



Impact of social media on Youth

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ABSTRACT :

The current study, “Impact of Social Media on Youth,” examines the influence of social networking platforms on the lifestyle, behavior, communication, and mental health of adolescents. Social media is now an important part of everyday life in the digital age. A lot of young people use sites like Instagram, Facebook, WhatsApp, Snapchat, YouTube, and X (Twitter).

These sites have revolutionized the way in which young people communicate, exchange information, and perceive themselves as well as society as a whole. The purpose of this research is to identify both the benefits and the consequences that social networking can have for young individuals.

For the research, a combination of primary and secondary sources will be employed. The former will include questionnaires and surveys filled out by students between the ages of 15 and 25. As for the latter, journals and scholarly articles, which have already been published, will be used in the course of investigation. It will be necessary to find out how much social media teenagers utilize and to learn about the pros and cons of such behaviour.

Keywords : Social media , academic performance , mental health , behavioural changes , psychological changes , digital communication .



Introduction :

The use of social media has emerged in the 21st century as one of the greatest tools used for communication and interaction purposes. The use of this medium has brought about a revolution in the manner in which people interact with each other, exchange ideas, and communicate. All generations of people, however, it is the young generation that uses social media applications such as Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, Snapchat, YouTube, and X (Twitter) on a frequent basis. The emergence of smart devices and internet technology has played a significant role in promoting social media use among the young generation.

Social media sites were designed initially with the objective of creating connectivity and virtual communities between individuals. But with time, their purpose has broadened to provide news, education, entertainment, and self-expression. Presently, youth leverage social media to voice their opinion, showcase talent, participate in debates, and stay informed about the latest developments. Social media provides a new dimension of learning and networking, enabling people to discover new cultures and perspectives from around the world. Yet, this widespread use of social media raises questions regarding their impact on mental well-being and academic performance.

LITERATURE REVIEW:

Bonfanti et al. (2025) carried out a meta-analysis study on the topic of social comparison and discovered a correlation between the moderate frequency of engagement in activities related to social media use and adverse results like body dissatisfaction and disordered eating.

Fassi et al. (2025) carried out an observational cohort study and established that teenagers who experience mental issues tend to use social media more frequently and have a decreased level of life satisfaction.

Recent studies (2025) utilize platform comparison, which reveal that entertainment-based apps such as TikTok have higher rates of distraction compared to other social media platforms because of the use of algorithm-based, short-form content.

American Psychological Association (2025) emphasizes in public health guidelines that risks are associated more with usage patterns and online behavior rather than overall screen time.

According to **JAMA (2025)**, the latest studies have demonstrated that suicidal ideation can be more accurately forecast through addictive behaviour on social media platforms than by screen time alone.

According to **The Times of India (2025)**, there has been an increase in reported cases of depression among adolescents in India due to clinical data revealing how cyberbullying on various platforms leads to depression.

A review carried out by **Sala et al. (2024)** concerning the topic of mental wellbeing established that social media presents both positive and negative aspects that depend on the ways, purposes, and frequency of its use.

Avci et al. (2024) have reviewed literature concerning the process of identity formation. It has been established that social media is capable of promoting the process of identity development in teenagers and causing distress simultaneously.

Glaser et al. (2024) carried out a diary study and discovered that fitspiration content related to physical appearance has a stronger association with negative body image compared to the total time spent on social networking sites, emphasizing the



importance of the type of content consumed.

Research gap:-

- Few studies have been conducted to understand the impact of social media on both mental well-being and academic success at once.

Objective(s):-

- To study the impact of social media on academic success.
- To evaluate the influence of social media on mental well-being.

HYPOTHESIS:-

H₀: Social Media does not significantly affect youth's academic performance and their mental wellbeing.

H₁: Social Media significantly affects youth's academic performance and their mental wellbeing.

METHODOLOGY :

Design of Research

The current research will use descriptive and analytical approaches to conduct research. Descriptive research gives an understanding of the trends, behavior, and attitudes of young individuals toward social media usage. Analytical research examines various relationships among different variables including social media usage, academic performance, mental wellbeing, etc.

Nature of the Study

It is an interplay of quantitative and qualitative research techniques.

- Quantitative data will be gathered through structured surveys.

Population of the Study

The population under study includes individuals between 15 to 25 years of age, comprising of students in high schools and colleges, as well as young professionals. This particular demographic group has been selected as it extensively uses social media and is directly impacted by technological advancements.

Size of Sample & Sampling Technique

The sample size for the research comprises of 45 people. For obtaining equal proportionate numbers from both genders, educational background and frequency of usage of social networking sites, random sampling technique will be used. Occasionally, purposive sampling method may also be applied.

Sources of Data

The research uses sources of data.

- Primary Sources of Data:

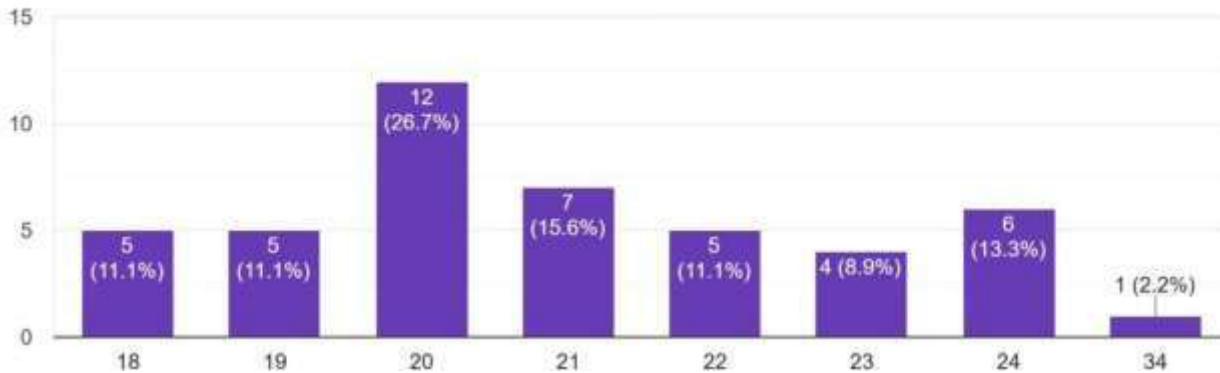
The information was gathered directly from the respondents through an efficient questionnaire survey. The questionnaire contained close-ended and open-ended questions related to the frequency of use, purpose, effects, and attitude towards social media.



As we can observe from the graph above, the majority of the respondents, i.e., 26.7%, fall into the category of being 20 years

HOW OLD ARE YOU ?

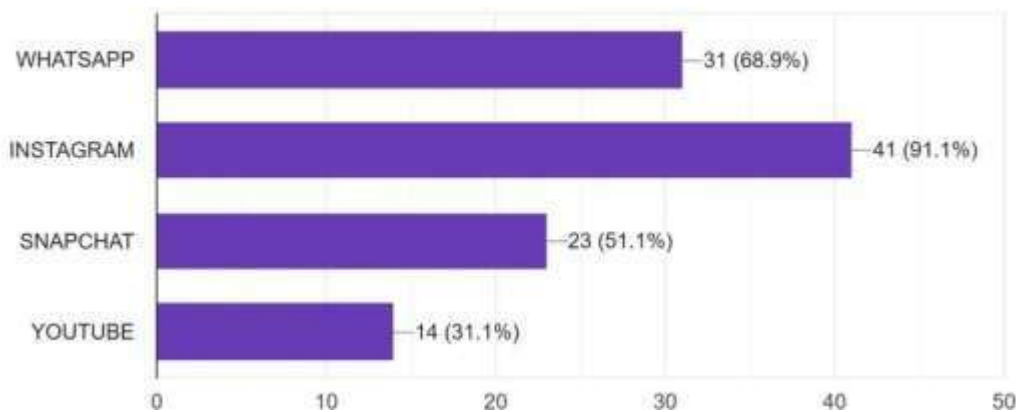
45 responses



old. They are followed by those who are 21 years old, comprising 15.6% of the total, while another 13.3% fall in the age category of 24 years. Nearly the same percentage, i.e., 11.1%, belongs to those aged 18, 19, and 22 years. Another 8.9% are aged 23 years, while one person aged 34 years represents just 2.2%

WHICH SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORM DO YOU USE ?

45 responses



Graph 1 displays the level of preference for various social media platforms by the sample population (of 45 individuals). As illustrated in Graph 1, the most favored platform is Instagram, as indicated by the highest percentage of usage, 91.1% (41 respondents), showing the level of appeal Instagram has among youth due to its visuals and reels.

Secondly, 68.9% (31 respondents) use WhatsApp, suggesting the significance of this platform in terms of social interactions and communications. Thirdly, Snapchat ranks third, with a 51.1% (23 respondents) usage rate, suggesting the importance of Snapchat among youth who appreciate fast, visual, and secure messaging applications.

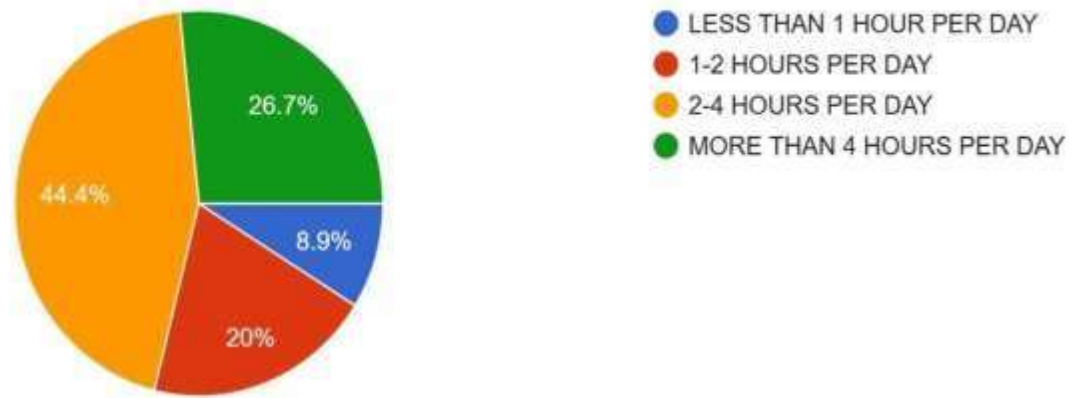
Lastly, only 31.1% (14 respondents) use YouTube, which indicates the secondary status of this



platform as a source of entertainment and information.

HW OFTEN DO YOU USE SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORM?

45 responses

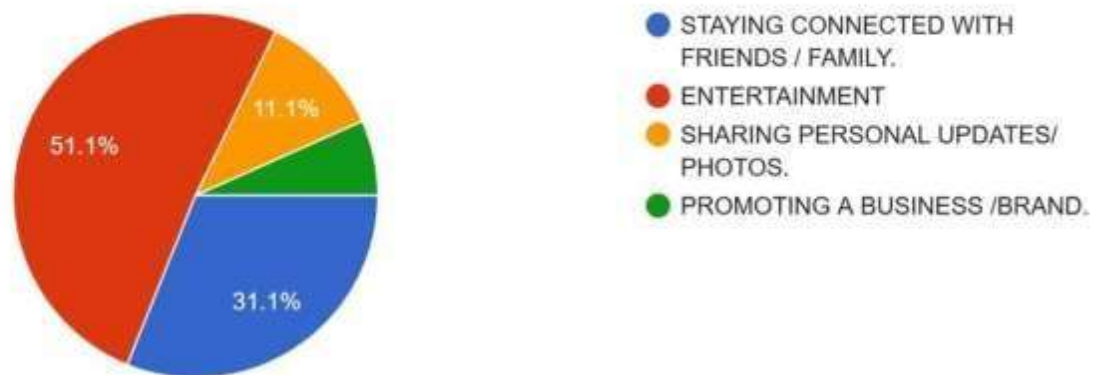


This pie chart reveals the usage of social media daily among the 45 respondents. From the statistics, it can be observed that the majority of the respondents tend to be regular users of social media.

The biggest portion of the sample size is made up of those who spend between 2-4 hours on social media daily, accounting for 44.4%. This implies that almost half of the youth population uses these platforms regularly on a daily basis. Also, 26.7% of the respondents use social media for more than 4 hours every day. This implies that the dependence on social media is very high.

WHAT DO YOU PRIMARILY USE SOCIAL MEDIA FOR?

45 responses



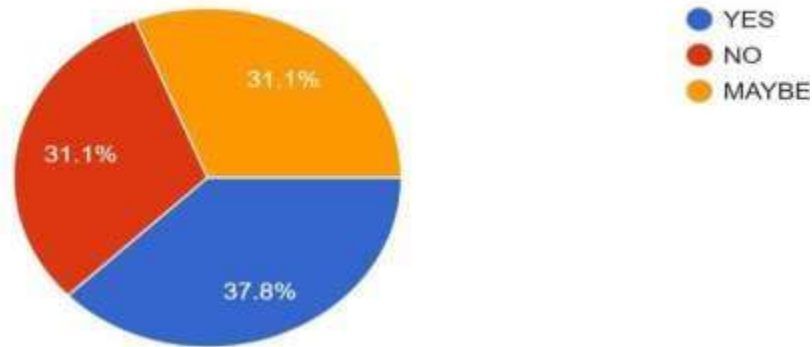
According to the pie chart, the leading factors behind people's usage of social media have been indicated below. As evident from the opinions of 45 individuals, entertainment ranks as the first purpose of using social media among young people with 51.1%. In other words, majority of youngsters utilize social media sites for entertaining themselves through videos, memes, songs, and current trends on the Internet.

Following entertainment comes the second reason for the usage of social media – keeping in touch with relatives and friends, which amounts to 31.1% of people. Furthermore, 11.1% of respondents stated they used social media as a means of communication for sharing personal pictures and other updates. Hereby, fewer people seem to rely on the Internet for personal communications as compared to previous years. Finally, 6.7% of individuals reported using social media to advertise a product or brand name.



DO U FEEL ADDICTED TO SOCIAL MEIDA?

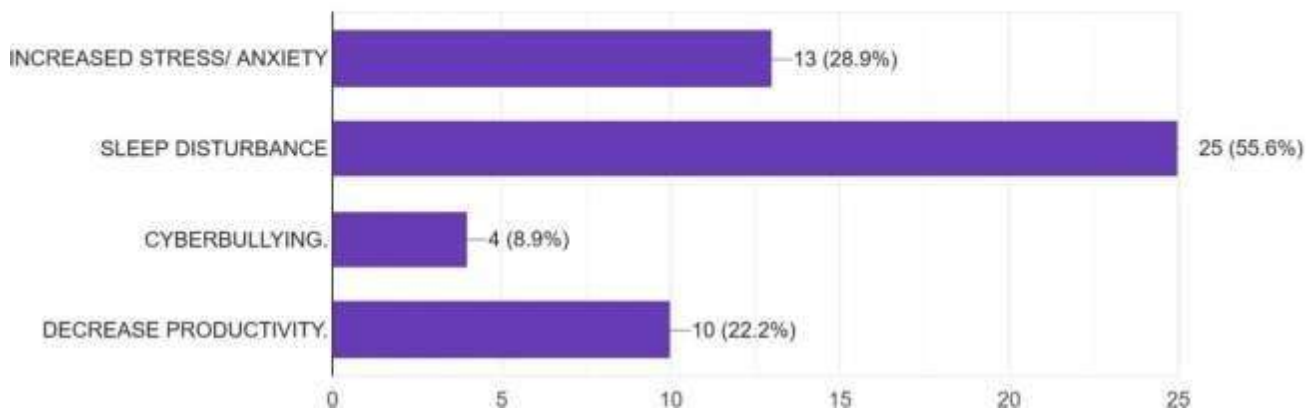
45 responses



Out of the total number of responses that I received, 37.8 percent respondents feel that they are addicted to social media, 31.1 percent respondents feel that they are not addicted to the social media platform, and 31.3 percent respondents maybe addicted to the social media platform..

WHICH NEGATIVE IMPACTS HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED DUE TO EXCESSIVE SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE?

45 responses

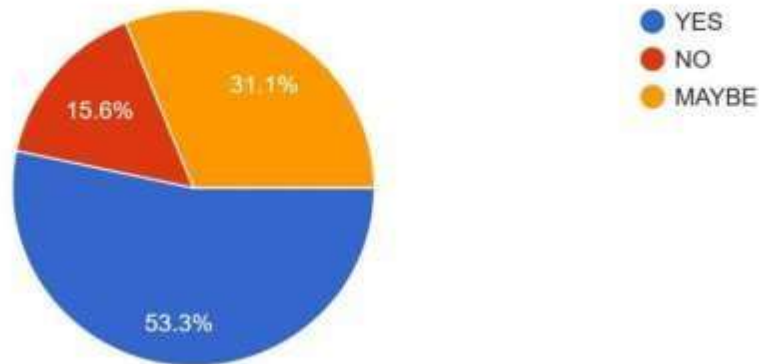


Out of the 45 responses, 55.6% of respondents reported that they have faced the negative impact of sleep disturbances because of their heavy usage of social media. On the other hand, 28.9% of individuals have reported that they have suffered from negative impacts such as increased stress/anxiety because of their excessive use of social media. Furthermore, there were also 8.9% of individuals who reported having faced the negative impact of cyberbullying because of their excessive usage of social media platforms. Finally, 22.2% of individuals have reported having suffered from decreased productivity because of their excessive use of social media.



ARE YOU AWARE OF THE PRIVACY SETTINGS AVAILABLE ON SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS?

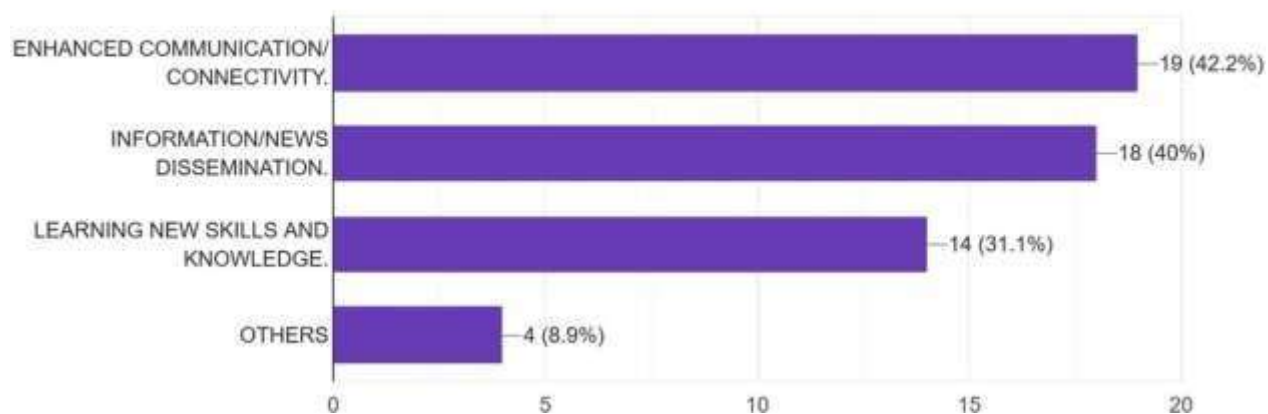
45 responses



Out of total of 45 respondents obtained, 53.3% of the people were aware about the privacy settings available on the social media platform. Also, 31.1% of the people were unsure about the existence of privacy settings for social media platform, while 15.6% of people were unaware of the privacy settings on social media platforms.

WHICH POSITIVE IMPACTS HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED DUE TO SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE?

45 responses

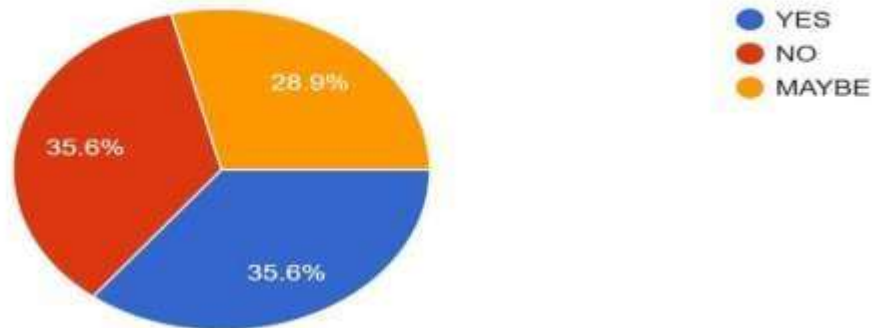


Out of the 45 respondents that were surveyed, 42.2% were individuals who had a positive experience such as an increase in connectivity because of the over usage of the social media site; 40% were individuals who had a positive experience such as receiving information/news from over using the social media sites; 31.1% had experienced a positive effect of gaining new skills and knowledge through the over usage of social media sites; and lastly, 8.9% had experienced another kind of positive influence as a result of the over usage of the social media sites.



DO YOU THINK SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE AFFECTS YOUR MENTAL HEALTH?

45 responses

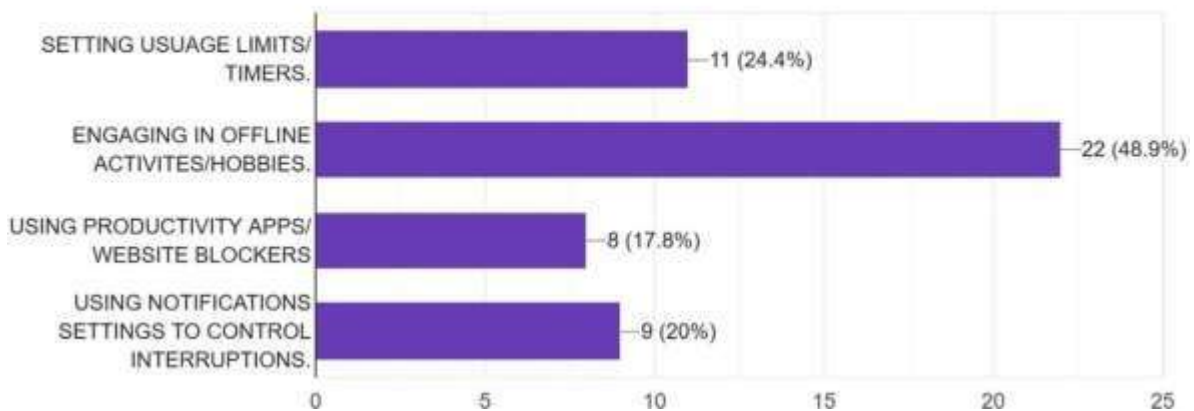


Out of the total 45 respondents, 24.4% individuals used setting usage limits/timers to regulate their use of social media; 48.9% individuals used engaging in offline activities/hobbies to regulate their use of social media; 17.8% individuals used productivity applications/website blockers to regulate their use of social media and 20% individuals used notification settings to control disruptions.

Out of the total 45 respondents, 44.4% felt that social media had enhanced the overall quality of their lives; 37.8% individuals felt that social media had not enhanced the overall quality of their lives and 17.8% individuals felt that social media had enhanced the overall quality of their lives.

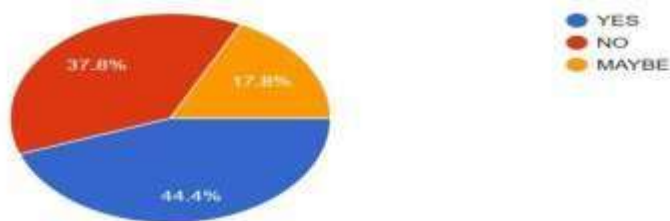
WHICH STRATEGIES DO YOU USE TO MANAGE YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE ?

45 responses



DO YOU THINK SOCIAL MEDIA HAS IMPROVED YOUR OVERALL QUALITY OF LIFE?

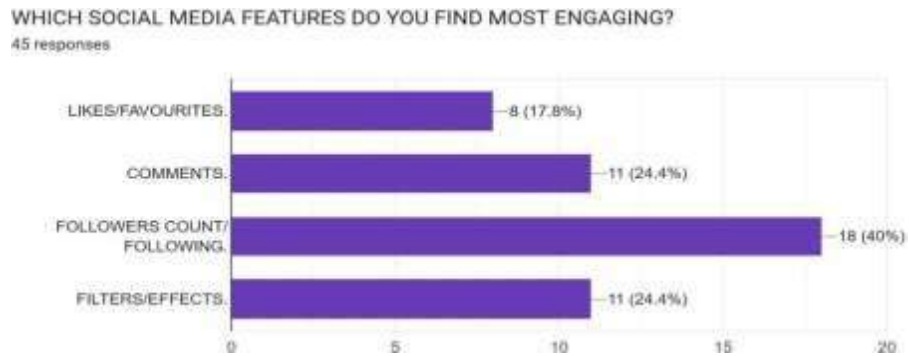
45 responses



Out of the 45 total responses collected, 17.8% of respondents identified like or favorite as the most engaging feature on social media platform, while 24.4% of respondents indicated that comments are the most engaging feature on social media. Additionally, 40% of respondents indicated that follower counts/following are the most engaging features on social media,

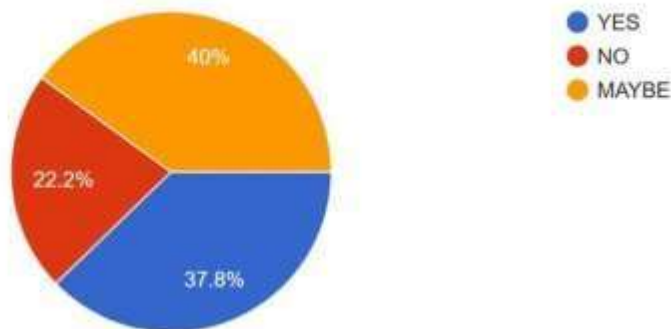


and 24.4% of respondents said that filters/effects are the most engaging feature on social media platform.



Amongst the 45 responses collected, 17.8% of people find like/favourites to be the most engaging features on social media platforms. 24.4% of people consider the comments as the most engaging feature on social media, while 40% of people consider followers counts or following as the most engaging features on social media. 24.4% of people believe filters or effects to be the most engaging feature on social media platforms.

DO YOU THINK SOCIAL MEDIA PROMOTES A DISTORTED VERSION OF REALITY?
45 responses



In the total of 45 feedback collected, there were 40% respondents who believe that social media create a warped sense of reality, there were 37.8% respondents who believe that social media creates a warped sense of reality and there were 22.2% respondents who believe that social media does not create a warped sense of reality.



WHICH SOCIAL MEDIA ACTIVITES DO YOU FIND MOST TIME-CONSUMING.

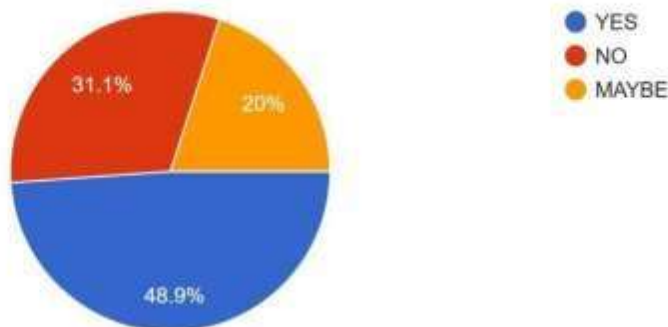
45 responses



In the total number of 45 responses collected, 33.3% of people felt that browsing their news feed was the most time-

DO YOU THINK SOCIAL MEDIA HAS IMPACTED YOUR PRODUCTIVITY NEGATIVELY.

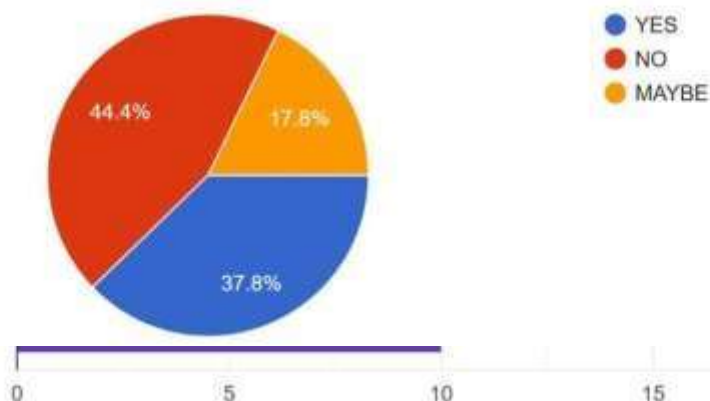
45 responses



consuming activity on social media sites, while another 35.6% considered watching/liking/commenting on videos to be the most time-consuming activity on social media sites. Furthermore, 24.4% of people felt that reading/share articles/blog post was the most time-consuming activity on social media, and the remaining people felt that posting updates/statuses was the most time-consuming activity on social media sites..Out of 45 respondents, 48.9% people believed that social media had negatively affected their productivity, while 31.1% respondents did not believe that social media had negatively affected their productivity, and 20% of respondents felt perhaps social media had negatively affected their productivity.



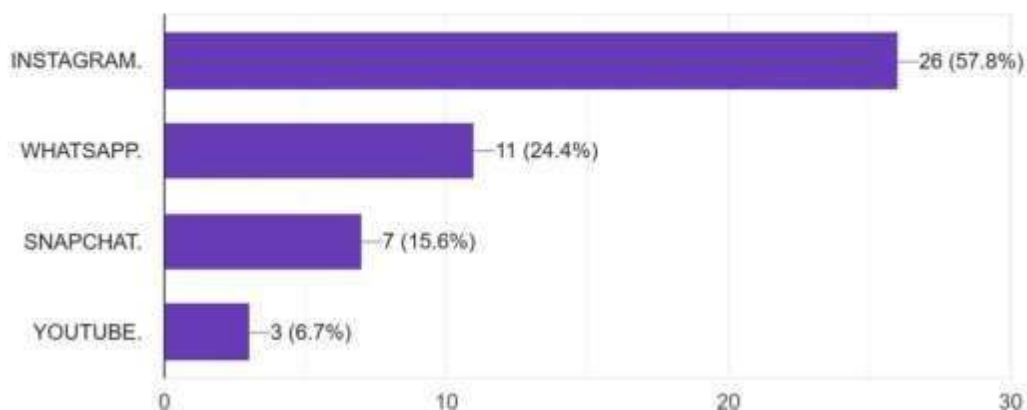
WHICH SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS DO YOU THINK HAVE THE MOST POSITIVE IMPACT ON SOCIETY?
DO YOU FEEL PRESSURED TO PRESENT A PERFECT IMAGE/LIFESTYLE ON SOCIAL MEDIA?
45 responses



Out of the 45 answers obtained, 28.9% people believed that Snapchat was having the greatest impact on the society. The percentage of people who believed that Youtube had the greatest impact on the society was 40%. The percentage of people who believed that WhatsApp was having the greatest impact on the society was 31.1%, while those who believed that Instagram had the greatest impact was 22.2%.

Of the total 45 answers, 44.4% respondents felt that there was no pressure to present themselves or their lifestyle as being perfect on social networking sites; 37.8% respondents felt that they have been put under pressure to present themselves or their lifestyles as being perfect on social networking sites; 17.8% felt that they were pressured to present themselves as perfect on social networking sites.

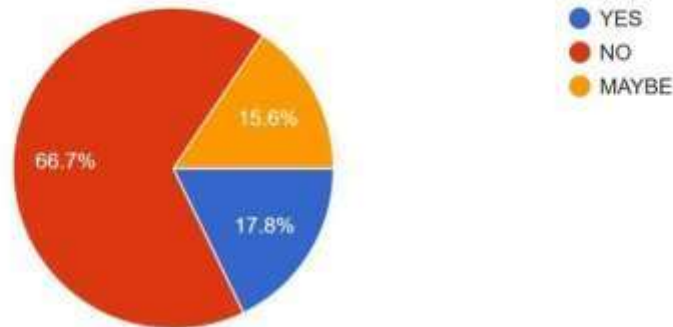
WHICH SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS DO YOU THINK HAVE THE MOST NEGATIVE IMPACT ON SOCIETY?
45 responses



Out of the 45 answers that were provided, 66.7% of the population had not been subjected to cyberbullying or online harassment on social media; 17.8% of the population had been subjected to cyberbullying or online harassment on social media; and 15.6% of the population may have experienced cyberbullying or online harassment on social media.

HAVE YOU EVER FACE CYBER BULLYING OR ONLINE HARASSMENT ON SOCIAL MEDIA?

45 responses



Out of 45 responses, 35.6% of people believed that social media did not affect their political views; 42.2% of people believed that social media affected their political views; and finally, 22.2% of people thought that social media may have affected their political views.

Conclusion:

○ As concluded above, social media has become an important aspect of life for youths today. Social media helps improve communication, learning and education among other aspects of development. Despite these advantages, there are negative impacts associated with excessive use of the same which include lack of focus in schoolwork, low mental well-being, and bullying among others.

○ In conclusion, the effects of social media on young people are thus both advantageous and disadvantageous, depending greatly on its use. Its proper and moderate use may serve as an effective learning aid. However, its improper and excessive use can lead to detrimental effects on one's personal development and health.

Implications :-

- Need to build up self-regulation and time-management skills
- Digital literacy and critical thinking have gained more relevance
- Mental health considerations because of the risks such as anxiety, stress, and comparison

Scope of future research :-

- Comparison of different platforms' impacts (Instagram, YouTube etc.)
- Behavioural and mental health implications
- The link between social media and academic performance
- Safeguarding from cyberbullying



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