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National Service Information Networks of Emirati Fathers and Mothers

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ABSTRACT: Youths rely on parents for information at critical life moments such as national service enlistment. However, parents themselves have to seek information to provide the guidance needed. Hence this study identified national service information sources utilized by Emirati parents. 59 parents were surveyed with Fathers comprising 44.1% of the sample. It found differences in selection of information sources based on parental gender. The top three sources used by Mothers were all Social but Fathers used Social and Institutional sources. Government websites and Military Recruiter are emergent national service information disseminators. It also found that Father and Mother participants would rely mainly on both Social and Institutional sources in future information-seeking behavior. Also, more distant sources; linked by weak ties to participants, would be utilized. These trends suggest that parent information networks would become more heterogeneous. It is recommended that the UAE military increases communication to parents through the use of Military Recruiters and by strengthening its digital media presence in Internet sites or social media. Moreover, the UAE military could tailor information delivery to each parental gender that would support parental engagement with the national service program for promoting its relevance to youths and the Emirati community.

KEYWORDS　: *Emirati parents, information sources, national service, strong and weak ties, United Arab Emirates*

I.　　INTRODUCTION

　　　The United Arab Emirates (UAE) implemented a national service program in 2014 mandating all male citizens (Emiratis), aged 18 to 30 years, to be drafted into service. Uncertainties over the impact of national service on studies, career and personal safety would lead conscripts to seek information about the service to alleviate this anxiety. Although the nature of the problem faced by youths largely influences their choice of information sources, research has shown that youths tend to rely on parents for advice when encountering key milestones in life such as career decision-making. Similar to career decision-making, national service is an important stage in the lives of Emirati youths with long-term effects on their educational and vocational plans. Since parental communication of information on national service could influence the views of conscripts and the formation of positive or negative attitudes towards the service, this study identifies information sources on national service used by Emirati parents. This study also compares service information sources used by Emirati fathers and mothers with the sources they intend to access in the future. This comparison would reveal emergent information disseminators specific to each parental gender that the UAE military could focus on to deliver resources and to utilize in promoting the relevance of national service to parents, youths and the wider Emirati community for ensuring the sustainability of the program.

II.　　LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Background: Parents as youths' preferred information source

　　　The United Arab Emirates (UAE) implemented a national service program in 2014 through the Federal Law No.6 of 2014 on the National Military Service and Reserve Force that mandates all male citizens (Emiratis), aged 18 to 30 years, who are able-bodied and not eligible for permanent exemption, to be drafted into service [1]. In 2019, the service length was 16 months but in 2022, it was reduced to 11 months for high school graduates while male youths leaving school without qualifications must serve three years [2]. Unlike countries with long established service programs such as the United States (US), United Kingdom (UK), South

Korea and Singapore, Emirati conscripts in 2014 lacked opportunities to interact with service alumni who could share their experiences. Uncertainties over the impact of the service on studies, career and personal safety would lead conscripts to seek information about the service to alleviate this anxiety. By 2019, a number of institutional and social information sources on national service were available to future conscripts. *Institutional informationsources* include military recruiters, government websites such as the National Service and Reserve Authority and news media while *social information sources* include the conscripts' family members, friends and social media contacts who may also be service alumni.

Although the nature of the problem faced by youths largely influences their choice of information sources, research has shown that youths tend to rely on parents for advice when encountering key milestones in life such as career decision-making [3-6]. Gehlhaus (2020) [7] examined the major information sources used by American youths in military career decision-making utilizing archival data from a national survey (High School Longitudinal Survey of 2009) of 25,000 high school freshman (aged 14 to 15 years) from 944 US schools. It also interviewed high school juniors (aged 16 to 17 years) and new US Air Force recruits (aged 17 to 21 years) (N = 68). Information sources included family, teachers, friends, military, and the Internet. It found that *Parents* (Father, Mother) were the primary source across groups.

Similar to career decision-making, national service is an important stage in the lives of Emirati youths with long-term effects on their educational and vocational plans. Lim et al. (2022) [8] identified information sources on national service used by Emirati youths in 2019. Questionnaires were administered to 179 male Emiratis, aged 16 to 28 years, who have not served but would be obliged to serve after high school or college graduation and unlikely to be exempted from service. It found that *Father* was one of the top four sources used most by participants for service information. This finding is consistent with an earlier UAE study where Lim (2018) [9] examined Emirati youths' preferred information sources on military service in 2014. 80 male Emiratis, aged 16 to 28 years who have not yet been drafted into national service, were surveyed and asked to rank their most to least preferred sources of information on military service. The findings showed that *Father* was the most preferred information source.

Research has showed that youths rely on parents for guidance and information at critical moments in life such as career decision-making about and national service enlistment. However, parents themselves would have to seek information in order to provide the guidance needed. In the UAE context, Emirati parents were found to function as a *bridge* connecting youths, who are future conscripts, to information sources the latter otherwise would not have access to [8]. Hence, there is a need to examine information sources used by parents that form the basis for their advice to youths.

2.2 Research on information sources used by parents

Research on information sources used by parents have largely focused on the areas of child health, parenting techniques as well as child career choice. Just as the nature of the problem faced by youths largely influences their choice of information sources, this information-seeking behavior pattern applies to parents as well. In the areas of health information-seeking behavior of parents, Rahi et al. (2003) [10] examined the sources parents used to learn about their child's ophthalmic condition. A survey was conducted with 65 parents of children diagnosed with ophthalmic disorders in London. Although most parents were found to utilize more than one information source, formal sources (ophthalmologists, family practitioners, opticians) were most frequently used while parents relied less on informal sources (family support groups, the Internet, family/friends). The reliance on formal sources was expected since the self-management of paediatric ophthalmology disorders requires medical specialists to convey complex information to parents. Another study in Israel which investigated COVID-19 vaccine information-seeking behavior by parents found similar results [11]. 520 parents with children aged 12 to 15 years completed an online survey. Participants indicated the sources they had used when searching for information about the COVID-19 vaccine for their children. Social information sources (family, friends, social media), Institutional sources (healthcare professionals, medical journals) and mass media (television, the Internet, newspapers) were included for selection. It found that healthcare professionals (Institutional source) were most frequently used by respondents who intend to vaccinate their children while respondents who do not intend to vaccinate their children mostly relied on the Internet (Social source) for vaccine information.

While these studies treated the parent sample as a whole, other work differentiated between the information-seeking behaviors of mothers and fathers. Radey & Randolph (2009) [12] investigated the resources parents used to obtain child-rearing information and the effect of parental demographic characteristics on variation in use of non-professional (Social), professional (Institutional), and media sources. Phone and mail surveys were conducted with 1,081 parents (with children 10 years old and younger) from a south-eastern US state. The statistical results showed that the most common sources of parenting information were books (media source) and family members (non-professional/Social source). Parents with higher education levels were associated with greater usage of information sources. Moreover, when parental gender is considered, it found that compared to Fathers, Mothers were more likely to use a greater number of sources and a broader

combination of professional (teachers, parenting classes), non-professional (family, friends) and media (books/magazines, television, Internet) sources.

Rudi et al. (2018) [13] examined parents' perceptions of the usefulness of various sources of parenting information. The study obtained a national sample of 1,339 in the US that included both mothers and fathers, with children 18 years old and younger, who were surveyed online. Results indicated that parents regarded the Internet, friends and their doctor/paediatrician as the most useful sources of parenting information. No differences were found in the use of the Internet for parenting information between older and younger parents. However, parental gender showed differences as Mothers regarded all parenting information sources included in the survey as being more useful sources compared to Fathers. Also, Fathers regarded Mothers as a more useful source of parenting information but not vice versa.

Trusty and Watts (1996) [14] examined parents' perceptions of best career information sources for their teenage children. The study used archival data from 11,068 parent participants in a 1988 US national survey (National Educational Longitudinal Study). A Parent Questionnaire was administered to the parent or guardian who had most knowledge of the adolescent's career plans. The majority of the participants were Mothers (80%) while 15% were Fathers. The remaining were the adolescents' guardian (step-parents, relatives, non-relatives). It found that parents' best sources of career information for their children were school counselors and professionals in their children's field of interest who represented Institutional sources.

Research in the UAE has showed that Emirati youths rely on parents for information prior to being drafted into national service [9]. When parental communication of information on national service to Emirati youths could influence the latter's views and the formation of positive or negative attitudes towards the service, there is a need for this study which identifies information sources on national service used by Emirati parents. Since previous research has found that parental gender may lead to differences in information-seeking behavior, this study also compares information sources on national service used by Emirati fathers with those chosen by mothers. Finally, this study compares the information sources used by Emirati fathers and mothers with sources they intend to access in the future. Findings from this comparison would contribute new knowledge by revealing emergent information disseminators that the UAE military could adopt to tailor information delivery to each parental gender and to promote the relevance of national service to youths and the wider Emirati community that could ensure sustainability of the program.

III.   METHOD

3.1 Sampling strategy, instruments, validity and data analysis

A purposive sampling strategy was used to identify parent participants with specific characteristics: UAE citizens, aged 18 years and above in 2018/19, and have at least one child who is likely to undergo national service. Snowball sampling was used as it was difficult to find potential participants with the target characteristics [15]. Hence, initial participants were asked to recommend potential participants among their familial and social networks. The total sample was 59: 30 participants completed surveys; 14 participants completed individual interviews and 15 participants completed focus group interviews (3 focus groups). The findings were based on the survey and interview datasets.

Three questionnaires were developed (survey, individual interview, focus group interview) that contained closed questions on demographics and the constructs examined. In this qualitative study, *construct validity* as the appropriateness of the questions for eliciting the required information, was addressed at the piloting stage which identified a general difficulty in understanding the questionnaires' instructions and questions worded in English. Hence, the final questionnaires were printed in English and Arabic so that participants would have recourse to the language they were more comfortable with. To identify information sources on national service used and to compare them with the sources participants intend to access in the future, two closed questions were asked that required participants to a) select the sources they had used in 2018 or 2019 (data collection period); and b) select the sources they will use for information on national service. A total of 12 information sources items; adapted from Lehnus & Wilson (1996) [16], were listed in the questions. The parent participants included Fathers and Mothers, and each group selected from a list of 11 items. The *Wife* information source item was included for only male participants (Fathers) while the *Husband* item was included for only female participants (Mothers). Quantitative data from closed questions were processed and presented as descriptive statistics.

3.2 Ethical considerations

In this study, the main ethical considerations were participant protection, confidentiality, and informed consent. Data collection started in June 2018 till December 2019. Institutional Review Board approval for the study protocol was granted in May 2018 and valid till April 2020. This research did not place participants in physical danger. Confidentiality of identity was ensured by not gathering real names of participants, using codes to replace actual participant names in data processing and publications. All participants read, understood and signed a consent form (available in English and Arabic) that included the project aims, assurance of

confidentiality, consent to voluntary participation and audio recording of interviews, and the right to withdraw from participation anytime without penalty.

3.3 Concepts and measures

       In this study, the construct information sources refer to resources that provide information on national service, measured as individuals, mass media, Internet sites, and categorized as Institutional and Social sources (Table 1). The 12 sources used in the questionnaires were adapted from [16]. *Institutional sources* provide information on national service that is regulated or controlled and include government websites, military recruiter, newspapers, TV/movies. *Social sources* provide information that are based on own opinion, personal experiences or hearsay and would not have the authority to disseminate official information on national service. Social information sources include spouses, siblings, relatives, friends, work colleagues, Internet sites, TV/movies. TV/movies is regarded as both an institutional and social information source since this media may convey official and unofficial information on the service to the public.

Table 1. Emirati parents' Institutional and Social information sources on national service

	Institutional	Social
Friends[1]		x
Friends (older)[2]		x
Husband		x
Wife		x
Brother/Sister		x
Relatives		x
Work colleagues		x
Internet sites[3]		x
Military recruiter	x	
Newspapers	x	
TV/movies	x	x
Government websites	x	

[1]same age or younger; [2]older friends; [3]YouTube, Blogs, Forums

       The resources that provide information on national service included human and non-human sources. The human information sources are further categorized in terms of the level of intimacy or closeness of their relationship with the parent participants: kinship, friendship, and non-kinship/non-friendship (Table 2). Information sources based on kinship include nuclear family members such as spouses (Husband, Wife) and extended family members such as siblings (Brother, Sister) and *Relatives*. Information sources based on *friendship* include nonfamilial individuals who have bonds of mutual affection with the parent participants. Information sources based on *non-kinship/non-friendship* are from the parent participants' work or military community such as *Work Colleagues* and *Military Recruiter*.

Table 2. Classification of human information sources: Kinship, friendship, non-kinship/non-friendship

	Kinship	Friendship	Non-kinship/friendship
Friends[1]		x	
Friends (older)[2]		x	
Husband	x		
Wife	x		
Brother/Sister	x		
Relatives	x		
Work colleagues			x
Military recruiter			x

[1]same age or younger; [2]older friends

       This study also adopts the concepts of strong and weak ties from social network analysis to interpret the findings on trends in Emirati parents' national service information-seeking behavior. *Social network analysis* (SNA) is defined as a method enabling the disciplined inquiry into the patterning of relations among social actors at the group level of analysis [17]. The concepts and assumptions adopted in this study are explained below [18-19]:

- a *node* represents a social unit which is a group (Father/Mother participant groups) or an information source.
- a *tie* is a relation representing a connection or link between two nodes i.e. the Father/Mother participant groups and the information sources. Ties enable the transfer or exchange of material or non-material resources but in this context, ties facilitate the transfer of intangible resources i.e. information on national service.
- a *relation* refers to the type of tie that exists between a pair of nodes i.e. information acquisition behavior whereby a participant group selects one or more information source.

- *strong ties* demand time and energy to maintain; requiring frequent interactions or contact that facilitate flow of information or other resources. Strong ties include kinship and friendship ties. The absence of such ties can leave individuals isolated when deprived of needed information or resources [20].

- *weak ties* are formed in distant social relationships with infrequent interactions. Weak ties include non-kinship/non-friendship ties between acquaintances or strangers which are determined by structural arrangements rather than by choice [21]. Weak ties can facilitate access to novel information not already known to the participants through their kinship and friendship ties.

IV. RESULTS

4.1 Participant profile

The 59 participants were all Emiratis aged 18 years and above with at least one child. When differentiated by parental gender, Father participants comprised 44.1% (*N* = 26) of the sample (Table 3). Compared to Mothers, Fathers were older (88.4% aged 34 and above), better educated (80.8% with Bachelor's degree and above), more likely to be employed (92.3%) with more than 7 years' work experience (86.9%).

Table 3. Participant demographics: Emirati fathers and mothers

Demographics		Fathers[1]	Mothers[1]
Age (in 2019)	34-44 years	53.8%	33.3%
	Above 45 years	34.6%	36.4%
Marital status	Married	96.2%	90.9%
AV monthly income[2]	Above US$10,890	54.5%	47.1%
Employment	Employed	92.3%	48.5%
Work experience[3]	More than 7 years	86.9%	62.5%
Education	Bachelor's degree or above	80.8%	75.8%
Children	2 or more children	84.6%	81.8%

[1]% based on Fathers *N*=26; Mothers *N*=33;[2]1 USD = 3.67AED (10 Jan 2023);[3]% based on employed participants

4.2 Information sources on national service used by Emirati parents

Participants were asked to select information sources on national service they had used in 2018 or 2019 (data collection period). The top three Social information sources used that were common to Fathers and Mothers were based on kinship and friendship: *Relatives, Brother/Sister* and *Friends (same age/younger)* (Table 4). Although kinship and friendship ties provide participants with informational support, there can be preferential selection of kin as the presence of frequent interactions between family members can encourage supportive ties. There could also be greater expectations of support from kin compared to friends since friendship ties are voluntary [22]. Additionally, this study found that Mother participants relied more on siblings (Brother/Sister) for national service information compared to Fathers which is consistent with Wellman & Wortley's (1990) [22] finding that women are more likely to access siblings for support compared to other family members. Table 4 also showed that both groups relied more on younger *Friends (same age/younger)* than older *Friends*. Since most of the participants were aged 34 and above (Table 3), their older *Friends* may not qualify for the draft and hence would not have first-hand experience of national service.

Table 4. Emirati parents' national service information sources - Used (Ranked)

Rank	Fathers	Mean[4]	Rank	Mothers	Mean[4]
1	Friends[1]	0.58	1	Brother/Sister	0.55
2	Relatives	0.50	2	Friends[1]	0.52
	Government websites	0.50	3	Relatives	0.48
3	Brother/Sister	0.42	4	Husband	0.45
	Internet sites[2]	0.42		Military recruiter	0.45
4	Wife	0.31		Internet sites[2]	0.45
	TV/movies	0.31	5	Newspapers	0.36
5	Work colleagues	0.27	6	Government websites	0.33
	Military recruiter	0.27	7	Friends (older)[3]	0.27
	Newspapers	0.27		Work colleagues	0.27
6	Friends (older)[3]	0.19		TV/movies	0.27

[1]same age or younger; [2]YouTube, Blogs, Forums; [3]older friends; [4]Mean based on number of choices made for each source/number of participants (Fathers *N* = 26; Mothers *N* = 33)

A between-group comparison showed that the top three information sources used by Fathers included both Social (Friends-same age/younger, Relatives, Brother/Sister, Internet sites) and Institutional (Government websites) sources. In contrast, the top three information sources used by Mothers were all Social (Brother/Sister, Friends, Relatives). Although the item *Work Colleagues* had the same mean for both groups (*M* = 0.27), it was ranked lower by Mothers. The lower ranking for this item suggests that Mothers were less likely to rely on *Work*

Colleagues for national service information compared to Fathers which could be attributed to the employment status of Mother participants. Fewer Mothers were employed (48.5%) compared to Fathers (92.3%) which would have reduced the former's opportunities to interact with colleagues at work (Table 3).

Finally, the assumption that the nature of the problem faced by parents influences their choice of information sources is reinforced here. Rudi et al. (2018) [13] found that for parenting issues, Fathers reported their spouse (Mother) as a more useful source of parenting information than did Mothers which was explained by the social belief that child-rearing is traditionally regarded as a mother's responsibility. In this study, both *Husband* and *Wife* items shared the same ranking (4) but the *Wife* item had a lower mean score ($M = 0.31$) compared to the *Husband* item ($M = 0.45$). It suggests that *Husbands* (Fathers) were less likely to rely on *Wives* (Mothers) for information on national service but the converse is true as *Wives* were more likely to rely on *Husbands* for such information. The finding that *Wives* depended more on *Husbands* as a source of service information could be due to traditional gender roles. In patriarchal Emirati society, men and women are socialized into accepting traditional gender roles hence *Wives* may be more likely to depend on and defer to *Husbands* on issues perceived as belonging to a male domain such as national service with its association with physicality, masculinity and being a rite of passage into manhood [23].

4.3 Emirati parents: Emergent information disseminators on national service

To identify future use of information sources on national service, participants were asked to select the sources they would access after 2018 or 2019. The top three future information sources for both groups included both Social and Institutional sources. The items *Government websites* and *Military Recruiter* are emergent national service information disseminators. *Government websites* was the top ranked future source for both Father and Mother participants. The *Military Recruiter* would become a more important Institutional information source to both groups. For Fathers, the *Military Recruiter* gained in ranking from 5 to 4 while for Mothers, the *Military Recruiter* gained in ranking from 4 to 3 (Tables 5 and 6).

A comparison between top three information sources used and the top three sources participants would access in the future (Table 6) showed that Fathers would continue to use both Institutional and Social sources. In particular, *Work colleagues* gained in ranking to be among the top three future sources for Fathers. In contrast, Mothers' selection of future sources expanded from only Social sources to include Institutional sources. Two Institutional sources (Government websites, Military recruiter) gained in ranking to be among the top three sources Mothers intend to rely on in the future for national service information.

Table 5. Emirati parents' future national service information sources (Ranked)

Rank	Fathers	Mean[4]	Rank	Mothers	Mean[4]
1	Government websites	0.62	1	Government websites	0.67
2	Friends[1]	0.50	2	Internet sites[2]	0.52
3	Relatives	0.35	3	Military recruiter	0.48
	Work colleagues	0.35	4	Relatives	0.45
	Internet sites[2]	0.35	5	Newspapers	0.36
4	Brother/Sister	0.31	6	Friends[1]	0.30
	Military recruiter	0.31	7	Husband	0.27
	Newspapers	0.31		Brother/Sister	0.27
5	Friends (older)[3]	0.27	8	TV/movies	0.24
6	TV/movies	0.19	9	Friends (older)[3]	0.21
7	Wife	0.15		Work colleagues	0.21

[1]same age or younger; [2]YouTube, Blogs, Forums; [3]older friends; [4]Mean based on number of choices made for each source/number of participants (Fathers $N = 26$; Mothers $N = 33$)

Table 6. Comparison of Emirati parents' information sources: Used vs. future (Top three sources)

Rank	Father		Rank	Mother	
	Sources used	Future sources		Sources used	Future sources
1	Friends[1]	Government websites	1	Brother/Sister	Government websites
2	Relatives Government websites	Friends[1]	2	Friends[1]	Internet sites[2]
3	Brother/Sister Internet sites[2]	Relatives Work colleagues Internet sites[2]	3	Relatives	Military recruiter

[1]same age or younger; [2]YouTube, Blogs, Forums

4.4Implications of findings: Trends in Emirati parents national service information-seeking behavior

Several trends emerged in the comparison of national service information sources used by Emirati parent participants and their choice of future information sources:

Trend 1 – *Father and Mother participants would rely on both Social and Institutional sources in future information-seeking behavior*. Future information sources selected reflect two patterns whereby participants combine the use of a) Institutional and Social sources, and b) Social sources based on kinship/friendship relations together with more distant Social sources based on non-kinship/non-friendship relations.

Trend 2 – *More distant Social sources would be utilized by parent participants*. For Fathers, the top three Social sources used were based on kinship/friendship (Relatives, Brother/Sister, Friends-younger/same age) and one non-kinship/non-friendship Social source was used (Internet sites). Future Social sources selected by Fathers were the same items but included an additional distant non-kinship/non-friendship based human Social source (Work colleagues). For Mothers, the top three Social sources used were all based on kinship/friendship (Relatives, Brother/Sister, Friends-younger/same age). The only future Social source ranked in second position was *Internet Sites* – a non-human distant source which is not based on kinship or friendship.

Overall, the patterns of parental future information-seeking behavior indicate that participants would rely on both Social and Institutional sources as well as sources that are not based on kinship/friendship for national service information. When the findings are interpreted from a social network perspective, this suggests that parent information networks are becoming more heterogeneous which facilitates access to distant *non-kinship/non-friendship* based sources that can offer new information. According to Granovetter's (1973) [18] *The Strength of Weak Ties*, strong ties exist between actors such as family members and close friends whose kindship or friendship relations lead to frequent interaction during which resources or information could be obtained or exchanged. However, weak ties exist between actors such as strangers or acquaintances whose distant relations lead to infrequent interactions representing fewer opportunities for the transfer or exchange of information or resources.

Granovetter (1973) [18] argued that information dissemination within social networks with strong ties is characterized by redundancy since actors within these networks (i.e. spouses, siblings, relatives, friends) have much in common, such other contacts and the information they possess. In contrast, information dissemination within social networks with weak ties is characterized by novelty since actors in these networks (i.e. Work Colleagues, Military Recruiter) do not have much in common, including other contacts and the information they can access [24]. Hence when parent information networks become more heterogeneous by the selection of sources not based on kinship/friendship, parent participants would likely be able to access new or unique information on national service which would not be already known to their family members and close friends. This could also enable participants to triangulate the information acquired and develop a better understanding of the knowledge gained from these sources. Moreover, Wellman and Wortley (1990) [22] found that heterogeneous information networks characterized by a mix of kinship ties, friendship ties, and distant ties are important in fulfilling the need for different or specialized information or resources.

V.   CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study compared information sources on national service utilized by Emirati fathers and mothers. It also compared the information sources used by Emirati fathers and mothers with sources they intend to access in the future. The results showed differences in selection of information sources based on parental gender. The top three information sources used by Mothers were all Social but Fathers used both Social and Institutional sources. *Government websites* and *Military Recruiter* are emergent national service information disseminators. Two trends emerged in the parent participants' choice of future information sources which were firstly, Father and Mother participants would rely mainly on both Social and Institutional sources in future information-seeking behavior. Secondly, more distant sources would be utilized by parent participants. These trends suggest that parent information networks would become more heterogeneous. The participants' main reliance on future sources that are not based on kinship or friendship would enable them to access novel information on national service which would not be already known to their family members and close friends.

Based on the findings, it is recommended that the UAE military increases communication to parents through the use of *Military Recruiters* and by strengthening its digital media presence in *Internet sites* or social media. Moreover, the UAE military could tailor information delivery to each parental gender that would support parental engagement with the national service program for promoting its relevance to youths and the wider Emirati community. Finally, the main limitations of this study are its sample size and scope. The sample size of each parent group is small (Fathers $N = 26$; Mothers $N = 33$) and a larger sample could be obtained in future research. While this study examined Emirati parents' choice of information sources on national service, future work could focus on perceived level of trust in information sources and its effect on information propagation in social networks.

VI.   ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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