

## **A study on the perception of the students towards social media and it's usefulnesss in academics**

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### **Abstract**

For the last few years, rapid technological changes have brought the entire world under one roof. Social media has made it possible to easily connect with someone within seconds despite the physical distance of a thousand miles .Increasing use of different social media platforms are paving the way to explore to the next level. Facebook, Whatsapp, You tube, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat, Telegram are some common social media platforms which are being widely used. This study has been done to have a better understanding of the perception of students towards different aspects of social media and also its usefulness in academics. Primary data was collected from a sample of 100 students. The study revealed that youtube users are more positively inclined towards the usefulness of it in academics followed by whatsapp users. Facebook and Instagram platforms are found to be less useful in academics as per the perception of their users. Along with this, mostly students have a positive attitude towards the impact of social media on the overall being of users and an association was also found between their preferred platform and time spent by the users on them.

### **Key words**

Attitude, perception, student, Facebook, you tube, whatsapp, usefulness

### **Introduction**

Social media is defined as websites and applications that enable users to create and share content or to participate in social networking(Kenny & Johnson, 2016). It is becoming commonplace to use communication apps like WeChat and WhatsApp to communicate with employers, colleagues, teachers, friends, businesses, doctors, and more. It is understandable that knowing how to communicate effectively through social media is increasingly acknowledged as being a vital part of linguistic competence(Lambton-Howard et al., n.d.). Over the years, there has been an increase in user participation in social computing systems such as online communities, media sharing sites and Social network sites (SNSs). (Johnston et al., n.d.). Users engage with social media via a computer, tablet, or smartphone via web-based software or applications. People are using social media for a variety of purposes. The four main uses of social media form the acronym SLIM: **sharing, learning, interacting, and marketing**. Today's media landscape is larger and more diverse than Ever before, with youth having access to an unprecedented volume of digital content across numerous devices, including smartphones, tablets, computers, laptops, and gaming consoles. Social media represents a

central component of this landscape(Nesi, 2020) the Covid- 19 pandemic has catapulted the urgency and dire need for using online tools to the forefront of its significance to continue teaching and learning activities. Nationwide closures of educational institutions are impacting over 91% of the world's student population.(Vandeyar, 2020).

### **Review of literature**

Review of literature is an essential part of a research work. It helps a researcher to learn about the studies that have been done in this area of research. For this study, researchers also went through many studies which have been reviewed as follows.

Lambton-Howard, Kiaer and kharrufa (2020) focused on understanding the perception and attitudes of teachers and learners towards social media and presented an analysis of the result of two workshops in UK university that were held on campus analysis identified that learners reported using social media for language learning than teachers reported using it for language teaching(Lambton-Howard et al., n.d.)

Kenny and Johnson (2016) conducted the cross-sectional study in one dental school to examine the social media use and attitude of dental students on social media towards professional behavior. The study concluded that Twitter was the least popular platform and few students admitted to unprofessional behavior. The results advised greater perception of safety to avoid risk while involving in inappropriate behavior on social media(Kenny & Johnson, 2016)

Johnston et al. (2013) conducted a cohort study to analyze the changed perception among students of University of Cape Town towards Facebook and Twitter. The students were found to be extremely positive toward Facebook and less positive towards Twitter as the study revealed an increase in registered Facebook members as compared to previous studies(Johnston et al., n.d.)

Nesi (2020) examined the effects of social media in deteriorating and promoting mental health of adolescents. the findings of the study showed very small but significant negative effect of social media on mental health. The study suggested to develop approaches for healthy use of social media in youth(Nesi, 2020)

### **Research Methodology**

Researchers conducted a cross- sectional study based on primary data to understand the different perception of students toward social media platforms and its usefulness in academics. The data was collected from 100 students of school and colleges of some cities of Haryana simultaneously. Further, they were divided according to their preferred social media platforms, gender and education level (senior secondary, Undergraduate, Post graduate). Data was collected online through Google form for convenience and large reach.

Four social media platforms were taken into study to know the perceptions.

Questionnaire was designed with positive philosophy in a manner that covered some important topics which were to be asked from respondents. To know the different perceptions of students towards their preferred social media platform, likert scale variables were introduced and to know demographic profile of respondents, some categorical variables were also included in the

a study on the perception of the students towards social media and it's usefulness in academics

questionnaire.

**Objectives of the study**

1. To know the preferences of students towards social media platforms used by them.
2. To explore and get the basic idea behind using their preferred platform.
3. To explore whether students have a positive, negative and neutral attitude toward these platforms in affecting their overall well- being.
4. To assess any association between their preferred platform and time spent on it.
5. To know the different perception of students towards their preferred social media platforms
6. To compare the perception of preferred platform users and education level on academic performance.

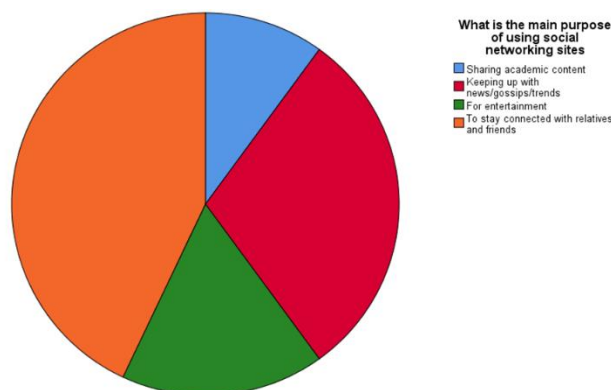
**Data analysis and Interpretation**

**which social media site you prefer the most**

|       |           | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------|-----------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | facebook  | 17        | 17.0    | 17.0          | 17.0               |
|       | Whatsapp  | 37        | 37.0    | 37.0          | 54.0               |
|       | You tube  | 21        | 21.0    | 21.0          | 75.0               |
|       | Instagram | 25        | 25.0    | 25.0          | 100.0              |
|       | Total     | 100       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

From the above table, it is clear that that the among all the respondents, **Whatsapp** is the most preferred platform.17% students preferred **Facebook** as their most preferred SMP(social media platform),37% preferred **whatsapp**,21% preferred **you tube** and 25% respondents preferred **Instagram** as their preferred social media platform. This shows that users are more inclined towards whatsapp.

**Objective 2** Main Purpose of users toward social media platforms.



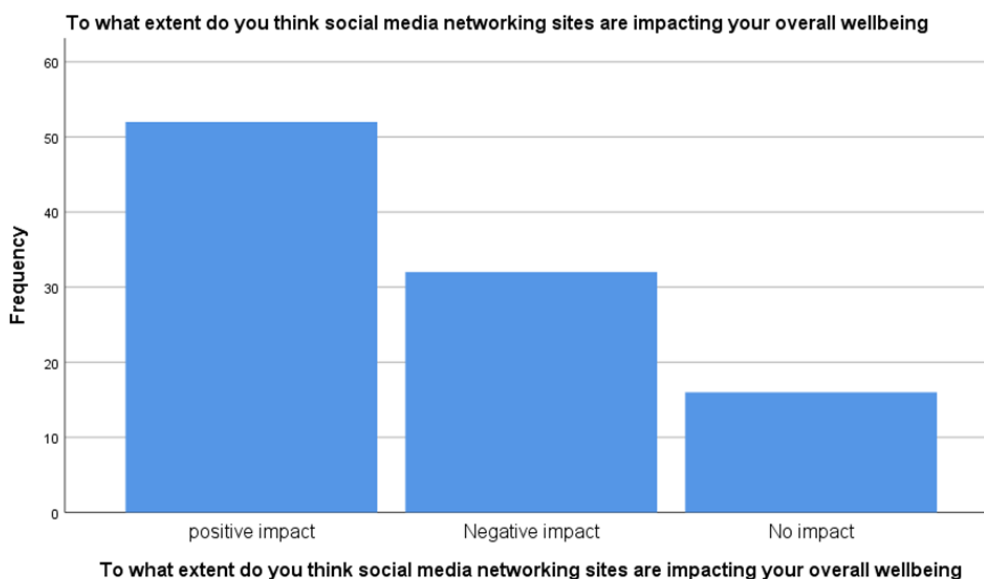
The pie chart above shows that most of the users use social media platforms to **stay connected with relatives and friends** and least they use them for **sharing academic content**.

**What is the main purpose of using social networking sites**

|       |  | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------|--|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | Sharing academic content                     | 10        | 10.0    | 10.0          | 10.0               |
|       | Keeping up with news/gossips/trends          | 30        | 30.0    | 30.0          | 40.0               |
|       | For entertainment                            | 17        | 17.0    | 17.0          | 57.0               |
|       | To stay connected with relatives and friends | 43        | 43.0    | 43.0          | 100.0              |
|       | Total  | 100       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

It is clear from the above table and pie chart that users usually don't use social media platforms for **sharing academic contents**. Most of them use social media to **stay connected with family and friends**.

**Objective 3 To know their attitude towards social media on the overall being of users.**



Bar chart shows that 52% respondents have a positive attitude, 32% respondents have a negative attitude towards social media and 16% respondents think that there is no impact of social media on the overall being on users.

**Objective 4 Finding correlation between their preferred platform and time spent on it.**

**Null Hypothesis: There is no significant correlation between preferred platform and time spent on it.**

a study on the perception of the students towards social media and it's usefulnesss in academics

To find correlation between the preferred platform and time spent on it, researcher conducted a Chi-Square **test**. The findings of **Chi-Square** test are as follows:

**Chi-Square Tests**

|                              | Value               | df | Asymptotic Significance (2-sided) |
|------------------------------|---------------------|----|-----------------------------------|
| Pearson Chi-Square           | 75.938 <sup>a</sup> | 6  | .000                              |
| Likelihood Ratio             | 84.636              | 6  | .000                              |
| Linear-by-Linear Association | 8.724               | 1  | .003                              |
| N of Valid Cases             | 100                 |    |                                   |

a. 1 cells (8.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 4.42.

The above table shows the results of **chi -square** test. Since the **p value < 0.05**, therefore, Null hypothesis that there is no significant correlation between preferred platform and time spent on it is **rejected**. Hence, a significant correlation exists between these two variables.

|           | 30mnts-1hour | 2-3 hour | 4-5 hour | Total |
|-----------|--------------|----------|----------|-------|
| Facebook  | 100%         | 0%       | 0%       | 100%  |
| Whatsapp  | 40.5%        | 29.7%    | 29.8%    | 100%  |
| You tube  | 28.6%        | 0%       | 71.4%    | 100%  |
| Instagram | 20%          | 80%      | 0%       | 100%  |

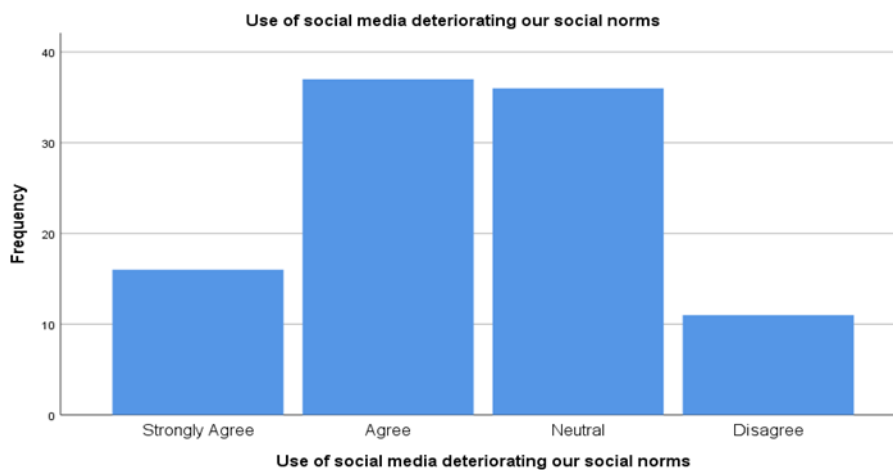
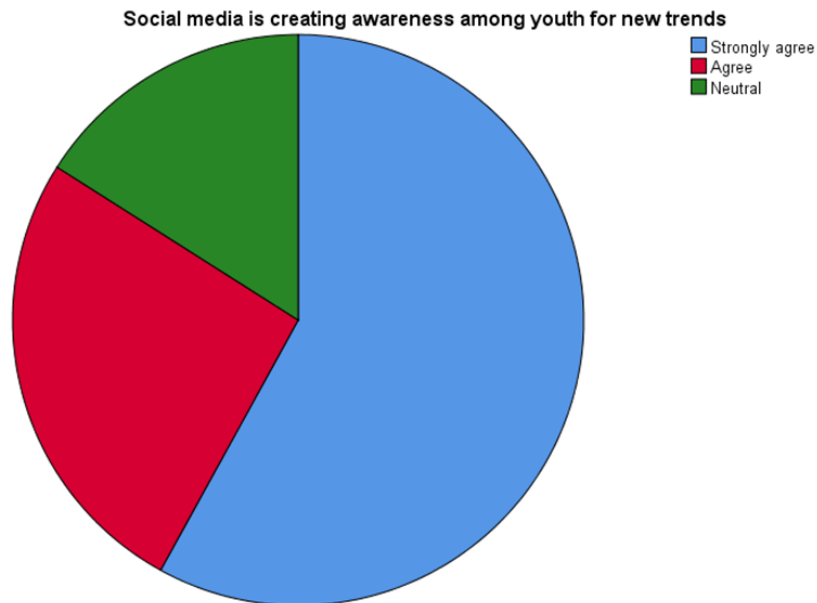
The table shows the percentage of users according to time spent on their preferred social media users.

**Objective 5 To know about the different perceptions of users towards social media.**

**Social media is the source to get knowledge and information**

|                      | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|----------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid Strongly agree | 79        | 79.0    | 79.0          | 79.0               |
| Agree                | 16        | 16.0    | 16.0          | 95.0               |
| Neutral              | 5         | 5.0     | 5.0           | 100.0              |
| Total                | 100       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

79% users strongly **agree** with the statement, 16% users **agree** and 5% users are **neutral** towards this. No user was found to disagree and **strongly disagree** with the statement. It means that we can assume that social media is the source of knowledge and information.



The above bar chart shows that 16% users strongly **agree** with the statement, 37% users agree, 36% users are **neutral** towards the statement and 11% disagree. No user was found to strongly **disagree** with the statement. The researcher concluded that to some extent users think that use of social media is deteriorating our social norms.

Above pie chart depicts that mostly (58%) users strongly **agree** with the statement, a comparatively less (26%) agree with this, 16% users were found **neutral** with the statement. No users were found to disagree and **strongly disagree**. This shows that research says that social media is creating awareness among youth about new trends.

**Objective 6: To compare the perception of different education level students towards usefulness of social media on academics**

To measure their perception on academics, 5 variables were introduced and a cronbach alpha test was conducted to measure the internal consistency. The result of cronbach alpha is as follows:

a study on the perception of the students towards social media and it's usefulnesss in academics

### Reliability Statistics

| Cronbach's Alpha | N of Items |
|------------------|------------|
| .961             | 5          |

Internal consistency exists because the value of cronbach alpha is 0.961 which is much higher than 0.6.

**Null hypothesis: There is no difference between the perception of educational groups on the usefulness of social media on academics.**

To compare the perception between these, One way ANOVA was conducted by the researcher after meeting all the assumptions. The results shown by the test are as follows.

### Descriptives

Academics

|                  | N   | Mean   | Std. Deviation | Std. Error | 95% Confidence Interval for Mean |             | Minimum | Maximum |
|------------------|-----|--------|----------------|------------|----------------------------------|-------------|---------|---------|
|                  |     |        |                |            | Lower Bound                      | Upper Bound |         |         |
| senior secondary | 24  | 5.3000 | 1.61837        | .33035     | 4.6166                           | 5.9834      | 2.60    | 6.60    |
| Undergraduate    | 60  | 4.4167 | 1.75916        | .22711     | 3.9622                           | 4.8711      | 2.20    | 6.60    |
| Post graduate    | 16  | 4.4625 | 1.66808        | .41702     | 3.5736                           | 5.3514      | 2.40    | 6.00    |
| Total            | 100 | 4.6360 | 1.73645        | .17364     | 4.2915                           | 4.9805      | 2.20    | 6.60    |

The descriptive table provides useful statistics and it is showing the different mean of the perception of different educational level users and academics. But whether this difference in mean is significant or not, we will have this idea from the table below.

**Null hypothesis: There is no difference between the perception of educational groups on the usefulness of social media on academics**

### ANOVA

Academics

|                | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F     | Sig. |
|----------------|----------------|----|-------------|-------|------|
| Between Groups | 13.950         | 2  | 6.975       | 2.378 | .098 |
| Within Groups  | 284.561        | 97 | 2.934       |       |      |
| Total          | 298.510        | 99 |             |       |      |

No significant difference between group mean was found. We can see that the significance level is 0.098 (p =0.098), which is more than 0.05. **Thus the Null hypothesis is accepted**, and, therefore, there is no significant difference between the perception of different education level students towards the usefulness of social media on academics.

**Objective 7: To compare the perception of different preferred social media platform users on the usefulness of social media on academics.**

### Descriptives

Academics

|           | N   | Mean   | Std. Deviation | Std. Error | 95% Confidence Interval for Mean |             | Minimum | Maximum |
|-----------|-----|--------|----------------|------------|----------------------------------|-------------|---------|---------|
|           |     |        |                |            | Lower Bound                      | Upper Bound |         |         |
| Facebook  | 17  | 2.5294 | .09852         | .02389     | 2.4788                           | 2.5801      | 2.40    | 2.60    |
| Whatsapp  | 37  | 5.8919 | .31831         | .05233     | 5.7858                           | 5.9980      | 5.40    | 6.40    |
| You tube  | 21  | 6.4095 | .24881         | .05429     | 6.2963                           | 6.5228      | 6.00    | 6.60    |
| Instagram | 25  | 2.7200 | .27689         | .05538     | 2.6057                           | 2.8343      | 2.20    | 3.00    |
| Total     | 100 | 4.6360 | 1.73645        | .17364     | 4.2915                           | 4.9805      | 2.20    | 6.60    |

**Null Hypothesis: There is no significant difference between the perception of different social media platforms users on the usefulness of social media on academics.**

To compare the perception, One way ANOVA was applied by the researcher and the results of

the tests are as above. Youtube users have the highest mean( 6.4095) and whatsapp have comparatively less mean( 5.8918), while facebook and Instagram users have less mean score as compared to youtube and whatsapp. But whether this difference is significant or not, we will have the idea from the following table.

### ANOVA

Academics

|                | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F        | Sig. |
|----------------|----------------|----|-------------|----------|------|
| Between Groups | 291.629        | 3  | 97.210      | 1356.227 | .000 |
| Within Groups  | 6.881          | 96 | .072        |          |      |
| Total          | 298.510        | 99 |             |          |      |

The ANOVA table shows a significant **difference** between the perception of different social media platform users on the usefulness of academics since the p value is 0.00, which is less than 0.05. **Thus, the Null hypothesis that there is no significant difference between groups is being rejected** by the researcher. It means that a difference between the perception of groups exists .It means that as per the perception of users **youtube** is more useful in academics followed by **whatsapp**. **Facebook** and **Instagram** are comparatively less useful in academics.

### Findings of the study

1. Among all the respondents from which data have been collected, **whatsapp** is the most preferred site of 37% students, **Instagram** was preferred by 25% students, 21% students preferred **youtube** and 17% students preferred **Facebook**. It shows that students are more inclined towards **Whatsapp** and less inclined towards **Facebook**.



a study on the perception of the students towards social media and its usefulness in academics

2. Results depicted that 43% students use their preferred platform **to stay connected with family and friends**. 30% users use that **to keep up with news/gossip with friends**. 17% use social media **for entertainment and** 10% use their preferred site for **sharing academic content**. This shows that social media is least used for academic purposes and mostly used to get connected with family and friends.
3. 52% users showed a **positive attitude** towards the effects of social media on the overall well being of users while 32% showed a **negative attitude** and 16% students think that social media **does not affect** the overall being of the user in any way. It shows that users are more positively inclined towards the use of social media.
4. 58% users strongly **agree** with the statement that **social media is creating awareness among youth on new trends**, 26% users agree with this, 16% are **neutral** but no user was found to disagree and **strongly disagree** with the statement. We can now conclude that yes, social media is a means of creating awareness about the trends.
5. A comparison between the perception of (**senior secondary students, undergraduate students and postgraduate students**) on the usefulness of social media on academics was made. **One way Anova** was applied and no significant difference was found as the **P value (0.098)** was more than **0.05**. It depicts that all different educational level students almost have the same perception towards social media and its usefulness on academics.
6. **Chi-Square** test was applied to assess any significant correlation between the **time spent by the users and their preferred social media platforms**. A significant correlation between the two was found since the **p value (0.00)** is less than **0.05**.
7. **One way ANOVA** was applied to compare the perception of different preferred social media platform users on the usefulness of social media on academics. Results showed that the **significant difference** was found between the perception of them since the **p value (0.00)** is less than **0.05**. we can conclude that **youtube** and **whatsapp** users think that these platforms are highly useful in academics while **Facebook** and **Instagram** users take their preferred platform less useful in academics.

### **Limitations of the study**

This study has been conducted on a sample size of 100 students, had the sample size been big, results would have been different to some extent. The data has been collected from 3 cities of Haryana, results could be different if few more cities would have been taken into study. This research has been done on primary data, with the use of secondary data, researchers could have a better understanding or idea about social media. In this study, only four social media platforms have been taken for study, there are few other platforms like Twitter, Snapchat, Telegram, wechat and others which have been sidelined.

### **Deliverance**

Undoubtedly, social media has made life easy in almost all the areas whether it may be workplace, academics and others but increasing use has put so many threats to our young generation, specially for the students and the youth. A lot of mental problems have been detected among students. Too

much exposure to social media is also deteriorating our social norms .Therefore, it is advised to put it to good and proper use. Unnecessary surfing on social media sometimes may cause big problems. In academics, it has proved beneficial.

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