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## **The Degree of Using Government Social Media Accounts in Qatar: The Awareness Level and The Satisfaction Degree of Qatari Users**

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### **Abstract**

This study shed light on the potential for public adoption of e-government through social media, as well as the future barriers to such expansion. The main objective of the study was to determine the degree of using government social media accounts in Qatar. A representative sample of 1,340 persons in Qatar aged 18 to 77 years old was chosen and interviewed using the Computer-Assisted Telephone Interviewing technology (CATI) to reflect the perspectives of the general population in the State of Qatar (Qataris and Expats). The study recommended that raising awareness of government social media accounts and focusing on the capabilities of these new modes of communication would be a significant step toward improving the usability and adoption of these platforms. Additionally, respondents are resistant to change, leaving government agencies with little choice but to launch awareness campaigns to emphasize the benefits of social media tools. Respondents responded that they would utilize these tools if needed, suggesting that shining a light on the benefits is an effective strategy to increase public acceptance. Finally, there is much space for development in Qatar's government-client contact via social media platforms. Many mutual benefits could be gained by adopting online strategies that would not be possible in traditional offline settings. Working from home (during the report's writing stage) and online learning at Qatar University and all Qatari schools during COVID-19 are two examples.



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**Keywords:** *Government; Social Media; Awareness; Satisfaction; E-Government; COVID-19; Qatar.*

## **1. Introduction**

With the advent of the notion of e-government, governments around the world recognized the significance of making their services more efficient and accessible. While individuals have become more Internet knowledgeable and have had positive experiences with good electronic services (e-Services) from the commercial sector, they are beginning to expect the same high standards from government agencies when it comes to public services (Kassen, 2022). Electronic government (e-government) claims to replicate the private sector by providing individuals and businesses with more efficient, transparent, and accessible public services (El Khatib et al., 2022). Although the benefits of e-government are well recognized, both developed and developing countries have been slow to implement and adopt the concept. Many studies have been conducted since the inception of the e-government concept to investigate the issues that influence e-government implementation in diverse national contexts (Al-Shafi and Weerakkody, 2010).

None of the current e-government research studies take a comprehensive view of service delivery and acceptance, nor do they provide any guidelines for comparing user (citizen) expectations to service providers' (a government agency) expectations of what constitutes good practice in terms of efficiency, usability, awareness, security, availability, and



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accessibility, among other things, of a given e-government service (Al-Shafi and Weerakkody, 2010).

Although some research initiatives have attempted to develop citizen satisfaction models for e-government (for example, Carter et al., 2008; Irani et al., 2007; Welch et al., 2005; Al-Sebie and Irani, 2005; Carter et al., 2005; Eyob, 2004), these models do not propose a systematic process for evaluating citizen satisfaction and expectations of e-government services against government perception.

Although the benefits of e-government are well recognized, both industrialized and developing countries have been slow to adopt and spread the concept. This is especially true in the Western Asian region, where, despite significant investment, most Arab countries have faced a variety of problems that have hampered the implementation and spread of their e-government projects (Al-Shafi and Weerakkody, 2008; Sahraoui, 2005). One such example is the state of Qatar. Qatar launched its e-government effort in 2000. The UN e-government readiness assessment (2008) ranks Qatar's e-government initiative 53rd in the world. The national e-government objective in Qatar, as in many other nations, is to attain maximum performance in electronically executing governmental activities through optimized business processes and integrated Information Technology (IT) solutions (ictQATAR, 2009).



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## 1.1 Research Problem

This study is the first to examine the degree of using government social media accounts in Qatar, the awareness level, and the satisfaction degree of Qatari users. This study gives light on the potential for public adoption of e-government through social media, as well as the future barriers to such expansion.

Governments can use the Internet to deliver services more effectively and efficiently than was previously possible, as well as to minimize national spending and transmit information to the general public. As a result, e-Government has spread worldwide. Governments around the world, both developed and developing, are investing extensively in order to become more effective, transparent, and engaging. However, in many parts of the world, public acceptance of e-Government has trailed below predictions. Governments all around the world are now embracing social media tools to enhance the adoption of their e-Government systems by further opening up their systems and transactions in the direction of a more transparent and participatory government.

In Qatar, the e-Government initiative was launched in 2000 with a low implementation rate. To establish a more transparent, efficient, and accountable administration, the Qatari e-administration portal incorporated new communication technologies, including the most recent social media platforms, to interact and reach out to the public. On the one



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hand, the site began to open up some of its information and make it available to the public.

## **1.2 Research Questions**

The main objective of the study is to determine the degree of using government social media accounts in Qatar.

The sub-question of the study is:

1. What is the efficiency of adopting e-Government social media in Qatar?
2. There are awareness and satisfaction with using government social media in Qatar?

## **1.3 Research Objective**

1. Explain the efficiency of adopting the e-Government social media in Qatar.
2. Explain the awareness and satisfaction of using government social media in Qatar.

## **2. Methodology**

The poll was conducted using a mobile phone in March 2020. The target demographic consists of adults who are at least 18 years old and live in Qatar at the time of the survey's reference period. In order to contact this population, SESRI interacts with adjacent mobile phone carriers to produce a cell phone sample using the dialing strategy specified. Because



about 98 percent of adult Qataris own a cell phone, a sample drawn from this type of frame should have excellent coverage and representation of the target population. To ensure that full call processes are followed for all phone numbers in the sample, the numbers are released for interviewing in phases. The usage of batches improves the survey's representativeness by spreading phone numbers uniformly across respondent attributes.

Each phone number in the sample requires at least seven attempts to complete the interview. Phone calls are made at various times of the day and on different days of the week to maximize the likelihood of reaching replies. Devoted interviewers would contact and strive to complete phone number interviews with break-off and mild refusal. The results of each phone number that was phoned during this survey are shown in table (1).

All individual interviews were integrated and saved in a single BLAISE data file after data collection. After that, the dataset was cleaned, coded, and saved in STATA formats for analysis. The data were analyzed using STATA, the statistical program for the social sciences, after weighting the final replies to account for the probability of selection and non-response. Univariate, bivariate, and multivariate analyses were done.

**Table (2-1): Calling dispositions**

<b>Disposition</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Completed	1340
Not completed	5770



Eligible	2069
Ineligible	3426
Unknown eligibility	275
Raw response rate (RR1)	36.4%
Adjusted response rate (RR2)	37.8%

### 3. Literature Review

#### 3.1 Adoption of E-Government

The delivery of government services has been transformed by technological advancements. The general public can now visit government websites and apply for services. Meanwhile, government personnel receive user requests and confirm that they match the necessary parameters. While there are numerous advantages to such a paradigm change, there is still a need to handle potential difficulties. Such difficulties can erode public satisfaction with e-government services (Benmansour et al., 2019).

Several goals are shared by all sectors in the e-government agenda. The primary goal is to make government operations more effective by lowering the amount of time citizens spend looking for government services and providing simple and secure services. E-government is thus designed to shift the activities of acquiring, verifying, exchanging, and distributing papers to electronic platforms that only authorized parties can access (Al-Shafi and Weerakkody, 2009). E-government systems can also



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be accessible by multiple persons at the same time, allowing more people to access government services.

According to Al-Yafi et al. (2016), e-government has numerous benefits, including supporting governments in improving public service efficiency. However, the influence of e-government on service efficiency has yet to be adequately studied in terms of key actors. Many scholars have taken a user-centric approach while ignoring the provider perspective, which might be critical in evaluating the performance of government service providers (Al-Yafi et al., 2016). Weerakkody et al. (2013) conducted a systematic review on the adoption of e-government services across ministries and discovered that speed of delivery, ease of use, control, enjoyment, and reliability were key drivers of service quality. Notably, avoidance of interaction did not appear to be connected to willingness to use e-government services (Weerakkody et al., 2013).

Citizens (government-to-citizens), governments (government-to-government), and companies (government-to-businesses) are the three constituents of an e-government paradigm proposed by Zhou (2001). We concentrated on government-to-citizen e-government systems in our study. These technologies are supposed to make citizens' interactions with the government more time-consuming and easier to execute through activities such as renewing licenses, certificates, permits, and paying taxes (Ezz, 2003). However, the fundamental challenge with e-government is user adoption (Ghaziri, 2003). E-government will not





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attain its full potential—and governments will not reap its full benefits—unless users choose to interact with the government through the new technology. As a result, it is critical to comprehend the aspects that may impact people' acceptance of e-government services.

### **3.2 E-Government in Qatar**

Qatar is one of the Middle Eastern countries that has been in the forefront of implementing e-government. According to some experts, Qatar's early forms of e-government were among the most democratic in the region (Chatfield and Alhujran, 2009). In Qatar, there were two rounds of e-government efforts. Qatar's e-government services were implemented in 2000, with the government's ultimate goal of making all services available online or via mobile phone. However, it was not until 2004 that information and communication technology (ICT) was integrated into government planning, resulting in the establishment of the Supreme Council of Information and Communication Technology, also known as IctQatar, which later acquired control of all e-government efforts. H.E. Prime Minister Sheikh Abdullah bin Nasser bin Khalifa Al Thani established a committee in late 2013 that was led by IctQatar and comprised eight of the main ministries. The committee was tasked with establishing and directing the implementation of a nationwide e-government strategy, which included the introduction of the Baladiya application, which was the first to get widespread government promotion in the form of billboards across the country.



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### **3.3 Government Social Media**

Social media provides a shared space for individuals to share interests and share ideas. Social media allows users to build communities through continuous communication. Information exchange and long-term growth increase members to develop loyal social relations (Raacke and Bonds-Raacke, 2008). According to Java et al., (2009), the measure of data distributed via web-based networking media by clients is emphatically connected with the number of devotees the client has members to develop loyal social relations (Raacke and Bonds-Raacke, 2008). According to Java et al., (2009), the measure of data distributed via web-based networking media by clients is emphatically connected with the number of devotees the client has.

A government must manage information dissemination activities in response to various public demands; they must grasp the needs of the community before the community itself and discover which amenities the community requires in order to make a lasting impression (Kim and Perdue, 2013). Several public services now provide services and receive complaints via social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram (Kim and Ko, 2012). Many regional leaders are also active on social media, thus communication between the community and the government is not limited by time, geography, or medium.

As a result, traditional broad communications' single-direction data transfer has evolved into an intuitive two-path type of direct interaction.



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The increased interchange efficacy of web-based social networking has enticed a slew of taxpayer-funded organizations to expand their presentation to Internet online networking (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010). As a result, the benefits of social media may be maximized. As a result, a set of rules for community management and governance has been formed, and the government has also devised appropriate information distribution tactics for social media.

The advantages of this social media community include transmitting information and community services, investing in taxpayers' requests, and dealing with a network. This practice can promote community participation and satisfaction with public services. Verhagen et al., (2011) observed that when conducting online transactions, individuals as clients will be more satisfied with their site if they have a positive experience. McAlexander et al., (2002) noted that contact and communication between users in a community can promote community loyalty and satisfaction and that the amount of community loyalty is critical to the long-term administration of the community platform.

#### **4. Results**

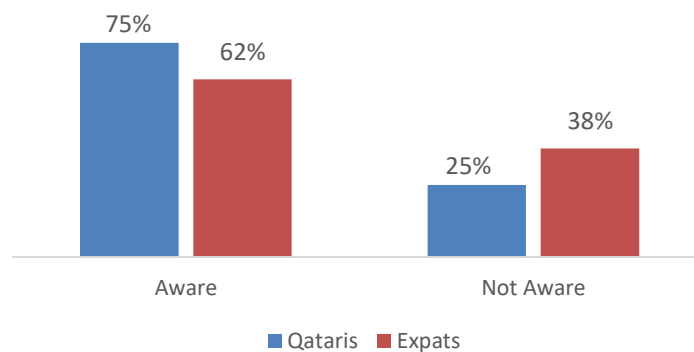
Social media has recently become omnipresent and crucial for information sharing, as well as a popular medium for social contact. Social media accounts have permeated every aspect of daily life, whether for individuals or for diverse organizations. Citizens can engage in direct interaction with officials and government entities via social media.



Similarly, it allows those officials and government bodies to respond. Because social media is becoming increasingly important in daily life, this section investigates the awareness and use of government social media accounts among Qataris and white-collar expats living in Qatar.

Overall, three-quarters (75%) of Qataris and around two-thirds (62%) of ex-pats are aware of social media accounts supplied by the Qatari government (see Figure 4-1).

**Figure (4-1) Overall Awareness of Social Media Accounts**

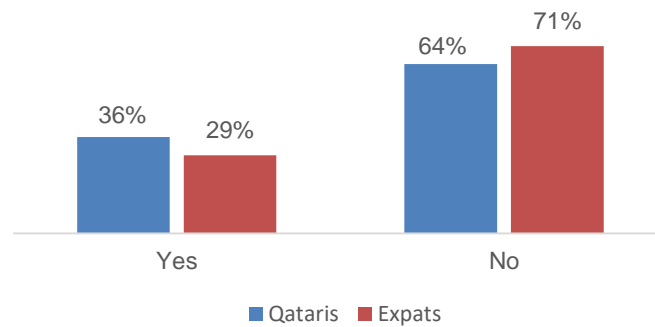


#### **4.1 Using Social Media Accounts to Interact with the Government**

Respondents remarked on their e-government contacts at the heart of the poll. Respondents were specifically asked if they have interacted with the government via any of the government's social media channels. Figure (4-2) shows that more than one-quarter of white-collar expatriates (29%) and more than one-third (36%) of Qataris do so.



**Figure (4-2) Using Social Media Accounts to Interact with the Government**



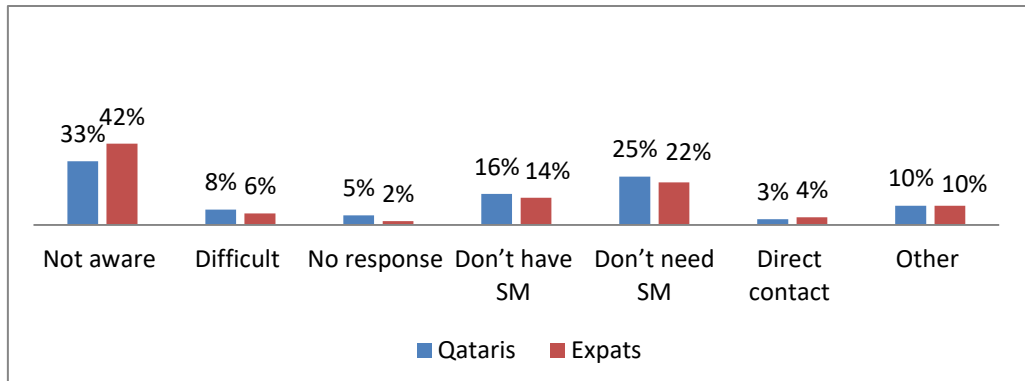
An open-ended question was asked of individuals who did not use social media accounts to connect with the government to get a broad picture of what could be the cause for more than two-thirds of the participants not doing so. These text replies were then processed and organized into categories. One-third (33%) of Qataris and 42% of expats stated they were unaware of the government's social media presence. Furthermore, one-quarter of Qataris and 22% of expats said they do not require social media profiles. Furthermore, 16% of Qataris and 14% of expats reported having no social media accounts. As indicated in Table (4-1) and Figure (4-3), the remaining respondents (26% Qataris and 22% expats) gave various reasons for not accessing the government's social media accounts.



**Table (4-1): Reasons for not Using Social Media Accounts**

	<b>Qataris %</b>	<b>Expats %</b>
<b>I am not aware of the government social media accounts</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>42%</b>
<b>I don't need social media accounts</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>22%</b>
<b>I don't have social media accounts</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>14%</b>
<b>I feel it would be difficult to use social media accounts</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>6%</b>
<b>No response from government social media accounts</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>2%</b>
<b>I prefer direct contact through website, telephone, Metrash or Hukoomi</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>4%</b>
<b>I follow news only</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>1%</b>
<b>I don't like social media accounts</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>3%</b>
<b>I don't have time</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>2%</b>
<b>I don't trust social media accounts</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>1%</b>
<b>Other ( haven't tried it before, I don't know how to read or write, personal reasons ...)</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>3%</b>

**Figure (4-3) Reasons for not Using Social Media Accounts**



Another follow-up question was posed to people who do not utilize social media accounts to connect with the government, asking them to explain why they should. These text replies were then processed and organized into categories. More awareness initiatives, according to about 16% of Qataris and a quarter (26%) of expats, could encourage them to use social media accounts to connect with the government. Furthermore, 16% of Qataris and 14% of expats believe they will use social media profiles once they deem it necessary to contact the government. While 12% of Qataris and 10% of expats say that giving incentives such as time, effort, and money savings could drive individuals to use social media accounts to connect with the government. Around 3% of Qataris and 2% of expats said that the engagement of those accounts with users, speed, and security influence their selection. Furthermore, 9 percent of Qataris and 8 percent of expats said that they use social media accounts to connect with the government for a variety of reasons, including following the news, checking updates on a specific topic (such as the Corona Virus), or filing

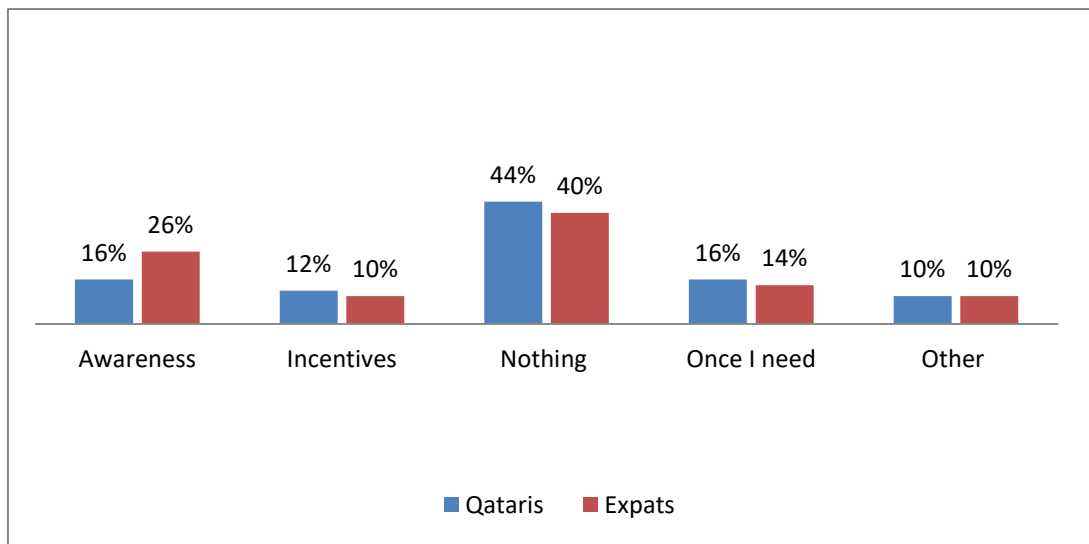


a complaint. Notably, 44 percent of Qataris and 40 percent of expats said nothing could force them to use it (see Table (4-2) and Figure (4-4)).

**Table (4-2): Using Social Media Accounts to Interact with the Government**

	Qataris %	Expats%
Providing more awareness campaigns	16	26
I will use it once I need it	16	14
Providing incentives (saving time, money, effort)	12	10
Check updates/News/ Information	3	4
Interaction/ Speed/ Security	3	2
Queries /File complaints	2	1
Other	4	3
Nothing will make me use it	44	40

**Figure (4-4) Using Social Media Accounts to Interact with the Government**







## 4.2 Top Social Media Accounts

Respondents who indicated the use of social media to connect with the government were asked to name up to five of the key social media accounts that they most often use in engaging with any government body in an open-ended question. The responses were then coded and categorized. The findings for respondents' first choice are shown in Figure (4-5) below. Twitter (39%) was the most popular social media account among Qataris. Instagram (12%) came in second, followed by WhatsApp (4%). Other social media accounts cited by a small percentage of Qataris were Facebook (2%) and Snapchat (2%). Similarly, Twitter (26%) topped the list of social media accounts for expats. However, Facebook (14%) was followed by Instagram (11%), and WhatsApp (5%). Only a small percentage of white-collar workers (1%) mentioned Snapchat.

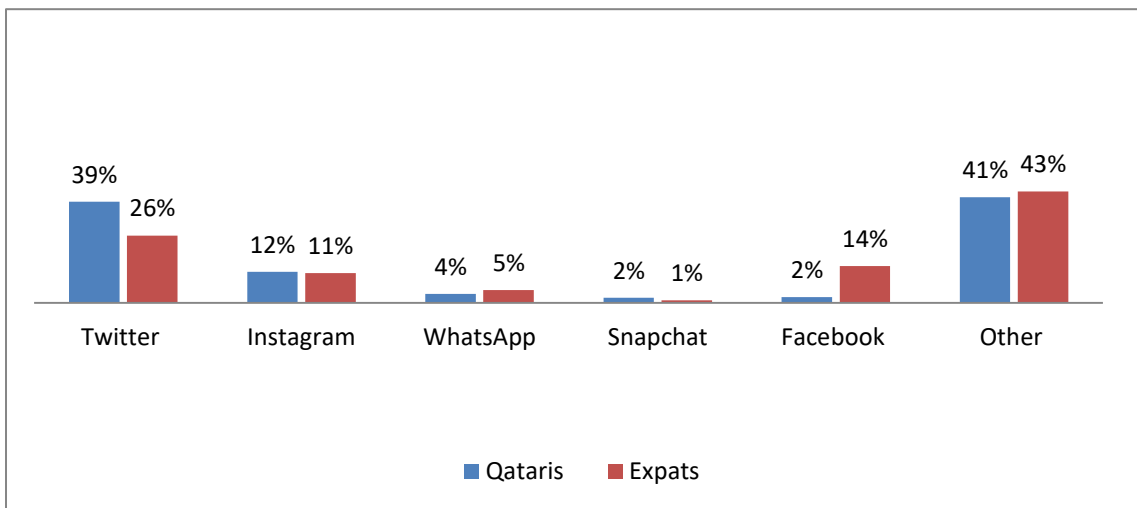
Notably, despite the fact that the survey specifically requested respondents to name social media accounts, approximately 41 percent of Qataris and 43 percent of Expats cited alternative channels they most frequently utilize to connect with the government body. Figure (4-6) depicts the breakdown of those 41% Qataris and 43% Expats. Ashgal and various ministries such as the Ministry of Commerce, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Public Health, Ministry of Transportation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Deference, Ministry of Education and



Higher Education, and Ministry of Labor were reported by approximately 58 percent of Qataris and 55 percent of white-collars.

Furthermore, approximately 11% of Qataris and 7% of expats named Metrash as their primary point of contact with the government. Furthermore, approximately 8% of Qataris and 11% of expats indicated the traffic department as their primary point of contact. However, nearly a quarter of respondents (23% of Qataris and 27% of expats) mentioned Qatar civil aviation, Qatar rail, Qatar weather, traffic department, websites, healthcare systems, schools, banks, news agencies, Jazeera TV, Ooredoo, Hukoomi, Katara, Kahrama, HR emails, and municipalities as additional sources of interaction with the government.

**Figure (4-5): Main Social Media Accounts**





**Figure (4-6): Other Sources to Interact with the Government**

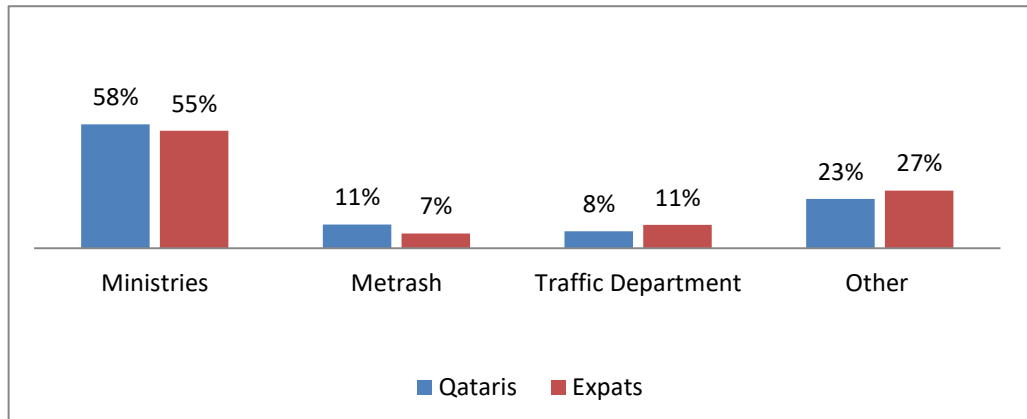


Table (4-3) displays the four other important social media accounts that Qataris and Expats most frequently utilize when interacting with any government organization. For Qataris, Twitter was the most popular social media account, followed by Instagram, Snapchat, WhatsApp, and Facebook. Ministries, Metrash, Hukoomi, Oun, Kahrama, Ooreadoo, municipalities, schools, immigration, and the traffic agency are among the other sources. Twitter topped the list of social media accounts for Expats as well. Facebook was followed by Instagram, WhatsApp, and Snapchat on the list. Ministries, Metrash, Hukoomi, Oun, Kahrama, Ooreadoo, municipalities, schools, immigration, and the traffic agency are among the other sources.

**Table (4-3): Main Social Media Accounts that Qataris and Expats Use to Interact with the Government (Four Other Choices)**



		Second Choice %	Third Choice %	Fourth Choice %	Fifth Choice %
<b>Twitter</b>	<b>Qataris</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>29</b>
	<b>Expats</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Instagram</b>	<b>Qataris</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
	<b>Expats</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Snapchat</b>	<b>Qataris</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>5</b>
	<b>Expats</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>WhatsApp</b>	<b>Qataris</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>
	<b>Expats</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Facebook</b>	<b>Qataris</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>5</b>
	<b>Expats</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>Ministries/Ashgal</b>	<b>Qataris</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>43</b>
	<b>Expats</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Healthcare systems</b>	<b>Qataris</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>
	<b>Expats</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Metrash/ Hukoomi/Oun</b>	<b>Qataris</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
	<b>Expats</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Kahrama</b>	<b>Qataris</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
	<b>Expats</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Traffic Department</b>	<b>Qataris</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>-</b>
	<b>Expats</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Municipalities</b>	<b>Qataris</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>4</b>
	<b>Expats</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Ooredoo</b>	<b>Qataris</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>-</b>
	<b>Expats</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Schools</b>	<b>Qataris</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>

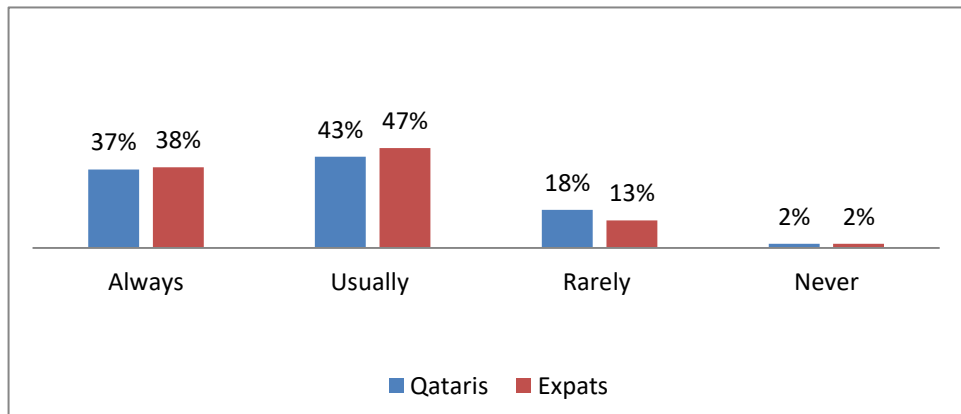


	<b>Expats</b>	-	-	-	-
<b>Banks</b>	<b>Qataris</b>	-	-	-	-
	<b>Expats</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	-	-
<b>Immigration (Passport/Visa)</b>	<b>Qataris</b>	-	<b>1</b>	-	-
	<b>Expats</b>	-	<b>3</b>	-	-
<b>Other</b>	<b>Qataris</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>
	<b>Expats</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>15</b>

### 4.3 Frequency Usage of Social Media Accounts

In addition, respondents were asked how frequently they use their social media accounts. According to the study's findings, there is no significant difference between the values indicated by Qataris and those expressed by white-collar expatriates. Approximately 37% of Qataris reported always, 43% reported frequently, and 18% reported rarely. Similarly, around 38% of Expats reported always, 47% reported usually, and 13% reported rarely. Notably, 2% of both Qataris and expats reported never used social media accounts to contact with the government, while previously indicating the contrary (see Figure 4-7)

**Figure 4-7: Usage of Social Media Accounts**

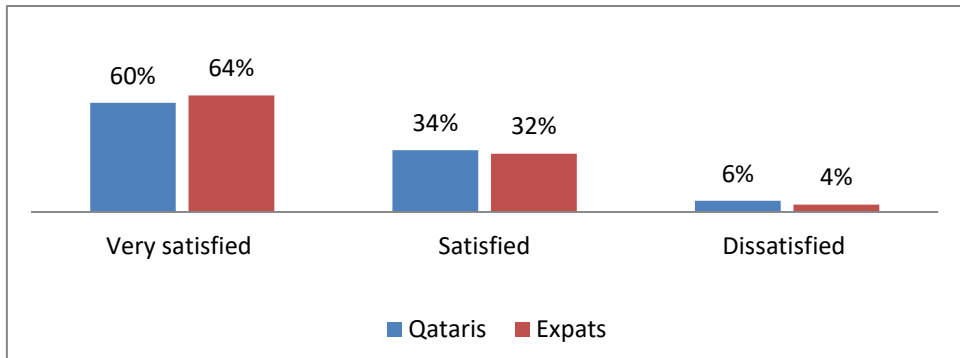




#### 4.4 Satisfaction with the Social Media Accounts

According to the study's findings, the vast majority of respondents (94% Qataris and 96% expatriates) were either very satisfied or somewhat satisfied with the government's social media accounts (see Figure 4-8).

**Figure 4-8: Satisfaction with Social Media Accounts**



#### 4.5 Government Information Available on Social Media Accounts

Respondents who use social media accounts to connect with the government were also asked, in an open-ended question, what type of government information they would like to see on social media accounts. These text replies were then processed and organized into categories. Only a minority of Qataris (11%) and expats (12%) said that all of the information they require is already available. A quarter of Qataris (26%) and 18% of expats want general information about businesses, education, the financial market, and the census to be available on social media. Furthermore, a fifth of Qataris (19%) and a quarter of expats (24%) want



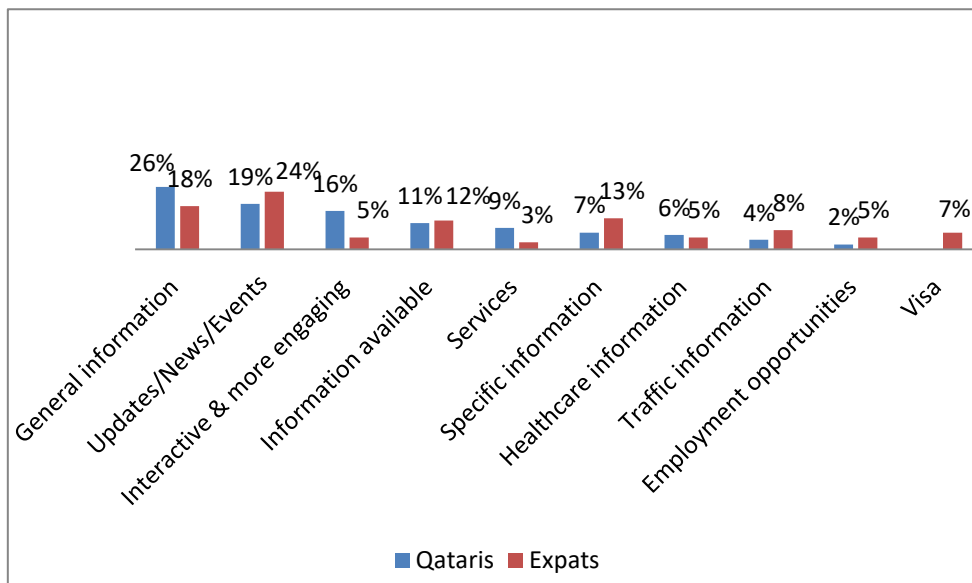
social media to provide educational content about all that is going on in Qatar in terms of new rules and events. Furthermore, 16% of Qataris and 5% of expats would prefer social media to be participatory and engage with citizens. While the rest of the population (28% Qataris and 41% expats) would like social media to include information about government services, information specific to each ministry, information about healthcare and traffic in Qatar, information about job opportunities, and visa-related information (see Table 4-4 and Figure 4-9).

**Table 4-4: Information Requirements and Demands (Needs) on Social Media Accounts**

	Qataris %	Expats%
<b>General Information</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Updates/ News/ Brochures/ Rules / Events</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Social media accounts: interactive, updated and easy to use (raise awareness of those accounts)</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Information is already available</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Services provided by the government</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Information specific to each ministry</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Information related to healthcare</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Information about the traffic (signals, road closures and speed limit)</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Employment opportunities</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Visa related information (passports)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>



**Figure 4-9: Information Requirements and Demands (Needs) on Social Media Accounts by Qataris and Expats**



#### 4.6 Statements Relating to Government Social Media Accounts

To determine the degree to which Qataris are willing to adopt e-government, all respondents were asked to rate their agreement with the following statements: awareness of government social media accounts, perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, and intention to use social media accounts (see Table 4-5, Figure 4-10, Table 4-6, and Figure 4-11). Overall, 80 percent of Qataris are aware of the government's social media accounts, and 64 percent believe they are well informed. Similarly, 69 percent of expats are aware of the government's social media profiles, and 53 percent believe they are well informed.





In terms of the perceived utility of social media accounts, 89 percent of Qataris and expats agree or strongly agree that social media accounts help people engage more with the government. However, just 62% of Qataris and 55% of expats are aware of the benefits of using the government's social media accounts.

In terms of perceived ease of use, a quarter of respondents strongly believe that training is required to use the government's social media accounts. While 44 percent of Qataris and 42 percent of expats think that a lack of knowledge and awareness campaigns makes using social media accounts difficult.

Overall, 89 percent of Qataris plan to use social media accounts to engage with the government in the future, and 87 percent would advise their families and friends to utilize social media accounts for any connection with the government. Similarly, 85 percent of expats intend to use social media accounts to contact with the government in the future, and 84 percent recommend that their families and friends utilize social media accounts for any connection with the government.

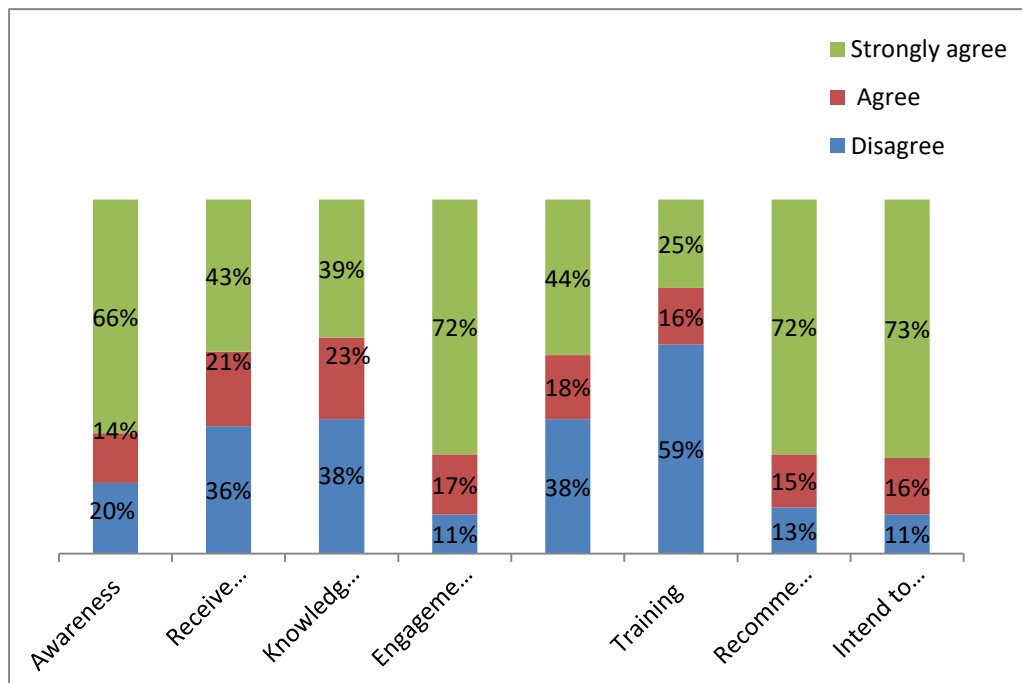
**Table 4-5: General Statements Pertaining to Government Social Media Accounts**

		Strongly Agree %	Agree %	Disagree %
<b>I am aware of the government's social media accounts</b>	<b>Qataris</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>20</b>
	<b>Expats</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>I receive enough information about the government's social media</b>	<b>Qataris</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>36</b>
	<b>Expats</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>47</b>



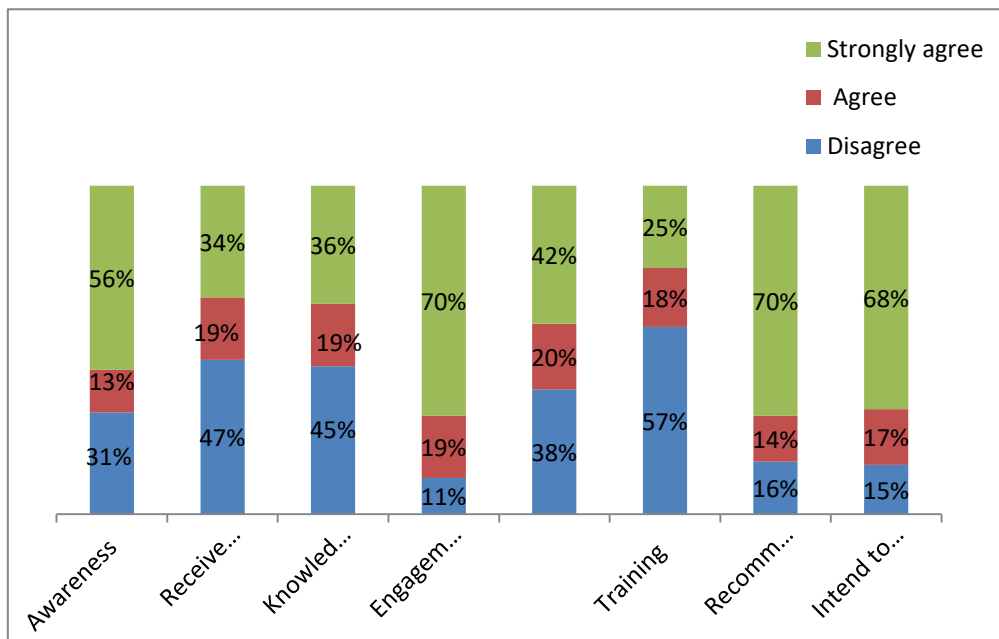
accounts				
The use of social media accounts could assist me to engage more with the government media accounts	Qataris	72	17	11
	Expats	70	19	11
I know the benefits of using the government's social media accounts	Qataris	39	23	38
	Expats	36	19	45
Lack of information and awareness campaigns make it difficult to use government social media accounts	Qataris	44	18	38
	Expats	42	20	38
I need training in order to use the government social	Qataris	25	16	59
	Expats	25	18	57
I recommend to my family and friends that they use social media accounts for any interaction with the government	Qataris	72	15	13
	Expats	70	14	16
In the future, I intend to use social media accounts to interact with the government	Qataris	73	16	11
	Expats	68	17	15

**Figure 4-10: General Statements Pertaining to Government Social Media Accounts by Qataris**





**Figure 4-11: General Statements Pertaining to Government Social Media Accounts by Expats**



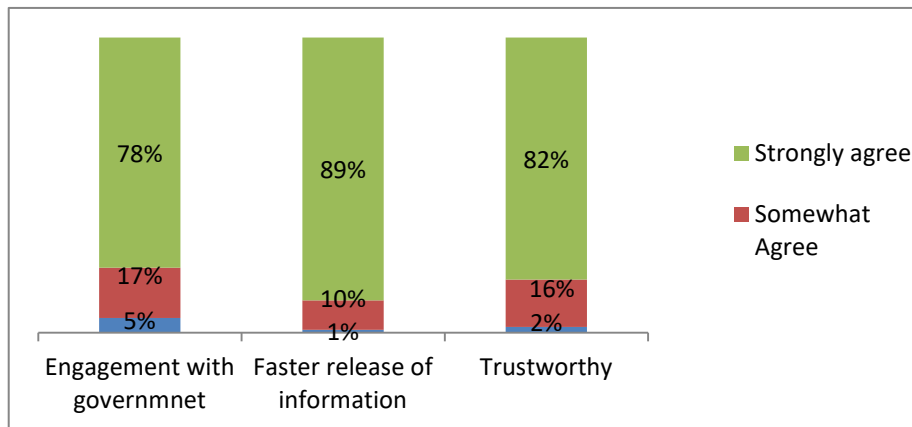
Respondents who mentioned utilizing social media accounts to connect with the government were also asked to rate their agreement with three additional claims. The vast majority (99%) of Qataris and white collars agree or strongly agree that government social media profiles enable for speedier public distribution of information. Similarly, the vast majority (98%) believe that the information they obtain via social media is trustworthy. Similarly, 95% strongly agree or agree that having official social media accounts would allow them to interact with the government more regularly (see Table 4-6, Figure 4-12, and Figure 4-13).



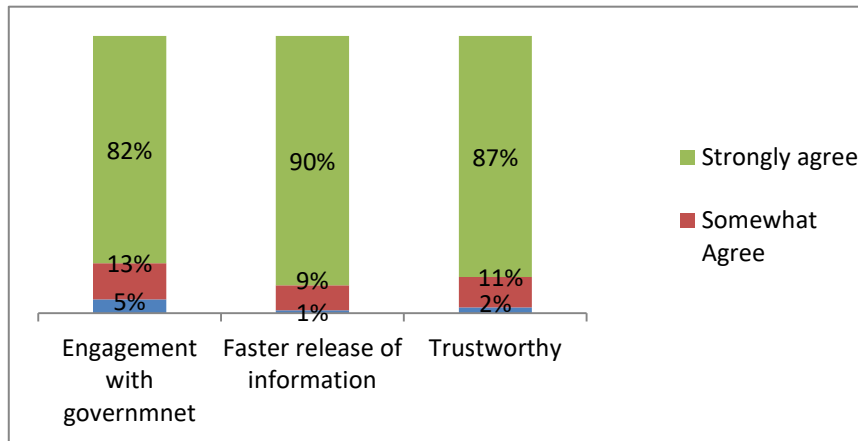
**Table 4-6: Statements Relating to those who use Social Media Accounts to Interact with the Government**

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?		Strongly Agree %	Agree %	Dis-agree %
Government social media accounts allow faster release of information to the public	Qataris	89	10	1
	Expats	90	9	1
The information I get from government social media accounts is trustworthy	Qataris	82	16	2
	Expats	87	11	2
Government social media accounts would enable me to engage with the government more frequently	Qataris	78	17	5
	Expats	82	13	5

**Figure 4-12: Statements Relating to those who use Social Media Accounts to Interact with the Government by Qataris**



**Figure 4-13: Statements Relating to those who use Social Media Accounts to Interact with the Government by Expats**



#### 4.7 Monetary Incentives to Encourage the Use of Online Services to Interact with the Government

Finally, respondents who indicated that they do not use any online (Internet) services to interact with the government in Qatar were asked whether it would be an incentive for them to try any online service to interact with the government if the government made it 5% cheaper to get services online. According to the findings, monetary incentives encourage respondents to use online services to connect with the government. Approximately 80% of Qataris and 90% of white-collar respondents said affirmatively.

Furthermore, to investigate whether a higher financial incentive would impact those who did not respond positively to the 5% incentive, a follow-up question asked whether it would be an incentive for them to try any online service to interact with the government if the government



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made it 10% cheaper to get services online. A favorable reaction was given by around 54% of Qataris and 27% of white-collar respondents.

## **5. Conclusion and Recommendations**

Qatar's e-Government effort began in the year 2000, with modest acceptance rates so far. Thus, in order to achieve a more interactive and efficient e-Government system, the Qatari e-Government portal began opening up some of its information and making it available for public use on the one hand, while on the other hand, the portal embraced new communication tools such as the latest mobile applications and social media tools and platforms to further engage and reach out to the public.

This study sheds light on both the current potential of e-Government public acceptance and the future difficulties and advances that will help to improve it. The purpose of this study was to better understand the extent of e-Government adoption and usability of online services among Qataris in order to explain the existing scenario. The goal of this study was to investigate the public's use of e-Government through social media.

A representative sample of 1,340 persons in Qatar aged 18 to 77 years old was chosen and interviewed using the Computer-Assisted Telephone Interviewing technology (CATI) to reflect the perspectives of the general population in the State of Qatar (Qataris and Expats). As we approach the conclusion and recommendations section of this report, the study will



attempt to extract some main recommendations based on the outcome and results of the study as per each area of the report.

The study generates the following recommendations and outcomes for online activity in general, based on overall usage of all accessible online communication methods to connect with the government online:

1. The main reason for not embracing online tools (for those respondents who don't use online ways) is attributed to their ignorance of online services in general and not knowing of their benefits. Thus more tailored-awareness campaigns that focus on the impact of online services to fulfill the needs of the general public is a must, as we are experiencing currently at the time of writing this report, the extreme need to go online either for businesses, education, or even working limitations at the time of writing this report because of the adverse impact of COVID-19 pandemic.
2. There is a high tendency and preference in both categories of Qataris and Expats to use mobile applications to interact with the government online rather than accessing the service through a website on a computer, so focusing on providing more user-friendly applications could be an easier and more effective way to reach out to the masses and increase online adoption.



finally, the study has made the following recommendations regarding the existing usage status and future utilization of the Government Social Media accounts:

1. When it comes to the availability of social media profiles for various government agencies in the country, Qataris and Expats are well-informed (75% and 62%, respectively). When questioned about them, over three-quarters of Qataris and two-thirds of Expats responded positively. Despite their high levels of awareness, over two-thirds of participants in both groups (64% and 71%) reported that they do not use social media accounts in their dealings with the government. Respondents ascribed the low rate of usefulness to either a lack of understanding about the presence of social media accounts or the fact that they do not have or require social media accounts. Thus, raising awareness of government social media accounts and focusing on the capabilities of these new modes of communication to meet the demands of the Qatari public would be a significant step toward improving the usability and adoption of these platforms.
2. Respondents are resistant to change, with a large majority (44% Qataris and 40% Expats) indicating that nothing could possibly force them to utilize social media accounts. This leaves government agencies with little choice but to launch more and more awareness campaigns emphasizing the benefits of adopting these technologies (saving time, effort, and even money, for





example). Respondents responded that they would utilize these tools if they felt the need for them, implying that shining a light on the benefits achieved by social media tools is an effective strategy to enhance public acceptance of these tools.

3. There is public demand (28% Qataris and 41% Expats) to use social media platforms to convey information about government services provided by each ministry. Among other things, information such as regular healthcare updates and traffic updates are examples. A quarter of Qataris (26%) and Expats (20%) also requested that information regarding education, companies, the financial market, career possibilities, visas, and even the census be made available. As a result, there is lots of room for communication on government social media once it is widely adopted by the country's government bodies, as only about 10% of respondents in both groups acknowledged that the information they seek is currently available online. As a result, the low proportion of respondents shows a need for more information and a substantial knowledge deficit at this point.

The majority of respondents (89% in both Qataris and Expats) have a high tendency and desire to communicate with various government entities via social media tools, as their trustworthiness of information acquired via social media platforms is sky high. As a result, this provides both a huge opportunity and a challenge for all government bodies in the country to expand their online activity.



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Finally, there is a lot of room for improvement in the government-client interaction in Qatar using social media platforms. Many mutual benefits could be realized using online tactics that would not be available in traditional offline circumstances. The current working-from-home experience (during the report's writing stage) and online learning at Qatar University and all Qatari schools during COVID-19 are just a few instances.

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