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**DUBAI POLICE EFFECTIVENESS IN COMBATING RUMOURS
THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA**



**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
UNIVERSITI UTARA MALAYSIA
2024**

**DUBAI POLICE EFFECTIVENESS IN COMBATING RUMOURS
THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA**



**A thesis submitted to the Ghazali Shafie Graduate School of Government in
fulfilment of the requirement for the Doctor of Philosophy
Universiti Utara Malaysia**



Kolej Undang-Undang, Kerajaan dan Pengajian Antarabangsa
(College of Law, Government and International Studies)
UNIVERSITI UTARA MALAYSIA

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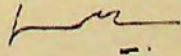

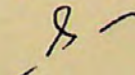
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ABSTRAK

Media memainkan peranan yang penting dalam masyarakat moden dengan membolehkan komunikasi dan perkongsian maklumat penting kepada orang ramai. Namun, terdapat beberapa kes di mana platform media sosial di Dubai digunakan untuk menyebarkan khabar angin dan berita palsu, yang menyebabkan kemarahan dan kekeliruan orang awam. Kajian ini bertujuan untuk menilai keberkesanan pengurusan krisis Polis Dubai dalam menangani khabar angin and maklumat palsu. Kajian ini mengkaji sebab dan punca masalah ini dan menilai pelbagai strategi yang dilaksanakan oleh Kerajaan Emiriah Arab Bersatu (UAE) untuk mengawal selia dan mengawal penyebaran maklumat palsu. Kajian ini menggunakan pendekatan kaedah campuran, termasuk tinjauan terhadap 377 orang pegawai Polis Dubai dari pelbagai pangkat dan temubual separa berstruktur dengan 4 informan utama. Data ini kemudian dianalisa secara komprehensif dengan menggunakan perisian SPSS, Amos dan MAXQDA. Dapatan kajian ini menunjukkan bahawa para pegawai Polis Dubai menyedari peranan penting media sosial dalam penyebaran maklumat serta potensi risiko yang berkaitan dengan penyebaran khabar angin dan maklumat palsu. Natijah kajian ini juga mendapati bahawa para pegawai polis mempunyai pemahaman yang baik dalam menangani isu ini dengan menekankan kepentingan mendidik orang ramai tentang keburukan penyebaran khabar angin serta maklumat palsu di media sosial. Selain itu, kajian menunjukkan bahawa Polis Dubai telah melaksanakan langkah proaktif untuk mencegah penyebaran khabar angin dan maklumat palsu di media sosial menerusi kerjasama dengan platform media sosial untuk melaksanakan algoritma keutamaan maklumat, bekerjasama dengan organisasi pemeriksa fakta, serta mengambil tindakan undang-undang terhadap individu yang terlibat dengan penyebaran berita atau maklumat palsu. Kajian ini menyimpulkan bahawa Polis Dubai secara keseluruhannya telah dapat menghalang penyebaran khabar angin dan maklumat palsu di media sosial. Pemantauan aktif, penyiasatan dan campur tangan undang-undang terhadap mereka yang menyebarkan kepalsuan, digabungkan dengan usaha untuk meningkatkan kesedaran orang ramai tentang risiko media sosial, telah menyumbang kepada kejayaan mengekalkan platform media sosial sebagai sumber maklumat yang selamat dan boleh dipercayai untuk orang ramai.

Kata kunci: Khabar Angin, Media Sosial, Polis Dubai, COVID-19, Pasukan Polis

ABSTRACT

Media plays a crucial role in modern society by enabling communication and sharing importance information with the public. However, there have been instances of social media platform in Dubai being responsible for spreading rumours and false news, leading to public outrage and confusion. This study aimed to assess the effectiveness of Dubai Police's crisis management in combating rumours and false information. This research investigated the causes of these issues and evaluated the various strategies implemented by the UAE government to regulate and control the dissemination of false information. This study used a mixed-method approach, including survey of 337 Dubai Police officers from various ranks and semi-structured interviews with 4 key informants. The data was comprehensively analyzed using IBM SPSS Amos and MAXQDA software. The findings indicated that Dubai Police officers recognized the significant role of social media in disseminating information as well as the potential risks of spreading rumours and false information. Further, it revealed that Dubai Police officer had adequate knowledge in addressing this issue and emphasize on educating the public about the negative impacts of spreading rumours and false information on social media. The study also revealed that Dubai Police officers took proactive measures to prevent the spread of rumours and false information by collaborating with social media platforms to implement algorithms that prioritize information, partnering with fact-checking organizations, and taking legal action against individuals who were involved with spreading falsehoods. This research concluded that the Dubai Police officers successfully prevented the spread of rumors and false information on social media platforms. Their active monitoring, investigation, and legal interventions, combined with efforts to raise public awareness, have helped maintain social media platforms as safe and reliable sources of information for the public.

Keywords: Rumours, False Information, Dubai Police, Social Media, COVID-19, Police Forces

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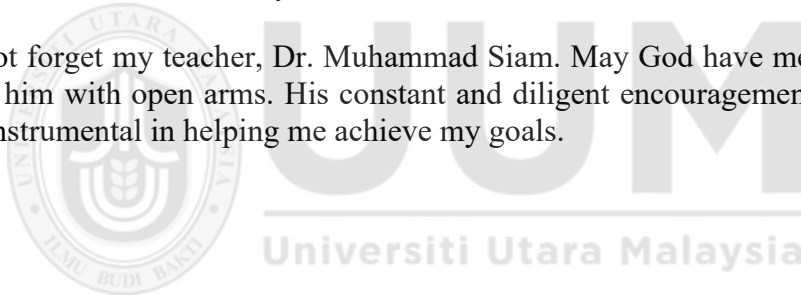


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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| UNESCO | United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization |
| UAE | United Arab Emirates |
| CBP | United States Customs and Border Protection |
| PR | Public Relations |
| SEM | Structural Equation Modeling |
| AVE | Average Variance Extracted |
| CA | Cronbach Alpha |
| CR | Composite Reliability |
| CFI | Comparative Fit Index |
| SM | Social Media |
| RSI | Reliable Source of Information |
| SMI | Social Media Information |
| SMR | Social Media Rumours |
| Q² | Predictive Relevance |
| R² | Coefficients of Determination |
| f² | Effect Size |



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Media plays a critical and vital role in our modern society by facilitating communication and sharing important information with the public. Some scholars believe that today's media serves as the link between the government and the public. Citizens are informed of the decisions, rules, and regulations enacted by the government from online and offline media channels (Qamar et al., 2020). Moreover, media platforms play an even greater role in the case of emergencies and crises by allowing disaster management authorities and governments to interact with the public, distribute vital information, and ensure public safety. Inevitably, media platforms aid in spreading information and facts, which are crucial for the proper functioning of our society. Unfortunately, the media's positive influence also comes with its negative facet: people also use various media, especially social platforms, to spread rumours and fake news. This is a vital issue we face today that contributes to the disruption of social harmony, raising the vehemence of delinquent attitudes (Almarzouqi et al., 2022).

Digital, print, and social media platforms are all responsible for spreading the news all over the nation (Mourão & Harlow, 2020). However, false news has recently been rampant all over social media and even digital media. It is prominent that social media platforms seem to be mostly responsible for spreading rumours and false news in Dubai while causing public outrage over incidents that did not occur in reality. They affect the sanctity of the country and lead to a chaotic situation. The United Arab Emirates (UAE) has legislative instruments to control the spread of false information via media; they are Federal Law No. 5 (2012), Electronic Media Regulation (2018), and Federal Law No. 12 (2016), and violations of these legislations have been rampant over the years. Even in recent times, it has been evident that these issues are quite concerning due to the COVID-19 pandemic situation. Within the list of fake news being spread, issues on Dubai Police were also included (Zboja et al., 2020). Rumours about legislative measures, government officials, political upheavals, and now the legal servants have created havoc in the country. In anticipation of the aforementioned problems, the current study explores the efficiency of the steps taken by media management in combating rumours through the usage of legal steps as well as technological expertise. The government, too, has involved itself in the act and has taken viable steps against the spreading of rumours present on various media platforms (Shabbir, 2020).

1.2 Background

The large-scale spreading of misinformation has made it necessary for legal procedures to be amended through government interference. Regulations and acts exist against spreading false news in the UAE's legal system; however, in recent times, violation of these laws has increased tenfold (Elareshi & Ziani, 2019). Reform

measures like spreading public awareness and warnings against the spread of misinformation by the government have been taken. However, cases of the spread of false news have only increased (Broussard, 2020).

Since 2017, the police force of Dubai has had to block more than 5,000 reported social media accounts for spreading false news. The government also arranged a talk with the media houses on public awareness via social media, educating the public about false news and suggesting ways to identify them (Allern & Pollack, 2019). In March 2018, the government introduced new regulations for online activities, publishing on print media, e-commerce, and advertising. Yet several cases kept on recurring. In the very same year, two cases were taken to court. Ahmed Mansour Al-Endres was accused of using his social media accounts to publish fabricated news and, as a result, was imprisoned. In another incident, two women posted a video on their social media platforms accusing a woman of African origin of kidnapping a child; however, it was later found that the woman was the child's nanny (Pennycook et al., 2020). The two women were then charged with disseminating false news using their social media accounts. Another recent viral video on social media also created quite a stir in the UAE. The video showed an individual, presumed to be a COVID-19-infected patient, experiencing seizures. However, it was later confirmed that the said patient actually experienced an epileptic seizure and was not infected by the virus (Almarzouqi et al., 2022). Similarly, in another incident, news about the death of five family members from COVID-19 was broadcast on Abu Dhabi Sports Channel. Evidently, it was later confirmed that this information was entirely fabricated and that the family did not even exist in the first place.

Several other cases of false news spreading on different media channels were evident during the COVID-19 pandemic in the UAE. To address this rising problem, authorities in the UAE have called and requested media outlets to be more vigilant and responsible when handling and sharing information about the pandemic with the public (Pasha et al., 2022; Elareshi & Ziani, 2019). Officials particularly stressed the importance of verifying the authenticity of news sources and stories to avoid confusion and chaos among the masses. Salem Al Zaabi, the current acting head of the Federal Emergency Crisis and Disasters Prosecution in the UAE, said that people making up fake stories and news channels sharing false information would be detained until investigations are complete. In addition, the UAE government has also imposed a fine of 20,000 Dirhams on people involved in the circulation of unconfirmed and fake news (Tahat et al., 2020).

In regards to the matter, the police have also sometimes taken the blow. Rumours of corruption within the police department and allegations of collusion with political powers are often heard of. Recently, the Dubai Police were in the limelight for waiving traffic fines. However, the police department soon dismissed those rumours (S. Ali, 2020). Such news could often affect the reputation of a nation, creating an environment of confusion and distrust. Rumours about public officials could also lead to losing faith in the law and undermine the integrity of the legal system. It could lead to a state of lawlessness that permeated throughout the entire nation, and there were existing punishments for spreading false rumours and news, including the charging of a convict with million-dirham fines or even imprisonment. However, such efforts have managed to keep false news from being spread.

1.3 Problem Statement

The relationship between rumours and media (both traditional and social) is prominent as rumours always spread everywhere and are not something new to society. Instead, they are present and influential in most civilizations and cultures throughout history. They are closely connected to human gatherings but differ from one society to another in terms of motive and the impact thereof (Al Tumi, 2019). According to surveys, in recent times, the spread of misinformation has increased. Social media platforms hold the record for the highest number of false news cases. However, digital and print media are also not exempted from having such cases (Al Baloushi, 2019). Digital- and internet-based media might be prone to publishing incorrect information as a direct result of spreading propaganda, but print media might also follow the same pattern. Therefore, it is the collective duty of media houses, the government, and public officials (e.g., law enforcement agencies and policymakers) to deal with the problem (Tahat et al., 2020).

Hassan (2017) argued that there are many effects of rumours through modern means of communication, starting from the distortion of individual and institutional reputations, the exacerbation of discord in the society, and the weakening of morale to the various issues in local, regional or global public opinion in the political, economic, social and military fields (S. Ali, 2020). The spread of rumours in society may lead to the political and economic collapse of a state, and the aim of spreading rumours is to stir up strife and destabilize security and stability in societies. Recently, it has also been observed that the spread of electronic rumours and their circulation speed has accelerated. Electronic rumours are no longer just false news or information circulated by a person. Instead, they have become more than that, as specialized institutions (e.g.,

state actors, private companies, or rogue entities) are standing behind them, and media outlets have mastered the manipulation and presentation of information to weaken countries (Ramadan, 2019).

Ali (2020) asserted that rumours affect the public, as the repercussions of false information are often confusion, public outrage, chaos, and false accusations. For example, on April 3rd, 2020, a rumour was spread saying that Dubai Police arrested an Asian man for uploading a video of a COVID-19-related topic on social media. This was a rumour, and police had issued a warning about spreading such rumours. Some incidents have recently created enormous confusion, and these days, the spread of false information is increasingly harmful, especially during crises. As a form of anticipation, responsible parties, including mainstream media platforms and social media account owners, have implemented several measures. Some of those steps include filtering the information they receive before publishing, scrutinizing the news source, controlling their own social media pages, and imposing limits on the exposure of the news shared. Those who are responsible have started making use of technology to monitor the origins of the news and being very investigative before a piece of news is published (Dempsey et al., 2018).

It became clear that the widespread rumours in societies can be highly attributed to the technological revolution, i.e., people mostly consumed all kinds of information in the virtual world by overlooking the sources. Today, it is possible for anyone without the appropriate technical skills and means, such as journalists from well-established traditional media platforms, to be the “producer” of their own news. There is almost no barrier to sharing information since the use of social media platforms today does

not require the users to be specifically capable of the production of “news” that follows journalistic standards. This, eventually, comes with a very complex problem once it becomes so difficult for the public, who receives this information, to distinguish the right from the wrong, the good from the bad, and the truth from the rumours (Mitra et al., 2021). Furthermore, rumours and false information have become a very substantial concern during and after the COVID-19 crisis, particularly for the entities working to nullify these rumours and mitigate their further impacts. In Dubai, these rumours also pose a severe threat to national sovereignty and integrity, hinting at the need for an investigation into the effectiveness of Dubai Police in managing rumours (Song et al., 2021).

Notably, studies in law enforcement's response to rumours on social media, especially regarding the Dubai Police, are relatively determinate. While there is a significant body of literature on the spread and effect of rumours in different regions, i.e., China, Nigeria, Bangladesh, etc., (Hui et al., 2020; Islam et al., 2020; Shi & Qu, 2020), a substantial gap exists in understanding how law enforcement agencies, such as Dubai Police, perceive and address rumours spread through social media platforms.

Current research tends to focus more extensively on the societal implications of rumours and misinformation (Rocha et al., 2023; Wang et al., 2021), usually bypassing law enforcement's precise strategies and challenges in combating these phenomena within the digital landscape. Consequently, there is a demand for more targeted investigations into the effectiveness of Dubai Police's approaches to mitigating the spread of rumours on social media platforms and their general implications for societal stability and public trust.

The cited literature highlights the pervasive impact of rumours and misinformation in contemporary society (Almomani & Al-Qur'an, 2020; Naeem et al., 2021; D. Wang, 2021), especially in the digital age characterized by the widespread adoption of social media platforms. Studies consistently underline the detrimental effects of rumours on public trust, social cohesion, and institutional credibility, highlighting the urgency of effective countermeasures to mitigate their impact (Shahamatinejad, 2021).

Overall, the existing literature highlights the critical need for empirical research that examines the perceptions, strategies, and challenges faced by law enforcement agencies (Rusho et al., 2021), such as the Dubai Police, in managing rumours and misinformation on social media platforms. By combining theoretical insights with empirical evidence, this study aims to contribute to the development of evidence-based conclusions for combating rumours and misinformation in the digital age.

Furthermore, existing research highlights the need for more robust law enforcement approaches in addressing the distinctive challenges posed by rumours and misinformation in the digital ecosystem (Hu et al., 2021; Ralph et al., 2022). The rapid dissemination and amplification of false information through social media platforms obligate innovative strategies and proactive engagement by law enforcement agencies to effectively fight the spread of rumours. Existing frameworks and conceptual models from the literature also offer valuable insights into the background mechanisms driving rumour propagation and public exposure to misinformation. These frameworks provide a conceptual foundation for understanding the basis of rumour diffusion and the factors affecting individual behaviour and decision-making in online information consumption (Song et al., 2021).

Furthermore, there need to be more empirical studies investigating the perceptions, attitudes, and operational protocols of Dubai Police regarding rumours circulating on social media platforms. Understanding how Dubai Police conceptualizes and responds to rumours on social media is important for informing evidence-based practices and improving the agency's ability to address emerging threats to public safety and security in the digital age. Given the immediate evolution of digital communication technologies and the increasing plurality of social media platforms as primary sources of information dissemination, there is an acute need for comprehensive research that investigates the rumour propagation within the digital ecosystem and the efficacy of law enforcement interventions, especially those executed by Dubai Police, in countering the spread of misinformation and disinformation online.

1.4 Research Question

The current study has five research questions that the research aims to answer:

- 1) How do perceptions within Dubai Police concerning social media's role as a source of information in Emirati society affect their response to rumours?
- 2) What are Dubai Police's perspectives on how social media platforms contribute to spreading rumours in Emirati society?
- 3) How do perceptions within Dubai Police regarding the reliability of social media influence their strategies for managing information dissemination in Emirati society?
- 4) To what extent do Dubai Police's efforts effectively mitigate the spread of rumours through social media platforms in Emirati society?
- 5) What measures are developed by Dubai Police in counteracting the rumours through social media in Emirati society?

1.5 Research Objective

The study has four research objectives that are derived from the research problem and questions, which are to:

- 1) Investigate Dubai Police's perceptions concerning the role of social media in disseminating information within Emirati society and its implications for rumour management.
- 2) Evaluate Dubai Police's understanding of how social media platforms facilitate the spread of rumours within Emirati society.
- 3) Analyze Dubai Police's perspectives on the reliability of social media as an information source and its implications for their communication strategies.
- 4) Investigate the effectiveness of Dubai Police's measures in countering the propagation of rumours through social media platforms within Emirati society.
- 5) Scrutinize the current measures designed and implemented by Dubai Police in counteracting the rumours through social media in Emirati society.

1.6 Research Scope

The study focuses on the effectiveness of media crisis management in combating rumours in the Dubai Police Department during the years 2022-2023. The study considers records of various incidents of spreading misinformation that have created a public outcry, which has created mass confusion. The study also considered the multiple laws that the UAE government has imposed to control the spread of false news. A few incidents showed that perpetrators were punished if caught (Jamil, 2020). It has also been observed that social media platforms are the most available mediums for wrongdoers to spread misinformation. The steps taken by the media management have also been mentioned. However, the study faced several limitations. More

information is needed on the exact steps and measures taken by the media management to combat the issue. More statistical data is also needed to support certain formulations, such as the number of cases per year and imprisonment details. The deeper causes behind the spread of false news have been left unexplored as that would require more intricate knowledge of how different media houses function and would bring into question their affiliations. The exact impact of false news on the public has been left unexplored as individual case studies must be properly conducted (S. Ali et al., 2022a). The study has scope for further development, and more information can be gathered about the various issues that media management has faced over the years due to the spread of false news and how they have developed their strategies to combat these problems. The study can be expanded to include the different aspects of false news and how that affects the collective consciousness of the citizens.

1.7 Significance of the Research

The current study offers insights into the implications of the new peril plaguing the citizens of Dubai, i.e., the spread of false rumours. Recent observations showed that the number of false news on various media has only been increasing. The increase has been due to two reasons: the rise in social media usage and the incapability of media houses to control the spread of unconfirmed news (Ejaz et al., 2022). Therefore, Dubai Police have been monitoring cases of false news and taking measures to reduce the amount of misinformation being spread.

This study is significant as it explores the efficacy of the measures taken by the police in combating spreading rumours and critically analyzes the reasons behind the steps and their long-term effects. The spread of rumours has impacted the citizens of Dubai

as it has created unnecessary confusion. In addition to rumours, false news can lead to adverse consequences and affect a nation's sanctity; misrepresenting it on the global stage shall potentially harm the country's international reputation. Consequently, it is hardly surprising that the public starts to question the efficiency of legal bodies in controlling the situation.

This research also enables the Dubai Police and other professionals in the associated field to identify gaps in the current media crisis management, which still allows people to share and spread false information, and adopt suitable tactics and strategies to fill these gaps and ensure that the practice of spreading rumours and fake news is completely mitigated (Elareshi & Ziani, 2019).

1.8 Research Terminology

i. Rumours

Ali (2020) defined rumours as "perceived as coming from one or more people's information statements about some events that are not officially confirmed (Hamdan, 2017). Al-Sarem et al. (2021) defined rumours as "A process of promoting false and baseless news to influence public opinion." Thus, the current study defines rumours as sayings, news, and stories circulated by individuals in a particular society without proof of their validity or verification. These stories or news may be accurate, but in most cases, they are far from the truth.

ii. Media

Media serves as a tool that allows communication between two parties, the media itself and the public, or a sender and a receiver, through many different platforms (Al

Aashry, 2020). Media are the communication outlets or tools used to store and deliver information or data (Dempsey et al., 2018). Based on the two sources, the current study defines Media as "the mechanisms and tools through which news is transmitted to the members of society through multiple channels."

1.9 Conceptual Framework

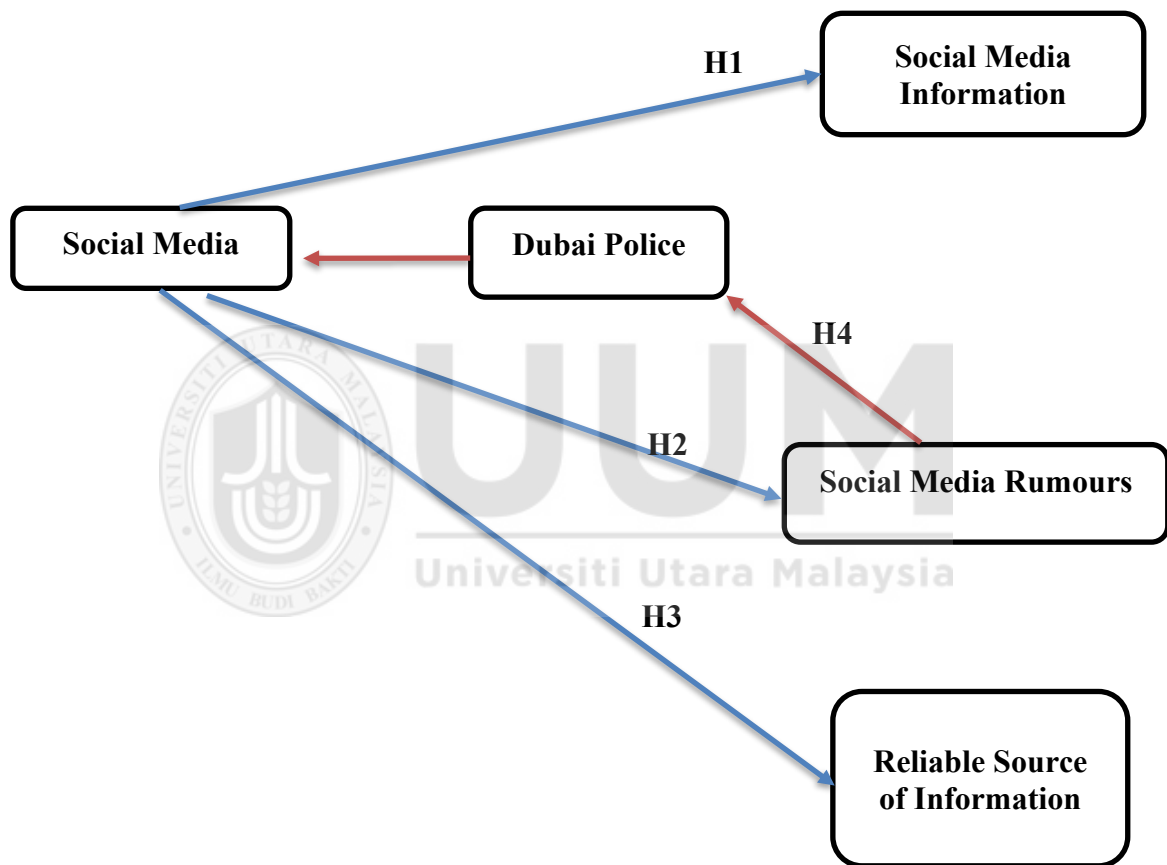


Figure 1. 1 Conceptual Framework

1.10 Research Hypotheses

H1. There is a statistically significant relationship between social media and information in the Emirati society.

H2. There is a statistically significant relationship between social media and rumours in Emirati society.

H3. There is a statistically significant relationship between social media and reliable sources of information in Emirati society.

H4. Dubai Police significantly affects the circulated rumours on social media in Emirati society.



CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

With the rapid development and growth of digital technology, the spreading of false news and rumours have increased drastically in most societies across the globe. This results from greater internet accessibility today, exposing people to fake news, disrupting nations' sanctity, and generating unnecessary chaos (S. Ali, 2020). Such trends have risen alarmingly in recent times, and despite the adoption of legislative measures, significant improvements have yet to be noticed in this context. Several studies have assessed the crisis generated by disseminatfalse news and relevant media management tactics necessary for addressing and managing such situations. This section reviews existing literature in this domain in detail to gather a better insight and understanding of the research topic (Aloqaily et al., 2022).

The best way for the media to build understanding is by promoting media culture. These media should be vibrant, independent, pluralistic, inclusive, and fair, enjoying complete freedom in expressing their opinion and free from censorship. Notably, it is impossible to contribute to establishing dialogue and understanding between the parties except in the light of media freedom. In addition, free media is essential for

disseminating information and knowledge, which is the mainstay of informed democratic participation and good governance (Sabban, 2017).

Journalists must be able to practice their predefined details without fear. They must have freedom of movement to gather facts and opinions, disseminate news, hold officeholders accountable, and protect their informants. In return, journalists are required to uphold the highest ethical and professional standards and conduct themselves according to general moral principles. Media organizations and professional journalists' associations must encourage accurate, professional, and ethical reporting. This can be achieved through developing voluntary codes of conduct, training for journalists, and developing self-discipline mechanisms. This media accountability should be organized according to systems of self-discipline that allow a direct dialogue between readers, listeners, viewers, Internet surfers, and media professionals. Adhering to ethical standards can give the media credibility in front of their audience (El-Sadig et al., 2020).

Citizens should live in an open and transparent political atmosphere so that they can participate in monitoring economic, social, and political issues within their local communities and society. Pledges to increase transparency and accountability in public administration must be accompanied by laws that guarantee the full use of information in the public interest in all areas. National information laws must provide full and open access for the general public to information in the government's possession. Realizing this right to information will ensure the media have the information needed to hold elected officials accountable for their responsibilities (S. Ali, 2020).

2.2 Dubai Emirate

The United Arab Emirates consists of seven emirates: Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ras al-Khaimah, Ajman, Umm al-Quwain, and Fujairah. Each emirate enjoys its unique features and is united by common factors such as religion, culture, history, customs and traditions, and the economy, which made it integrated under a union that has proven its ability to succeed, achieve civilized transformations, and giant achievements locally and internationally (Mazouz et al., 2019).

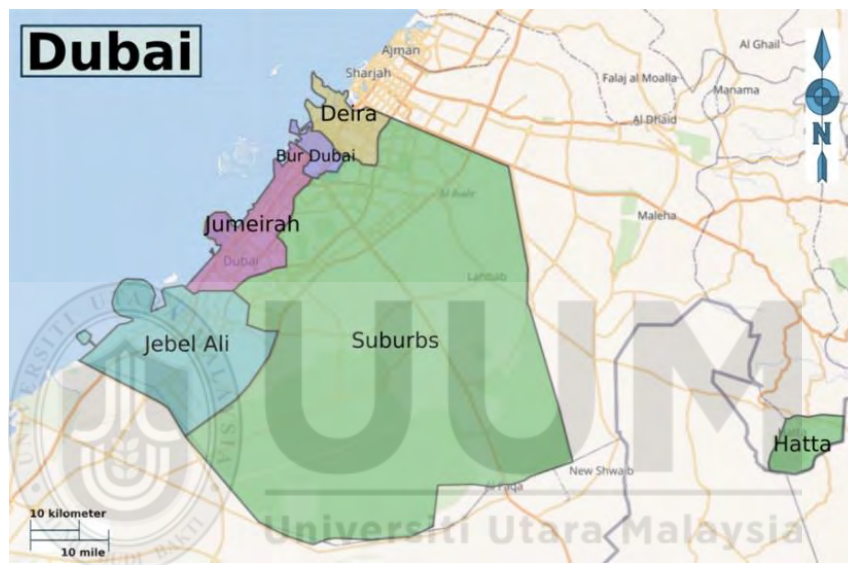


Figure 2. 1 Maps of Dubai

The Emirate of Dubai is the second largest among the seven emirates in terms of area. Its founding dates to 1833 when nearly 800 people from the Bani Yas tribe, led by Al Maktoum, settled at the creek area, which divides the city into two parts: Deira and Bur Dubai. Dubai's economy depends mainly on trade, services, finance, and tourism sectors. The emirate is distinguished by its cultural diversity and iconic landmarks and receives millions of visitors annually (Dubai, 2020).

According to 2019 estimates, the population of the Emirate of Dubai reached about 3,355,900 people, with 2,331,800 males and 1,024,100 females. The significant disparity in the number of males compared to females can be attributed to the higher proportion of male expatriate workers who do not relocate with their families.. According to the estimates of the Federal Competitiveness and Statistics Center for the year 2010, the number of Emirati citizens in the Emirate of Dubai reached 168,029 people, with 84,245 males and 83,784 females (Jeljeli, Farhi, & Hamdi, 2022).

2.2.1 Dubai Police in Combating Rumours

Dubai Police are the civil force of the Emirate of Dubai, headed by the Ruler of Dubai. Its commander is a member of the Emirate's Executive Council of Dubai. It has become one of the most advanced and contemporary devices required by the rapid development witnessed by the Emirate of Dubai. The Chief of Police and Public Security is Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, and his deputy, General Sheikh Ahmed bin Rashid Al Maktoum. Dubai Police was the first Arab police institution to apply the DNA system in criminal investigation, use the "electronic fingerprint" system and implement the "paperless management" system. The use of locating patrols helps the operations officer work via satellite. It has also set up cameras all over the city to monitor traffic crises, accidents, and riots (Alaajel, 2019).

Sabban (2017) asserted that Dubai Police called on the public not to spread rumours and circulate them through social networking platforms. This plea was prompted by a multitude of messages, many of which lacked accuracy and credibility, propagated by individuals disseminating baseless news that impacts public sentiment.. Dubai Police explained that spreading rumours is punishable by the Federal Penal Code by Article

198/bis. The relevant code stipulates that whoever deliberately broadcasts false or tendentious news, statements, rumours, or sensational propaganda, shall be punished by imprisonment for no less than one year. Such actions have the potential to disturb public security, spread terror among the people, or cause harm to the public interest. Dubai Police stressed the importance of community members being a protective shield in confronting the spread of rumours and misleading news. They emphasized the importance of investigating the objectivity and credibility of information and considering the potential negative impact on individuals and society before spreading rumours. Additionally, they advised against hastily responding to any rumour (Mehmood, 2009).

2.2.2 The Role of Dubai Police

Dubai Police embodies a strong foundation for its residents to rely on. Innovation and communication between people who provide security and their residents are the fruits of its efforts. Its solid foundation is a tangible aspect on which society depends. This foundation is the feeling of security and safety. Dubai Police stated that rumour mongers are exploiting the atmosphere of crises to spread anxiety and fear among people. Our basis in this aspect is to refer to the official authorities to verify the information and its sources and cooperate with the efforts of the concerned authorities that have taken precautionary measures for the safety of society (Aksar et al., 2022).

1- Anti-rumour mechanisms

The use of rumours as a political weapon is not new, and fake news has remained a significant part of propaganda campaigns and psychological wars for decades. However, rumours on the Internet are gaining new momentum considering major

factors, especially the spread of fake social media accounts. For instance, Facebook estimated 83 million accounts in 2012, in addition to the rapid spread of social networks and the availability of tools for falsifying images and fabricating videos that facilitate their spread (Mehmood, 2009).

The rumour in its traditional sense is no longer the only misleading content on the network, but the various methods of forgery and misinformation in the information environment, which Claire Wardle, a researcher with the "First Draft" project to combat fake news around the world, identified in an article last February (2017). entitled "It's not easy when it comes to fake news" in several types, namely: fabricated content, which is primarily untrue and aims to deceive and harm. False content specifically impersonates real sources and misleading content that uses the information to make false accusations and manipulate content. False linking by posting titles or images unrelated to the content, and finally, sarcasm or sarcasm may also cause misinformation (Jeljeli et al., 2022).

Social networks have grabbed a great deal of attention when discussing the spread of rumours on the Internet, considering their global spread and their potential to enhance opportunities for publication and communication (Almaiah, Alfaisal, Salloum, Hajjej, et al., 2022).

2- Monitoring and control mechanisms:

Technology is an active factor in spreading rumours and lies across the Internet. However, it has also provided solutions to combat and besiege these lies through new

tools developed by technology companies and research laboratories (Hassan et al., 2012).

First - Artificial intelligence applications: depend on advanced algorithms to analyze information and detect fake news in real-time, automatically, and more quickly than traditional fake information monitoring groups. In 2016, Google funded 20 European projects to verify information, including two projects in Britain that used artificial intelligence techniques to combat fake news during the UK parliamentary elections.

Facebook also published a paper called Information Operations in April 2017, which included the development of algorithms capable of monitoring organized campaigns.

These algorithms track systematic behaviours aimed at publishing specific news, detect fake accounts, and monitor their posts of the same news repeatedly or even suspicious messages.

Second - Digital Tracking: they are solutions that monitor the rumour, track its spread, trace its source, and verify its elements in an immediate and orderly manner. One of the most prominent examples is Emergent, which is part of a research project of the "To Center for Digital Journalism at Columbia University." The site places banners on the rumour, indicating that it is a rumour or information that is correct or not yet confirmed, and by clicking on it, it shows its source, the extent to which it has spread, and other information.

Third - Rumours Control Centers: these are observatories equipped with the technologies and technical applications necessary to follow up on cyberspace and monitor rumours, especially in times of crisis and emergency.

Fourth - Specialized initiatives: these are projects launched to combat rumours in a specific period or scope, such as the Cross-Check project launched by the "First Draft" coalition to combat fake news in newsrooms, which is dedicated to combating misinformation and false information during the French presidential election period.

Fifth - Participatory control: it is based on integrating the user himself in the face of rumours by spreading awareness among users and urging them to report questionable content.

Sixth - Digital Reputation Management Systems: these are systems associated with public relations and the corporate and business environment but can generally monitor frequently discussed topics, collect feedback on them, formulate responses or counter content and publish them.

Thus, Dubai's police seek to combat rumours. Every year, more than 5 million calls are made to the emergency number 999, 75% of which are non-urgent cases. This causes most emergency callers to be put on hold, risking their lives and safety. Therefore, in pursuit of enhancing our services, the police department has set up a toll-free number, 901, for non-emergency cases to alleviate the pressure off the 999 lines and allow every emergency caller to be attended to immediately and get our services at the earliest possible (Alhashmi et al., 2018).

2.3 Media and Rumours

The media is one of the critical factors affecting society in recent times, as the means of social communication have spread worldwide, even reaching remote and rural areas. On the contrary, the information circulated on these social platforms frequently lacks authentic credibility, resulting in destabilization and posing risks to national security as false information quickly spreads within the fabric of society. The UAE society is experiencing significant changes due to the evolving methods of social communication affecting it. Certainly, the emergence and widespread acceptance of these new communication channels have reshaped numerous traditional societal customs and promoted increased openness within Emirati society towards other cultures and lifestyles (I. Ali, 2022)

The media's central focus lies in addressing issues beneficial to the wider populace and bearing the responsibility of upholding justice, national cohesion, and global collaboration. Traditionally, the mass media serves to inform, educate, entertain, disseminate information, and, notably, rectify societal wrongs. As a pervasive communication medium, it holds a significant position in governance, particularly in the digital era. Acting as the primary source of information for communities on local, regional, and global matters, people place trust in the media's presentations. As the fourth estate and guardian of societal interests, the media plays a pivotal role in driving national progress (Suve et al., 2015).

Media-shaped government operations influence public opinion, promote democracy, influence people's behaviour, and support people-oriented policies. The media, as a powerful tool for the nation's sovereignty, is referred to as the vanguard of political,

economic, and societal development. The dynamics of media influence on national security differ from country to country and cannot be underestimated. In less developed countries, the extent of public attention and backing for certain matters correlates directly with the level of media exposure. There are instances where the media has been swayed by government, financial, and religious factors, resulting in biased reporting or the propagation of false information (Alhashmi et al., 2018).

The recent surge of uprisings across the Arab world since 2011, sparking a rise in grassroots political consciousness and a push for inclusive political frameworks – often dubbed the "New Arab Spring" – has illuminated the transformative impact of new media on the emerging Arab generation. This impact manifests in three key aspects: fostering diverse ideas and perspectives, reinforcing popular expectations, and cultivating a unified Arab political arena. Given these implications for political structures, attention is drawn to community media, defined as "websites and applications allowing users to create and share content or engage in community networks." Visual media serves as a convenient platform for communication and file sharing, a tool for social and political influence and management, and a space for engagement and information warfare. Depending on user intentions, social media can threaten national security (Rose & Rashid, 2019). Several risk scenarios for social media that could threaten national security analyze the methods for creating and managing bots - fake actors, and the experience of some countries in this field. The article provides information about online services that can be used to monitor and analyze social media (Allington et al., 2021).

Table 2. 1

Summary of Literature Regarding Media and Rumours and Media in Community Development

| Author(s) | Design/Methods | Publication Venue | Summary |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------|--|---|
| (Madeleine, 2015) | Case study, survey method | Journal of Medical Internet Research | In developing countries, the attention and support people give to issues is directly proportional to media coverage. In some cases, the media have come under the influence of government, money, and religious fanaticism to colorize or spread falsehoods. |
| (Ahmed S. , 2019) | Perspective article | <u>Journal of Accounting and Social Research</u> | UAE society is going through significant changes because of the changing ways and means of social communication affecting it. There is no doubt that the emergence of these new means and their acquisition of solid ground in the lives of the people of the Emirates has changed many of the traditional societal lifestyles and enhanced the openness of the UAE society to others and their lifestyles. |
| (Rose & Rashid, 2019) | Case study, survey approach | IEEE Xplore | Visual media is a convenient platform for communication and file exchange, a social and political influence and management tool, and an arena for confrontation and information warfare. Depending on the purposes of |



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| | | | |
|------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|---|
| (Mahfouz, 2020) | Policy report | Scientific Reports | its users, social media can create a range of threats to national security. |
| (Eismann, 2021). | Case study method | Emerging Infectious Diseases | The media is a means of communication that reaches people or affects them on a large scale, and it has a prominent place in the governance mechanism, especially in the era of the information revolution. It is the source of information for the community regarding any issue, whether it is local, regional, or global. People depend, and even trust, on what the media presents to them. The media have tools that can facilitate and simplify dialogue between different cultures, as they can address prevailing attitudes and dispel bad ideas regarding the “other”, as well as they can cross the barrier of stereotyped perceptions, and remove the ignorance that supports fear and mistrust. |
| (Mattar, 2021) | Case study, qualitative method | SN Social Sciences | As a conscious society possesses autoimmunity against extremism, and this heralds a better life for all segments of society, in addition to a stable political life; Let trust prevail and be reciprocal between the people, the government, and the media. |

Among the roles played by the media in the development of society are the following.

2.3.1 The importance of media in community development

The United Nations Organization (UNESCO) praised the role of a free media that believes in a plurality of viewpoints and freedom of expression. UNESCO views media as a vital instrument for fostering social transparency and as a fundamental pillar of political and cultural advancement. Policies should be formulated to support this role, ensuring freedom of expression for all societal groups while regulating how opinions are articulated through laws that safeguard societal integrity without compromising legal freedoms. It is important to recognise that this developmental process, across its various dimensions, contributes to enhancing community awareness concerning nonviolence and extremism. A vigilant society inherently guards against extremism, paving the way for an improved quality of life for all societal segments and fostering political stability. This, in turn, fosters mutual trust and collaboration among the populace, government, and media (Allington et al., 2021). Among the pivotal roles fulfilled by the media in societal development are the following:

2.3.2 Contributing to decision-making

The media plays a crucial role in the decision-making process by furnishing negotiable information to various decision-makers, fostering a shared understanding of the situation. Its function is to align perspectives among decision-makers by ensuring equitable access to relevant information. This aids in the formulation, elucidation, and comprehension of political decisions. Additionally, the media can influence the reception or rejection of decisions by shaping public opinion and preparing the ground

for decisions made by higher authorities. Nevertheless, it also holds the potential to provoke opposition through the dissemination of specific information to its audience (Almaiah, Alfaisal, Salloum, Al-Otaibi, et al., 2022).

2.3.3 Promoting intercultural dialogue:

The media has tools that can facilitate and simplify dialogue between different cultures. They can address prevailing attitudes and dispel bad ideas regarding the "other," break down the barrier of stereotyped perceptions, and eradicate the ignorance that supports fear and mistrust. Through engagement with diverse perspectives, it promotes acceptance and cultivates a comprehensive understanding of differing viewpoints, thus presenting diversity as a natural state and a valuable avenue for mutual comprehension and connection (Aksar et al., 2022). Moreover, the media plays an important role in developing people's awareness, motivating young people to develop a society that is cooperating with the country's renaissance while facing all obstacles, as it is, with its great ability and unlimited potential, responsible for informing people of many issues and dangers such as crime (Mazouz et al., 2019).

2.3.4 The importance of the media as a source of information

The media's significance is on the ascent as it acts as a primary source of information and news across various domains, including politics, sports, economics, health, fashion, culture, art, technology, and entrepreneurship. Individuals interested in these spheres heavily rely on the media, particularly the new media, not only for updates but also as a platform for expressing opinions and scrutinizing policymakers' decisions. However, to effectively fulfill this role, the media must prioritize transparency and address community and human concerns, potentially holding them accountable for

their obligations. Zhuravskaya & Boyles & Meyer, (2018) suggested that while media functions as a channel for distributing helpful information to society, it can also indirectly encourage animosity and racial prejudice. Furthermore, it can serve as a conduit for spreading untruths and disinformation. Social media networks have enabled freedom of expression, providing users with a platform to express their viewpoints and react to information (Appiah et al., 2020).

2.3.5 The influence of the media on individuals

Existing research indicates a close relationship between the media's content and individuals' psychological and physical health. Moreover, concerning social interactions, the influence of media can have both positive and negative effects on individuals. It undeniably shapes their actions, convictions, and outlooks (Posetti & Storm, 2018).

The media affects the individual's view of himself and society. Besides, it modifies individuals' attitudes and values (Ejaz et al., 2022). While some media content aims to foster societal change, others may have adverse effects on individual values, resulting in negative social and psychological outcomes. The perpetuation of negative behaviours in certain content, such as the reinforcement of stereotypes, substance abuse, violence, and antisocial behaviour, raises concerns regarding the credibility and societal impact of the media (Golan & Mishol-Shauli, 2020).

Table 2. 2

Summary of Literature Regarding Importance of Media at Different Levels

| Author(s) | Design/Methods | Publication Venue | Summary |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|
| (Abdel Ghani & Shaldan, 2015) | Quantitative Content Analysis | Telematics and Informatics | Provides real and live images of various events - any live event happening now can be viewed anywhere. It also helps the media to reach the voice of the masses to the stakeholders. |
| (Khalid L., 2017) | Perspective approach | Studies in Media and Communication | A good relationship with the media and mastering the investment of social media networks in defining the self-skills, activities, and experiences that an individual enjoys is important, and its importance is increasing at the functional, social, and family level, and even about media professionals, where their good relationships are considered Media institutions are their strength. |
| (Ferdaous, Sánchez, & Martínez, 2018) | Cross-sectional design, survey method | ACM SIGKDD Explorations | The media affects the individual's view of himself and the surrounding society and contributes to modifying individuals' attitudes and values, and |



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(Kapoor & Tamilmani, 2018).

Quantitative Content Analysis

Psychological Science Agenda

to forming many mental images for them.

The media helps ignite our awareness by providing information and knowledge. It does not impose its own opinion on us, but it provides facts, figures, and news so that we can analyze the information and understand what is wrong and right.

(Rose & Rashid, 2019)

Content analysis, quantitative method

Applied Sciences

The importance of the media lies first and finally in the extent of the impact that it can achieve in the various segments of society. On the societal level, charities aspire to take advantage of this opportunity, in addition to commercial companies, election campaigns, and owners of ideas, products, or projects.

(Ramadan, 2019)

Perspective approach

Electronic Journal Folklore

of content are intended to build and reform society, some of them may work on individuals from their environments and keep them away from their good legacies and change their social concepts.



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2.3.6 The importance of the media at the functional level

Rose and Rashid (2019) argued that the importance of the media lies in its visible impact on various domains of society. On the societal level, charities aspire to take advantage of this opportunity, in addition to commercial companies, election campaigns, and owners of ideas, products, or projects. Since the media may multiply the chances of success, spread, and profit between individuals and institutions, the purpose is to maximize public well-being and information spread. Earlier forms of advertising via television and the internet revolutionized communication and promotion, a trend further amplified by the advent of social networks. Through social media platforms, institutions and individuals can now announce services and share the latest updates directly with the public (Rose & Rashid, 2019).

2.3.7 The importance of the media on a personal level

Khalid (2017) observed that establishing favourable connections with the media presents tangible benefits on an individual level, drawing attention to one's name, position, professional domain, or accomplishments within public discourse. This dynamic also applies within the realm of social media platforms. Cultivating positive rapport with media outlets and effectively utilising social networks can enhance personal branding by showcasing individual skills, activities, and experiences. It is worth noting the escalating presence of social media across various functional and social domains. For media entities, such alliances fortify their capacities, streamlining operations, reportage, and the prompt dissemination of news updates (Khalid, 2017).

2.3.8 The Contributions of Media

There are some basic contributions of media that further enhance their importance, such as:

1- Media provide tremendous knowledge and information transmission

The media acts as a vital conduit of information, ensuring we remain apprised of global occurrences and developments. It imparts extensive knowledge spanning various subjects through diverse channels such as broadcasting and print. Serving a pivotal function, the media regularly disseminates updates to keep the public informed about both domestic and international affairs. The media fosters awareness and comprehension by presenting facts and statistics, enabling individuals to discern and evaluate information independently. It refrains from imposing viewpoints, instead prioritising the delivery of impartial news (Kapoor & Tamilmani, 2018).

2- Sheds light on issues in societies

Abdel Ghani and Shaldan (2015) affirmed that the media assumes a constructive societal role by fostering awareness of pertinent issues. Present-day media platforms often spotlight social concerns, such as gender discrimination, prompting public recognition and action towards resolution. Additionally, the media's ability to broadcast live events in real-time enables widespread access to current developments, facilitating broader dissemination of public sentiment to relevant stakeholders (Abdel Ghani & Shaldan, 2015).

3- Educating the community

One of the media's most important roles is to educate the community. Through various media platforms, individuals can access diverse product evaluations, conduct price

comparisons, and stay updated on a wide range of topics, including politics, fashion, conflicts, weather, and healthcare. Furthermore, the media addresses societal issues such as poverty, illiteracy, and social exclusion, acting as an educational tool to raise awareness and promote understanding. Additionally, it plays a vital role in enlightening individuals about their rights and responsibilities, thereby contributing to law enforcement efforts.

The negative role of the media in spreading rumours

Given the pervasive nature of crime and its escalating threat to individuals and communities, addressing and combating criminal activities has become an urgent imperative for all societies. Crimes are now bolder, more audacious, and increasingly violent, demanding comprehensive strategies for prevention and intervention (Zhuravskaya & Petrova, 2020)

The media's role in exacerbating crime rates and dissemination has sparked significant debate. Rusho et al. (2021) contend that the press often sensationalizes crime, thereby amplifying its impact and influence on society. This sensationalist approach not only glorifies offenders but also undermines societal values and beliefs. Media outlets, including newspapers and television programmes, frequently exploit violence to attract viewership, ultimately contributing to the proliferation of violent content (Kapoor & Tamilmani, 2018).

Furthermore, there is a concerning normalization of violence, which is increasingly embraced as a form of entertainment. Violent content, prominently featured in newspapers, magazines, and television shows, has become a significant aspect of

contemporary entertainment. Unfortunately, many parents inadvertently expose their children to harmful content, potentially jeopardizing their moral, psychological, and emotional development. This widespread phenomenon underscores the pervasive influence of media in modern society, where violence and crime are readily accessible and often glorified, catering to the preferences of a broad audience.

2.3.9 Risks and spreading false news

Opinions are divided on this topic. Is it better to publish crime news in the media or ignore it altogether? Everyone has their own opinions. On the one hand, psychologists, sociologists, the media, and law and management. There are even different layers of society, including parents. Points of view, so it is necessary to mention some of them (S. Ali, 2020).

The media functions as a reflection of society, portraying its positives and negatives, including various instances of crime and violence. It's imperative for the media to accurately document and share such occurrences, allowing individuals to grasp the extent of societal harm and suffering. By informing the public about the realities of crime and violence, the media empowers people to take proactive measures against them and prevent their recurrence. The widespread coverage of such incidents serves as a deterrent, discouraging potential wrongdoers. Additionally, disclosing the identities of perpetrators and highlighting their actions during social events serves to condemn their criminal behaviour.

Essential information disseminated through media channels serves a crucial role in illuminating the plans and techniques employed by criminals, thereby alerting society

to their illicit activities and strategies (S. Ali & Pasha, 2022). The transmission of crime-related content aids law enforcement in tracking and apprehending wrongdoers. On occasion, sources, intermediaries, or media representatives clandestinely embed themselves within criminal networks or households, extracting valuable insights into their plans and actions, thus preempting potential threats and outmaneuvering security forces.

Furthermore, exposure to narratives of criminality via media platforms assists young individuals in discerning between right and wrong, shaping their moral compass before navigating social complexities. Public demand for justice is met when the media reports on criminal incidents, instilling confidence in the efficacy of the legal system (Habes, Ali, Qamar, et al., 2023). However, when reporting on juvenile delinquency, it is imperative to withhold identifying details, such as images and personal information, to prevent perpetuating negative stereotypes and to nurture hope for rehabilitation.

Table 2. 3
Summary of Literature Regarding Media, Rumours, and their Effects

| Author(s) | Design/Methods | Publication Venue | Summary |
|--------------------------|---|-------------------------------|---|
| (Ansell & Boin, 2019) | Case study, Quantitative Approach | Journal Broadcast Media | The spread of rumours in society leads to the disintegration of society and the feeling of individuals in it of danger, especially the rumour that affects the belief, values, and societal structure, which leads to the collapse or destabilization of individual values. |

| | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|--|
| (Habes et al., 2021) | Case study, Quantitative Approach | Pertanika Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities | Criminal communication through the media helps children to identify good and evil, and it helps to distinguish between them before they enter the arena of social mobility. When the media publishes crime news, it satisfies the people's desire to treat the criminals and assures the citizens that justice is going in the right way. |
| (Zhuravskaya & Petrova , 2020) | Media Content Analysis | Mass Communication Quarterly | Due to the rampant nature of crime and the increasing danger to individuals and society, there is almost no society that does not talk about crime and the cause of crime and does not fight or deal with crime, and its characteristics have become bold, reckless, and violent, and corruption; although crime can be discussed as a form of preaching, it can also be learned from it to prevent crime from occurring at other times. |
| (S. Ali & Pasha, 2022). | Systematic Review | Journal of Ethics and Law | Vital and criminal information published by the media helps to clarify the criminals' plans and methods of committing crimes, to alert the members of society to their criminal activities and methods. |



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2.3.10 The effects of spreading rumours in society

The societal repercussions of rumour dissemination can vary, influenced by factors like societal cohesion, educational levels, and the effectiveness of communication between decision-makers and individuals. These factors shape the spread of misinformation and subsequent rumours, impacting individuals within the community (S. Ali, 2020). Residents of rumour-prone societies face heightened susceptibility to targeted misinformation, shaping their thoughts, emotions, and social dynamics. This susceptibility can lead to mental health issues and weaken social bonds, exacerbating societal divisions. Rumour propagation contributes to societal fragmentation and a pervasive sense of insecurity, particularly when rumours challenge fundamental beliefs and norms. In the absence of credible rebuttals, external actors may exploit rumours to undermine societal values, perpetuating discord (Ansell & Boin, 2019).

External actors, especially those instigating rumours, can undermine societal values like honesty and integrity, profoundly affecting social resilience. Misinformation fosters widespread disillusionment, potentially leading to self-harm, social isolation, and depression. This underscores the importance of robust corrective measures and effective communication strategies to counter rumour proliferation.

Rumour dissemination within communities fosters mistrust and erodes confidence in media outlets, contributing to morale depletion.

2.4 Social Media and Rumours

In today's era of abundant information, unrest, and uncertainty, the notion of information credibility, or web credibility, assumes utmost significance. It

encompasses the trustworthiness, reliability, integrity, and accuracy of information. Information credibility assesses the extent to which individuals perceive online content as trustworthy (Alkhodair et al., 2021).

With millions of individuals actively engaged on social media platforms every second, a vast amount of data is generated, revealing numerous unnoticed patterns and behavioural trends. This data, dispersed across the internet, social platforms, and online forums, has attracted the attention of critics and analysts as it reflects societal behaviour, preferences, perceptions, and attitudes (Obi-Ani et al., 2020).

While the internet provides a dynamic and immersive platform for entertainment and leisure, it also facilitates the dissemination of a significant volume of unverified and unauthenticated information, misleading a substantial portion of the population. Consequently, there is an urgent need to enhance the reliability of online social networks and counteract the detrimental impacts of information pollution through prompt identification and containment of false content distributed on the web (Rocha et al., 2023; A. W. Wang et al., 2021).

In the past, rumours spread at a relatively sluggish pace. However, with the advancement of internet technologies and the prevalence of retweeting activities on social networks, the global dissemination of rumours has accelerated (Sahni & Sharma, 2020). For example, during the 2016 US presidential elections, flaws in Facebook's algorithmic framework led to the platform emerging as a prominent purveyor of fake news. This significantly influenced individuals' voting preferences and had a profound impact on the election outcome, highlighting the potency of fake news to surpass genuine news in terms of influence.

Scholars delving into web and social media mining have directed their attention towards various facets, including analyzing tweeting behaviour, extracting features, conducting trend and pattern analysis, examining information distribution, visualizing data, detecting peculiarities, performing predictive analysis, developing recommender systems, and enhancing situation awareness (Alzanin & Azmi, 2018). Specifically, algorithms designed to identify fake news aim to uncover systematic patterns within news content and scrutinize transmission behaviour to regulate the dissemination of potentially dubious information.

Information and communication technology (ICT) has revolutionized access to information, making it universally available at any time and place. ICT has played a pivotal role in alerting and responding to global crises. The proliferation of communication technologies and systems has introduced new platforms driving economic, political, social, and cultural transformations (Almomani & Al-Qur'an, 2020).

The widespread adoption of Web 2.0 technologies has propelled social networks into prominence, particularly in recent years. This emergence of social networks has expanded public participation, enabling computer-mediated interaction with implications for both informal and formal responses (D. Wang, 2021).

Traditional mass broadcasting methods through newspapers, radio, and television have been supplanted by individuals and public and private entities leveraging social media platforms. These network-driven new media tools enable direct broadcasting, influencing various spheres, including individual, cultural, social, legal, economic, and

political domains, as noted by Scaglione, Giovannetti, and Hamoudia in 2015. People are influenced by social media developments, which present both threats and opportunities (Naeem et al., 2021).

ICT has reshaped the global information-sharing landscape and encouraged closer relationships between the public and governments. Social media platforms offer global forums for disseminating information, content, and opinions while facilitating social interactions among individuals, organizations, and governments.

In modern society, information creation, circulation, and manipulation permeate various aspects of cultural, economic, and social life. The internet and social media serve as tools for seeking health information.

The COVID-19 pandemic was not the first witnessed in the age of social media; previous outbreaks like the H1N1 virus (2009), Ebola virus (2014), and Zika virus (2015) have all had consequential impacts documented widely on social media. Historically lacking technological prowess, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) increasingly depend on social media for disseminating risk information (Al-Sarem et al., 2021).

The effective and trustworthy sharing of pandemic-related information is pivotal in managing virus spread and easing associated worries. The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare's actions and successes in 2016 highlighted concerted efforts to communicate effectively online, despite grappling with misinformation on social media platforms (Rusho et al., 2021). As reported by Shahamatinejad (2021), among

the global population of 7.676 billion, roughly 4.388 billion people use the internet, with 3.484 billion actively engaging on social media. This signifies that nearly half of the world's inhabitants rely on the Internet for information. However, concerns persist regarding the reliability of online information dissemination, prompting ongoing scrutiny into the verification of daily encountered facts.

False information typically originates from a small group of individuals. Zhao et al. (2015) propose an iOLAP framework based on a polyadic factorization method for analyzing networked data, which encompasses people, relationships, content, and time across various dimensions. Their framework caters to a wide array of networked data types, including microblogs, social bookmarking, user comments, and discussion platforms.

Information pollution spans four crucial dimensions: origination, propagation, detection, and intervention (Jahan, 2020). Origination involves the creation of fraudulent content by individuals or multiple accounts, while propagation delves into the factors driving the rapid and extensive dissemination of such content online. Meel and Vishwakarma's (2020) research underscores the style, linguistic features, and propagation trends of counterfeit news, revealing that falsehoods spread faster and farther than truths due to their novelty and sensationalism.

Detection entails identifying misinformation and disinformation within vast social media data using various Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies. Intervention strategies aim to curtail the spread of false information by promoting the truth. The prevalence of fake product reviews is particularly prominent in e-commerce, where

customer reviews significantly impact a product's reputation. Kadam and Atre (2020) and Shahsavari et al. (2020) propose algorithms utilizing sentiment analysis, temporal and statistical features, and text classification to detect fake reviews. Song et al. (2021) employ supervised machine learning classifiers to identify fake hotel reviews and news articles online, achieving significant accuracy rates.

Various methods, including content-based, feature-based, behaviour-based, and graph-based techniques, can discern opinion spam in fake reviews, comments, social network posts, and messages. Furthermore, as advocated by Ferrara et al. (2020), alternative media endeavors to present factual information and encourages readers to critically analyze reality through discussions.

2.4 1 Social Media and Rumours during COVID-19

Social media users played a significant role in the rise of the COVID-19 infodemic, facilitated by the internet's rapid and global dissemination of unverified information (Sahni & Sharma, 2020). Despite efforts by social media platforms to combat false content, they faced challenges due to the overwhelming volume of COVID-19 information and concerns regarding censorship (Brindha et al., 2021).

Information spreads swiftly through online channels like search engines and social media algorithms, with Google processing billions of searches daily, influencing users' access to information. Social media algorithms also contribute by distributing selected content to billions of users, but they were manipulated to propagate COVID-19 misinformation, targeting users with specific profiles or search histories (Gisoni et al., 2022).

The proliferation of online bots further complicated matters, mimicking user profiles or credible sources to disseminate disinformation. Social media platforms struggled to detect and remove these bots, exacerbating hoaxes and misinformation about COVID-19's origins, treatment, and prevention.

Moreover, an increasing number of people rely on social media for news consumption, leading to virtual echo chambers where beliefs are reinforced by algorithmically selected information. This trend limits exposure to diverse perspectives and hinders critical thinking. During the pandemic's early stages, low-credibility sources dominated COVID-19-related content on platforms like Twitter and Facebook, surpassing traditional news outlets (Hossain et al., 2020).

During the COVID-19 pandemic, alongside the outbreak, the World Health Organization (WHO) identified an "infodemic" characterized by a mix of verified and distorted information. Social media platforms, with their widespread presence, have made it challenging to discern reliable sources, resulting in adverse health effects for many individuals (Al-Zaman, 2021).

Misinformation regarding health extends beyond COVID-19, with Twitter serving as a hub for misinformation concerning smoking, drugs, and vaccines. Social media companies share responsibility for this misinformation by allowing its dissemination from influential figures, including celebrities, who significantly contribute to online misinformation (Skafle et al., 2022).

The interactive nature of social media encourages celebrity influencers to disseminate content without rigorous fact-checking or accountability. Despite the potential harm caused by misleading COVID-19 messaging, social media platforms seldom restrict the reach of celebrity influencers (Obi-Ani et al., 2020).

Misinformation during the pandemic has led to tragic outcomes, such as the belief that highly concentrated alcohol could disinfect the body, resulting in the deaths of at least 800 individuals who followed this erroneous advice. Another harmful claim suggested drinking methanol as a COVID-19 cure, causing blindness in 60 people and hospitalizing 5,876 others. These instances underscore how misinformation, combined with ignorance about COVID-19 treatments, can prompt individuals to take perilous actions, including consuming inappropriate medications.

Social media platforms have played a significant role in the spread of misinformation, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. Research has explored various aspects of this phenomenon, including user behaviour, cross-platform dissemination, and trends in misinformation consumption (Alzanin & Azmi, 2018).

Studies suggest that users often share unverified information due to trust in the source or information overload, while others attribute it to a lack of awareness. However, increased information consumption during the pandemic has been linked to improved abilities to discern misinformation.

In the ethical framework of information-as-a-resource, it is argued that quality information is essential for informed decision-making. Providing individuals with

reliable information can lead to better decision-making and potentially save lives lost due to COVID-19 misinformation (Melki et al., 2021).

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to what experts term an "infodemic," a global spread of misinformation that challenges public health efforts. Social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter have been implicated in amplifying misperceptions, particularly concerning medical and health-related topics such as vaccines, Ebola, and Zika (Kouzy et al., 2020).

Despite the prevalence of misinformation, it typically represents a small percentage of discussions on a given topic. Moreover, exposure to misinformation does not always result in belief. Thus, further research is needed to fully understand the scope and implications of COVID-19 misinformation on social media (Roozenbeek et al., 2020; Bridgman et al., 2020). Efforts to combat misinformation on platforms like Twitter and Facebook have been initiated, but criticism persists regarding the continued circulation of misinformation on prominent pages and groups. The ongoing impact of misinformation on people's perspectives and behaviours warrants further investigation (Obi-Ani et al., 2020).

2.5 Media in the United Arab Emirates

The National Media Council is the body responsible for all media: visual, print, visual, and electronic reporting in the UAE under Federal Law No. (11) of 2016, taking over and supervising media affairs in the Emirates. Besides traditional media, such as magazines and newspapers, many digital media platforms fall under the purview of

the National Media Council. This governmental body is affiliated with the Council of Ministers, and its headquarters are in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi.

The National Media Council of the United Arab Emirates grants licenses to media entities and oversees the content they produce, distribute, and broadcast. This authority extends to imported content from foreign sources, which also falls under the purview of the council's regulation and supervision (Hassan et al., 2012). It is charged with:

- Drafting media legislation, followed by monitoring its proper implementation.
- Development of media policy in the Emirates
- Ensuring the Union's support and encouraging national unity

All UAE media organizations are obligated to comply with the rules and regulations issued by them. In addition, they agree to provide such data and information about the application to the National Media Council as required. Government agencies and individuals in the media sector offer many electronic services.

Every media organization creating audio, print, visual and digital content in the UAE, free zones, and the mainland is obligated to abide by the standards in Federal Law No. (15) of 1980 regarding the press, publications, and other applicable regulations and laws.

Federal Law No. (15) of 1980 Concerning Publications and Publishing regulates publishing and printing licensing activities. It also applies to traditional media content, such as magazines, newspapers, TV broadcasts, etc. Within the law are some guidelines regarding which materials are prohibited from publication. There are

penalties for this publishing company or its associated employees if a violation of the Publications Act is detected.

2.5.1 Banned content in the media in the UAE

The United Arab Emirates sets national media content standards requiring every media organization operating in the Emirates to adhere to these standards without any margin of error. This includes a list of activities and actions on social media that are strictly prohibited. There are penalties for those who engage in such activities.

Some unavoidable criteria include (Sabban, 2017):

- Respect for the system of the Emirates, its political system, and its symbols.
- Respect for the heritage and culture of the United Arab Emirates
- Respecting the policies and direction of the UAE at the international and local levels
- Respect for Islamic and divine beliefs while respecting other religions.
- Should not harm the economic system of the UAE.
- Do not spread rumours and biased or misleading news.
- Respect the rules of ethics and principles of media work.
- Respect copyright regulations and rules.
- Respect the government's policy to enhance national identity as well as integrate citizens into the media sector's labor market.
- Refrain from publishing and disseminating information harmful to women, children, and other community groups. Example: hate and violent content
- Non-disclosure of secret official communications, military treaties, agreements, or matters entered into by the government with the competent authority.
- Non-disclosure of information related to an ongoing criminal investigation that ordered confidentiality.
- Not to fabricate or falsify documents or provide unfounded news in bad faith.

- Do not post photos, news, and comments that violate the privacy of an individual or family or undermine their reputation.

To sum up, the variety of media platforms in the UAE are well organized according to international standards, keeping in mind the societal and operational needs of the country. The UAE is monitoring and developing current media regulations through various methods. The local government formed media cities to encourage local, regional, and international businesspeople to set up offices that produce the best art in all its forms. In addition, the United Arab Emirates took a keen interest in promoting films. As these media platforms are such a complex part of our lives, it is imperative that we are aware of the legal implications of their misuse (Anwar, 2019).

2.5.2 The UAE's role in combating intellectual extremism

The UAE Vision 2021 enhances the culture and values of tolerance and the influence of the UAE's soft powers and supports its international standing. The United Arab Emirates leads the world with initiatives, visions, and national programs that contribute to spreading a culture of coexistence and peace and building bridges of international cooperation, communication, convergence, and dialogue. Building a system of moral values is also prominent according to the legacy of the late Sheikh Zayed (Broussard, 2020).

- Formation of the National Committee for Terrorism
- The Hedayah International Center of Excellence in Combating Violent Extremism was established to support dialogue.
- Issuing a "law to combat terrorist crimes."
- The Council of Muslim Elders was established in 2014 as an international body that aims to promote peace in the Islamic world.

- The position of Minister of State for Tolerance has been created, and the National Program for Tolerance has been adopted. The aim is to sustain the values of tolerance, solidarity, respect for pluralism, cultural discrimination, and acceptance of hatred and intolerance.

It is clear from the preceding that places of worship have an active role in achieving intellectual security by setting controls and an approach society should follow. Security is a fundamental pillar that society needs as a society cannot achieve sustainable development without security and peace. A society cannot achieve any of its goals without stability and tranquillity.

2.5.3 Media and COVID-19 pandemic

Dealing with emergencies like COVID-19 is the responsibility of crisis management systems. Consequently, it has moved out of the crisis management framework to the so-called damage control management, and other countries manage the consequences of disasters. Some countries combine two of these methods or distribute their efforts between the three phases. It may move from one stage to another within specific restrictions. The biggest threat is denial and resistance to effective measures based on established plans and approved professional steps, laws, and institutional tasks, a chain of command, infiltration in agile and inflexible decision-making, and taking the experts' opinion, who were unable to predict this pandemic. They needed innovative alternatives or preparation, befitting the scale of the challenge. Thus, minimizing the threat, describing precautionary measures, restricting social interaction that might follow for some, and reducing danger were some ways to counteract the disease transmission. In some cases, the inability to process information and reach the public

also leads to confusion and an increased spread of infection as the human mind reaches a particular stage of resilience, after which the need to return to normal life becomes a semi-biological priority.

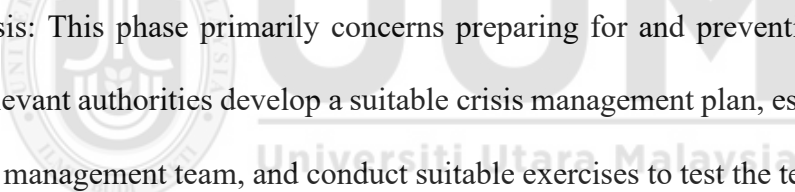
The UAE government swiftly responded to the crisis by implementing policies and procedures leading to effective outcomes (Mehmood, 2009). For example:

- 1- Declaration of a state of emergency allows the state to allocate additional resources to confront the crisis: The state of emergency enables governments to take exceptional measures to confront the crisis, quickly assess the situation, and not hesitate to take strict preventive measures. To respond to emergencies and communicate with international institutions or governments of other countries whose systems have proven more successful in dealing with similar crises to learn about their experience (Sabban, 2017).
- 2- Implementing strict closures for non-essential sectors: Schools and places of worship were closed, and working from home allowed the largest number of individuals to continue their professional responsibilities. Moreover, malls and restaurants were closed, at least temporarily. This helped prevent the initial spread of the virus. Isolating and suspending all activities for at least 14 days (the disease's incubation period) enhanced the state's ability to organize matters more efficiently.
- 3- Use of security control tools to impose "contact tracing" and strict quarantine procedures: One effective method is to compel society to comply with government measures in determining harsh, enforceable penalties for violators, including fines, imprisonment, and even deportation. Even if these sanctions were ineffective, they motivated citizens to abide by them to ward off risks.

- 4- Protecting the stock of basic commodities and strategic medicines: In such crises, countries provide foodstuffs and basic medical tools by restricting the circulation of materials such as rice, grains, eggs, and certain medication. In parallel, preventing the possibility of a "black market" emerging from those trying to profit from the panic spreading among individuals in these situations by imposing harsh penalties against those who attempt to violate these rules was also prevalent in many cases.
- 5- Continuous communication with the country's citizens: Communication with the population was one of the most important steps that countries adopted in managing the COVID-19 crisis, especially as it required individuals to adhere to certain behaviours to limit the aggravation of the crisis.
- 6- Supporting the most affected groups: Facing this type of crisis required compensating citizens who were financially affected by staying home and business owners who lost huge amounts of money due to the epidemic outbreak.
- 7- Developing "post-crisis" plans now: It is worth noting that the crisis did not end with the end of the virus. It is also important for governments to develop plans for recovery in the post-crisis phase. China, for example, has already announced plans worth a trillion dollars to revive its economy. This measure is equal to the importance of dealing with the epidemic itself, as governments must adopt clear policies to stimulate economic growth once the epidemic stops.

2.6 Challenges Face Dubai Police

With rising cases of reputation damage on various media channels, media crisis management has gained increasing attention and focus today. According to common understanding, media refers to a strategically developed plan that allows organizations, individuals, media channels, and the government to respond quickly to the crisis generated by spreading rumours and false information. In other words, this concept refers to the initiatives and measures adopted by media companies to effectively restrain the spreading of false data and mitigate the associated crisis in various fields. There are three major media crisis management phases: pre-crisis monitoring, crisis response, and post-crisis surveillance (Alhashmi et al., 2018).

Pre-crisis: This phase primarily concerns preparing for and preventing a crisis. For this, relevant authorities develop a suitable crisis management plan, establish and train a crisis management team, and conduct suitable exercises to test the team's ability and efficiency. Adequate planning and preparation enable crisis management teams to respond faster to media crises and make more efficient decisions (Alaajel, 2019). Adopting appropriate communication channels is also significant for effective media crisis management.

Crisis response: This stage involves management responses after a media crisis. Crisis response in this context may be divided into initial and long-term responses. The initial response must be consistent, accurate, and quick to mitigate the crisis and ensure all implications are under control. Long-term response mainly focuses on reputational repair and enhanced crisis responsibility (Choi et al., 2019).

Post-crisis: The last stage is a continuation of reputational repair, where officials majorly stress follow-up communication and sharing of correct information. During the post-crisis phase, crisis managers mainly aim to deliver informational promises to manage public unrest and augment people's trust in authentic news.

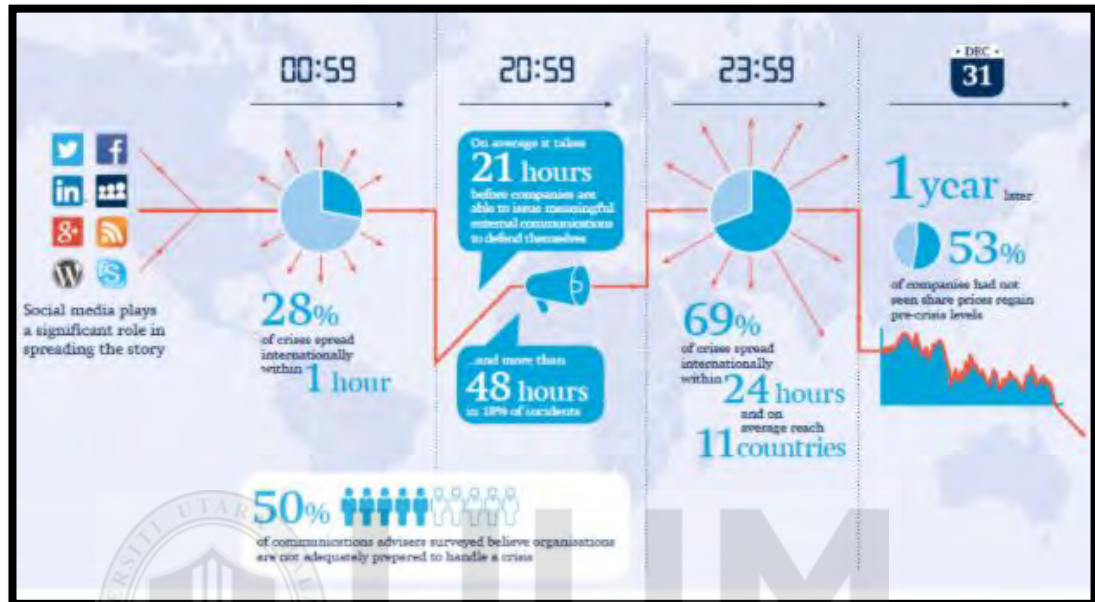


Figure 2. 2 Instance of a story spreading on social media
Source: (Riffe et al., 2019)

In light of the recent surge in social media usage, there has been a noticeable increase in the spread of rumours and false information across platforms like YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. This phenomenon is not confined to digital spaces alone; misinformation also finds its way into print media. Such occurrences often lead to widespread public consequences, generating outrage, confusion, and chaos. Consequently, many countries are emphasizing the importance of developing robust crisis management strategies to address these media-related crises effectively (S. Ali, 2020).

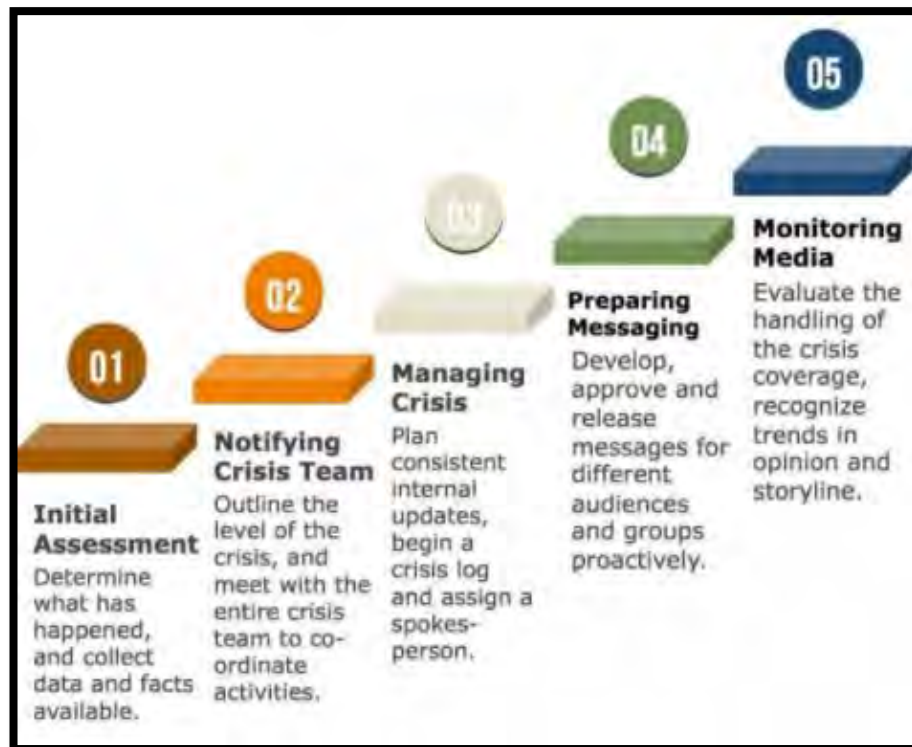


Figure 2. 3 Steps in media crisis management
Source: (Liu, Kim & Pennington-Gray, 2015)

2.6.1 Discussing the Role of Social Media and the Prevalence of Media Crisis Today

Before identifying the crisis caused by media channels today, it is imperative to understand social media as a platform for the public and realize its positive and negative effects on our society and daily life. Ali et al. (2022) defined social media as the interaction between individuals and groups on an online platform, sharing and exchanging ideas, videos, images, etc. Multiple social media channels are available today, like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Orkut, My Space, etc. The authors identified that social networks are transforming the behaviour of individuals in today's generation and causing several positive and negative impacts. On the positive side, social networks serve as invaluable tools for communication. On the negative side, these media channels are generating several risks, such as cyber-bullying, privacy and security issues, sharing fake data and identity theft.



Figure 2. 4 Social media audience in the UAE
 Source: (UAE Social Media Usage Statistics, 2020)

A study by Kotteti et al. (2020) highlights the detrimental role of social media in spreading misinformation post-crisis, which has led to its exclusion from formal emergency response protocols. As social media becomes the primary channel for community disaster response, traditional information transmission methods are being overlooked. Researchers argue that individuals often fill knowledge gaps by sharing their interpretations, resulting in ambiguity and increased risks. Rumours are thus seen as the community attempts to navigate uncertainty. Additionally, Obi-Ani et al. (2020) found that disseminating false information significantly tarnishes the reputation of institutions and governments, prompting doubts about their legitimacy.

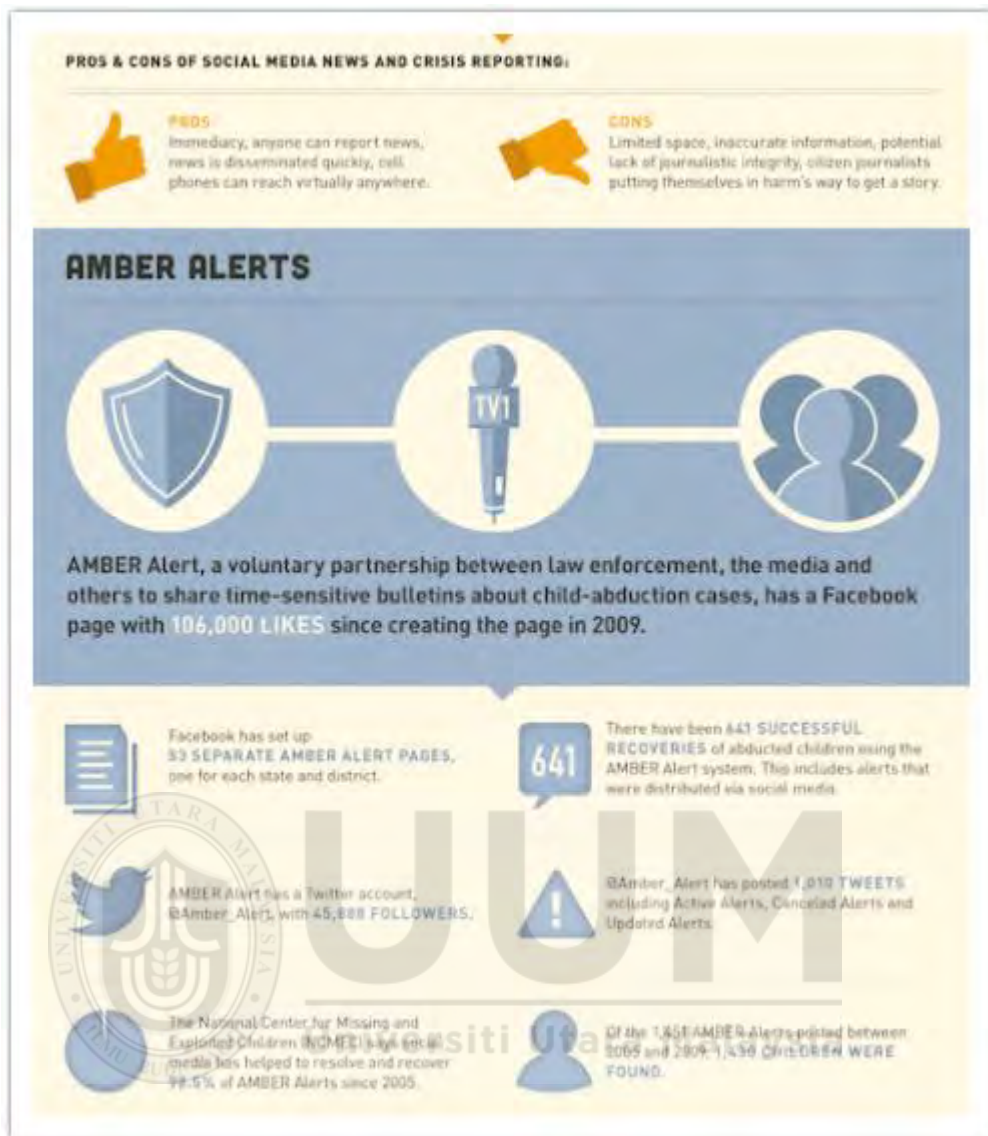


Figure 2. 5 Pros and cons of social media news and crisis reporting
 Source: (Vignal Lambret & Barki, 2018)

Social media plays a major role in emergency and crisis management. However, Zheltukhina et al. (2019) state that, often, social media facilitates the sharing of incorrect and fake information, which severely disorients emergency management practices and goals and challenges society's ability to revive from detrimental conditions. Unlike the previous study, researchers focus on crisis informatics in this article and suggest that the use of social media in emergency and disaster management has increased rapidly in the past few years. Nevertheless, authors also argue that

rumours generate more confusion and chaos among the public, hindering their ability to deal with crises effectively. Zheltukhina et al. (2019) mention that fake news on social media is questioned much more than the original information. Nevertheless, the dissemination of misleading and false information and rumour propaganda severely damages the reputation of media organizations and questions their legitimacy towards the betterment of society.

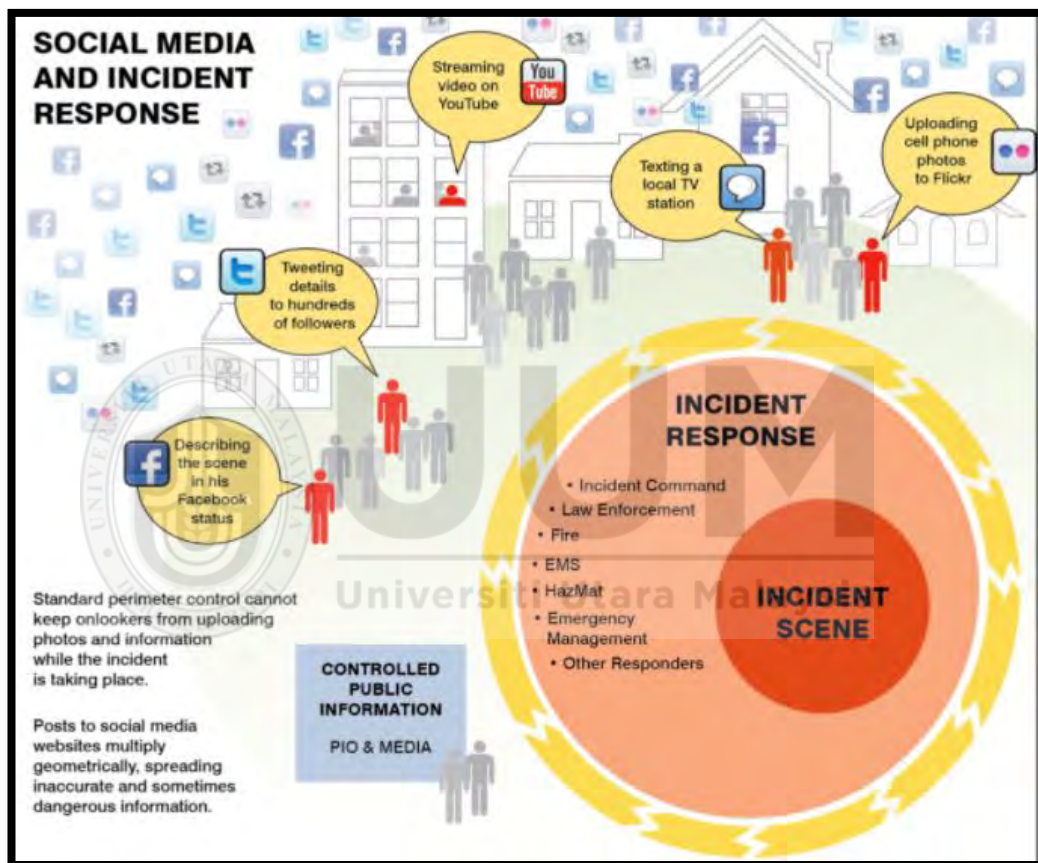


Figure 2. 6 Role of social media in emergency management
Source: (Mohamed, 2017)

Ali et al. (2022) focused on social media as a major tool in crisis management, which provides valuable information in various forms like images, videos, texts, etc. Researchers claim that social media offers a huge amount of data during a crisis, which supports crisis management efforts and initiatives. However, this article shows that

since social media has democratized news production and dissemination today, it has become a viable breeding ground for fake and false news. According to Ali et al. (2022), politicians and policymakers interact directly with the masses through social media, which strongly impacts the overall functioning of the government. Nevertheless, the rampant increase in spreading erroneous information and rumours on social media negatively affects society by disrupting government functions. Based on such arguments, Sabban (2017) states that monitoring and validating information available on social media is crucial before utilizing it.

Habes et al. (2023) conducted a study on the hospitality sector to identify the varied implications of spreading false news on social media platforms. Based on detailed evaluations, the scholars identified that negative and false reviews regarding hotel services on social media disrupt daily operations in the hospitality industry. Such fake information leads to rapid declines in revenue margins for hotels and restaurants and severely damages their reputation in the market, thereby postponing all capital investments. Habes and colleagues stated that social media is essential in crisis communication today. It offers an innovative platform for hoteliers and hospitality suppliers to communicate directly with clients and remain connected even during times of crisis. However, negative user-generated content on such online platforms leads to a severe social media crisis, significantly harming organizations' reputations and amplifying the crisis, thereby generating a derogatory situation. Thus, Obi-Ani et al. (2020) stated that effective response strategies in advance are vital for dealing with social media crises efficiently.



Figure 2. 7 Social media crisis response scale
Source: (Park & Avery, 2018)

2.6.2 Social Media during COVID-19 Pandemic

Ali (2020) highlights how the extensive use of social media simplifies the creation and spread of COVID-19 misinformation. Platforms such as Facebook and Twitter have become pivotal sources of news, fueling the dissemination of false information. Research by El-Sadig et al. (2020) reveals that misinformation about public health aspects of COVID-19 spreads rapidly and reaches a broad audience, surpassing previous pandemics. In April 2020, unfounded rumours emerged, falsely accusing Muslims of intentionally spreading the virus following a positive test among an Islamic missionary group. Since the pandemic's onset, various false narratives have circulated on social media platforms, blaming China for deliberately spreading the virus .


Furthermore, misinformation has been disseminated regarding COVID-19 treatments and cures, with audio clips containing false information gaining traction during the pandemic. These falsehoods have had significant repercussions on communities, media outlets, and governments worldwide. Additionally, inaccurate data concerning

COVID-19 cases, deaths, and recoveries has been widely shared globally, contributing to media crises in numerous countries. Some prevalent fake news shared on social media is depicted in the images provided below (Jabeen, A Ansari, & Ikram, 2020).

Table 2. 4

Summary of Literature Regarding Media Rumours and Covid-9

| Author(s) | Design/Methods | Publication Venue | Summary |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|
| (Jabeen, A Ansari, & Ikram, 2020) | Case study, quantitative approach | Journal of Broadcasting Media | False data on the number of confirmed and active COVID-19 cases, number of deaths, and number of cures were also prevalent throughout the world. Such media crises were prevalent in all countries across the world. Some prevalent fake news shared on social media are depicted in the images provided below. |
| (S. Ali, 2020) | Systematic Review | Human Arenas | The ubiquity of social media makes it easier for people to create and spread COVID-19 falsehoods. As online platforms like Facebook and Twitter are becoming important sources of news, the rate of misinformation spread through such channels is also rising. |
| (S. Ali et al., 2022a) | | Yale Journal of Biology and Medicine | Social media is a major tool in crisis management, which provides valuable information in various forms like images, videos and texts. Researchers claim that social media offers a huge amount |

| | | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|--|
| (El-Sadig et al., 2020) | Case study, quantitative approach | Mass Communication Quarterly | <p>of data during a crisis, which supports crisis management efforts and initiatives.</p> <p>Social media plays a very derogatory role in spreading misinformation after any form of disaster or crisis, which is the primary reason for not integrating social media into formal emergency response practices. Since social media use has become the most essential form of community response to disasters, most traditional models of information transmission are being ignored today.</p> |
| (Habes, Tahat, 2023) | Ali, et al., |   Universiti Utara Malaysia | <p>Varied implications of spreading false news on social media platforms. Based on detailed evaluations, the scholars identified that negative and false reviews regarding hotel services on social media disrupt daily operations in the hospitality industry. Such fake information leads to rapid declines in revenue margins for hotels and restaurants and severely damages their reputation in the market, thereby postponing all capital investments.</p> |

Fake news regarding COVID-19 tends to circulate faster than actual or accurate news. Habes et al. (2023) explored the rapid spread of COVID-19-related fake news, noting its faster dissemination compared to accurate information. The study highlighted five primary drivers behind the sharing of fake news: altruism, social interaction, information dissemination, leisure activity, and information search. Furthermore, research indicates a higher propensity for young individuals to share fake news relative to older demographics. Effective media crisis management approaches must target these influential factors to achieve desired results.

2.7 Negative Effects of Media on General Public

A study conducted by Al-Zaman et al. (2020) in the context of the Zika virus as a case study shows that fake information travels three times faster than valid data on social media. Such rumours influence the public to make allegations against the government and associated organizations, eventually generating mistrust between people and their governing bodies. The spread of misinformation also disrupts public services offered by the government and the health sector, in this case, generating several other threats, disturbing social harmony, and decreasing the effectiveness of intervention strategies. Particularly in the context of the Zika virus, Al-Zaman et al. (2020) found that spreading misinformation across social media platforms negatively affected treatment and prevention efforts since the public had a false perception of the virus. This study reveals that spreading health-related fake news on social media has a disastrous effect on the benefit and welfare of people and societies.

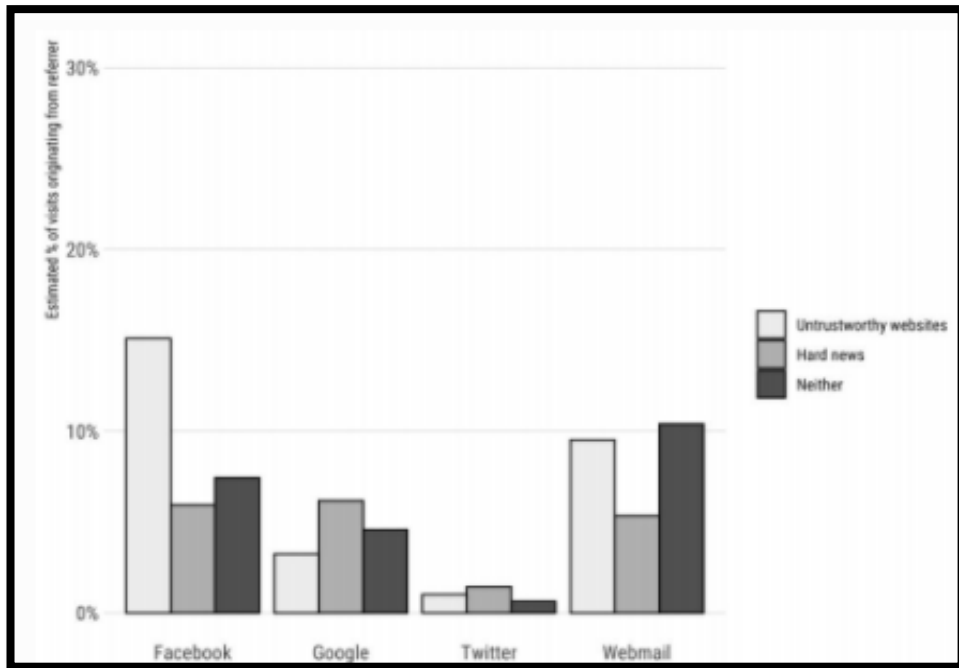


Figure 2.8 Unworthy websites on different social media channels
 Source: (Al-Zaman, Sife, et al., 2020)

With the rapid evolution of social media, their use in crisis and emergency management is also changing. Alam et al. (2021) identified that social media is used before, during, and after crises today and in close connection with security and defence management. Detailed evaluations show that various algorithms are used today to study and understand user-generated content on social media and use them to predict critical events and improve information management.

At the same time, Alam et al. (2021) mention that the prevalence of social bots and fake news being spread on social media has also increased rapidly, severely complicating all efforts in utilizing social media in emergency management. Owing to such problems, researchers claim that in most cases, emergency managers are afraid of using citizen-generated content on social media, as they tend to provide filtered and erroneous information. This, in turn, reduces the transparency between people and

respective government authorities and disrupts the trust one has in the other. Inevitably, this article claims that spreading fake news and rumours on social media harms the social bond and the relationship people share with their government.

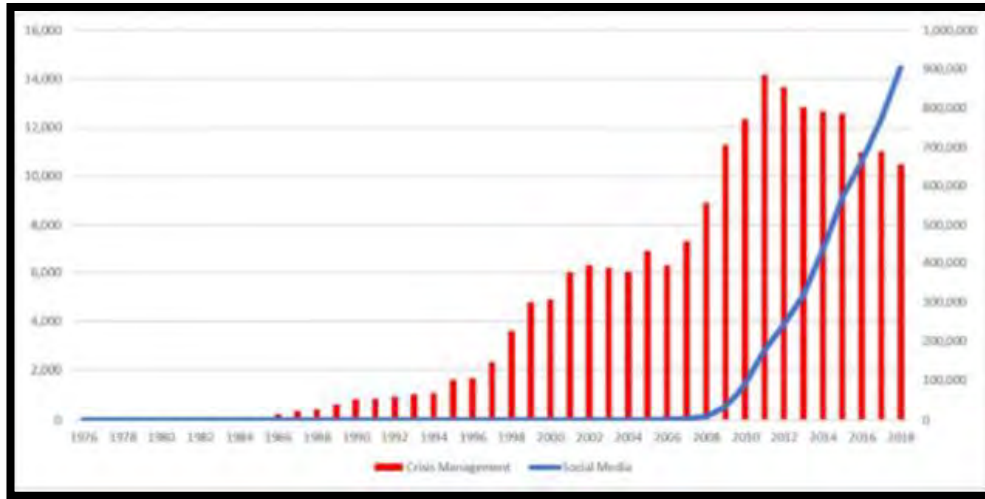


Figure 2. 9 Frequency of press citations about crisis management and social media
Source: (Alkhodair et al., 2020a)

Alkhodair et al. (2020) conducted a study in the UAE context to assess public relations practitioners' utilization of social media tools during crises. Based on detailed research and consideration of several real incidents, the authors argue that social media and mass media are vital communication tools today, especially in a crisis. PR practitioners depend on social media during crises and emergencies to gauge the economic and financial status of their country or the UAE. This results in a speedy economic development prompted by the rapid diffusion of information and data on different social media platforms. Such utilization of social media has resulted in developing a new information society in the UAE. However, Alkhodair et al. (2020) argue that while social media platforms are heavily utilized in public relations, the spread of incorrect and fabricated information via these channels directly harms the public. Inaccurate

data during crises confuses PR professionals, hindering their crisis management efforts and exacerbating social challenges for the UAE population.



Figure 2. 10 Fake news shared on social media in Dubai

Source: (Tasnim et al., 2020)

Online media channels play a major role in crisis communication. (2020) undertook a study and identified that social media helps spread valid and relevant information during a crisis, thus helping people and crisis management authorities deal with the emergency efficiently. However, it also encourages the sharing and spreading wrong and fake data. This augments the derogatory condition caused by the crisis and causes immense harm to people. This study reveals that people rely on social media channels to seek information during various crises. Moreover, age also predicts the preference in specific media channels for gaining access to crisis-related data. However, risks of fake and false information persist in all cases, making all people vulnerable to the negative impacts of poor or false crisis communication.

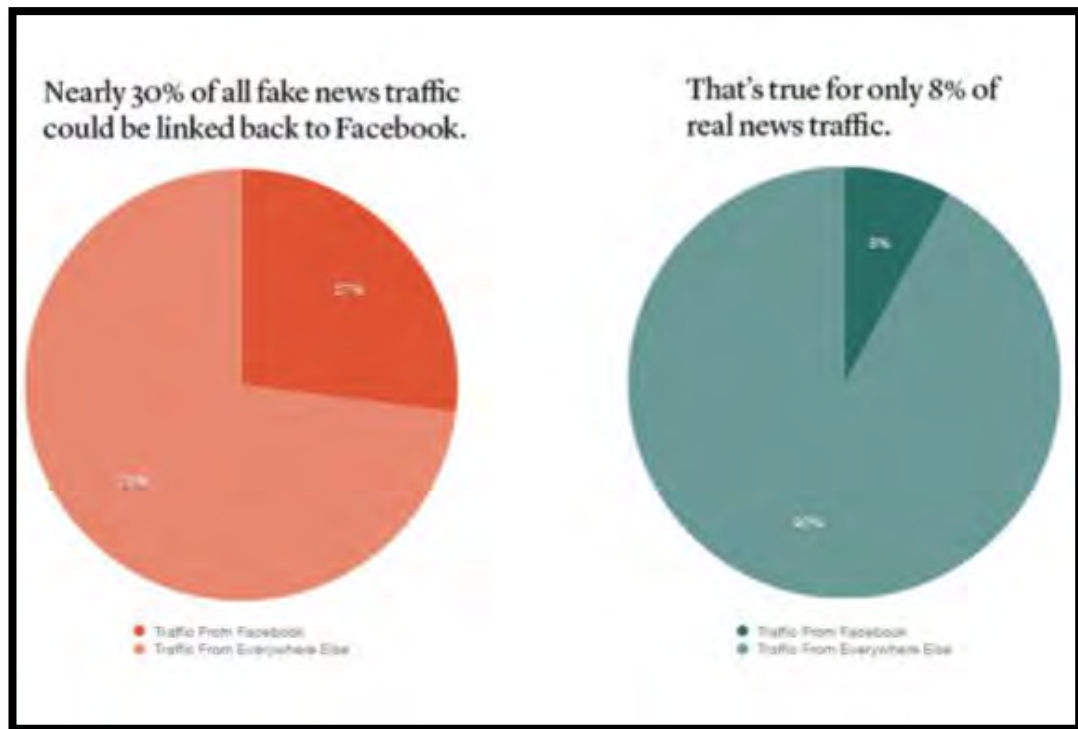


Figure 2. 11 Fake news traffic on Facebook

Source: (Sommariva et al., 2018)

Kotteti et al. (2020) conducted a very recent study on the implications of media exposure on health conditions during the COVID-19 pandemic. Based on thorough research, this study reveals that the prevalence of spreading fake information and rumours has increased rapidly during the recent pandemic situation, which has generated a severe community crisis. Choi et al. (2019) found that people with high exposure to media faced increased stress, anxiety, and other health conditions compared to those who did not have adequate media exposure. It is argued that most negative implications occurred due to wrong information and fake news shared on various social media channels, which agitated the public and caused severe trauma.

Another study by Alhashmi et al. (2018) reveals the negative repercussions faced by Chinese individuals outside China owing to false and fake news regarding China's role

in the spread of the COVID-19 virus in different media. Several media platforms today are filled with misleading and biased information on COVID-19, representing the Western media perspective and inciting anger throughout the Chinese community. Sahni and Sharma (2020) state that such false data encourages racial discrimination worldwide, causing drastic implications on mental health, especially for Chinese individuals. The spreading of false data is also demeaning China's image in the global forum and affecting its economic status. Misleading media coverage is one of the most disastrous implications of social media today.



Figure 2. 12 Confusion among the public generated by fake news online.
Source: (Riffet al. 2019)

To sum up, mass media's increasing reach and influence have become inseparable from any social setting. The media facilitates access to information for policymakers, managers, and citizens alike, and increases the speed at which accumulated new information is collected and distributed, further expanding its role in managing situations such as natural disasters. The media can have a negative role in a crisis, increase its scope or play a positive role and help resolve the crisis. However, the role of the mass media in any crisis cannot be dismissed (Kotteti et al., 2020).

During times of crisis, public sentiment becomes unsettled. In these cases, the media can engage in an organized effort to control public sentiment and control public opinion with a positive attitude. Without a positive attitude in the media, even the best efforts of policymakers and managers will not have a possible impact. In these cases, reporters working for the media should only receive information from official sources to reduce the number of contradictory and confusing information. National security means securing the state and preserving its sources of political, military, economic, and social power and finding comprehensive strategies and plans to ensure this is achieved. The nation's identity and stability call for individuals and homeland security.

The sources of the threat to intellectual security are numerous. They often come from groups of extremism and ideological extremism, sedition instigators and advocates of division, taking advantage of the lack of security oversight or controls and restrictions on what these groups display and broadcast through media broadcasts, the Internet, the massive flow of information and other means (Kotteti et al., 2020). An integrated social strategy is urgent to preserve young people's minds from intellectual invasion and fortify them culturally through correct information. As a result, it helps them increase security and cultural awareness to keep them from falling into crime and deviating from sound religious systems, values, customs, and teachings.

Drawing a clear and robust strategy to develop and support intellectual security is a way to achieve the country's ambitions. It ensures providing security, speeding up preventive measures, and following up on changes and conflicts at the regional and global levels, accompanied by readiness and readiness to address problems and crises that may threaten national security and demonstrate the seriousness of intellectual

security. We know that Military invasion comes to conquer and achieve colonial goals without the desire of the colonizing peoples. The intellectual or cultural invasion is to clear minds and ideas to be subordinate to the invader.

Therefore, the intellectual invasion may be more severe and harsh because the intellectually defeated nation goes to its invader voluntarily, with consent and conviction, and does not try to rebel or deliver. Therefore, when the invader does not find a way to a military invasion, he resorts to an intellectual invasion. The most important sources of corrupt intellectual invasion that some young people refer to are the mass media, i.e., reading, audio and visual, including satellite channels. The Internet also disrupts the youth and invites them to extremism. For example, on the left, it is easy for any hater to promote what he wants through these networks, all because the media and cultural security restrictions are about to disappear in the light of global globalization. Media and cultural openness have replaced moral and cultural values. The best solution to reduce this problem obligates the societal institutions that contribute to immunizing young people from this invasion by strengthening their intellectual security and providing them with correct information. The aim should be to prevent juveniles by providing them with awareness and to prevent them from falling into the dangers of an intellectual invasion that motivates crime by using necessary measures to establish security based on the principles that the state emphasizes. Thus, the goal is to achieve tranquillity and stability on each level and cultivate a sense of confidence and freedom from uncertainty.

2.8 Rumours in Society

The rumour is characterized by some features related to the state of its nature. However, some others are related to society and ongoing phenomena, further indicating the uncertainty in society. There can be different types of rumours that may involve disseminating information, especially if it is related to a topic and is published in circumstances where it is impossible to verify its authenticity.

Sometimes, a true piece of information becomes a rumour as the source is unknown, and uncertainty reaches an extent that people may not want to believe. Yet, the rumours are difficult to stop, as they are often associated with strong emotions. They also spread quickly, such as a rumoured war known as "warmongering". Also, black rumours that carry feelings of hatred, hostility, or discrimination are among the most common ones and are more quickly transmitted than others (Al Tum, 2019).

2.8.1 Aims of the rumours

Rumours are a lethal weapon of dangerous psychological warfare, and they play a significant role in influencing morale through their promoters seeking to achieve diverse goals. Based on the objectives of the rumours, which can be stated in the types and purposes, we can divide rumours into different forms as described in the figure below (Figure 2.13).

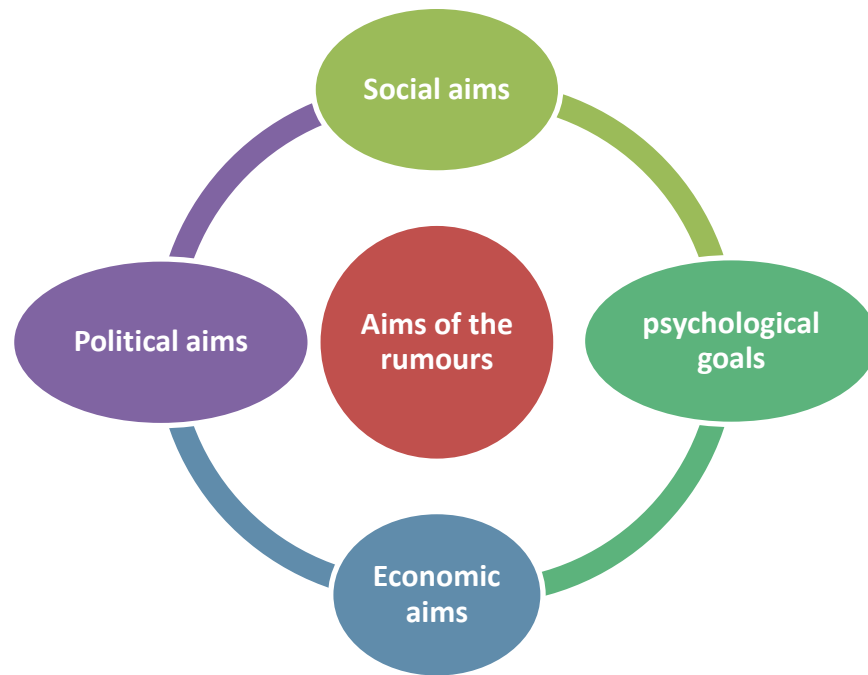


Figure 2. 13 Aims of rumours – prepared by the researcher.

Social goals

Rumours are an effective means of propaganda, as many believe that they have the same effect as media such as radio and television. Thus, the rumour creates a loophole between people and their governments and makes them doubt the legal system. These rumours further adversely affect certain social groups, such as clan, families, and associations, provoke strife and rivalries and deepen differences and problems (Abdel Rahman & Al Mahdi, 2020).

Psychological goals

The moral objectives of rumours are numerous, “If psychological warfare is considered these days a cornerstone of the enemy’s aggressive policy, we have realized the extent of the effectiveness and danger of rumours. Rumours are one of the most dangerous weapons of psychological warfare in influencing the morale of individuals and masses in peace and war, leading to confusion, doubt, destabilization of self-

confidence, spreading defeatism, discrimination, and scepticism about everything (Ramadan, 2019).

Table 2. 5
Summary of Literature Regarding Aims of Rumours

| Author(s) | Design/Methods | Publication Venue | Summary |
|-----------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| (Jiang, 2017) | Case study, quantitative approach | Journal of Social Science Studies | Rumours are an effective means of propaganda, as many believe that they have the same effect as media such as radio and television. Thus, the rumour creates a loophole between people and their governments and makes them doubt the justice of their issues to society through what they face from rumours by its members to each other or from certain social groups. |
| (Ramadan, 2019) | Systematic Review | Journal of Broadcasting Media | The moral objectives of rumours are numerous, "If psychological warfare is considered these days a cornerstone of the enemy's aggressive policy, we have realized the extent of the effectiveness and danger of rumours, and it is one of the most dangerous weapons of psychological warfare in influencing the morale of individuals and masses in peace and war, by finding. |
| (Abbas, 2019) | Case study, quantitative approach | European Journal of | Often, these rumours are carried out by some countries with the aim of the market. An |

| | | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|--|
| | | Social Sciences | example of this is what the British propaganda did during its presence in Egypt: Egypt could not be an industrial country in order to keep it a consumer market for Britain. |
| (S. Ali et al., 2022a) | Perspective paper | Multicultural Education | Misinformation can affect every aspect of life, such as social, political, economic, and stock market, emergency response during natural disasters, and crisis events. It aims to mislead public opinions, influence political elections, and threaten public security and social stability intentionally or unintentionally. |
| (Abdel Rahman & Al Mahdi, 2020) | | BMC Medicine | Rumours are an effective means of propaganda, as many believe that they have the same effect as media such as radio and television. Thus, the rumour creates a loophole between people and their governments and makes them doubt the justice of their issues to society through what they face from rumours by its members to each other. |

Economic aims

This type of rumour aims to discredit large economic establishments and global gatherings, intending to impede the progress of the production process and economic development. Sometimes, rumours may be shared by commercial and industrial

companies with the intent of competing and making a profit. Further, hostile propaganda may focus on undermining the country's economic position against which the rumours are directed and undermine financial confidence, especially since the economy is the lifeblood of the countries that embark on the development process. Often, these rumours are carried out by some countries with the aim of the market. For instance, during its occupation of Egypt, British propaganda claimed that Egypt was incapable of industrialization and instead positioned it as a consumer market for Britain (Abbas, 2019).

Political aims

Rumours are intended to influence the fighters on the battlefield. They aim to weaken morale and demotivate the public. A group of agents may spread these rumours by the state to achieve political agendas. They are often accompanied by intrusive military raids, which the enemy may launch on civilian and economic targets to sow fear and terror in the souls (Lee et al., 2022).

2.8.2 Impact of misinformation

Misinformation can affect every aspect of life, such as the social, political, economic, stock market, and emergency response during natural disasters and crises. It aims to mislead public opinions, influence political elections, and threaten public security and social stability (Ali et al., 2022) intentionally or unintentionally. It often reveals fabricated information related to fictional issues rather than relevant information (Abdel Rahman & Al Mahdi, 2020). It has become easier to spread misinformation quickly due to social network platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Sina Weibo.

Within these platforms, individuals can easily disseminate information under the guise of factuality, even though its veracity may be questionable at times.

Additionally, fraudulent users share misleading information to look for personal gain in some way. For example, concerning political issues, some view being a misled resident as more regrettable than being an uninformed resident. Misguided residents express their opinions with certainty and thus influence elections. This deception originates from speakers needing to be more forthright and clearer.

2.8.3 Misinformation and Rumours

Misinformation is a false statement that leads people astray by hiding the correct facts. It is also called deception, ambiguity, or falsehoods. It generates feelings of mistrust that subsequently weaken relationships, which is a violation of expectations (Abdel Rahman & Al Mahdi, 2020). Additionally, people do not expect to receive misinformation from their close friends, relatives, or strangers; instead, they expect truthful communication. For example, some users were involved in a Facebook discussion on a recently published product where there were both fake users and real users. The real users discussed the product's features honestly. However, counterfeit users praised the product regardless of their true opinion. The below figure (Figure 2.14) shows the types of misinformation in society.



Figure 2. 14 Rumours types
Prepared by the researcher

Rumour, fake news, false information, spam, and disinformation are all terms used to describe misinformation. Rumour is a story about information being passed from person to person whose veracity is questioned (Tran et al., 2021). For instance, intentionally deceptive news articles that are demonstrably false are labelled as misinformation (S. Ali et al., 2022). Misinformation broadly refers to false information. Spam refers to unsolicited messages sent online to propagate malware, advertisements, or other unwanted content. Disinformation refers to misleading information disseminated with the intention of deceiving individuals (El-Sadig et al., 2020)

Although both misinformation and disinformation refer to incorrect/false information, there is a significant difference between the two in terms of intent: misinformation is

spread without the intent to deceive, whereas disinformation is spread with the intent to deceive. Several studies indicated that circulating misinformation is common, especially on social media (Tran et al., 2021). Some of them focused on a microblog post as an object, determining its credibility. Furthermore, some research extracts various features from the level of crisis and determines whether an event is related to misinformation (L. Zhao et al., 2012).

Table 2. 6

Summary of Literature Regarding Misinformation and Rumours and their Impacts

| Author(s) | Design/Methods | Publication Venue | Summary |
|------------------------|--|------------------------------|--|
| (L. Zhao et al., 2012) | Cross-sectional study, survey approach | Journalism and Media | Some works treat a microblog post as an object, determining its credibility and aggregating it to the event level (Jin et al. 2017a). Furthermore, some research extracts various features from the event level and determines whether an event is related to misinformation. |
| (S. Wang et al., 2019) | Research Perspective | Journal of Media Psychology | The time of war, and the time of peace (the Cold War), are characterized by their strong influence on the masses' emotions, their great ability to spread, and their great effectiveness that begins from when they reach the place it is directed. Rumours differ from other methods in that the means that carry, transmit, and increase their intensity and effectiveness is the target community itself. |



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| | | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|---|
| (Manzoor, Wei, Nurunnabi, & Subhan, 2019) | Experimental design, survey method | Journal of Applied Psychology | As soon as the rumour reaches some members of the target community, they tell it and promote it to all who know, but it is not limited to the narration or transmission only; rather, the matter goes beyond the person who transmits the rumour often adds and exaggerates it and may fabricate many parts of its details. |
| (Tran et al., 2021) | Content analysis, quantitative method | New Media and Society | Rumour, fake news, false information, spam, and disinformation are terms used to describe misinformation. Rumour is a story about information being passed from person to person whose veracity is questioned |



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Rumours play a significant role in psychological and social warfare, whether in times of conflict or peace like the Cold War, due to their profound impact on mass emotions and their widespread dissemination (S. Wang et al., 2019). What sets rumours apart from other forms of communication is their reliance on the target community itself to carry, transmit, and amplify their effects. Once within the target community, certain members promptly propagate the rumour. However, it doesn't stop there; those spreading the rumour often embellish, exaggerate, or even fabricate details, thereby magnifying its impact. Consequently, the influence of the rumour surpasses that of information disseminated through traditional media outlets, as individuals tend to

believe and share rumours heard from friends or within their communities (Manzoor et al., 2019).

2.9 The Theory Interpreted Rumours

2.9.1 The psychological theory

Psychologists and specialists in it say that the rumour reveals the contents of the collective unconscious in a twisted way through some psychological tricks, such as projection, symbolism, condensation, projection, displacement, isolation, and others.

Psychologists claim the rumour reveals the contents of the collective unconscious in a twisted way through some psychological tricks, such as projection, symbolism, condensation, projection, displacement and isolation. The rumour succeeds when it can stir up the subconscious and pent-up emotions. The proponents of this theory assert that the psychological stages of testimony are awareness, remembering, and evidence. The proponents of this theory, such as Allport & Bestman (Year), believe that rumours propagate under two conditions: importance and ambiguity. The topic of the rumour must be of interest to both the speaker and the listener, while ambiguity refers to the presence of uncertainty surrounding the information associated with the rumour. This uncertainty may arise from various factors, such as inadequate or conflicting data, brevity, inconsistency, distrust, or emotional tension, leading individuals to hesitate in accepting the information presented (Abbas, 2020).

2.9.2 Conspiracy theory

Conspiracy theories have emerged regarding a wide range of major events in American life, from the assassination of John F. Kennedy to the moon landing to the existence of aliens to the idea that 9/11 was an “inside job” (Sunstein, 2014). define conspiracy theory as “an effort to explain some event or practice by reference to the machinations of influential people who attempt to conceal their role. Ali et al. (2022) offer a few examples of such machinations in their definition of conspiracy: a “secret arrangement between two or more actors to usurp political or economic power, violate established rights, hoard vital secrets, or unlawfully alter government institutions.”

Conspiracy theories can occasionally be true, but most of the time, they overestimate the competence of official actors, who are thought to be capable of carrying out secret nefarious actions despite evidence that such actions are rarely kept as secrets in an open society (Kotteti et al., 2020). This theory considers that rumours are the creation of individuals or institutions that have spread out. That is, the community is working to promote it and ratify it. For example, rumours spread about the stock market, the economic situation, or high prices in the market.

This theory considers that rumours are the creation of individuals or institutions that have spread out. That is, the Community is working to promote and ratify it. For example, rumours spread about the stock market, the economic situation, or high prices in the market.

Talking about the current research and conspiracy theory, Conspiracy Theory provides practical insights into the effectiveness of Dubai Police in combating rumours through social media in Emirati society (Skafle et al., 2022). The relevant theory usually thrives and spreads rapidly on social media platforms, making them a significant concern for law enforcement agencies like the Dubai Police (Kotteti et al., 2020).

First, examining how the Dubai Police perceives social media as a source of information in Emirati society highlights the prevalence and impact of conspiracy theory. If the police view social media as a primary source of information, they likely recognize the possibility of conspiracy theories gaining traction and influencing public perception (Brindha et al., 2021).

Similarly, understanding the Dubai Police's perception of social media in spreading rumours underlines their challenges in addressing misinformation and conspiracy theories. Social media platforms are breeding grounds for rumours and false information, making it difficult for law enforcement agencies to combat them effectively (Hossain et al., 2020).

Also, analyzing Dubai Police's perception of social media as a reliable source of information reveals the complexities of distinguishing between credible information and conspiracy theory. In an era where misinformation spreads rapidly, the police's trust in social media platforms may be undermined by the prevalence of conspiracy theories and false narratives (Al-Zaman, 2021). Thus, investigating the effectiveness of the Dubai Police in combating rumours through social media can provide insights into their strategies and capabilities in addressing conspiracy theories. If the police

struggle to counteract rumours and conspiracy theories on social media effectively, it may indicate a need for enhanced communication strategies and digital literacy initiatives (Melki et al., 2021). Therefore, conspiracy theories serve as a lens to evaluate the challenges and opportunities Dubai Police faces in combating rumours through social media. By understanding the role of conspiracy theories in shaping public discourse and perception, law enforcement agencies can develop more informed and effective strategies to address misinformation and maintain public trust (Gisondi et al., 2022).

2.10 Ways to Combat Rumours in Dubai

Some social institutions can aid the government and police in combating rumours.

1- Community police

The central concept under scrutiny pertains to "Community Policing." This term, originating in English, has sparked debate within Arab circles. The contention arises from differing interpretations of its translation. Some perceive it as "community police," while others see "Policing" as synonymous with "community police" or "neighbourhood police." Yet another group translates it as "tapes" or a requirement within the Community, with the core disagreement revolving around the role of "police" within the Community (Chen & Wing , 2016).

When referring to the "partnership" of policing, it is important to understand that CBP implies a new contract between the police and the people they serve, seeking to reverse discontent, indifference, and opposition to the police while constraining the public's drive to administer justice themselves. This new relationship is built on mutual trust

and respect. It pushes people to accept their share of responsibility towards quality and indicates that the police can serve them, so both sides of the partnership need to know their responsibilities (Muhamed N., 2021) :

- Community police need an organizational strategy to ensure that everyone in the police organization translates its philosophy into practice and application. The basic principles are that "all police are community police" and "all police are community police officers.
- Significant changes in the police institution, especially the traditional and hierarchical institutions, where the authority is entrenched in rank and position. Community policing requires a change of "front line" operational officers to have more autonomy to make decisions that promote respect for their judgment as police members.
- It also requires the acceptance by the police institution of the need to focus on solving society's problems in ways that are not innovative but rather broaden the horizon of society through the process of practising policing itself.
- Community Police invest their trust in those involved in the 'front line' of police – police officers and local individual people – by using their experience, expertise, and knowledge to seek local solutions to local problems, the disadvantaged, and the poor people.

The Role of the Community

As citizens, the populace bears rights and responsibilities and must engage in participatory problem-solving. Community-Based Policing (CBP) hinges on continuous communication, identifying and addressing local issues collectively across

various community sectors. It necessitates a collaborative approach where joint policing is paramount.

Community policing advocates for the prudent use of technology while emphasizing the importance of dialogue and collaboration in achieving positive outcomes, such as victim support. Additionally, initiatives like neighbourhood watch, school engagement programmes, crime prevention efforts, and community security structures contribute to problem-solving and enhancing residents' overall quality of life.

To enhance the bond between community police and residents, efforts are directed towards not only countering violent extremism but also fostering security, trust, and peace within the locality, thereby promoting social cohesion among all community members (Galal, 2019):

- Effective Community policing based on mutual trust, inclusion, and dialogue between police and community members is critical to the success of PVE efforts.

The spirit of serving society, ensuring safety, and protecting society, especially those most vulnerable to violence, must be at the heart of the work of the present and active security services in society. This requires a profound transformation in countries where security services, including the police, are trained to protect the state or national security interests at the expense of human security (Galal, 2019).

- Security interventions must be at the local level to prevent or counter violent extremism; violent intervention must be part of a comprehensive approach to policing that addresses other local security concerns.

Community policing must be developed alongside the local Community from its inception. The public and the police should build trust among themselves and respect the common values that underpin that trust. Some existing models can provide guidance but cannot be fully reproduced without adapting them to the unique characteristics of each context.

There can be a practical division of labor between the civil society and the security sector in the communities to promote the advantages of the strategy for each of them. For example, civil society organizations are in a better position to guide individuals, facilitate community-based operations, and provide training to police on dealing with women's concerns. They can fill specific technical gaps related to gender participation and youth (van de Weert & A M Eijkman, 2020).

The Role of Community Police

The effectiveness of community policing in preventing crime has been subject to debate due to challenges in defining it precisely and measuring its success (Perez & Vogel, 2021). The complexity of CBP further complicates efforts to gauge its effectiveness (Al Baloushi, 2020). However, existing literature outlines various benefits associated with adopting community policing strategies. As outlined by the New Zealand Police, these advantages include enhancing relationships between police and communities, empowering communities to address issues, influencing the attitudes and behaviours of officers, improving perceptions of safety, and reducing crime and anti-social behaviour (Choi & Khajavy, 2019).

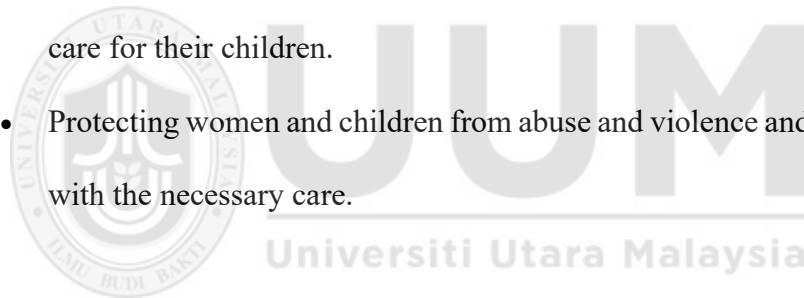
In the national context, community policing embodies the principle that security is a shared responsibility between law enforcement agencies and society. Just as Western societies have embraced community policing to prevent crime and enhance social order, Arab and Islamic societies can similarly adopt relevant approaches (Al Baloushi, 2020). The role of community police extends beyond law enforcement; it fosters a cohesive society through dialogue, tolerance, and guidance. Embracing citizen involvement, community police operate proactively, engaging in collaboration to uphold community safety and well-being.

Community Police Aim

Community police aim to develop and deepen the relationship between community members (Choi & Khajavy, 2019), which can be explained as follows:

- Strengthening social work in the police apparatus in form - activating the preventive role against crime and involving the community in this responsibility (Moyer, 2021).
- Breaking the psychological barrier and eliminating the causes of fear of the police officers.
- Adopting guidance, reform, and social rehabilitation for correctional and penal institutions inmates, transcending the punitive view, and adopting social integration.
- Providing psychological and social support to the victims of crime.
- Protecting human rights, seeking aid and advice to those who need it while submitting the necessary reports on violations and abuses in the use of power against persons dealing with the police (auditors, defendants, or inmates of correctional and penal institutions).

- Solving individual problems, family conflicts, and disputes, between neighbours by social harmony (Choi & Khajavy, 2019).
- Cooperation and coordination with social and educational institutions to address social problems and rehabilitate delinquent juveniles.
- Coordination with service and charitable bodies in the country to provide material, medical and moral assistance to people in need and exposed to crises.
- Infusing positive values in society and combating harmful activities in coordination with social, educational, and religious institutions.
- Activating the family's role in preventing crime and delinquency, providing psychological and social support to broken families, and enabling them to care for their children.
- Protecting women and children from abuse and violence and providing them with the necessary care.



To sum up, the community police is a civil organization based on the citizens' cooperation with the police to maintain security (Al Baloushi, 2020). They aim to counteract crimes, ensure the desired security results, employ a possible amount of community force for police work, and motivate citizens to confront crime before it occurs.

Characteristics of the Community Police

Community Police have certain functions in society (Al Shaali, 2020), such as:

- Organizing and supervising the work of community patrols.

- Receive information and data received from members of the public, inmates of penal institutions, juvenile and elderly care centres, and governmental and non-governmental agencies, and take the necessary measures in this regard.
- Developing and deepening the concepts of community policing among the police and civil society personnel.
- Creating reciprocal relations with members of society and foreign communities that influence individuals' attitudes and behaviour patterns to improve security sense and voluntary commitment and introduce them to police services.
- Using and developing mechanisms for forming police friends and volunteer work in the police force.
- Preparing and implementing programs and external activities to prevent crime in proportion to each region's demographic and environmental conditions.
- Conducting public opinion surveys occasionally to measure security performance and reactions.
- Protecting human rights, seeking assistance and advice to those who need it, and submitting the necessary reports on abuses and violations in using power against persons dealing with the police.
- Deepening the interactions between the police and society by attracting voluntary efforts of institutions and individuals in the areas of crime prevention

The community police are to enhance the overall security awareness among the public by holding lectures and seminars for citizens to educate them about the dangers of crime as preventive measures that help achieve the goals of community police to create an informed and supportive public opinion for cooperation with the police. The community police are strengthening the social status of the community police through direct contact with community members to gain their trust. Thus, the authority of community police workers derives from their social status rather than the executive authority directly.

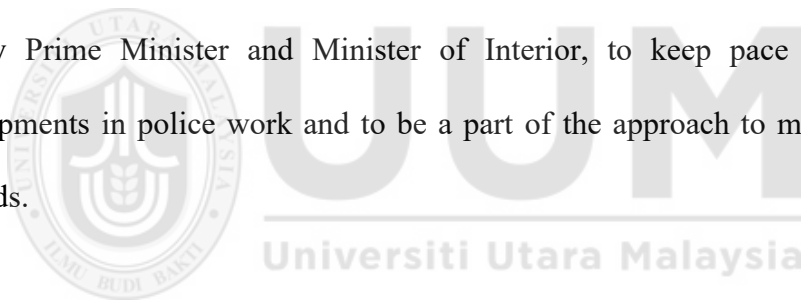
Community Police in the UAE

The importance of the community police strategy for the United Arab Emirates appears, given the rapid social and security transformations reflected in social structures. Thus, there is a need for a unique model that can be applied and yield good results. The societal and security conditions necessary for establishing community policing and the attitudes of neighbourhood residents all encourage the application of community contribution, which bodes well for success (Al Shaali, 2020). The follower of community police studies about the United Arab Emirates notes the scarcity of single studies to demonstrate this aspect, although they are general.

There is a general trend of high crime rates in the United Arab Emirates, but this mitigates the societal awareness of this rise (Al Shaali, 2020). Reports from law enforcement and annual statistics released by the Ministry of Interior indicate a rise in yearly crime rates in the nation, particularly in economic crimes, which topped the list of offences during the 1990s. To demonstrate the suitability of security conditions for implementing community policing in the UAE, researchers conducted a field study on

local residents' perceptions regarding societal issues. This study focused on identifying social and security threats, revealing the necessary infrastructure for establishing such a system to prevent crime and achieve community oversight. It underscores the significance of community cohesion among neighbourhood residents in shaping community control (Choi & Khajavy, 2019).

Community Police in the Emirates is a new philosophy adopted by the Ministry of Interior in the UAE to approach the public. It requires exchanging roles and maintaining the cohesion and security of society in a civilized manner (Choi & Khajavy, 2019). This new philosophy has received tremendous support and encouragement from Lt. General His Highness Sheikh Saif bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior, to keep pace with the latest developments in police work and to be a part of the approach to modernizing their methods.



The Community Police Department includes the Community Patrols Branch, Partnerships and Community Communication Branch, and Community Programs Branch. The Department of Social Support Center has the Awareness and Family Protection Branch, the School Liaison Branch, the Psychosocial Support Branch for Crime Victims, and the Shelter and Social Care Branch. Besides, work is described as a link between the police authorities and society (Jabeen & Alhashmi, 2018).

The police collaborate with citizens to implement programs and initiatives for public administrations, aiming to enhance the image of the Emirates' police force and fulfil its forward-looking vision for a modern, progressive police service aligned with a

development agenda. This approach seeks to strengthen police-community relations, facilitate communication, and serve the public, ultimately reinforcing security measures (United Arabs of Emirates, 2018). Community policing seeks to shift from conventional law enforcement to a service-focused model, fostering community spirit and encouraging diverse groups and sectors to engage with law enforcement in preventing crime.

Countries adopting community involvement approaches have experienced notable success in addressing criminal activity. The Community Police Department partners with local community police units in comprehensive police stations, establishing task forces to oversee local initiatives, supervise community policing plans, and ensure their effective execution, enhancement, and adaptation. Key principles guiding these initiatives include transparency, accountability, and respect for human rights. The overarching objective of community involvement is to enable security agencies to identify and address issues proactively, averting potential escalations (Ramadan, 2019).

Combating rumours in the UAE society

Official and governmental authorities in the UAE, including Dubai Police, seek to cooperate with civil society institutions to reduce rumours in society and raise awareness among individuals, including the following:

1- Places of worship as community control

The Constitution of the United Arab Emirates states that "Islam is the official religion of the state" (United Arabs of Emirates, 2018). The Constitution guarantees freedom

of worship as long as it does not conflict with public policy or morals. It also states that all individuals are equal before the law. The law prohibits blasphemy, proselytizing by non-Muslims, and conversion from Islam. The law also provides a prison sentence of up to five years for anyone who preaches religious sermons against Islam or any rituals violating the sanctity of a holy shrine. The law also prohibits proselytizing Muslims to convert them religiously to any religion, insult any religion, or incite any person to sin or violate national values (United Arabs of Emirates, 2018).

To understand the interaction between religion and national security, one can either look back through history to assess past ties or forward from today to establish future relationships (United Arabs of Emirates, 2018). Notably, there is a close interrelationship between religious freedom and national security. Far from being a human rights issue, the advancement of religious freedom can play a major role in enhancing national and international security. This link is increasingly recognised as evidenced by the development of language in the National Security Strategy, statements and activities led by high-ranking officials across the US government, and emerging academic research.

People worldwide are locked to the Emirates as they are attracted by job opportunities in Dubai and Abu Dhabi (Report, 2018). As a result, of the approximately 9.1 million people in the UAE, only 11% are nationals. There is no naturalization mechanism, meaning that all citizens are native-born. The 2005 census found that the entire population, including non-citizens, is 76% Muslim and 9% Christian, while 15% are of other faiths—mostly Hindus and Buddhists (Al Tum, 2019).

The Constitution enshrines Islam as the official state religion, and there are laws against blasphemy, proselytizing by non-Muslims, and conversion from Islam. But the constitution also guarantees freedom of worship if it does not conflict with public policy or morals — a vague designation that critics say gives the government ample berth for interpreting acceptable forms of worship (Al-Harthy, 2017). According to a 2017 US State Department report on religious freedom in the UAE, individuals belonging to non-Muslim religions said they could worship privately without government interference. Still, they faced restrictions on practising their religion (Report, 2018).

The UAE's role in combating intellectual extremism

The UAE Vision 2021 enhances the culture and values of tolerance and the influence of the UAE's soft powers and supports its international standing (Bloemen & Coninck, 2020). The United Arab Emirates leads the world scene with initiatives, visions, and national programs that contribute to spreading a culture of coexistence and peace, building bridges of international cooperation, communication, convergence, and dialogue, and creating a system of moral values in accordance with the legacy of the late Sheikh Zayed:

- Formation of the National Committee for Terrorism
- The Hedayah International Center of Excellence in Combating Violent Extremism was established to support dialogue.
- Issuing a "law to combat terrorist crimes".
- The Council of Muslim Elders was established in 2014 as an international body that aims to promote peace in the Islamic world.

- The position of Minister of State for Tolerance is created, and the National Program for Tolerance is adopted. The aim is to sustain the values of tolerance, solidarity, respect for pluralism, cultural discrimination, and acceptance of hatred and intolerance.

It is clear from the preceding that places of worship have an active role in achieving intellectual security by setting controls and an approach society should follow. Security is a fundamental pillar and cannot be ignored to achieve societal goals (Al-Harthy, 2017).

2- The family as a society discipline

The fabric of society plays a crucial role in upholding national security, acting as a frontline defence against potential threats. A harmonious society, encompassing diverse cultural and societal dimensions, is essential for maintaining security. Given humans' inherent sociability, their interactions within society shape and are shaped by their environment. Central to societal cohesion is the family unit, instilling values and behaviours in individuals. Thus, fostering the well-being of children within families is paramount for ensuring societal security.

Over the past three decades, the UAE has experienced significant societal shifts influenced by global dynamics. Preserving the distinctive characteristics of Emirati society is imperative in safeguarding against external pressures. Noteworthy is the demographic diversity within the Emirates, comprising a multitude of nationalities, which enriches the societal fabric of the nation (Mamesh, 2019).

The role of the family in security awareness

Most studies agree that the family plays a central role in societal regulation. Children's upbringing is primarily the responsibility of their families, which greatly impacts their development. The immediate social environment, encompassing parents, siblings, and extended family, serves as the initial source of social norms and values. By instilling these values and traditions, families shape individuals' character, leaving a lasting imprint across generations. As a result, families hold considerable sway over children's personalities, especially in rural areas where family status is highly valued. Older family members play a significant role in shaping personality traits, influencing individuals' attitudes, interests, and lifestyles. In numerous instances, marriages are arranged by elders, representing a union between families rather than just individuals. (Liu & Visher, 2021).

The guidance of young individuals, alongside teachings of tolerance, camaraderie, and inclusivity, cultivates a mindset of tolerance and diminishes hostility. Families play a pivotal role in shaping a child's conduct, moulding their personality throughout their development. Additionally, families instil in children a sense of societal duty, stressing the importance of respecting others' rights and safeguarding them against violation. Any act that jeopardises community security and disrupts its harmony is harmful.

The role of the family includes the following (Mamesh, 2019):

- Inculcating sound doctrine through advice and sound education
- Strengthening national belonging through introducing the student to the concepts of citizenship and patriotism.

- Presenting honourable national models that made great sacrifices for the country and imitating them.
- Develop a security culture among young people and familiarize them with the systems that guarantee they will preserve their rights and fulfil the required rights, family harmony, and social control.

The coherence of the family as a single fabric represents one of the tools of societal control and also as a monitoring tool for the individual (Aziz, 2019). Some argue that this fabric is a social organization to help community members reach a decent standard of life as social relations enable everyone to contribute and participate in the development of society. It is affirmed that the family's role is very big in preventing behavioural deviations and falling prey to crime and criminals in light of the world's recent openness (Mamesh, 2019).

The family holds accountability for potential behavioural disparities within its members, especially adolescents, resulting from diminished emotional and parental connections between fathers and children. This lack of bonding may reduce behavioural regulation in boys, distorting their understanding of human interactions and heightening their vulnerability to deviant behaviour. (Liu & Visher, 2021).

Role of Emirati family

The structure of Emirati families mirrors substantial alterations in Emirati culture. Despite the family's continued centrality, societal standards concerning marriage age, family size, arrangement, educational ambitions, women's roles, and gender dynamics have progressed. These changes influence how families engage in shaping and

educating young individuals, bringing forth both advantageous and problematic aspects (El-Sadig et al., 2020).

The community has undergone a social transformation associated with rapid economic development and the influx of expatriate workers, including expatriate foreign coaches. This section contains an introduction that sheds light on the differences between Arab and Western or foreign cultures that can lead to a breakdown in communication between members of society and distance that may negatively affect society (Alhashmi et al., 2018). There is a difference between Western and non-Western Arab societies, and the differences that often cause misunderstanding among their members are highlighted. Arab societies tend to be collegial, promote interdependence, expect discussion and consultation in decision-making, and value maintaining relationships more than effective ones (Alaajel, 2019).

3- Educational institutions

Educational establishments serve as crucial instruments for societal regulation, impacting individuals morally, scientifically, and practically. Collaborating with families, they play a pivotal role in shaping personal identity and character. In the diverse landscape of UAE society, knowledge and education are imperative for upholding security and unity, promoting inclusivity. Additionally, these institutions influence our outlooks and furnish us with the essential competencies to navigate diverse scenarios, assisting in the pursuit of societal objectives guided by prevalent educational standards. Consequently, they cultivate individuals as esteemed contributors to societal advancement.

Societal and natural conditions determine the role and function of education. Within the relationship between education and society, the most prominent feature of education is its societal aspect. Education affects not only the educated person but also the whole of society, starting from his family. Being armed with education and science is a powerful weapon in confronting ideological extremism from specific people. Education is enlightenment for society and the individual because the educated person is fully aware of the importance of the homeland and the concept of national security and cannot be easily lured into actions that harm the interests and security of the state. However, there is a direct relationship between education and a country's ability to maintain its bilateral relations economically and, ultimately, as a global power. National security is inherently intertwined with economic stability, which in turn is heavily influenced by levels of educational achievement.

National Identity

Core principles like allegiance, affiliation, and selfhood are fundamental to fostering committed citizenship, and crucial for upholding national unity. The essence of national identity serves as a pivotal element within any nation's security architecture. The declaration of 2008 as the "Year of National Identity" by His Highness Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed highlights the paramount importance of this concept. This initiative underscores a dedication to nurturing the national identity of the state as a Gulf Arab entity. State security threats extend beyond external military or economic challenges to encompass internal vulnerabilities, which pose a more direct threat to the state's integrity..

National identity as a social concept means affiliation, loyalty, sincerity, and giving in the workplace according to investing in the best capabilities to raise the value of citizens and the whole country. It is this concept from which the idea of a responsible citizen, or productive citizenship, branched off. The concept of national identity has a role that requires action to confront the growing risks and the increasing challenges facing this concept. Some challenges and risks were not previously known to the turmoil of the Arab region, the complexity of international politics and the rule of cultural, civilizational, and scientific globalization led to the global cultural patterns.

Culture is often critical for solving societal and national problems because it contains the values that motivate human and national action. This view is further supported by the fact that in securing the various sections of culture, such as language, customs, norms, art, science, and metaphysical belief, there is an accompanying security of human societal systems, creating an alliance of the society. As culture and security follow some independent and functionally dependent dynamic trends concerning societal and individual well-being, it is appropriate to analyze its two-level operational function as either "culture security" or "culture security (Nabil, 2015).

Dual culture may negatively affect national identity and national security, as people's overall way of life has a tremendous security impact on people. Hence, national security is a complex concept, and without applying it to societal phenomena and national identity, it cannot be practically understood. It further states that the threat to cultural concepts forms the core of understanding national security. Specific threats to cultural notions of national security can be assessed through the weakening and

erosion. In some cases, even the internal collapse of states and societies and their inability to ensure public order and perform other functions (Mohieldin, 2017).

Similarly, globalization has negatively affected Arab societies and Arab identity due to unlimited openness, leading to the loss of Arab identity. External threats usually arise from conflict between one state and another or even an international organization. Internal threats are those unfavourable conditions that may lead to conflict and threaten public order. These conditions may be for social, political, economic, ideological, or ethnic reasons. Internal threats also come from influence from outside the country, especially by organizations or groups that promote values hostile to integration or cohesion in the country. Interfering with these values may lead to actions hostile to national security.

2.11 Media and the Ability to Combat Rumours

Zhang et al. (2016) consider the multiple disruptions caused by fake news and information spreading on social media platforms and highlight social media analytics as a strategic and tactical tool for enriching media management. Researchers define social media analytics as a procedure for gathering and analyzing information from various social networks and opine that such information management is necessary for managing and controlling user-generated content on social media. This article reveals that many organizations today rely on social media analytics to turn information on social media into important knowledge for enhancing product and service development and customer interaction. Stieglitz et al. (2018) specifically focus on the application of social media analytics in the context of crisis management and argue

that it offers better situational awareness, which may be used to deal with fake news or information on social channels efficiently.

However, researchers also highlight a range of drawbacks in this context, suggesting better methods for handling and restricting the spread of rumours on social media platforms. Choi et al. (2019) opine in this context that adopting media crisis management strategies must depend on the type or degree of false information being spread. Accordingly, there are three categories of information disorder: misinformation, disinformation, and malinformation.

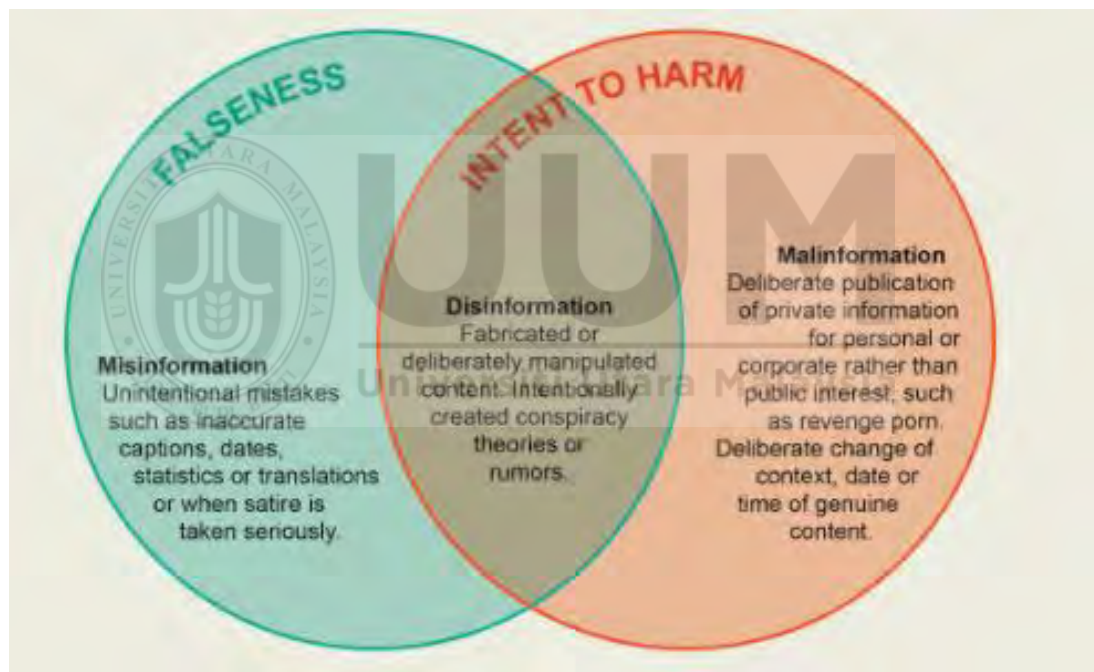


Figure 2. 14 Categories of information disorder
Source: (Zhang et al., 2016)

Social media may mitigate the crisis in different ways. Somerville (2009) primarily focused on analyzing stakeholders' emotions online, which helped to determine appropriate response strategies for minimizing reputational threats. According to the researcher, the rapid use of social media has drastically increased the unpredictability

of corporate crises today, which cannot be managed and eradicated using existing crisis management strategies. Therefore, a new analytical framework is necessary for understanding contemporary crises and designing suitable resolution tactics. Based on inferences gathered by analyzing several cases, Zhang et al. (2016) mention that crisis management strategies should be flexible and stakeholder-centric since social media. Researchers also propose a social media crisis management matrix in their article, which may be used to rationalize suitable response strategies.

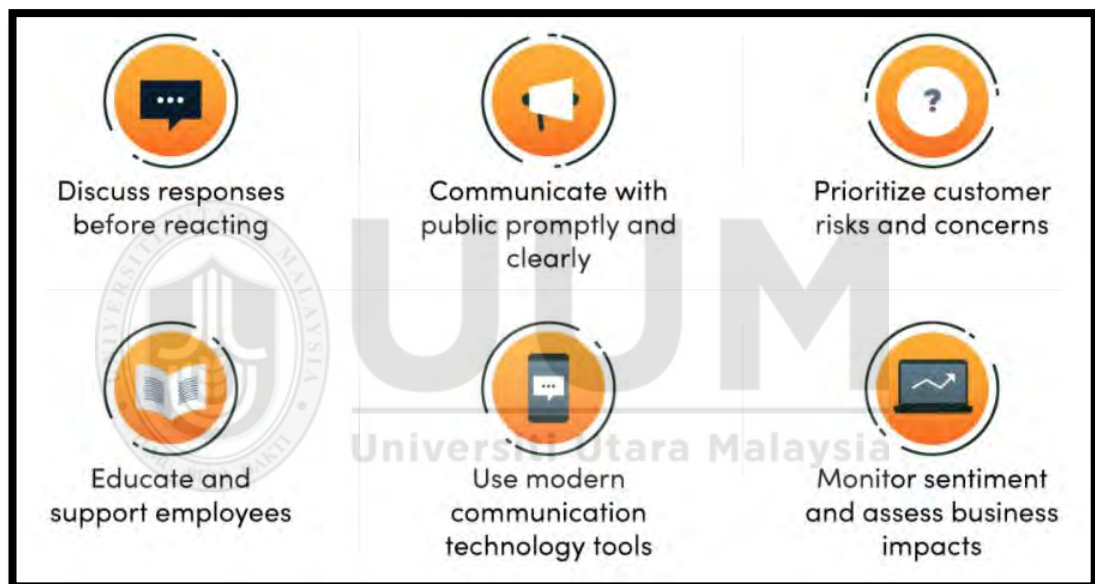


Figure 2. 15 Common media crisis management tactics
Source: (Zhang et al., 2016)

Within modern media crisis management, Public Relations (PR) assumes a crucial role. Following significant setbacks triggered by rumours and misinformation, organisations often enlist the expertise of PR professionals to regain momentum and repair their brand standing. As per Zhang et al. (2016), PR teams possess the analytical acumen to strategically navigate adverse scenarios and facilitate the restoration of brand value. Disseminating false news and fabricated reviews on social media

platforms can severely disrupt a company's operations, revenue generation, and investor relations. Utilizing e-collaboration, social media channels, television, and diverse media platforms, PR teams strive to engage transparently with customers, rebuild trust, and improve their brand perception. Consequently, PR strategies emerge as the optimal approach to media crisis management in today's context.



Figure 2. 16 Crisis management through PR
Source: (Bailey & Breslin, 2021)

Li et al. (2021) emphasize that companies can effectively address reputation damage caused by spreading false information on social media by proactively informing stakeholders about potential crises and their negative consequences before they escalate. Their study underscores that sharing inaccurate data on social platforms is a serious violation. However, the success of managing media crises depends on immediate actions taken by organizations when crises emerge. Moreover, scholars

stress the importance of crisis type and the organization's existing reputation as crucial factors influencing overall crisis management strategies. Bailey and Breslin (2021) additionally argue that adopting a clear and logical approach is the best tactic for handling a media crisis.

2.12 Media Ways to Deal with Rumours

According to Pennycook et al. (2020), ways to deal with rumours in the media:

1. **Effective treatment:** tends to cover up intimidation and superficial treatment, and his interest in the crisis ends with the end of the event; that is, it is a type of amputation treatment that can cause a misleading and confusing perception among the public, which is him. It is believed that this type of processing is only a response to the considerations of authority in particular systems or the requirements of the media market. The latter focuses on the marketing function of the media without regard to the function of education or education.
2. **Incomplete treatment:** This treatment is completely different from the first time and usually contradicts it to resolve the crisis through political dialogue or exaggerates the belief that these voices pose a danger to society.
3. **Comprehensive solutions:** It is a treatment that deals with different aspects of the crisis (attitudes, causes, background, development, prospects of the concerned parties) because this treatment is characterized by comprehensive, in-depth and accurate follow-up—respect for its subject and recipient.

Factors to consider when dealing with the media when dealing with a crisis:

- The relationship between the media and the crisis management team must be resolved with high accuracy and wisdom. When dealing with the media, some precautions must be considered when a crisis occurs in the organization.
- The need of the media to know the facts quickly, accurately and clearly must be met.
- Disclose the facts and developments of the situation so that the facts are not distorted.
- Acknowledgement of errors, honesty and integrity when transmitting information, and clarifying the causes of errors, because denying errors and identifying them from other parties may push the media to take an improper position in covering up the crisis.
- Dealing with ambiguity, doubt and emotions associated with the crisis.
- The organization does not take a position of self-defence and cannot answer questions with confidence and credibility.
- Preparing a list of answers to expected questions, such as the number of casualties and losses during the crisis.

The researcher believes that the Emirati media plays a crucial role in enhancing the country's profile and strengthening the nation as a centre for development and innovation. Our local media plays a pivotal role in highlighting our national achievements and conveying cultural messages in the UAE based on tolerance, coexistence, love and generosity. In the same context, the National Media Council always seeks to support and motivate the media sector to move towards a new stage of development that adopts a system of integrated coordination and cooperation. A

balanced media that maintains the highest standards of integrity, objectivity, and integrity is needed. It should be a driving force for national progress. Steven Fink introduced a four-stage crisis management model consisting of prodromal, acute, chronic, and resolution phases.

2.13 Controls For Effective Media

Social media plays a crucial role in delivering immediate news updates and emergency notifications. Its importance stems not just from people's frequent usage but also from their dependence on these platforms for timely information. Successful crisis management in the media domain relies on four key phases: setting overarching goals, pinpointing the target audience, formulating key messages, and selecting the communication platform. (M & Durai, 2017).

Fu (2020) stresses the importance of proactive crisis management, emphasizing the need for an advanced communication plan. This plan should foresee potential crises and detail appropriate responses to mitigate their impact. Clearly defining roles and responsibilities within the crisis communication strategy is crucial for effectively addressing uncertainties. Essential personnel, such as social media managers and organizational spokespeople, should deeply understand the legal aspects of data sharing and be familiar with the organization's communication policy and crisis messaging framework. Ferrara et al. (2020) underscore the importance of training organizational representatives to adeptly handle crisis communication scenarios, thus preventing undue stress from persistent media inquiries. Training should highlight the significance of tone and body language in interactions with the public and media.

2.14 Nature Of Media's Role

Because of the media's significant role in crisis management, several studies investigate the role of media in crises. Before the crisis, the media played a critical role in crisis prevention by educating citizens about the process of facing crises. As cited by Cheng (2018), media can also help create laws for crisis management and crisis management plans. Media also supervises the disaster centres and their readiness.



Figure 2. 17 Role of social media platforms in managing the crisis
Source: (Reuter & Kaufhold, 2018)

The media plays a vital role in providing information to the public during emergencies. Amplified media exposure of natural calamities improves public understanding of the situation. Findings from Alkhodair et al. (2020) study underscore the media's capacity to shape public responses, whether by fostering assistance for disaster victims or discouraging specific behaviours. While comprehensive news coverage can aid relief efforts, it's crucial to alleviate the potential for panic and unease among the population.

Hence, media organisations should strive to report disasters in a manner that reduces anxiety and apprehension.

Lindsay (2011) emphasizes the pivotal role of the media in monitoring the aftermath of crises. Media responsibility encompasses activities from pre-crisis readiness to post-crisis reporting, encompassing governmental and official responses to victims. Effective crisis handling involves promoting citizen readiness, fostering a media-aware society, and teaching vital skills such as basic rescue and first aid. All media channels significantly contribute to crisis management, public enlightenment, early warning mechanisms, and the mitigation of both human and financial tolls during crises. The public expects the media to deliver accurate and unbiased reporting, while also persistently tracking the consequences of crises to ensure accountability and sustained attention to the needs of affected individuals.

2.15 Main Challenges Facing The Media

Guo et al. (2020) argue that advancements in information and communication technologies have transformed the handling of crisis awareness, impact, and response. These developments aid in capturing and retaining crisis-generated information. Social media platforms are pivotal in allowing stakeholders and citizens to collect and share information, albeit governmental oversight frequently limits data flow. Despite its effectiveness in disseminating vital information during crises, social media also poses various challenges.

According to Reuter et al. (2019), the main challenges facing the media in managing crises consist of the following:

- A case of network overload or failure.
- The coordination and integration of information by the applicable media agencies and parties.
- Linking the formal and informal channels of data creation and distribution.
- Altering the information needs at different levels of the crisis.
- Reliable sources of data.
- Information insecurity.
- Providing accurate information to the accurate individual at the accurate time.
- Conflicting information.

As stated by Goel and Gupta (2020), social media is considered a helpful tool for distributing information to ensure the information is appropriately organized to fulfil the goals and objectives of the particular agency engaged. However, broadcasting information needs careful consideration while using social media platforms. Social media means combined power, which can ease damages during a crisis; however, the applicable legislation should be implemented in a country to govern media usage effectively as a crisis communication tool.

2.16 Driving Factors for Developing a Media Strategy

Shahsavari et al. (2020) stated that social media is helping crisis managers in performing existing communication-related activities and tasks rather than developing the requirement for completely new ones. The companies have been recognized for

utilizing social media platforms as society involvement tools. Thus, media can be utilized as a collective and collaborative intelligence tool in the organization and has been used to respond to disasters.

For crisis communication, the timeliness and accuracy of data are significant, as a lack of information reliability can result in decisions that may aggravate the crisis. Simultaneously, the authorities of organizations and individuals should be safeguarded, and thus, privacy should be maintained. Social media can assist in availability and timeliness because of the social nature one requires to guarantee the correctness of the information and preserve the necessary confidentiality. As per Vraga and Bode's (2021) opinion, the capacity to access information from any place or location can benefit any company, whether private or public. It enables immediate communication for people located anywhere. The properness of the information is significant because of the rapidly evolving nature of some crises like spontaneous events. Moreover, factors such as confidentiality, integrity, availability, completeness, accuracy, and relevancy must be considered while developing a media strategy for managing crises.

2.17 Research Gap

Upon scrutinizing the research objectives, various deficiencies emerge in the literature, suggesting avenues for further investigation. A notable gap involves the insufficient exploration of Dubai Police's perspectives on how social media facilitates information dissemination within Emirati society and its impact on rumour control. While some discourse exists on social media's role in spreading misinformation, deeper analysis is

required to understand how law enforcement perceives and navigates social media dynamics in addressing rumours.

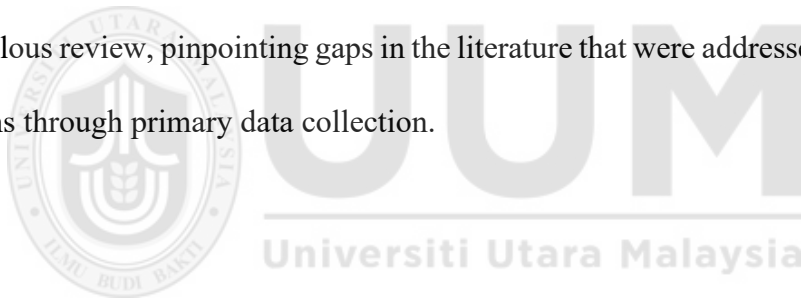
Another gap pertains to the need to examine Dubai Police's comprehension of how social media platforms foster rumour propagation within Emirati society. Grasping these mechanisms and law enforcement's viewpoints is essential for devising effective strategies against misinformation. Additionally, there is a necessity for a more in-depth examination of Dubai Police's stance on social media's reliability as an information source and its influence on their communication strategies. Investigating law enforcement's confidence in social media and their management of challenges in delivering accurate digital information can offer valuable insights into their communication approaches. Furthermore, evaluating the efficacy of Dubai Police's initiatives in combatting rumour dissemination through social media within Emirati society is pivotal. While efforts to combat misinformation are acknowledged, more empirical evidence is required on the outcomes and effectiveness of these initiatives in practice.

Lastly, a thorough assessment of Dubai Police's tactics and programmes to counter rumours through social media in Emirati society is warranted. Understanding these strategies can guide future interventions and policy formulations. Addressing these gaps can enrich our understanding of social media's role in rumour management in Emirati society and enhance the effectiveness of communication strategies and interventions by Dubai Police and other relevant entities.

2.18 Conclusion

The media holds a crucial role in modern society, its reach expanding globally through various communication channels. However, the reliability of information circulated on these platforms often raises concerns, posing risks to national security and causing destabilization. Misinformation spreads swiftly within societal structures, impacting fundamental aspects. The UAE society experiences significant changes due to evolving social communication methods, altering traditional lifestyles and fostering increased receptiveness to external influences.

This chapter thoroughly explores existing literature to furnish readers with comprehensive insights into the research topic. Scholarly evidence undergoes meticulous review, pinpointing gaps in the literature that were addressed in subsequent sections through primary data collection.



CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The methodology chapter of a thesis dissertation is essential as it outlines the research approach to answer the research questions. It is important that the methodology is clearly defined and detailed to ensure that the study is conducted validly and reliably.

The current chapter also describes the methods used for data collection, analysis, sampling technique, and others.

This chapter aims to highlight and discuss the research methods used for the current study. Notably, media crises caused by spreading rumours and false information have become a growing issue of national importance in most countries today. With the rapid onset and development of digital media and various social media platforms (Ali, 2020), people today enjoy increased access to information, which has several positive sides but also facilitates sharing false data. This tendency has several disadvantages and affects society in different ways. Countries have designed and adopted various media crisis management techniques to address and mitigate these challenges (Saunders et al., 2009). However, their efficiency and effectiveness, in reality, remain a question. The current study aims to

fill this void by investigating the effectiveness of the Dubai Police in combating rumours. The three research objectives developed in the first chapter were followed diligently throughout the research process to conduct fluent and valid research in this case.

Thus, the most suitable research design and methodologies were chosen to fulfil the research objectives as research design and methodology. These approaches are considered the building blocks of any research project and define the work of selecting and using a specific strategy, the philosophical concept, and the data collection techniques and analysis (Cooper & Schindler, 2013).

According to Collis and Hussey (2009), a research methodology refers to the philosophical presumptions and presuppositions that constitute the essence of reality (ontology) and knowledge (epistemology). It contains principles governing a scientific investigation and the technical problems encountered when conducting a study.

The chapter follows the research onion method and begins with a discussion on certain paradigms and various research approaches, particularly positivism versus interpretivism, deductive versus inductive, cross-sectional versus longitudinal, and quantitative versus qualitative. A discussion and explanation of instrument development, sampling design, data collection method, and questionnaire are included. Finally, the explanations are presented through a data analysis approach and statistical tools.

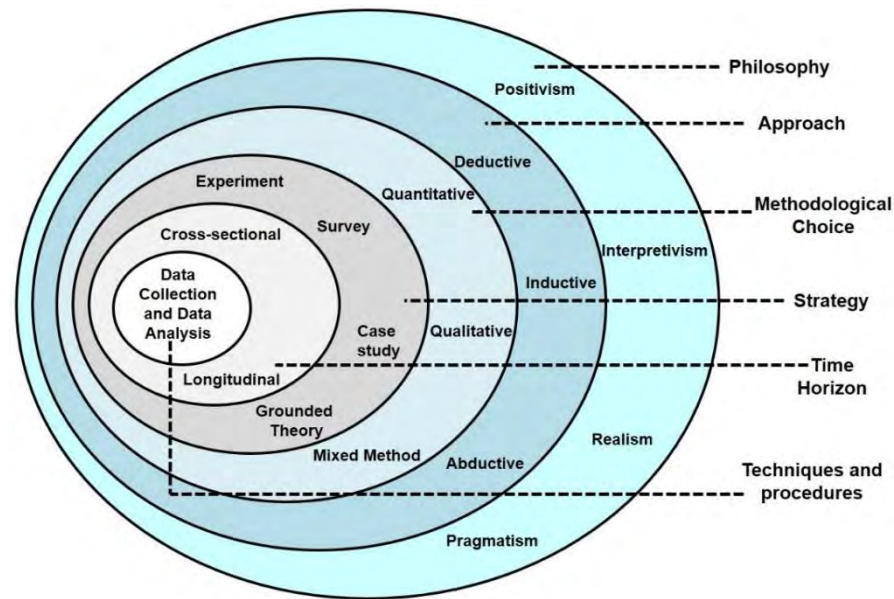


Figure 3.1 Research Onion
Source: (Saunders et al., 2009))

3.2 Research philosophy

Holden (2010) stated that choosing a research philosophy is the preliminary step in the research process since it defines how data about a specific phenomenon must be gathered and analyzed. There are four research philosophies: pragmatism, positivism, realism, and interpretivism, and each offers a precise research trajectory.

Pragmatism follows a deconstructive paradigm and promotes the use of mixed research methods. This particular philosophy deals with facts and focuses primarily on the research problem. Positivism is very similar to pragmatism as it also emphasizes factual data. However, positivism encourages an objective viewpoint and states that objectively assessing the world is the best way to understand a particular phenomenon. Realism is another crucial research philosophy that follows the idea that the human mind is independent of reality. This philosophy is often divided into direct and critical realism, which offers different perspectives and paths for conducting research. Lastly,

interpretivism follows the principle that observing the social world from different perspectives is the best way to investigate a phenomenon (Bryman & Bell, 2012).

Considering the type and nature of this research, positivist philosophy, which aids in gathering objective and realistic data about a particular phenomenon without manipulating any of its variables, was chosen. Adopting an objective standpoint helped gather impartial and unbiased information for this study, which in turn assisted in investigating the particular case of the Dubai Police in detail and identifying the various impacts and implications of a media crisis in this context. Most importantly, positivist philosophy aided in gathering factual knowledge through intense measurement and observation, significantly improving the quality of the data collected in this research. Furthermore, adhering to the tenets of positivism also helped in rigorous and empirical research, which helped analyze all hypotheses and measure results.

3.3 Research design

Selecting the research design is the next important step in the research process, which provides the overall strategy for logically integrating various research components to address the primary research problem efficiently and coherently. Cooper and Schindler (2013) state that a research design offers the blueprint for collecting, measuring, and analyzing data. Various research methodologies encompass descriptive, exploratory, explanatory, case study, action research, and cross-sectional approaches. Selecting the most suitable methodology is essential for conducting thorough and accurate research and obtaining valuable insights.

Given the nature of the research objectives, a mixed-method design was opted for in this study. This approach allows for a comprehensive exploration of the chosen research problem (Bryman & Bell, 2012). Particularly advantageous in examining the Dubai Police's role in managing media crises, the case study design facilitated focused research on critical aspects, streamlining the process and enhancing hypothesis testing.

Crucially, this approach facilitated an examination of real-world scenarios, thereby enhancing the quality of the final findings. With both quantitative and qualitative data involved, this research is capable of capturing nuanced details, underscoring the versatility of mixed-method approaches. Such an approach integrates qualitative and quantitative elements to provide a thorough understanding of a specific topic (Z. Ali & Bhaskar, 2016).

Mixed-method research proves invaluable for investigating complex topics such as social phenomena, which cannot be adequately addressed by single methods. By combining qualitative and quantitative methodologies, researchers can uncover diverse perspectives, explore interactions between elements, and draw more robust conclusions (Berman, 2017).

Given the scarcity of knowledge surrounding media crisis management, particularly within the context of the Dubai Police, the research topic is inherently intricate. The case study design was particularly effective in conducting detailed investigations and contextual analyses to identify key variables, conditions, and relationships. Furthermore, this research design facilitated significant contributions to existing

literature on media crisis management and provides foundational insights for future studies.

3.3.1 Ontology

According to Saunders et al. (2009), ontology is related to reality, leading researchers to make assumptions about how the world operates. There are two sides to ontology: objectivism (the role of social factors that exist in reality external to social players concerned with their presence) and subjectivism (social entities made by the perception and awareness of and actions resulting from those entities involved with their existence).

Creswell (2009) defines ontology as the collection of concepts and relationships that can exist for an individual or a community. A shared ontology establishes the language used for communication among individuals. This study adopts a subjectivist ontology, wherein human interactions and behaviours shape and reinforce the perceived realities within their environments.

3.3.2 Epistemology

According to Sekaran and Bougie (2013), epistemology is the disagreement about the nature of knowledge or how we come to know. While Saunders et al. (2012) suggest that epistemology concerns what constitutes acceptable knowledge in a field of study. Further, Bhattacharjee (2012) mentioned that epistemology refers to our assumptions about the best way to study the world. In other words, (Hofer & Bendixen, 2012) describe epistemology as a branch of philosophy that focuses on studying knowledge, its acquisition, and validation.

In research, epistemology concerns how researchers come to know something and the implications that knowledge has for research. Epistemology is divided into two branches: traditional and modern. Traditional epistemology seeks to understand how knowledge is acquired through reason, while contemporary epistemology focuses on the justification of knowledge and the sources that provide it. In research, epistemology is important as it forms the basis for the design of studies, data collection, analysis of results, and interpretation of information. It helps researchers critically evaluate the value of their information and distinguish between empirical evidence and mere opinion.

3.3.3 Axiology

According to Saunders et al. (2012a), axiology is a field of philosophy that focuses on value judgments. The researcher's values play an influential role in the research stages and contribute to the credibility of the results. From another point of view, the guiding reason for all human action is based on our values. To articulate the values, the researcher must demonstrate axiological skill as a building block for making judgments about how they will conduct the research. Selecting a philosophical paradigm reflects research values, such as selecting procedures regarding data collection (Heron, 1996).

Biedenbach and Jacobson (2016) define axiology in research as a branch of philosophy that studies values and ethics. In research, axiology is concerned with understanding people's ethical and moral beliefs and how these values affect their behaviour and decisions. Axiology is particularly important in psychology, sociology, economics, and other social sciences research. For example, an axiological approach to research

may involve looking at the different cultural beliefs and attitudes that contribute to a person's decision-making or how a political system values other aspects of society. Axiology can also be used to examine how different societies' value systems affect how people think, behave, and interact with each other.

Permilovski (2012) mentioned that a value continuously depends and presents on the subject. Additionally, the quality of an "evaluative judgment" or ideas will be expressed through expressions, i.e., "like" or "dislike," "importance," or "unimportance," measured by axiological assessment. Moreover, it is undeniable that the researcher's values are influential when choosing the research area, formulating research questions, methods and techniques, data collection implementation, data analysis and interpretation, and conclusions (Bryman & Bell, 2012). Consequently, it is rational to state that this research is value-laden.

3.4 Research approach

Both inductive and deductive approaches are two well-known methods of reasoning (logic). The deductive method involves formulating the hypothesis and theory and designing a research technique to investigate the hypothesis. Meanwhile, the inductive method involves collecting and developing a theory from data analysis. Induction owes more to interpretivism and deduction to positivism (Saunders et al., 2009).

According to Lancaster (2005), the deductive method is restrictive, involves the confirmation or testing of hypotheses, and refers to a group of methods used in executing a stringent testable theory to appraise its applicability in reality or the actual setting. Sekaran and Bougie (2013) indicated that deduction is a procedure for drawing

a sensible conclusion by rationalizing recognized information. Several procedures are involved in this process, and in the scientific method, it is regarded as the building block.

Following the nature and type of this study, the deductive research approach was selected. This approach specifically helped in conducting a logical study and gathering data that may be used to represent a larger focus area. Most importantly, the deductive research approach facilitated the collection of valid research conclusions from theories and data presented in the existing literature.

According to Myers et al. (2010), the deductive approach mainly involves deducing appropriate conclusions from several propositions and premises. The deductive approach emphasizes an expected pattern within research, which helps make relevant and valid observations. This approach proved most suitable and beneficial for this study. It helped observe the prevalence of media crisis in the case of Dubai Police, identifying the direct and indirect implications of media crisis for the organization and the public in general.

Besides, it also facilitated the evaluation of existing media crisis management strategies used by Dubai Police about existing theories and models on the selected topic. In addition, this research approach also helped me to recognize and evaluate causal relationships between different variables and concepts associated with media crisis and management. Since this research approach follows a quantitative trajectory, it greatly aided in conducting the current study most objectively and rationally. Overall, the deductive approach helped collect accurate and reliable research data.

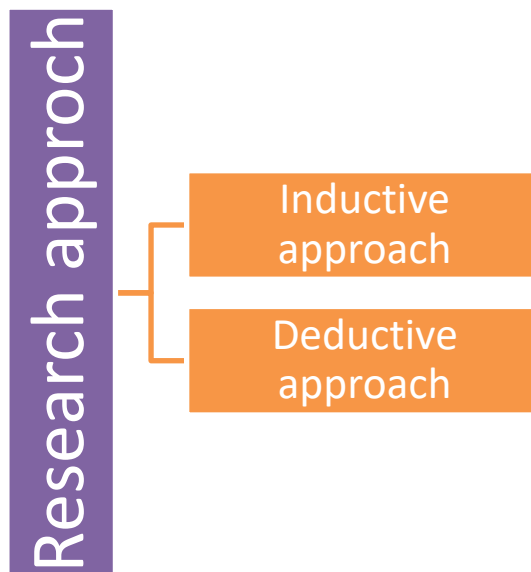


Figure 3. 2 Types of research approach
(Source: Self-developed)

3.4.1 Population

Selecting suitable research participants is a vital criterion for ensuring that the data collected is valid. For this, it is imperative to identify subjects whose characteristics are related or of interest to the chosen research topic (Hawkins & Sanson-Fisher, 2007). Notably, the population in research refers to a group of people or objects being studied. The population can either be a sample of the larger population or the entire population. It is important in research to define the population of interest, as this will determine the study's design, the data collected, and the type of analysis conducted. This definition will also help researchers identify the specific group of people or objects studied and the characteristics that define the population.

The population of the current research comprised individuals working in the Dubai Police, specifically employees or officials working in the relevant organization who were primarily selected as the target population. However, Ali and Bhaskar (2016)

mention that a significant factor influencing the selection of the target population in research is accessibility. This crucial criterion was addressed in the current context by submitting a proposal letter to the Dubai Police administration and gaining their approval to research some employees.

This approval was further used to gather the email addresses of all employees and officials currently working in the headquarters location of Dubai Police. This target population proved most suitable and effective for the current research since employees working in the organization have the best and most updated knowledge about the issues confronted by Dubai Police due to media reporting and information spreading conduct. Notably, important tactics were adopted to avoid such crises and the significant implications of media crisis on the organization's reputation and the residents of Dubai.

3.5 Sampling

According to Ali et al. (2021) the process of choosing a sample population from the targeted group is crucial to ensure the research's viability and accuracy. Employing a suitable sampling technique is necessary to select a representative set of participants. The initial step involves establishing a sampling frame that fits the research criteria and encompasses all significant characteristics of the target population (Gentles, 2019).

The sampling frame devised for this study is based on three key criteria. Firstly, participants must be employees of the Dubai Police. Secondly, they should have a minimum of one year of experience. Thirdly, they must demonstrate awareness of media crises and their prevalence in Dubai today.

Demographic factors beyond these criteria were not included in the sampling frame due to the diverse nature of the Dubai Police workforce, which comprises individuals from various nationalities, age groups, and levels of experience. No specific department within the Dubai Police was targeted, as media crises and management concern the organization as a whole rather than specific domains or departments.

The subsequent step in the sampling process is selecting the most appropriate method for choosing the sample population from the target group. Gentles (2019) outlines two primary sampling approaches: probability and non-probability sampling. Probability sampling assumes an equal chance of selection for every member of the target population, while non-probability sampling acknowledges variations in selection probabilities. Given that one of the primary selection criteria is awareness of media crises and their management, particularly within the context of the Dubai Police, a non-probability sampling technique was employed in this research.

Several non-probability sampling techniques are available, such as snowballing, accidental or convenience sampling, purposive sampling, modal instance sampling, and others (Habes, Ali, Qamar, et al., 2023). Among these options, convenience sampling emerged as the most suitable method for this study, facilitating the selection of participants well-versed in media crises and management. According to Alvi

(2016), convenience sampling is utilized when obtaining a random sample proves challenging or impractical, often employed in survey research to overcome logistical constraints and save time and resources.

Despite facing criticism, convenience sampling remains prevalent due to its simplicity and cost-effectiveness (Etikan 2017). It serves as a valuable tool for preliminary investigations, providing insights into the data before pursuing a broader, more representative sample. Thus, based on the outlined sampling frame criteria, participants were selected from the target population consisting of all current employees at the Dubai Police headquarters.

3.5.1 Sample Size

The recent data from the Dubai Police indicates that there are a total of four departments in the relevant organization (see Table 3.1). Notably, there are twelve police stations in Dubai as per the requirements of each area (Government of Dubai, 2022). These police statistics are in Al Rifa, Naif, Al Murraqbat, Al Rashidiyaah, Al Qusais, Hatta, Jebel Ali, Ports, Nad Al-Sheba, Bur Dubai, Al Barsha, and Al-Khawaneej. Over 17,500 police employees in Dubai (in all the departments) police the 4,114 square kilometres. There are force departments in the Dubai Police, and all of them are headed by Major General Dr Mohammad Nasser Al Razooqi.

Table 3. 1
Details of Departments in Dubai Police

| S/R. | Departments | Established in |
|------|--|----------------|
| 1. | General Department of Operations | 1990 |
| 2. | General Department of Artificial Intelligence | 2001 |
| 3. | General Department of Criminal Investigation | 2008 |
| 4. | General Department of Forensic Science and Criminology | 1980 |

Now that the total number of employees is determined from the recent data, the researcher further calculated the ideal sample size. As noted by Taherdoost (2016), sample size selection is an important step in research projects as it helps to narrow down the group of individuals for the data gathering.

According to Sharma (2015)), sampling size determination is important due to limited financial resources and periods, and a particular sample size helps the researchers gather the data from individuals that are representative of the population. Thus, the sample size is selected in this research based on some criteria.

3.5.2 Quantitative Sample Size

First, for the quantitative sample size, the researchers utilized two criteria. First, the researchers used Krejcie and Morgan's sample size determination formula (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970). The Krejcie and Morgan sample size formula is an important tool for researchers when determining how many participants they should include in a study. This formula helps to ensure that the study's findings are accurate and that the conclusions are meaningful. According to Dokhan and Akkoyunlu (2016), the Krejcie and Morgan sample size formula aims to estimate the number of participants that should be included in a study. The formula helps researchers to optimize their sample size to ensure the accuracy of their results. The formula considers the population size and the level of precision that the researchers desire.

Kenpro (2012) argued that the Krejcie and Morgan sample size formula is based on a combination of factors, including population size, standard deviation, and expected level of accuracy. To calculate a sample size, the researcher inputs the population size

and the desired level of precision into the formula. This will then give the researcher an estimate of the number of participants that should be included in the study.

$$s = X^2 NP(1-P) + d^2 (N-1) = X^2 P(1-P)$$

Table 3. 2

Sample Size Selection based on Krjceic and Morgan (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970).

| <i>N</i> | <i>s</i> | <i>N</i> | <i>s</i> | <i>N</i> | <i>s</i> |
|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| 10 | 10 | 220 | 140 | 1200 | 291 |
| 15 | 14 | 230 | 144 | 1300 | 297 |
| 20 | 19 | 240 | 148 | 1400 | 302 |
| 25 | 24 | 250 | 152 | 1500 | 306 |
| 30 | 28 | 260 | 155 | 1600 | 310 |
| 35 | 32 | 270 | 159 | 1700 | 313 |
| 40 | 36 | 280 | 162 | 1800 | 317 |
| 45 | 40 | 290 | 165 | 1900 | 320 |
| 50 | 44 | 300 | 169 | 2000 | 322 |
| 55 | 48 | 320 | 175 | 2200 | 327 |
| 60 | 52 | 340 | 181 | 2400 | 331 |
| 65 | 56 | 360 | 186 | 2600 | 335 |
| 70 | 59 | 380 | 191 | 2800 | 338 |
| 75 | 63 | 400 | 196 | 3000 | 341 |
| 80 | 66 | 420 | 201 | 3500 | 346 |
| 85 | 70 | 440 | 205 | 4000 | 351 |
| 90 | 73 | 460 | 210 | 4500 | 354 |
| 95 | 76 | 480 | 214 | 5000 | 357 |
| 100 | 80 | 500 | 217 | 6000 | 361 |
| 110 | 86 | 550 | 226 | 7000 | 364 |
| 120 | 92 | 600 | 234 | 8000 | 367 |
| 130 | 97 | 650 | 242 | 9000 | 368 |
| 140 | 103 | 700 | 248 | 10000 | 370 |
| 150 | 108 | 750 | 254 | 15000 | 375 |
| 160 | 113 | 800 | 260 | 20000 | 377 |
| 170 | 118 | 850 | 265 | 30000 | 379 |
| 180 | 123 | 900 | 269 | 40000 | 380 |
| 190 | 127 | 950 | 274 | 50000 | 381 |
| 200 | 132 | 1000 | 278 | 75000 | 382 |
| 210 | 136 | 1100 | 285 | 100000 | 384 |

Note.—*N* is population size. *s* is sample size.

Based on the total size of the population ($n= 17,500$), Krejcie and Morgan's sample size determination indicates an ideal sample size of $n= 377$ police employees. In other words, a sample size of $n= 377$ was suitable based on the study design and objectives, as also validated by the previous studies (Boateng et al., 2016).

Furthermore, the researchers also used a second sample size estimation criteria known as G* Power Analysis. Notably, G* Power analysis is one of the widely applied sample selection techniques that help researchers ensure the reliability and validity of their results by setting certain criteria regarding the sample size (Faul et al., 2007). Thus, the G* Power analysis was applied by keeping the settings at “Fixed-linear regression” (Kang, 2021), and the number of predictors was $n= 1$. Results indicated that an ideal sample size, based on the number of predictors and relationships between the variables, would be a minimum of $n= 74$ respondents with the effect size f^2 and error of approximation value at 3.33. Figure 3.1 graphically represents the central and non-central sample size distribution according to the G* Power analysis. Thus, based on both criteria, the researcher finalized the sample size of $n= 377$ respondents as ideal for this research project.

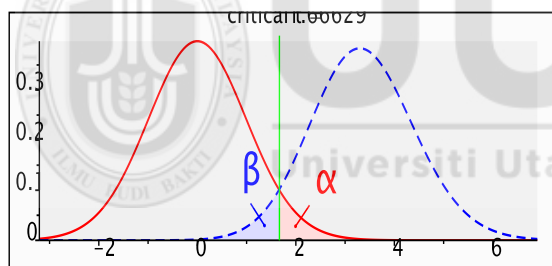


Figure 3. 3 Central and Non-Central Sample Size Distribution

3.5.3 Data collection method

There are several methods for data collection, for instance, observation, self-administered paper questionnaire, self-administered electronic questionnaire, interview, physical experiment, and multi-methods (Sekaran & Bougie, 2013). An adequate data collection method for any study inherently depends upon the study's problem (Tull & Hawkins, 1984). It is recognized that the most acceptable method of

generating primary data is through surveys (Zikmund et al., 2010). Thus, this study first employs quantitative data collection following the rules of statistical surveys. Surveys can be applied using non-Internet survey methods or Internet survey forms. There are several techniques for Non-Internet surveys, such as personal interviews, telephone interviews, self-administered questionnaires, and structured observations.

On the other hand, an internet survey involves generating a Web-based or mail panel and administering it online. Structured surveys for police employees were the primary choice. Thus, according to Sekaran and Bougie (2013), each questionnaire mode of data collection has its advantages and disadvantages, as shown in (Table 3.1).

Table 3. 3
Questionnaire Methods of Data Collection

| Method of questionnaire | Advantages | Disadvantages |
|---------------------------------|---|---|
| Mail questionnaires | Wide geographic areas can be reached. More comfortably, the respondent can take more time to answer. Respondent anonymity is high. Questions can be clarified. Ability to motivate respondents. | Possibly resulting in low response rates. Unable to clarify additional details. Non-response follow-up procedures are necessary. |
| Self-administered questionnaire | High response rate. Low cost when administered to a group. Anonymity is high. | An organization may be reluctant to give work time out for the survey with groups of employees assembled. |
| Online questionnaire | Inexpensive, Globally reached. Easy to administer from remote locations Fast delivery Respondents feel free to answer the mail questionnaire. | You need a certain level of computer literacy. Respondents may experience technical problems. Respondents must be willing to complete the survey. |

Source: (Sekaran & Bougie, 2013)

The respondents are police employees and personnel in Abu Dhabi, UAE. The researcher distributed a personally administered questionnaire to collect data from respondents within the sample populations in the current study. It first required the researcher to distribute the questionnaires and collect them once they were completed. As Sekaran and Bougie (2013) argued that such an approach can create a bond and motivate the respondents, and any doubts can be clarified on-site. Also, it can be cost-efficient when administered to a group of respondents, and the response rate is usually high.

Collecting data by following a pre-approved research philosophy, design, and approach is the most important step in the research process since the validity of ultimate findings, and research conclusions depends on the tactics and methods involved in the data collection procedure. Golder et al. (2017) argued that there are two definitive data types, which are primary and secondary. Primary data refers to information gathered for the first time, whereas secondary data refers to information produced or collected by others. Primary data is considered more valuable than secondary data since it involves information derived from first-hand sources (Golder et al., 2017).

Nevertheless, secondary data is also very valuable in research as it offers valuable inferences gained by scholars and academics in the field. In this study, the primary data type was selected over secondary data since the major intention of the research was to investigate and review media crises and management in the case of the Dubai Police. This particular data type significantly helped in considering and studying the case of Dubai Police and addressing all research objectives.

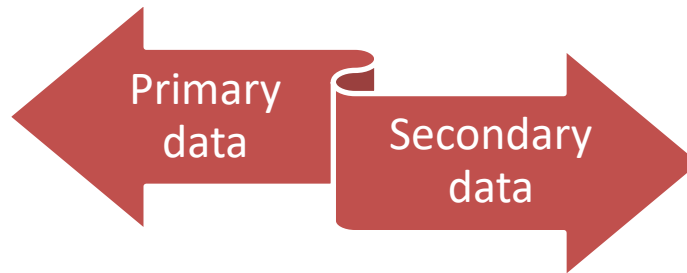


Figure 3. 4 Types of data
(Source: Self-developed)

3.6 Operational Definitions

Rumours. Rumours are stories or information circulating among people but have not been verified or confirmed. They are often spread by word-of-mouth and can take on a life of their own as they spread from person to person. Rumours can be harmless but damaging or hurtful to the people involved. They can also be used to manipulate public opinion and create false impressions.

Social Media. Social media is a term used to describe digital technologies and platforms that enable users to interact with each other and share content, such as photos, videos, text, and audio. Popular examples of social media platforms include Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter.

Rumour Mongering. Rumour-mongering is the malicious spread of rumours, gossip, or false information to damage someone's reputation, create confusion, or cause trouble. It is important to note that while rumours can be harmless, they can also be damaging and harmful. Knowing the potential consequences of rumours before they are spread is important.

3.7 Data Gathering Tool

3.7.1 Quantitative Tool

Data gathering tools are essential for any research study, as they provide the necessary information to analyze the research topic accurately. Data gathering tools can be used to collect quantitative and qualitative data, which allows researchers to gain a deeper insight into the research topic. For example, surveys, interviews, and focus groups are popular data-gathering tools that help researchers understand the opinions and beliefs of the participants.

At the same time, field observations and experiments provide researchers with empirical data (Ponto, 2015). Additionally, data-gathering tools can help researchers explore the relationships between variables and identify causal relationships that can be used to make informed decisions. Therefore, data-gathering tools are essential for any research study as they provide the necessary data to analyze the research topic accurately and draw meaningful conclusions (Moser & Kalton, 2017). Several quantitative tools for gathering primary data include surveys or questionnaires, case studies and checklists (Kypri et al., 2004).

The quantitative survey method was selected for this study due to its ease of administration, efficiency in terms of time, cost-effectiveness, and compatibility with remote or online methods. These characteristics made it particularly suitable for data collection during the pandemic, eliminating the need for physical visits to the Dubai Police and enabling survey administration to participants remotely.

Moreover, the survey method also helped in efficiently gathering quantifiable and measurable data, which helped logically answer all research questions. The survey respondents considered for this research, sampling methods used, and other relevant procedures involved in developing and administering the survey in the case of Dubai Police are described in detail below.

3.7.2 Translation of Research Instruments

The survey items were adapted from previous studies and were originally written in English. However, as the current study was undertaken in the United Arab Emirates, where Arabic is the main language, the items had to be translated to ensure their comprehension. Jones et al. (2001) suggested several translation methods, including one-way translations, bilingual techniques, the committee approach, and pre-testing.

They also mentioned that there can be issues with the translation process, such as some technical words that have an understandable meaning in English but no significance in other languages, or the translator needing to gain knowledge of the topic being researched. In this regard, this research employed two translation methods: one-way translation and back translation.

1. A 16-year experienced bilingual language translator was tasked to convert the questionnaire from English to Arabic.
2. Secondly, back translation was employed, in which the Arabic version was given to another bilingual language teacher with seven years of translation experience to translate it back into English and check the content and the meaning of the items. This method requires two independent translators, as Brislin (1970) recommended.

3. Lastly, the semi-finalized version was handed to three academics with expertise to finalize the words, ensuring the correct translation.

3.7.3 Quantitative Questionnaire

Conversely, the quantitative method focuses on quantity and consists of descriptive, logical, and quantifiable data collection techniques. Both these methods have their advantages and disadvantages in different contexts. In the case of the current study, qualitative and quantitative data collection methods were primarily chosen to fulfil basic research requirements and conduct detailed research on Dubai Police.

3.7.4 Measurement Scales

In this study, three typologies of scaling were implemented to measure and evaluate the data collected: nominal, interval, and ratio. Nominal scales were used to collect personal information about the participants, allowing them to be divided into categorised groups. On the other hand, an interval scale was used to measure behaviour, attitude, perception, and beliefs and measure the magnitude of differences between individuals.

Similarly, the items in the questionnaire were measured using a five-point Likert scale, with ratings ranging from '1' for 'strongly disagree' to '6' for 'strongly agree'. This type of scale was chosen to prevent participants from merely opting for the 'indifference' option, which often occurs with a five-point scale. According to Preedy and Watson (2010), the presence of a five-point Likert scale with a middle point of '3' for 'neither agree nor disagree' can interfere with the results of the study due to social desirability bias. They further argued that the participants would choose their answers in line with the content of the questions when presented with an even number of response choices.

Additionally, people from Middle Eastern countries are found to be more likely to pick the middle option than others (Joshi, 2015). Furthermore, using an even number response scale produces higher validity and reliability of findings compared to an odd number scale (Croasmun & Ostrom, 2011).

3.7.5 Sources of Quantitative Scales and Items

Section 1

A segment of the ongoing research centred on acquiring general insights into Emirati society, encompassing perspectives on information propagation, media accessibility, particularly through social media channels, usage patterns, and the velocity of information diffusion. Notably, a scale consisting of four items was employed, drawing from the methodology established by Cinelli et al. (2020), who devised the scale to evaluate general perceptions regarding the role of social media, its utilization, and its influence on disseminating news about societal phenomena.

However, the selected scale was also adopted from the studies conducted in different parts of the world, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic, to investigate social media use and general perceptions of information (Ahmed, 2020). Table 3.4 summarizes the scale items for social media and information.

Table 3. 4
Measurements Items of Social Media

| S/R | Items |
|-----|---|
| 1. | Lack of awareness in the UAE society |
| 2. | Delayed clarification by the concerned authorities of the news |
| 3. | Multiculturalism in Emirati society |
| 4. | The development and availability of mass media and social media |

Section 2

Section 2 of the quantitative questionnaire examined the importance of social media in spreading information. According to Adekoya & Fasae (2021), spreading information is one of the most prominent contributions of social media in our society. It has also led people to develop critical thinking abilities and access information beyond borders. The relevant section is based on three items adopted from the scale developed, used, and empirically tested by Cinelli et al. (2020). Table 3.5 provides details regarding the Social Media and Information scale.

Table 3. 5

Measurements Items of Social Media and Information Scale

| S/R | Easy access to social media |
|------------|---|
| 1. | Sources of information on a common topic |
| 2. | Common spread speed |
| 3. | Easy access to social media |
| 4. | The development and availability of mass media and social media |

Part 2 of the survey questionnaire aimed to collect responses concerning social media's role in either propagating or mitigating rumours, how social media platforms react to rumours, the societal repercussions of rumours circulated via social media, and their impact on police operations. This section employed a scale comprising five items to delve into the contemporary role of social media in rumour dissemination. The scale utilized to gauge the influence of social media on rumour dynamics and their outcomes was adapted from the work of Zheltukhina et al. (2016). Zheltukhina et al. (2016) and Pröllochs and Feuerriegel (2022). Notably, both studies have widely used and investigated the role of social media in rumours.

However, contrasting conclusions have emerged from recent research regarding the impact of social media on rumours. While Zheltukhina et al. (2016) suggested a positive role in confirming or dispelling rumours, Pröllochs and Feuerriegel (2022) demonstrated its negative influence in spreading them. It's worth noting that the latter study was conducted in the post-COVID-19 pandemic period, which saw significant changes in online discourse. Several studies conducted during (Lachlan, 2020) and after the pandemic Wang et al. (2021) have empirically explored social media's role in rumour dissemination and misinformation, emphasizing the need to investigate this phenomenon across different contexts. Table 3.6 outlines the scale items related to social media and rumours.

Table 3. 6
Measurements Items of Social Media and Rumours

| S/R | Items |
|-----|---|
| 1. | Rumourmongers exploit crises to spread anxiety and fear among members of society. |
| 2. | Social media contributes to responding to rumours and reducing their spread. |
| 3. | Social media shapes individual and societal consciousness. |
| 4. | Social media spreads culture and enlightenment among the members of society. |
| 5. | Social media plays a vital role in spreading rumours. |

Section 3

In section three, In the third section of the study, five questionnaire items were included to explore how social media contributes to sharing accurate information and building trust among individuals and institutions. Additionally, it investigated the involvement of police personnel in countering rumours within Emirati society. The questionnaire items are detailed in Table 3.6.

These items were adapted from the social media and trustworthy information scale developed by (Keshavarz, 2020), who examined social media’s role in disseminating accurate information and enhancing public trust in government institutions. Similarly, Sun (2021) utilized this scale and proposed strategies to strengthen social media's role in sharing reliable information, thereby narrowing the gap between authorities and the public. Details of the scale items used to assess social media as a dependable information source are presented in Table 3.7.

Table 3. 7
Social Media as a Reliable Source of Information

| S/R | Items |
|-----|--|
| 1. | Social media informs society of facts as a reliable source of information. |
| 2. | Social media promotes trust between the public and institutions. |
| 3. | Social media investigates accuracy and credibility before publishing the news. |
| 4. | Social networking sites are more influential in spreading rumours and limiting them. |
| 5. | Dubai Police have strict procedures to curb rumours. |

Section 4

The fourth scale consisted of five items that delved into the involvement of Dubai Police in addressing rumours propagated through social media. These items explored various facets, including the police force's role in curbing the spread of rumours, initiating and managing awareness campaigns, and monitoring social media platforms to counteract potential rumours. This scale drew inspiration from a study conducted by Kyza et al. (2020), which investigated how local police departments worldwide tackle social media-based rumours and misinformation. And as highlighted by Rogers et al. (2020), police departments play a pivotal role in addressing rumours disseminated through social media channels. They undertake significant measures to monitor and combat the dissemination of false information, thus ensuring accuracy

and minimizing the spread of misleading rumours. A detailed breakdown of the scale items assessing the role of police departments in combating social media rumours can be found in Table 3.8.

Table 3. 8

The Role of Police Departments in Counteracting Social Media Rumours

| S/R | Items |
|-----|--|
| 1. | Dubai Police is coordinating with the concerned authorities to limit the spread of rumours. |
| 2. | Dubai Police organizes awareness and warning campaigns to address rumour spreaders. |
| 3. | Dubai Police do not tolerate applying the law to rumour spreaders, follow up on their activities and confront them firmly. |
| 4. | Dubai Police organizes community seminars and conferences to raise awareness of the dangers of rumours. |
| 5. | Police authorities monitor social media to prevent the spread of rumours. |

Section 5

Theme 7

Finally, the last section delves into scrutinizing the measures and strategies implemented by Dubai Police to tackle social media rumours. This section aligns with the fifth research question and objectives of the study, aiming to assess the effectiveness of these approaches. It comprises three root questions tailored to probe specific factors contributing to the efficacy of the strategies.

These root questions are crafted to gain insights into which strategies and methods are deemed effective in addressing rumours and mitigating their impact on Emirati society. They are designed to offer valuable insights into the effectiveness of Dubai Police's

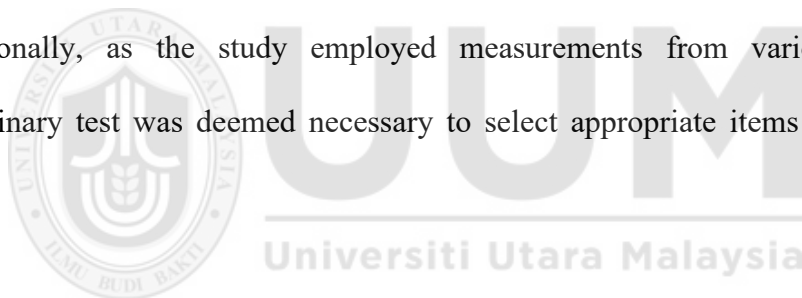
efforts in combating social media rumours. Table 3.17 details the root questions concerning Dubai Police's role in addressing social media rumours.

Table 3.17
Root Questions about the Role of Dubai Police

| Theme | Root Questions |
|--|---|
| Strategies Designed to Counteract Rumours | What are the strategies your department has adopted to counteract the rumours? To what extent do you think these strategies are important? How do you consider the effectiveness of these strategies? |

3.7.6 Pilot Testing

Prior to initiating the primary survey, a trial run was conducted to anticipate any potential issues that might arise during data collection (Schroder et al., 2011). Additionally, as the study employed measurements from various sources, a preliminary test was deemed necessary to select appropriate items (Jordans et al., 2016).



Dikko (2016) suggested a sample size of 15 to 30 participants for the trial run; hence, 30 questionnaires were distributed using convenience sampling. Feedback from the trial study prompted revisions to certain wordings to enhance clarity.

Furthermore, to streamline the research explanation, the cover letter of the questionnaire was simplified to avoid redundancy in both oral and written communications. The analysis presented in Table 3.9 revealed Cronbach's alpha values ranging from .803 to .959, all exceeding the .70 threshold, indicating measurement reliability (Schabowsky, 2010). Both English and Arabic versions of the questionnaire

utilized in the field study are provided in the Appendix, along with the results of the trial study's reliability analysis in Table 3.9.

Table 3. 9
Pilot Study Constructs Reliability

| S/R. | Constructs | Cronbach Alpha Value |
|------|------------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. | Social Media | .835 |
| 2. | Social Media and Information | .803 |
| 3. | Social Media and rumours | .945 |
| 4. | Role of Police Department | .959 |

3.8 Data Analysis Technique

Data analysis is one of the essential steps in the research process. The information collected is evaluated systematically with the help of statistical or logical techniques to illustrate, describe, and condense data into manageable parts (Z. Ali & Bhaskar, 2016). Data analysis aims to utilize the gathered data to address research objectives and answer all research questions. Genser et al. (2007) mention that selecting the most appropriate analysis tool is vital for deriving true, valid, and accurate inferences. Various analysis techniques and tools for primary and secondary data are gathered via qualitative or quantitative tools, such as text analysis, statistical analysis, diagnostic analysis, etc. Thus, this study involved both descriptive and inferential techniques based on the following requirements:

3.8.1 Descriptives

This research employed Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 21 to conduct statistical analysis of the data. Descriptive analysis, as emphasized by Ki et al. (2019) is vital for understanding data by offering an overview and identifying patterns. Ali and Bhaskar (2016) argued that descriptive analysis also helps in identifying anomalies

or outliers, which are important for further examination. Additionally, descriptive statistics summarize data in a clear format for decision-making and drawing conclusions. Therefore, descriptive statistics were initially used to detect errors, handle missing values, and calculate the mean and standard deviation of the variables.

Moreover, the mean scores of both independent and dependent variables were calculated, indicating a general consensus among respondents with the provided statements (ranging from 1.3119 to 1.7654). Table 3.11 illustrates the average scores for Social Media Information (1.603 to 1.6255), Social Media (1.720 to 1.7654), and Reliable Source of Information (1.507 to 1.5901). The average score for the Role of Dubai Police ranged from 1.173 to 1.3119.

Table 3. 10
Descriptive Analysis of Constructs

| S/R. | Constructs | Min | Max | Mean | SD |
|------|--------------------------------|-----|------|--------|--------|
| 1. | Social Media Information | .86 | 2.00 | 1.6255 | .29672 |
| 2. | Social Media Rumours | .40 | 2.00 | 1.7654 | .34166 |
| 3. | Reliable Source of Information | .80 | 2.00 | 1.5901 | .35802 |
| 4. | Role of Dubai Police | .20 | 1.40 | 1.3119 | .19161 |

The investigation delved into Common Method Bias and assessed data normality via skewness and kurtosis. According to MacKenzie and Podsakoff (2012), scrutinizing Common Method Bias is crucial to discern whether study outcomes are solely influenced by the variables under scrutiny or if other factors play a role. This bias arises when researchers use the same data collection method, such as surveys or interviews, for all participants in a study. This approach can yield accurate results if the data collection method is suitable for the study or if similar factors affect each participant's outcomes.

Analyzing Common Method Bias helps researchers identify and rectify potential issues, ensuring more accurate results (Çizel et al., 2020). Additionally, data normality was verified by calculating skewness and kurtosis. According to Arthur et al. (2012), if the absolute value of skewness exceeds three and that of kurtosis surpasses eight, it indicates non-normal data (See Table 3.10).

3.8.2 Inferential Statistics

This study employed Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to test the hypotheses and the proposed relationships between study variables. According to Habes et al. (YEAR), Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) is useful when a research goal is to predict target constructs and the data is not normally distributed. It is also helpful in avoiding issues arising from small sample sizes and is commonly used in studies. The two-step approach was used in the PLS-SEM, which is reported to provide more meaningful inferences than the one-step method (Guàrdia-Olmos et al., 2018).

To evaluate the measurement model, we assessed convergent validity, discriminant validity, and reliability. For convergent validity, loadings exceeding 0.5 were required (Cheung & Wang, 2017), along with composite reliability above 0.7 and an average variance extracted (AVE) greater than 0.5 (Carlson, 2010). Discriminant validity was achieved when the average variance shared between each construct and its measures exceeded that shared between the construct and others (Voorhees, 2016).

Furthermore, bootstrapping was used to test the structural model to determine the significance of loadings and path coefficients. The R^2 value was used to measure how well the modelled variables explained the endogenous construct (Filho et al., 2011).

Finally, the study involved path analysis examining the proposed relationships between the independent and dependent variables (Soltanzadeh, 2015). The path analysis also involved regression weights that helped determine the hypotheses' significance.

The study utilized structural equation modelling (SEM) analysis to depict descriptive data via charts, graphs, and tables, and to quantify responses as percentages for each survey query. This approach facilitated an objective and logical analysis of the survey data, reducing the impact of researcher bias. Moreover, SEM assisted in deriving conclusive research findings and addressing research inquiries effectively within the designated timeframe.

3.9 Data Representation

According to Ferreira (2020), data representation is important after analysis to illustrate the findings clearly. Graphs, charts, diagrams, and other visual representations of data make it easier to interpret complex data sets and draw insights and conclusions from them. Data representation helps to make sense of the data and understand the relationships between different variables. Additionally, data representation can help to identify trends, detect outliers, and compare different datasets (Guàrdia-Olmos et al., 2018).

Thus, after the data analysis, the data was represented using different techniques primarily based on data summarization using tables and figures. The tables provided the calculations of respondents' demographics, descriptives regarding data normality, missing value analysis, and common method bias. Further, the results of inferential

statistics are also represented in the table. Additionally, the graphical models are also described as per the need.

3.10 Qualitative Approaches

The second data-gathering technique in this research involved qualitative interviews with the higher-ranked personnel in the Dubai Police departments. According to Trotter (2012), qualitative interviews can be a powerful tool for uncovering valuable insights into customers' needs and preferences. The relevant method allows for more detail and nuancedly exploring customer sentiment than quantitative research, which offers only closed-ended questions. Qualitative interviews can uncover potential problems, identify new opportunities and opportunities for growth, and provide a more in-depth understanding of the participants' sentiments.

3.10.1 Qualitative Sample Size

Notably, the purpose of the qualitative interviews was to gather information about the role of Dubai Police in general, their opinion about the misinformation, and how effectively Dubai Police counteracted the misinformation from social media. Notably, different researchers have diverse views about the selection of the qualitative sample. For example, Ali et al. (2022a) consider $n=10$ participants sufficient for qualitative sample size. However, Vasileiou (2018) emphasized a minimum of $n= 30$ participants for the qualitative data collection.

Several studies have used a sample size of $n= 2$ to $n= 4$ individuals for data-gathering purposes (Rusu Mocănașu, 2020; Sim et al., 2018). Thus, based on the diversity of opinions (Neuman, 2014), the researcher selected $n= 4$ higher ranked personals from

the Dubai Police officials. As Weller et al. (2018) suggested, a sample of $n= 4$ participants is ideal for a study in which subjective reviews further add more value to the objective responses in a study.

3.10.2 Qualitative Data Gathering Tool

According to Kypri et al. (2004), there are two methods for collecting primary data: qualitative and quantitative. The qualitative method emphasizes quality and involves more detailed and in-depth data collection procedures. As Horsburgh (2003) noted, qualitative interviews are an effective way to collect data in research. These questionnaires can help researchers to gain deeper insights into the subject area than quantitative methods. Qualitative interview questionnaires allow exploring certain topics in more depth and asking questions tailored to the research subject.

Saunders et al. (2018) further argued that qualitative interview questionnaires provide researchers with a better understanding of the attitudes and opinions of the participants by allowing them to elaborate on their responses. These questions also allow researchers to ask questions that can be used to probe deeper into the research subject. This offers a richer insight than is possible with quantitative approaches. The qualitative tool used in this research was based on six themes and a total of $n= 21$ root questions. The following discussion highlights the themes and associated root questions in detail.

Theme 1

The first section was based on gathering the participants' responses regarding the general opinion about rumours, the causes behind spreading rumours, and the purposes behind rumours in society. The focus remained on exploring the general perceptions of participation as a social phenomenon. Table 3.11 shows the list of questions that were employed in the first theme of the qualitative data gathering purposes:

Table 3. 11
Root Questions about Rumours in Society

| Theme | Root Questions |
|--------------------|--|
| Rumours in society | In your opinion, what is the concept of rumours? What are the factors that help spread rumours in society? In your opinion, what is the purpose of spreading rumours in society? |

Theme 2

Theme 2 of the interview questionnaire was comprised of questions regarding the role of social media in spreading rumours. There were n= 3 root questions examining the potential contribution of social media in spreading rumours, its role, and the nature of the role that could be positive or negative. Ali (2020) noted that social media has revolutionized how we communicate, and its impact on spreading rumours and false information is prominent.

The instantaneous and wide-reaching nature of social media platforms makes it easier for rumours to spread quickly and for false information to be disseminated on a large scale. Social media users can easily share and repost information without verifying the accuracy of the source or the content. Table 3.12 shows the root questions in theme 2 of the qualitative questionnaire.

Table 3. 12
Root Questions about Social Media and Rumours

| Theme | Root Questions |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Social Media and Rumours | <p>What do you think that social media contributes to spreading rumours?</p> <p>In your opinion, what is the role of the UAE media in limiting the spread of rumours?</p> <p>Does social media have a positive or negative role in spreading rumours?</p> |

Theme 3

Theme 3 of the qualitative questionnaire examined the impact of rumours on society. The relevant theme also contained three root questions about the potential impacts of rumours on Emirati society, national security, and the national economy.

Notably, Keshavarz (2020) considers rumours to have both strong and weak impacts based on the relationships between the government and the public. These rumours can affect society on different levels, yet their impacts vary from situation to situation.

Table 3.13 shows the root questions of theme 3 of the qualitative questionnaire.

Table 3. 13
Root Questions about the Impacts of Rumours

| Theme | Root Questions |
|---------------------------|--|
| Impacts of Rumours | <p>What is the effect of rumours on Emirati society?</p> <p>What is the impact of rumours on national security?</p> <p>How do rumours affect the national economy?</p> |

Theme 4

The fourth theme of the qualitative interview questionnaire was based on the participants' perceptions about the sources of rumours. The relevant theme contains two root questions about the perceived internal or external sources of rumours and the association of rumours with any political party.

As noted by Wang et al. (2021), rumours are primarily attributed to achieving the interests of a certain group and organizations. The motive is to attain power and dominance, alter public opinion and gain interest. Thus, the root questions in the relevant theme are given in Table 3.14 below.

Table 3. 14

Root Questions about Sources of Rumours

| Theme | Root Questions |
|--------------------|--|
| Sources of Rumours | Do you think the sources of rumours are internal sources or planned external plots? Interpret? In your opinion, are the rumours systematic, organized and arranged by certain parties, or random? interpret |

Theme 5

Theme five of the study qualitative questionnaire was based on general questions about the role of social media in refuting rumours, the role of society in sharing awareness, and rumour mongers. According to (Cinelli et al., 2020), social media plays a vital role in refuting rumours and spreading societal awareness.

The more a society is aware, the more they act sensibly to nullify the impacts of rumours. However, during crises, countering the rumour mongers becomes difficult. These individuals remain active and share false information to create social unrest,

leading to adverse outcomes. Table 3.15 shows the root questions about the fifth theme of the qualitative interviews.

Table 3. 15 Root Questions about the Role of Social Media and Society in Sharing Awareness and Rumour Mongering

| Theme | Root Questions |
|---|--|
| Role of Social Media and Society in Sharing Awareness and Rumour Mongering | <p>In your opinion, how does social contact educate the community about misleading rumours?</p> <p>In your opinion, what is the role of society in limiting or reducing the spread of rumours?</p> <p>In your opinion, how do rumour spreaders exploit crises?</p> |

Theme 6

Finally, theme 6 was based on the n= 7 root questions about the role of Dubai Police in counteracting and handling the rumours in society. According to (Apfeldorf, 2022), the role of police forces in combating misinformation and rumours in society is immense. Misinformation and rumours can lead to confusion and chaos and can be incredibly damaging to the public's well-being. Police forces play a critical role in countering this type of misinformation and rumours by patrolling the streets, monitoring social media platforms, and engaging in public education initiatives.

Table 3. 16
Root Questions about the Role of Dubai Police

| Theme | Root Questions |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Role of Dubai Police | <p>What are the procedures and measures taken by the Dubai Police to limit the spread of rumours in the community?</p> <p>What is the role of the security media in Dubai Police in limiting the spread of rumours?</p> <p>Have you ever been exposed to Dubai Police rumours? How was it dealt with?</p> <p>What plans do Dubai Police have to deal with rumours?</p> <p>How do Dubai Police deal with rumour-mongers?</p> |

What is the punishment for the rumour mongers?

Is the current punishment enough to deter rumourmongers?

Aditya (2017) stated that police forces can monitor and investigate areas where rumours or misinformation may be forming, allowing them to intervene quickly if necessary. They also have the power to investigate false rumours and dispel them before they can spread. Additionally, police often engage in public education initiatives, such as visiting schools and community centres, to educate people about the importance of avoiding the spread of misinformation and rumours. Table 3.16 contains the questions that investigate the role of Dubai Police in counteracting the rumours in Emirati society.

3.10.3 Validity of Qualitative Tool

The researcher ensured the validity of the qualitative data-gathering tool. As Kennedy et al. (2019) noted, the validity of a qualitative interview instrument is of utmost importance in research. Validity refers to how accurately the questions measure what they are intended to measure. The questions must be valid for the data obtained from the instrument to be useful and reliable. Therefore, it is important to ensure the questions are valid to obtain useful data from the qualitative interview instrument (S. Ali et al., 2022a).

Thus, after preparing the first draft of the questionnaires, the questionnaire was given to three experts (n= 2 assistant professors, n= 1 senior researcher) to check for any issues. The experts thoroughly checked the interview transcript and suggested some revisions. After revising the interview questionnaire, the researcher proceeded with the data collection.

3.10.4 Qualitative Interview Process

According to Stephens (2016), qualitative interviews are valuable for gaining insight into how people think, feel, and act in particular situations. By engaging in face-to-face conversations, researchers can obtain more detailed information and a deeper understanding than they could through other data collection methods. The interview also allows researchers to ask open-ended questions, follow up on answers, and observe nonverbal cues such as facial expressions, body language, and tone of voice. This type of information is often lost when conducting surveys or focus groups.

Interviews allow respondents to discuss their own experiences in their own words, providing a rich, contextualized understanding of their thoughts, feelings, and behaviours (Bowden & Galindo-Gonzalez, 2015). Hence, this study employed qualitative interviews involving face-to-face interviews with police personnel to understand the role and effect of social media on spreading or nullifying rumours and the involvement of Dubai Police. The focus remained on impartially gathering their opinions in a flexible and open environment.

Gustavsson (2007) noted that qualitative interviews also provide a more natural environment for respondents, which can increase the likelihood of authentic responses. Additionally, the interviewer can clarify confusing questions or probe deeper into particular topics, providing more depth and detail in the data. Notably, the interview process was based on personal visits and face-to-face interviews with high-ranked Police personnel.

3.10.5 Qualitative Data Analysis

Qualitative data analysis is an important element of research. It can help uncover patterns, trends, and correlations within the data, allowing researchers to understand the results more deeply. Researchers can look beyond simple numbers by analysing qualitative data and better grasp the data's underlying meaning (Akinyode & Khan, 2018). This can be especially useful when trying to uncover new insights or determine the impact of certain behaviours on outcomes. Qualitative data analysis also helps researchers identify potential confounding factors or any biases that may have been present in the data. Ultimately, qualitative data analysis is essential for researchers looking to understand their results comprehensively (Jacelon & O'Dell, 2005).

Therefore, the interview data underwent analysis using MAXQDA software, enabling structured data management for researchers. However, according to Locke (2002), non-human methods may not accurately handle transcription, translation, and transcribing processes. To ensure precision, a comparison between themes generated by researchers and those by MAXQDA was conducted. MAXQDA facilitated qualitative analysis, streamlining the process and enhancing its systematic and explicit nature.

3.11 Ethical Considerations

Conducting systematic and empirical research involves addressing various ethical considerations that may impact participants' ability to provide honest responses and could compromise the reliability and validity of research findings and conclusions (Talukder et al., 2018). Therefore, it is crucial to address and mitigate these ethical concerns before starting data collection to ensure the accuracy of the results. Given the

adherence to formal research standards in this study, prioritizing primary ethics was essential.

Ermine et al. (2004) outlined that ethics play a critical role in research projects, ensuring ethical conduct throughout the process. Research ethics encompass a set of guiding principles for researchers, including respect for human rights, autonomy of subjects, confidentiality, honesty, and fairness. Additionally, researchers must ensure the information's accuracy, impartiality, and non-misleading nature. They must also be vigilant regarding potential risks associated with the research and take necessary measures to protect participants, data, and results. Moreover, researchers must remain vigilant for any ethical dilemmas arising during the research process and address them appropriately.

To uphold ethical standards, informed consent was obtained from all participants through a signed appendix (see Appendix), clearly indicating their voluntary participation in the study and ensuring the confidentiality of their information without sharing it with any third parties.

3.12 Chapter Summary

This chapter extensively explores and discusses the most appropriate research methodologies to align with the research problem, objectives, and goals. It covers discussions on research design, philosophy, and the chosen approach. The study population is examined based on official sources from Dubai Police (Government of Dubai, 2022). Following this, the chapter is divided into quantitative and qualitative approaches.

In the quantitative section, comprehensive discussions are held on the study sample, sample size, sampling technique, questionnaire structure, scales and sources, data analysis process, pilot study, and methods of data representation. Subsequently, the chapter addresses the qualitative data collection process, including details on data gathering methods, interview questionnaires, questionnaire validity, and data analysis techniques. Ethical considerations during both quantitative and qualitative data collection are also explored.

Therefore, this chapter equips the subsequent chapter with the necessary groundwork and coherence to conduct analysis and derive results using descriptive and inferential statistics. Additionally, it highlights the types of analyses employed to systematically generate results.



CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter contains the data analysis and results. As noted earlier, this study is based on descriptive and inferential statistics; the analysis section contains analyses based on the selected approaches. Notably, data analysis is an important part of a research study that helps to calculate the gathered data and determines the interferences that can be drawn upon the results. Thus, this chapter first involves descriptive statistics and results.

Further, inferential statistics is performed to check the variables and their effects as proposed in the research hypotheses. Notably, the selected approaches align with the study aims and objectives, and certain approaches are selected based on their strengths to determine the preliminary research hypotheses. This chapter also contains a qualitative analysis of the interviews with higher-ranked police personnel. The qualitative analysis used the MAXQDA, which helped quickly analyze the large data.

4.2 Quantitative Analysis

4.2.1 Data Collection and Response Rate

The data collection was performed from 1st October 2022 to 28th December 2022. The data gathering was based on personal visits to the Dubai Police Departments. As there were no selection criteria other than the individuals who should be currently employed, the survey questionnaire distribution was based on the availability and permission of the respondents (Cheung & Wang, 2017).

However, some respondents were also reluctant to fill in the responses. The relevant issues were more common among the police officers in the comparatively lower ranks. They were convinced by showing the formal permission letter the head of the concerned departments issued to avoid further misunderstanding. The respondents were continuously monitored and guided as needed during the data collection process. Thus, the questionnaires were collected and calculated after the quantitative data gathering. All the questionnaires were filled out by the respondents and handed over.

Later, the survey questionnaires were carefully checked and evaluated for analysis purposes. It was found that some survey questionnaires needed to be completed by the respondents. Besides, some of the survey questionnaires were also filled in a manner that the respondents had selected more than one option. Thus, after removing the relevant survey questionnaires, the remaining ones were calculated and finalized. A total of $n=316$ survey questionnaires were shortlisted for further proceeding. Overall, the response rate was 83.8%, greater than 60% (Arthur et al., 2012), indicating that the acquired response rate was ideal and ensured the generalizability of the results.

According to Deutskens et al. (2004), existing literature on survey-based shows a response rate between 50% to 60% as ideal by employing the intercepts. These studies indicate that a higher than 50% response rate is useful for generalizing the results (Hing et al., 2011; Phillips et al., 2007).

4.2.2 Data Screening and Missing Value Analysis

The data screening was carried out to examine the potential of the data set. Descriptive analysis (maximum, minimum) was utilized to find any missing values and data entry concerns. Thus, data screening indicated fewer missing values, which were replaced per the approach emphasized by Marshall and Jonker (2010). However, the Missing Value Analysis was first performed to further identify any missing value among the continuous variables that need to be accurately detected by the previous method.

According to Lin and Tsai (2019), missing value analysis is essential to descriptive statistics as it helps identify data patterns and uncover important insights. Missing values can arise from various sources, such as measurement errors, coding errors, or a lack of data. With analyzing missing values, certain underlying relationships in the data may be noticed, leading to accurate conclusions.

Christopher et al. (2019) stated that missing value analysis involves identifying and classifying missing values according to their source. This helps to identify patterns in the data and explore their significance. For example, if many values are missing from a particular variable, it could indicate a problem with the data collection process or the variable. It is also possible to use different substitution methods to fill in the gaps.

Table 4. 1
Missing Value Analysis of the Continuous Variables

| S/R. | Descriptives | Occupation | Sex | Nationality | Age |
|------|----------------|------------|------|-------------|------|
| 1. | Valid | 314 | 316 | 316 | 316 |
| 2. | Missing | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 3. | Mean | .74 | .61 | .22 | 1.56 |
| 4. | Median | 1.00 | 1.00 | .00 | 1.50 |
| 5. | Std. Deviation | .440 | .489 | .414 | .772 |
| 6. | Variance | .194 | .239 | .171 | .596 |
| 7. | Minimum | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 8. | Maximum | 1 | 1 | 1 | 4 |

Table 4.1 summarizes the Missing Value Analysis of the continuous variables in the current study. Thus, it is found that the number of missing values in the data set is less than 15. Specifically, there are only 2 values that are missing in the variable "Occupation", which further indicates that there is no possibility of any data errors in the continuous variables. Therefore, the missing value analysis of the continuous variables further provided the pathway to examine the relevant variables without any errors or missing data.

Table 4. 2
Missing Value Analysis of the Constant Variables

| Constructs | Mean | Median | Missing | SD | Mini | Maxi |
|------------|------|--------|---------|------|------|------|
| SM1 | 1.17 | 1.00 | 0 | .733 | 0 | 2 |
| SM2 | 1.07 | 1.00 | 0 | .843 | 0 | 2 |
| SM3 | 1.87 | 2.00 | 0 | .381 | 0 | 2 |
| SM4 | 1.93 | 2.00 | 0 | .295 | 0 | 2 |
| SMI1 | 1.97 | 2.00 | 0 | .223 | 0 | 2 |
| SMI2 | 1.42 | 2.00 | 0 | .733 | 0 | 2 |
| SMI3 | 1.90 | 2.00 | 0 | .342 | 0 | 2 |
| SMR1 | 1.79 | 2.00 | 0 | .521 | 0 | 2 |
| SMR2 | 1.66 | 2.00 | 0 | .635 | 0 | 2 |
| SMR3 | 1.74 | 2.00 | 0 | .526 | 0 | 2 |
| SMR4 | 1.67 | 2.00 | 0 | .586 | 0 | 2 |
| SMR5 | 1.89 | 2.00 | 0 | .343 | 0 | 2 |

| | | | | | | |
|------|------|------|---|------|---|---|
| RSI1 | 1.46 | 2.00 | 0 | .727 | 0 | 2 |
| RSI2 | 1.68 | 2.00 | 0 | .572 | 0 | 2 |
| RSI3 | 1.01 | 2.00 | 0 | .869 | 0 | 2 |
| RSI4 | 1.90 | 2.00 | 0 | .336 | 0 | 2 |
| RSI5 | 1.80 | 2.00 | 2 | .467 | 0 | 2 |
| POL1 | 1.85 | 2.00 | 2 | .354 | 1 | 2 |
| POL2 | 1.76 | 2.00 | 0 | .563 | 0 | 2 |
| POL3 | .97 | 1.00 | 0 | .184 | 0 | 1 |
| POL4 | .94 | 1.00 | 0 | .232 | 0 | 1 |
| POL5 | .99 | 1.00 | 0 | .097 | 0 | 1 |

Similarly, the constant variables were analyzed during the second phase of the Missing Value Analysis. These variables were mainly from the data gathered from the five-point Likert scale surveys. According to Abidin et al. (2018), missing value analysis is important as it can help identify errors in the data, uncover relationships between variables, and provide an overall understanding of the data set.

It is a crucial step in descriptive statistics and should be noticed. Thus, scrutinizing the constant variables was also important after examining the continuous variables (Karpievitch et al., 2012). Table 4.2 shows the second phase of the missing value analysis.

4.2.3 Common Method Bias

Common method bias is a phenomenon that occurs when data collected from a single source is used to conclude a research question. Considering its involvement in research is important it can introduce systematic errors that may lead to inaccurate or unreliable results (Chin, 2012).

According to Min et al. (2016), a common method bias can arise when self-reported data are reliant, for example, when surveys are used. The respondent's responses may be influenced by the same underlying bias, leading to a distorted view of the research question.

Table 4. 3
Analysis of the Common Methods Bias

| S/R. | Total | % Of Variance | Cumulative % | Total | % Of Variance | Cumulative % |
|-------------|--------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|--------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. | 1.864 | 46.594 | 46.594 | 1.864 | 46.594 | 46.594 |
| 2. | 1.061 | 26.514 | 73.108 | | | |
| 3. | .641 | 16.033 | 89.141 | | | |
| 4. | .434 | 10.859 | 100.000 | | | |

MacKenzie and Podsakoff (2012) argued that researchers must ensure their data is reliable and valid to reduce common method bias. This includes ensuring that the survey questions are unbiased and that the responses are collected to prevent bias from influencing the results. It is also important to select a range of data sources, such as interviews, focus groups, and other forms of qualitative data, to reduce the risk of common method bias.

This research also examined the common method bias using Harman's Single Factor test. According to Çizel et al. (2020), despite the variation of techniques to examine the common method bias, Harman's single-factor approach is one of the most preferred. Thus, results revealed an 18.9% variance lower than the threshold value of 50.0%, indicating that the common method bias was under control.

4.2.4 Respondents' Personal Profile

All respondents were the employee of the Dubai Police Force of different ranks and living in Dubai during their services. However, these respondents differed in their personal backgrounds or demographics.

Based on the calculation of their personal data, it was found that most of them were working under the military forces (73.4%), while 25.9% were working under civilian departments. Military employees were dominant, perhaps due to the nature and requirements of the military personnel in the Dubai Police. Notably, Dubai Police individuals' link with the military was due to their wider responsibilities such as antinarcotics, customs and immigration, fire brigade services, special forces working as counter-terrorism departments, a special department for international security and rescue, and others.

Similarly, the sex-wise calculation of the respondents showed that most of them (60.8%) were males and 39.2% were females. Women's quota is associated with the number of hirings in the Dubai Police department. However, due to the nature of responsibilities and working hours, most male respondents were available during the visit for data gathering.

Table 4. 4
Descriptive of Respondents' Personal Profile

| Constructs | Variables | N | % | Mean | SD |
|-------------|-----------|-----|------|------|------|
| Occupation | Civil | 82 | 25.9 | | |
| | Military | 232 | 73.4 | .740 | .440 |
| Sex | Female | 124 | 39.2 | | |
| | Male | 192 | 60.8 | .610 | .489 |
| Nationality | Emirati | 247 | 78.2 | | |
| | Others | 69 | 21.8 | .220 | .414 |

| | | | | | |
|-----|----------------|-----|------|-------|------|
| | 18 - 25 | 15 | 4.7 | | |
| | 26 - 35 | 143 | 45.3 | | |
| Age | 36 - 45 | 130 | 41.1 | 1.560 | .772 |
| | 46 - 55 | 22 | 7.0 | | |
| | 55 - and above | 6 | 1.9 | | |

Furthermore, the calculation of the respondents' nationality was also calculated. Results indicated that most respondents had Emirati nationality (78.2%), while 21.8% others had other nationalities. This might be because the United Arab Emirates is a hub of economic activities, providing employment opportunities to people from across the globe.

Today, people from different countries, including Iran, Afghanistan, Turkey, Sweden, Germany, Pakistan, United Kingdom, Bulgaria, Egypt, Libya, Syria, Argentina, and many other countries, are working in different public sector organizations, especially, the Ministry of Interior, UAE. They hired individuals from different countries to join and serve the Emirati security forces, and Dubai Police department is not an exception (Government of Dubai, 2022).

Finally, the descriptive analysis also involved calculating the respondents' age groups. Notably, the age calculation was based on different age groups, and the respondents were asked to select the most suitable group matching their criteria. Thus, it was found that most respondents (45.3%) were 26 to 35 years old. The others were 36 to 45 years old (41.1%), 46 to 55 years old (7%), 46 to 55 years old (4.7%), and 55 years old or above (1.9%).

4.2.5 Test of Normality

Normality testing is an important part of statistics that helps determine whether a given sample of data follows a normal distribution. Testing normality type helps to ensure that data is appropriately distributed and is not skewed or biased. According to Rani Das (2016), normality tests determine if a data set is normally distributed, meaning the data is symmetric and follows a bell-shaped curve. It is important to perform normality testing before other statistical tests can be used.

This study employed Kolmogorov-Smirnov-Z as one of the most popular testing approaches (Kwak & Park, 2019) to test the normality and data distribution. In this context, skewness and Kurtosis were also considered regarding the normality of the distributed data. Results revealed that the values of skewness ranged from -.620 to -2.416, and the values of Kurtosis ranged from -.248 to 6.672. Ferreira (2020) asserted that data distribution is not considered normal when the absolute value for skewness exceeds 3, while the value for Kurtosis is greater than 8. However, since the obtained values fell within the given limits, it was found that the data is normally distributed. Furthermore, the results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov-Z test also indicated that the K-S values exceeded the threshold value of 1.0 (Mishra et al., 2019), and the significance levels were also less than .5. Overall, it was found that the data is normally distributed. Table 4.5 shows the results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z tests and the significance values attributed to each item.

Table 4. 5
Testing of Normality- Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z

| Constructs | Kolmogorov- Smirnov Z | Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) |
|-------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| SM1 | 4.270 | .000 |
| SM2 | 4.539 | .000 |

| | | |
|-------|-------|------|
| SMI3 | 9.233 | .000 |
| SM4 | 9.498 | .000 |
| SMI1 | 9.497 | .000 |
| SMI2 | 6.287 | .000 |
| SIII3 | 9.385 | .000 |
| SMR1 | 8.915 | .000 |
| SMR2 | 8.027 | .000 |
| SMR3 | 8.349 | .000 |
| SMR4 | 7.867 | .000 |
| SMR5 | 9.337 | .000 |
| RSI1 | 6.542 | .000 |
| RSI2 | 7.906 | .000 |
| RSI3 | 4.532 | .000 |
| RSI4 | 9.370 | .000 |
| RSI5 | 8.757 | .000 |
| POL1 | 9.107 | .000 |
| POL2 | 8.736 | .000 |
| POL3 | 9.606 | .000 |
| POL4 | 9.598 | .000 |
| POL5 | 9.412 | .000 |

4.2.6 Inferential Statistics

This study involves a Structural Equation Modelling approach to test the proposed study hypotheses. For this purpose, IBM Amos Ver 23 was used to perform all the steps of the Structural Equation Modeling, including measurement and structural model assessments. Besides, bootstrapping was also employed to examine the significance levels for path coefficients and loadings.

Notably, the assessment of the measurement model was conducted at the first stage, which involved reliability and validity analysis, also known as external and internal consistency of the measurement model. The Goodness of Fit values were also assessed to examine any errors that may deviate from the expected results from the obtained dataset. Notably, the data convergence was also performed using the Amos Ver 23 after necessary iterations, indicating that data estimation was suitable for the data analysis purposes.

4.2.6.1 Measurement Model Analysis

The measurement model analysis was performed in the first phase of the Structural Equation Modelling. First, the internal and external consistency, as well as convergent and divergent reliability, were examined. The same phase was also based on examining the reliability of the measurement model by conducting the construct reliability analysis. Furthermore, a two-criteria approach was used to test the discriminant validity of the measurement model.

4.2.6.2 Convergent Validity and Construct Reliability Analysis

The measurement model's convergent validity and construct reliability were assessed by calculating the factor loadings, Average Variance Extracted (AVE), Cronbach Alpha, and Composite Reliability values. The purpose of assessing the convergent validity and construct reliability was to determine the extent to which the measurement items and constructs are internally consistent.

Table 4. 6
Convergent Validity and Construct Reliability Analyses

| Variables | Items | Factor Loadings | AVE | CA | CR |
|--------------------------------|-------|-----------------|------|------|------|
| Social Media | SM1 | .808 | .730 | .802 | .891 |
| | SM2 | .744 | | | |
| | SM3 | .601 | | | |
| | SM4 | .768 | | | |
| Social Media Information | SMI1 | .878 | .725 | .795 | .874 |
| | SMI2 | .704 | | | |
| | SMI3 | .593 | | | |
| Social Media Rumour | SMR1 | .505 | .731 | .793 | 1.62 |
| | SMR2 | .730 | | | |
| | SMR3 | .728 | | | |
| | SMR4 | .736 | | | |
| | SMR5 | .636 | | | |
| Reliable Source of Information | RSI1 | .731 | .830 | .843 | 1.09 |
| | RSI2 | .803 | | | |
| | RSI3 | .682 | | | |
| | RSI4 | .854 | | | |
| | RSI5 | .934 | | | |
| Role of Dubai Police | POL1 | .685 | .783 | .813 | .774 |
| | POL2 | .763 | | | |
| | POL3 | .199 | | | |
| | POL4 | .466 | | | |
| | POL5 | .902 | | | |

Note: Items SMI3, SMI7, SMR1, RSI3, POL3, and POL4 were deleted due to lower loading values to attain Composite Reliability values greater than .7. The relevant analysis was based on calculating the LAMBDA and Epulsion of items and then calculating their average to apply the formula for the composite reliability analysis.

The current literature on Structural Equation Modelling witnessed diverse opinions about the values affirming the convergent validity and construct reliability. However, the mutual consensus remains prevalent, indicating the ideal Factor Loading and

Average Variance Extracted greater than .5 (Carlson, 2010). At the same time, these studies also set the ideal Cronbach Alpha and Composite Reliability values to be greater than .7 (Cheung & Wang, 2017).

Table 4.6 shows that the majority of the Factor Loadings values are greater than .5, and the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values are also exceeding the value of .5. It is found that convergent validity is partially established. Additionally, the Cronbach Alpha values and Composite Reliability values are also surpassing the threshold value of .7. Overall, it is found that the convergent validity is affirmed, and internal consistency does exist among the research constructs and items.

4.2.6.3 Discriminant validity

The measurement model's discriminant validity was also examined using the two-criterion approach for the relevant analysis. These approaches involved Fornell - Larcker criterion and Hetero-trait Monotrait Ratio. According to Shiu et al. (2011), discriminant validity helps to determine the extent to which the constructs are uncorrelated as an important step of measurement model analysis of Structural Equation Modelling. Table 4.7 shows the results of the discriminant validity assessment.

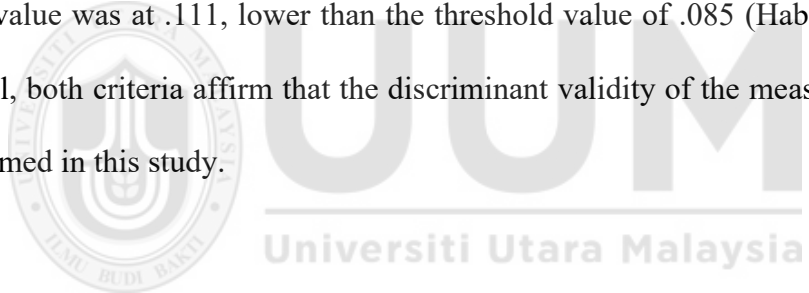
Table 4. 7
Discriminant Validity Analysis

| | Social Media | Social Media Information | Social Media Rumours | Reliable Source of Information | Dubai Police |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Social Media | .532 | | | | |
| Social Media Information | .543 | .525 | | | |

| | | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------------|-------------|------|
| Social Media | .359 | .432 | .534 | | |
| Rumours | | | | | |
| Reliable Source of Information | -.028 | -.043 | -.086 | .688 | |
| Dubai Police | .121 | .029 | .059 | .475 | .613 |

Note: Values in the diagonal, bold style are the squares of Average Variance Extracted (AVE), while the other values are the bivariate Pearson correlation values.

As shown in Table 4.7, all the square values of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) are not only greater than the correlation values attained by bivariate Pearson correlation but also do not correlate with any of the mentioned values. The second criterion, "Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio", was also fulfilled by manually calculating the HTMT values in Microsoft Excel. Results revealed that the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio value was at .111, lower than the threshold value of .085 (Habes et al., 2022). Overall, both criteria affirm that the discriminant validity of the measurement model is affirmed in this study.



4.2.6.4 Goodness of Fit

The goodness of fit is an important part of measurement model analysis in the extent to which the observed data fits well with the expected data (Demler et al., 2015). The current research involves model fit analysis, as some items from the factors loading were below the threshold value and could affect the overall results if not eliminated. As a result, a model fit test was conducted to examine the extent to which the elimination of the relevant items has affected the overall model estimation and performance to further conduct the structural model analysis.

Table 4. 8
Goodness of Fit

| Chi-Square | <i>P</i> | <i>df</i> | CFI | TLI | GFI | AGFI | RMSEA |
|------------|----------|-----------|------|------|------|------|-------|
| 151.849 | .000 | 125 | .986 | .941 | .864 | .920 | .278 |

Table 4.8 shows that five constructs and eighteen items defined the model after eliminating the items having values below .5 with the sample size of $n= 316$ participants after calculating and finalizing the response rate. Thus, the goodness of fit analysis showed a p-value of .000, suitable for a sample size greater than 200.

Overall, the goodness of fit indices showed the Comparative Fit Index (CFI) value at .986, the Goodness of Fit Index at .864, and the Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index at .920 Tucker and Lewis value at .941. Additionally, the Standardized Root Mean Square value was at .278, less than the threshold value of .85, considered acceptable to ensure the goodness of fit (Tenenhaus et al., 2009).

4.2.7 Structural Model Analysis

The second stage of the Structural Equation Modelling involved different analysis approaches to examine the significance of path coefficients, predictive relevance, coefficients of determination R^2 , and the effect size of q^2 and f^2 . Notably, collinearity can be possible for formative measurements as the items in the relevant measurement are interchangeable (Cheung & Wang, 2017).

4.2.7.1 Hypotheses Testing and Path Analysis

The significance of the structural model path coefficients was examined with a 500-resample bootstrapping process to attain t-values, as suggested by Hoe (2008). Notably, when using a one-tailed t-test with a significance level of .05, the value of

the path coefficient is significant when the *t*-value(s) exceeds the threshold value of 1.600. As shown in Table 4.9, the H1, H2, H3, and H4 are tested by involving the path, *t*-values, significance/p-values, and Confidence Interval bootstrapping value, including upper and lower bounds.

Table 4. 9
Hypotheses Testing of the Relationships

| Hypotheses | β | <i>t</i> | <i>P</i> | Bootstrapped Confidence Interval | | <i>Status</i> |
|---|---------|----------|----------|----------------------------------|-----------|---------------|
| | | | | 95% Upper | 95% Lower | |
| | | | | Social media à Information | -2.825 | |
| Social Media à Rumours | -1.676 | 2.014 | .044 | .012 | .360 | Accepted |
| Social Media à Reliable Source of Information | .864 | 1.925 | .054 | .054 | .353 | Accepted |
| Dubai Police à Social Media Rumours | 31.584 | 2.337 | .019 | .081 | .258 | Accepted |

First, the path analysis examined the relationship between social media and information. Results show that H1 is significant as social media has a significant effect on social media information with a path value of -2.825 and a significance value of .048 (-1.977). Thus, H1 of the current research is supported, indicating that social media has a prominent role in spreading information to its users regardless of geographical or other potential barriers (Adekoya & Fasae, 2021).

Further, the relationship between social media and social media rumours is examined (H2) using the relevant analysis approach. Results indicated that the second hypothesis is also significant and validated with the path value -1.676 and the significance p-value > .044. According to S. Ali et al. (2022), the role of social media in spreading

rumours and misinformation cannot be denied. Especially during a crisis like COVID-19, this role even accelerates and leads to harmful consequences for society.

The third hypothesis (H3) examined the relationship between social media and reliable sources of information. The findings show that the relevant relationship is validated with the path value of .864 and the significance value of .054. Thus, it is found that social media is a reliable source of information as per the study hypothesis and new findings. According to Sun (2021), social media has become a ubiquitous source of information in our daily lives. Many people turn to platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram to stay informed about news, events, and trends. However, Ahmed (2020) argued that it is important for individuals to exercise caution when using social media as a source of information and to take steps to verify the accuracy of any information they come across. While social media can be a valuable source of information, it should be used in conjunction with other sources to ensure that the information is accurate and trustworthy.

Finally, the last hypothesis (H4) tested the relationship between Dubai Police and social media rumours. As noted by Vese (2021), the role of police in combatting social media-based rumours is increasingly important in the digital age. Due to the emergence of social media, the swift spread of false information and rumours presents notable dangers to individuals and communities. Law enforcement holds a critical position in detecting and addressing these rumours through surveillance of social media platforms and cooperation with other entities to identify their origins. Consequently, research suggests a significant association between Dubai Police and the handling of social media rumours. Particularly, police play a central role in

countering rumours stemming from social media by monitoring these platforms and investigating the roots of misinformation. Collaborative initiatives with other organisations are essential for averting harm and ensuring the protection of individuals and communities from the negative consequences of misinformation (Quan-Haase, 2017).

4.2.7.2 Coefficient of Determination R^2 Analysis

The next step in the structural equation modelling was the analysis of the Coefficients of Determination R^2 . According to Nakagawa et al. (2018), the coefficient of determination R^2 helps determine the exogenous variables' predictive power. In other words, the relevant test determines the extent to which the independent variable(s) is causing Variance in the dependent variable(s) (Habes et al., 2023). If the R^2 values approach +1, it indicates higher predictive accuracy of the independent variable. Typically, values around .750, .500, and .250 are considered as strong, moderate, and acceptable, respectively. Table 4.10 presents the Coefficients of Determination R^2 results.

Table 4. 10
Coefficients of Determination R^2 of Endogenous Variables

| Endogenous Variables | R^2 Value |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Social Media Information | .537 |
| Social Media Rumours | .592 |
| Reliable Source of Information | .419 |

Results showed that the independent variables cause a 53.7% variance in social media as a source of information, a 59.2% variance in social media rumours, and a 41.9% variance in reliable sources of information. Altogether, the predictive precision of the independent variables is moderate in the current research as they fall between .600 and .250 (Filho et al., 2011), which is acceptable for this study.

4.2.7.3 Analysis of Effect Size (f^2)

After examining the R^2 , this study examined the effect size f^2 to determine how each exogenous variable affects the endogenous variables (Messner, 2023). Table 4.11 shows the results of the f^2 by using Cohen's f^2 . Cohen's f^2 method involves the following formula:

$$f^2 = \frac{R^2 \text{ included} - R^2 \text{ excluded}}{1 - R^2 \text{ included}}$$

Table 4. 11
Analysis of Effect Size f^2

| Exogenous Latent Variable | Endogenous Latent Variable | R^2 Included | R^2 Excluded | f^2 | Effect Size |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|
| Social media | Social Media Information | .475 | .226 | 91.7687 | Large |
| Social media | Social Media Rumours | .028 | .001 | .252 | Small |
| Social media | Reliable Source of Information | .043 | .004 | .588 | Large |
| Dubai Police | Social Media Rumours | .359 | .129 | 46.372 | Large |

According to Selya et al. (2012), effect values are crucial in gauging the extent of impact. For instance, a value equal to or above .35 indicates a substantial effect size, while a value below 0.15 suggests a moderate effect size, and anything below .020 signifies a minor effect size.

The results indicate that both social media and Social Media Information, along with Dubai Police and Social Media Rumours, demonstrate considerable effect sizes. Additionally, the effect size of social media and Reliable Sources of Information is notable. Consequently, the effect size of social media and Social Media Rumours appears to be relatively significant according to the established criteria. Overall, the

findings highlight a robust effect size, with Cohen's f^2 estimation outcomes presented in Table 4.11.

4.2.7.4 Analysis of Predictive Relevance (Q^2)

The study further involved the analysis of predicted relevance or Q^2 . Notably, the relevant analysis involves two approaches: the cross-validated commonality technique and the cross-validated redundancy technique. This study employed the cross-validated commonality technique suggested by Akter and D'Ambra (2011). According to Richard et al. (2019), the cross-validated commonality technique involves information about the study measurement model and structural model to anticipate the eliminated data points to attain the Q^2 values. Table 4.12 shows the results of the analysis of the predictive relevance (Q^2).

Table 4. 12
Predictive Relevance Q^2 Analysis

| Endogenous Variables | Q^2 Value | Size |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------|
| Social Media Information | .475 | Large |
| Social Media Rumours | .028 | Small |
| Reliable Source of Information | .086 | Small |

The Q^2 was analyzed using the same effect size criteria discussed above under Cohen's effect size evaluation (Selya et al., 2012). Results showed the effect size of Social Media Information was .475, higher than the threshold value of .35 (Messner, 2023). Thus, it is considered as large. On the other hand, the Q^2 of the Reliable Source of Information was .086, which is higher than the threshold value of 0.020 (Messner, 2023), indicating the Q^2 is small. However, the Q^2 value of the Social Media Rumours is .028, exceeding the threshold value of .02, indicating that the relevant Q^2 is small. Overall, the results revealed that despite the Q^2 values of two endogenous variables being small, they are acceptable under the given criteria.

4.2.8 Summary of the Structural Model Analysis

The current study has performed all the steps involved in Structural Equation Modelling. Table 4.13 provides an overview of the study objectives and their links with the hypotheses tested. Figure 4.1 illustrates the measurement model of the current research, and Figure 4.2 shows the structural model of this study.

Table 4. 13

An overview of the study objectives and their links with the hypotheses

| Research Objective | Hypothesis | Result |
|---|---|----------|
| To examine the perceptions about the role of social media in spreading information. | A statistically significant relationship exists between social media and information in Emirati society. | Accepted |
| To assess the perceptions about the role of social media in spreading rumours. | There is a statistically significant relationship between social media and rumours in Emirati society. | Accepted |
| To analyze the relationship between social media and reliable information. | There is a statistically significant relationship between social media and reliable sources of information. | Accepted |
| To investigate the role of Dubai Police in counteracting the rumours through social media in Emirati society. | Dubai Police significantly affect the rumours through social media in Emirati society. | Accepted |

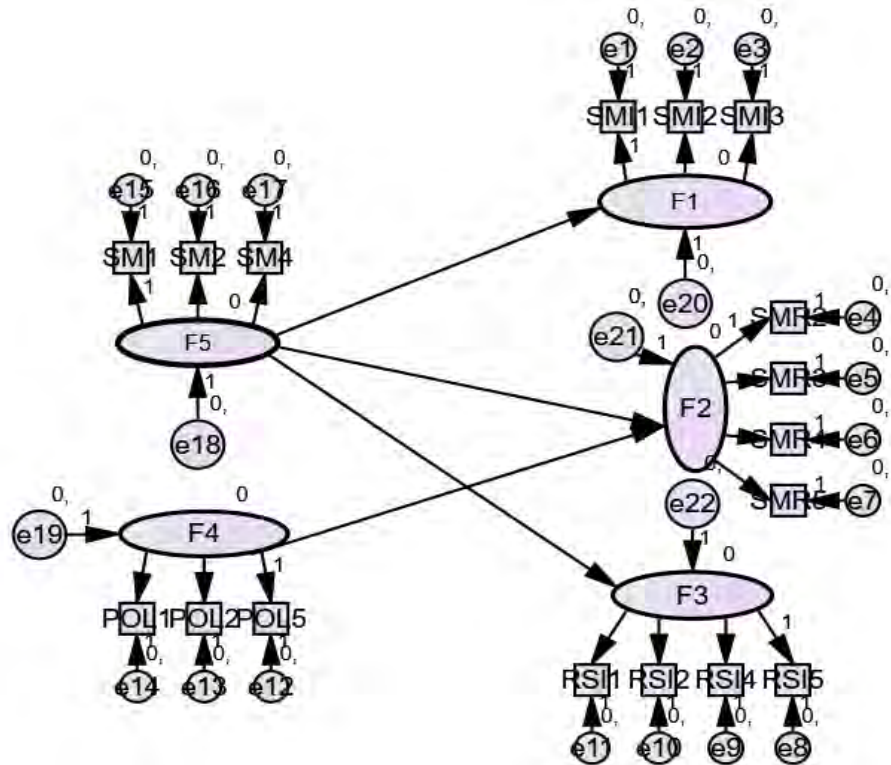


Figure 4. 1 Measurement model of the study

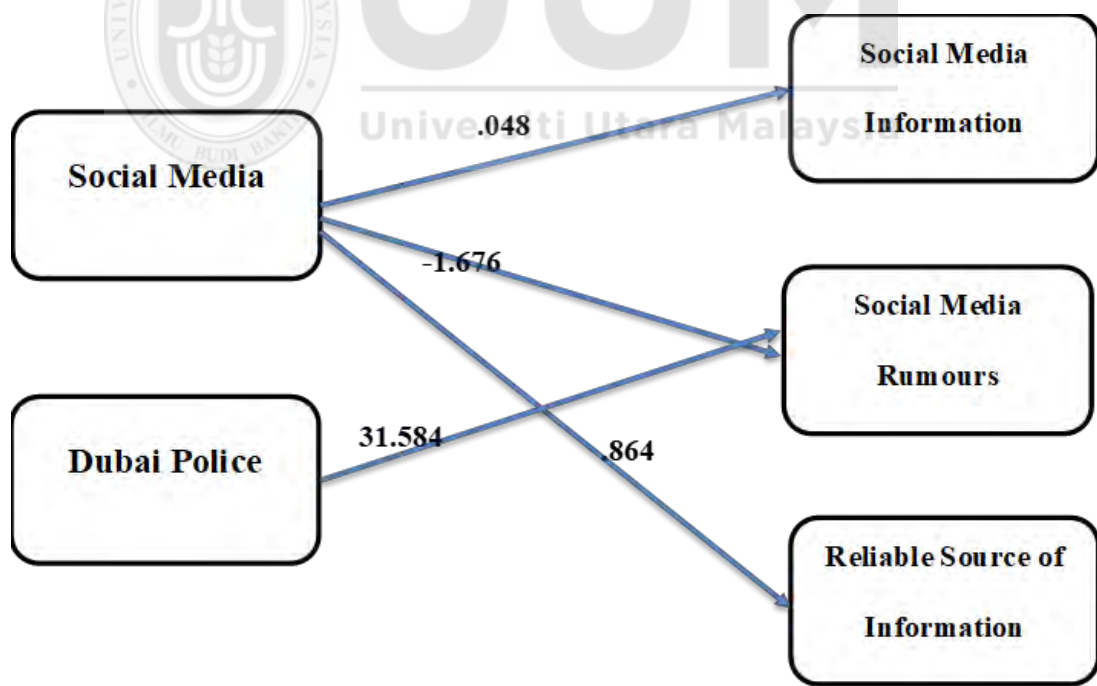


Figure 4. 2 Structural model of the study

4.3 Qualitative Analysis

Personal Profile of the Participants

The research gathered participants' personal information while ensuring ethical standards by anonymizing their identities with initials to protect their privacy. The data indicated that two participants worked as captains in the Community Happiness Department and the General Department of Operations, respectively. Furthermore, one participant served as a first sergeant in the General Department of Criminal Investigation, and another participant held the rank of major in the Crisis and Disasters Department. Table 4.14 shows the list of participants in the current study.

Table 4. 14
Profile of Interview Participants

| Participant # | Name Abbreviation | Rank | Management |
|---------------|----------------------|-------------------|---|
| 1. | ME | First Sergeant | General Department of Criminal Investigation |
| 2. | SA | Major | Crisis and Disasters |
| 3. | AO | Captain | Community Happiness Department |
| 4. | MAS | Captain | General Department of Operations. |

Theme1: Rumours and Society

1. In your opinion, what is the concept of rumours?

The first root question examined the participants' general opinion and awareness about "rumours". According to Aloqaily et al. (2022), a rumour is a piece of information or a story that is spread without being verified or confirmed. It spreads quickly and can be based on speculation or hearsay rather than facts. The study participants also indicated their consistent understanding and awareness of "rumour". According to the participants, it is a type of information that is spread among the members of society, and it is impossible to judge whether it is true. It is misinformation being passed on by members of society and further received and reshared by others as it is interesting or

appealing to the listeners. However, participants also considered it a piece of information lacking any source.

According to one of the participants (SA),

"It is information that does not specify the source and is completely incorrect or includes false information, which is circulated by many individuals on a large scale in society, aiming at influencing public opinion and negatively affecting public security and societal peace the long run".

Participants also indicated that rumours are based on information from an unidentified source that is completely incorrect or includes false information, circulated by several individuals on a large scale, aiming to influence public opinion and negatively affect public security and community peace in the long run. As S. Ali (2020) noted, rumours can negatively affect individuals, groups, and organizations. The effects lie in spreading rumours that can show short-term and long-term consequences.

2. What are the factors that help spread rumours in society?

The participants were asked their opinions regarding the potential factors that may facilitate the spreading of rumours in any society. According to El-Sadig et al. (2020), rumours are common in human societies, and several factors can facilitate their spread. One of the primary factors that can reduce the spread of rumours is the existence of information gaps. When people need access to reliable information or are unsure about the accuracy of the available information, they may fill in the gaps with rumours. This can be particularly true during times of crisis or uncertainty, such as during natural disasters or political crises. In this regard, the study participants revealed diverse opinions. However, the dominant needed more news confirmation and spread of

enormous information resources without validation and further their style of writing and spreading a piece of information.

According to some of the participants (P3, P4),

"The community's ability to receive and transmit information without verifying its authenticity or the reliability of its sources leads to the spread of rumours. Besides, lack of community awareness of the seriousness and implications of circulating and disseminating false and anonymous information".

As noted by Jeljeli et al. (2022), the existence of information gaps, unauthorized resources, and the human tendency to gossip are some factors that can facilitate the spread of rumours in a society. Understanding these factors can help individuals and organizations take steps to prevent the spread of false information and promote the dissemination of accurate and reliable information. Notably, according to the study participants, social media availability and usage also remained one of the dominant factors behind the spread of rumours.

For example, one of the participants (P4) argued that:

"Provided ease of use of social media and communication applications on smartphones. As Easy access to modern social media is provided, the rumours are easily spread and shared among the masses".

The above responses are consistent with the argumentation by Almaiah, Alfaisal, Salloum, Hajjej, et al. (2022). In the contemporary digital age, social networks play a crucial role in accelerating the dissemination of rumours. Social media platforms have streamlined the spread of false or misleading information, with users frequently

sharing unverified rumours. Additionally, these platforms cultivate echo chambers, where individuals are more likely to accept rumours that align with their pre-existing beliefs and values. Further, the study participants also indicated a need for more awareness, a habit of sharing news without confirmation and authentication, and less awareness about the potential harms of spreading inaccurate or unauthenticated information leading to spreading rumours.

According to the study participants (P2, P3),

“Lack of awareness and the level of culture in society as people may not know about the dangers and effects of the circulation and dissemination of false information from an unknown source”.

Overall, the understanding of rumours indicates that multiple elements play a role in their propagation in society, such as information voids, insufficient knowledge, social media's influence, propensity for gossip, and the sway of social networks. Acknowledging these aspects empowers individuals and entities to enact strategies that hinder the proliferation of false data and promote the circulation of accurate and trustworthy information (I. Ali, 2022).

3. In your opinion, what is the purpose of spreading rumours in society?

The third question was about the potential purpose(s) behind spreading rumours in society. According to El-Sadig et al. (2020), rumours can have various societal purposes. Some people may spread rumours to gain attention or social status, while others may advance a personal or political agenda. Rumours can also be spread to manipulate or control others, sow discord or mistrust, or create a sense of belonging

or group identity. Thus, the dominant opinion was based on the role of rumours as altering public opinion or achieving some specific agenda.

According to some of the participants (P1, P4),

“The rumours are spread to the aim of spreading rumours in society is to public opinions stirred partisan or foreign agendas and to achieve personal interests. These interests can be of different types, such as social interests, economic interests, and gaining popularity. However, most of the time, the focus is on attaining the political interests”.

As Allington et al. (2021) noted, one of the leading purposes behind spreading rumours is to advance a personal or political agenda. Rumours can be used to discredit or undermine political opponents or create a sense of fear or anxiety among the general population. Sometimes, rumours may be spread as part of a broader disinformation campaign to manipulate public opinion or create confusion and mistrust.

Participants also indicated that rumours could aim to gain attention or social status. Some people may spread rumours about themselves or others to be the centre of attention or to gain a sense of power or influence within their social group. Rumours can also establish or reinforce social hierarchies, with those who can spread the most convincing or entertaining rumours being seen as more influential or powerful.

According to one of the participants (P2),

“Rumours are spread to gain attention, followers, and attention on social media platforms. The focus is on bringing some unique phenomenon into the foreground and gaining attention, spreading panic, and destabilising society members.”

According to Aksar et al. (2022), the perceived purposes behind spreading rumours in a society can be complex and multifaceted. Understanding the motivations behind spreading rumours can help identify and counter false information and promote the dissemination of accurate and reliable information.

Theme 2: Social Media and Rumours

4. How does social media contribute to spreading rumours?

Next, the participants were asked about their opinions regarding the perceived role of social media in spreading rumours. Golan Mishol-Shauli (2020) noted that the perceived purposes behind spreading rumours in a society could be varied and complex. Understanding these motivations is essential for identifying and countering false information. Rumours can be spread intentionally or unintentionally, and their motivations can range from gaining attention or social status to advancing a political or personal agenda. Overall, the study participants responded to social media's increased and prominent role in spreading rumours.

According to one of the participants (P1),

“Spread speed is due to prevalence in the digital age. The accounts are hidden under pseudonyms, allowing them to spread rumours, believing there is no deterrent or censorship.”

As Pröllochs and Feuerriegel (2022) argued, one of the most significant challenges in countering rumours is that they can be spread quickly and easily, particularly in social media. False information can be shared before it is verified or debunked, making it difficult to control the spread of rumours. Further, other reasons were also explained,

including the appealing content circulating on social networks, the entertaining nature of the false information, and others.

According to one of the participants (P3),

"The false information about celebrities or social media influencers remains dominating about these digital platforms. Besides, the superficial nature of the rumours also makes them catchy for the audiences. As a result, most young generation read or watch the relevant content and further share through social media with each other".

According to Hassan et al. (2012), social media has significantly spread rumours in recent years. The instantaneous nature of social media platforms allows rumours to spread rapidly, often before they can be verified or fact-checked. Social media algorithms also prioritize sensational or controversial content, further fueling rumours. Additionally, the anonymity of social media platforms can encourage people to spread false or misleading information without fear of consequence or accountability.

5. In your opinion, what is the role of Emirati media in curbing the spread of rumours?

According to Broussard (2020), traditional media, encompassing newspapers, television, and radio, play a crucial role in addressing rumours in society. Unlike social media platforms, these longstanding mediums adhere to ethical guidelines and professional standards, prioritizing accuracy and thorough fact-checking procedures. This ensures that information is verified before being shared with the public, maintaining its reliability. Participants recognised the importance of media in the

United Arab Emirates (UAE) in combating the spread of rumours, affirming a consensus on the constructive role played by Emirati media in this aspect.

According to the participants (P2, P4),

“The Emirati media has a positive role and has the potential influence to reduce the spread of rumours. The media in the UAE effectively deals with misinformation and false information, indicating its strong role in curbing the rumours”.

However, the study participants also suggested that the Emirati media should pursue some additional steps to reduce the spread of rumours in society. As noted by (Sabban, 2017), traditional media can also serve as a watchdog, investigating and debunking false information and holding those responsible for spreading rumours accountable. This measure can serve to deter the dissemination of rumours by raising awareness about the potential repercussions of spreading false information. Moreover, emphasizing these consequences and discussing associated penalties can act as a deterrent, discouraging individuals from engaging in spreading rumours.

According to one of the participants (P2, P3),

“Disclosure of penalties for those who contribute to spreading false information reduces the spread of this phenomenon. Additionally, the media or the competent authorities also deal with rumours with wisdom and measure; only some things they want must be answered”.

Thus, Alhashmi et al. (2018) argued that traditional media is important in curbing the spread of rumours in society. By adhering to ethical guidelines, spreading information and awareness, providing reliable, objective reporting, and investigating and

debunking false information, traditional media can help promote a more informed, engaged, and responsible society.

6. In your opinion, does social media have a positive or negative role in spreading rumours?

The next question was about gathering opinions regarding social media's positive or negative role in spreading rumours. The participants emphasized the positive role more than the negative and discussed its importance. According to Choi et al. (2019), despite its role in spreading rumours, social media can also play a critical role in nullifying false information, as it can help to counter the spread of rumours by promoting fact-checking and information sharing. Many social media platforms have implemented measures such as fact-checking labels or links to credible sources, which can help contextualize information and counter the spread of false information.

According to one of the participants (P3),

“It has a positive rather than a negative role due to the measures taken by the media agencies concerned with dealing with rumours. These agencies do not identify the information status and take it down if it is false or based on an unauthentic source. Besides, these agencies also issue declarations regarding certain pieces of information and their falsehood to update the social media users”.

Some participants also indicated the negative role of social media, while still, the dominating stance was about its positive role.

According to the participant (P1),

“Positive in certain topics, such as good or joyful news for some, although it may be incorrect, and negative in other topics that spread fear or instability, even if they are true”.

Some participants addressed the rapid spread and increased circulation of rumours, noting that social media rumours are relatively easy to detect and often serve temporary purposes.

According to the participant (P1),

“Social media has a positive role in spreading rumours due to the speed of its spread among people and the possibility of circulating it among different social groups with different cultures and education. Thus, we may see that the rumour has achieved its temporary goal, but it can easily be counteracted”.

Thus, the response indicates the role of social media as both positive and negative. According to Kotteti et al. (2020), rumours on social media can be easily spread yet taken down; they can achieve their goals but can be refuted; however, there is still a need to counteract these rumours to avoid any issues regarding social stability.

Theme 3: Impacts of Rumours

7. What is the impact of rumours on Emirati society?

As theme 3 was based on investigating the opinions about the impacts of rumours, the participants were first asked about their general points of view. According to Zheltukhina et al. (2019), rumours can significantly impact individuals, communities, and even society. They are often spread without verified evidence or facts and can be

based on hearsay or speculation. One of the most notable effects of rumours is the potential to damage a person's reputation or credibility. False or misleading information can quickly spread through social media or other platforms, leading to widespread misconceptions and negative perceptions of an individual or group. The study participants also agreed with the similar impacts of rumours; however, the leading opinion remained about the potential impacts on the destabilization of the political system.

According to the participants (P3, P4),

“Rumours and their popularity destabilize society's confidence in government agencies and their ability to fulfil their obligations and duties”.

As noted by Ali et al. (2022), in some cases, rumours are used as a tool for manipulation or propaganda. False information can be spread to influence public opinion or to discredit a political opponent, leading to further division and mistrust within society. This can have long-lasting effects on the political landscape, potentially leading to a breakdown in trust between citizens and their government. On the other hand, some participants (P1, P2) disagreed with the impacts of rumours on Emirati society for different reasons, including the local government's efforts to ensure common well-being, people's confidence in political leadership, and others.

According to the relevant participants (P1, P2),

“Its impact may be the same on the rest of societies. Still, rumours related to political affairs are not popular with Emirati society because of the community's confidence in its government and leaders, which always strive for a quality of life, in contrast to

rumours related to the social aspect and jealousy that may find a listening ear many times. I can say that the impact of rumours on UAE society is not high because of the community's confidence in the leadership, institutions, and national ministries”.

Thus, it is assumed that overall, the understanding and opinion about the impacts of rumours on society are negative. Yet, when given their opinion on the effects of rumours on Emirati society, the participants indicated that they are less harmful and have no long-term impacts due to higher confidence in the local government and administrative bodies.

8. What is the impact of rumours on national security?

Generally speaking, El-Sadig et al. (2020) consider rumours to significantly impact national security, particularly in today's rapid information-sharing and communication era. False or misleading information about national security matters can cause panic and confusion and undermine the confidence of the public and the government, creating an environment that is vulnerable to physical and cyber attacks. The participants also agreed with the above statement, as they indicated the negative impact of rumours on national security.

According to one of the participants (P3),

“Rumours have effects on public security and the stability of society in the medium and long-term and may lead to the undermining of national security and the spread of crimes and acts of vandalism due to the lack of confidence in the security.”

As Ali et al. (2022) argued, rumours about security threats or ongoing investigations can compromise law enforcement operations, hindering officials from carrying out their duties. They can also tip off potential attackers, giving them an advantage in planning and executing their attacks. Rumours about high-level security breaches that circulate can lead to the exposure of confidential or classified information, which can compromise national security and put the lives of individuals at risk. However, some participants also consider rumours not endangering national security and sovereignty. These participants (P2, P3) supported their previous opinions by linking them with Emirati society.

For example, Participant 3 said,

“Rumours cannot affect national security. As I have mentioned earlier, Emirati public is confident about their government and administrative department, so rumours do not mean to them, nor do we worry about rumours. Even if there is a rumour, our representative instantly notifies the public through official platforms”.

According to Keshavarz (2020), despite the nature, objectives, and strategies behind rumours that may be intense and vary, if the gaps between the public and government are well-managed, false information can only exist on a short-term basis.

9. How do rumours affect the national economy?

The next question was about the participants' perceptions of the impacts of rumours on society. Al-Zaman et al. (2020) noted that rumours about economic conditions or government policies could cause widespread fear and uncertainty among investors, leading to a rapid decline in the stock market and currency devaluation. This can

negatively impact the overall economy, as businesses cannot obtain financing, and consumers cannot purchase goods and services. In addition, rumours can lead to a decrease in foreign investment, as potential investors may be dissuaded by perceived instability and uncertainty. The responses also remained consistent as the participants indicated the impacts of rumours on the national economy, leading to lower investments and decreased interest from foreign investors.

According to Participants 2 and 3,

“Rumours and false information about the economic conditions in any country harm the confidence of investors, capital owners, and workers in this sector. Therefore, the delay in dealing with rumours in this sector has a faster impact than any other type of rumour in other sectors”.

However, the participants again pointed out the confidence and trust of the public in leadership and governance, which further leads to decreased impacts and increased economic activities in the United Arab Emirates, including foreign investments.

According to the participants (P1, P4),

“In the past, there was an impact to some extent, but now its impact has decreased significantly, and confidence in wise leadership also has a role. So, we can say that rumours have a low impact on the national economy due to increased trust in the governance”.

According to Alam et al. (2021), when there is a strong trust in the government and its policies, the impact of rumours on the national economy is typically lower. Individuals and investors are more likely to have confidence in the government's ability to manage the economy and respond to any crises or challenges that may arise. As a result, they

may be less likely to believe and act on false or misleading information that could harm the economy.

Theme 4: Sources of Rumours

10. Do you think the sources of rumours are internal sources or planned external conspiracies? Interpret

The fourth theme involved questions about the participants regarding the potential sources of rumours. Notably, Alkhodair et al. (2020) consider the sources of rumours often anonymous and unidentifiable because it provides them with protection and anonymity. By remaining anonymous, sources of rumours can avoid accountability and the consequences of spreading false or misleading information. According to Tasnim et al. (2020), anonymity can make it easier to disseminate sensitive or confidential information that may be difficult or impossible to share. By keeping their identity hidden, the rumour source may feel more comfortable sharing potentially damaging or controversial information. The study respondents also specified these resources as anonymous, yet they argued that these sources could be external or internal based on the nature and goals behind them.

According to Participant 1,

“The goals of spreading these rumours differ from internal or external sources. In many cases, they are external due to the difficulty of tracing their source, especially those related to security or political aspects.”

Similarly, the participants also indicated the sources could be internal; however, the aim can be to achieve the goals of some external entities. Besides, the participants highlighted the source of rumours depending mainly upon the purposes.

According to one of the participants (P1),

“Rumours may be internal for personal reasons and interests and may be external due to the presence of some hostile parties to the state. These rumours mostly contain false information whose sources are internal and aim to influence public opinion and shape it according to a specific path. On the other hand, there are rumours whose sources are external and aim to harm and influence the image and reputation of government agencies”.

Thus, Alhashmi et al. (2018) state that the prevalence yet definite opinion about these sources having either internal or external sources is difficult. Today, with the enormous number of information and communication platforms, it is easier than ever to spread rumours quickly and anonymously, often with little or no fact-checking. Lacking definite information about the sources of rumours with protection makes sharing sensitive information easier and allows manipulation of situations or people without identification.

11. In your opinion, are rumours systematic, organized, and arranged by certain parties, or are they random? Interpret

According to Kotteti et al. (2020), rumours can impact public opinion by shaping how individuals perceive certain communities, groups, or events. False or misleading information can cause individuals to develop negative opinions, impacting socio-political behaviour and how people view certain policies or issues. The second

question of the fourth theme examined the opinions about the possibility of rumours as linked with any parties (political or social). The participants agreed that the sources behind rumours could be diverse as the parties mostly depend on different sources to spread false information.

According to one participant (P1),

“In light of the current circumstances, the use of rumours, especially through social media, has sometimes become an important, influential, and decisive weapon. Groups and organizations with specific agendas exploit this weapon. Foreign rumours are certainly organized and with specific goals against the state”.

The study participants also highlighted the role of political rivals in spreading rumours to achieve certain goals. According to the participants, the rumours are false information that may also serve as a political phenomenon.

According to the participants (P2, P3, P4),

“False information and rumours may be used to test public opinion and reactions to a specific issue or phenomenon. Still, this type of information quickly fades once the goal of its popularity and spread is achieved. Still, another type of rumour is broadcast at specific intervals and in a scheduled and deliberate manner. This information builds a certain image or impression leading to achieving the desired political goals”.

Thus, rumours can also be intentionally spread to create a false narrative or to misrepresent facts. This can sway public opinion, favouring a particular political agenda or discredit an opposing viewpoint. Political agendas, rumours, and public

opinion are all interconnected. Rumours can be intentionally spread to support or oppose political agendas and bring diverse outcomes (Al Tum, 2019).

Theme 5: Role of Social Media and Society in Sharing Awareness and Rumour Mongering

12. In your opinion, how does social media contribute to raising society's awareness of misleading rumours?

The role and impact of social media in spreading awareness about rumours and false information are twofold. First, social media directly informs the public about the falsehood of rumours, mainly involving contradictions from official resources, spokespersons, or other official resources. Second, social media have machine learning systems that may detect and takedown rumours effectively. As a result, Al-Zaman, Sultana et al. (2020) consider social media an effective tool to counteract the rumours and nullify their impacts on society. Thus, the first root question from theme five also investigated the opinion of police personnel about the role of social media in raising social awareness about the rumours in society. The study participants revealed an overall positive role of social media in spreading awareness and educating the public.

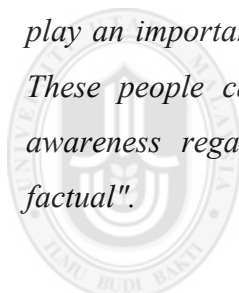
According to Participant 1 and Participant 2,

“These means have increased communication easily at any time and time. They are used for good, in transferring information or adding new information. They are used to educate society through official platforms, and a group of distinguished content owners, analysts, and intellectuals participate in these means. We should also promote these people through the new media”.

Further, the study participants also emphasized producing balanced information through the official platforms to curb the rumours and false news through social media. According to Oh Lee 2019), social media is a powerful tool for raising awareness about rumours and promoting a balance of information sharing among the masses. One of the most significant advantages of social media is its ability to reach a large audience quickly. When false or misleading information is spread, stakeholders on social media quickly contradict and indicate the falsification of the news, providing a platform for discussion, debate, and correction.

According to one of the participants (P4),

"Social media influencers and official stakeholders (internal) can play an important role in refuting rumours and false information. These people can control the flow of information and spread awareness regarding identifying news status as a rumour or factual".



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Thus, Shen (2021) argues that social media can be a force for good in the fight against rumours. By raising awareness and promoting a balance of information sharing among the masses, social media can help mitigate the harm caused by rumours and support more informed and critical discussions about complex issues.

13. In your opinion, what is the role of society in limiting or reducing the spread of rumours?

According to Alsaeedi and Al-Sarem (2020), society is critical in limiting or reducing the spread of rumours. By promoting media literacy, fostering a culture of accountability, encouraging the use of verified sources, and recognizing the potential impact of rumours, society can work to mitigate the harm caused by rumours and

support more informed and critical discussions about complex issues. When the study participants were asked about the prospective role of society in reducing rumours, they revealed the importance of awareness and media literacy as important factors that may reduce rumours. The study participants also emphasized the positivity of the public in counteracting the rumours in Emirati society.

According to one of the participants (P2, P3),

“Before a piece of information adversely affects society, people should investigate the truth and stir the patriotic motive by stopping the rumours and not circulating them to preserve the state's reputation and its national interests. However, we can reduce these rumours when people know as much as possible”.

As Pal et al. (2019) noted, one-way society can limit the spread of rumours is by promoting media literacy. By educating individuals on how to evaluate information critically, society can reduce the likelihood that false or misleading information will be shared. This includes understanding the sources of information, using evidence to support claims and the potential biases or motivations behind the spread of certain rumours. The participants also indicated a similar viewpoint about the rumours through people with awareness and literacy.

According to the participants (P3, P4),

“Media literacy and awareness is a key factor in obtaining information from its official sources and ensuring the validity of the information circulated before contributing to its dissemination”.

Thus, the role of society is critical in limiting or reducing the spread of rumours. Society is responsible for fact-checking and actively promoting reliable sources of information. Additionally, it is important for society to recognize the potential impact of rumours and to take appropriate action to limit their spread (Alzanin & Azmi, 2018).

14. In your opinion, how do rumour-mongers take advantage of crises?

The last root question of theme five was based on investigating the participants' opinion about the rumour-mongers, mainly their role during crises. According to Alkhodair et al. (2020), rumours tend to spread like wildfire, causing panic and confusion. During a crisis, people are often in a state of heightened emotions and seek answers and explanations for the situation themselves. In this state, they become more susceptible to believing in rumours and passing them on, even if they are unsure if the information is true or false. One reason rumours take advantage of crises is the need for more credible information.

During a crisis, there is often a need for more official information or explanations from the authorities, leaving people to rely on what they hear from other sources, which often need to be more trustworthy. This information void allows rumours to fill in the gaps, especially when the situation is perceived as threatening or dangerous (Ramadan, 2019). Thus, the study participants also indicated that increased uncertainty and lack of instant information help the rumour-mongers to create and spread false information.

According to one of the participants (P1),

“The spread of rumours during crises is greater than in stable conditions because society is thirsty for true or false information, so these people work more during that to achieve their goals. The

rumour-mongers take advantage of crises by playing in troubled waters and exploiting the momentary weakness of society”.

Eismann (2021) argued that individuals who spread rumours often capitalize on people's emotions and fears, using sensational or dramatic methods that strike a chord with individuals' feelings and encourage extensive sharing. In times of crisis, heightened emotions make individuals more prone to accepting these sensational explanations or messages that instil fear. Furthermore, participants in the study observed that rumour mongers utilize diverse tactics to influence people's emotions and mould their viewpoints in specific directions.

According to the participants (P3, P4),

"By distorting and falsifying the available information and detailing it to the context that the rumour-mongers see while using some real information to give credibility to the general form of the novel or story and the false content. The motive is to achieve the sense of credibility by targeting the emotions without revealing the sources that may further lead to achieving the desired objectives".

Therefore, rumour-mongers take advantage of crises because they offer a sense of control and provide explanations without official information. They thrive on people's emotions and fears and often spread quickly, causing panic and confusion. During a crisis, it is essential to seek out credible sources of information and verify any rumours before sharing them (Abbas s, 2019).

Theme 6: Role of Dubai Police

15. What are the procedures and measures taken by the Dubai Police to limit the spread of rumours in society?

The police must help limit the spread of false information, as societal rumours can damage and destabilise. For example, police can implement measures to limit the spread of rumours in society, such as actively monitoring social media platforms, including Twitter, Facebook, and WhatsApp, to detect and intercept false information. On the other hand, there can be many technical strategies to curb the spread of rumours and false information (Lee et al., 2022). When the participants in this study were asked about the steps Dubai Police took to counteract the rumours, they indicated different steps and strategies.

For example, Participant 1 indicated that,

"Some parties follow up on the source of rumours according to their quality and evidence. The procedures involve the application of the law in the crime of spreading rumours, activating all official means of communication for the Dubai Police General Command to spread awareness and the dangers of rumours, and improving the speed and transparency in confirming or denying the news to the community through official channels".

According to Tran et al. (2021), police forces can coordinate with specially designed media security teams to design and implement public awareness programs and campaigns. These campaigns provide information and train the masses to counteract rumours, especially during emergencies and crises. Additionally, their role is to provide on-time reports about media content and content so that the police keep an eye on the information being shared from the relevant platforms.

The study participants also indicated the same approach by Dubai Police according to Participants 2 and 3,

“The Dubai Police Security Media Team works within a government communication system through which it activates mechanisms to respond to false news and misinformation that negatively impact society and the reputation of government agencies in Dubai. In this context, the Security Media Department coordinates with the Dubai Government Media Office to review mechanisms and methodologies for dealing with possible crises and critical situations. A joint media team between Dubai Police, the Media Office, and other government agencies coordinate efforts to conduct exercises, scenarios, and mock experiments annually, including responding to malicious media campaigns that include rumours and false news”.

Therefore, the subjective feedback proposed further measures, such as setting up a hotline or online platform for accessing trustworthy information and organizing awareness initiatives to underscore the importance of verifying information prior to sharing it. Additionally, law enforcement is actively monitoring and promptly debunking rumours and misinformation with factual data (Government of Dubai, 2022).

16. What is the role of the security media in Dubai Police to limit the spread of rumours?

According to Zhao et al. (2012), the general role of the security media in policing is to help limit the spread of rumours and false information. By controlling the flow of information, police can ensure that the public is aware of the facts and is not misled by malicious rumours. Police can use security media outlets such as press releases, social

media posts, and public events to update the public on the facts and help prevent the spread of misinformation. Additionally, security media can help police identify and track suspicious activity, which can help to prevent crime and protect the public.

The security media can also conduct campaigns and seminars to spread awareness about the rumours and their impacts. Thus, the participants in the current research also indicated a similar opinion about the role of security media in the Dubai Police.

According to one of the participants (P1),

“Conduct seminars, workshops, and advertising campaigns regarding the dangers of rumours and the penalties for this crime. Post ads to reduce this scourge. Highlight the stakeholders from the police departments to convey understanding and address the community visually. Harnessing influencers in communication and cooperating with them to deliver the goals to the influential segment”.

Participant 2 also revealed that

“The Security Media Department of Dubai Police activates the work mechanisms documented in the communication guide during crises, risks, and emergencies, which was prepared and approved in August 2020. It is an integrated work guide with many mechanisms for media dealing with crises and critical situations.”.

However, it is notable that the crisis required more organized and strategic policies and performance to counteract the rumours.

According to the study participants (P1, P4),

“Dubai Police uses the CCC Manual for Communication which includes a mechanism for the flow of media information between the joint media team, the media, and the official accounts of government institutions and departments in the emirate of Dubai, which ensures the speedy media response to any rumour or False news sourced from an official media outlet, a government agency, or a non-governmental organization”.

According to Wang et al. (2021), security media in the police can help counter rumours during a crisis by providing accurate, up-to-date information to the public using various social media platforms, such as Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram, to share verified facts and dispel false information. Additionally, police can use digital tools such as video and audio recordings to provide a visual and auditory representation of the situation, helping to maintain public order and dispel rumours. Moreover, law enforcement can utilize their networks to disseminate positive messages and foster constructive dialogue, mitigating tension and thwarting the spread of rumours.

17. Have Dubai Police been exposed to Dubai Police rumours? How did they deal with them?

According to Choi et al. (2019), one of the best methods for police to deal with rumours about their performance is to be as transparent and honest as possible. The police force ensures the provision of accurate and timely information to the public and promptly addresses any allegations or rumours. They also strive to maintain a positive professional relationship with the public and to build trust and credibility. In this regard, the study participants also emphasized that the Dubai Police prefer

transparency and winning public trust in their policies and performance, which helps them deal effectively with the rumours.

According to some of the participants (P1, P2),

“Dubai Police widely prefer transparency in dealing with rumours. Police personnel provide the public with accurate information and deal with rumours transparently. The current strategies involve providing clear and timely responses to rumours and not making assumptions about the truth or falsity of the information.”

Further, the participants also quoted some incidents in the past, indicating their responsibilities during the events and their strategies to counteract the rumours.

According to the participants (P3, P4),

“The Security Media Department dealt with many rumours and false news related to security and police work from 2007 to 2009, a period in which rumours and false news were active as a result of the occurrence of several crimes, such as the assassination of the Palestinian leaders Mahmoud al-Mabhouh and the assassination of the Chechen leader, in addition to the murder of the Lebanese singer Suzanne Tamim and the crime of theft of Graf jewellery stores from the Wafi Center through the international Pink Panther gang. I dealt with all these situations and the rumours by activating the joint media work system with the Dubai Government Media Office and other government institutions”.

Thus, Bailey Breslin (2021) stated that the role of media during crises is to provide accurate and timely information to the public to help people make informed decisions and help them to act quickly and appropriately. Media can also provide psychological

support and comfort to those affected by the crisis. Additionally, media can serve as a platform for discussion, analysis, and advocacy to effect change.

18. What are the plans of Dubai Police to deal with rumours?

Eismann (2021) argued that the importance of police plans in dealing with rumours is that they provide a framework for law enforcement agencies to respond in an organized manner. Police plans help to address a wide range of rumours, from false news stories to gossip about criminal activity. Police plans also help ensure that law enforcement agencies are adequately prepared to respond to rumours and misinformation promptly and effectively. The fourth question of the final theme was inquiring about the participants' opinions about the prospective plans of Dubai Police to deal with the rumours. The participants shared the details about the plan, including the media monitoring team to monitor and evaluate the content shown and shared with the masses.

According to the participants (P2, P3, P4),

“Once the media monitoring team detects the rumour, it is subjected to measurements such as analyzing the level of seriousness of the information contained in the news, determining the source of the information, its impact and spread, and the expected degree of access. Accordingly, the joint media work system with the Dubai Government Media Office is activated, and a plan for dealing with news and content is prepared. The appropriate media provided that this process is at most 10 to 15 minutes”.

Participants 2 and 3 also indicated that the concerned departments effectively handled their responsibility to curb the rumours. They constantly monitor the proceedings and make improvements as needed.

According to one of the participants (P1),

“The concerned department is using different strategies regarding how to investigate and respond to rumours, as well as to provide resources for community members to help them identify false rumours and differentiate between fact and fiction”.

Therefore, Bailey and Breslin (2021) stated that the importance of police plans in dealing with rumours is twofold. First, these plans help investigate and, if necessary, arrest those who spread false information or malicious rumours. Second, these plans help dispel rumours by providing accurate information and facts to the public, allowing people to make more informed decisions, and reducing the potential for spreading false information.

19. How do Dubai Police deal with rumour mongers?

The study participants were asked their opinions regarding how to deal with rumours. Notably, M and Durai (2017) consider dealing with rumours as requiring tactful strategies and consideration. As noted, officers take the time to investigate any rumour they hear, as it can lead to valuable information. It is also important to remember that people often spread rumours out of fear or misunderstanding, so officers stay careful not to take things at face value. The study participants indicated different considerations while dealing with the rumours, including tracking down the sources of

information, implementing the law, and spreading awareness about the rumours and their harmful impacts.

According to the participants (P1, P2),

“Dubai Police effectively deal with the rumours by tracking the sources and the aims behind spreading them. Now different laws are also implemented further criminalizing false information based on their motives and impacts. Besides, our departments are also running media campaigns and programs based on spreading awareness about the rumours, further helping the public react tactfully when they encounter any rumours”.

Further, the study participants indicated the potential involvement of other departments in responding to the rumours based on their expertise and formal practices.

According to some of the participants (P3, P4),

“The answer is within the competence of the General Department of Investigation, specifically the Department of Electronic Crimes, where the file is transferred based on the leadership's instructions to the authorities concerned with the seizure procedures. The relevant departments then act effectively and instantly issue measures and strategies based on dealing with the rumours under the best possible solutions.”

Thus, Fu (2020) also suggested strategies and actions to respond to the rumours, such as being clear and honest when communicating with the public and ensuring that their statements are accurate and consistent. Officers should strive to provide evidence to support their statements.

20. What is the penalty for rumour mongers?

According to Alaajel (2019), penalties for rumour mongers are important because they serve as a deterrent against the spread of false information. They also help to protect the reputation of individuals and companies, organizations, and governments. Penalties discourage people from engaging in malicious gossip and encourage truth-telling and responsible communication. Ultimately, the goal is to promote a culture of honesty and integrity. Thus, the second last question of the final theme was about asking the participants about the potential penalties against the rumour mongers in Dubai. The respondents indicated different punishments based on the nature and objectives of the rumours and false information.

According to participants 2 and 3,

“Imprisonment for not less than one year by the Federal Penal Code. Financial penalties are also imposed, including fines. Besides, restrictive activities and monitoring social media usage, etc., are also involved”.

However, participants 1 and 4 needed to gain more knowledge about the penalties. Instead, they referred to the Department of Legal Affairs when dealing with the penalties against the rumour mongers in the United Arab Emirates.

According to the respective participants (P1, P4),

“I am unsure about the exact penalties as our responsibilities differ. I believe that answer can be well-given by the jurisdiction of the General Directorate of Human Rights and the Legal Affairs Department, as they are concerned with the convictions and penalties related to the cases filed by Dubai Police”.

According to Alaajel (2019), charging penalties is the responsibility of legal departments because it is a form of punishment for breaking the law. Penalties are meant to discourage people from breaking the law by imposing a financial burden on those who do. Penalties also ensure that those who commit crimes are held accountable for their actions and that justice is served. Furthermore, penalties deter potential lawbreakers, as they know their actions may result in a financial penalty.

21. Do you think this punishment is enough to deter rumour-mongers?

Finally, the participants were asked about the sufficiency of the penalties to deter rumour mongers in Emirati society. Notably, the penalties are generally implemented to counter the crimes and nullify the possible chances in the future regarding recidivism among convicts. Penalties aim to reduce crimes and prevent others from getting involved. Thus, the question about the sufficiency of penalties gained valuable insights. The participants might be influential, yet they are enough to ensure crime reduction in the future. For this purpose, there must be additional punishment.

As Participant 1 and Participant 2 argued,

“As far as I know, the penalties are good, but they cannot guarantee that the crime will stop. People keep sharing rumours without any prior knowledge or fear of punishment. I think that it also requires community punishment, such as publishing the person's name in the media”.

Notably, additional punishments are often used to increase the likelihood that a potential criminal will be deterred from committing a crime. If criminals know they will face a harsher punishment for committing a certain crime, they will be less likely to commit it. This is because they will be more aware of the consequences they could

face and thus be more likely to choose an alternative option. Besides, harsher punishments act as a form of social control. Individuals are more likely to conform to societal expectations of behaviour if there is a greater risk of being punished for deviating from these standards (Almaiah et al., 2022).

However, participant 3 and participant 4 remained hesitant to share opinions about the sufficiency of penalties in curbing rumour-mongering in Emirati society. According to the relevant participants,

“I would say that the sufficient and potential of penalties and punishment is better determined by the individuals in legal and jurisdiction. As a police officer, I cannot make any definite statement; rather, the concerned department can better determine the effectiveness of penalties”.

Therefore, Alhashmi et al. (2018) argued that the status and sufficiency of penalties and punishment rely on their effectiveness. The previous cases can better demonstrate their effectiveness, which can further lead to adding or removing the punishment considered suitable to deter crime.

Theme 7. Strategies Designed to Counteract Social Media Rumours

1. What are the strategies your department has adopted to counteract the rumours?

The question's objective concerning the strategies adopted by the department to neutralize rumours served as a key inquiry to explain the proactive measures undertaken by law enforcement entities, especially within the study's investigation into rumour management. By demanding insights into the specific strategies, the study aimed to understand the operational tactics used by law enforcement agencies, such as

monitoring units and public awareness campaigns, to mitigate the dissemination and impact of rumours within the community. In this regard, the study participants provided several useful insights. For example, Participant 3 revealed that

“Our department has executed several strategies to counteract rumours effectively. We have established reliable social media monitoring units tasked with monitoring different social media platforms for spreading rumours and misinformation. These units use advanced monitoring tools and techniques to identify and address false information promptly.”

Participant 2 further revealed that

“We conduct regular public awareness campaigns to enlighten the community about the risks of spreading rumours on social media. These campaigns highlight the importance of verifying information before sharing it online and the possible consequences of spreading false rumours. Also, we collaborate closely with social media platforms to fight the spread of rumours. Through partnerships and information-sharing agreements, we acquire access to tools and resources that help identify and terminate false information from these platforms. We also work together to encourage digital literacy and responsible online behaviour among users.”

While Participants 4 and 1 agreed with the role, impact, and practicality of engaging with the public to ensure the effectiveness of the message and awareness:

“Our department actively engages with the public by responding to queries and explaining misleading information in real-time. By keeping open lines of communication with the community, we strive

to address concerns and build trust, thereby mitigating the effect of rumours on societal stability and public security."

Thus, this question elucidated the extent of collaboration with social media platforms and the effectiveness of community engagement initiatives in promoting trust and responsible online behaviour, thereby contributing to developing evidence-based approaches for rumour management in contemporary society as emphasized by Song et al. (2021).

2. To what extent do you think these strategies are important?

Study participants agreed that the significance of the strategies implemented by the department to counteract rumours must be balanced. These strategies are crucial in protecting societal stability, preserving public trust, and mitigating the possible harm caused by spreading misinformation on social media platforms. According to participants 2 and 3,

"Establishing reliable social media monitoring units is essential in promptly identifying and addressing false information. These units use advanced monitoring tools and approaches, enabling the department to detect rumours early and take necessary actions to prevent escalation. The enactment of regular public awareness campaigns serves to familiarize the community with the risks associated with spreading rumours on social media. By highlighting the importance of verifying information before sharing it online, these campaigns entrust individuals to make informed decisions and exercise caution in their online interactions."

According to participant 4,

“Active engagement with the public supports trust and transparency between the department and the community. By answering questions and addressing misleading information in real-time, the department demonstrates its commitment to managing concerns and maintaining open lines of communication. This proactive strategy helps mitigate rumours' influence on societal stability and public security.”

Participant 1 further revealed that

“Collaboration with social media platforms improves the department's ability to effectively fight the spread of rumours. Through partnerships and information-sharing agreements, the department acquires access to tools and resources to identify and remove false information from these platforms. Besides, promoting digital literacy and accountable online behaviour among users promotes a culture of critical thinking and discernment, further contributing to the deterrence of rumour propagation.”

Thus, participants agreed that the strategies implemented by the department are essential in combating the spread of rumours and misinformation on social media platforms. Their prominence lies in their ability to promptly detect and address false information, educate the community about the risks of rumourmongering, collaborate with social media platforms, and maintain trust and transparency with the public. Collectively, these strategies contribute to the conservation of societal well-being and the advancement of responsible online behaviour.

3. How do you consider the effectiveness of these strategies?

The effectiveness of these strategies is evaluated through different perspectives among the participants. Participant 3 voiced confidence in the effectiveness of the strategies, stating,

"Our department has executed multiple strategies to counteract rumours effectively. We have established dedicated social media monitoring units tasked with observing different social media platforms for circulating rumours and misinformation. These units use state-of-the-art monitoring tools and approaches to identify and address false information promptly."

On the other hand, Participant 1 and Participant 2 expressed apprehensions about the limitations of existing penalties and proposed further measures to enhance deterrence.

Participant 1 remarked,

"As far as I know, the strategies are good, but they cannot guarantee that the crime will stop. People keep sharing rumours without any prior knowledge or dread of punishment."

Participant 2 added,

"I think it also needs community punishment, such as publishing the person's name in the media, to prevent individuals from disseminating false information."

Furthermore, Participant 4 and Participant 1 highlighted the importance of engaging with the public to provide the effectiveness of the department's strategies. Participant 4 accentuated,

"Our department actively engages with the public by responding to queries and explaining misleading information in real time. By keeping open lines of communication with the community, we aim to address concerns and build trust, thereby mitigating the effect of rumours on societal stability and public security."

Hence, these diverse opinions reflect the complex nature of evaluating the effectiveness of strategies in combating rumours. While some participants voiced confidence in the strategies implemented by the department, others emphasized the need for more measures or highlighted the significance of community engagement in ensuring the success of these initiatives. Overall, evaluating the effectiveness of these strategies requires considering numerous factors, including their effect on rumour mitigation, public perception, and societal stability.

4.4 Chapter Summary

This chapter contained the analysis and results using the most suitable methodological approaches to this study. First, the descriptive analysis of the data is performed, including different analyses, normality tests, missing value analyses, and others. Further, after the descriptive analyses, inferential statistics is employed to test the relationships between variables and further the performance of each exogenous variable in its relation to the endogenous variables.

After the quantitative data analysis, qualitative data analysis covered six themes of the interview questionnaire. The study participants recorded their responses in the face-to-face interviews, which were further converted into written transcripts for data analysis. Notably, the results from both analyses remained supportive of the study hypotheses, objectives, and problem.

Overall, the role of social media in spreading information and rumours is validated. The participants also agreed social media works as a reliable source of information. Finally, the role of Dubai Police in curbing information, the penalties, and the effectiveness of penalties is discussed. The next chapter will provide insights into the results and an extensive discussion.



CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter highlights and discusses the research findings and their relation to existing literature, further providing empirical support to the obtained results. This chapter also summarizes and concludes this project and provides practical, theoretical, and methodological implications. Finally, study limitations and recommendations for future studies are proposed.

5.2 Summary of the Findings

The findings of this research are based on two parts. As noted earlier, this study is based on a mixed-method approach. First, the survey results are obtained, and then the qualitative analysis is conducted. In this regard, both quantitative and qualitative results are represented and discussed accordingly.

First, this study found that all the quantitative hypotheses are validated by statistical analysis. It has been found that there is a significant relationship between social media and information in the United Arab Emirates. Furthermore, the second relationship between social media and rumours in Emirati society is also significant, as the respondents indicated that social media significantly plays a role in spreading rumours. On the other hand, the study respondents also agreed that the Dubai Police is

significantly affecting these social media rumours by curbing them through different strategies and policies.

The analysis of qualitative data followed the quantitative analysis and results. Utilizing a predetermined set of themes, guided by root questions, facilitated qualitative data collection. Thorough examination and assessment of the data revealed participants' acknowledgement of social media's dual role in both disseminating information and occasionally spreading rumours within Emirati society. Additionally, they recognised social media as a dependable source of information.

Furthermore, participants affirmed the efficacy of Dubai Police's strategies in combating rumours. They provided insights into the current penalties for rumour-mongering and advocated for more effective policies to bolster the police's role in addressing these rumours. Overall, the qualitative findings were consistent with the quantitative data, highlighting the significant impact of social media on information dissemination, the propagation of rumours, and the pivotal role of Dubai Police in upholding the security and integrity of Emirati society.

5.3 Discussion of Findings

The discussion on results is based on the research objectives and hypotheses as organized in this research. The relationship between social media and information, social media and rumours, and social media as a reliable source of information is discussed. Further, the role of Dubai Police is discussed as the third hypothesis representing the quantitative results.

5.3.1 There is a statistically significant relationship between social media and information in Emirati society

The first hypothesis of the current research was based on examining the relationship between social media and information in general. The aim was to examine how information and social media are interlinked. In other words, the aim was to analyze how information is considered an integral part of social media. According to Al-Zaman et al. (2020), social media has become one of the most influential and efficient tools for spreading information. One of the main reasons social media is so effective in disseminating information is its large user base. Platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram have millions of users worldwide, facilitating information outreach to a broad audience in minutes.

Additionally, social media allows users to share and repost information, creating a ripple effect that can quickly spread news or updates across multiple platforms. For example, during the COVID-19 pandemic (Ali et al., 2022), many studies approved the role of social media in spreading information about different social, political, economic, and healthcare-related phenomena. The relevant information was diverse and benefitted the users on different levels to prevent virus transmission by adopting the best possible measures.

A significant link between social media and social media information was also found in this study. The study respondents agreed that information availability is a common phenomenon on social media. Further, the United Arab Emirates has a multiculturalism, so they rely on social media for information, as they can easily access social networking platforms anytime they want. They also agreed that this is due to the extensive development of information technology that has facilitated social media

usage and access among the general public. These findings are consistent with the propositions by Sun (2021).

As noted, social media allows for real-time updates and direct audience engagement. Social media is often the first place people turn to for information during a crisis or breaking news event. Platforms like Twitter allow users to follow hashtags related to a particular topic, making tracking and staying updated on the latest developments easy. Furthermore, social media provides a platform for direct communication between individuals and organizations, allowing for quick and efficient dissemination of information.

Social media is a platform for sharing information, ranging from truthful to untruthful or depicting the author's opinions. Truthful information can often be found on reputable national and local news profiles, which carry the responsibility of ensuring accuracy and truthfulness in their reports. In cases where false information is disseminated, reputable news sources are known to issue retractions to maintain or regain the trust of their audience. These sources typically verify the authenticity of information through diligent fact-checking and source verification (Al-Zaman, 2021).

Deceitful information may be spread intentionally or inadvertently. Deliberate dissemination of false information can occur as satire or to evoke emotional responses. However, misleading information can also be spread inadvertently by social media users who share content without verifying its accuracy. Studies show that a significant portion of social media users, approximately 59 per cent, share information based

solely on headlines without reading the full article. Also, opinions expressed by individuals may be mistakenly perceived as factual information (Zhao et al., 2015). Social media platforms significantly impact social change by providing a voice to thousands, if not millions, of users to share content they deem relevant and significant. However, the downside of this democratization of information dissemination is the proliferation of false information masquerading as truth. Information circulated on social media can alter individual beliefs and shape group perceptions (Obi-Ani et al., 2020).

Bridgman et al. (2020) illustrated the impact of social media during the U.S. presidential election, highlighting the active online presence of both candidates, Hillary Clinton and President-elect Donald Trump. While Clinton scaled back her social media engagement post-election, Trump continued to utilize these platforms to disseminate important messages. Notably, a single tweet from Trump regarding the Air Force One's cost caused a significant reaction, leading to a drop in Boeing's stock price. This underscores the substantial influence of social media on public perception and financial markets, regardless of political affiliations.

Moreover, the increasing reliance on social media during crises has transformed the way information is shared. Emergency response agencies routinely utilize these platforms to distribute critical alerts and guidance (Kadam & Atre, 2020; Shahsavari et al., 2020). However, social media serves as more than just a broadcasting tool. Individuals contribute by sharing firsthand experiences, observations, and information gathered from various sources, offering nearly real-time updates to affected communities and those beyond the disaster zone (Sahni & Sharma, 2020).

It is recognized that information shared on social media platforms during critical and time-sensitive situations can be immensely valuable for decision-makers involved in emergency response efforts. Previous studies have demonstrated that Twitter and other social media platforms significantly convey information that enhances situational awareness during mass emergencies. Consequently, emergency responders and humanitarian organizations, ranging from local fire departments to international aid agencies, are endeavouring to integrate information on social media platforms into their operational procedures. Many of these agencies acknowledge the importance of the information the public shares on social media and actively seek methods to locate, organize, and utilize this information efficiently. Some organizations have formally integrated social media monitoring and communication into their response strategies during mass emergencies. For instance, the American Red Cross (ARC) conducted a survey highlighting the effectiveness of social media and mobile apps in disaster response. In response, ARC established its Social Media Digital Operations Center for Humanitarian Relief to gather additional information from affected areas during emergencies, anticipate public needs more effectively, and connect individuals with essential resources such as food, water, shelter, and emotional support (Rocha et al., 2023; A. W. Wang et al., 2021).

The research findings add to the growing field of study concerning social media's role in raising awareness. Notably, qualitative feedback supports the correlation between social media and information dissemination. Participants affirm the inherent link between social media and the sharing of information. According to Habes et al. (2023), social media offers a wealth of information to its users. Each time individuals access their social networking accounts, they encounter a wide array of content spanning

political, social, and other domains. Consequently, social media holds heightened importance today and is widely regarded as a significant information source.

5.3.2 A statistically significant relationship exists between social media and rumours in Emirati society

According to Ali (2020), the availability of rumours on social media is a significant concern that has gained increasing attention in recent years. Rumours are based on false or misleading information that is spread without the intention to spread unrest and uncertainty. Social media platforms have become a prominent source of rumours, with false news spreading rapidly across the internet. Kyza et al. (2020) highlight the importance of ensuring accuracy and reliability in information shared on social media platforms. Rapid dissemination of rumours and fake news can lead to confusion and panic among users. Hence, readers must exercise critical judgment when encountering information on social media and verify sources before sharing it with others.

Thus, the current study also showed a greater agreement regarding a significant association between social media and rumours in Emirati society. First, the quantitative data indicated agreement regarding the role of social media in spreading rumours in the United Arab Emirates. Study respondents indicated that rumour-mongers often use social media to spread fake news. The respondents also agreed with the fact that these rumours may cause anxiety, uncertainty, fear, and unrest in society. Alkhodair et al. (2020) suggest that the proliferation of rumours on social media is facilitated by the ease of creating and sharing false information. With just an internet connection, users can generate and disseminate content, making it challenging to discern between credible and unreliable sources.

Furthermore, the viral nature of social media means that false information can quickly spread and become widely accepted as fact. Ahmed (2020) argued that one reason for the availability of misinformation on social media is the need for more regulation and fact-checking. Social media platforms have limited control over the content posted by users, and there are no strict guidelines or regulations to ensure the accuracy of the information shared. Additionally, the algorithms used by social media platforms are designed to promote content that generates engagement, regardless of its accuracy or reliability. This means that sensational or controversial content is often prioritized over information.

However, despite the involvement of social media in spreading rumours, individuals from both quantitative and qualitative datasets emphasized its ability to effectively combat misinformation. They highlighted that while rumours might impact Emirati society, social platforms play a vital role in recognizing and addressing their consequences. Ali (2020) emphasized the continued significance of social media in countering rumours in recent years. In cases where false news and rumours proliferate on social media, prompt rebuttals and clarifications from credible sources are viewed positively within today's social media landscape. Furthermore, individuals underscored the importance of awareness campaigns and initiatives to educate the public about rumours and their harmful effects.

Existing literature (See Almomani & Al-Qur'an, 2020; Naeem et al., 2021; D. Wang, 2021) also witnessed the presence of social media rumours as a primary phenomenon, requiring greater consideration. Pröllochs (2021) stated that understanding the propagation of false content holds significant interest across various domains. For

users, grasping this phenomenon could reveal certain indicators to distinguish between true and inaccurate content. Social media platforms could benefit from a deeper understanding to develop early warning systems that automatically identify the spread of false content. This understanding could lead to the derivation of features from the dissemination dynamics of false content, which could then be integrated into machine learning classifiers. Policymakers also require insights into the spread of false content to devise strategies targeting its viral effects, such as promoting critical thinking among users when encountering emotionally charged content. This is crucial as repeated exposure to false information often leads users to mistakenly believe it to be true.

The spread of misinformation is particularly significant during breaking news events (Gisondi et al., 2022), where information is released incrementally, often beginning as unverified rumours. These rumours can rapidly disseminate to large audiences, influencing perceptions and understanding of events despite lacking verification. Social media rumours that are later debunked can have detrimental consequences, as seen in incidents like the false report of the White House bombing in 2013, which caused upheaval in US stock markets. Major events like Hurricane Sandy in 2012 also suffered from widespread rumours, prompting the US Federal Emergency Management Agency to establish a dedicated webpage for rumour control.

Research into rumours spans various disciplines, from psychology to computational analysis. Early investigations by Allport (YEAR) highlighted the importance of studying rumours, emphasizing their connection to newsworthy events and the need for understanding and controlling them. Research has examined factors influencing

rumour diffusion, including believability and perceived importance. The internet and social media have transformed the study of rumours, enabling large-scale data collection and analysis (Hui et al., 2020; Islam et al., 2020; Shi & Qu, 2020). For example, studies have investigated the diffusion of rumours during events like the 2011 Japan Earthquake, shedding light on how correction tweets can impact the spread of false information. Despite advancements, more research is needed to fully understand the nature and consequences of rumours in social media.

Li et al. (2021) outlined two primary strategies for addressing rumours: targeting influential users to stop their spread and disseminating accurate information to debunk them. The latter approach is often more effective in the long term compared to directly blocking rumours. This is because it's challenging to effectively block rumours and counter-rumours on the open Internet, which can lead to increased scepticism among users. Moreover, attempting to censor information outright may trigger a backlash and raise concerns about human rights if not supported by societal consensus. Thus, the prevailing approach to managing rumours favours spreading accurate information.

According to Alkhodair et al. (2021), conventional methods of detecting misinformation typically utilize manually crafted features such as user attributes, text content, and dissemination patterns to train supervised classifiers like Decision Trees, Random Forests, and Support Vector Machines. While some studies incorporate more sophisticated features like user comments, temporal-structural attributes, and emotional sentiment of posts, these approaches heavily rely on feature engineering, which is time-consuming and labour-intensive. Additionally, these handcrafted

features often need more high-level representations derived from the spread and propagation of rumours (Roozenbeek et al., 2020).

Recent studies have explored deep learning methods to extract complex representations from propagation pathways or networks for identifying rumours. Techniques such as Long Short-Term Memory (LSTM), Gated Recurrent Unit (GRU), and Recursive Neural Networks (RvNN) have been utilized due to their ability to understand sequential features in rumour dissemination. However, these methods may be insufficient as they primarily focus on sequential spread while neglecting the broader impacts of rumour diffusion. The structure of rumour dispersion reveals distinct dissemination patterns (Gisoni et al., 2022). To overcome this limitation, some research has integrated insights from rumour dispersion structures using Convolutional Neural Network (CNN)-based approaches. Although CNNs excel at capturing correlation features within local neighbourhoods, they require assistance in addressing global structural relationships in graphs or trees. As a result, these approaches often overlook the wider structural aspects of rumour dispersion. While CNNs are not explicitly designed for deriving high-level representations from structured data, Graph Convolutional Networks could bridge this gap.

5.3.3 Dubai Police significantly affects the rumours through social media in Emirati society

According to Wang et al. (2021), the police are essential in curbing rumours and rumour mongers through social media. ~~Rumours and false information spread quickly on social media platforms and can cause panic, unrest, and even violence in certain situations.~~ Oh & Lee (2019) argued that it is essential for the police to be proactive in monitoring social media and taking action against those who spread false information.

Eismann (2021) also stated that the police have a critical role to play in curbing rumours and rumour-mongers through social media, including education and awareness campaigns, investigating and prosecuting those who spread false information, and implementing measures to prevent the spread of rumours on social media. By working with social media platforms and the public, the police can help ensure that social media is a safe and reliable source of information for everyone.

Consequently, examining the role of Dubai Police in curbing the social media rumours to nullify their impacts further remained significant. Objective responses from the surveys and subjective responses from the interview remained consistent, indicating the role of Dubai Police in supporting accurate information, having policies to counteract the rumours, and their instant action committees to address any misinformation and public apprehension.

As noted by Alkhodair et al. (2020), one of the key roles of the police in curbing rumours on social media is through education and awareness campaigns. The police can work with social media platforms to raise awareness about the dangers of false information and provide users with the tools to identify and report rumours. This can include training programs, public service announcements, and information campaigns to educate the public about the risks of spreading false information.

Moreover, the researcher also expressed a positive viewpoint concerning the current measures and strategies aimed at effectively addressing rumours within Emirati society. However, they also pointed out that the existing penalties may not be sufficient to deter individuals from spreading rumours. It is suggested that authorities and

policymakers clarify their position on the effectiveness and overall impact of these measures.

According to Alsaedi and Al-Sarem (2020), law enforcement agencies actively investigate and prosecute individuals who disseminate rumours and false information on social media platforms. Leveraging their resources, the police can identify and track down those responsible for spreading misinformation, subsequently taking appropriate legal actions against them. Additionally, the study highlights the importance of police personnel possessing expertise in social media management and rumour control, which involves collaborating with online platforms to access user data and employing traditional investigative techniques to gather evidence.

To strengthen law enforcement's role in tackling social media rumours, Li (2022) proposes implementing coping strategies. Detecting misinformation on social platforms is challenging due to its deceptive nature. Researchers emphasize the need to go beyond textual features alone and consider additional factors such as context, user interactions, and social behaviours. Fact-checking organizations like PolitiFact and Snopes play a crucial role in verifying information and combating fake news, highlighting the importance of utilizing fact-checking tools to maintain societal trust.

However, the effectiveness of professional fact-checking hinges on the rapid and widespread dissemination of accurate information. This poses a challenge in politically polarized settings where individuals tend to seek out information that aligns with their beliefs. Social media platforms are often criticized for perpetuating confirmation bias

and echo chambers, reinforcing existing viewpoints and impeding the spread of truth, as evidenced by research from the Pew Research Center (Skafle et al., 2022).

Efforts to combat misinformation require continuous fact-checking and the efficient dissemination of fact-check results. While progress has been made in detecting misinformation, further investigation is needed to understand user reactions to fact-checks and develop effective strategies for disseminating them online to mitigate the impact of misinformation (Alzanin & Azmi, 2018).

When tackling misinformation, the first step involves detecting it, often approached as a classification issue in current studies. This method assesses whether a message is true or false by examining various features, distinguishing between fact-based (e.g., fake news) and opinion-based (e.g., fake reviews) misinformation. Disinformation, deliberately crafted to captivate and deceive readers, requires consideration of factors beyond just text, such as presentation, source, format, and context.

Different types of misinformation exhibit distinct characteristics; opinion-based misinformation often displays traits like brevity, duplication, exaggeration, skewed ratings, and short intervals between postings, while fact-based misinformation tends to be lengthier, more complex, and associated with closely linked newer accounts. Economic factors, business type, performance, and competition significantly influence the occurrence of fake review spam. Social contexts have proven to be predictive in detecting fake news, emphasizing the importance of domain-specific features and contexts (Ralph et al., 2022).

Although automated learning models hold promise, relying solely on them is premature. Given the vast volume and diversity of information across various topics, contexts, and sources, accurate misinformation detection relies heavily on manual investigation and analysis (Hu et al., 2021). The proliferation of misinformation is attributed to the absence of third-party filtering, fact-checking, or editorial judgment online. As a result, organizations and major tech companies have taken on the role of fact-checkers, rigorously scrutinizing news stories, rumours, or statements by political figures/organizations through thorough investigation and analysis.

These fact-checkers disseminate their findings through various channels, including websites and social media platforms, and may also take direct actions such as deleting or flagging misinformation. Additionally, some researchers have explored assessing the credibility of information sources rather than directly evaluating the information, suggesting the incorporation of crowdsourced judgments into ranking algorithms to combat misinformation on social media (Al-Sarem et al., 2021).

5.4 Recommendations

Based on the results presented, multiple practical recommendations emerge regarding strategies designed to counteract social media rumours:

- Law enforcement agencies should invest in state-of-the-art social media monitoring tools and techniques to promptly identify and address false information. Scrutinizing different social media platforms is crucial to detecting rumours early and taking necessary actions to deter escalation.
- Continual public awareness campaigns should be executed to educate the community about the threats associated with spreading rumours on social

media. Emphasize verifying information before sharing it online to designate individuals to make informed decisions and exercise caution in online interactions.

- Law enforcement agencies should establish collaborations and information-sharing agreements with social media platforms to effectively fight the spread of rumours. Access to instruments and resources provided by social media platforms can help determine and remove false information, contributing to rumour mitigation efforts.
- Active engagement with the public is important to build trust and transparency between law enforcement agencies and the community. Respond promptly to queries and address deceptive information in real-time to show commitment to managing concerns and maintaining open lines of communication.
- Regular evaluation of the effectiveness of executed strategies is necessary to identify areas for improvement. Law enforcement agencies should consider feedback from the community and adjust strategies accordingly to improve their influence in combating rumours on social media platforms.
- Analyze the possibility of executing additional measures, such as community retributions or public exposure of individuals spreading false information, to prevent rumour-mongering behaviour. Evaluate the feasibility and effectiveness of such measures in conjunction with existing strategies to strengthen rumour mitigation efforts.
- Encourage digital literacy and responsible online behaviour among social media users to promote a culture of critical thinking and discernment. Provide resources and guidance to help individuals recognize false information and differentiate between reliable and unreliable sources on social media platforms.

Thus, by implementing these practical recommendations, law enforcement agencies can improve their ability to counteract social media rumours effectively, preserve public trust, and facilitate responsible online behaviour within the community.

5.5 Conclusion

The research study conducted on the opinion of police about social media and rumours has shed light on the critical role of the police in curbing false information and rumours on social media platforms. The study's findings indicate that police officers recognize the role of social media in spreading information and the potential dangers of social media in spreading false information and rumours and are actively working towards combating these issues in the United Arab Emirates.

The study has highlighted that police officers increasingly understand social media platforms to spread and curb rumours. Additionally, police officers emphasized educating the public about the dangers of spreading rumours and false information on social media. They are working to raise awareness about the importance of fact-checking and verifying information before sharing it online. Furthermore, the research has shown that Dubai Police take proactive measures to prevent the spread of rumours and false information on social media platforms. This includes working with social media platforms to implement algorithms that prioritize factual information, partnering with fact-checking organizations, and taking legal action against individuals who spread false information.

Thus, it is concluded that the Dubai Police are essential in curbing rumours and false information on social media. By actively monitoring, investigating, and taking legal action against those who spread false information and working to raise awareness about the dangers of social media, the Dubai Police are ensuring that social media platforms remain safe and reliable sources of information for the public.

The study recommends further collaboration between the police and social media platforms to combat the spread of rumours and false information online. Notably, the partnership between police and social media can be a powerful tool in spreading awareness about rumours, as police can use social media by creating official accounts that share accurate and verified information about incidents or events (Vese, 2021). Police can provide real-time updates to the public and curb false information that may be circulating.

Moreover, police can collaborate with social media by monitoring social media platforms for false information and rumours by using specialized tools that track keywords or hashtags related to specific events or incidents (Shen, 2021). According to Shen (2021), once false information or rumours are identified, the police can use their official accounts to share accurate information and correct any misinformation. Additionally, working with social media platforms can help request the immediate removal of false information (Alkhodair et al., 2020).

5.6 Methodological Implications

Investigating the effectiveness of Dubai Police awareness and their role in counteracting the rumours causing social uncertainty and unrest remained significant

in this study. However, the relevant phenomenon is investigated using the mixed-method approach, which provides a broader picture based on the responses from the employees and higher-ranked police officers. As stated earlier, mixed-methods research is an approach that combines both qualitative and quantitative research methods to provide a more comprehensive understanding of a research phenomenon under study. Using multiple research methods in this approach can increase the validity and reliability of the findings and provide a broader picture of the research phenomenon (Creswell & Clark, 2017).

The current research aimed to provide empirical evidence gathered and affirmed through the systematic process where first the quantitative data is gathered, and then the qualitative interviews were conducted. Using the mixed-method approach also remained useful since the quantitative results were obtained, then the qualitative results. According to Greene and Caracelli (1989), by combining these two approaches, mixed-methods research can provide a more comprehensive understanding of the research phenomenon by triangulating the data from different sources and perspectives, helping the researchers address the limitations of each method and enhance both strengths.

The relevant methods were useful as results from both methods were consistent and helped to acquire a wider picture of social media and rumours and further the role of Dubai Police in curbing the dissemination of rumours through different social networking platforms. As noted by Creswell (1999), using a mixed-methods approach in research can provide a broader picture of the research phenomenon under study by combining the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative research methods. This

approach can help researchers gain a more comprehensive understanding of complex research phenomena and provide insights that may not be possible through a single research method alone.

5.7 Practical Implications

The results obtained by this research project will not only help to highlight the effectiveness of Dubai Police but also their overall role in creating and sustaining social integrity and sustainability in Emirati society. Apfeldorf (2022) notes that the police are critical in supporting peace and integrity in any society. They are responsible for enforcing the law and maintaining order, ensuring that individuals and communities are safe and protected from crime and violence. They serve as a deterrent to criminal activity, and their presence alone can prevent crimes.

Additionally, the police act as a link between communities and the criminal justice system, facilitating the reporting of crimes and ensuring that justice is served. Through their work, the police help uphold the rule of law and promote social cohesion, contributing to society's overall well-being and prosperity. Dubai Police are considered one of the most effective law enforcement institutions. They have a distinguished record of crime detection, further ensuring integrity in the United Arab Emirates, particularly in Dubai (Government of Dubai, 2022).

Notably, the opinion regarding information through social media and its status as based on both rumours and reliable information remained prominent in this study. It shows that Dubai Police officers are well aware of the role and impacts of social media on spreading reliable information but also spreading rumours to cause civil unrest and

uncertainty. However, they also indicated effective strategies and policies that highlighted their roles as liable officers, coping with challenging situations and playing an influential role in providing their civilians with the best possible solutions to their problems (Kiedrowski et al., 2019).

As noted by Lum and Nagin (2017), the goal of police departments is to deter criminals and reduce crime in an area by making it clear that police are actively doing their jobs and taking steps to identify criminal activity. Officers engage with their community to build positive relationships, build trust, and gain valuable intelligence that can be used to prevent crime. Police actively look forward to eliminating distrust and uncertainties in the community and work proactively to prevent crime rather than simply responding to calls and acting after a crime has occurred (Pavlichenko, 2018).

Thus, this study also remained consistent with the relevant propositions, further providing practical insights regarding the role, importance, and police in counteracting the rumours and pertinent other crimes in the best possible manner.

5.8 Study Limitations and Recommendations

This study was based on a mixed-method approach using quantitative and qualitative methods. Although qualitative methods can claim the generalizability of results, qualitative methods are considered to have weak generalizability (Trotter, 2012). Notably, the qualitative data is gathered from a small number of participants, and there needs to be more consensus regarding the standard sample size for the qualitative study. Thus, using the qualitative approach is one of the primary limitations of current research. Therefore, in light of these limitations, it is recommended that more studies

on the relevant topic with a large sample size can further ratify the limitations of this research.

Further, selecting both samples from Dubai Police also adds more to the limitations of this research. In other words, the data obtained and results generated by the police officers of the Dubai Police Department question the generalizability of results in other regions. It is assumed that the awareness level of social media, rumours, and information from digital platforms might vary in different countries and even states within the United Arab Emirates. Future researchers can overcome this limitation, conduct studies covering different cities and states, and even compare the responses from different countries to ensure the generalizability of results without geographical limitations.

Finally, the last limitation involves constructs based on a general overview of social media, information, and rumours. The study needs to focus on any particular situation or crisis, such as COVID-19, that witnessed a plethora of rumours and misinformation (Ali et al., 2022; Ali, 2020). However, this research focused on rumours and information in social media in a general context.

Future researchers can focus on the role and awareness of police officers regarding social media and rumours, which further show relevance with some instances, strategic approaches, and the roles of police institutions in emergencies. As Weisburd et al. (2019) noted, police play a crucial role in curbing rumours and ensuring accurate information is disseminated. They can do this by actively monitoring social media and

other information sources, verifying the information's accuracy, and issuing official statements to the public (Braga et al., 2019).

Police officers can also engage with community leaders and other stakeholders to address any concerns and provide reassurance that the situation is under control. By taking swift action to curb rumours, the police can help prevent the spread of false information, reduce anxiety and fear, and maintain public trust and confidence. As a result, contributing to a more effective emergency response and better outcomes for affected individuals and communities becomes inevitable (Zhao & Zhang, 2022).

5.9 Chapter Summary

This chapter presents a summary of the research findings, delving into the relationship between Dubai Police and rumours and examining their implications. It covers the topic overview, results discussion, conclusion proposals, practical and methodological implications, and highlights limitations and recommendations for future research. The discussion and conclusions are drawn from the obtained results and their alignment with existing literature.

Moreover, the implications discuss the practical and methodological aspects of the research findings, exploring their potential impact on policy, practice, and future research directions. The conclusions section provides a synopsis of the main findings and an overall evaluation of their significance. Lastly, the limitations section addresses potential weaknesses or constraints of the study, affecting the validity or generalizability of the results. Recommendations for future research suggest areas for further exploration and potential enhancements or expansions of the study.

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