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TITLE: "Effective Communication During a Crisis"

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ABSTRACT (up to 300 words)

Over the past two decades, the rapid rise of social media has revolutionized the way we communicate and share information online. Social media platforms are not now only used extensively by individuals but also by businesses, governmental agencies, educational institutions, and many other organizations to deliver information to the public and, in return, collect information from that same audience. The preliminary study presented here offers valuable insights into how social media may be used to improve food safety standards. Today, food safety is still a major health challenge in the country, which occasionally faces unsafe food supply chains, an increased number of food borne outbreaks, and poor hygiene education. Social media may be used as a very valuable tool for people to access important information and more knowledge about food safety. The limited-scope survey presented here was conducted over the western part of Saudi Arabia and included 295 individuals of both genders, among various age groups. Participants responded to an online questionnaire about their use of social media to obtain information about food safety. Results showed that social media was indeed a major outlet for individuals to access information on food safety, with the top-ranked social media platforms being WhatsApp (M = 2.99) followed by Snapchat (M = 3.72), YouTube (M = 4.08), Instagram (M = 4.46), and Facebook (M = 4.81). Additionally, we found that the most trusted sources of information was the Saudi Food and Drug Authority (72.6%) and the Saudi Ministry of Health (55.4%). Participants most frequently sought epidemiological information (52.5%), quantitative risk estimates (23.1%), and information on the

various types of foodborne infections (15.3%); they preferred the information to be in video format (67.5%), articles (57.6%), infographics (55.3%). Trustworthiness clearly emerged from the survey as an important consideration for individuals when accessing food safety information on social media.

BIOGRAPHY (up to 200 words)

Dr. Nisreen Abdulsalam, an Assistant Professor of Food Safety and Technology at King Abdulaziz University, holds a Ph.D. in Food Technology from Clemson University and a Master's degree in Food and Nutritional Sciences - Food Microbiology from North Carolina A&T State University. With over a decade of experience, she is a Certified Highfield trainer in 30 HACCP and food safety courses and a certified lead auditor in ISO2200:2018. Dr. Abdulsalam is a senior specialist in food and nutrition services and contributes to the Saudi Commission for Health Specialties' committee. Her research focuses on improving food safety globally, and she is dedicated to creating a sustainable, healthy society in line with Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030. Her future goals include innovative research and policy development, emphasizing emerging technologies to elevate food safety standards and exploring the intersection of food safety and public health in a rapidly globalizing world.

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