

SAUDI PARENTS' PERSPECTIVE ON THE ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA
PLATFORMS IN PROMOTING PARENTING KNOWLEDGE

by

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To all my loved ones who kept me in their prayers and wished me good luck on this journey.

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Rima Abdulilah D Alahmadi

ABSTRACT

SAUDI PARENTS' PERSPECTIVE ON THE ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS IN PROMOTING PARENTING KNOWLEDGE

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The purpose of this research was to assess social media, and specifically a podcast entitled *Consultation with Sarah*, as a source for parents obtaining knowledge about children's development, and to consider the factors that influence the use of social media to acquire knowledge on parenting in Saudi Arabia. The questions inquired about sources of information Saudi parents perceive as beneficial for learning about parenting, and which factors, such as gender, age, number of children, marital status, education, and employment status, are related to knowledge seeking behaviors. The research questions also sought to understand if there was a difference reported by Saudi parents who use social media for parenting knowledge before the COVID-19 pandemic. The *Using Social Media for Parental Knowledge Survey* was distributed to 353 Saudi parents. A mixed method survey design was used, as the survey included both multiple choice and open-ended questions. SPSS was used for quantitative data analysis. Findings indicated websites and social media were the two most common sources parents utilized to obtain parenting information. Results also indicated there were differences in knowledge

seeking or reported parental knowledge based on gender, age of parents, marital status, education level, and employment status. Findings also indicated there was a statistically significant difference in respondents' use of social media before COVID-19, although there was not a difference with regard to *Consultation with Sarah*. Finally, the results suggested listening to the *Consultation with Sarah* podcast made a significant difference in parenting knowledge, and there was a statistically significant difference reported by parents or caregivers who listened to the *Consultation with Sarah* podcast. The qualitative findings shed light on the reasonings behind the relationships. These findings may provide valuable information for parents, caregivers, podcast leaders, influencers, and educators.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	iv
ABSTRACT	vi
LIST OF TABLES	xii
LIST OF FIGURES	xiii
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	xv
CHAPTER ONE	
INTRODUCTION	1
Statement of Purpose	2
Statement of the Problem	3
Background	5
Definition of Parenting and Parental Knowledge	5
Family Structure and Parenting in Saudi Arabia	6
Social Media Usage	7
Overview of <i>Consultation with Sarah</i> Podcast	11
Research Questions	13
CHAPTER TWO	
LITERATURE REVIEW	15
Relevant Theories	15
Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory	15
Baumrind's Parenting Theory	16

TABLE OF CONTENTS—Continued

Bowlby and Ainsworth’s Attachment Theory	18
Social Learning Theory	19
Uses and Gratifications Theory	21
The Conceptual Model	23
Empirical Research	24
Sources of Parenting Knowledge	24
Parental Knowledge	28
The Rights of Saudi Children	32
The Effects of Child Abuse in Saudi Arabia	35
The Use of Social Media to Acquire Parenting Knowledge	36
Summary	42
CHAPTER THREE	
RESEARCH METHODS	43
Research Design	45
Instrument	47
Validation and Reliability of the Data	48
Ethical Considerations	50
Researcher Positionality	52
Participant Characteristics	52
Data Collection Methods	57
Data Analysis Methods	58

TABLE OF CONTENTS—Continued

CHAPTER FOUR	
RESULTS	61
Using Social Media for Parental Knowledge Survey: Quantitative Results	61
Sources for Parental Knowledge	61
Social Media Platforms for Parental Knowledge	62
Parents’ Gender and the Scales	63
Parents’ Age and the Scales	65
The Number of Children and the Scales	67
Parents’ Marital Status and the Scales	68
Parents’ Education Level and the Scales	69
Parents’ Employment Status and the Scales	71
COVID-19 and the Scales	73
Listening to the <i>Consultation with Sarah</i> Podcast and the Scales	74
Listening to Other Podcasts	75
Summary of the Quantitative Data Results	77
Using Social Media for Parental Knowledge Survey: Qualitative Results	79
Overview of Survey Qualitative Results	78
Overview of Survey Qualitative Categories and Themes	80
CHAPTER FIVE	
DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION	94

TABLE OF CONTENTS—Continued

Sources that Saudi Caregivers Perceive to be Most Beneficial for Learning about Parenting	95
Factors Related to Knowledge Seeking Behavior, Using Social Media Platforms, and Listening to the <i>Consultation With Sarah</i> Podcast	101
Differences Related to Use of Social Media Platforms Before the COVID-19 Pandemic	107
Differences in Parenting Knowledge and Using Social Media to Gain Parental Knowledge Between Saudi Caregivers who and do not Listen to the Podcast	108
Differences in Listening to other Podcasts, either in Arabic or in Other Languages Between Saudi Caregivers who and do not Listen to the Podcast	109
Implications	110
Limitations of the Study	112
Directions for Future Research	113
Conclusions	114
 APPENDICES	
A. Research Questions, Methodologies, and Analysis	117
B. Using Social Media For Parental Knowledge Survey	121
C. Institutional Review Board Approval Letter	133
D. Recruitment Invitation	135
E. Code Analysis- Qualitative Survey Responses	137
REFERENCES	151

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1	Component Matrix and Reliability Score of the Survey Items	51
Table 2	Descriptive Statistics of Parents' Demographic Information	54
Table 3	Descriptive Statistics of Parents' Background Characteristics	55
Table 4	Descriptive Statistics of Family Characteristics	56
Table 5	Number of the Responses to the Open-Ended Questions	79
Table 6	Research Questions, Methodologies and Analysis	118
Table 7	Code Analysis of Reasons for Listening to the <i>Consultation with Sarah</i> Podcast	138
Table 8	Code Analysis of Reasons for Dislike Listening to the <i>Consultation with Sarah</i> Podcast	141
Table 9	Code Analysis of Reasons for Using Social Media in General for Parental Knowledge	143
Table 10	Code Analysis of Reasons for Dislike Using Social Media for Parental Knowledge	146
Table 11	List of the Podcasts that Suggested by the Saudi Parents for Parental Knowledge	148
Table 12	Code Analysis of the Topics Suggested by Parents for Parenting Specialists to Discuss	149

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1	Parenting Paradigm	23
Figure 2	Data Collection Process	58
Figure 3	Descriptive Statistics of the Sources Used by Parents for Learning about Parenting	62
Figure 4	Descriptive Statistics of the Social Media Platform Used for Parenting Knowledge	63
Figure 5	Parent Knowledge, Social Media Usage, and Listening to the <i>Consultation with Sarah</i> Podcast Scales by Parents' Gender	64
Figure 6	Parent Knowledge, Social Media Usage, and Listening to the <i>Consultation with Sarah</i> Podcast Scales by Parent Age	66
Figure 7	Parent Knowledge, Social Media Usage, and Listening to the <i>Consultation with Sarah</i> Podcast Scales by Number of Children	67
Figure 8	Parent Knowledge, Social Media Usage, and Listening to the <i>Consultation with Sarah</i> Podcast Scales by Parent Marital Status	69
Figure 9	Parent Knowledge, Social Media Usage, and Listening to the <i>Consultation with Sarah</i> Podcast Scales by Parent Education Level	70
Figure 10	Parent Knowledge, Social Media Usage, and Listening to the <i>Consultation with Sarah</i> Podcast Scales by Parent Employment Status	72
Figure 11	Using Social Media Before the COVID-19 Differences in Response to Parent Knowledge, Social Media Usage, and Listening to the <i>Consultation with Sarah</i> Podcast Scales	74
Figure 12	Differences in Responses to Scales by Listening to the <i>Consultation with Sarah</i> Podcast	75
Figure 13	Difference in Responses to Listening to Other Podcasts by Listening to The <i>Consultation with Sarah</i> Podcast	76

LIST OF FIGURES —Continued

Figure 14	Reasons for Like and Dislike Listening to the <i>Consultation with Sarah</i> Podcast	85
Figure 15	Reasons for Like and Dislike Using Social Media for Parental Knowledge	89
Figure 16	Analysis of the Topics that Suggested by the Parents for Parenting Specialist to Discuss	93

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

UGT	Uses and Gratifications Theory
EFA	Exploratory Factor Analysis
IRB	Institutional Review Board
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
ANOVA	One-Way Analysis of Variance

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Parents play a significant role in shaping their children's futures and determining in the careers they choose (Jack, 2000). Parents nurture young children to grow and become vital members of society (Kuppens & Ceulemans, 2019). Over the years, parents around the world have used different parenting methods when raising their children such as relying on family members, books, and religious education (Berkule-Silberman et al., 2010; Radey & Randolph, 2009). According to Smetana (2017), many parents have found authoritative parenting to be an effective strategy to employ while raising their children. This parenting style involves not only consideration of children's needs but also the establishment of boundaries and parental expectations regarding children's good behavior. Smetana (2017) explained that parents have struggled to advance their personal opinions while also raising their children within their socially acceptable culture and social contexts. Some parents have used the Internet as a tool to enhance their parenting skills. This information-seeking behavior has often been aimed at gathering knowledge to manage the new and challenging responsibilities associated with parenthood around the globe (Ryan et al., 2021).

Today, three-quarters of the world's population can access the Internet, with over 50% of the total population participating actively on various social media platforms (Auxier & Anderson, 2021). These platforms include Facebook, which has the highest number of social media users, and others that are widely used, including Twitter, YouTube, WhatsApp, and Instagram. Additional analyses revealed that 84% of the total

population of social media users are individuals between 18 and 40 years old (Auxier & Anderson, 2021). According to Kashiparekh (2021), people worldwide spend an average of two hours every day on social media. Similar findings have been reported in Saudi Arabia, as research from 2020 has indicated 88% of individuals use the internet, with 25 million individuals using social media, specifically (Statista, 2020a). These numbers are only growing with 2025 being forecasted for 97% of individuals, or 36.2 million, to use the internet. Notably, the transition to parenthood is a crucial period for using social media to source information (Ryan et al., 2021).

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this research was to assess social media as a source for parents to obtain knowledge about children's development, and to consider the factors that influence the use of social media to acquire knowledge on parenting. Research has indicated individuals around the world (Auxier & Anderson, 2021), as well as Saudi Arabia, frequently use the internet and social media (Statista, 2020a). Therefore, this research focused specifically on Saudi Arabia, although it is also informative to other areas of the world in which the internet is also highly utilized for information sharing..

The outcomes of this project may highlight needs for future research, as well as recommendations for parents seeking knowledge. Insight can also be gained regarding the different challenges encountered by parents. The results may present a basis for using social media to acquire practical parental knowledge. Results from the study could also lead to insights regarding different parenting strategies. Additionally, the research findings could inform individuals who share information on social media regarding the need to integrate appropriate and well researched information on parenting on social

media to make the content valid and readily available. The findings may improve parenting practices and ensure ethical values are passed on to children.

The fundamental research argument for this study focusing on Saudi parents is the importance of culture when parents seek knowledge through social media concerning child-rearing. A hallmark characteristic of Saudi society is the unity and inter-relationship among extended families. Families are the pillars of a society where children's needs are met and protected. The state policy Saudi Vision 2030 (n.d.) is aimed to promote and reinvigorate social development, and contains strategies to strengthen families, thereby building a solid and productive society. The Saudi Vision 2030 focuses on providing necessary support to families to care for their children and nurture their talents.

Importantly, this policy intends to inculcate positive moral values during childhood to ensure families remain safe spaces for raising children. Social media has taken over many of the traditional means of communicating information, and that trend is expected to grow. This study hopes to contribute to a growth that leads to positive parenting and child development, with specific focus on Saudi Arabia.

Statement of the Problem

Over the years, parents have relied on books and literary works based on the experiences of individual authors and researchers in the field of education and psychology (Bornstein et al., 2010). Parents all over the world have also often sought religious content for parental advice, such as the Bible for Christians and the Quran for those practicing Islam (Godina, 2014). This is particularly true in Saudi Arabia, as religion is interwoven throughout all institutional systems, including families, education, and policies, and religious leaders also share religious content on social media (Al-

Saggaf, Himma, & Kharabsheh, 2008; Al-Saggaf & Simmons, 2015). So parenting advice on social media often has religious implications, because of the impact of culture and religion in all areas, including online sources.

This is also true around the world, as physical books and journals are being replaced with digitized content expounding on parental skills and knowledge (Jenkins & Moreno 2020; Moon et al., 2019; Setyastuti et al., 2019). Large-scale access to the Internet now plays a fundamental role in sharing knowledge through interaction with peers and listening to experts (Haslam & Baker, 2017). For instance, parents can use social media to learn about parenting as well as for a source of entertainment (Haslam & Baker, 2017).

The availability of digital content and the exodus of information to online sources have increased the number of people actively participating on various social media platforms. As a result of increasing participation, the available content is growing and is shared and accessed across multiple online platforms (Shearer & Mitchell, 2021). The visibility of these platforms assessed by the number of active users presents a vital opportunity that can be leveraged as a means of availing parenting knowledge. Therefore, this study evaluates the significance of social media platforms, such as Twitter, Podcasts, and Instagram, in promoting parenting knowledge, with a particular focus on Saudi parents. In addition, this study highlights the potential of podcasts, which are currently gaining momentum as an educational source (Celaya, 2020). This study used the *Consultation with Sarah* podcast as an example to compare parenting knowledge, as reported by Saudi parents, of those who listen to the podcast and parents who do not

listen to this specific podcast, but rather turn to other social media platforms as tools to gather parental knowledge.

There is currently a gap in research worldwide, but specifically in Saudi Arabia, regarding parents seeking knowledge about parenting (Alharbi et al., 2019; Dwairy et al., 2006). This research seeks to fill the gap and explore the merits and demerits of social media as a tool for obtaining knowledge on parenting and child development in the contemporary era. Research in this area is needed in Saudi Arabia to ensure that parents are properly informed and educated within the cultural norms.

Background

Definition of Parenting and Parental Knowledge

The terms *parenting* and *parental knowledge* are used throughout this study. According to Doepke et al. (2019), child-rearing or parenting is “all things that parents do in supporting the development of their offspring, from the provision of food and shelter to guiding their emotional and intellectual growth” (p. 1). In this context, the term parenting is a noun that refers to raising children and all the associated responsibilities and activities. Parenting is characterized by ensuring that a child is healthy and safe, preparing a child for life during adulthood, and passing down cultural values.

Benasich and Brooks-Gunn (1996) defined *parental knowledge* as “the understanding that parents have about developmental norms and milestones, processes of child development, and familiarity with skills of caregiving” (p. 1187). Gadsen et al. (2016) defined parenting knowledge as information, facts, and skills acquired through understanding and experience in parenting. Knowledge of parenting involves understanding how children grow and develop, including the progressive stages of child

developmental domains. Benasich and Brooks-Gunn (1996) expounded on various definitions for parental knowledge, but with a common characteristic of emphasizing child development. Notably, parents can influence the learning and behavior of their children, hence making a drastic impact in their lives (Benasich & Brooks-Gunn, 1996).

Family Structure and Parenting in Saudi Arabia

According to the Saudi General Authority for Statistics (2019), the population of Saudi Arabia is approximately 34,218,169 people, with 42.2% women and 57.8% men. The largest portion of the population in the age group is 35-39 years old, constituting about 3,707,231. In contrast, the smallest age group is 60-64 years old, with only 779,129. Urbanization has influenced families in Saudi Arabia, which is evident by the replacement of traditional homes, which include extended families, with nuclear families living in apartments. Despite the changes, Saudi's conservativeness and religiosity have prevented rapid changes in social practices in Saudi society. In the past, family members lived in traditional houses characterized by accommodation sharing. Even in modern arrangements, brothers continue to live with their wives and children in the family compounds whenever possible (Almalki & Ganong, 2018).

Furthermore, the society in Saudi Arabia is patriarchal, where men are considered the heads of their families and have the responsibility to provide for and protect their families (Long & Maisel, 2010). Marriage traditions allow family members to choose a spouse according to the set tribal considerations. The most common type of marriage involves arrangements between cousins and other relatives. Alternatively, semi-arranged marriages may occur with couples getting an opportunity to meet and develop a bond before marriage is arranged by the family (Almalki & Ganong, 2018).

Social Media Usage

Definition of social media. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) defined *social media platforms* as “a group of applications based on the Internet with the aim of building on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, thereby allowing people to create and exchange User Generated Content” (p. 61). The phrase social media platforms will be used in this study to refer to technological avenues that promote interactions, collaboration, and connectivity among people. The definition of social media may vary due to constant changes associated with technological advancements and the evolution of social networking sites. Along with Facebook, some of the widely used social media platforms include Twitter, YouTube, Podcasts, and Instagram.

The parent company of Facebook, Meta, describes this platform as a central place where people can connect with family, friends, and communities with shared interests. Those seeking new experiences can also connect with novel communities through the platform (Meta, n.d.). Essentially, this platform is an all-stop shop for content generated by users on the platform for other users. Although the content is moderated for privacy and legal concerns, most of it is user-centered and targeted toward their specific audiences.

Twitter is a social networking site involving real-time communications limited to less than 200 characters. Thus, Twitter is a microblogging service where users share content on a platform combined with social networking (Tess, 2013). Twitter was determined to be a faster way to communicate to a large following due to the relatively short post length versus other social media forums (Java et al., 2007).

YouTube is a social media platform that “hosts videos from different types of producers with different purposes to communicate” (Djerf-Pierre et al., 2019, p. 238).

YouTube has a significant online influence and reaches over a billion users globally. The broad spectrum of audiences attracts content creators who produce videos to inform, entertain, and engage the public worldwide (Djerf-Pierre et al., 2019).

Instagram is a social media app that allows individuals to post photos, messages, and videos. In addition, users employ features such as stories, feed, live, or direct in celebrating milestones, building communities, and sharing daily moments (Connect Safely, 2015). Similar to Facebook or Twitter, creating an Instagram account helps users acquire a profile and a news feed (Moreau, 2018).

Podcasts refer to “online audio or video files of digital media that are released in a series of episodes” (Samuel-Azran Laor & Tal, 2019, p. 483). In most cases, users access free podcasts platforms, and some podcasts require a subscription to listen or download podcast episodes of interest. Podcasts are also known as radio on demand due to their accessibility via download at any time. They refer to digital audio episodes downloaded to mobile devices such as computers and phones. An attractive feature of podcasts is the ability to listen while doing other activities (Samuel-Azran et al., 2019). Notably, podcasts are essential sources of parenting information, especially among parents and guardians with tight schedules. Another significant characteristic of podcasts is the perceived intimacy provided by the audio. Sound production used in podcasts stimulate listeners’ imaginations in ways that visuals do not. Hearing other parents openly narrate their experiences and specialists talk about parenting is a hallmark of many parenting

podcasts. Identifying resourceful podcasts can be a decisive moment for parents and guardians seeking support.

TikTok is used for posting brief videos, and was designed to inspire creativity and fun for both users and creators (TikTok, n.d.). The firm seeks to promote good through various campaigns such as #edutok. The site features an interface that allows scrolling to view a preselected list of videos promoted by the algorithm or sorted by the user. They are 30 seconds in length and often accompanied by music and audio embeds such as voice and collaborations with other creators. The platform also promotes niche sections for developers as well as advertisers. There are rewards for its users, and it offers help to them as well.

Clubhouse defines itself as the hallways of the internet where people meet to listen to each other (Clubhouse, n.d.). The platform allows for conversations between individuals on the platform through its unique feature of rooms. One can tune in to the different rooms, listen in, chime in, and contribute to the conversation while on the go. The platform is also as advanced to be where new friends are made, and old friendships are regenerated. You can also create a conversation about any topic that interests you and invite others to join in and contribute their perspectives and points of view (Clubhouse, n.d.)

Snapchat describes itself as a place to express oneself through a multitude of lenses. Different filter and lens viewpoints allow the user to connect with their environment in a unique and personalized way. These also allow them to have a connection with friends, family, and other people. Creativity is also promoted through embeds that allow for an innovative showcase of skills (Snapchat, n.d.)

Multiplatform messenger telegram defines itself on the pedestal of being open-source with an API and code open to everyone. The tool has no limits for the amount of media that can be sent through it and includes unlimited groups of up to 200000 people. It also elevates itself as being secure and keen on the privacy of its users (Telegram, n.d.).

The use of social media in Saudi Arabia. In 2019, there were approximately 28.8 million internet users in Saudi Arabia. Internet users, therefore, equate to approximately 82% of the population (Statista, 2020b). In addition, 25 million, 71% of the Saudi population use social media (Statista, 2020a). According to Statista (2020c), the social network with the most users in Saudi Arabia was YouTube, with approximately 26.25 million users in 2020. It was followed by Instagram, which had about 22.45 million users. Facebook came in third with approximately 21.41 million users, followed by Twitter with approximately 20.03 million users. Competition among mobile telecommunication companies has led to improved service provision, quality of services, and customer care. As a result, the prices of mobile telecommunication devices have been reduced, and there has been a tremendous growth of subscribers to online services (Askool, 2012). For example, Saudi mobile internet users are expected to reach 36.17 million by 2025 (Statista, 2020b). The growing number of educated people in Saudi Arabia participating in various technical, professional, and managerial roles has contributed to this rapid growth in internet usage.

Furthermore, the use of social media, especially in Saudi Arabia, is affected by factors such as culture and socioeconomic status (Askool, 2012). Interestingly, the people of Saudi Arabia use a combination of social media tools for work, leisure, and social purposes. The most popular is YouTube, with about 92.3% of the people using this

platform in their social lives. Most of Saudi society has used YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter. Also, most people reported using Facebook for social, leisure, and professional purposes (Askool, 2012). The higher levels of social media usage in the Arab world has contributed to economic growth by promoting social inclusion and creating employment and entrepreneurial opportunities (Hujran et al., 2021).

Overview of *Consultation with Sarah* Podcast

On January 21, 2019, Mics networks released the first episode of the podcast *Consultation with Sarah*, with new episodes uploaded weekly (Mics, n.d.). *Consultation with Sarah* is an educational program that targets parents to help them make parenting decisions. As of January 2022, the series had reached 116 episodes. Dr. Sarah Al-Abdulkarim, the host, is an assistant professor in the early childhood education department at King Saud University, and she is a member of the Council of the Human Rights Commission in Saudi Arabia. Her PhD in early childhood education gives her the knowledge and credibility to lead these podcasts. Dr. Al-Abdulkarim invites guest specialists to discuss aspects of parenting and engages with listeners through calls and messages in many of the episodes (Mics, n.d.).

According to Chartable (n.d.), this podcast is at the top of chart rankings in the kids and family category across countries; it ranks number one in Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, and Yemen. This particular podcast is being highlighted and studied in this research because of this popularity. This podcast, in particular, can inform other podcasters of the importance of credibility and knowledge in acquiring followers. In the *Consultation with Sarah* podcast, the host discusses parenting topics, such as effective ways of addressing misbehavior and preventing jealousy among siblings. In addition,

parents receive useful parenting information and resources on raising children (Chartable, n. d.).

Moreover, there is a *Consultation with Sarah* Twitter account with approximately 46.4 thousand followers, and the views of the clips on Twitter exceed 276 million (S. Al-Abdulkarim, personal communication, January 11, 2021). Links to the episodes are posted with an overview of the topic and then attached to a clip. Other platforms posting the clips include the Mics network on YouTube, TikTok, and Telegram. The TikTok account has approximately 741.7 thousand followers, and the views of the clips on TikTok exceed 8 million. In addition, Dr. Al-Abdulkarim posts clips of the show on her Instagram, and the views of the clips on Instagram are more than 15,000. In addition, the podcast apps have had more than 600,000 listeners. Some of the countries with followers of the podcast are Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, United Arab Emirates, Oman, America, Libya, Britain, Germany, Bahrain, Palestine, Qatar, India, Sweden, Norway, Belgium, Mauritania, Pakistan, Sudan, France, Australia, and Canada (S. Al-Abdulkarim, personal communication, January 11, 2021). The majority of the podcast followers are mothers 61%, while fathers constitute only 3%. The other 16% constitute children's relatives or work and other categories 20%.

In a survey concerning the podcast's educational impact, 80% of respondents indicated that it mainly covers behavioral problems in children (S. Al-Abdulkarim, personal communication, January 11, 2021). About 94% of the followers reported using parenting skills presented in the program, and another 86% listened to advice from other mothers on the program for a similar problem with their children. Moreover, 78% of teachers reported benefits from discussions and ideas about students, and 97% of

caregivers found the program supports caring and parenting for children. Approximately 87% of the users recommended the podcast to those around them.

Research Questions

Scholarly evidence has pointed out different styles of parenting, as in this research. For instance, Smetana (2017) presented the different parenting styles and contextualized how different parents acquired the styles. However, with the advent of new media interaction platforms such as social media, these perspectives have also been diversified (Dwairy et al., 2006). Given these arguments, the five general questions that will be addressed in the study are:

- Which sources do Saudi parents and caregivers perceive to be most beneficial for learning about parenting?
- What factors of Saudi parents and caregivers (gender, age, number of children, marital status, education, and employment status) are related to knowledge seeking behavior, using social media platforms, and listening to the *Consultation with Sarah* podcast that is exhibited among Saudi parents and caregivers?
- Is there a difference reported by Saudi parents and caregivers who use social media platforms for parenting knowledge before the COVID-19 pandemic?
- Are there differences in parenting knowledge and using social media to gain parental knowledge reported by Saudi parents and caregivers who listen to the podcast and parents who do not listen to the podcast?
- Are there differences regarding the use of other social media outlets for parenting advice, either in their native or other languages as reported by Saudi

parents and caregivers who listen to the *Consultation with Sarah* podcast and those who do not?

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review includes the theoretical framework for the study. First, several theories are discussed related to the use of social media as a source of information for parents and caregivers, followed by a conceptual model of the connection between social media platforms, parenting, and knowledge acquisition. Next, the review contains descriptions of parents' sources of parenting knowledge and the rights of Saudi children. The last section of the review discusses social media as a platform to acquire parenting knowledge around the world, including Saudi Arabia.

Relevant Theories

Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory

In the ecological systems theory, Bronfenbrenner posited circumstances and the environmental influences on children's characteristics and behaviors. Bronfenbrenner (2005) categorized these ecosystems into five categories: (a) microsystem, (b) mesosystem, (c) exosystem, (d) macrosystem, and (e) chronosystem. The microsystem refers to the immediate living environment for a child, such as home, school, peers, church, and the community. The mesosystem includes the interaction between different microsystems, and the ecosystem concerns relationships that do not directly involve the child but indirectly affect them. The macrosystem consists of cultural values, ideologies, political environment, and the economic system in which children live. All these broad societal characteristics affect the characteristics of children as they grow. Lastly, the chronosystem is an agglomeration of events in the environment and each transition in a

child's life, including all socio-historical occurrences. This theory aligns with the premise of this paper, which is that diverse factors, both distal and proximal, influence parents' and children's experiences.

Baumrind's Parenting Theory

It is essential to understand approaches used by parents to raise their children, given that parents are part of their child's microsystem. Parenting approaches or styles, as characterized by a parent's degree of responsiveness and exertion of control, have been categorized as authoritative, authoritarian, permissive, and uninvolved. Baumrind (1966) developed the first three concepts: authoritarian, permissive, and authoritative. Baumrind (1966) described the permissive parent as someone that involves the child in most aspects of rearing. The parent presents themselves as a resource that can be tapped and not necessarily as a role model from which the child ought to form their behavior and perspective. The level of responsiveness, in this case, is relatively low, as well as the exertion of control.

On the opposite extreme lies authoritarian parenting where the parent exerts maximum control on their child's actions or inactions. The parent often models their child-rearing on a specific set of guidelines and policies that the child has no freedom to alter whatsoever (Baumrind, 1966). These standards are often formulated and embedded in traditional aspects of child-rearing accentuated by theological and cultural aspects and derived from how these parents were reared and how they feel they are expected to parent from their peers and the community. Responsiveness in this kind of parenting is often high with the parents partaking in every aspect of their children's lives with already set goals and objectives that they ought to meet (Baumrind, 1966).

However, authoritative parenting is an amalgam of both ends of the spectrum and often is proportionally measured (Baumrind, 1966). In this case, although the child is controlled and directed in their actions and inactions, they are often offered the leeway of negotiating the standards and policies that they ought to observe. The child's position in shaping their capabilities is often not hindered albeit with a few guidelines and measures that skew them towards a desired path. Their qualities are often recognized and future directions are pointed towards progression set to help them grow (Baumrind, 1966). More often, the level of control and responsiveness is intermediary of the former two, authoritarian and permissive.

As suggested by Maccoby and Martin (1983), the fourth parenting style is uninvolved parenting. Uninvolved parents are low on both responsiveness and control, and offer little emotional support for their children. These parents may think that controlling their children is unnecessary. As Maccoby and Martin described, “the uninvolved parent is likely to be motivated to do whatever is necessary to minimize the costs in time and effort of interaction with the child” (1983, p. 48).

The understanding, provided through this theory, is imperative for the current study. To foster the culture of good parenting, parents must follow the most appropriate and practical parenting techniques, which will support discipline for children and create a stronger emotional bond between them. Authoritative parenting is a balance between strictness and listening to the perspectives and needs of the child. Thus, by adopting this approach, parents are likely to raise socially competent children with high self-esteem and high resilience levels. Ultimately, the resilience that children build will help them cope with unexpected negative situations in life.

Bowlby and Ainsworth's Attachment Theory

In all the styles of parenting discussed, authoritative, authoritarian, permissive, and uninvolved, the concept of attachment is central. Specifically, successful authoritative parenting is based on developing an attachment between the child and the parent. Bowlby and Ainsworth (1991) defined attachment as a deep, enduring emotional bond that provides a connection between a person and another, in this case, a child and the parent. Bowlby and Ainsworth further explained that attachment, such as that between a child and a parent, needs to be reciprocated and also is inclusive of parents' sensitivity to the child's needs (Bretherton, 1992). The researchers addressed how secure attachments make a child feel protected, secure, and safe. Essentially, children attach to their parents and make use of this attachment to manage distress; they show distress using behaviors and traits, such as verbal resistance, facial expression, and body movement.

While distress is inevitable, children's understanding that distress is temporary is crucial to managing their behaviors. Attachments buffer distress because the parents' presence and sensitivity to their child's needs improve emotional co-regulation (Brown et al., 2018). Children then learn how to create solutions to their challenges, and they establish resilience as they become motivated to overcome failures and resolve conflict. Also, children use their parents' loving and sensitive responses as a buffer to their challenges and problems. Ainsworth observed that children with a secure attachment can use their caregiver, guardian, or parent as a base for exploration (Bretherton, 1992). As they explore, these children become aware that reassurance and comfort are available as needed. For this study, this theory will be a lens to understand the importance of secure attachments and their mutual benefits with positive parenting. Moreover, the theory may

augment understanding of insecure attachments and how positive parenting can overcome attachment insecurity. Finally, this theory could be used to inform attachment as conscious thoughts, behaviors, and feelings control since it is one of the premises of behavior regulation.

Social Learning Theory

Bandura's Social Learning Theory (1977) is related to attachment theory because parenting approaches can be shaped by observing the relationship between a parent and child. The Social Learning Theory is helpful for the current research study because it informs parents of the usefulness of social media as a vital forum to learn about parenting. For example, listening to other parents' experiences on podcasts and reading about their parenting approaches on social media learning forums may give parents insight into applying the best parenting practices in raising their children. Bandura's (1977) theory focused on social learning—learning from social interactions, society, and the environment around individuals. Bandura emphasized the importance of modeling, observation, and imitation as a source of learning or adapting behaviors and attitudes. The theory consists of the following main concepts: observational learning, reinforcement, and vicarious learning. Bandura stated the importance of modeling, monitoring, and imitation in learning or modifying actions and attitudes (Williams, 2017).

According to Bandura (1977), "The ability to learn through observation allows individuals to acquire vast, integrated patterns of behavior without having to build them gradually via lengthy trial and error," (p. 12), explaining how the Social Learning Theory may be utilized to teach in direct and limited access settings (Williams, 2017). Learners

may benefit from the Social Learning Theory as they monitor their environment. If there is a lack of confidence in a circumstance, people will quickly follow the crowd. The individual may obtain knowledge that can later aid him or her by monitoring peers around them and learning more about those peers and their experiences. Similarly, as parents discuss their ideas about parenting, they may develop new ones, elaborate on ones during the discussion, or comment on posts on social media platforms, for instance. This knowledge can aid parents in dealing with their own children. Those who engage in these talks may apply other people's thoughts and actions to their situations (Williams, 2017). A parenting expert, for example, may post a thread of tweets about good parenting, and parents, early childhood educators, and others are among the recipients of the tweets. The audience starts to talk about the ideas and inspires new ones in a small group. Members may take those ideas and apply them to their situations to determine whether they can be implemented. Early childhood educators may share the post with their students' parents. Bandura (1977) stated "by watching a model of the desired behavior, a person acquires an understanding of how response components must be joined and sequenced to generate the new behavior," (p. 35).

Moreover, Bandura (1977) explained how learning can be taught through direct experience to accomplish a distinct learning behavior. The learner may observe the scenario and then build a behavior depending on the response obtained (Williams, 2017). If the learner receives a reward due to the behavior, they are likely to repeat it. However, if the conduct is penalized, the probability of it being repeated is reduced. Knowledge, therefore, is gained through experiences and feedback. Parents gain more understanding when they connect other parents or specialists, which they might use in their future lives.

Many parents bring experiences to the sessions that they may share with other parents on different social media platforms. Peers are able to learn from one another's failures and accomplishments by drawing on previous experiences in the comments. As a result, the group will be able to make more informed decisions and choices based on the experiences of others (Williams, 2017).

Uses and Gratifications Theory

The uses and gratifications theory (UGT) is connected to the Social Learning Theory and the present study because parents can utilize social media platforms to learn from other parents and become better informed. The premise behind the UGT is that parents make their own media-related decisions based on their need for gratification. Blumer and Katz (1974) conceptualized the audience of media content as the active user of that information. The audience is free to decide which media content they view, and some specific needs of the individual form the basis of that choice. According to Shah et al. (2014), the UGT, fulfills cognitive and affective, personal, social integrative, and tension free needs.

Cognitive needs are associated with an individual's need to seek knowledge and information. Media is the primary source of obtaining information from diverse sources like TV (i.e., electronic media), social media, the Internet, and newspapers (i.e., print media). Thus, people could browse and search for an information source to gratify their needs. In contrast, affective needs are associated with pleasure and satisfaction. Therefore, media provides the gratification of affective needs of users through different entertainment-related programs and shows.

Personal needs of integration comprise an individual's need for self-esteem, a unique sense of being, and status quo in society. Media content provides the person with an opportunity to reassure all the needs mentioned earlier and feel a sense of personal satisfaction. In contrast, integrative social needs are associated with the need to feel integrated with social circles, family, and friends. Therefore, media is a source of connection with the people in social circles, no matter how distant they are, which creates a sense of belonging among individuals. Media can also provide an opportunity for one to enjoy their leisure time. Individuals can relax and enjoy their free time viewing their favorite media content or connecting with others.

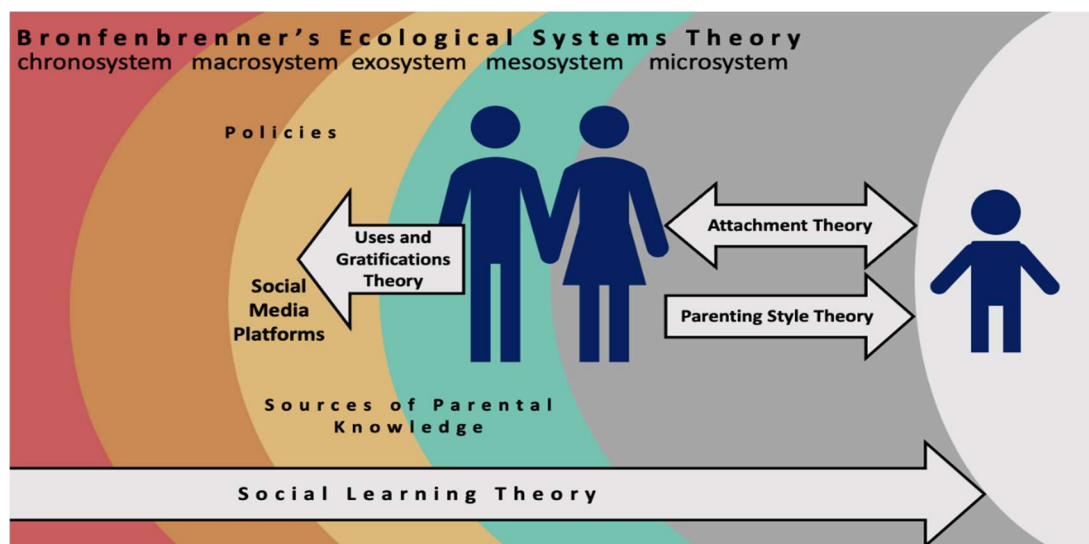
Parents should choose to view media content insightfully and carefully. According to the UGT, the audience is an active participant and is not just a passive viewer of the content displayed. The audience has their choice regarding the content they want to view and which is associated with fulfilling a specific need. Furthermore, media content can significantly impact individuals' thinking because the information is a source of social learning, as Bandura (1977) described in the Social Learning Theory. Therefore, the choice of media content is of crucial significance for effective learning by parents.

The Conceptual Model

The model for this study emphasizes the connection between social media platforms, parenting, and knowledge acquisition, as shown in Figure 1. From Figure 1, The variety of the colors represents the different ecology systems of Bronfenbrenner's theory. Bronfenbrenner's theory has been used to encapsulate the importance of social environments and parental influence on children's development. Similarly, Bandura provided insight into social bonds and how they influence behavior acquisition among

children and their parents. These theories can inform the social media argument directly, such as the social-cultural limits they set in terms of places to gather information. These theories can also influence parenting knowledge acquisition and the styles that can be advanced. As seen in the model, most parents have a circle of friends and acquaintances that they have grown with or acquired along the way who influence their parenting decisions. The UGT exemplifies parents' need for gratification by using social media. The caregiver using these platforms can acquire knowledge from contextual anecdotes and from worldwide global or regional sources, such as within Saudi Arabia. In the Saudi national context, children's rights are advanced significantly based on culture and religion. Viewed through an attachment theory lens, parents' ideal desires to acquire parental knowledge are encompassed in their parenting styles. Their chosen style often involves not one style, but rather a multitude of styles that reflect their individual traits.

Figure 1
Parenting Knowledge Paradigm



Empirical Research

Sources of Parenting Knowledge

It would be beneficial to assess previous research on parents' sources of knowledge since it relates to one of the research questions in the current study. Ateah (2003) assessed parents' disciplinary practices and information sources. The researcher used a cross-sectional survey design to identify the primary source of knowledge on parenting, especially child development, discipline strategies, and anger management for children. The respondents' most common sources of parenting knowledge were discussions with peers, books on parenting, and sharing personal experiences among the parents (Ateah, 2003). For instance, personal experiences were identified as a regular information source on self-anger management used by 67% of the study participants. At the same time, the respondents identified the importance of providing information on topics such as age-appropriate strategies of instilling discipline, expected development and behaviors of the child, nutrition, and self-anger management techniques (Ateah, 2003). The most frequent suggestions by the participants on the issue of sharing parenting information were parenting books and discussions with peers.

Furthermore, Lupton and Pedersen (2016) evaluated the use of pregnancy and parenting apps among Australian women and the features these users preferred in such apps. Importantly, these researchers assessed the women's attitude towards the information they acquired from the apps and the privacy and security of their data. The methodology of this empirical study involved conducting an online survey among 410 women who were either expectant or had given birth in the past three years. These women were between 18 to 45 years old and had competency in the English language.

Lupton and Pedersen concluded that it was common for women to use apps when expecting and rearing their children. The study participants found the apps helpful, especially as sources of information, monitoring child and fetal development, and reassuring the parents. However, most of the users did not assess the validity of the apps' content or consider issues concerning the security and privacy of the personal information collected by these apps. Thus, a significant research gap addressed in this article is the need to study how midwives and other healthcare professionals engage with apps in their professional practice (Lupton & Pedersen, 2016).

Radey and Randolph's (2009) study surveyed a group of randomly selected parents and assessed the most frequently used information sources on parenting. In general, the researchers concluded that parents commonly used books and family members to gain knowledge on parenting. Also, a high level of education was associated with more significant Internet usage. Analysis using logistic regression showed that young and unmarried participants had a higher likelihood of using the Internet (Radey & Randolph, 2009). The present research also seeks to assess if qualities such as education level impact parental knowledge seeking on the Internet.

In a descriptive study, Berkule-Silberman et al. (2010) assessed the sources of parenting information for mothers with a low social-economic status. Regarding sources of parenting information, the three most recognized sources of parenting information included grandmothers 48%, books 32%, and other family members 30%. The proportion of participants who planned to share books and television exposure were 78% and 32%, respectively. Analyses adjusting for sociodemographic variables such as maternal

education, immigrant status, and birth showed statistical significance between intention to share reading and print, medical, and personal sources (Berkule-Silberman et al., 2010).

Research conducted by the Al-Aghar Group (2014) aimed to look into the efficiency of Saudi parents' self-education in improving their skills for parenting. The research consisted of 800 families (50% men and 50% women) who came from the city of Jeddah in Saudi Arabia. According to the Al-Aghar Group (2014), parents' prototypes for parenting are grouped into four categories. The first group, Category A, addresses 20% of parents who are highly knowledgeable, enthusiastic, have high pursuits of knowledge, and are worried about their children's education. This category feels responsible for their own learning, and they believe that to be better parents, they need to be willing to learn about what it entails.

Category B, addresses a group of parents who are knowledgeable, but do not have any worries. Al-Aghar Group (2014) noted that this group constitutes only 5% of the parents who highly appreciate parental knowledge. This group does not worry if they are making an effort to learn or not, but they are confident that when and if they work toward increasing their parental knowledge, it is beneficial for them and their children. Category C includes those parents who are extremely knowledgeable on parenting. This group constitutes 57% of the parents and believe that there is no need for acquiring parental knowledge; they view themselves as the ideal source of knowledge. Supporting their belief with their experience in parenting, this group of parents are of the notion that there is no need for anyone or other sources of parenting knowledge to guide them on how to parent their children. The last group, Category D, consists of only 18% of parents. This group feels that parenting knowledge is not important at all. They believe that there is no

need to stress over the acquisition of parental knowledge, because their children will grow up anyway.

The findings of this research also detailed the extent to which parents had interest in learning about parenting and acquiring parenting knowledge. According to the Al-Aghar Group (2014), an estimated 75% of parents are interested in learning about parenting. While most of the mothers believed that books were practical for acquiring parental knowledge, most fathers picked structured strategies to acquire knowledge on parenting, such as courses or lectures. Furthermore, the Al-Aghar Group (2014) noted that in Saudi Arabia, families were a large source of parenting knowledge as well as Muslim clergies and elders, who were preferred by 68% of parents seeking knowledge. Also, the findings of this research named magazines and the internet as another highly preferred source of parenting knowledge with 49% of parents preferring this option.

A cross-sectional analysis of the literature in the parenting knowledge sources area showcased a diversified field (Al-Aghar Group, 2014; Ateah, 2003; Berkule-Silberman et al., 2010; Lupton & Pedersen, 2016; Radey & Randolph, 2009). Factors such as social-economic class, education, and age have been identified as causative sources of knowledge consumption. For example, research has suggested older parents are more likely to use traditional sources, such as peers, books, religious education, among others (Radey & Randolph, 2009). This dissection showcases the need to reach parents and caregivers to find sources that help them establish knowledge of parenting.

Parental Knowledge

Rowe et al. (2016) evaluated how knowledge about parenting impacted children's subsequent language and pre-literacy skills across different socioeconomic statuses. The

study participants consisted of mothers and their children. The mothers' knowledge of infant development was measured when their child was nine months old, and the children's language and pre-literacy skills were assessed when they were four years old (Rowe et al., 2016). The researchers reported an association between mothers' knowledge of infant development and the participants' education and ethnicity. Thus, the authors suggested that to eliminate gaps in children's early language and literacy skills achievement for those of low socioeconomic status, parents' knowledge of child development should be considered (Rowe et al., 2016).

Eid et al. (2017) recruited six parents in their study to investigate whether parents learned their parenting skills by observing other parents. Eid et al. used a local partner in Saudi Arabia to recruit the participants. Three parents were trained directly while three other parents only observed the parents being trained. The behavioral skills training model was used to train the participants. None of the parents recruited in the program had prior experience with Applied Behavior Analysis or Natural Language Paradigm programs. Applied Behavior Analysis focuses on the acquisition of behavioral skills and demonstrating behavior change and these programs are aimed at improving childhood behavioral problems. The findings from the study demonstrated that although parents can learn from each other concerning parenting styles, the level of learning amongst them is not equal. So this style of learning may be an effective strategy for some parents, although it is not beneficial for all.

From the study, only one of the three parents who were observing met the performance criteria; the other two required direct training using Behavioral Skills Training. During follow-up, parents demonstrated maintenance of their skills, and social

validity assessments were strong. The fact that the parents demonstrated different levels of benefits from observational training, or watching the other parents receive the training, warrants future research. The information from this study could be applied to the current research, as social media platforms could be used as a means for parents to learn from one another, as Eid et al. (2017) recommended in their findings.

Spoth and Redmond (1995) conducted a study aimed at analyzing the family context factors linked with parents being prone to registering in parenting skills programs. The cross-sectional study used a health belief model as a component to test the proposed hypothesis of the study. Data were collected through a survey in which 1,192 parents of grade 5 children from a rural area participated. The study used different available measures to analyze its proposed constructs. After analysis, the findings of the study revealed support for the constructs of the health belief model, in which different components were (a) problem severity, (b) program barriers, (c) program benefits, and (d) perceived teen problems. The model construed indirect effects of several family context constructs such as parental education, child problem behavior, household income, number of children, and the use of past parenting resources. Factors such as program benefits perceived by the parents, barriers to it, and past used parenting resources showed the most significant impact on the parents being prone towards enrolling into parenting programs (Spoth & Redmond, 1995).

Considering the working status of parents and the parental knowledge-seeking behavior, one such research has been conducted by Perry-Jenkins et al. (2020), which studied how the mother's status as a working woman and the father's job autonomy in the first year of parental life impacts the children's adaptive life skills and behavior problems

in the first grade. The research aimed to answer the question of how parents' employment status affects children's life skills and if it contributes to their children's behavioral problems. The study was conducted via a longitudinal study method consisting of 120 couples who were interviewed for five years throughout the parenthood transition. The interviews consisted of almost three to four hours, including filling out questionnaires and answering open-ended questions. The study's findings suggested that the mother's working autonomy and father's job hours significantly predicted fewer behavioral problems and increased adaptive life skills in the children aged 6 to 7 years. Also, greater job autonomy correlated with less children's behavioral problems and increased favorable outcomes for children. Parental involvement also predicts better life adaptive skills in children.

Another study on seeking parental knowledge was conducted by Bornstein et al. (2010), considering the role of parental knowledge as beneficial for the developmental and well-being of the children. The research study was conducted via a cross-sectional questionnaire-based study method. The sample size was 268 European American mothers, and their children, who were two years old. The data regarding parental knowledge was collected from all the mothers. All the study participants reflected different demographic characteristics used to determine differences among groups. The idea behind considering mothers from different demographics was an attempt to answer the study's research question, which was, do differing demographic groups impact parental knowledge? The different demographic characteristics of the participants included; the gender of the child, socioeconomic status of the parents, mother's age, education, employment status, birth or adoptive parental status and parity. The study

compared parental knowledge of mothers among varied demographic groups. The study's findings suggested that overall European American mothers had an appropriate level of parental knowledge, which is less than basic or complete knowledge regarding parenting. The mother's age, education and availability of useful written material were contributed to parents' knowledge. Moreover, mothers of adult children, compared to adolescent mothers, scored higher as well, as their parental knowledge improved at the birth of their second child. The study has reported no difference in gender in terms of parenting knowledge.

Rowe et al. (2016) and Spoth and Redmond (1995) discussed the impact of parenting knowledge on children's achievements and outcomes. Perry-Jenkins et al. (2020) examined the parents' employment status and the impact on parental knowledge. Bornstein et al. (2010) discussed factors such as gender, age, the number of children, education, and availability of reading materials on parental knowledge.

The Rights of Saudi Children

The Family Affairs Council of Saudi Arabia. The Family Affairs Council of Saudi Arabia was established on July 20, 2016, after an order was issued by the Royal Highness of the Ministry (Family Affairs Council, n.d.). The council helps empower the role and status of the Saudi family and imparts an influence by recognizing the developmental needs of the families in all religions of the Kingdom by providing insight into the reality and challenges. Moreover, the council is responsible for identifying regional committees to aide in helping families in their respective areas. Collaboratively, they seek to improve the overall well-being and status of the families by recognizing challenges concerning the sustainable development of the families, children, and women.

The council also prepares reports on the meetings and checks the performance level of all the councils and committees attached (Family Affairs Council, n.d.). In addition, the council has completed several campaigns on social media in cooperation with different organizations to promote awareness of diverse topics related to families, children, and older adults.

The Saudi Arabian government also issued the Child Protection Law under the Family Affairs Council. Article 18 of the law states that all relevant authorities must play an influential role in promoting health and guidance and raising awareness via media platforms for the rights of the children, such as (a) nutrition, (b) health, (c) mental health, (d) advantages of breastfeeding, (e) promoting school health programs to play a significant role in protecting healthcare and guidance, (f) age-appropriate education provision (g) protecting the child from damaging and contagious disease, (h) protecting the child against car accidents, (i) protecting the child against pollution in the environment, and (j) facilitating the relief of children living in harsh conditions such as disputed custody and homelessness, street children, and victims of wars and disaster (Family Affairs Council, n.d.). The following sections will highlight children's rights to protection against abuse/neglect, healthcare, and safety as sorted by the theme of the published articles related to Saudi children's rights.

Protection against abuse/neglect. Saudi children's rights are critical regarding protection against abuse or neglect by parents. These rights ensure that children are treated as individuals and not possessions. Importantly, adherence to children's rights ensures that adults nurture and guide them to grow and become independent (Almuneef & Al-Eissa, 2011). Furthermore, when parents gain knowledge of the best parenting style

to rear their children, the knowledge extends to helping parents avoid practices that may negatively affect their children's mental health.

Healthcare. Saudi children also have a right to healthcare. For example, premature babies should be given care at neonatal intensive care units to ensure survival. Moreover, newborns and infants also have a right to quality healthcare (Almuneef & Al-Eissa, 2011). Overall, the right to child protection shields them from unnecessary trauma that may lead to mental illnesses. In addition, the right to good nutrition ensures that children in Saudi Arabia maintain a healthy weight. As a consequence, these children can experience optimal growth throughout their childhood. Fulfilling this right also prevents the development of illnesses such as malnutrition and anemia that affect growth in children (Almuneef & Al-Eissa, 2011).

Child safety. Child safety is another right. Children should be protected from family violence (Almuneef & Al-Eissa, 2011). An essential aspect of children's rights in Saudi Arabia involves protecting children from abuse. According to the precepts of Islamic law, Saudi children should be kept free of all forms of abuse and neglect. When children are abused and neglected, the law guarantees fair and necessary punishment for the perpetrators.

In addition to protecting children from physical harm, safety may also entail protection from Internet content that may not be age-appropriate and from dangerous individuals who may intend to hurt them. Policies on early childhood development and care raise the performance levels and focus on the special needs of young learners. These policies strengthen children's right to quality education (Almuneef & Al-Eissa, 2011).

Almuneef and Al-Eissa (2011) recommended strategies to prevent evidence-based child maltreatment in Saudi Arabia.

The Effects of Child Abuse in Saudi Arabia

Almuneef et al. (2018) assessed the extent of adverse experiences in childhood and how they impacted social determinants in Saudi Arabia. Using a cross-sectional, national study with 10,156 participants, more than half reported experiencing emotional abuse while a small proportion reported having gone through sexual abuse. Other undesirable experiences during childhood reported by the participants included neglect, bullying, and physical abuse. In addition, some of the determinants of adverse childhood experiences involved low educational attainment, disrupted marriages, and substance abuse (Almuneef et al., 2018). The researchers recommended implementing programs to reduce adverse childhood experiences at the national level (Almuneef et al., 2018).

In another study by Al Dosari et al. (2017) 200 parents who attended three primary health centers in Riyadh were recruited to determine their perspectives on child abuse and its effect on children's emotional and physical health. Data were collected using questionnaires. The National Family Safety Program reported increases in child abuse cases, with 47% of them being physical abuse, 32% neglect, 13% sexual abuse, and 8% emotional abuse. The majority of the responses were by males at 63.8%, compared to 36.2% female. The most frequent dataset was received from those between the ages of 27 and 45. The study showed risk factors associated with child abuse, such as physical abuse in the parents' childhood, being younger parents, being an observer to aggressive behavior at home, and having a child who is difficult to control. Not owning a home also made parents more likely to use physical discipline. In addition, aggressive beliefs of

parents, such as physical discipline being a successful tool for child-rearing, also led to a higher likelihood of abuse by parents (Al Dosari et al., 2017).

Al Dosari et al. (2017), and Almuneef and Al-Eissa, (2011) argued on the role of parenting knowledge of children, especially rights in the Saudi context, and the need to uphold them, therefore encapsulating the knowledge gap that this paper seeks to fill. In addition, this study will determine if the education level, employment status, and the number of children impact parents' and caregivers' knowledge seeking.

The Use of Social Media to Acquire Parenting Knowledge

Social media provides a platform where parents can exchange perspectives online, thereby collaborating to contribute knowledge. One such topic concerned vaccinations. A recent study by Drouin et al. (2020) analyzed parents' and their perceptions of using social media at the beginning of COVID-19. Parents and children reported that both had increased social media use since the beginning of social distancing. Moreover, parents with higher anxiety utilized social media for support and information seeking. Also, Kaya (2020) utilized a questionnaire completed by 668 users to investigate social media use influences during COVID-19. Overall, these findings indicated that many users use the digital medium to have more recent information, and they can distinguish the information's reliability and credibility by following the official sources.

As sources of health information for parents, blogs contain varied perspectives and potentially influence parents' decisions related to their children's health (Jenkins & Moreno, 2020). A recent study by Jenkins and Moreno (2020) analyzed content by evaluating comments on parenting blogs regarding pediatric vaccinations. As discussed, social media influenced parents' views because most of the comments from the

community about vaccination were similar to the perspective of the author of the blog (Jenkins & Moreno, 2020). Overall, these findings indicated that many parents communicate regarding vaccination through blogs (Jenkins & Moreno, 2020). Parents shared their understanding and beliefs about immunization in this online community. However, these tools were also used to disseminate information to the contrary. Overall, the effectiveness of social media during the COVID-19 pandemic was observed to be significantly positive (Jenkins & Moreno, 2020). From spreading information on the protocols and government regulations and also as modes of sharing general parenting knowledge and information, their effectiveness was guaranteed.

Notably, parents reached out in different ways to provide support within their online networks. For example, Duggan et al. (2015) assessed the role of social media in parent communities using questionnaires concerning giving and receiving support. The researchers reported that mothers were active in responding and communicating within their social media networks. Some of the ways parents engaged in social media involved responding to good news shared by their peers and answering parenting questions others prompted (Duggan et al., 2015). According to their study, more than half of the parents on social media received parenting help through their network. Nearly 80% of the mothers received support from social media, while a smaller proportion of fathers 65% received help from participants on these platforms (Duggan et al., 2015). Facebook, with 74% usage, was the most used platform. Pinterest, LinkedIn, Instagram, and Twitter followed with rates between 23% and 29%.

Kallem et al. (2018) investigated mothers' use of social media when seeking parenting advice. Forty-three mothers from low-income families were enrolled in a

private Facebook group. The researchers assessed the nature of the health questions and answers that were discussed by the mothers and their relevance to American Academy of Pediatrics guidelines. The results showed that the interactions among mothers in the Facebook group were helpful in providing parental information. Generally, peers gave answers according to the American Academy of Pediatrics guidelines whenever mothers posed questions related to infant health (Kallem et al., 2018). The results were related to the topic of this research study because they emphasized the importance of Facebook, a social media platform, as a source for parents to gain knowledge.

Additionally, Moon et al. (2019) assessed mothers' perceptions of social media as sources of information about parenting and healthcare information. Focus group discussions were used to evaluate parental perceptions of the advantages and disadvantages of information found on the Internet, and more specifically social media, concerning parenting of infants. Overall, the participants appreciated the vast information at their disposal. However, they recognized the importance of using credible, evidence-based platforms to learn about parenting and their children's health (Moon et al., 2019).

In another study, AlKlayb et al. (2017) evaluated the effectiveness of using applications on mobile phones to educate mothers. In this case, a free application (iTeethey™) was developed and made available for the participants. The mothers' knowledge, attitudes, and oral hygiene practices were then assessed through a questionnaire. The study reported improved knowledge for all mothers after using the application (AlKlayb et al., 2017). However, comparing the knowledge of mothers from Najran with those in Riyadh, they found that Najran mothers improved their knowledge to a greater extent. This difference was due to the unequal level of base knowledge in the

sample areas. Those in Riyadh had a significantly higher base knowledge diversified among different modes compared to those in Najran, hence the significantly higher affinity for the latter to use this platform. Moreover, the application was more effective for mothers of multiple children when compared to first-time mothers. Although the authors found interesting results, a potential research limitation was that the sample size in this study was not representative of the entire Kingdom. Therefore, there is a need to conduct more extensive studies to assess the potential of mobile phone-based applications in providing parenting knowledge to parents across the cultural divide.

In Indonesia, a study was conducted by Setyastuti et al. (2019) to explore how social media is used as a preferable source of information for parents from the millennial generation, especially young mothers. The study used a quantitative method with a survey design. The study included 443 social media users, consisting of mothers born in the 1990s to 2000s, who were actively engaged in social media interactions. The survey included different questionnaires completed by the participants online via Facebook. The study's findings suggested that half of the mothers preferred the usage of social media as a tool for information on parenting. The most used sites and their ranking order were WhatsApp, Instagram, and Facebook. Social media was preferred by mothers for parenting compared to those of relatives or neighbors.

Another study conducted by Haslam & Baker, (2017) explored the increased use of social media and communication habits among parents and their access to social support via online modalities in Australia. The study looked into the parental use of social media and the factors that increase the likeliness of their use of social media for getting parental support. Five hundred thirty-two parents were involved in the study and

filled out an online survey. The study was conducted via a cross-sectional method through a survey questionnaire. The findings suggested that parents used mostly Facebook, blogs, and parental websites to attain resourceful social media information. The most significant reason for doing so was to get top-rated information and advice for parenting purposes. The researchers performed a regression analysis to test the predictors of social media, which included internet self-efficacy, perception towards social media use, and online support. The second model suggested that levels of online support depended upon the perceived use of social media; greater the support equated to greater use. Thus, the study supported the notion that parents use social media for parenting purposes, so it can be a useful source of social support as well.

The Saudi Center for Opinion Polling (2022) aimed to expound on the use of social media applications in Saudi Arabia. The sample consisted of 1220 individuals who were above 18 years of age. They were randomly selected and participated in interviews conducted through the telephone. The Saudi Center for Opinion Polling (2022) noted that WhatsApp, Snapchat, and Twitter dominated in the three categories of mind awareness, preference, and app use. Regarding mind awareness, WhatsApp led with 33% and was closely followed by Snapchat and Twitter with 30% and 20%, respectively. Regarding preference, WhatsApp led with 32% followed by Snapchat and Twitter with 26% and 12%, respectively. On app use, WhatsApp led with 92% whereas YouTube, Snapchat, Twitter, and Instagram followed with 79%, 77%, 61% and 58%, respectively.

The findings also detailed differences on these applications. The Saudi Center for Opinion Polling (2022) noted that Instagram had more female users whereas YouTube had more male users. WhatsApp users were older as compared to Snapchat and TikTok

users who were younger in age. Both positive and negative effects were recorded. Positive effects included eased communication and exchange of information, self-learning, and access to information, while negative effects included time wastage, isolation, health issues, misinformation, and poor relationships among families and friends. The positive effects were ranked high at 75% satisfaction while the negative effects ranked at 48% satisfaction.

The studies by AlKlayb et al. (2017), Duggan et al. (2015), Haslam and Baker, (2017), Jenkins and Moreno (2020). Kallem et al. (2018), Moon et al. (2019), Saudi Center for Opinion Polling (2022), and Setyastuti et al. (2019) showed the effectiveness of social media in spreading information. This paper will explore the most frequent social media platforms Saudi parents and caregivers use to help them establish knowledge of parenting.

Summary

The purpose of this paper is to seek and analyze data on how social media applications impact parenting. This analysis will be done in the context of podcasts as the primary source of survey data on social media usage and will show how the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted parenting knowledge seeking and dissemination. Of particular interest is the effectiveness of social media to distribute information. Solutions to virtual learning and online learning issues faced in the social media arena will also be explored. In essence, the study will contextualize social media platforms in parenting knowledge. There exists a research gap in parental use of social media to seek and use information from these sites, especially in the Saudi context. The research seeks to find out the sources Saudi parents and caregivers perceive as most beneficial for acquiring parenting

knowledge, the factors related to knowledge seeking behaviors by parents, and the differences between parents who use social media for parenting knowledge. This study also seeks to assess social media, specifically the *Consultation with Sarah* podcast, as a source for parents to acquire an understanding of their children's development.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODS

The proposed research is intended to assess social media as a source for parents obtaining knowledge about children's development, and to consider the factors that influence the use of technology to acquire parenting knowledge. This research concerns the connection between social media as a source of information and the growth of parental knowledge. According to Statista (2020b), Saudi Arabia has about 28.8 million internet users and 25 million social media users. Despite the rapid increase in Internet usage in Saudi Arabia, there is a research gap in understanding why parents and caregivers use social media to enhance their parenting knowledge. In addition, this research aims to find out the sources parents use to learn about parenting and determine if social media platforms, such as the podcast *Consultation with Sarah*, can assist parents in learning about parenting. Therefore, this study was developed to assess parents' and caregivers' uses of social media, and the *Consultation with Sarah* podcast, as a source for parents to acquire understanding about their children's development. Additional aims included assessing the relationships between social media and other factors such as gender, marital status, education, employment status, the number of children in the family and whether that impacted the use of technology to obtain parenting knowledge. According to Chartable (n.d.), the *Consultation with Sarah* podcast was ranked number one in Saudi Arabia in the kids and family category. This podcast has a considerable social media following, mostly on Twitter and TikTok. Mothers make up the bulk of podcast listeners, with a modest number of caregivers and a small percentage of fathers

(S. Al-Abdulkarim, personal communication, January 11, 2021). The podcast is believed to have an educational impact, focusing on children's behavioral issues and parental abilities.

The specific research questions to be addressed in this research study are:

- Which sources do Saudi parents and caregivers perceive to be most beneficial for learning about parenting?
- What factors of Saudi parents and caregivers (gender, age, number of children, marital status, education, and employment status) are related to knowledge seeking behavior, using social media platforms, and listening to the *Consultation with Sarah* podcast that is exhibited among Saudi parents and caregivers?
- Is there a difference reported by Saudi parents and caregivers who use social media platforms for parenting knowledge before the COVID-19 pandemic?
- Are there differences in parenting knowledge and using social media to gain parental knowledge reported by Saudi parents and caregivers who listen to the podcast and parents who do not listen to the podcast?
- Are there differences regarding the use of other social media outlets for parenting advice, either in their native or other languages as reported by Saudi parents and caregivers who listen to the *Consultation with Sarah* podcast and those who do not?

This chapter discusses the methods that were used in this research study, specifically the research design, the research context, the research participants and sampling methods, instruments, procedures, and ethical concerns. Furthermore, methods for quantitative and

qualitative data analysis are presented, as well as reliability and validity. Finally, the chapter concludes with a summary. **Appendix A** contains an overview of the research questions, sub-questions, methodology, and analysis.

Research Design

The research design for this study is mixed methods, which blends the collection, analysis, and interpretation of both quantitative and qualitative data with the goal of a more comprehensive approach to understanding the concepts under study (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003). The research questions regarding relationships between variables must be explored using appropriate quantitative data sources. Likewise, inquiries about reasons behind parents' and caregivers' patterns of use and behavior regarding social media can best be explored through qualitative data sources. Questions in this category include the third and fifth research questions. This blended approach was chosen "so the evaluation could tell the full story" (Greene et al., 1989, p. 260). Furthermore, an expanded mixed method design was the chosen approach and data collection method for this study because a survey with both open and closed-ended items may be one of the best ways to determine participants' habits, preferences, and thoughts related to social media use.

A survey is quick, inexpensive, and sufficient for a large sample size study (Hair et al., 2003). Despite these benefits, the survey technique has been critiqued for its lack of details and in-depth relevant data (Biemer et al., 2004). As a result, the proposed research overcomes the above restriction by including six open-ended questions through which the participants can offer more detailed explanations and extend their answers beyond the close-ended responses. Thus, using the mixed methods approach, a researcher can gather

in-depth and wide-ranging data. A detailed description of the survey used in this research is provided below in the Instrument section of this chapter.

The expected sample size was at least 100, as recommended in order to run a factor analysis (MacCallum et al., 1999). The researcher compared the differences reported by Saudi parents and caregivers who listened to the *Consultation with Sarah* podcast, and those who do not listen to the podcast, but turned to other social media for parental advice. Thus, the minimum size for each group was 50 participants. A non-probability purposeful sampling approach was employed for this current study. For a purposeful sampling method, "researchers intentionally select (or recruit) participants who have experienced the central phenomenon or key concept being explored in the study" (Creswell & Clark, 2018, p. 176). The target population for this study was Saudi parents who used social media and are located across a large geographic area. Thus, online data collection was the most appropriate method to reach potential participants.

For the qualitative side of the study, it was anticipated that 20 to 30 participants would be optimal to achieve saturation (Morse, 1995). This number was recommended to ensure enough data for themes to emerge (Dworkin, 2012). However, after receiving the data, 309 (87.53%) of the survey participants responded to one or more open-ended questions, but most of the participants did not answer all six of them. Therefore, I decided to use all of the qualitative data (whichever responses the participants completed) to achieve saturation.

Instrument

The instrument used to collect both qualitative and quantitative data for this study was a digital survey offered via *Qualtrics*. A scale to measure if and how parents use

social media to acquire parenting knowledge consisted of 31 statements that were rated using a Likert scale with 5 (always; happens most or all the time; or I have done it most or all the times) to a low score of 1 (never; not used; or I have never done it). The scale included only three components: parental knowledge, social media as a parental knowledge tool, and *Consultation with Sarah's* podcast sections. The survey included five blocks or sections: demographic information (20 questions), parental knowledge (10 items), social media as a parental knowledge tool (11 items), *Consultation with Sarah* podcast (10 items and 2 questions), and reflection (2 items and 4 questions). The survey primarily consisted of closed-ended questions and items; however, these questions were followed by six open-ended questions to allow participants to share their views and beliefs.

The first and second questions asked parents and caregivers who listened to the *Consultation with Sarah* podcast about their reasons for listening to the podcast and what they do not like about it. The third and the fourth questions included Saudi parents who listened to the *Consultation with Sarah* podcast, as well as those who did not, and inquired about their reasons for using social media, or not using them, for parental knowledge. The fifth question asked participants to name other podcasts they had listened to. Question six asked participants to list suggestions, comments, or other concerns about parenting or child-rearing that they would like the parenting specialist to discuss. The survey developed for this study is hereafter referred to as the *Using Social Media for Parental Knowledge Survey*.

The survey was offered in the Arabic language. It was set up to screen participants to ensure only respondents who had the required qualities and fit into the

sample frame were allowed to answer the full survey. These inclusion criteria included being a Saudi parent of children aged 0-18, a user of social media, and at least some of the participants needed to have listened to the relevant podcast. Not all of the respondents needed to have watched the Podcast because the statistical analyses used required a comparison group. Respondents who did not fit the participant criteria due to the options they selected on the screening questions were directed to the end of the survey without an opportunity to participate further. To restrict multiple responses from the same participants, I activated an option on *Qualtrics* that blocked repeat IP addresses using cookies to prevent participants from taking the survey again (Qualtrics, n.d.). The survey that includes demographics questions, parental knowledge scale, social media as a parental knowledge tool scale, *Consultation with Sarah* podcast scale, and the open-ended questions could be found in **Appendix B**.

Validation and Reliability of the Data

Validity is concerned with the accuracy of measurement, and reliability is concerned with consistency. The instrument developed for this study included multiple steps. After reading the related literature, I developed a survey and used social media to gather the survey data. Survey items were shared with my advisor, the dissertation committee members, and colleagues, to receive unbiased feedback.

The study's survey questions were in the English language and were thoroughly evaluated by academic specialists with extensive expertise and knowledge on social media. This was done prior to the survey questions translation. In addition, native Arabic-speaking experts in the discipline, including Dr. Al-Abdulkarim and PhD colleagues examined the survey questions for greater clarity once they were translated into Arabic,

all of which support the content validity of the survey (Taherdoost, 2016). These experts were familiar with the *Consultation with Sarah* podcast, as well.

In educational research, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) has been utilized as an analytical method. The EFA is used for a number of different reasons, including "reducing a large number of items from a questionnaire or survey instrument to a smaller number of components, uncovering latent dimensions underlying a data set, or examining which items have the strongest association with a given factor" (DiStefano et al., 2009, p.1). For example, the first block of the questionnaire is about parental knowledge. When the EFA was conducted, there were three components. Thus, to make them fit together in one component, I took out the second and the third items of the questionnaire because they did not fit on the scale. However, the second and the third blocks of the questionnaire were good and appropriate items with apparent face and content validity, which also fit together in one component. Table 1 shows that the parental knowledge section consisted of eight items. The second section consists of eleven items, including all the using social media for parental knowledge items. Finally, the third section consists of ten items, including all the *Consultation with Sarah* podcast items.

The reliability of the survey was measured by using Cronbach's alpha to assess internal consistency across the second, third, and third blocks of the survey. Cronbach's alpha should be above .70 to be considered acceptable (Creswell & Clark, 2018). Cronbach's alpha produced internal consistencies that exceeded the minimum value of .70 required for acceptable reliability. The Cronbach alpha coefficient remained stable, and all items in the scale are consistent as shown in Table 1.

Ethical Considerations

This study was presented to the Oakland University Institutional Review Board (IRB) for preliminary evaluation and approval of the methods. The informed consent form, the invitation, and the survey were reviewed by the IRB. Informed consent obtains individuals' permission to collect their information and explains how their confidentiality will be protected by excluding any personal identifying information in the survey. The use of an online survey protects the anonymity of the participants and also safeguards privacy and confidentiality. The participants were informed that their replies were categorized and used solely for educational and research reasons. IRB approval was obtained for the study (project ID number IRB-FY2022-246) on March 2, 2022. The questionnaire was opened for data collection from March, 6, 2022 –March 13, 2022. The IRB approval letter is included in **Appendix C**, and the invitation of recruitment for participation in the research is provided in **Appendix D**.

Table 1
Component Matrix and Reliability Score of the Survey Items

Survey Items		1	2	3
Parental Knowledge Section	I believe that parenting knowledge helps me acquire new skills that I can implement in child rearing.	.71		
	I can learn new parenting skills for child rearing.	.71		
	I feel good when I develop my parenting knowledge.	.71		
	I increase my parenting knowledge to raise my child better.	.71		
	I use a variety of sources to gain parenting knowledge.	.70		
	I seek out knowledge about possible parenting issues that have not happened yet.	.64		
	If I improve my parenting skills, my child's behavior will improve.	.63		
	I share the parenting information I have gained with others.	.57		
Using Social Media for Parental Knowledge Section	I believe that using social media enables me to stay up to date with the latest parenting strategies.		.88	
	I believe that using social media helps me acquire new skills that I can apply in child rearing.		.86	
	I took advantage of social media to learn about effective parenting.		.85	
	I believe that social media improves my knowledge of parenting.		.83	
	Social media enables me to follow experts in parenting and child development.		.77	
	I believe that it is good to spend free time on social media and take advantage of the accounts specialized in parenting.		.75	
	I believe that social media is an easy way to increase parenting knowledge.		.73	
	Using social media boosts my self-confidence as a parent.		.72	
	I trust the content provided on social media regarding parenting.		.65	
	I only trust the content provided on social media from experts on parenting.		.58	
	Social media enables me to share the parenting information I find with others.		.56	
Consultation with Sarah Podcast Section	Through the podcast, I gained parenting knowledge that I can apply in child rearing.			.93
	The podcast helped me acquire new parenting skills that I could use in child rearing.			.91
	The podcast helps me to understand what is appropriate in child rearing.			.90
	The way the podcast presented the issue, discussed it, and provided examples, helped me gain parenting knowledge.			.89
	From the podcast, I learned parenting knowledge and skills that enable me to advise others about child rearing.			.88
	The <i>Consultation with Sarah</i> podcast helps me with my children.			.84
	I have tried some of the solutions provided in the <i>Consultation with Sarah</i> podcast.			.82
	I like listening to the <i>Consultation with Sarah</i> podcast because it is recorded, and I can listen to it whenever I want.			.80
	I have encouraged others to listen or watch the <i>Consultation with Sarah</i> podcast			.80
	I share clips or episodes of <i>Consultation with Sarah</i> podcast with someone by retweeting or sending them to others.			.71
Cronbach's Alpha		.75	.92	.95

Researcher Positionality

The data analysis from this research included the possible interpretations of these individuals' experiences based on my standpoint as a Saudi Arabian, a female researcher who is familiar with the topic, and a mother of 3 children (aged 14,10,8) years. The researcher used social media to learn about parenting as a parent and as an early childhood educator. Additionally, my friends have used social media, such as *Consultation with Sarah*, to obtain parenting advice on various topics. However, I was unaware of what sources of information other parents use and the information they are seeking. I believe parents have the right to choose whatever sources help them enhance their parenting knowledge regardless of their age, gender, marital status, education level, ethnic or racial background, or familiarity with social media. The baseline information and beliefs of the researcher are an important component of grounded theory research, which was the methodology utilized for the qualitative portion of this research (Chun et al., 2019). The assumptions during data collection and the analysis process were discussed with the advisor and colleagues to avoid bias.

Participant Characteristics

Three hundred and fifty-three Saudi parents participated in the study by completing the *Using Social Media for Parental Knowledge Survey*. The majority of the respondents received the questionnaire link from Twitter ($n = 204$; 58%). Others got the link to the survey from WhatsApp ($n = 69$; 19.5%). These are followed by respondents who got the link from undefined sources ($n = 27$; 7.6%), Telegram ($n = 32$; 9.1%) and others.

Females were the largest group of the participants ($n = 86.4\%$). Most of the participants were living in Saudi Arabia (93.2%). The majority of the participants (74.8%) ranged in age in years from 26-40, with the largest group being ages 31-35 (28.9%). Table 2 represents the gender, age, and current country of parents' residence in more detail.

Regarding parent participants' background characteristics, Table 3 demonstrates the parents' education, current student status, and employment status. The majority of the respondents (79.6%) held a bachelor's degree (55.8%) or a graduate degree (23.8%). Thirty-six of the participants were employed, and (84.7%) were not students.

Regarding the family characteristics, Table 4 presents the parent's marital status, the number of the children, number of adults raising the child, and relation to the child. The majority of the respondents were married (93.2%), and the majority (78.5%) were taking care of one to three children. Also, most of the respondents reported that they were mothers (87%), and, most often, both fathers and mothers were care of their children (83.3%).

Table 2
Descriptive Statistics of Parents' Demographic Information

	Percent of Parents
Gender	
Male	12.2
Female	86.4
Prefer not to say	1.4
Age	
21-25	4.8
26-30	24.4
31-35	28.9
36-40	21.5
41-45	10.8
46 or +	9.6
Country of Residence	
Saudi Arabia	93.2
Outside Saudi Arabia	6.8

Table 3
Descriptive Statistics of Parents' Background Characteristics

	Parents' Percent in the Study
Education Level	
No schooling completed	1.7
High school	9.3
Associates	9.3
Bachelor's degree	55.8
Master's degree	20.4
Doctorate degree	3.4
Current Student Status	
Yes	15.3
No	84.7
Employment Status	
Employed	36.5
Not employed, looking for work	31.2
Not employed, not looking for work	21.5
Self-employed/Freelance	6.2
Retired	4.5

Table 4
Descriptive Statistics of Family Characteristics

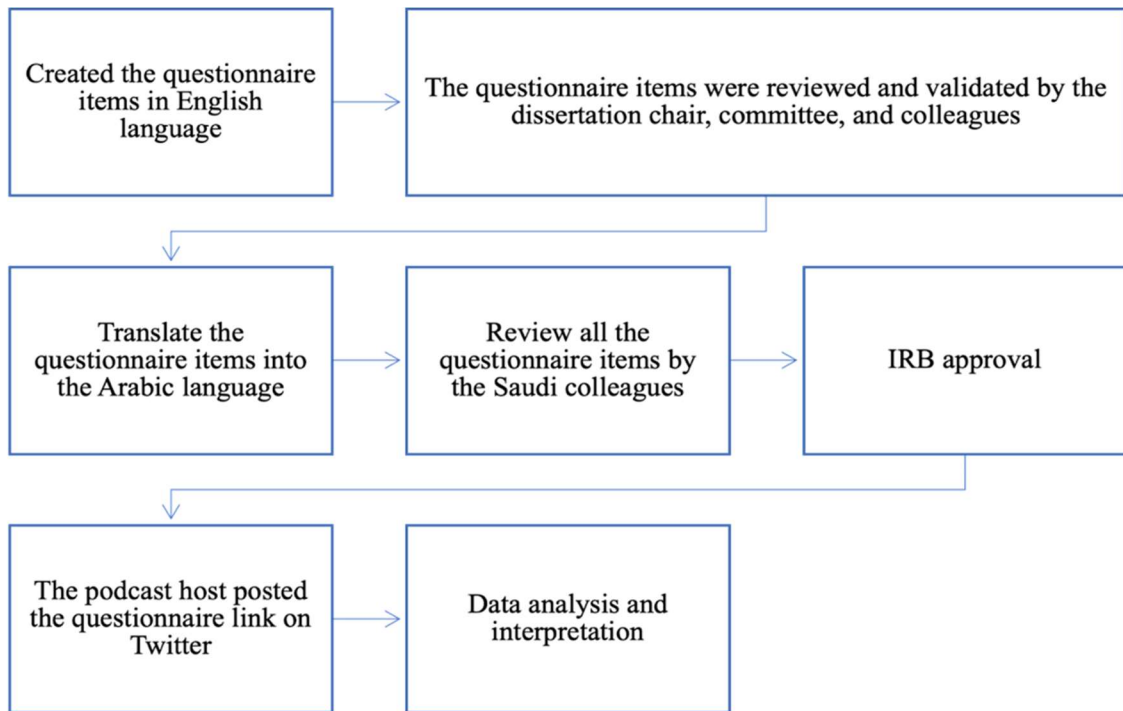
	Parents' Percent in the Study
Marital Status	
Married	93.2
Widowed	1.7
Divorced	5.1
Number of Children	
1	20.4
2	34.3
3	23.8
4	13.3
5 or more	8.2
Number of Adults Raising the Child	
Just me	7.4
My spouse and I	83.3
I and others	9.3
Relation to the child	
Mother	87.0
Father	12.2
Other: Aunt, uncle,..	.8

Data Collection Methods

Qualtrics was used to collect data via an online survey. The survey included an information sheet and a questionnaire with both closed and open-ended questions. Once the IRB approved the research, the study information sheet and the questionnaire link were given to the facilitator and host of the *Consultation with Sarah* podcast, Dr. Al-Abdulkarim. Originally, the plan was for her to share it with her fans and listeners via their podcast's accounts, across the social media platforms. However, Dr. Al-Abdulkarim posted the survey on her personal Twitter account. Fortunately, the minimum number of participants was achieved within the first 24 hours of publishing the questionnaire. Therefore, it was not necessary for the link to be shared by the podcast's social media platforms. Parents that received the survey via Twitter, however, did share it via social media, so some of the responses came from those means, as well.

In this study, the survey was available for one week. In addition, the survey showed that people also shared the survey link with other parents they knew on different social media platforms. Respondents were able to access and answer questions at their convenience. Figure 2 shows the modified data collection process. Figure 2 provides a visual outline of the step-by-step process used to develop the questionnaire, translate it into Arabic, and gain IRB approval. Note that after being translated into Arabic, the questionnaire items were reviewed by Arabic-speaking Saudi colleagues prior to submitting the study for IRB approval.

Figure 2
Data Collection Process



Data Analysis Methods

The data were downloaded from *Qualtrics* into Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), version 28. SPSS was used for quantitative data analysis, including descriptive statistics, EFA, Cronbach's alpha, independent samples t-test, and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA). The EFA was used to reduce the survey components, and to save each section of the survey as a variable by computing the z-scores of each Likert scale. Cronbach's alpha was used to assess internal consistency across the items from the questionnaire data per section. In addition, the independent samples t-test was used to compare categorical or nominal variables with two groups (e.g., gender) as independent

variables and continuous variables as a dependent variable, specifically the computed z-scores of each section of the survey. Additionally, the ANOVA was used to test the difference between two or more groups in categorical data (e.g., age categories, education level and occupation), on the one hand, and the responses to each of the three rating scales as continuous variables, as the dependent variable.

Grounded theory was the methodology used for the qualitative portion of this research, utilizing inductive reasoning. This methodology, which was introduced in the 1960s, allows the researcher to generate theories from gathered research data (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Then comprehensive information can be derived from the individual data, from open-ended questions, which were collected from the surveys. With these data, codes were applied and then were formed into categories, which ultimately generated themes. Constant comparative analysis, which is a part of grounded theory, was the coding method used for the data from all six open-ended questions from the survey. Creswell & Creswell (2018) described how the researcher begins this process inductively, but also utilizes deductive thinking as the researcher is required to revisit the data after generating themes to gather additional evidence for each theme. Consistent with grounded theory, the codes were developed from the data itself, rather than starting with codes and conforming the data to these codes, as discussed by Chun et al. (2019). Within this process, the newly created codes from the data are constantly compared to one another, so they can be categorized correctly. After they are appropriately categorized, they are grouped into themes. Ultimately, theories can be derived from this data analysis process (Chun et al., 2019).

In the qualitative portion of the present research study, thematic analysis was used to evaluate qualitative data. The coding followed Tesch's eight steps for qualitative data coding (Tesch, 1990), which includes initially understanding the data by considering the underlying meaning while writing notes about the data. After this is done for several participants, a list of all topics is generated. Similar topics are then grouped together. The topics are then abbreviated into codes, which are written next to the relevant sections of the text until new categories and codes are generated. Categories are then established from the most relevant words for the topics. Similar categories are grouped together. The codes are then alphabetized. A preliminary inter-coder analysis is then conducted, and existing data are recoded, if necessary (Tesch, 1990). Using Microsoft Word, a file was created with all the qualitative data with categories and emergent themes organized in a table. The process of arranging the final themes into a narrative that explained participants' thoughts and explanations, using participants' words as supporting evidence, is discussed in Chapters Four and Five.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

This chapter assesses the online survey results from 353 Saudi parents or caregivers who completed the survey to assess social media as a source for parents obtaining knowledge about children's development, and to better understand the factors that influence the use of social media to acquire knowledge on parenting. The chapter is organized around results concerning each of the research questions, which can be found in Chapter Three. The results reported in Chapter Four begin with quantitative data and then followed by results from the qualitative data to better understand the reason behind the quantitative responses.

Using Social Media for Parental Knowledge Survey: Quantitative Results

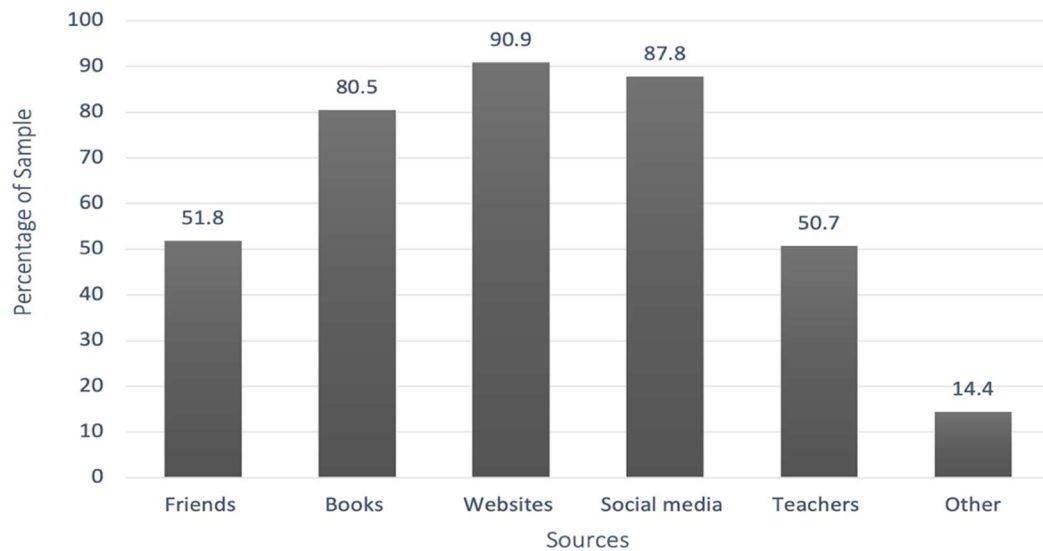
This section discusses the quantitative data results using descriptive statistics, one-way ANOVAs, and independent samples t-tests. The survey contained five sections: demographics questions, parental knowledge scale, social media as a parental knowledge tool scale, *Consultation with Sarah* podcast scale, and the open-ended questions. Each of the three scales were converted into z-scores individually.

Sources for Parental Knowledge

This research sub-question examined the sources that were used by parents to gain parental knowledge. Figure 3 shows the results of these items. Each bar shows the percentage of parents who selected each option. Note the percentages do not add up to 100% because parents could choose more than one option.

Figure 3

Descriptive Statistics of the Sources used by Parents for Learning about Parenting



In examining Figure 3, it is clear that the largest percentage of parents identified websites and social media as sources of information for parenting. Interestingly, each of the categories was marked by more than half of the participants. Among the areas identified under “Other” were pediatricians, workshops/lectures, personal experience, parenting experts, and Zoom.

Social Media Platforms for Parental Knowledge

This research sub-question examined which social media platforms the parents used to gain parental knowledge. Figure 4 shows the results of these items. Each bar shows the percentage of parents who selected this option. Again, the percentages do not add up to 100% because parents could choose more than one option.

Figure 4

Descriptive Statistics of the Social Media Platform used for Parenting Knowledge

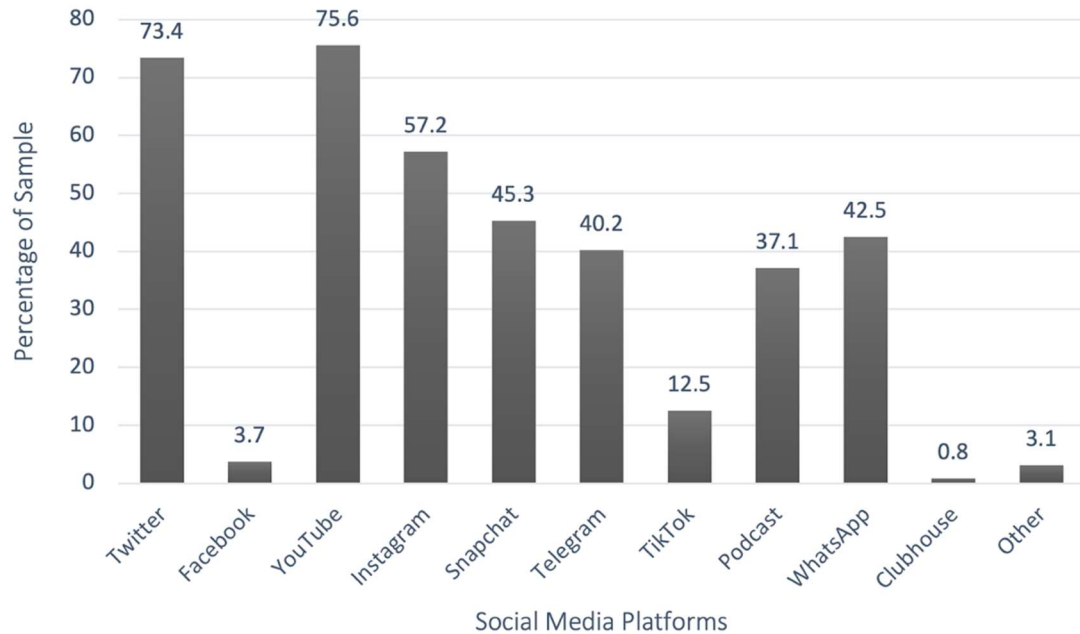


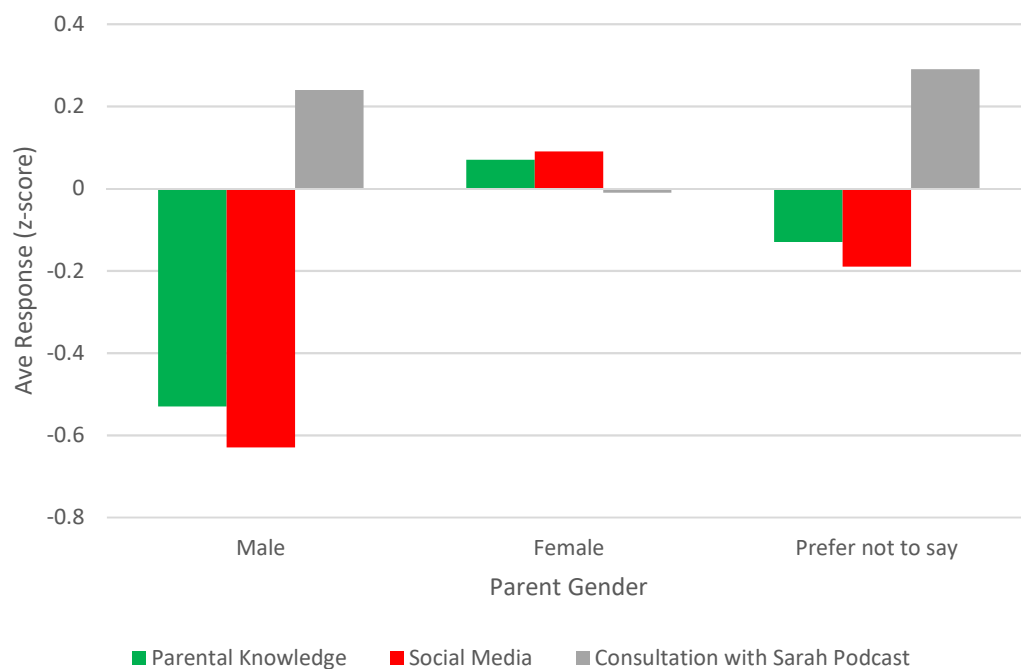
Figure 4 shows that the largest percentage of parents have been using YouTube and Twitter as sources of information for parenting their children. Whereas, Facebook and Clubhouse were used by a smaller percentage of the participants.

Parents' Gender and the Scales

I utilized a one-way ANOVA to analyze whether parental knowledge scale, social media as a parental knowledge tool scale, and listening to the *Consultation with Sarah* podcast scale varied statistically by parents' gender. Overall, these data showed a statistically significant differences by parents' gender for scores on the parental knowledge scale $F(2,350) = 7.49$, ($p = .001$), and with social media scale $F(2,350) = 10.74$,

($p = .000$). However, these data did not reveal a relationship between gender and consultation with Sarah podcast $F(2,211) = .27$, ($p = .758$). Figure 5 shows the differences between genders for the three dependent variables with each bar showing the average response for each gender to the parent knowledge scale (in green), the social media scale (in red) and the *Consultation with Sarah* scale (in grey).

Figure 5
Parent Knowledge, Social Media Usage, and Listening to the Consultation with Sarah Podcast Scales by Parents' Gender



As shown in Figure 5, for parental knowledge in this study, in general, male parents reported having less knowledge than female parents, with parents who preferred not to reveal their gender being in between the two. Male parents also reported less use of social media as a knowledge tool than female parents did, with parents who preferred not to reveal their gender in between the two. The *Consultation with Sarah* podcast scale was not significantly different by gender, though male parents reported the highest average score on this scale.

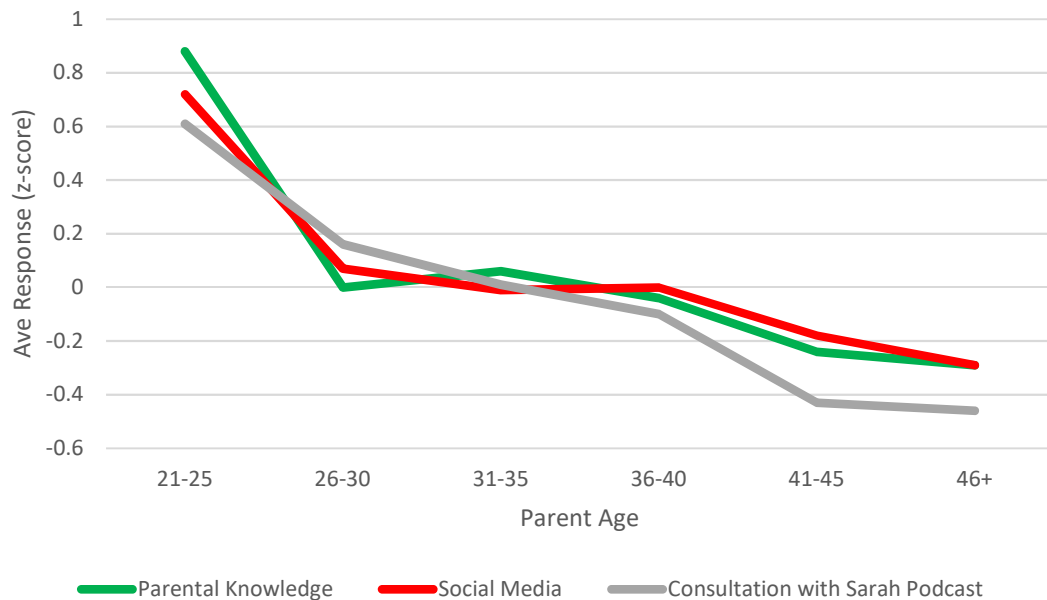
Parents' Age and the Scales

This research sub-question determined if parental knowledge scale, social media scale, and listening to the *Consultation with Sarah* podcast scale varied statistically by parents' age via a one-way ANOVA. Overall, these data show a statistically significant difference between parents with parental knowledge scale $F(5,347)= 3.96$, ($p=.002$), with social media scale $F(5,347)= 2.81$, ($p=.017$), and $F(5,208)= 3.02$, ($p=.012$) related to listening to the *Consultation with Sarah* podcast scale. Figure 6 shows the results of these analyses, with parental knowledge shown with a green line, social media with a red line, and *Consultation with Sarah* with a grey line. From Figure 6, the parental knowledge scale and social media scale followed a similar pattern across parent age groups. For both of these scales, the highest scores were in the youngest age group of 21-25. It was followed by a sharp drop in the 26-30 age group, fairly steady averages through age 40, and then a decline across ages 41 and up. In other words, parents in the youngest age group reported the highest knowledge and use of social media as a knowledge tool and the oldest age groups reported the least. The most notable drop was from the youngest age group to the 26-30 age group. The *Consultation with Sarah* podcast scale had some

pattern similarities, but without the sharp drop. For this scale, again the 21-25 age group had the highest average score, which was followed by a fairly steady decline in each age group thereafter. The largest drop was still from the youngest to 26-30 age group, but this drop was not as steep as it was for the other two variables. In summary, those in the 21-25 age group reported the highest average scores for listening to the podcast, with a decline as age increased.

Figure 6

Parent Knowledge, Social Media Usage, and Listening to the Consultation with Sarah Podcast Scales by Parents' Age

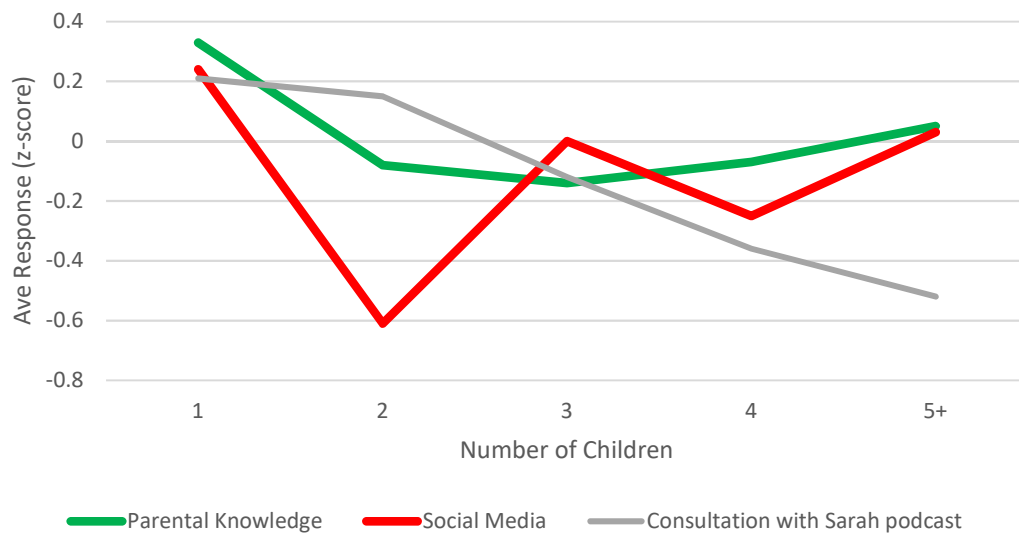


Number of Children and the Scales

I utilized a one-way ANOVA to determine if parental knowledge scale, social media scale, and listening to the *Consultation with Sarah* podcast scale varied statistically by the number of children parents had. Overall, these data show a statistically significant difference in parents with parental knowledge scale $F(4,348)=2.86$, ($p=.023$), and for listening to the *Consultation with Sarah* podcast scale. $F(4,209)= 3.31$, ($p=.012$). However, these data did not reveal a relationship $F(4,348)= 2.004$, ($p=.094$) between parents related to using social media as a parental knowledge tool scale. Figure 7 shows different patterns for the three variables with regard to number of children, following the same formatting as Figure 6.

Figure 7

Parent knowledge, Social Media Usage, and Listening to the Consultation with Sarah Podcast Scales by Number of Children



As displayed in Figure 7, for the parental knowledge scale, the highest reported knowledge was for parents with one child. There was a sharp decline for those with two children, which was similar across three and four children, and then a slight increase for those with five or more children. In other words, those with only one child reported having the most knowledge, followed by those with five or more children. Those with 2-4 children felt they had lower levels of knowledge about parenting. For the podcast scale, the highest reported levels of listening came from those with one child, which was very closely matched by those with two children. However, there was a very steep decline for each additional child thereafter. The social media scale did not significantly differ across number of children. The numbers were fairly steady across different numbers of children, with the exception of a seeming dip at two children for use of social media. However, this dip did not result in a significant difference.

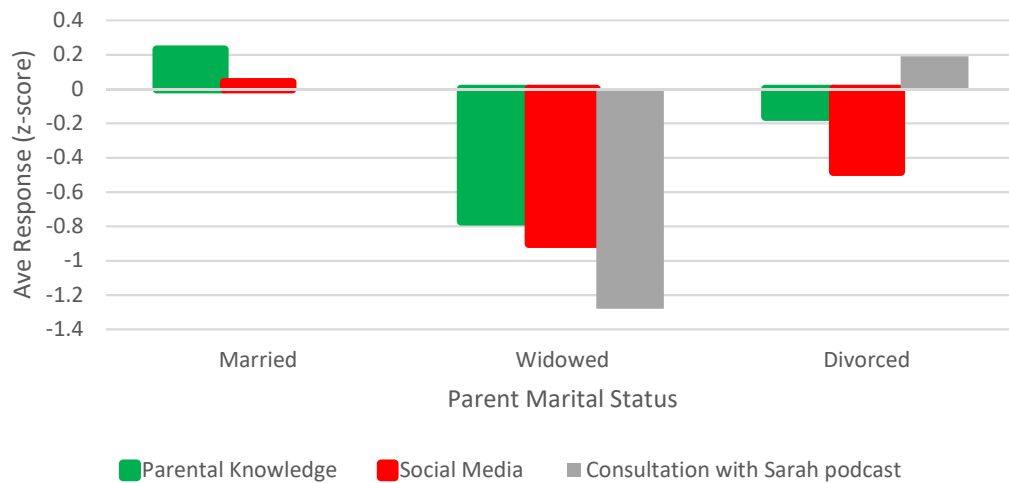
Parents' Marital Status and the Scales

I utilized a one-way ANOVA to determine whether parental knowledge scale, social media scale, and listening to the *Consultation with Sarah* podcast scale varied statistically by marital status. These data showed a statistically significant difference of parents with social media as parental knowledge tool $F(2,350)=5.03$, ($p=.007$). However, parenting knowledge $F(2,350)=2.15$, ($p=.117$) and listening to the *Consultation with Sarah* podcast $F(2,211)=.99$, ($p=.370$) did not reflect a statistically significant difference in the marital status of the respondent as the p -values are above (.05). Figure 8 shows these results, formatted in the same manner as Figure 5. From Figure 8, all three scales the average scores for married and divorced are similar, and the scores for those who are widowed are much lower. However, the difference is only significant for social media.

For this one, those who are married report the highest use of social media as a knowledge tool, those who are widowed report the least, and those who are divorced are in between the two.

Figure 8

Parent Knowledge, Social Media Usage, and Listening to the Consultation with Sarah Podcast Scales by Parents' Marital Status



Parents' Education Level and the Scales

This research sub-question compared the measures of parental knowledge scale, social media scale, and listening to the *Consultation with Sarah* podcast scale to the education level of the parents or caregiver. The results revealed a statistically significant difference in parents with parental knowledge scale $F(5,347)=2.36$, ($p=.039$). However, using social media as parental knowledge tool scale $F(5,347)=1.28$, ($p=.270$) and the

Consultation with Sarah podcast scale $F(5,208)=.42$, ($p=.831$) did not reflect a statistically significant difference in the marital status of the respondent. Figure 9 shows the results of these analysis, formatted in the same manner as Figure 6.

Figure 9

Parent Knowledge, Social Media Usage, and Listening to the Consultation with Sarah Podcast Scales by Parents' Education Level

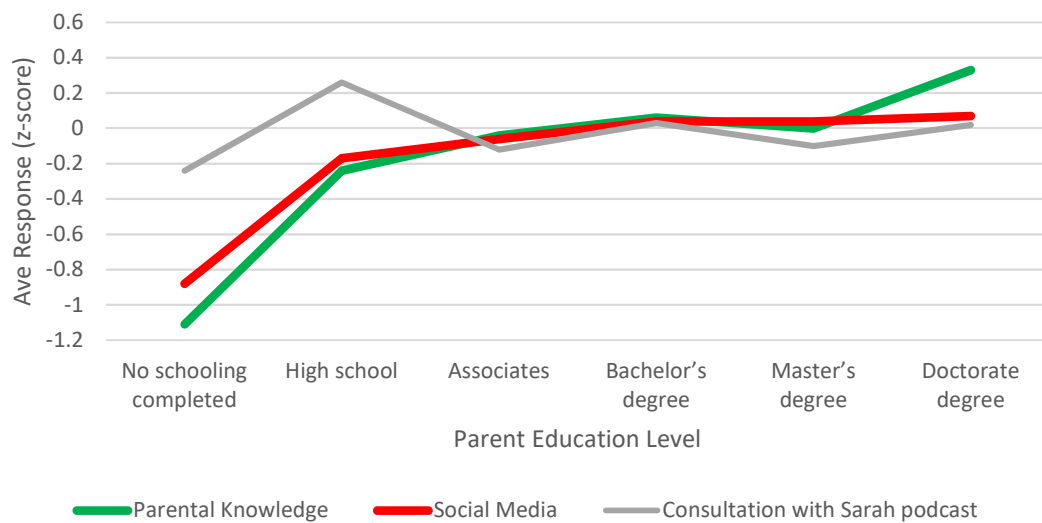


Figure 9 shows that parents with no schooling who completed the survey report much lower levels of knowledge about parenting than the other groups. Those with high school, Associate's, Bachelor's, and Master's degrees report similar knowledge scores, with high school being slightly lower and Bachelor's being slightly higher than the others. Finally, those with a doctorate degree report higher levels of knowledge than all

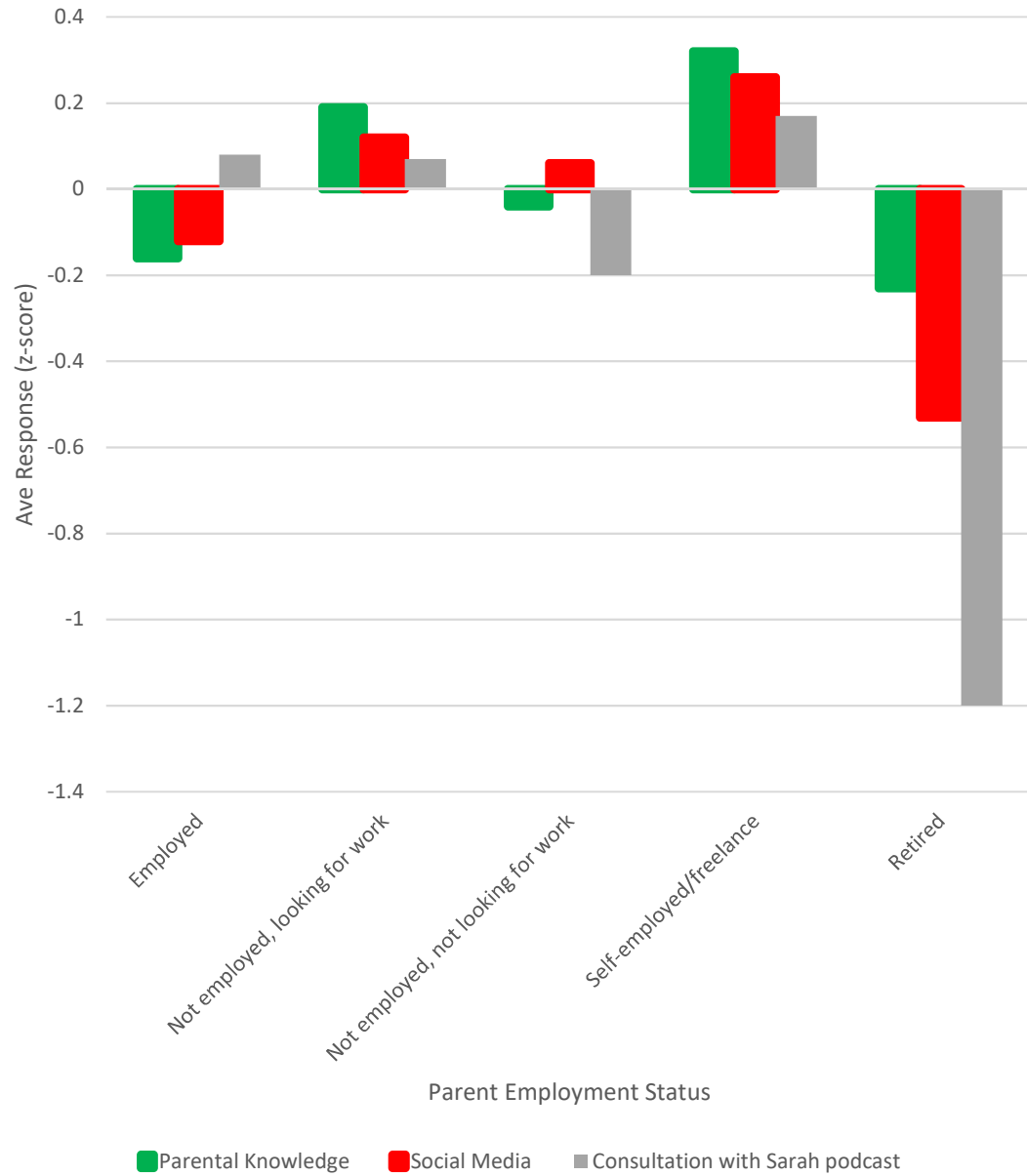
the rest of the education levels. In summary, there is a somewhat positive relationship between reported knowledge and amount of schooling, with the two extremes in schooling being much different from the other middle four schooling levels in reported knowledge.

Parents' Employment Status and the Scales

I utilized a one-way ANOVA to determine if parental knowledge scale, social media scale, and listening to the *Consultation with Sarah* podcast scale varied statistically by employment status. Overall, these data show a statistically significant difference between parents with parental knowledge scale $F(4,348)=2.81$, ($p=.025$), and for using social media scale $F(4,348)=2.59$, ($p=.037$). However, these data did not reveal a relationship $F(4,209)=2.04$, ($p=.090$) with parents who listened to the *Consultation with Sarah* podcast scale. Figure 10 shows these results, formatted in the same manner as Figure 5. Figure 10 shows a similar pattern for both parental knowledge and use of social media. Those who are self-employed/freelance workers have the highest average scores for both knowledge and social media use. Those who are retired have the lowest scores for both. Those who are not employed, both looking for work and not looking for work have similar scores that are just slightly lower than the self-employed/freelance group. Those who are employed have lower scores on both scales than those who are unemployed and those who are self-employed, but higher than those who are retired.

Figure 10

Parent Knowledge, Social Media Usage, and Listening to the Consultation with Sarah Podcast Scales by Parents' Employment Status



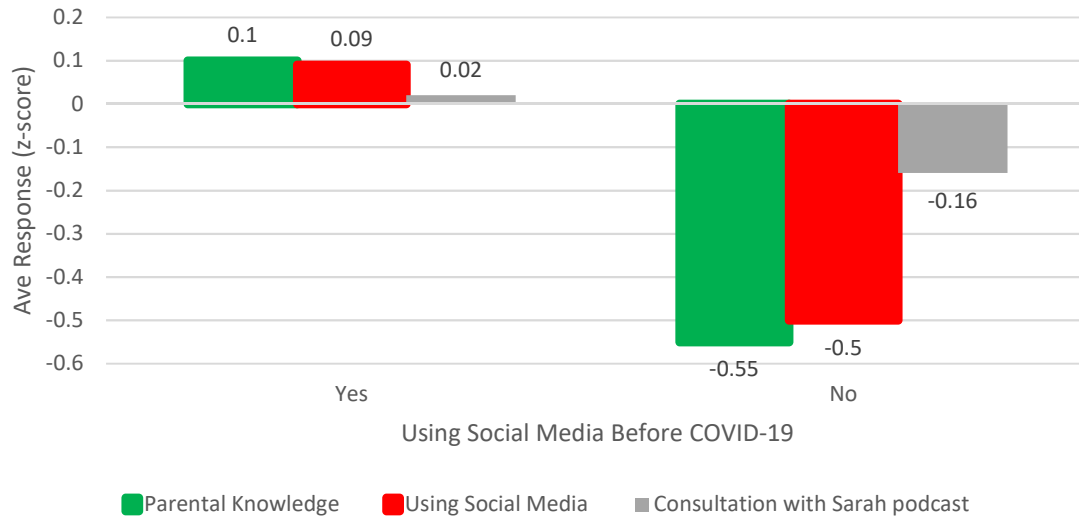
COVID-19 and the Scales

An independent sample t-test was performed to examine the difference between parents who used social media before the COVID-19 pandemic for parental knowledge scale, using social media scale, and the *Consultation with Sarah* podcast scale. Overall, there was a significant difference in the scores for the parents who used social media before the COVID-19 pandemic to seek for parenting knowledge and who did not $t(351)=-4.48, (p = .001)$. For the second scale using social media for parental knowledge, there was a significant difference in the scores for parents who used social media as a parental tool before the COVID-19 pandemic and who did not $t(351)=-4.04, (p = .004)$. However, there was not a significant difference in the scores for parents who listened to the *Consultation with Sarah* podcast and used social media before the COVID-19 pandemic and who did not $t(212)=-.86, (p = .551)$. Figure 11 shows these results, formatted in the same manner as Figure 5.

As shown in Figure 11, the mean differences between those who did versus those who did not use social media before the pandemic with regard to their seeking parenting knowledge, using social media as a parenting knowledge, and listening to the *Consultation with Sarah* podcast z-scores. The parenting knowledge and social media scales have similar scores, while the scores for the *Consultation with Sarah* are much lower. For all the scales, those who did report using social media averaged much higher scores than those who did not report using social media.

Figure 11

Using Social Media Before the COVID-19 Differences in Response to Parent Knowledge, Social Media Usage, and Listening to the Consultation with Sarah Podcast Scales



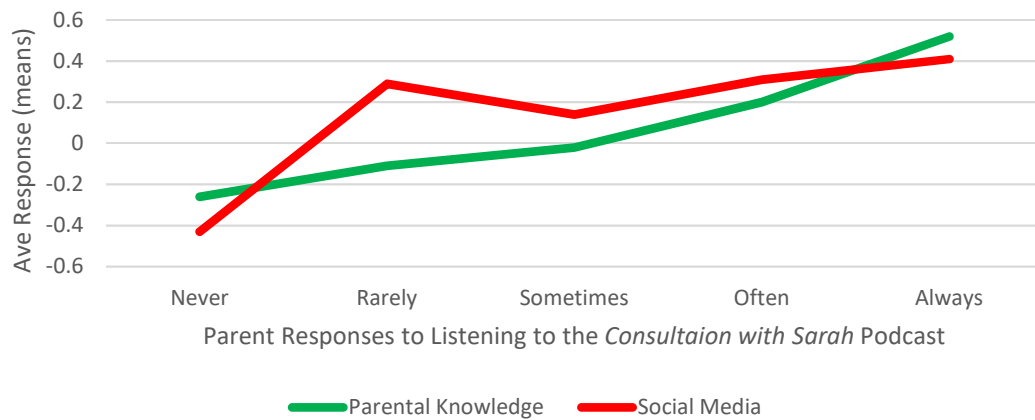
Listening to the *Consultation with Sarah* Podcast and the Scales

This research question examined whether there was a significant difference in parenting knowledge reported by parents and caregivers who listened to the *Consultation with Sarah* podcast and parents who do not listen to the podcast, but did turn to social media as a tool to gather parenting knowledge. This relationship was analyzed using a one-way ANOVA. The analysis shows a statistically significant difference in listening to the *Consultation with Sarah* podcast and parenting knowledge $F(4,348)= 7.64, (p= .000)$, and using social media as parental knowledge tool $F(4,348)= 13.01, (p=.000)$. Figure 12 shows these results, formatted in the same manner as Figure 5. Figure 12 shows that, for knowledge, there is a consistent slow increase from never to always in terms of mean

scores. For social media, there is a sharp increase in score from never to rarely, but then a slight dip and slow increase from sometimes to always.

Figure 12

Differences in Responses to Scales by Listening to the Consultation with Sarah Podcast



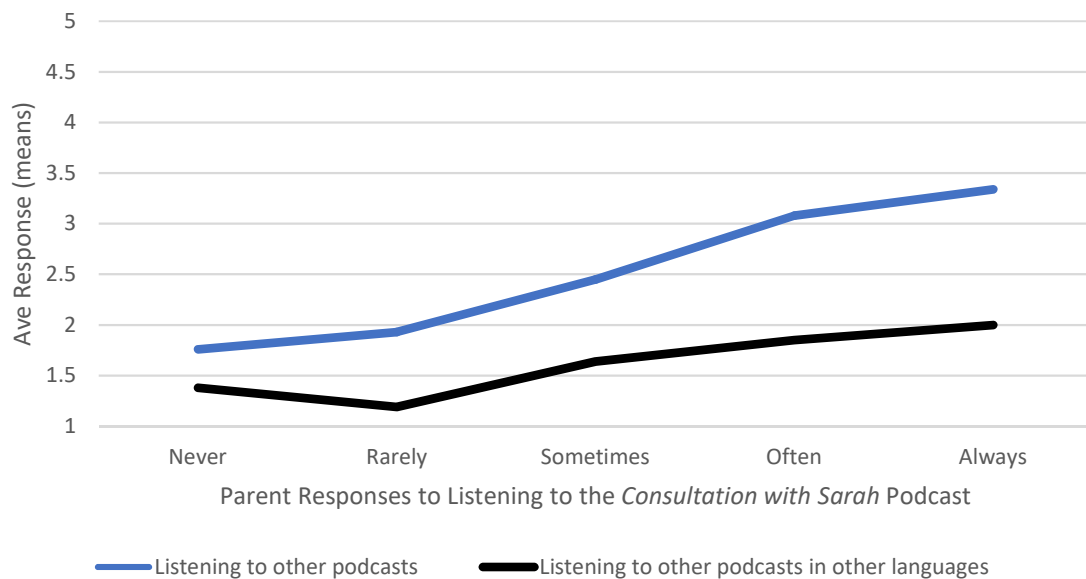
Listening to Other Podcasts

This research sub-question examined whether listening to other podcasts to increase parenting knowledge related to listening to the *Consultation with Sarah* podcast using a one-way ANOVA analysis. Overall, these data show a statistically significant difference of parents who listen to other podcasts $F(4,293)=23.87$, ($p= .000$), and listen to other podcasts in languages other than Arabic $F(4,294)=6.12$, ($p= .000$). Figure 13 shows the differences between parents' responses to listening to the *Consultation with Sarah* podcast for the two dependent variables, with each line showing the average for

each response to listening to other podcasts with a blue line and listening to other podcasts in other languages with a black line. From Figure 13, those who sometimes, often, or always listen to other podcasts and/or listen to other podcasts in other languages report higher parental knowledge than those who never or rarely listen to other podcasts. The difference is greater for those who listen to other podcasts than it is for those who listen to other podcasts in other languages.

Figure 13

Difference in Responses to Listening to Other Podcasts by Listening to the Consultation with Sarah Podcast



Summary of the Quantitative Data Results

The purpose of this study was to assess social media as a source for parents obtaining knowledge about children's development. Analysis of the questionnaire results identified several findings and significant relationships between the variables:.

- The most used sources for obtaining parental knowledge by Saudi parents and caregivers were websites, social media, books, and family.
- The most used social media platforms by Saudi parents and caregivers to gain parental knowledge were Twitter followed by YouTube.
- Male parents report having less knowledge than female parents do.
- Male parents report less use of social media as a knowledge tool than female parents do.
- There was no statistically significant difference in terms of gender with regard to the podcast *Consultation with Sarah*.
- There was a significant difference in perceived parent knowledge, social media, and *Consultation with Sarah* podcast scales based on parent age.
- For all three scales, the highest scores were in the 21-25 age group, with a decline across the subsequent ages, and 46+ having the lowest scores in both.
- There was a significant difference between parents based on number of children for two of the three scales: knowledge and listening to *Consultation with Sarah*.
- The highest perceived knowledge was for parents with one child, followed by those with five or more children.

- The highest levels of podcast listening came from those with one child, followed closely by those with two children.
- Only the social media scale differed significantly by marital status, with those who are married reporting the highest use of social media as a knowledge tool.
- Only the parent knowledge scale differed significantly by parent education, with the two being positively related; no schooling had much lower reported levels than the others.
- Those who are self-employed/freelance workers have the highest average scores for both knowledge and social media use. Those who are retired have the lowest scores for both.
- An independent t-test showed significant differences in both parenting knowledge and use of social media based on whether or not the parent used social media before the COVID-19 pandemic to seek parenting knowledge.
- For both scales, those who did report using social media averaged much higher scores than those who did not report using social media.
- There is a positive relationship between listening to the *Consultation with Sarah* podcast and both reported parenting knowledge and using social media as a parenting knowledge tool.
- Those who more often listen to other podcasts and/or listen to other podcasts in other languages report higher parental knowledge than those who do not usually listen to other podcasts.

Using Social Media for Parental Knowledge Survey: Qualitative Results

Overview of Survey Qualitative Results

Six qualitative questions were added to the survey to understand Saudi parents' and caregivers' reasons behind their use of social media to obtain parental knowledge. In the present study, 309 (87.53%) of survey participants responded to the open-ended questions, but most of the participants did not answer all the open-ended questions. Participants had the option to answer none of the questions, some of the questions, or all of the questions. Table 5 shows the number of the responses given by the parents or caregivers. The qualitative results helped to explain the quantitative findings and better understand the participants' reasonings.

Table 5

Number of the Responses to the Open-Ended Questions

The Questions	Total N	Frequency	Percentage
Why Parents Like Listening to the <i>Consultation with Sarah</i> Podcast	214	129	60%
Why Parents Dislike Listening to the <i>Consultation with Sarah</i> Podcast	214	62	28%
Why Parents Like Using Social Media	353	146	41%
Why Parents Dislike Using Social Media	353	63	17%
List of Other Podcasts	353	53	15%
Other Topics	353	84	23%

Sixty percent of respondents answered the open ended question regarding why parents like listening to the *Consultation with Sarah* podcast. Conversely, only 41% of respondents answered the open ended question about why they like using social media. Fifteen percent of respondents listed other podcasts they listen to, and 23% of participants listed other topics that interested them.

Overview of Survey Qualitative Categories and Themes

Reasons for listening to *Consultation with Sarah* podcast for parental knowledge. Four primary themes were established for this question, and thirteen codes were also generated. Codes, categories, and themes can be found in **Appendix E**.

Realistic problems and effective solutions are addressed. The first primary theme that was generated for this question was that realistic problems are discussed and effective solutions are addressed. Initially, problems being addressed and solutions were two separate categories, but they were combined into one after all the data analysis was completed. Prior to the themes, the data were organized and prepared, and five codes, including realistic, reality/realism, solve the problem, solutions, and effective change, were established. One participant stated the reason they listened was because the podcast solves realistic problems. Another reason participants listened to the podcast was because it provided effective solutions to problems they might face in parenting. One participant stated, “She is wonderful in simplifying and solving problems. She also has a meaningful and effective manner in dealing with children or adolescents.” Participants felt that a benefit of the podcast was that the host addressed real problems that many people face in parenting, and that she provided solutions that the typical person could truly implement.

Host is accessible and unpretentious. The second theme generated was the host is accessible and unpretentious (in both language and meaning). Participants noted that the style of speech used and the advice delivered in the podcast were easy to understand and were practical rather than theoretical. The initial codes that led to this theme included simplicity, simple, easy, and speech. One participant stated, “the simplicity of the style and the ease of understanding the meaning without stereotyping or theorizing.” Another wrote about “Dr. Sarah’s straightforward and easy style of speech.”

Assists with proper upbringing and confirms beliefs. The third theme that was established for the first question was assists with proper upbringing and confirming beliefs they already held. Several participants mentioned that the podcast assisted with proper upbringing. These participants seemed to feel that the podcast host was reaffirming beliefs they already held about child rearing, and that listening helped them to feel more confident that their previously held beliefs were correct. The codes that were initially established to generate this theme included raise child, upbringing, open, and popular. One parent said, “I have a stubborn child who is difficult for me to deal with, so I like to watch podcasts to help me raise my child.” Another parent stated, “those around me blame me for the manner of my upbringing, so sometimes I feel guilty, but following her episodes takes away this feeling from me and proves that my view of upbringing my children is correct.”

Dr. Sarah’s qualifications allow her to convey advanced skills and trustworthy information. The fourth and final theme that was established was that Dr. Sarah’s qualifications allowed her to convey advanced skills and trustworthy information. After organizing and assessing the data, three codes emerged, which included skills,

qualification, and expertise. Some participants mentioned that the podcast host's expertise in the area of early childhood gave her the credentials and knowledge to convey trustworthy information and advanced skills that they might not hear or receive elsewhere. One participant stated, "I also gain some advanced skill to enable me to be ready to solve my children's issues even before they reach them and thus I will be ready to solve it." Another stated, "the solutions are practical, not theoretical, and Dr. Sarah has long and extensive knowledge and expertise in raising children, so I trust in what she presents." This specific theme, regarding Dr. Sarah's qualifications, was least represented in the responses.

Reasons for not having enjoyed listening to *Consultation with Sarah* podcast for parental knowledge. After organizing and assessing the data, twelve codes were generated for this question. These codes ultimately led to five themes, which reflected the participants' responses, and they can be found in **Appendix E**.

Style and delivery of speech. The first theme which emerged was style and delivery of speech. Some of the participants were not fond of the delivery method utilized in the podcast. Though more people cited her style of speech in the first part of question one as positive, her style does not appeal to everyone. The initial codes which were established were style, loud/sharp, and speaking. One participant stated, "the way of speaking and the style of presentation does not suit my personality." Another responded, "I have only listened to two episodes only. May God reward her for her efforts and bless her, but I did not like the loudness of her voice and the use of generalization."

Length of podcast. The next theme had to do with the length of the podcast. The theme that was generated was that it can be too long, and people don't have enough time

to listen. Some participants stated that episodes were too long, others say that they did not have time to listen, and some cited both as reasons for not enjoying the podcast. Two codes were initially established, which were long/length and time. Regarding reasons for not listening to the podcast, one participant stated, “The length of the episode and the complexity of the topics in one episode.” Another participant responded, “Some topics sometimes take too much time. I prefer the brief talk.” Still another respondent spoke about other obligations, which make listening to the podcast difficult. “I do not have enough time. I take care of my children without having a housekeeper at my home. I also have other responsibilities such as cooking and cleaning that do not make me have time to follow up podcasts.”

Topics not always relevant. The third theme that was generated was the topics are not always relevant to everyone. The initial codes that were established were relevance, different, and not a problem. One participant stated, “Some episodes pertain to different age groups from my children's stage.” Another participant stated, “most of the questions were not a problem for me.”

Accessing podcast can be a challenge. The next theme was in regard to accessing the podcast and searching for relevant information. The theme that was established was accessing the podcast can be a challenge, and the initial codes were know/known and searching. One participant stated, “I don't know how to find it. By chance, I listened to one episode and I liked it.” Another respondent spoke about the challenges they run into with searching for content stating, “Laziness in searching for the content she offers” as their reason for not listening to the podcast.

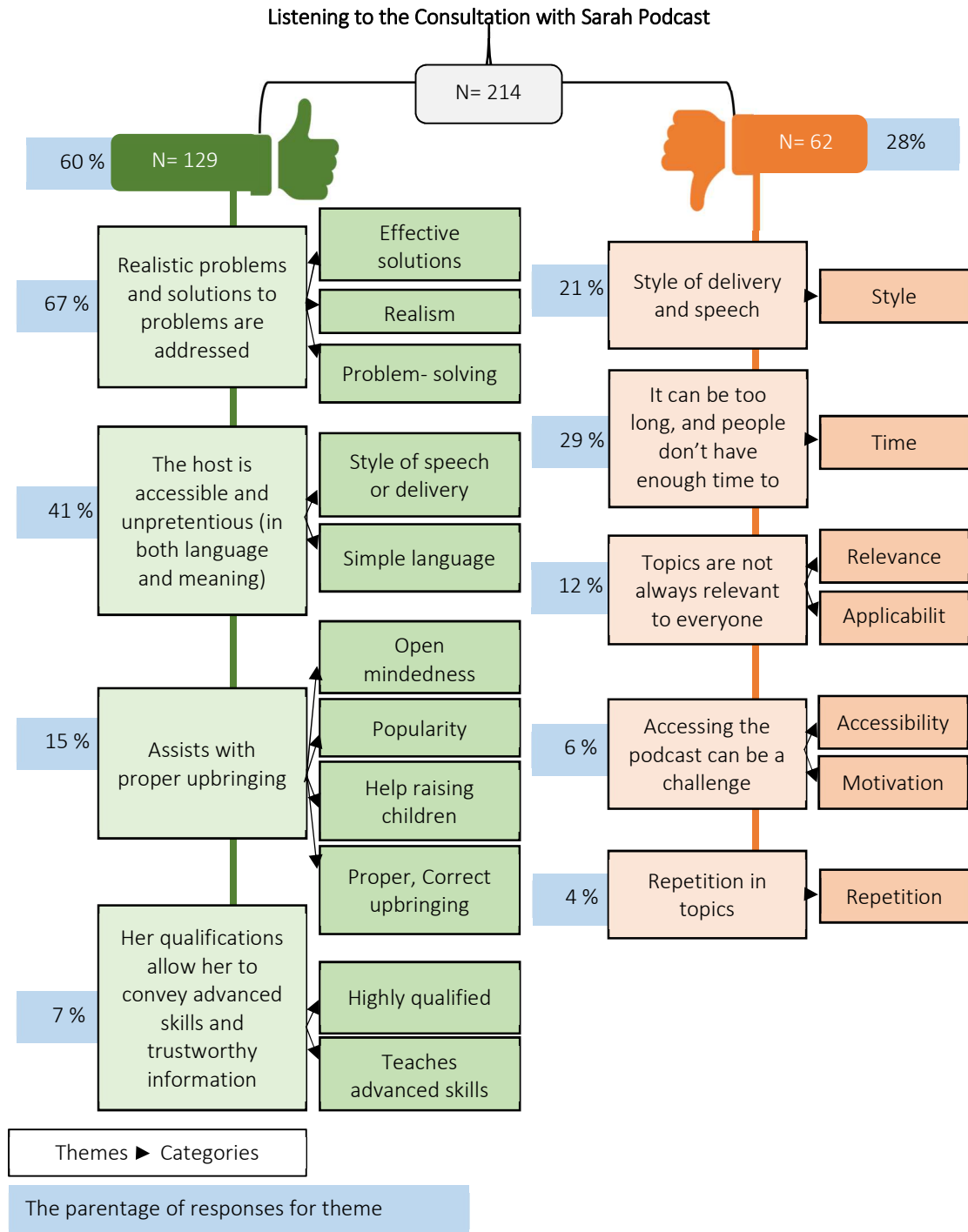
Podcasts can be repetitive. The final theme was concerning repetition. It seems that some of the participants felt the podcasts were repetitive. The codes, which were initially produced were recurring and repetitive. One participant stated, “some problems are sometimes recurring.” Another stated, “in the past, I sent consultations that I thought were important and interested other mothers, but they were not discussed or responded to. I can say that some topics are sometimes repeated; I have already listened to all the episodes.” This specific theme, regarding repetition in topics, was least represented in the responses. Figure 14 demonstrates why Saudi parents and caregivers reported whether or not they preferred listening to the *Consultation with Sarah* podcast with the percentage of responses and as by the emergent themes.

Reasons for using social media in general for parental knowledge. Twelve initial codes were established for this question. These codes ultimately led to the creation of four themes, which summarized the participants’ responses.

Ease of accessing information. The first established theme was the ease of accessing information quickly and in a concise form, which evolved after generating the codes of easy access, quick/fast/simple, and accessible. The participants liked how easy it was to access social media. One participant stated social media was “easily accessible anywhere and anytime.” Another respondent, when speaking about why they use social media, stated “so infinitely much information that you can choose the right for you without financial losses. In addition, you have the ability to control time.”

Figure 14

Reasons for Like and Dislike Listening to the Consultation with Sarah Podcast



Access to experts and specialists, The next theme was access to experts and specialists. The participants liked how they could speak with experts, or specialists, regarding various topics. One participant stated, “Easily discussing with specialists and parents about an educational topic.” Another stated, “I like to follow child-rearing specialists because they design ways and means to help raise the child through their accounts”. In response to reasons for using social media for parental knowledge, another respondent replied, “as it enriches our information and facilitates access to specialists.”

Obtaining information and benefitting from solutions to problems, The third theme, explaining participants' reasons for using social media for parenting knowledge, was obtaining information and benefitting from solutions to problems. The initial codes which led to this theme included information, education/knowledge, solutions/effective/benefit, and problems. It seems participants liked using social media to learn new information and find solutions to their problems. One respondent asserted their reason for using social media was “to educate myself.” One participant stated, “ease of access to information in addition to sharing and finding solutions.” Another reported, “it is always better to have a previous idea of any possible problems that may occur in the future.”

Way to share ideas and receive practical advice. The final codes regarding reasons for using social media in general for parental knowledge were sharing/others/people, which led to the theme stating it is a way to share their own ideas and experiences and receive practical advice. Participants seemed to like how social media gave them the opportunity to share their ideas with others. One participant stated:

You may listen to information from several people and each of them has his own vision and point of view. I can also select what is useful and can be applied, and sometimes there are new ways (that is, newly discovered) of which you may hear for the first time and it may be someone who introduced you to it. This one may be thousands of miles away from you, but with the social media, it is delivered to you to listen to it for the first time.

Other responses included, “sharing ideas is good for increasing knowledge” and “the easiest way to share ideas with others.”

Reasons for not using social media in general for parental knowledge. Eight codes and three themes were generated from this question, which helped to illustrate the participants’ responses. Some of the responses were somewhat contradictory toward previous statements made by the participants.

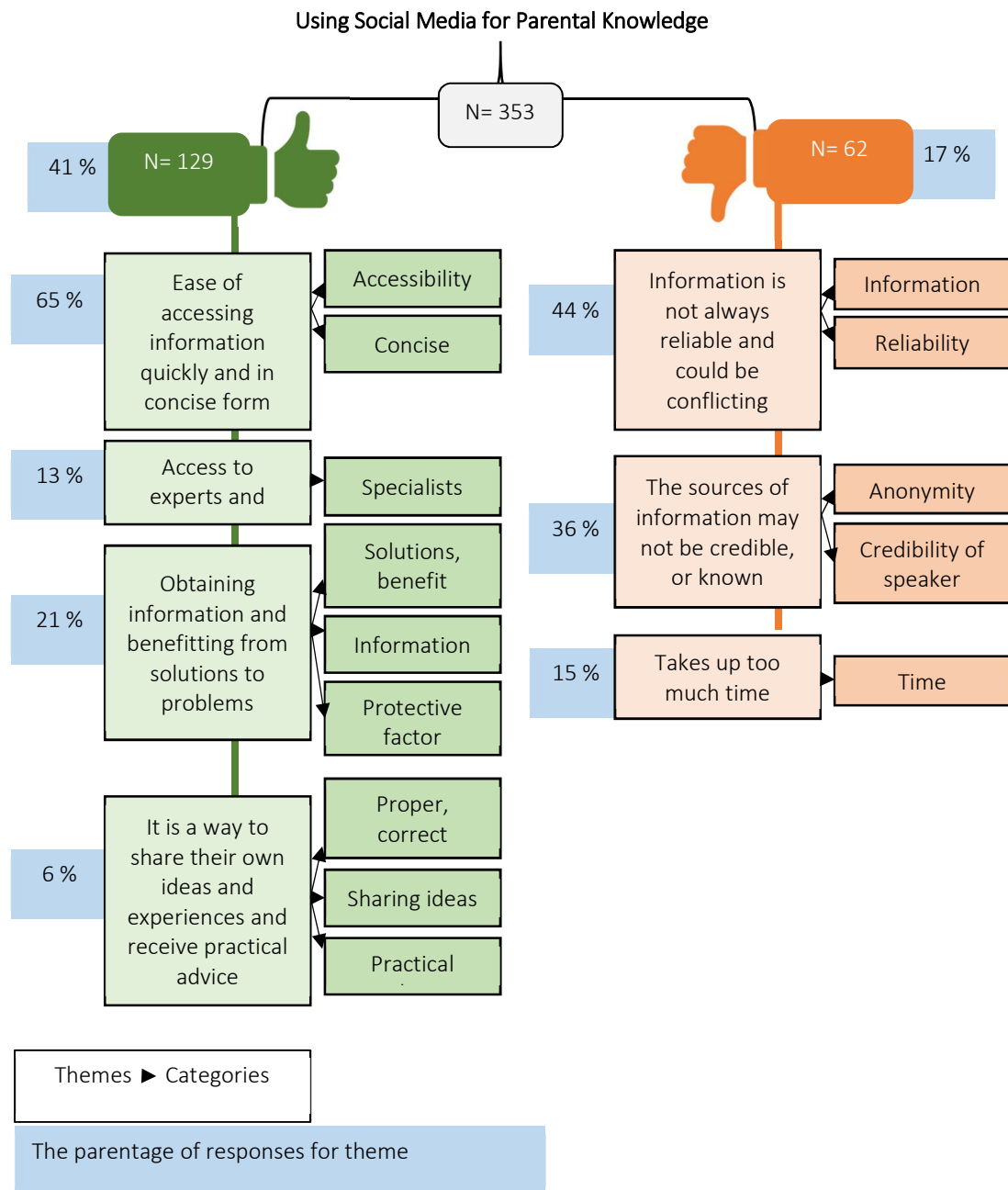
Information is not always reliable and can be conflicting. The first set of codes, reliable/reliability, information, reality, and conflicting/contradiction, had to do with the reliability of the information on social media. The theme that was ultimately created from these codes was information is not always reliable and could be conflicting. Conversely, some participants stated information as one of the reasons they use social media for parenting knowledge, so clearly there are conflicting opinions on this matter. For this question, however, some participants seemed to feel that the information obtained from social media is not always reliable and could also be conflicting. One participant stated, “some information is incorrect.” Another stated, “the information may not be completely reliable.” One participant expressed their concerns that the information presented did not pertain to reality, stating “a lot of people talk about education in an ideal way or in a way which is far from reality, untested or unclear.” Yet another talked about conflicting information, stating “contradiction of opinions.”

Sources of information not credible or clear. While some participants were concerned about the information obtained from social media, the next theme was that the sources of information may not be credible, or clear. The codes that were initially generated after the data was sorted and reviewed were credible/credibility, specialists, and anonymous/reference/background. One participant stated, “Sometimes there is no reliable reference or reference for those who talk about education. Everyone talks about education and advice from his/her point of view or his/her personal experience, and some of them may be wrong. Therefore, the recipient who wants to acquire knowledge must be extremely aware of that.” Another stated, “I don't trust anonymous sources.” Still another expressed their concerns, stating “Not everyone who gives information about education and upbringing is a specialist. Some of them do not give education lessons or even have a certificate, but they talk about raising children and methods of punishment, while they do not know anything about children.”

Takes up too much time. The final theme for this question on reasons for not using social media, takes up too much time, transpired from the code of time. Some participants did not like their use of time on social media. One participant stated, “One of the main reasons I don't like about using social media is time elapses quickly without realizing that.” Another stated social media was “A waste of time.” Another participant expressed their feelings, stating “I often don't have time to read about this kind of knowledge.” Figure 15 demonstrates why Saudi parents and caregivers reported whether or not they preferred using social media for parental knowledge.

Figure 15

Reasons for Like and Dislike Using Social Media for Parental Knowledge



Other list of podcasts’ titles that help to increase parental knowledge. The full list of podcast titles in Arabic can be found in **Appendix E**, but there are several which were mentioned multiple times and are worth mentioning, such as Dr. Heba Hariri, which was mentioned 23 times, as well as the *Consultation with Sarah*, which was mentioned 14 times, Saturday Couch, which was mentioned three times, and Podcast parenting and awareness, which was mentioned twice. Parenting Beyond and Life Kit: Parenting were two podcasts mentioned, which are in the English language. Additionally, several Twitter accounts, namely Dr. Mustafa AboSaad and Maeen (by Dr. Jasem Almotua), were both mentioned several times. Finally, one SoundCloud, which was Qyadiya, was mentioned.

Other concerns about parenting or child-rearing that Saudi parents would like the parenting specialist to discuss. For this question, a list of codes was created for each answer, as well as a count for the frequency of the code appearing in the data. Then I went back and entered the most popular ones into the chart. The full list of codes can be found in **Appendix E**. Fourteen codes and four themes were developed for this question, based on the participants’ data.

The first set of codes were celebrities, electronic devices, and social media, which led to the theme of concern about influences from social media via electronic devices. The participants would like the parenting specialist to discuss potential influences, which could affect them. One participant stated, “Children are influenced by social media celebrities and try to imitate them.” Another expressed they would like to discuss “Ways to protect the child from electronic games and websites.” Yet another stated they would like to learn more about “The danger of children being affected by inappropriate things that they may see through social media programs.”

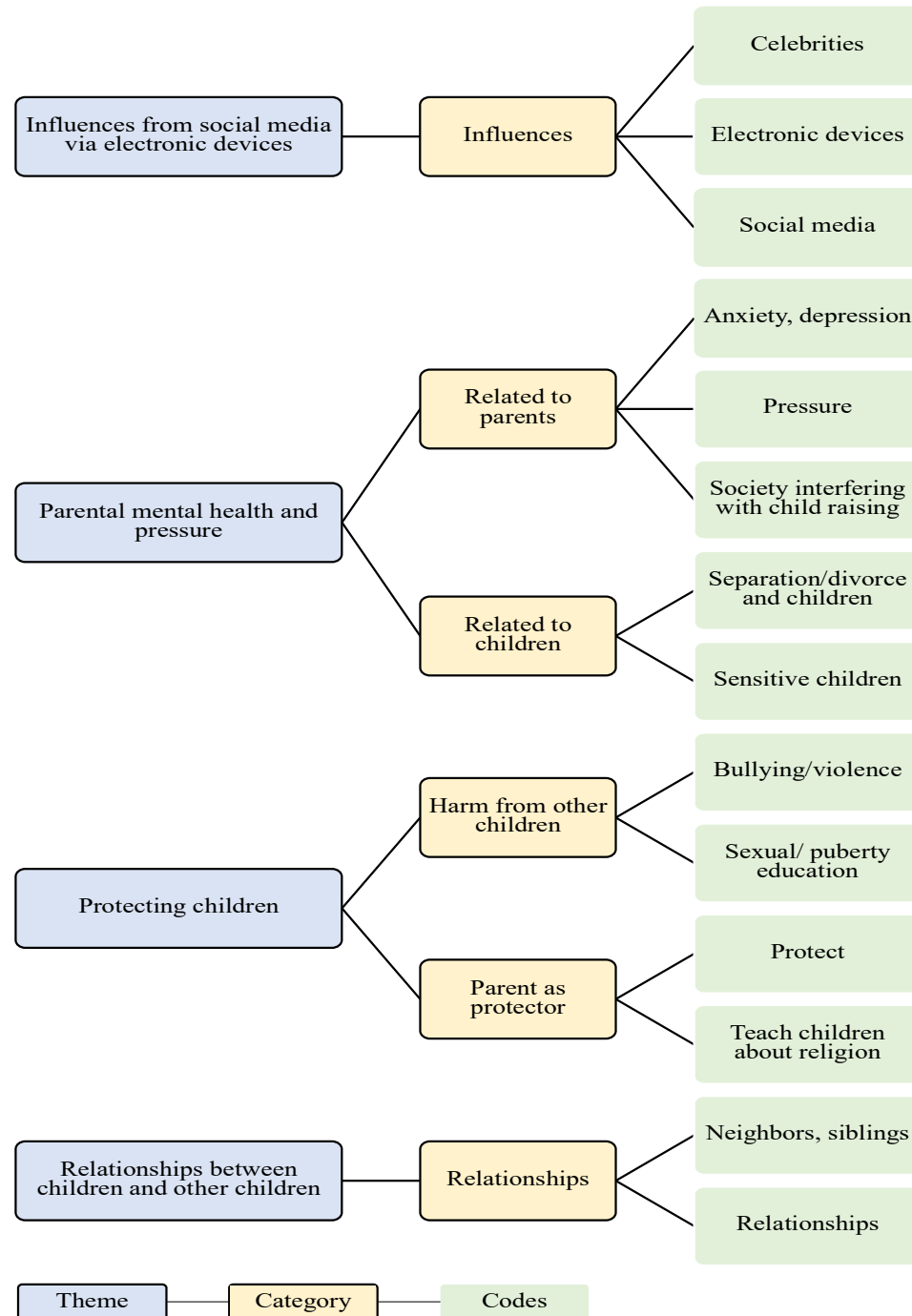
The next codes which emerged were anxiety, depression, pressure, and society interfering with child raising which generated the theme concern about mental health and pressure on parents and children. Participants would like to learn more about mental health issues, such as anxiety. Respondents also commented on the pressure that exists with parenting, stating “The ambition to reach the ideal in raising children may cause great pressure on parents because their circumstances differ from those which they see in the experiences of parents presented to them in the media.” It seems participants would like to learn more about this, as well as psychology to do with parenting.” Further, other participants were concerned about how to deal with society interfering with child raising. One parent stated: “The interference of parents and society in raising your son make your task a difficult one.” In addition, participants would like to learn how to deal with sensitive children and parenting after parents’ separation or divorce. For example, one parent stated: “Dealing with the son in divorce cases.”

Participants also had concerns about protecting their children, which was the next theme. The codes that were generated were bullying, educate their children about sexuality and puberty, and parent as a protector. One parent stated, “How can I protect him from outside society, bullying, violence and all the things that could hurt him/her?” Another expressed they would like to learn more about “Child protection from harassment and bullying - How can I protect my child from toxic thoughts, bad company and bad people who want to turn children against their parents.” Few parents were concerned about how to protect their children by teaching them about religion. One parent stated: “Developing the religious conscience in children and parents is the most basic necessities of life.”

The final topic parents wanted to learn more about has to do with relationships. The codes that emerged were neighbors, siblings, and relationships, and the theme that transpired was concern about relationships between children and other children. It seems parents want their children to behave well and have good relationships with their family members and peers. One parent stated they would like to learn more about “The child's behavior with his brothers and neighbors.” Another parent questioned, “How can the relationship between children be improved and how can they be accustomed to honesty?” Figure 16 displays the themes, categories, and codes for the concerns reported by Saudi parents and caregivers about parenting and child-rearing that they would like parenting specialists to discuss.

Figure 16

Themes and Codes for other Concerns about Parenting or Child-Rearing Saudi Parents would like Parenting Specialist to Discuss



CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to assess how social media was used by parents to obtain knowledge about children's development, and to consider the factors that influence the use of social media to acquire knowledge on parenting. Investigating social media as a source for obtaining parental knowledge, as well as exploring which factors influence the use of social media for obtaining knowledge on parenting, were studied with these specific research questions:

- Which sources do Saudi parents and caregivers perceive to be most beneficial for learning about parenting?
- What factors of Saudi parents and caregivers (gender, age, number of children, marital status, education, and employment status) are related to knowledge seeking behavior, using social media platforms, and listening to the *Consultation with Sarah* podcast that is exhibited among Saudi parents and caregivers?
- Is there a difference reported by Saudi parents and caregivers who use social media platforms for parenting knowledge before the COVID-19 pandemic?
- Are there differences in parenting knowledge and using social media to gain parental knowledge reported by Saudi parents and caregivers who listen to the podcast and parents who do not listen to the podcast?
- Are there differences regarding the use of other social media outlets for parenting advice, either in their native or other languages as reported by Saudi

parents and caregivers who listen to the *Consultation with Sarah* podcast and those who do not?

To answer these questions, a digital survey was offered via *Qualtrics* to 353 Saudi Arabian parents that met the criteria. The parents accessed the survey via several social media apps, including Twitter, WhatsApp, and Telegram. The purpose of this chapter is to provide a summary of the findings, assess the findings as they relate to previous literature on the topic, and discuss potential implications. Limitations and directions for future research will also be discussed.

Sources that Saudi Caregivers Perceive to be Most Beneficial for Learning about Parenting

The first research question regarding the sources Saudi parents and caregivers perceive as most beneficial revealed websites and social media were the two most common sources parents utilized to obtain parenting information. These sources were followed by books, friends, and teachers. Additionally, the sub-question regarding specific social media sources parents used for parenting knowledge indicated parents used YouTube and Twitter the most, followed by Instagram, Snapchat, WhatsApp, Telegram, Podcast, and TikTok. In contrast, the fewest number of parents reported they used Facebook, Clubhouse, or other social media outlets for parenting information. Regarding specific podcasts Saudi parents listened to, the qualitative question inquiring about podcast titles parents used to increase parental knowledge revealed the primary podcasts included a program offered by Dr. Heba Hariri and the *Consultation with Sarah* podcast.

The findings regarding parents listening to a program by Dr. Hariri and *Consultation with Sarah* suggested that parents want information from reliable sources, as both of these podcasters have doctorates. The findings regarding the sources utilized indicate most participating parents in the study are seeking out parenting information online, as opposed to reading books or consulting with friends or teachers. However, they are still looking to learn from other parents' experiences. Using social media allows them to read what other parents are posting, respond, and engage in dialogue online. The Social Learning Theory, which was one of the guiding theories in the current research, may help to explain these results. Bandura's (1977) theory emphasized the importance of listening to others' experiences as a source of knowledge and learning. In today's society such information and perspectives are easily accessible through podcasts and learning about parental experiences and advice through social media. Eid et al. (2017) and Williams (2017) discussed how parents can benefit from this social interaction, as parenting ideas can be discussed, and parents with similar experiences can share their personal stories and elaborate on discussions. For example, if a parenting expert tweets about parenting advice, the readers can apply the knowledge and add their own experiences. Bronfenbrenner's (2005) ecological systems theory also helps to explain these findings, as the theory asserts that children and parents are influenced by their environment, interactions between them, and relationships, that may not involve the children, but indirectly affect them. This is true of social media, as these interactions do not necessarily directly involve children, but parents' acquired knowledge and the resultant parenting actions do affect them. The results of this research substantiated this

does take place in Saudi Arabia, as Twitter was one of the social media sources most utilized by parents seeking parenting knowledge.

Regarding previous literature on this topic, there was a variance. Some previous findings align with this research, stating that the internet and social media were highly utilized sources of parenting information (Lupton & Pedersen, 2016). However, other previous findings suggest books and family members were parents' primary sources of parenting information (Al-Aghar Group, 2014; Ateah, 2003; Berkule-Silberman et al., 2010; Radey & Randolph, 2009). Regarding specific social media outlets utilized, the Saudi Center for Opinion Polling (2022) noted that WhatsApp, Snapchat, and Twitter dominated and were the most used among Saudi. However, Setyastuti et al. (2019) found WhatsApp, Instagram, and Facebook were the most highly utilized in Indonesia. The reason for the discrepancy between general sources of information parents seek on parenting may be because of the different geographical area and the date of the published research, as the internet and social media have increased significantly in recent years. Furthermore, the discrepancy between general parental knowledge sources could be due to differences in cultural contexts.

Lupton and Pederson's (2016) findings on the value of apps for pregnant mothers seeking wisdom suggests parents are utilizing online sources, while data from Al-Aghar Group (2014), Ateah (2003), Berkule-Silberman et al. (2010), and Radey and Randolph (2009) are more dated, suggesting the use of books and conversations with families as the most prevalent source of parenting information. This can be confirmed by the findings of both Al-Aghar Group (2014) and Ateah (2003), which only offered other parents, books, television, classes, magazines, and experience as options for parental information

sources. The internet and social media were not offered as a choice with Ateah's (2003) research, though they were mentioned as sources of parental knowledge in Al-Aghar Group's (2014) research.

Qualitative findings from this study also revealed several reasons Saudi parents and caregivers perceive as their reasons for using social media, including the ease of accessing information quickly and in a concise form. Saudi parents and caregivers also stated they used social media because it offers access to experts and specialists. The next reason Saudi parents and caregivers provided for using social media was obtaining knowledge and benefitting from solutions to problems. Finally, Saudi parents or caregivers reported using social media because it was a way to share their own ideas and experiences and receive practical advice. Also, the Saudi parents and caregivers have suggested topics that they want experts and specialists to discuss in more detail. These topics related to parenting include influences from social media, parental mental health, protecting children, and relationships between children.

As reported by the Saudi parents and caregivers, it seems they want to be able to access information from specialists quickly and easily, which will help them resolve their parenting problems without needing to leave their house. By following the experts and specialists, parents can turn to social media platforms to recognize credible information (Kaya, 2020). Furthermore, they are able to collaborate with others, giving and receiving practical information, again aligning with Bandura's (1977) Social learning theory, which suggests we learn from social interactions with those around us.

Duggan et al. (2015) discussed how parents used social media to collaborate, encourage one another, and answer parenting questions asked by others. In addition,

Drouin et al. (2020) indicated that parents used social media to get social support during COVID-19. Moon et al. (2019) affirmed these findings, stating parents used social media as evidence-based platforms to learn more about their children's health. Therefore, social media enabled parents to obtain information and share information in a social, yet virtual, setting. Moreover, The Saudi Center for Opinion Polling (2022) indicated positive effects that included eased communication and exchange of information, self-learning, and access to information.

Regarding reasons for not using social media for parenting knowledge, several themes emerged. The first theme was that information is not always reliable and could be conflicting. The second theme was that information may not be credible, or clear. The final theme that emerged for reasons why parents or caregivers do not use social media was that it takes up too much time. It is both interesting yet conflicting that participants stated they perceived information as not always credible. Participants' reasons for using social media were that they could obtain information from specialists. However, when providing reasons for not using social media, participants stated the information may not be credible or is not always reliable. It seems there is a variance in the type of information parents or caregivers are receiving. This emphasizes the importance of ensuring information is from reliable sources and transparencies in the source of the information. While social media allows parents to interact and collaborate on parenting ideas, it is also important for parents to feel confident knowing the information they received is valid and helpful. This is substantiated by the UGT, which also helped to shape this research. This theory asserts that parents are active users of information, suggesting the social media information they choose to read is their personal choice

(Blumer & Katz, 1974). Therefore, parents' discretion is necessary to ensure they are accessing valid and reliable advice. Social media taking up too much time was a resounding response, which is not surprising. There is so much information at one's disposal with social media, it is sometimes difficult to stay focused and obtain information quickly. This aligns with previous findings. Spoth and Redmond (1995) found children consume parents' time, making it difficult to seek parenting information, especially after one has multiple children and they become involved in school and activities. In addition, the Saudi Center for Opinion Polling (2022) indicated negative effects of social media usage, including time wastage, isolation, and misinformation.

Saudi parents and caregivers are eager to learn more about the suggested topics. As many studies indicate, social media platforms help parents learn and gain knowledge about how to raise their children (Al-Aghar Group, 2014; Eid et al., 2017; Lupton & Pedersen, 2016; & Williams, 2017). The contribution of the specialists regarding enriching parenting content on the Internet and social media platforms may help raise the level of knowledge of parents and caregivers. As suggested by Drouin et al. (2020) and Kaya (2020), social media users turned to this outlet as a means of social support and to seek information.

Factors Related to Knowledge Seeking Behavior, Using Social Media Platforms, and Listening to the *Consultation With Sarah* Podcast

Variables, such as gender, age, number of children, marital status, education, and employment status, were also considered to further explain parents' knowledge seeking behaviors. Gender was assessed initially, and the results indicated there was a gender difference with parental knowledge and use of social media, and females were both more

likely to seek knowledge and more likely to use social media than males. There was no gender difference regarding parents listening to the *Consultation with Sarah* podcast. The reason for females being higher in two of the three areas assessed may go back to the culture in Saudi Arabia, as culture is an influencing factor in parents' use of social media (Askool, 2012). Women are more likely to care for children, and while they previously did not have much decision-making power, that is changing with the shift in women's education level (Al-Khraif et al., 2017). Since women are likely caring for the children and now have more decision-making power, they may be seeking out information online and on social media to obtain parenting knowledge.

These findings align with most of the previous literatures, which suggests women are more active than males in communicating and interacting on social media (Duggan et al., 2015; The Saudi Center for Opinion Polling, 2022). There is a significant amount of research assessing mother's use of social media (AlKlayb et al., 2017; Moon et al., 2019; Setyastuti et al., 2019) although most of research did not study the relationship between males and females, but the published research merely suggested that women are using social media for parenting advice. Most of the research solely focusing on mothers' use of social media also substantiates the results of this study, suggesting females are more likely than males to seek knowledge and use social media for parenting knowledge.

Regarding the *Consultation with Sarah* question, although the results did not align with most of the previous research, Bornstein et al. (2010) found no difference in gender in terms of parenting knowledge. This report supports the research finding that there is no gender difference; males and females had no differences in listening to the *Consultation with Sarah* podcast. However, there is a variation in the use of social media

between males and females, Duggan et al. (2015) and the Saudi Center for Opinion Polling (2022) stated females were more interactive and utilized different social media platforms.

Regarding the age of parents, the results of this study indicated a statistically significant difference in all areas, with parents aged 30 to 35 years reporting the highest average level in parental knowledge, parents aged 26 to 30 years reporting the highest average of social media use, and parents aged 21 to 25 years reporting the highest average level of listening to the *Consultation with Sarah* podcast. From these results, it seems older parents may have more parental knowledge than their younger peers, while parents in a younger age group may seem to use social media more. Finally, the *Consultation with Sarah* podcast seems to draw a younger group of parents. It seems possible that younger parents are more educated on how to use social media, and it is also possible parents in the youngest group of 21 to 25 may have heard about the *Consultation with Sarah* podcast during their college studies. Conversely, older parents may not be aware of the podcast.

These results aligned with findings by Bornstein et al. (2010), which indicated the mother's age is a contributing factor to their parenting knowledge. Specifically, Bornstein et al. (2010) studied differences in parental knowledge for mothers aged 15-47 and concluded adult mothers, with a mean age of 28.63 scored higher than adolescent mothers with a mean of 19.84 in their parenting knowledge. Moreover, Radey and Randolph (2009), found that younger participants were more likely to use the internet for parenting information. However, they did not break down the age groups like the current research or specify knowledge versus social media use and a specific podcast.

Furthermore, The Saudi Center for Opinion Polling (2022) found older users utilize WhatsApp as compared to younger parents who use Snapchat and TikTok. This literature supports the findings from this study.

Parents' number of children was the next variable, and the results suggested parents or caregivers, who take care of one child reported the highest average level in parental knowledge, although the results were not statistically significantly different from parents who take care of five or more children. Regarding listening to the *Consultation with Sarah* podcast, also parents or caregivers who took care of one child reported the highest average level, and there was also no statistically significant difference versus parents who took care of two or three children. Therefore, it does not seem that having more children makes parents more knowledgeable at parenting. It also does not seem that having only one child gives parents more time to listen to podcasts, as there was not a statistically significant difference. However, the qualitative analysis did reveal time was an impediment. Time was given as a reason for not using social media and not listening to the *Consultation with Sarah* podcast. Therefore, it is possible that regardless of the number of children parents have, time is a limiting factor, even with one child. That is, having one child or numerous children might not make a difference.

Moreover, these results also align with the findings from the Bornstein et al. (2010) study, which indicated that parental knowledge of mothers improved with the birth of their second child. Thus, parents may use their own previous experiences to navigate how to raise their children. When the participants were asked about the resources they used for parenting knowledge, some parents mentioned personal experience. Although, these results do not align with research by Spoth and Redmond

(1995) who found the number of children presented a barrier to parents' ability to seek out parental knowledge, it could be argued that such information is easily accessible in today's society.

Regarding marital status, the findings suggested there is a difference in the use of social media to obtain parenting knowledge, although there is not a statistically significant difference with parenting knowledge or listening to the *Consultation with Sarah* podcast. It seems possible that married couples have more time to seek out parenting information on social media, since they have shared responsibilities. However, there is not a difference in their reported knowledge level or time spent listening to the *Consultation with Sarah* podcast.

These findings do not align with results published by Radey and Randolph (2009), which indicated unmarried parents were more likely to seek parenting information on the internet. However, Radey and Randolph's (2009) findings also reported books and family members were the most prevalent sources of parenting information, so it is possible that the difference is merely due to the results being older, given the rise in social media in recent years.

Regarding education, there was only a statistically significant difference regarding parental knowledge, as parents who held a doctorate degree reported higher levels of parental knowledge than parents or caregivers with less education. This finding is not surprising, as education often yields knowledge and understanding on many topics. However, there was not a statistically significant difference in parents seeking parental knowledge on social media or listening to the *Consultation with Sarah* podcast. This is somewhat surprising, as it seems likely that educated parents would want to always be

obtaining more knowledge. The reason for the difference may be that more educated parents do not feel the need to seek out additional information on parenting, as they may feel that it is hard to trust the social media information. Furthermore, the qualitative analysis did reveal reliability was a theme. Some participants stated that they did not like information obtained from social media because it is not always reliable and could also be conflicting.

These findings align with Bornstein et al. (2010) study, which reported that education and availability of useful written material contributed to parenting knowledge. The findings did not, however, align with Spoth and Redmond (1995), whose research found educated parents were not more likely to seek out parenting knowledge. More research is needed to better understand the discrepancy.

Employment status was the last variable assessed, and the findings revealed there was a statistically significant relationship between parents' employment status and parents' reported parental knowledge and use of social media as a knowledge tool. More specifically, employed parents were more likely to seek knowledge on parenting, although social media was not the most prevalent means. Conversely, unemployed, or parents who were freelancers, were more likely to use social media to obtain parenting knowledge. The results suggest both groups of parents reported seeking knowledge on parenting, although the parents went about it in different ways. This may be because unemployed parents have more time than employed parents. Additionally, parents who are freelancers may be more familiar with social media, as they may use it to advertise their business, since they are self-employed.

Previous literature suggests parents' employment, including hours and autonomy, predicted children's adaptive skills (Perry-Jenkins, et al., 2020). The authors suggested that when parents are employed, feel valued at work and are able to solve problems, they are more likely to try to help their children solve their problems, and develop the skills to do so (Perry-Jenkins et al., 2020). This aligns with the assumptions in the current research, suggesting employed parents are more likely to seek knowledge on parenting. However, both employed and unemployed parents in the current study did report knowledge seeking. Conversely, Bornstein et al. (2010) found no correlation between parents' employment status and knowledge on parenting.

Differences Related to Use of Social Media Platforms Before the COVID-19 Pandemic

This question inquired about COVID-19 and whether it affected social media use for parenting knowledge. The results suggested there was a statistically significant difference in respondents' use of social media before COVID-19 and seeking for parenting knowledge, although there was not a difference with regard to *Consultation with Sarah* podcast. Therefore, respondents reported a difference in their use of social media to obtain parenting advice, although they did not report they listened to *Consultation with Sarah* more post-COVID. This suggests the time spent home during COVID, probably made parents or caregivers more self-sufficient and more likely to seek parenting advice online through social media in their homes. The results indicate the respondents sought social interactions on social media as a way of obtaining information, rather than merely listening to a podcast to obtain the information.

This aligns with previous findings by Kaya (2020) who suggested that social media users turned to this outlet as a means of survival, recognizing credible information, and discarding information which was untrue from unofficial sources. Kaya (2020) also indicated that social media use was related to information retrieval during the pandemic. Jenkins and Moreno (2020) also found social media was a means of acquiring parental knowledge during the COVID-19 pandemic. Their research found parents communicated regarding vaccines and sharing information. Jenkins and Moreno (2020) found the social media outlet was a positive form of communication between parents to acquire parenting information. Drouin et al. (2020) similarly found parents utilized social media to connect and for information seeking during the pandemic.

These findings align with the Social Learning Theory, suggesting individuals learn from others' experiences, and they are then able to emulate others (Bandura, 1977). Bronfenbrenner's (2005) ecological systems theory also helps to explain these findings, as the theory suggests one's environment affects children and parents' experiences, and the environment during COVID-19 was certainly changed, which also changed social interactions. The findings regarding social media being used as a source of information retrieval during the pandemic emphasizes the importance of podcast leaders sharing their education and credentials, as Sarah does in *Consultation with Sarah*.

Differences in Parenting Knowledge and Using Social Media to Gain Parental Knowledge Between Saudi Caregivers who and do not Listen to the Podcast

The results suggested listening to the *Consultation with Sarah* podcast made a significant difference in parenting knowledge, compared to those who reported they did not listen to the podcast. This is likely because the qualitative findings suggest the

respondents who listened to the podcast felt that it is beneficial, as they received solutions for their parenting problems. Additionally, parents or caregivers who listened to the podcast were more likely to seek additional parental knowledge from other social media, as well. The qualitative findings explained there is a variance in opinions on *Consultation with Sarah* podcast, although the respondents who listened to the podcast found it to be beneficial and helpful.

The qualitative results helped to explain these findings, as parents and caregivers reported listening to the *Consultation with Sarah* podcast because realistic problems and effective solutions are addressed, the host is accessible and unpretentious, the podcast assists with proper upbringing and supports beliefs they already held, and Dr. Sarah's qualifications allow her to convey advanced skills and trustworthy information. These results suggest listeners tune in to the podcast because it is helpful. Conversely, respondents stated their reasons for not listening to the podcast include the style and delivery of speech, the length of the podcast, irrelevant topics, and repetition. Therefore, one can conclude that listeners who tune in feel they are benefitting from the podcast, while those who do not believe the podcasts are too long, irrelevant, repetitious, and they do not care for the delivery of the information.

There is no previous research specifically on *Consultation with Sarah* podcast or specific research on parenting knowledge, which warranted this research. However, previous research did indicate that the use of social media did yield greater parental knowledge (AlKlayb et al., 2017). Therefore, one can conclude that social media, including *Consultation with Sarah*, leads to greater levels of parental knowledge for parents, or caregivers.

Differences in Listening to other Podcasts, either in Arabic or in Other Languages between Saudi Caregivers who and do not Listen to the Podcast

The results of this question indicated there was a statistically significant difference reported by parents or caregivers who listened to the *Consultation with Sarah* podcast. Specifically, respondents who reported listening to the *Consultation with Sarah* podcast reported the highest level in listening to other podcasts or using other social media for parenting advice, either in Arabic or other languages. Additionally, the more frequently respondents listened to the *Consultation with Sarah* podcast, the more frequently they reported listening to other podcasts or seeking other parenting advice through social media. This suggests parents seeking parental knowledge, particularly through podcasts, are likely seeking parenting wisdom through these means.

The findings show as parents or caregivers who are listening to the *Consultation with Sarah* podcast are likely listening to other podcasts, because they find podcasts to be beneficial. Previous literature does not exist on the specific *Consultation with Sarah* podcast. However, information obtained from Dr. Al-Abdulkarim indicated people are able to access *Consultation with Sarah* podcasts through YouTube, TikTok, and Telegram (S. Al-Abdulkarim, personal communication, January 11, 2021). These social media outlets are highly utilized (The Saudi Center for Opinion Polling, 2022), but the data that exists does not separate *Consultation with Sarah* to explain the knowledge seeking behaviors of the listeners more clearly. That is why this research will shed light on the topic.

Implications

During a time when social media is so highly utilized in many areas, it is important to better understand what sources parents are using, the reasons behind their choices, and their needs regarding parental knowledge. The results of this research may inform parents, podcasters, educators, the Family Affairs Council, and the Ministry of Education (hereon, stakeholders) regarding the use of various resources from social media for parenting knowledge. Additionally, the results may shed light on areas of parenting where parents are experiencing challenges and seeking insight, while highlighting the importance of ensuring parenting information is both researched and reliable.

From the findings reported by the Saudi parents and caregivers, websites and social media are great tools for several reasons, such as easy access to information. Stakeholders may want to use these means for communicating the importance of effective parenting to help parents and caregivers raise healthy and well adapted children.

One of the focuses of this study was to explore the characteristics and experiences of parents who listen to podcasts. Parents who listen to podcasts were found to turn to multiple podcasts to increase their parenting knowledge. This finding indicates that podcasts could play a central role in enriching parenting knowledge.. Since parents are looking for information that is credible and from knowledgeable sources, it is important for podcasters to publicize their educational achievements and titles in their podcasts. This is especially important because this study found that parents are more interested in deepening their understanding of parenting if they hear from a specialist such as Dr. Sarah Al-Abdulkarim of the *Consultation with Sarah* podcast. At the same

time, parents also need skills to filter information to ensure they acquire content that is valid and reliable. Better understanding how parents do this and where they may need help enables stakeholders to more effectively share accurate and reliable information pertinent to parents' needs.

Furthermore, parents reported increased use of social media after COVID-19. This finding emphasizes the huge potential of the role of social media in reaching parents and caregivers when institutions close down and interpersonal communications become difficult. Social media can help stakeholders get their messages across to the audience in their preferred ways in the comfort of their homes..

Varied factors affect parents regarding their seeking of knowledge and using social media to gain parenting knowledge. The findings may help stakeholders who are interested in reaching specific parents, depending on their characteristics. In other words, Stakeholders may use various outlets for different demographic groups, so information can be more targeted and directed toward appropriate audiences. Also, stakeholders may be able to expand this research to find ways to reach more inclusive groups of parents, including those who are hard to reach.

Limitations of the Study

Despite its theoretical and practical value, this research does have limitations. First, by design, the study recruited participants via social media. While this was intentional, the study only represents responses from parents who already use social media with some regularity. Second, there could have been bias, as some people accessed the survey through a link Dr. Sarah shared on her personal Twitter account. The results being shared by an individual whose podcast was highlighted in the study may have

skewed the results, as the participants who accessed the survey through her social media are familiar with her. However, it is important to add that 39% of my respondents reported never or rarely listening to the *Consultation with Sarah* podcast. Lastly, the participants did not always answer the qualitative questions in intended ways or in the order asked. Consequently, sometimes, the responses had multiple parts. This made connecting questions to answers difficult at times. .

Directions for Future Research

This study on social media as a source for parents or caregivers to obtain knowledge about parenting in Saudi Arabia provides critical information for parents, podcasters, website creators, educators, the Ministry of Education, and The Family Affairs Council. More research is needed to substantiate these findings, since prior research does not focus on specific podcasts. Studying specific social media outlets and podcasts enables researchers to better understand which social media outlets or podcasts are most informative. Further research could focus on different social media platforms, in addition to podcasts, as well.

Socio-economic status should also be included in future research to better understand if this affects social media usage. Social media and podcasts require technology, such as phones and computers. Therefore, socio-economic status should be included in future research to assess whether income affects access and use of technology and social media. More research is also needed post-COVID to substantiate the findings suggesting that more parents are using social media for parenting knowledge post-COVID.

Additional methods, other than an online survey, should also be included. This way participants who do not utilize social media can still be included. Using additional research methods other than surveys could also provide more information. For example, including interviews could provide additional qualitative data to better understand respondents' reasoning.

Future research should focus on methods for ensuring data obtained via social media is reliable. Parents or caregivers need to understand opinion versus research and published data, such as found in peer-reviewed journals. People need to understand the difference between researched data and opinions. Since social media is a highly utilized source of parental knowledge, research is needed to be conducted specifically on the reliability of information obtained via social media.

Conclusions

This research provides valuable insight for parents, caregivers, podcasters, social media influencers and web-designers, educators, the Ministry of Education, and The Family Affairs Council in Saudi Arabia. This information is of particular importance in Saudi Arabia, as religion, particularly Islam, is a governing force in Saudi Arabia, and religious leaders use social media to share information (Al-Saggaf, Himma, & Kharabsheh, 2008; Al-Saggaf & Simmons, 2015). Therefore, parenting advice is provided via social media, so it is important leaders, podcasters, authors, and website creators are aware parents' thoughts on the content provided.

Additionally, parenting in the early years is critical, as parents help their children evolve to become valuable contributors to society (Kuppens & Ceulemans, 2019). It is

imperative the information receive is valuable and reliable. The parenting information obtained and utilized by parents can affect children into their adulthood.

Light was shed on social media outlets being utilized to obtain parenting information, as well as parents, or caregivers, reasonings behind their choices. These findings are important because the research indicated parents are critical users of social media. Parents expressed their need for relevant information on parenting. They expressed their desire for reliable and credible information. Podcasters, such as *Consultation with Sarah* podcast, should take this information, and ensure their content is helpful, reliable, and based upon research-based practices. The *Consultation with Sarah* podcast can benefit from this feedback, and other podcasters and individuals that share information via social media can learn from parents' and caregivers' responses, as well. Podcast leaders and those who share information on social media should ensure they share their education and credentials. Furthermore, all sources of information should be cited, or stated in a podcast, so individuals can evaluate the information. Additionally, groups that advocate for children's rights, such as the Family Affairs Council of Saudi Arabia, can share information more efficiently, as they can use the social media outlets parents and caregivers reported using most frequently to ensure parents are receiving the information they need to benefit them and their children.

This research explained why so many parents and caregivers turn to social media for parenting advice, as the Social Learning Theory helps to explain how individuals learn from observing and interacting with others. The UGT explains the variance in parents, and caregivers, choices, as individuals make their own choices, based on their need for various forms of gratification (Blumer & Katz, 1974). With the increase in

internet usage and the rise in social media use post-COVID, it is imperative for podcasters and social media influencers to share information which is applicable, reliable, and relevant. This research can provide a basis for parents' and caregivers' desires regarding the type of parenting information they seek. Additionally, parents and caregivers can be informed of the importance of ensuring information they obtain on social media is reliable and trustworthy. Educators and the Ministry of Education can provide parents with podcasts and websites, which are trustworthy and reliable, sharing evidence-based practices. Parents and caregivers will likely collaborate with others on social media, as the Social Learning Theory suggests. However, they need to know when they are receiving opinion versus researched data from a professional, such as Dr. Sarah Al-Abdulkarim on the *Consultation with Sarah* podcast. These results provide a basis and fundamental knowledge on social media for obtaining parenting information, although the results need to be substantiated and more research needs to be conducted to confirm the findings.

APPENDIX A

RESEARCH QUESTIONS, METHODOLOGIES, AND ANALYSIS

Table 6*Research Questions, Methodologies and Analysis*

Major Questions	Sub-Questions	Corresponding Survey Questions and the Analysis Methods
1. Which sources do Saudi parents and caregivers perceive to be most beneficial for learning about parenting?	1.1. Which sources do Saudi parents and caregivers perceive to be most beneficial for learning about parenting?	Q1.18 SPSS: Descriptive Statistics
	1.2. Which social media platform do Saudi parents and caregivers perceive to be most beneficial for learning about parenting?	Q1.19 SPSS: Descriptive Statistics
	1.3. What do Saudi parents and caregivers perceive as their reasons for using social media platforms or not using them for parental knowledge?	Q4.12 & Q4.13 Qualitative Coding
	1.4. What topics do Saudi parents and caregivers suggest for the parenting specialists to discuss?	Q5.6 Qualitative Coding
2. What factors of Saudi parents and caregivers (gender, age, number of children, marital status, education, and employment status) are related to knowledge seeking behavior, using social media platforms, and listening to the <i>Consultation with Sarah</i> podcast that is exhibited among Saudi parents and caregivers?	2.1. Does the parents' and caregivers' gender impact their reports of their knowledge seeking behavior?	SPSS: One-way ANOVA (Parental Knowledge, Using Social Media, Consultation with Sarah podcast) + Q 1.2
	2.2. Does the age of parents and caregivers impact their reports of their knowledge seeking behavior?	SPSS: One-way ANOVA (Parental Knowledge, Using Social Media, Consultation with Sarah podcast) + Q 1.3

Table 6 — Continued

	2.3. Does the number of children impact parents' and caregivers' reports of their knowledge seeking behavior?	SPSS: One-way ANOVA (Parental Knowledge, Using Social Media, Consultation with Sarah podcast) + Q 1.6
	2.4. Does the parents' and caregivers' marital status impact their reports of their knowledge seeking behavior?	SPSS: One-way ANOVA (Parental Knowledge, Using Social Media, Consultation with Sarah podcast) + Q 1.8
	2.5. Does the parents' and caregivers' education level impact their reports of their knowledge seeking behavior?	SPSS: One-way ANOVA (Parental Knowledge, Using Social Media, Consultation with Sarah podcast) + Q 1.10
	2.6. Does the parents' and caregivers' employment status impact their reports of their knowledge seeking behavior?	SPSS: One-way ANOVA (Parental Knowledge, Using Social Media, Consultation with Sarah podcast) + Q 1.12
3. Is there a difference reported by Saudi parents and caregivers who use social media platforms for parenting knowledge before the COVID-19 pandemic?	3.1. Is there a difference reported by Saudi parents and caregivers who Used Social Media before the COVID-19 Pandemic for Parental Knowledge along with Parental Knowledge, Social Media as a Parental Knowledge Tool, and listening to the <i>Consultation with Sarah</i> podcast?	(Parental Knowledge, Using Social Media as a Parental Knowledge Tool, Consultation with Sarah podcast Scales) + Q1.16 SPSS: Independent samples t-test
4. Are there differences in parenting knowledge and using social media to gain parental knowledge reported by Saudi parents and caregivers who listen to the podcast and parents who do not listen to the podcast?	4.1. Do Saudi parents and caregivers who listen to the podcast and parents who do not report the same level of parenting knowledge?	Q4.1 + Parental Knowledge SPSS: One-way ANOVA
	4.2. Do Saudi parents and caregivers who listen to the podcast and parents who do not report the same level of satisfaction regarding the use of social media as a parental knowledge tool?	Q4.1 + Using Social Media as a Parental Knowledge Tool SPSS: One-way ANOVA

Table 6 — Continued

	4.3. What do Saudi parents and caregivers who listen to the <i>Consultation with Sarah</i> podcast, and those who do not, perceive as their reasons for using social media, or not using them, for parental knowledge?	Q 5.4 & Q 5.5 Qualitative Coding
5. Are there differences regarding the use of other social media outlets for parenting advice, either in their native or other languages as reported by Saudi parents and caregivers who listen to the <i>Consultation with Sarah</i> podcast and those who do not?	5.1. Are there difference in the number of listening to other podcasts between the Saudi parents and caregivers who do listen to the <i>Consultation with Sarah</i> podcast and those who do not?	Q 5.1 & Q 5.2 + Q4.1 SPSS: One-way ANOVA

APPENDIX B

USING SOCIAL MEDIA FOR PARENTAL KNOWLEDGE SURVEY

Information Sheet and Consent Form
(English Version)

Using Social Media to Gain Parenting Knowledge

Introduction

You are being asked to be in a research study that is being done by Rima A Alahmadi under the direction of Dr. Tomoko Wakabayashi, Associate Professor at Oakland University. This study is being conducted as part of the requirements for a Ph.D. in Early Childhood with a focus on parenting and child development. Your decision to participate in this study is voluntary. You can choose to stop your participation at any time or skip any part of the study if you are not comfortable. Your decision will not affect your present or future relationship with Oakland University, the researcher, the Human Development and Child Studies. If you are a student or employee at Oakland University, your decision about participation will not affect your grades or employment status.

What is the purpose of this study?

The purpose of this research study is to explore Saudi parents' perspectives of using social media to acquire parenting knowledge.

Who can participate in this study?

You are being asked to participate in the study because you are a Saudi parent of a child or children aged from 0 to 18 years, and you are listening to or watching the podcast 'Consultation with Sarah'.

What do I have to do?

You will be asked to complete a 5-10 minutes of online survey about using social media for parental knowledge.

ورقة المعلومات و إقرار الموافقة على المشاركة
(النسخة العربية) (Arabic Version)

استخدام وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي لاكتساب المعرفة الوالدية

المقدمة

هذه دراسة بحثية تقوم بها ريماء الأحمدى ، تحت إشراف د. توموكو واكabayashi، أستاذ مشارك في جامعة أوكلاند. يتم إجراء هذه الدراسة كجزء من متطلبات الحصول على درجة الدكتوراه في مرحلة الطفولة المبكرة مع التركيز على التربية وتنمية الطفل. تعد المشاركة في هذه الدراسة تطوعاً. يمكنك اختيار إيقاف مشاركتك في أي وقت أو تخطي أي جزء من الدراسة إذا لم تكن مرتاحاً. لن يؤثر قرارك على علاقتك الحالية أو المستقبلية مع جامعة أوكلاند والباحثة وقسم التنمية البشرية ودراسات الطفل. إذا كنت طالباً أو موظفاً في جامعة أوكلاند ، فلن يؤثر قرارك بشأن المشاركة على درجاتك أو حالتك الوظيفية.

ما هو الغرض من هذه الدراسة؟

الغرض من هذه الدراسة البحثية هو استكشاف وجهات نظر الآباء السعوديين أو الأم السعوديات في استخدام وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي لاكتساب المعرفة الوالدية.

من يمكنه المشاركة في هذه الدراسة؟

يُطلب منك المشاركة في الدراسة لأنك أب أو أم سعودي/ة لطفل أو أطفال تتراوح أعمارهم بين 0 و 18 عاماً ، وأنت تستمع أو تشاهد بودكاست "استشارة مع سارة".

ماذا أفعل؟

سيُطلب منك إكمال استبانة عبر الإنترنت تستغرق من 5-10 دقائق حول استخدام وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي لاكتساب المعرفة الوالدية.

Are there any risks to me?

There are no anticipated risks to you by participating in this study.

Are there any benefits to me?

Although there may be no direct benefits to you, the results of this study may benefit others in the future.

Will I receive anything for participating?

You will not receive anything for participating in this study.

What if I want to stop participating in this study?

If you want to stop participating, close your browser before clicking 'submit.' If you click 'submit,' it will not be possible to stop participating.

Who can I contact if I have questions about this study?

You can contact the researcher, Rima Alahmadi, via email: ralahmadi@oakland.edu and phone number: 001 2487222311. Also, you could contact the adviser Dr. Tomoko Wakabayashi via email: twakabayashi@oakland.edu or phone number: 001 2483703078.

For questions regarding your rights as a participant in human subject research, you may contact the Oakland University Institutional Review Board, 248-370-4898.

By clicking on "continue", you agree to participate in the study.

هل هناك أي مخاطر؟

لا توجد أي مخاطر متوقعة خلال مشاركتك في هذه الدراسة.

هل هناك فوائد قد أحصل عليها؟

على الرغم من أنه قد لا تكون هناك فوائد مباشرة لك ، إلا أن نتائج هذه الدراسة قد تفيد الآخرين في المستقبل.

هل سأحصل على شيء مقابل المشاركة؟

لن تتلقى أي شيء مقابل المشاركة في هذه الدراسة.

ماذا لو كنت أريد التوقف عن المشاركة في هذه الدراسة؟

إذا كنت ترغب في التوقف عن المشاركة، يرجى إغلاق المتصفح فوراً قبل الضغط على "إرسال". إذا قمت بالضغط على "إرسال" ، فلا يمكن إيقاف مشاركتك.

بمن يمكنني الاتصال إذا كانت لدي أسئلة حول هذه الدراسة؟

يمكنكم التواصل مع الباحثة ريماء الأحمدى عبر البريد الإلكتروني ralahmadi@oakland.edu ورقم الهاتف 0012487222311. كما يمكنكم التواصل مع المشرفة الدكتورة توموكو واكabayashi عبر البريد الإلكتروني twakabayashi@oakland.edu أو رقم الهاتف: 0112483703078.

لأسئلة المتعلقة بحقوقك كمشارك في هذا البحث المتعلق بالإنسان، يمكنك الاتصال بلجنة مراجعة الأبحاث بجامعة أوكلاند 0012483704898.

الضغط على "استمرار"، تعني موافقتك على المشاركة في الدراسة.

Start of Block: Demographic Information

Q1.1 Where did you get the questionnaire link?

Twitter (1)
Instagram (2)
Snapchat (3)
YouTube (4)
Podcast (6)
Telegram (7)
Other (8) (please explain) _____

Q1.2 Gender:

Male (1)
Female (2)
Prefer not to say (3)

Q1.3 Age:

20 or younger (1)
21 - 25 (2)
26 - 30 (3)
31 - 35 (4)
36 - 40 (5)
41 - 45
46+ (6)

Q1.4 Are you Saudi:

Yes (1)
No (2)
Skip To: End of Survey If Nationality: != No

Q1.5 Are you a parent?

Yes (1) *(If you are the mother, father, or a child guardian)*
Expectant (2)
No (3)
Skip To: End of Survey If Are you a parent? != Expectant and No

Q1.6 How many children do you care for?

Not applicable
1
2
3
4
5 and more
Skip To: End of Survey If How many children do you care for? = Not applicable

Q1.7 Please enter the ages of the children

Q1.8 Marital Status:

- Single (1)
- Engaged (2)
- Married (3)
- Widowed (4)
- Divorced (5)

Q1.9 Current country of residence:

- Saudi Arabia (1)
- Outside Saudi Arabia (2) (Please explain): _____

Q1.10 What is the highest degree or level of school you have completed?

- No schooling completed (1)
- High school (2)
- Associates (3)
- Bachelor's degree (4)
- Master's degree (5)
- Doctorate degree (6)

Q1.11 Are you currently a student?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

Q1.12 Which of the following categories best describes your employment status?

- Employed (1)
- Not employed, looking for work (2)
- Not employed, not looking for work (3)
- Self-employed/Freelance (4)
- Retired (5)

Q1.13 How many adults are involved in raising the child?

- Just me (1)
- My spouse and I (2)
- I and others (3) (Please explain) : _____

Q1.14 The relation to the child:

- Mother (1)
- Father (2)
- Adoptive (3)
- Not applicable (4)
- Other: Aunt, uncle, please explain _____

Q1.15 Do you use social media platforms?

- No (1)
- Yes (2)

Skip To: End of Survey If Do you use social media? = No

Q1.16 Had you used social media platforms for parental knowledge before the COVID-19 pandemic?

No (1)

Yes (2)

Q1.17 Which of the following social media platforms do you use?

	Yes	No
Twitter		
Instagram		
Snapchat		
YouTube		
Facebook		
Podcast		
WhatsApp		
Clubhouse		
Telegram		
Other		
<i>please explain: _____</i>		

Q1.18 How long have you been using social media?

Not applicable (0)

Less than a year (1)

1 year (2)

2 years (3)

3 years (4)

4 years (5)

5 years (6)

6 years and more (7)

Skip To: End of Survey If How long have you been using social media? = Not applicable

Q1.19 Which of the following resources do you use to help you establish knowledge of parenting?

	Yes	No
Family		
Friends		
Books		
Websites		
Social media		

Teachers		
Other sources <i>please explain:</i> _____		
Q1.20 Which of the following social media platforms do you use to help you establish knowledge of parenting?		
	Yes	No
Twitter		
Facebook		
Youtube		
Instagram		
Snapchat		
Telegram		
Tiktok		
Podcast		
What'sApp		
Clubhouse		
Other sources <i>please explain:</i> _____		

End of Block: Demographic Information

The following blocks help in assessed information on parental knowledge and modes of seeking this knowledge among other tools.

Explanation of Options: These blocks consist of closed questions, each requiring different interpretations, as explained below.

- 1- Never: Not used, or I have never done it.
- 2- Rarely: It happened one or two times, or I have done it once or twice.
- 3- Sometimes: It happened a few times, or I have done it a few times.
- 4- Often: It happened many times, or I have done it many times.
- 5- Always: It happened most or all the time, or I have done it most or all the times.

Start of Block: Parental Knowledge

The following block assists how parenting knowledge is acquired alongside the means that parents seek out knowledge or solutions to their parental dilemmas. Parental knowledge is all that contributes to increasing parents' knowledge regarding parenting and the comprehensive care of their children.

For each of the following statements, select the answer that best applies to you.

	Never (1)	Rarely (2)	Sometimes (3)	Often (4)	Always (5)
1. I seek out knowledge about possible parenting issues that have not happened yet.					
2. I seek solutions only if I struggle raising my child.					
3. My parental knowledge affects my parenting practices.					
4. I use a variety of sources to gain parenting knowledge.					
5. I increase my parenting knowledge to raise my child better.					
6. If I improve my parenting skills, my child's behavior will improve.					
7. I can learn new parenting skills for child rearing.					
8. I believe that parenting knowledge helps me acquire new skills that I can implement in child rearing.					
9. I feel good when I develop my parenting knowledge.					
10. I share the parenting information I have gained with others.					

End of Block: Parental Knowledge

Start of Block: Social Media as a Parental Knowledge Tool

This block seeks to assess the possibility of social media as a tool for acquiring parental knowledge because the interaction of content and users on social media platforms varies from person to person.

For each of the following statements, select the answer that best applies to you.

	Never (1)	Rarely (2)	Sometimes (3)	Often (4)	Always (5)
1. I believe that social media is an easy way to increase parenting knowledge.					
2. I believe that social media improves my knowledge of parenting.					
3. I took advantage of social media to learn about effective parenting.					
4. Social media enables me to follow experts in parenting and child development.					
5. I trust the content provided on social media regarding parenting.					
6. I only trust the content provided on social media from experts on parenting.					
7. Using social media boosts my self-confidence as a parent.					
8. I believe that it is good to spend free time on social media and take advantage of the accounts specialized in parenting.					
9. I believe that using social media enables me to stay up to date with the latest parenting strategies.					

10. I believe that using social media helps me acquire new skills that I can apply in child rearing.					
11. Social media enables me to share the parenting information I find with others.					

End of Block: Social Media as a Parental Knowledge Tool

Start of Block: Consultation with Sarah Podcast

This block assists how using the Consultation with Sarah podcast as a method in which parents can easily access trusted, up-to-date, and resourceful knowledge on parenting.

4.1 Have you listened to or watched the podcast ‘Consultation with Sarah’?

Never (1)

Rarely (2)

Sometimes (3)

Often (4)

Always (5)

*Skip To: Reflection Block If Have you listened or watched the Consultation with Sarah podcast?
= Never*

For each of the following statements, select the answer that best applies to you.

	Never (1)	Rarely (2)	Sometimes (3)	Often (4)	Always (5)
1. The Consultation with Sarah podcast helps me with my children.					
2. I have tried some of the solutions provided in the Consultation with Sarah podcast.					
3. I like listening to the Consultation with Sarah podcast because it is recorded, and I can listen to it whenever I want.					
4. I share clips or episodes of Consultation with Sarah podcast with someone by retweeting or sending them to others.					

5. I have encouraged others to listen or watch the Consultation with Sarah podcast					
6. Through the podcast, I gained parenting knowledge that I can apply in child rearing.					
7. The podcast helps me to understand what is appropriate in child rearing.					
8. The podcast helped me acquire new parenting skills that I could use in child rearing.					
9. From the podcast, I learned parenting knowledge and skills that enable me to advise others about child rearing.					
10. The way the podcast presented the issue, discussed it, and provided examples, helped me gain parenting knowledge.					

Q4.12 What are the other reasons you like watching or listening to the Consultation with Sarah podcast? *Optional*

Q4.13 What are the other reasons you do not like of watching or listening to the Consultation with Sarah podcast? *Optional*

End of Block: Consultation with Sarah Podcast

Start of Block: Reflection

This block is a space where the questions are more open-ended. Please share your perspective as a parent to different social media platforms.

Q5.1 I listen to other podcasts to increase my parental knowledge.

- Never (1)
- Rarely (2)
- Sometimes (3)
- Often (4)
- Always (5)

Q5.2 I listen to other podcasts to increase my parental knowledge in languages other than Arabic..

- Never (1)
- Rarely (2)
- Sometimes (3)
- Often (4)
- Always (5)

Q5.3 Please list some of the podcast names that you are listening to either in Arabic or any other language to increase your parental knowledge. *Optional*

Q5.4 What are the other reasons you like about using social media platforms for parental knowledge? *Optional*

Q5.5 What are the other reasons you don't like about using social media platforms for parental knowledge? *Optional*

Q5.6 Please write any suggestions, comments, or other concerns about parenting or child-rearing that you would like the parenting specialist to discuss. *Optional*

End of Block: Reflection

APPENDIX C

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL LETTER



Institutional Review Board

Date: March 2, 2022

Study #: IRB-FY2022-246

Study Title: Saudi Parents' Perspective on the Role of Social Media Platforms in Promoting Parenting Knowledge

Submission Type: Initial

IRB Decision: Exempt

Research Team:

Rima Alahmadi

Tomoko Wakabayashi

Based on applicable federal regulations, the above referenced study has been determined to be Exempt, with the following categories:

Category 2.(i). Research that only includes interactions involving educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior (including visual or auditory recording).

The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects cannot readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects.

Letter and Consent Document:

This letter along with the IRB approved (date-stamped) consent document can be found in Cayuse in the [Submission Details](#) page under [Letters](#) and [Attachments](#), respectively.

The IRB date stamped consent document must be downloaded and used in consenting participants.

Permission from Research Sites:

Please note the following:

- This IRB exemption determination letter means that this research has met one or more of the federal criteria for exemption per 45 CFR 46.104- Exempt Research.
- Before the research is initiated, permission to conduct research at a given site must be obtained from all research locations listed in the IRB submission. You must keep copies of all such permission letters for your files.
- It is the responsibility of each researcher to follow all applicable policies and procedures of any outside institution where the research will be conducted.

Modifications:

Any changes to this exempt project must be reviewed by the IRB prior to initiation by submitting a MODIFICATION request. Do not collect data while the changes are being reviewed. Data collected during this time cannot be used in research.

Record Retention:

Exempt projects will be retained by the IRB office for three years after the last action on the project.

You are approved to start the research. Please retain a copy of this notification for your records.

If you have any questions, please contact the IRB office.

Thank you.

The Oakland University IRB

APPENDIX D
RECRUITMENT INVITATION

To Whom it May Concern:

إلى من يهمه الأمر:

I am Rima Alahmadi, a Ph.D. candidate in the early childhood program at Oakland University. The doctoral dissertation topic is related to the use of social media in promoting parenting knowledge, especially consultation with Sarah podcast. I would like to ask for your cooperation in sharing the questionnaire link with the podcast's audience on the different social media platforms.

أنا ريماء الأحمدي طالبة دكتوراه في برنامج الطفولة المبكرة في جامعة أوكلاند. يتعلق موضوع رسالة الدكتوراه باستخدام وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي في تعزيز المعرفة الوالدية، وبشكل خاص بودكاست استشارة مع سارة.

أود أن أطلب تعاونكم في مشاركة رابط الاستبانة مع جمهور البودكاست على منصات التواصل الاجتماعي المختلفة.

This is a copy of a post that I would like to ask you to use:

هذه نسخة من المنشور الذي أود أن منكم استخدامه:

"دعوة للمشاركة في البحث.

"Invitation to participate in research.

المستهدفين: الآباء والأمهات السعوديون.

Target: Saudi parents.

الغرض: استطلاع حول استخدام وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي في تعزيز المعرفة الأبوية، وخاصة بودكاست استشارة مع سارة.

Purpose: A Survey about the use of social media in promoting parenting knowledge, especially consultation with Sarah podcast.

يرجى النقر على الرابط التالي للوصول إلى صفحة الاستبيان والذي سيأخذ من وقتك من 5-10 دقائق: [الرابط].

Please click the following link to go to the survey website: [The link].

This survey is conducted by Rima Alahmadi at Oakland University in the USA under the advisement of Dr. Wakabayashi."

تجري ريماء الأحمدي هذه الاستبانة تحت إشراف الدكتورة واكabayashi في جامعة أوكلاند في أمريكا."

Do not hesitate to contact me with any questions.

يرجى التواصل معي إذا كان لديكم أي سؤال.

Sincerely,

تحياتي،

Rima Alahmadi

ريماء الأحمدي

APPENDIX E

CODE ANALYSIS- QUALITATIVE SURVEY RESPONSES

Table 7*Code Analysis of Reasons for Listening to the Consultation with Sarah Podcast*

Themes	Categories	Codes	Quotes
Realistic problems and solutions to problems are addressed	Effective solutions	Effective	She is wonderful in simplifying and solving problems. She also has a meaningful and effective manner in dealing with children or adolescents.
		Change	My child has changed after listening to Mrs. Sarah's advice and instructions.
	Realism	Realistic	Solving realistic problems
			Realistic – Storytelling.
			Realism, easy language and various solutions.
	Problem-solving	Reality/Realism	“Realistic” and the problems and their solutions fit our society.
			Realistic problems and realistic dealing with them.
		Solve the problem	The exposed problems are realistic and do are their solutions. Also, they are various.
			She is close to reality and far from just theorizing.
	Solutions		It is easy to find out and solve the problem.
			To increase my information about raising children and how to solve behavioral problems that may occur and to promote positive behavior in children.
			To benefit. Most of the problems are close to each other, so I can benefit from them in solving my problems.
			“It is easy to come up with solutions”.
			“Realistic” and the problems and their solutions fit our society.
			Providing solutions and skills in education.

Table 7 — Continued

The host is accessible and unpretentious (in both language and meaning)	Style of speech or delivery	Easy	Dr. Sarah's straightforward and easy style of speech Easy language and phrases. It's an easy exposition with no complications. She is easily accessible.
		Speech	Because she's an artist and I like her style of speech.
	Simple language	Simplicity	The simplicity of the style and the ease of understanding the meaning without stereotyping or theorizing.
		Simple	The program presenter's simple language and our trust in her knowledge. Dr. Sarah's words are simple and clear. Her beautiful and simple way of communicating information, and that she is far from ideal in education. She is not like some other educators who make you feel that your method of education is wrong and you must punish your kids with methods that are older than their ages.

Table 7 — Continued

Assists with proper upbringing	Open mindedness	Open	The Doctor's open to all views.
	Popularity	Popular	Her clips are widely popular.
	Help raising children	Raise child	I have a stubborn child who is difficult for me to deal with, so I like to watch podcasts to help me raise my child.
	Proper, Correct upbringing	Upbringing	Those around me blame me for the manner of my upbringing, so sometimes I feel guilty, but following her episodes takes away this feeling from me and proves that my view of upbringing my children is correct. A correct and modern way of upbringing which is suitable for the era in which we live. I believe in her style of education and upbringing. She is Impartial and strengthens the mother's personality in addition to her insistence on the correct upbringing without bothering the children.
Her qualifications allow her to convey advanced skills and trustworthy information	Highly qualified	Expertise	The solutions are practical, not theoretical, and Dr. Sarah has long and extensive knowledge and expertise in raising children, so I trust in what she presents.
		Qualification	A direct, logical approach, accurate experience, and a high qualification in dealing with children
	Teaches advanced skills	Skills	I also gain some advanced skills tenable me to be ready to solve my children's issues even before they reach them and thus I will be ready to solve it, God willing

Table 8*Code Analysis of Reasons for Dislike Listening to the Consultation with Sarah Podcast*

Themes	Categories	Codes	Quotes
Style of delivery and speech	Style	Loud/Sharp	Sometimes the sharpness of her voice in speech. I have only listened to two episodes. May God reward her for her efforts and bless her, but I did not like the loudness of her voice and the use of generalization.
		Speaking	The way of speaking and the style of presentation does not suit my personality.
		Style	Maybe the used style is sometimes not that good, such as raising the voice more than required when the speaker gets angry.
It can be too long, and people don't have enough time to listen.	Time	Long/length	The length of the episode and the complexity of the topics in one episode.
		Time	Some topics sometimes take too much time. I prefer the brief talk. I have no private reasons and that is because I have time constraints since I am an employee and a mother, and I do not have a housekeeper.
Topics are not always relevant to everyone.	Relevance	Different	Some episodes pertain to different age groups from my children's stage.
		Relevance	According to the topics, questions, their relevance to the ages and the problems of my children
	Applicability	Not a problem	Most of the questions were not a problem for me.

Table 8 — Continued

Accessing the podcast can be a challenge	Accessibility	Know/Knowing	I don't know how to find it. By chance, I listened to one episode and I liked it. Not knowing the podcast's time.
	Motivation	Searching	Laziness in searching for the content she offers.
Repetition in topics	Repetition	Recurring	Some problems are sometimes recurring.
		Repeating	In the past, I sent some consultations that I thought were important and interested other mothers, but they were not discussed or responded to. I can say that some topics are sometimes repeated; I have already listened to all the episodes.

Table 9*Code Analysis of Reasons for Using Social Media in General for Parental Knowledge*

Themes	Categories	Codes	Quotes
Ease of accessing information quickly and in concise form	Accessibility	Accessible	Easily accessible anywhere and anytime.
		Easy access	So infinitely much information that you can choose the right for you without financial losses. In addition, you have the ability to control time. Easy access. I can use it in my spare time.
		Quick, Fast, Simple	It is simple, fast, and sometimes effective. Ease and content access is faster.
	Concise	Summarized information, brief information	It made me stop reading long books full of words. "It gives me the summary"
Access to experts and specialists	Specialists	Experts, Specialists	Easily discussing with specialists and parents about an educational topic. I like to follow child-rearing specialists because they design ways and means to help raise the child through their accounts. As it enriches our information and facilitate access to specialists

Table 9 — Continued

Obtaining information and benefitting from solutions to problems	Solutions, benefit	Benefit, Effective, Solutions	Because they are short and realistic solutions that can be applied. The benefit in applying it with my children and I found a good effect. It is simple, fast, and sometimes effective. Ease of access to information in addition to sharing and finding solutions.
	Information	Education, Knowledge	To educate myself. To just know it.
		Information	One of the most important reasons is that you can use it at any time and that it can also provide valuable information. As it enriches our information and facilitate access to specialists.
	Protective factor	Avoid problems	To avoid educational problems. it is always better to have a previous idea of any possible problems that may occur in the future

Table 9 — Continued

It is a way to share their own ideas and experiences and receive practical advice	Sharing experiences	Experiences	Gain wider experience in all fields There is a chance for taking as much as possible from the experiences of educators and mothers Knowing others' experiences
	Sharing ideas	Others, People, Sharing	Sharing ideas is good for increasing knowledge. The easiest way to share ideas with others You may listen to information from several people and each of them has his own vision and point of view. I can also select what is useful and can be applied, and sometimes there are new ways (that is, newly discovered) of which you may hear for the first time and it may be someone who introduced you to it. This one may be thousands of miles away from you, but with the social media, it is delivered to you to listen to it for the first time.
	Practical Advice	Practical, Applied	The advice is practical not theoretical As it gives examples of applied behavior not just random theoretical talk I can also select what is useful and can be applied, and sometimes there are new ways (that is, newly discovered) of which you may hear for the first time and it may be someone who introduced you to it.

Table 10*Code Analysis of Reasons for Dislike Using Social Media for Parental Knowledge*

Themes	Categories	Codes	Quotes
Information is not always reliable and could be conflicting	Information	Conflicting/Contradiction	Contradiction of opinions Contradiction of opinions among specialists Due to many errors and conflicting information
		Information	Some information is incorrect Some of them are false information Some people Sometimes give wrong or unwittingly wrong information about raising children
	Reliability	Reality	A lot of people talk about education in an ideal way or in a way which is far from reality, untested or unclear Too many hypocrites and losers express their opinions and tell words that do not apply to reality at all
		Reliable/Reliability	The information may not be completely reliable Not all platforms, but most of them, do not have enough reliability.

Table 10 — Continued

The sources of information may not be credible, or known	Anonymity	Anonymous, Background, Reference	Sometimes there is no reliable reference or reference for those who talk about education. Everyone talks about education and advice from his/her point of view or his/her personal experience, and some of them may be wrong. Therefore, the recipient who wants to acquire knowledge must be extremely aware of that I don't trust anonymous sources. Not knowing the speaker's experience and scientific background
	Credibility of Speaker	Credible/Credibility	They do not always have credibility or provide realistic solutions. Credibility
		Specialists	Not everyone who gives information about education and upbringing is a specialist. Some of them do not give education lessons or even have a certificate, but they talk about raising children and methods of punishment, while they do not know anything about children
Takes up too much time	Time	Time	One of the main reasons I don't like about using social media is time elapses quickly without realizing that A waste of time I often don't have time to read about this kind of knowledge

Table 11

List of the Podcasts that Suggested by the Saudi Parents for Parental Knowledge

	Related to Parenting		Psychology	General
Podcasts	Arabic Language	Dr. Heba Hariri (23 times)	Saturday Couch (3 times) Dr. Osama Bin Nejafan (on Wojden podcast) to prevent mantel health issues.	Morabbaa by Hatim Najar
		<i>Consultation with Sarah</i> (14 times)		Podcast Abajora by Lubna Alkhamis
		Mama Melons Podcast by Iman Battikha		Cup
		MishBilshibshib		(Gate of All) by Lujen Daghestani
		Bannon Podcast		Mana by Muhmed alhaji
		Podcast parenting and awareness (2 times)		
		Gracious childhood		
		Umbrella by Bassma		
		Happy mother club		
	Twitter Accounts	English Language	Parenting beyond	
Life kit: Parenting				
Dr. Mustafa AboSaad (3 times)				
Mosab Shaheen				
Dr. Ibrhim Alkhulaifi				
Dr Jasem Almotua (4 times)				
SoundCloud		Maeen (by dr. Jasem Almotua) (2 times)		
		Dr. Khaled Alholybi		
		Qyadiya		

Table 12*Code Analysis of the Topics Suggested by Parents for Parenting Specialists to Discuss*

Themes	Categories	Codes	Quotes
Concern about influences from social media via electronic devices	Influences	Celebrities	Children are influenced by social media celebrities and try to imitate them.
		Electronic devices	Ways to protect the child from electronic games and websites. Influence of devices and harassment The child's attachment to modern devices, like Mobile and PlayStation.
		Social media	The danger of children being affected by inappropriate things that they may see through social media programs.
Concern about parental mental health and pressure on parents and children	Related to parents	Anxiety, Depression	Parental anxiety. The psychology of parents and its impact on raising children.
		Pressure	The ambition to reach the ideal in raising children may cause great pressure on parents because their circumstances differ from those which they see in the experiences of parents presented to them in the media.
		Society interfering with child raising	The interference of parents and society in raising your son make your task a difficult one, like when they interfere in feeding him unhealthy foods, sweets, etc. They may also interfere in things like the Internet, electronic games and applications.

Table 12 — Continued

	Related to children	Separation/divorce and children	Dealing with the son in divorce cases
		Sensitive children	Dealing with sensitive children who cry over the slightest reason.
Concern about protecting children	Concerns about harm from other children	Bullying/Violence	How can I protect him from outside society, bullying, violence and all the things that could hurt him/her? Child protection from harassment and bullying - How can I protect my child from toxic thoughts, bad company and bad people who want to turn children against their parents.
		Sexual/ Puberty education	Awareness of sexual culture and how to discuss it with children.
	Parent as protector	Protect	Child protection from harassment and bullying - How can I protect my child from toxic thoughts, bad company and bad people who want to turn children against their parents.
		Teach children about religion	Developing the religious conscience in children and parents is the most basic necessities of life.
Concern about relationships between children and other children	Relationships	Neighbors, Siblings	The child's behavior with his brothers and neighbors.
		Relationships	How can the relationship between children be improved and how can they be accustomed to honesty?

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