' by following their own interests (and gratifications) rather than exposure to a more generalised news agenda.

Finally, the means were higher for the statement 'speaking to a member of the family' which came at the top. However, the means were low for the actions that involved an informal action that requires greater action like signing petitions and protesting, and also the students reported higher levels of formal participation in voting and elections. This may mean that the news they have received did not push them to go and do more through voluntary actions which may be related to their beliefs as these types of actions might be useless or maybe the news did not push them enough to carry such an action. Furthermore, we can assume that the younger generation in Jordan seem to participate and engage more in social media, although their socio-political awareness may come from multiple sources. However, their participation was highest when it came to speaking socially and then secondly, officially voting rather than carrying out voluntary actions which came last on the list, which can also be linked to the individual's name or identity being revealed, after watching both television and social media.

### **7.3 Limitations and recommendations for future research**

This study is not without limitations. Further studies could continue the discussion by addressing larger and different segments of society than only university students, such as young people outside the main cities.

The data collected in this study were purely from Jordan; thus, the findings may not be applicable to other nations, as nations have differences in culture, social background and consumption of the media.

Further studies need to be conducted to determine the timings of what times of day students watch the news, to give greater context for interpretation of the hours spent on both television and social media. This study was limited as it showed the number of hours of television and social media consumed, but not the total hours of both television and social media consumed by each individual to a clearer impression of how many hours students spent on leisure activity, under the assumption that watching the news on television and social media is a leisure activity.

Further research could be conducted to look into user behaviour patterns from cookies downloaded on users' computers. This could be used to generate algorithms to predict searches on search engines such as Google. This would help determine the type of news that is searched for on social media after it has been broadcast on television, and whether it is the first source of information students rely on. It could also predict future searches students may make once enough data was collected.

The issue of trust also raises some issues about whether people watch a particular medium because it is trustworthy, or to see different views on a story of those whom they don't trust, but they would still watch them and find them appealing or even to check what is being said by those they consider untrustworthy. These issues could form the basis of a future study.

Additionally, the nature of the survey precluded the possibility of determining correlations and causal links between patterns of news watching, trust, interest, awareness, participation and engagement within the news on either traditional or online media. This could be remedied in a future study with a different design.

Further research could be done to test if students process and compare the political knowledge gained from different platforms, to determine the perspective that gives an accurate representation of a political situation or the true presentation of a story. This could ultimately result in more positive participation and engagement, leading to the betterment of Jordan as a nation.

Further research can be conducted to look into primary and secondary forms of participation and engagement, and their effect on tertiary forms of participation and engagement.

This study used self-reported measures; future research could apply different methodological measures within this context.

Future research could look into incidental exposure to news on social media in relation to awareness, participation and engagement. Similarly, as misinformation or the circulation of fake news can play a role in destabilising the country, a future study could be done on the effects of fake news within Jordan.

Finally, wider studies could be carried out on different societies, mapping the similarities and differences between audiences' use of the media and linking to their awareness, participation and engagement within the context of different cultures.

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# Appendices

## Questionnaire in English

### **Key Words:**

**Socio-political News:** News that include both political and social factors such as conventional current affairs, crime, health, flash floods and environmental issues that being broadcasted in the news programmes and bulletins.

**Socio-political awareness:** Being aware of issues in our community, our country, and the world as large. It can also involve understanding your role and the impact of your actions in society.

**Online news videos:** News videos that are being circulated on different social media platforms such as news videos on Facebook or YouTube.

**Satellite Television:** All channels apart from **JRTV** which are available through **satellite television** in Jordan.

**JRTV:** Jordan National Television channel.

**Campaigner:** A person who works in an organized and active way towards a goal.

**NGOs:** Non-governmental organizations.

**Lobbyist:** A person who takes part in an organized attempt to influence legislators.

**Note:** **Online news videos** could be accessed via the two social media networks Facebook and YouTube.



University of the  
West of England

**Dear participant,**

I am Abd Allah Al-Jalabneh, a PhD student in the School of Film and Journalism, University of the West of England, Bristol, UK.

The purpose of this survey is to identify the role of **Jordan national television, satellite television**, and **social media news videos** on raising socio-political awareness among Jordanian university students. I'm inviting you to participate in this research by completing the survey. The survey should take you about 15 minutes to complete. The questionnaire is in Arabic, but for the purpose of analysis, the data will be translated into English.

Your participation in this research study is completely voluntary. You may choose not to participate. However, I highly appreciate your participation to make this project a great success. You may withdraw at any time while completing the questionnaire. Your answers are completely confidential and will be used for academic purposes only. The data will be used only by myself or by other researchers given permission by my director of studies. In order to ensure that all the information will remain confidential, please do not include your name. Please answer all questions as honestly as possible and return the completed questionnaire promptly. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me through email given below.

Thank you for participating in this survey and your responses will be greatly valuable to understand the role of television and social media in creating socio-political awareness

Sincerely,

**Name:** Abd Allah Al-Jalabneh

**Email** [Abd2.Al-Jalabneh@live.uwe.ac.uk](mailto:Abd2.Al-Jalabneh@live.uwe.ac.uk)

**Supervisor's Name** Jonathan Dovey

**Supervisor's Email** [Jonathan.Dovey@uwe.ac.uk](mailto:Jonathan.Dovey@uwe.ac.uk)

**Section One:**

1. Age:  From 18 to less than 20  
 From 20 to less than 22  
 From 22 to less than 24  
 From 24 to less than 26  
 26 and above

2. Gender:  Male  Female  Other

3. Student's Faculty:  Sciences  Humanities  Health

**Section Two:**

4. On average how many hours a day do you watch news in general on the following?

<b>Time in hours</b>	<b>Television</b>	<b>News videos on Social media</b>
One hour or less		
Over 1 hour and up to 3		
Over 3 hours and up to 5		
Over 5 hours and up to 7		
Over 7 hours		

5. On average how many hours a day do you watch news regarding socio-political issues on the following mediums?

<b>Time in hours</b>	<b>Television</b>	<b>News videos on Social media</b>
One hour or less		
Over 1 hour and up to 3		
Over 3 hours and up to 5		
Over 5 hours and up to 7		
Over 7 hours		

6. On average how many hours do you watch socio-political news on JRTV in a day?

Time in hours	Please tick (✓) in front of the right answer
One hour or less	
Over 1 hour and up to 3	
Over 3 hours and up to 5	
Over 5 hours and up to 7	
Over 7 hours	

7. The following table includes the different types of Online news videos that you usually watch on social media. How often do you watch these types of online news videos?

Types of Videos	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Often	Always
Videos that come from established television sources (mainstream television broadcasters) Note: examples can be seen in questions 5					
Videos that come from other established main stream news sources (Print and online newspaper sources) such as Ad-Dustour newspaper					
Videos that come from groups such as campaigners, NGOs, or lobbyists					
Videos that come from independent established high-profile content producers					
Videos that come from a member of the public such as a friend or classmate					
Other .....					

**Section Three:**

8. How interested are you in socio-political issues? [Please choose the option that best fits your Interest level]

Interest levels	Please tick (✓) in front of the right answer
Not interested at all	
Slightly interested	
Moderately interested	
Very interested	
Extremely interested	

9. The following table Indicates your level of interest in the type of socio-political news on television? Please tick (✓) to indicate your level of interest in front of each category.

Categories	Not at all interested	Slightly interested	Moderately interested	Very interested	Extremely interested
local Jordanian socio-political news only.					
National Jordanian socio-political news and not on local nor Arab or international level.					
Arab socio-political news and not on national neither international level.					
International socio-political news and not on Arab level.					



10. The following table Indicates your level of interest in the type of socio- political news on social media?

Please tick (✓) to indicate your level of interest in front of each category.

Categories	Not at all interested	Slightly interested	Moderately interested	Very interested	Extremely interested
local Jordanian socio-political news only.					
National Jordanian socio-political news and not on local nor Arab or international level.					
Arab socio-political news and not on national neither international level.					
International socio-political news and not on Arab level.					

**Section Four:**

11. The following statements show the reasons that motivate you behind watching socio-political news on television. Please mark the appropriate cell for your level of agreement or disagreement.

	<b>I watch news on television...</b>	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1.	To know more about Jordanian socio-political news					
2.	To know more about Arab socio-political news					
3.	To know more about international socio-political news					
4.	To join in conversations with my friends					
5.	To join in conversations with my family					
6.	To join in conversations with my colleagues					
7.	To be able to form my own opinions about different issues					
8.	To expand my intellectual horizons					
9.	Other reasons, please mention .....					

12. The following statements show the reasons that motivate you behind watching socio-political news videos on social media. Please mark the appropriate cell for your level of agreement or disagreement.

	<b>I watch online news videos on social media ...</b>	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1.	To know more about Jordanian socio-political news					
2.	To know more about Arab socio-political news					
3.	To know more about international socio-political news					
4.	To join in conversations with my friends					
5.	To join in conversations with my family					
6.	To join in conversations with my colleagues					
7.	To be able to form my own opinions about different issues					
8.	To expand my intellectual horizons					
9.	Other reasons, please mention .....					

**Section Five:**

13. The following statements are about JRTV raising socio-political awareness. Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement for each statement by marking the appropriate cell.

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1.	It provides me with enough information about socio-political issues					
2.	My socio-political awareness increases when I watch the news on JRTV					
3.	It contributes in shaping my opinion about social and political issues					

14. The following statements are about satellite television apart from JRTV in raising socio-political awareness. Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement for each statement by marking the appropriate cell.

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1.	It provides me with enough information about socio-political issues					
2.	My socio-political awareness increases when I watch the news on satellite television					
3.	It contributes in shaping my opinion about social and political issues					

15. The following statements are about online news videos raising socio-political awareness. Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement for each statement by marking the appropriate cell

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1.	It provides me with enough information about socio-political issues					
2.	My socio-political awareness increases when I watch online news videos					
3.	It contributes in shaping my opinion about social and political issues					

16. Indicate the level of trustworthiness of the news content coverage on the following mediums:

The medium	Not at all Trustworthy	Not Trustworthy	Neutral	Trust Worthy	Completely Trustworthy
Satellite television apart from JRTV and its news videos on social media					
JRTV and its news videos on social media					
Online news videos that are coming from other sources					

17. The following table includes actions which you may have taken after watching television news. How often did you involve or not involve in the following actions over the last year?

	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Often	Always
Speaking to a member of the family about the socio-political news you watch					
Speaking to a friend about the socio-political news you watch					
Sharing socio-political news on my social media accounts					
Signing a petition online					
Signing a petition on paper					
Joining a strike					
Voting for parliament elections					
Voting for municipality elections					
Joining a political party					
Joining a march / protest					
Other.....					

18. The following table includes actions which you may have taken after watching online news videos on social media. How often did you involve or not involve in the following actions over the last year?

	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Often	Always
Speaking to a member of the family about the socio-political news you watch					
Speaking to a friend about the socio-political news you watch					
Sharing socio-political news on my social media accounts					
Signing a petition online					
Signing a petition on paper					
Joining a strike					
Voting for parliament elections					
Voting for municipality elections					
Joining a political party					
Joining a march / protest					
Other.....					



## Questionnaire in Arabic

استبيان حول " دور التلفزيون ومقاطع الفيديو الاخبارية عبر المواقع الاجتماعية في زيادة الوعي الاجتماعي- السياسي لدى طلبة الجامعات الاردنية "

عزيزي الطالب \ عزيزتي الطالبة

يجري الباحث دراسة ميدانية حول عادات وانماط تعرض طلبة الجامعات الاردنية لمشاهدة التلفزيون ومقاطع الفيديو الاخبارية عبر المواقع الاجتماعية على شبكة الانترنت، بهدف قياس مدى وعيهم الاجتماعي والسياسي، والتعرف إلى درجة المصادقية بما يشاهدونه من أخبار على التلفزيون ومقاطع الفيديو، ومدى انعكاس ذلك على مشاركتهم الاجتماعية-السياسية.

أرجو التكرم بالإجابة عن جميع الأسئلة الواردة في هذه الاستبانة بدقة وموضوعية، علماً ان وقت ملئ الاستمارة سيستغرق تقريبا 15 دقيقة و أن المعلومات التي ستدلون بها لن تستخدم إلا لغايات البحث العلمي.

عبدالله سلطان الجلابنة

طالب دكتوراه

هاتف : 0788458866

ايميل الباحث : [abd2.al-jalabneh@live.uwe.ac.uk](mailto:abd2.al-jalabneh@live.uwe.ac.uk)

ايميل المشرف: [jonathan.dovey@uwe.ac.uk](mailto:jonathan.dovey@uwe.ac.uk)

كلية الصحافة والاعلام

جامعة غرب إنجلترا- بريستول

## التعريفات الاجرائية:

**الأخبار الاجتماعية-السياسية:** هي الاخبار اليومية التي تضم عوامل اجتماعية وسياسية معا، هذه الاخبار لها تأثيرات إما سياسية او اجتماعية او كلاهما معاً مثل قانون ضريبة الدخل او الفيزيانات والسيول.

**الوعي الاجتماعي-السياسي :** هو مدى ادراك الافراد للشؤون والاحداث الاجتماعية والسياسية، ومدى قدرتهم على فهمها وتحليلها، وكذلك تنمية معارفهم وخبراتهم وتشكيل اتجاهاتهم السياسية.

**مقاطع الفيديو الاخبارية:** هي المقاطع التي يتم نشرها على المواقع الاجتماعية المختلفة مثل الفيديوهات المنشورة على الفيسبوك واليوتيوب.

**القنوات الفضائية:** هي جميع القنوات المتاحة على التلفزيون للجمهور الاردني والتي تبث الاخبار الاجتماعية-السياسية.

**مصمم الحملة:** هو الشخص الذي يعمل بطريقة فعالة ومنظمة لتحقيق هدف الحملة.

**جماعات الضغط:** هم الأشخاص الذين يعملون بطريقة منظمة لتحقيق هدف معين.

**المحور الأول: الخصائص الديموغرافية**

1- العمر : ( ) من 18 إلى أقل من 20 ( ) من 20 إلى أقل من 22 ( ) من 22 إلى أقل من 24

( ) من 24 إلى أقل من 26 ( ) من 26 فأكثر

2- الجنس : ( ) ذكر ( ) أنثى

3- الكلية العلمية ضمن : ( ) الكليات الإنسانية ( ) الكليات العلمية ( ) الكليات الصحية

**المحور الثاني: التعرض للأخبار الاجتماعية – السياسية**

4- كم عدد الساعات التي تقضيها يوميا في حضور الاخبار بشكل عام على الوسيلتين التاليتين :

الوقت في الساعة	التلفزيون	الفيديوهات الاخبارية
أقل من ساعة واحدة		
من 1 ساعة إلى أقل من 3 ساعات		
من 3 ساعات إلى أقل من 5 ساعات		
من 5 ساعات إلى أقل من 7 ساعات		
من 7 ساعات فأكثر		

5- كم عدد الساعات التي تقضيها يوميا في حضور الاخبار (الاجتماعية - السياسية) على الوسائل التالية :

الوقت في الساعة	التلفزيون	الفيديوهات الاخبارية
أقل من ساعة واحدة		
من 1 ساعة إلى أقل من 3 ساعات		
من 3 ساعات إلى أقل من 5 ساعات		
من 5 ساعات إلى أقل من 7 ساعات		
من 7 ساعات فأكثر		

6- كم عدد الساعات التي تقضيها يوميا في مشاهدة الاخبار الإجتماعية-السياسية على التلفزيون الأردني:

الوقت بالساعة	ضع علامة (√) أمام الإجابة المناسبة
أقل من ساعة واحدة	
من 1 ساعة إلى أقل من 3 ساعات	
من 3 ساعات إلى أقل من 5 ساعات	
من 5 ساعات الى أقل من 7 ساعات	
من 7 ساعات فأكثر	

7- القائمة التالية تبين أنواع الفيديوهات الإخبارية المختلفة التي تشاهدها في العادة على شبكات التواصل الإجتماعي

أنواع الفيديوهات الإخبارية	دائماً	غالباً	أحياناً	نادراً	مطلقاً
الفيديوهات التي تأتي من محطات التلفزيون الرئيسية					
الفيديوهات التي تأتي من مصادر الصحف الرسمية					
الفيديوهات التي تأتي من مجموعات محلية مثل (مصممين الحملات والناشطين وجماعات الضغط)					
الفيديوهات التي تأتي من الأشخاص المشهورين والمؤثرين من خلال وسائل التواصل الإجتماعي					
الفيديوهات التي تأتي من عضو من العامة					
أخرى .....					

المحور الثالث: مدى الاهتمام بالأخبار الاجتماعية – السياسية

8- ما هو درجة اهتمامك بالأخبار (الاجتماعية-السياسية)؟ (يرجى اختيار إجابة واحدة)

درجة اهتمامك بالأخبار الاجتماعية-السياسية	ضع علامة (√) أمام الإجابة المناسبة
مهتم بدرجة كبيرة جدا	
مهتم بدرجة كبيرة	
مهتم بدرجة متوسطة	
مهتم بدرجة قليلة	
غير مهتم على الإطلاق	

9- الجدول التالي يبين مدى اهتمامك بالمواضيع الاخبارية الاجتماعية-السياسية التي تشاهدها على التلفزيون

المواضيع الاخبارية	مهتم بدرجة كبيرة جدا	مهتم بدرجة كبيرة	مهتم بدرجة متوسطة	مهتم بدرجة قليلة	غير مهتم على الإطلاق
أخبار اجتماعية-سياسية محلية على مستوى المدينة فقط					
أخبار اجتماعية-سياسية محلية على مستوى المملكة وليست على مستوى مدينتك ولا اي جهة اخرى في العالم					
أخبار اجتماعية-سياسية على مستوى الوطن العربي وليست على مستوى المملكة ولا اي جهة اخرى من العالم					
أخبار اجتماعية-سياسية على مستوى العالم وليس على مستوى الوطن العربي					

10- الجدول التالي يبين مدى اهتمامك بالمواضيع الاخبارية الاجتماعية-السياسية التي تشاهدها من خلال مقاطع الفيديو على  
المواقع الإجتماعية

المواضيع الاخبارية	مهتم بدرجة كبيرة جدا	مهتم بدرجة كبيرة	مهتم بدرجة متوسطة	مهتم بدرجة قليلة	غير مهتم على الإطلاق
أخبار اجتماعية-سياسية محلية على مستوى المدينة فقط					
أخبار اجتماعية-سياسية محلية على مستوى المملكة وليست على مستوى مدينتك ولا اي جهة اخرى في العالم					
أخبار اجتماعية-سياسية على مستوى الوطن العربي وليست على مستوى المملكة ولا اي جهة اخرى من العالم					
أخبار اجتماعية-سياسية على مستوى العالم وليس على مستوى الوطن العربي					

القسم الرابع: اسباب التعرض

11- الجدول التالي يبين دوافعك وراء مشاهدة الأخبار الاجتماعية-السياسية من خلال التلفزيون

أشاهد الأخبار من أجل...	موافق بشدة	موافق	محايد	غير موافق	غير موافق بشدة
معرفة أكثر حول الاخبار الاجتماعية – السياسية الاردنية فقط					
معرفة أكثر حول القضايا الاجتماعية – السياسية العربية وليس على مستوى المملكة او اي جهة اخرى من العالم					
معرفة أكثر حول القضايا الاجتماعية – السياسية الدولية وليس على مستوى الوطن العربي					
للدخول في نقاشات مع اصدقائي					
للدخول في نقاشات مع عائلتي					
للدخول في نقاشات مع زملائي					
ان اتمكن من تكوين رأي حول القضايا المختلفة					
لتوسع آفاقي الفكرية					
اسباب اخرى .....					

12- الجدول التالي يبين دوافعك وراء مشاهدة الأخبار الاجتماعية-السياسية من خلال المواقع الاجتماعية

أشاهد الأخبار من أجل...	موافق بشدة	موافق	محايد	غير موافق	غير موافق بشدة
معرفة أكثر حول الاخبار الاجتماعية – السياسية الاردنية فقط					
معرفة أكثر حول القضايا الاجتماعية – السياسية العربية وليس على مستوى المملكة او اي جهة اخرى من العالم					
معرفة أكثر حول القضايا الاجتماعية – السياسية الدولية وليس على مستوى الوطن العربي					
للدخول في نقاشات مع اصدقائي					
للدخول في نقاشات مع عائلتي					
للدخول في نقاشات مع زملائي					
ان اتمكن من تكوين رأي حول القضايا المختلفة					
لتوسع آفاقي الفكرية					
اسباب اخرى .....					

المحور الخامس: التأثيرات المعرفية والوجدانية والسلوكية

13- الوعي السياسي والاجتماعي من خلال التلفزيون الاردني

لا أوافق بشدة	لا أوافق	محايد	أوافق	أوافق بشدة	
					يزودني بمعلومات كافية حول القضايا السياسية- الاجتماعية
					وعبي السياسي والاجتماعي يزيد عندما أشاهد الاخبار على التلفزيون الأردني
					يساهم في تكوين رأيي حول القضايا السياسية والاجتماعية

14- الوعي السياسي والاجتماعي من خلال القنوات الفضائية ما عدا التلفزيون الاردني

لا أوافق بشدة	لا أوافق	محايد	أوافق	أوافق بشدة	
					تزودني بمعلومات كافية حول القضايا السياسية- الاجتماعية
					وعبي السياسي والاجتماعي يزيد عندما أشاهد الاخبار على الفيديوها الاخبارية
					تساهم في تكوين رأيي حول القضايا السياسية والاجتماعية

15- الوعي السياسي والاجتماعي من خلال مقاطع الفيديو عبر المواقع الاجتماعية

لا أوافق بشدة	لا أوافق	محايد	أوافق	أوافق بشدة	
					تزودني بمعلومات كافية حول القضايا السياسية- الاجتماعية
					وعبي السياسي والاجتماعي يزيد عندما أشاهد الاخبار على القنوات الفضائية
					تساهم في تكوين رأيي حول القضايا السياسية والاجتماعية

16- ما مدى تثقك في تغطية كلا من الوسائل التالية:

لا أثق بالمرّة	أثق قليلاً	إلى حدما	أثق	أثق ثقة تامة	الوسيلة
					القنوات الفضائية ومانتشره من مقاطع فيديو اخبارية على المواقع الاجتماعية ما عدا التلفزيون الاردني
					التلفزيون الاردني وما ينشره من مقاطع فيديو اخبارية على المواقع الاجتماعية
					مقاطع الفيديو الاخبارية القادمة من مصادر اخرى

17- القائمة التالية تحتوي على أفعال ممكن أن تقوم بها بعد مشاهدتك لمقاطع الفيديو الاخبارية على المواقع الاجتماعية (هل قمت بأي من الأفعال التالية خلال السنة الماضية).

الأفعال التي قمت بها	دائماً	غالباً	احياناً	نادراً	مطلقاً
التحدث لفرد من أفراد العائلة حول الأخبار الاجتماعية-السياسية التي تشاهدها					
التحدث الى صديق حول الأخبار الاجتماعية-السياسية التي تشاهدها					
مشاركة الاخبار الاجتماعية-السياسية على مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي الخاصة بي					
توقيع اعتراض الكتروني					
توقيع اعتراض خطي					
الانضمام الى إضراب					
التصويت في انتخابات البرلمان					
التصويت في انتخابات البلديات					
الانضمام الى حزب سياسي					
الانضمام الى احتجاج					
أخرى.....					



18- القائمة التالية تحتوي على أفعال ممكن أن تقوم بها بعد مشاهدتك للتلفزيون (هل قمت بأي من الأفعال التالية خلال السنة الماضية).

الأفعال التي قمت بها	دائماً	غالباً	أحياناً	نادراً	مطلقاً
التحدث لفرد من أفراد العائلة حول الأخبار الاجتماعية-السياسية التي تشاهدها					
التحدث الى صديق حول الأخبار الاجتماعية-السياسية التي تشاهدها					
مشاركة الاخبار الاجتماعية-السياسية على مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي الخاصة بي					
توقيع اعتراض الكتروني					
توقيع اعتراض خطي					
الانضمام الى إضراب					
التصويت في انتخابات البرلمان					
التصويت في انتخابات البلديات					
الانضمام الى حزب سياسي					
الانضمام الى احتجاج					
أخرى.....					

## Interview guide



University of the  
West of England



Television and Online News Videos

### **Interview Participant Information Brief**

#### **Dear participant,**

I am Abd Allah Al-Jalabneh, a PhD student in the School of Film and Journalism, University of the West of England, Bristol, UK.

The purpose of this interview is to identify the role of **Jordan national television, satellite television, and social media news videos** on raising socio-political awareness among Jordanian university students. You will be asked questions such as your sources for socio-political news related television and social media, your reasons behind watching socio-political news, and other questions related to your socio-political awareness, participation and engagement. The interview may take up to an hour long. The interview is going to be conducted in Arabic, but for the purpose of this research, the data will be transcribed then translated into English.

Your participation in this interview is completely voluntary. You may choose not to participate. However, I highly appreciate your participation to make this project a great success. You may withdraw at any time during the interview. Your answers and opinions will be used for academic purposes only. The data will be used only by myself or by other researchers given permission by my director of studies. In order to ensure that all the information will remain confidential, please do not include your name. Please answer all questions as honestly as possible and return the completed questionnaire promptly. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me through email given below.

Thank you for participating in this survey and your responses will be greatly valuable to understand the role of television and social media in creating socio-political awareness.

## Questions about the Research and your rights as Research Participants

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at [Abd2.Al-Jalabneh@live.uwe.ac.uk](mailto:Abd2.Al-Jalabneh@live.uwe.ac.uk) or my supervisors, Prof. Jonathan Dovey at [Jonathan.Dovey@uwe.ac.uk](mailto:Jonathan.Dovey@uwe.ac.uk).

If you wish to be interviewed in more detail after this interview, please tick this

Please provide your email.....

Email address:

Date and preferable time:

### **Consent for the use of interview data:**

Thank you for agreeing to participate in the University of the West of England, Bristol research project.

Please confirm that you understand and agree to the following:

\* I have read through the information on the previous page and received enough information about the study.

\* I understand that by consenting to taking part in this study means I am still able to withdraw at any time within the designated six months' period without having to give any reasons.

\* I understand that I can ask questions about the study after I have completed the interview.

\* I am over the age of 18.

\* I understand that this information will be used only for the purpose set out on the information page, and my consent is conditional upon the University complying with its duties and obligations under the United Kingdom Data Protection Act.

### **Do you consent to taking part in this interview?**

- Yes
- No

## **Interview Guide**

### **Part One – Introduction and Warming up**

- Introduction for topic conversations, topic keywords, discussion rules and duration, confidentiality and audio recording.
- Contact and Warming up (Please, Introduce yourself, Year of study, Age, Gender).

### **Part Two – Sources of television news channels & Online news videos on Social media**

- Can you tell me about your reasons behind watching socio-political news? (Can you also give me any reasons why would you want to watch this type of news either on television or socio media)?
- What is your main source of socio-political news on television? (Probe local, national and international news channel).
- Why did you choose to watch this channel/channels? (Probe: credibility and trust issues).
- What is your experience with the local channels in Jordan? (Probe respondents' experiences in terms of JRTV socio-political news coverage in comparison with other local or regional channels).
- Can you tell me about your platform preferences when it comes to watching socio-political news either on television or social media? And why is this preference?
- What are the traits you like about either television or social media when it comes to watching socio-political news? Also, in terms of the content, to what extent is it comprehensive?
- What is your main source of socio-political news videos on social media? Can you name some of these sources?
- Why did you choose to watch this source of news? (Probe: credibility and trust issues).

### **Part Three –Interest/ Motivations/ Socio-political awareness /Engagement and participation.**

This part presents two news stories that have happened during the past three months in Jordan and had a massive media coverage.

- I. The first news story is Jordan's flash floods.
  - Were you interested in this news story?
  - How far did you watch and follow this news story? Can you tell me, how did the story unfold to you by the media?
  - How did you come to know about this news story? What was your reaction to it?
  - Where did you follow up this news story? (Probe respondents' experiences about the media coverage of this news event, JRTV, Satellite television, Social media).

- Can you tell me about your personal reasons behind following up with this news story?
- How did you follow up this news event? (Probe respondents' experiences about the media coverage of these news events, JRTV, Satellite television, Social media).
- How did you make your opinion/ view on this story?
- Was the information you collected about the story from your source/ sources enough to raise your awareness about the story and how it all get unfolded to the public?
- What was the role of television and social media during this event?

II. The second news story is Jordan's new income tax law.

- Were you interested in this news story?
- Where did you watch this news story being unfolded by the media? (Probe why do you choose to watch it on this medium/ media?)
- Can you tell me, how did you know all the details about this news story? (Probe respondents' experiences about the media coverage on this event, JRTV, Satellite television, Social media)
- What was your opinion when you saw the story being unfolded? Can you tell me, how informative the media was on this news story?
- Can you tell me how did the story unfold and what was the reaction of the street on it?
- Can you tell me, how did you get your updates about the story? (Probe: Asking about particular platforms that focused on the details coverage of the protests).
- Can you tell me, how did you react to this story and why? (Probe: Actions such as, sharing, posting, talking to a friend or classmate?)
- What was the role of social media in this event?
- What was the role of television and social media during this event?

**Thank you**

## The demographic information of the interview respondents

participant	age	gender	faculty	Interview length (Minutes)
1	21	M	Sciences	34
2	21	M	Humanities	45
3	20	M	Sciences	40
4	21	F	Health	33
5	22	M	Humanities	45
6	21	F	Humanities	48
7	18	F	Humanities	31
8	20	M	Humanities	53
9	23	M	Sciences	35
10	20	M	Sciences	50
11	24	M	Health	46
12	22	M	Health	45
13	19	F	Health	33
14	24	F	Humanities	60
15	21	F	Humanities	36
16	20	F	Sciences	36
17	20	F	Sciences	44
18	19	M	Health	46
19	18	M	Health	41
20	19	M	Health	36
21	19	M	Sciences	33
22	18	M	Sciences	57
23	21	M	Humanities	30

24	20	F	Humanities	33
participant	age	gender	faculty	Interview length (Minutes)
25	21	F	Sciences	32
26	20	F	Sciences	31
27	23	M	Health	30
28	22	M	Sciences	37
29	18	M	Humanities	36
30	23	M	Humanities	34