



The impact of social media use on the culture of dialogue among Arab youth
A field study on a sample of Arab youth Facebook users

GUEDIRI Safa

University Ibn Khaldoun of tiaret (algeria), safa.guediri@univ-tiaret.dz

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Abstract:

This study aimed to elucidate the impact of social networks on the culture of dialogue among Arab youth..

The study revealed several key findings: social networks contribute slightly to improving the language of dialogue among Arab youth. Additionally, the study confirmed a change in the dialogue patterns of Arab youth in real life following their use of social networks, as evidenced by their increased ability to listen to others' opinions. The study also showed that engaging in discussions with friends and others via social networks helps youth bridge different viewpoints on issues and even creates new interests among those involved in the dialogue.

Keywords: Arab youth, dialogue culture, dialogue values, Facebook , Social networks.

I. INTRODUCTION

In recent times, the world has witnessed numerous technological advancements, especially in the field of communication and interaction, which has made the world feel like a small village. These developments have bridged the vast distances between people and societies, primarily through social networks. These networks serve as spaces for interaction among peoples, offering virtual communication opportunities for individuals and communities. Leading social networks such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram have topped the charts in terms of users and subscribers. Each network has distinctive features that differentiate it from others, yet all facilitate user engagement through publishing, commenting, and responding.

Studies indicate specific usage patterns across different Arab regions: Facebook is popular among the general public, Instagram is favored by celebrities, and Twitter is extensively used in the Gulf Arab countries. These platforms provide various communication methods, including text, audio, and video messages, as well as features for posting, commenting, and responding, all of which foster dialogue, discussion, and opinion exchange among users.

In summary, social networks create a virtual space where users can engage under pseudonyms, allowing for comfortable and sometimes anonymous expression, unlike traditional media platforms where dialogue and opinion exchange are more formal. Therefore, the culture of dialogue draws significant importance from the use of social networks and technology.

Thus, this study aims to explore the impact of social media use on fostering a culture of dialogue among Arab youth. The overarching question posed by this study is: What is the impact of social media use on the culture of dialogue among Arab youth?

This main question leads us to the following sub-questions:

- What are the habits and usage patterns of Arab youth on social networks?
- Has the use of social networks influenced the level of dialogue among Arab youth?
- What are the reflections of social networks on the culture of dialogue among Arab youth in real life?

Definition of Concepts and Terms:

1. Social Networks:

◦ **Terminologically:** "A system of electronic networks that allows subscribers to create a personal site and then connect it through an electronic social system with other members who have the same interests and hobbies". (BELKHIRI, 2014, p. 20)

◦ **Operationally:** A set of social networks on the internet that enables Arab youth to subscribe and use them for communication and dialogue by sharing their ideas, exchanging discussions, and opinions on various topics.

2. Culture of Dialogue:

○ **Terminologically:** "A set of intellectual rules, principles, and behavioral standards that individuals believe in when interacting with others. It includes manners and civilized differences that drive an individual to a level of politeness and appreciation for others, fostering social acceptance and overcoming social situation challenges". (Halal & Dalaa, 2022, p. 369)

○ **Operationally:** A set of behaviors and rules adopted by Arab youth in their dialogue through social networks

3. Arab Youth:

○ **Terminologically:** "Youth is a stage of life that an individual passes through while transitioning between successive life stages, moving from childhood to youth. Defining the youth period is approximate because human age stages overlap. However, this stage is characterized by its unique physical, psychological, social, and mental traits that distinguish it from other stages in a person's life". (Arik & Nessib, 2019, p. 10)

○ **Operationally:** A group of individuals aged between 18 and 30 years who use social networks, especially Facebook, to engage in dialogue and exchange opinions with others.

II. : Analysis of the study results

Table (1) : Frequency of Social Network Use Among Respondents

Answer	Repetition	Percentage
Always	58	58
Often	23	23
Rarely	19	19
Total	100	100.0

The source : Extracted from the Questionnaire

Table 1 shows that 58%, equivalent to 58 respondents, reported using social networks "always" This high percentage is due to the widespread use of social networks among the sample members, attributed to the free access, ease of use, and the entertainment, communication, and interaction they offer. In second place, "often" was chosen by 23% of the respondents, which equals 23 individuals. Meanwhile, a small percentage, approximately 19%, representing 19 respondents, indicated that they "rarely" use social networks.

Table (2) : Duration of Time Arab Youth Spend Daily on Social Networks

Answer	Repetition	Percentage
Less than 1 hour	7	7
1 to 2 hours	20	20
2 to 4 hours	58	58
More than 4 hours	15	15
Total	100	100.0

The source: Extracted from the Questionnaire

Table 2 shows that 58%, equivalent to 58 respondents, reported using social networks "2 to 4 hours" daily. In second place, "1 to 2 hours" was chosen by 20% of the respondents, which

equals 20 individuals. Meanwhile, a small percentage, approximately 7%, representing 7 respondents, indicated that they use social networks for "more than 4 hours" daily.

Table (3) : Identity of Respondents on Social Networks

Answer	Repetition	Percentage
Your real picture and real name	25	25
Your picture and name are both fictional	11	11
Real picture and fictitious name	19	19
Fictitious picture and real name	45	45
Total	100	100.0

The source: Extracted from the Questionnaire

Table 3 shows that 45%, equivalent to 45 respondents, reported using a "fictitious picture and real name" This is due to the respondents' reluctance to use their real pictures on social networks, opting for alternative images for privacy reasons. In second place, "your real picture and real name" was chosen by 25% of the respondents, which equals 25 individuals. The third place was occupied by "real picture and fictitious name," chosen by 19% of the respondents, equating to 19 individuals. Meanwhile, a small percentage, approximately 11%, representing 11 respondents, indicated using a "fictitious picture and fictitious name."

Table (4) : Preferred Method of Dialogue Among Arab Youth on Social Networks

Answer	Repetition	Percentage
Private chatting	12	12
Commenting on post	20	20
Both	68	68
Total	100	100.0

The source: Extracted from the Questionnaire

table 4 shows that 68%, equivalent to 68 respondents, reported using "both" private chatting and commenting on posts. In second place, "commenting on posts" was chosen by 20% of the respondents, which equals 20 individuals. Meanwhile, "private chatting" was selected by 12% of the respondents, representing 12 individuals. This indicates that respondents prefer to discuss and engage in social, political, and cultural topics on larger accounts, while they use private chatting for more personal discussions or extended conversations.

Table (5) : Arab Youth's Opinion on the Contribution of Social Networks to Promoting Dialogue Culture

Answer	Repetition	Percentage
Yes	61	61
Maybe	22	22
No	17	17
Total	100	100.0

The source: Extracted from the Questionnaire

Table 5 shows that "Yes" was chosen by 61% of the respondents, equivalent to 61 individuals. This is attributed to the unique features of social networks, which allow users to engage in discussions and dialogues through posting, commenting, or even private chatting via text, audio, and video messages. In second place, "Maybe" was selected by 22% of the respondents, representing 22 individuals. Meanwhile, "No" was chosen by a small percentage, approximately 17%, equating to 17 respondents.

Table (6) : Improvement in Conversational Language Due to Social Network Interaction

Answer	Repetition	Percentage
Improved significantly	19	19
Improved slightly	62	62
Remained the same	19	19
Total	100	100.0

The source: Extracted from the Questionnaire

Table 6 shows that 62%, equivalent to 62 respondents, reported that their dialogue "improved slightly". This improvement is attributed to Arab youth interacting closely, which helps correct some misconceptions and clarify ambiguous or incorrect ideas about countries or peoples. Meanwhile, "improved significantly" and "Remained the same" were reported equally by 19% of the respondents each, representing 19 individuals.

Table (7) : Observations of Changes in Arab Youth's Dialogue Style on Social Networks

Answer	Repetition	Percentage
Yes	65	65
No	35	35
Total	100	100.0

The source: Extracted from the Questionnaire

Table 7 shows that 65%, equivalent to 65 respondents, answered "Yes". This is attributed to the impact of social networks on the culture and style of dialogue among their users. In second place, "No" was selected by 35% of the respondents, representing 35 individuals.

Table (8) : If the answer is Yes, how so?

Answer	Repetition	Percentage
Dialogue in a refined language with others	14	14
Dialogue in a calm manner	20	20
Using stronger persuasive techniques	58	58
Speaking in a more error-prone manner than before	8	8
Total	100	100.0

The source: Extracted from the Questionnaire

Table 8 shows that 58%, equivalent to 58 respondents, reported "using stronger persuasive techniques" This is attributed to the fact that topics discussed on social networks often require evidence and arguments to support their validity, leading users to adopt this approach, which has influenced their dialogue culture with others. In second place, "dialogue in a calm manner" was chosen by 20% of the respondents, representing 20 individuals. "Dialogue in a refined language with others" was selected by 14% of the respondents, equivalent to 14 individuals. Meanwhile, "speaking in a more error-prone manner than before" was reported by a small percentage, approximately 8%, representing 8 respondents.

Table (9) : Similarity in Dialogue Style Between Arab Youth and Youth from Their Own Country

Answer	Repetition	Percentage
Yes	47	47
No	20	20
Sometimes	33	33
Total	100	100.0

The source: Extracted from the Questionnaire

Table 9 shows that 47%, equivalent to 47 respondents, reported "Yes" This is attributed to the strong relationships among Arab youth and the ability of social networks to bring users closer together, allowing interactions between distant individuals as if they were in the same geographical area. In second place, "Sometimes" was chosen by 33% of the respondents, representing 33 individuals. Meanwhile, "No" also received 20%, equivalent to 20 respondents, placing it last.

Table (10) : Arab Youth's Dialogue on Topics in the Virtual World Compared to Real Life

Answer	Repetition	Percentage
Yes	63	63
No	37	37
Total	100	100.0

The source: Extracted from the Questionnaire

Table (10) shows that 63%, equivalent to 63 respondents, answered "Yes" while 37%, equivalent to 37 respondents, answered "No".

Table (11) : Potential for Friends to Notice Changes in Dialogue Style After Using Social Networks

Answer	Repetition	Percentage
Yes	52	52
No	48	48
Total	100	100.0

The source: Extracted from the Questionnaire

Table 11 shows that the responses were closely distributed between "Yes" and "No". "Yes" was chosen by 52% of the respondents, equivalent to 52 individuals, indicating the impact of social networks on the culture and style of dialogue among users and Arab youth. Meanwhile, "No" was selected by 48% of the respondents, representing 48 individuals.

Table (12) : Extent to Which Arab Youth Feel Their Dialogue Style in Real Life Has Changed After Using Social Networks

Answer	Repetition	Percentage
Yes	53	53
No	47	47
Total	100	100.0

The source: Extracted from the Questionnaire

Table 12 shows that 53%, equivalent to 53 respondents, answered "Yes" This is attributed to the strong influence of social networks on dialogue, which starts in the virtual world and extends to the real lives of Arab youth, especially for those who use their real pictures and names. In second place, "No" was chosen by 47% of the respondents, representing 47 individuals. This is reflective of users who only use fictitious pictures and names, engaging in humorous or less serious discussions on social networks, and who may struggle to maintain such dialogue styles in real-life interactions.

Table (13) :Extent to Which Dialogue on Social Networks Adds Positive Value to Real-Life Communication

Answer	Repetition	Percentage
Yes	57	57
No	43	43
Total	100	100.0

The source: Extracted from the Questionnaire

Table 13 shows that 57%, equivalent to 57 respondents, answered "Yes" In second place, "No" was chosen by 43% of the respondents, representing 43 individuals.

Table (14) : If the answer is Yes, how so?

Answer	Repetition	Percentage
Addressing in a new style	37	37
Listening to others' opinions	63	63
Total	100	100.0

The source: Extracted from the Questionnaire

Table 14 shows that 63%, equivalent to 63 respondents, reported "listening to others' opinions" This change is considered a success in dialogue. In second place, " **Addressing in a new style** " was chosen by 37% of the respondents, representing 37 individuals.

Table (15) : Impact of Discussing Various Issues with Friends via Social Networks

Answer	Repetition	Percentage
Increased your awareness of various issues	45	17
Taught you a new way of thinking	37	14
Allowed you to express yourself freely about prevailing societal conditions	53	21
Helped to bridge viewpoints on issues	62	24
Created new interests for you	57	22
Did not change anything	6	2
Total	260	100.0

The source: Extracted from the Questionnaire

Table 15 shows the responses in the following order:

- Helped to bridge viewpoints on issues: 24%, equivalent to 62 respondents.
- Created new interests for you: 22%, equivalent to 57 respondents.
- Allowed you to express yourself freely about prevailing societal conditions: 21%, equivalent to 53 respondents.
- Increased your awareness of various issues: 17%, equivalent to 45 respondents.
- Taught you a new way of thinking: 14%, equivalent to 37 respondents.
- Did not change anything: 6%, equivalent to 6 respondents.

This reflects that dialogue through social networks, particularly regarding Arab issues, has generally had a positive impact. Most respondents noted that it helped bridge viewpoints on issues and increased their awareness. Additionally, it created new interests for some users, indicating that such dialogue is beneficial to Arab youth. However, those who felt it "did not change anything" likely had superficial discussions or engaged in topics outside the core issues.

III. Methods and Materials

1. Study Methodology:

Given the specific nature of our topic, we will adopt the survey methodology.

As defined by Mohammed Abdel Hamid, "it is a specialized form of collecting information about individuals' status, behavior, perceptions, feelings, and attitudes. It is considered the main and standard method for gathering information when the study covers the entire community or when the sample is large and widespread, making it difficult to reach all its members individually". (Abdel amid, p. 158)

This study aims to understand the impact of social network use on the culture of dialogue among Arab youth. This objective led us to choose this methodology, as it is one of the methods that involve scientific analysis and interpretation of the phenomenon of social network use, analyzing and interpreting its data, and deriving conclusions.

2. Study Instrument:

Questionnaire: An electronic questionnaire was designed and distributed in virtual groups for posting or chatting on Facebook to reach the largest possible number of Arab youth. The questionnaire included 14 questions divided into three sections: the first section focused on the habits and usage patterns of Arab youth on Facebook; the second section addressed the impact of social network use on the level of dialogue among Arab youth; the third section examined the reflections of social network use on the culture of dialogue among Arab youth in real life. Lastly, there was an open-ended evaluative question.

3. Population and Sample of the Study:

3.1 Study Population:

The study population comprises all Arab youth. Due to the large size of this population, it is challenging to reach the entire research community. Therefore, the researchers employed a sampling method derived from the larger or original research population.

3.2 Study Sample:

The study was conducted on a convenience sample of Arab youth who have accounts on social networks and use Facebook as a means of dialogue with others. The sample size was estimated at 100 individuals, and all responses were accepted and considered. The sample was chosen for its accessibility, as the questionnaires were distributed to those encountered by the researcher who use Facebook.

IV. Results and discussion :

After examining the impact of social network usage on the culture of dialogue among Arab youth, the study yielded the following results:

- The study revealed that Arab youth consistently use social networks.
- It was found that Arab youth typically spend between two to four hours daily on social networks.
- The study indicated that Arab youth use pseudonyms alongside their real names in their virtual social network accounts.

- The research confirmed that Arab youth prefer private chatting and commenting on posts when engaging in dialogue with others on social networks.
- Arab youth perceive that social networks contribute to promoting a culture of dialogue.
- The study showed that social networks have a minimal impact on improving the dialogical language among Arab youth.
- The research indicated that social networks help change the style of dialogue among Arab youth, enabling them to use persuasive techniques and maintain a calm conversational style.
- It was confirmed that Arab youth interact with peers from other Arab countries in the same manner as they do with those from their own country.
- The study revealed that Arab youth engage in discussions on various topics in both virtual and real worlds with the same approach.
- The research highlighted a change in the style of dialogue after using social networks, as observed by the friends of Arab youth.
- The study confirmed a shift in the dialogical patterns of Arab youth in real life following their use of social networks.
- The study demonstrated the positive value added to real-life dialogue through interactions on social networks, especially like learning to listen to others' opinions.
- The research indicated that dialogue among Arab youth and their friends on social networks brings them closer in terms of viewpoints on discussed issues, fosters new interests among the interlocutors, and allows for free and fluent expression about prevailing social conditions, largely due to the virtual identity.

V. Conclusion:

Social networks represent a revolution in the field of communication due to their distinctive features. These networks support the dissemination of various cultures, including the culture of dialogue among Arab youth. The study observed that there are impacts and reflections on the culture of dialogue in both virtual and real-life environments due to the use of social networks and the practice of dialogue through them. The virtual world has significant influences on the real world.

Addressing a topic of this magnitude requires greater effort and further studies and research. Therefore, the results obtained are not final but can be considered preliminary findings that can serve as a starting point for addressing this topic from a more precise and deeper perspective.

Recommendations:

- Conduct training sessions on the proper use of social networks to prevent users from encountering unnecessary problems.
- Raise awareness among Arab youth and social network users in general about the importance of dialogue through social networks and its benefits.
- Undertake complementary studies to this research to reach additional conclusions, understand deeper relationships, and identify their causes and effects.

– **Referrals and references:**

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