

A study aims to launch an electronic campaign to combat fake accounts in Lebanon



Fake accounts or electronic flies are all terms that have topped the largest place in prohibited behavior since the advent of the Internet and the spread of social media. This issue may be social, political or economic.

This phenomenon has exacerbated, especially after the multiplicity of applications through which the individual can reach all people and from different groups. This may consist of censoring pages, stealing images, directing abuse, ridicule, belittling, stalking, threatening and intimidating. Hence, fake accounts are a serious and dangerous phenomenon that affects society as a whole, and it is necessary to pay attention to them and work to mitigate and combat them.

Despite the proliferation of electronic campaigns aimed at deleting fake accounts, these accounts are still spouting their toxins and misguided and dangerous ideas at every opportunity given to them. Diyarouna Association launched a campaign to combat fake accounts in Lebanon, as the association cares about different age groups from children, Adolescents, youth, women and the elderly, so this issue may be exposed to all of these groups, so the “Diyarouna” association had a prominent interest in all widespread social phenomena, including fake accounts

and the negative effects that result from them, including the dissemination of prominent hate speech that appeared lately.

One of the most appropriate ways to confront these accounts is not to interact with them in any way, but rather to educate others about the dangers of dealing with them, and the need to focus on the penalties for their perpetrators and the negative effects they have on society in general. This is what we aim to shed light on by "Diyarouna "association.

This study deals with an important and dangerous issue facing societies in general and the Lebanese, Palestinian and Syrian society in particular, which is that these fake accounts contribute to spreading false and misleading news, which subsequently contribute to incitement and spreading hatred among others and inciting sedition and many phenomena that have resulted since their appearance, and in light of the importance of the topic presented by Diyarouna Association by publishing a campaign to combat this fake accounts, so the electronic questionnaire was used as a tool for collecting information as it is the most comprehensive technique because it determines the course of the study, and presents its results in a scientific and logical way. The association distributed through its employees and volunteers the electronic form to a random sample, which It consisted of 200 respondents. The results of the study were as follows:

1. Gender:

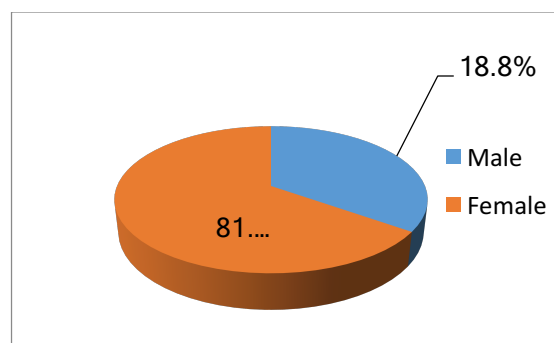
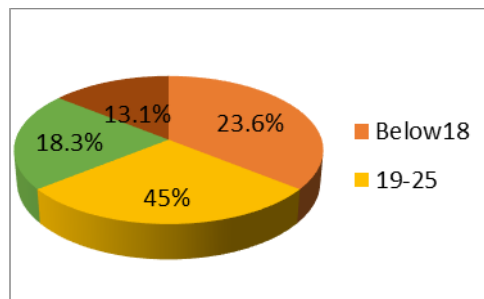


Diagram No. (1): Distribution of respondents by gender

Source: The field study carried out by Diyarouna Association 2022

The largest percentage was for females 81.3%, while the percentage of males was 18.8%, according to the pie chart. Therefore, we note that the percentage of females is higher than the percentage of males. The reason is the discrepancy in percentages because the questionnaire was published and distributed electronically via the link through the WhatsApp application and through the Facebook platform. On the one hand, we point out that the percentage of females is more, since females use and apply social media more on the one hand, and it can also be noted that the female participation rate in the twenty-first century is remarkably large and attractive, since the subject of the study has emerged as a negative result of modern technology.

2. Age:



Graph (2): Distribution of the sample according to age
Source: Study carried out by Diyarouna Association for the year 2022

Distribution of respondents according to age, where the highest percentage of respondents' participation appeared between the ages of 19-25 years, where their percentage was recorded at 45%, and the reason for attracting the largest to this group is because it is socially prominent, as it is represented in the youth stage,

meaning that it includes young people who are at the university level, there is no doubt that young people have A vital and effective role in participating and making decisions related to their affairs regarding the substantive issues related to their fate, followed by the category of respondents under 18 years of age, which constitutes 23.6%, because the owners of fictitious accounts target the young age group, i.e. adolescents, for ease of influence on them, so it was important to participate This category receives sufficient awareness to protect them from exposure to electronic flies. Followed by the age group 26-35 years, which amounted to 18.3%, followed by the lowest rate of 13.1% of those aged 36 years and over.

3. Educational level:

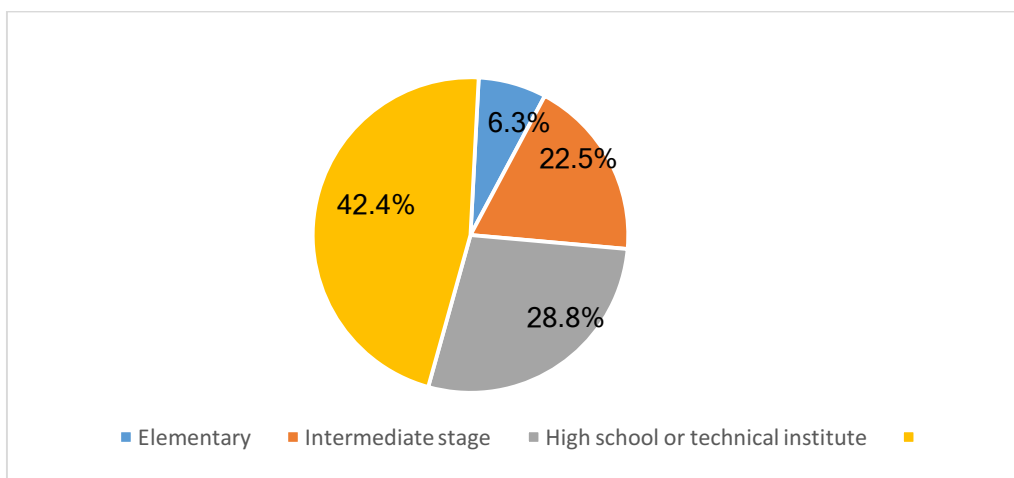


Chart No. (3): Distribution of respondents according to educational attainment

Source: The field study carried out by Diyarouna Association 2022

The results of the survey showed that the largest group of respondents are from the university level of education, as this category recorded a percentage of 42.4%, and the percentage of the respondents from the high school or technical institute was about 28.8%, because the percentage of respondents in the questionnaire ranged between 19 years and older Below are those with a percentage

of 23.6%, followed by individuals with intermediate stage, with a percentage of 22.5%. This is followed by the level of elementary education, which is 6.3%.

4. Place of residence:

Place of residence	Frequency	Percentage
Tyre City	149	%74
Nabatiyeh city	8	%4
Sidon City	25	%13
Iqlim al-Kharroub	6	%3
Beirut	7	%3
Beqaa	5	%3
Total	200	%100

Table No. (1): Distribution of respondents by place of residence

Source: The field study carried out by Diyarouna Association 2022

The spread of the phenomenon of fake accounts is not limited to a specific region, but is present in several Lebanese regions, because this expansion in the use of social networking sites affected all social groups, so it is clear from the above table that most of the respondents are residents of the camps of Tire, whose percentage constituted the largest proportion 74%, this city includes three main camps, which are Burj al-Shamali camp, al-Bass camp, and al-Rashidiya camp, as the highest percentage of respondents fall within Burj al-Shamali camp. The reason for this high percentage is that the Diyarouna Association, from which the study was launched, is stationed in Burj al-Shamali camp, where The camp includes several neighborhoods, including Lubeya neighborhood, Maghareba neighborhood, Saffuriyya neighborhood, Western neighborhood, School neighborhood... And that

many of the residents of these neighborhoods in the camp have participated in the study and the Palestinian gatherings inhabited by Palestinians and other Lebanese areas such as Tayr Dibba, Abbasiya and other areas in the city of Tyre, followed by the percentage of respondents who participated from the city of Sidon, where their percentage reached 13%, and of them live within Ain al-Hilweh camp, Mieh Mieh camp and outside it.

It is followed by the city of Nabatiyeh, which scored 4%, and then the city of Beirut, which scored 3%. This percentage was equal to the Iqlim al-Kharroub region, which includes the Wardania region, Ketermaya... and the Beqaa region, the same percentage.

This geographical diversity has contributed to getting to know more about the largest Palestinian, Lebanese, and Syrian segments distributed in all Lebanese regions, in order to involve all segments of the local community to participate in this study, with the aim of spreading awareness widely.

4. Type of work:

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
Student	83	41.5%
Does not work	87	43.5%
Free business	11	5.5%
Daily Worker	9	4.5%
Public/Private sector	10	5%
Total	200	100%

Table No. (2): Distribution of respondents by profession

Source: The field study carried out by Diyarouna Association for the year 2022

The above table shows the type of respondents' work. It was found through the results of the analytical study that most of the research sample participating in the questionnaire are not working and their percentage constitutes 43.5% of the total respondents, some of them are still at the university level, others are graduates and unemployed, and others are volunteers in Associations, followed by 41.5% of individuals who are still students. As for people who are self-employed, their percentage is 5.5%. The percentage of respondents working in the public/private sector constituted 5%, and the latter percentage came from the share of individuals who work on a daily basis, 4.5%.

6. Nationality:

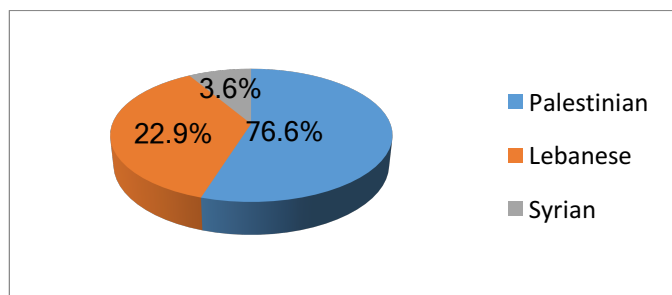


Diagram No. (4): Distribution of respondents by nationality

Source: The field study carried out by Diyaruna Association for the year 2022

It is evident from the above graph that most of the respondents are of Palestinian nationality, who are distributed among the various Palestinian camps and gatherings, as we mentioned previously, and they recorded the most number and their percentage reached 76.6%, which is the highest percentage, while the respondents of Lebanese nationality recorded 22.9%. As for Syrians, their percentage was 3.6%.

7. Did you have a personal account on social media:

Social media is defined as a group of applications and websites that are used to communicate with others, disseminate information and share all the details of our daily lives. These means have many positives and negatives. Today, no Arab house is devoid of social media, and because the subject of the study is discussed and working to launch a campaign to fight **Fake accounts** that fall within the negative effects of social media.

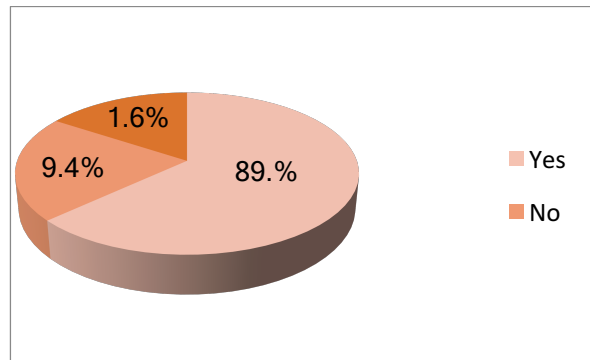


Diagram No. (5): Distribution of respondents according to their personal account on social media

Source: The field study carried out by Diyarouna Association for the year 2022

As the result of the study showed that 89% of the sample members have a personal account, this is clear evidence of the technological invasion and its control over all homes, so we had to consider addressing this aspect, protecting individuals and directing them to avoid the dangers and pests of social media, and the percentage of people who answered "Maybe" 9.4% percentage. While the percentage of people who answered "No", that is, they do not have accounts on social media, was the lowest, at 1.6% percent.

- **The number of accounts you have:**

During the last decade, social networking sites occupied a large part of the lives of many, as there were many accounts and applications on social media, which was the beginning of the **Facebook** site, followed by the emergence of many sites, each of which specialized in what distinguishes it from the other. This large spread of social media sites, especially with the emergence of generations of smart phones, has led to easy access to these sites, so we have put forward, through this study, several social media applications to see the extent to which the sample members use these applications, which were shown in the following form:

I. Facebook app:

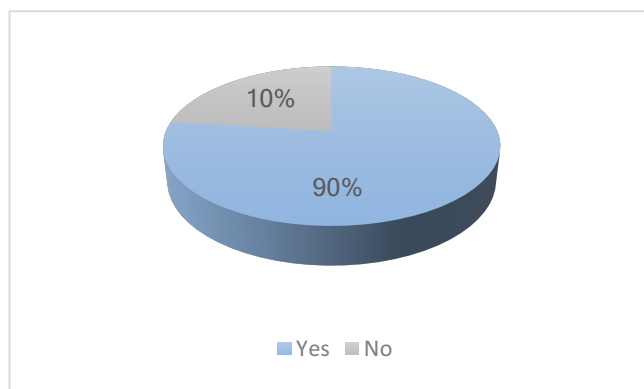


Chart (6): Distribution of respondents according to their use of social networking accounts (Facebook)

Source: The field study carried out by Diyarouna Association for the year 2022

ii. WhatsApp application:

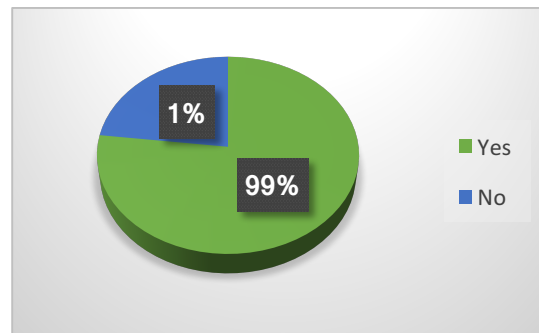


Chart (7): Distribution of respondents according to their use of social media accounts (WhatsApp)

Source: The field study carried out by Diyarouna Association for the year 2022

iii. Instagram app:

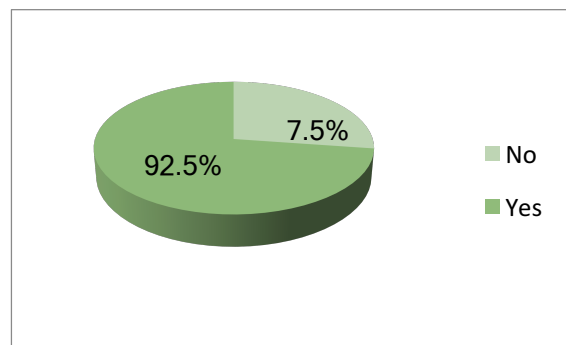


Chart (8): Distribution of respondents according to their use of social media accounts (Instagram)

Source: The field study carried out by Diyarouna Association for the year 2022

iv. Telegram app:

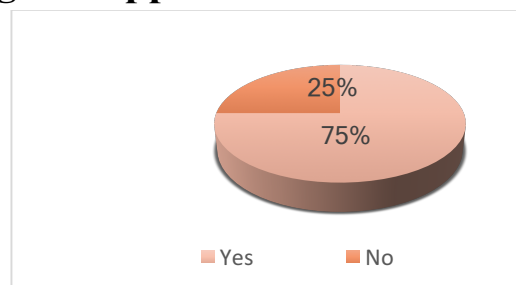


Chart (9): Distribution of respondents according to their use of social media accounts (Telegram)

Source: The field study carried out by Diyarouna Association for the year 2022

iv. Twitter app:

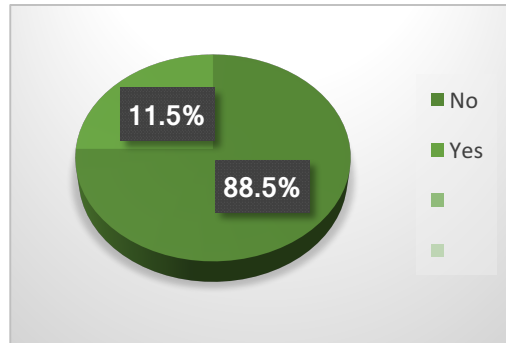


Chart (10): Distribution of respondents according to their use of social media accounts (Twitter)

Source: The field study carried out by Diyarouna Association for the year 2022

The percentage of respondents who use the Facebook application, as shown in the above figure, reached 90%, and the percentage of respondents who use the WhatsApp application was 99% out of 200 samples. While people who do not use WhatsApp, their percentage is very small, not more than 1%. As for the people who recorded the most use of the Instagram application by 92.5%. The percentage of individuals who use Telegram constituted 75%. These high rates of social media use are a clear indication of the dominance of social media, and we infer from this and the result of the continuous use of these sites, which led many people to fall into the trap of addiction to it. On the other hand, the least use of social networking applications in the study was the Twitter application, which scored 11.5%.

8. Information about your account:

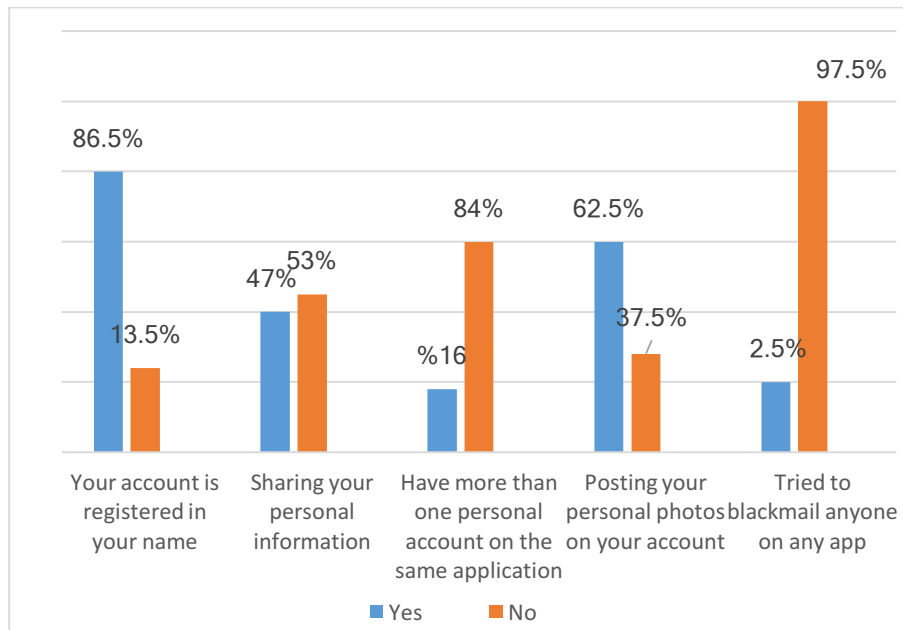


Chart (11): A survey of the sample's opinions according to the information about their account

Source: The field study carried out by Diyarouna Association for the year 2022

The percentage of people registered with their real name on social media reached 86.5%, while the percentage of people who have a false name reached 13.5%, and the percentage of respondents who do not share their personal information was 53%, and the percentages are close between them and the individuals who share the details of their daily lives on social networking sites. and those amounting to 47%. We were also interested to know if the sample members had more than one personal account on the same application, their percentage reached 16%, while the percentage of those who did not have more than one personal account on the same application was 84%. It is known to mention that many like to share their personal photos on social media to get some comments from friends and some likes, so their percentage reached 62.5%, and on the contrary, many do not like to appear on social media in order to preserve privacy, and we asked to know if someone tried to blackmail Anyone, for any reason, via social media applications,

and the answer to this question was that 97.5% of people who did not do such actions.

9. The time you spend daily on social media:

The time you spend on social media	Frequency	Percentage
From one to two hours	56.5	28.3%
Four to six hours	67.4	33.7%
More than eight hours a day	70.6	35.3%
A little bit	5.4	2.7%
Total	200	100%

Table No. (3): Distribution of respondents by profession
Source: The field study carried out by Diyarouna Association for the year 2022

Social networking sites, with their different applications, have become like a wide circle circulating between all ages and elements of society, full of events and phenomena, as the individual spends most of his time on the Internet, ranging from browsing on” **Facebook**”, chatting on” **WhatsApp**”, watching a video of “**Tik Tok**” and other programs that occupy a great position. From the user's time until he wastes his time without feeling. Therefore, it was important to know and determine the number of hours the participants spent filling out the questionnaire, and the results were as follows:

The percentages varied, as the above table showed. The percentage of individuals who used social media was 35.3%, the largest percentage, and this is evidence of the extent of reality’s addiction to social media, while the percentage of

people who used social media was close to between four and six hours, 33.7%. The percentage of people who sit on their phones and browse social media for two hours is 28.3%, and the lowest percentage of people who browse social media is slightly 2.7%. This small percentage indicates that the world is invaded by modern technology, and the negative effects that follow, such as fake accounts, and the latter contribute to spreading false news and circulating it among people.

10. About the fake account:

Given the exceptional importance that Diyarouna is working on, which is to launch a campaign against fake accounts to limit them and limit their convergence and their impact on different age groups in general and the youth group in particular, and because the sample of the study is the “youth group” we had the goal of asking a question about their information about The fictitious account, which was manifested in several sub-questions, where the study began by asking the interviewee about the extent of his knowledge of the fictitious accounts, which came in the following form:

_Your knowledge of the fake account:

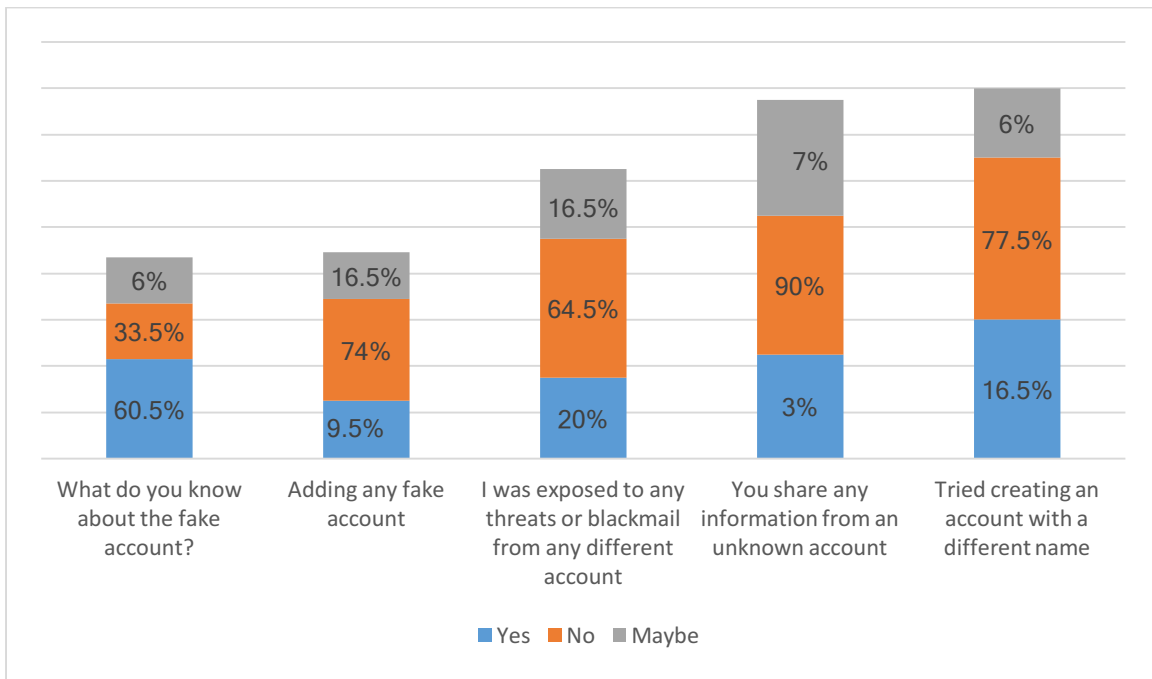


Chart (12): Distribution of respondents' answers according to their knowledge of the dummy arithmetic

The field study carried out by Diyarouna Association for the year 2022

The percentage of respondents who answered yes was recorded at about 60.5%, meaning they know information about the fake account, and this is evidence of its widespread spread, which confirms the necessity of launching this campaign by spreading awareness among the youth and the different age groups of the Lebanese, Palestinian and Syrian society. On the other hand, the percentage of respondents who answered “No” was 33.5%, which indicates a lack of sufficient knowledge of the dark sides of social networking sites, which shows a reason for this percentage of not being exposed to situations of threats or blackmail from behind the screen and anonymously. The percentage of people who answered "maybe" was 6%, because some people may hear about a topic or news, but have not personally experienced it.

- “You add any fake account”:

In light of the foregoing information, it is natural to ask the respondents an important question, which is if someone from the study sample added any fictitious account, and the results were as follows:

It constituted 74% of the respondents who answered that they did not add any fake account because it is normal that they do not add people outside their friends and acquaintances or anonymous accounts. While the respondents whose answer was "maybe" constituted 16.5%, they may be curious to know about these fake accounts. As for the sample members whose answer was "yes", they constituted 9.5% of the study sample.

- “Did you exposed to any threats or blackmail from any different account”:

Since the emergence of social networking sites, many pests have followed, such as blackmail and electronic threats, especially among girls, as they are the socially weakest group. The results of the study came as follows:

The percentage of individuals who were subjected to threats and blackmail on social media reached 20%, and since the participants in the study sample are mostly girls, this is clear evidence that they are more vulnerable to threats or blackmail in this era. 64.5%. And the individuals who answered "maybe" amounted to 16.5%.

- "Have you shared any information from an unknown account?"

The percentage of opinions of the study sample who did not share any information from an unknown or trusted account was 90%. On the other hand, the percentage of people who answered “maybe” was 7%, while the “yes” response was the small percentage of 3%.

- Did you tried to create an account with a different name

The percentage of people who did not try to create an account with a different name was 77.5%, while the sample members who made an account with a different name amounted to 16.5%, while the individuals who answered may be 6%.

11. Your information on fake accounts:

Proceeding from what was previously mentioned, we had the goal of surveying the opinions of the sample members about their knowledge of fictitious accounts in order to test their understanding and awareness of this issue. The opinions of the research sample came as follows:

Fake accounts are known according to a survey conducted by **Diyarouna** Association as account theft or impersonation with false names because some have been stolen and others say that these fake accounts are fictitious and have fake people and some know fake accounts as accounts that people use for irresponsible purposes or goals out of harm or disguise for a purpose.

Some opinions of the sample came to the effect that these accounts are governed by individuals blackmailing others or threatening, especially females who are most exposed to electronic blackmail, and that it is possible that these fake accounts are for the purpose of bullying, and some sample members say that these **fake accounts** may belong to certain parties whose goal is Stirring up strife and spreading hatred and misinformation among societies.

Some answered that the **fake account** could be a pseudonym or an account for a young man under the name of a female in order to add girls on various social media applications.

But on the other hand, some of the answers of the study sample were that they did not know anything about fake accounts, hence the importance of the study conducted by “**Diyarouna**” association to launch the campaign and educate different social groups.

12. The purpose of dummy accounts, and in case you encounter fictitious accounts:

There are many goals and motives for making or creating fictitious accounts that some individuals intend to do. The individual may be suffering from family problems and psychological symptoms that allow him to practice these behaviors that harm and threaten the comfort and tranquility of society. Based on the survey, it was reported that there are goals in distorting the reputation and image of girls, especially the following of blackmail or bullying, inciting sedition and spreading hatred among members of society through communication platforms. Therefore, **Diyarouna** Association sought to shed light on the fictitious accounts by mentioning the objectives.

As the results of the study came to show that some of the sample members see that the goal of creating these **fake accounts** has several purposes, including being with the aim of threatening or blackmailing individuals, especially girls, or delving into people’s symptoms by publishing personal pictures or harassment and others, some of the respondents answered that the goal is to Those accounts are intrusive and curious to know and monitor the news of others, and others see the goal as serving personal interests such as increasing likes or promoting a person or product

or for the sake of fame, and some individuals answered that it is in order to steal information or spy, sabotage relationships and harass others.

In the event that such accounts were encountered, most of the answers were to report them or block them through Report, and some said they ignored them, others saw it necessary to go to specialists to request protection, and others saw it necessary to carry out campaigns to close it, and others say that if he is exposed to such The quality of the accounts has to inform the close ones and the family in order to obtain protection, while some of the sample members asked for the need to raise awareness about this subject due to the lack of information about it.

13. The difference between a dummy account and a regular account:

The method of creating a fake account is the same as the method used to create the normal account, and the difference lies in the method of use. When we use our regular accounts, it is normal for us to communicate with friends and share posts or personal photos, but the matter is different for the fake account, as it can be used for purposes Many and branching can be for the sake of selling followers and other things that are managed through a program. **Fake accounts** are a violation of the first degree and they are deleted by social networks, so this proposition had a share in identifying the extent to which the respondents knew the difference between a **fake account** and a normal account. The answers were as follows:

The opinions of the electronic questionnaire survey were that the **fake account** is a suspicious account and that it was issued by a psychologically unstable person, while the normal account is a clear account in terms of details and information such as personal name, phone number, personal photo, email and others. The difference between them is that the first is with a real and realistic name, while the other is a pseudonym and a fake, and this account has followers and does not have a clear identification card for it.

The respondents see that the normal account has a clear goal, while the dummy account has an unclear goal that is used for private or immoral goals, and the normal account is used for a long period, while the dummy account is used for a specific period. As for the normal account, it is authenticated, real and realistic, and its news is honest and registered naturally, while the fake account publishes false and unreal news.

14. Suggestions to combat fake accounts:

According to what was previously mentioned, which was represented by the knowledge of the study sample, which included **200** male and female respondents, about the purpose of the study **Creating fake accounts**, distinguishing between a fake account and a normal account, and other information that we obtained from the opinions of the study sample, where the “**Diyarouna** association aimed to launch an electronic campaign to combat fake accounts that contribute to its role in instilling hatred between the Palestinian, Lebanese and Syrian society.

Therefore, we had a share of putting forward and knowing the respondents’ suggestions to contribute to the dissemination of the campaign on a large scale. The respondents’ suggestions came as follows:

- Some of the study sample suggested fighting **fake accounts** by spreading awareness through social media and qualifying individuals on how to use social media.
- Others believe that they should be banned and prevented from creating **fake accounts**, others see the need to follow a legal procedure towards them, and the other group answered the need to report them, and hold each person accountable for this act, and no one would dare to do that act, while some of the study sample believed that it is necessary not to approve and

accept these accounts, and some recommend not adding a new account, while some stress the need to give lectures in order to raise awareness of the dangers of these accounts.

- Others stress the need to continue campaigns to combat **fake accounts** to limit its spread, and some of the respondents' suggestions are to put a violation against anyone who seeks to create fake accounts.
- It was suggested that there be a classification of **fake accounts** under the name of **Spam**, while some believe that it is necessary not to pay attention to these accounts or give them importance and confirm the correctness of the information when creating any account by the administration of **Facebook** or any means of social media.

An example of this when requesting a friendship on **Facebook** is the need to verify the person's name and personal photo, and it is possible, as the research sample touched on, to preserve personal information and not publish it on social media to maintain privacy and prevent extortion. And approach those accounts, and others do not know about this topic to share some suggestions.

Hence, the most important of the recommendations presented to reduce the risks of fake accounts is the necessity of stressing the penalties imposed by the law in the Information Crimes Department and coordinating with associations to combat this problem and report its culprits to realize that no one can violate the freedom and privacy of users. Rather, **Diyarouna** Association aimed to talk about fake accounts and illegal numbers and their damage to society, so the study was able to spread awareness, draw attention and deliver the message to the local community about the danger of believing any false information aimed at misleading and spreading rumors among members of the community and inciting sedition, and to reduce people's intimidation.

Diyarouna Association

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