

PREFERENCE FOR SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORM AMONG USERS A PRELIMINARY STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Content helps to improve the reach of the audience on digital platforms it attracts, engages, and retains the audience through creating and sharing ideas in blog articles, posts, info graphics, videos, and other media. Content development happens in various stages at different levels; there is content creation and putting the content in a good effective way was the audience gets attracted and wishes to see the content again and again; there can be various types of content which could be humorous, educational, value-based and these contents interact effectively with the users understanding the audience, selecting the best format to reach the content to the audience, choosing a schedule and continuing to do with best practices is the effective ingredients to keep the audience engaged.

Keywords: *Instagram, Facebook, social media, engagement, interaction, creativity, content marketing, Users*

Introduction:

Social media platforms have evolved into dynamic and subjective spaces for content creation and consumption. Engaging the audience has become crucial for these platforms, as the quality and reach of content determine its effectiveness. Content can be generated by individuals, groups, or organizations to enhance their network and recognition. The ability of content to reach a wider audience translates to a broader consumer base for organizations.

Various types of content exist, such as blog posts, emails, social media content, guides, e-books, videos (including webinars and case studies), and more. Content creators with a large following or subscriber base often receive higher compensation for product promotion.

However, social media platforms encourage diverse content, including educational materials like documentaries, subject videos, course-related content, current affairs, infographics, educational posts, and entertainment-related content like movies, music, jokes, memes, food video logs, travel video logs, makeup channels, and gaming channels.

Different types of content cater to specific audience segments, with priorities shifting according to individual preferences. Content is accessible through various platforms such as websites, web applications, e-newspapers, traditional media, and social media platforms. This paper specifically focuses on popular social media platforms, namely Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and Twitter.

Facebook is a renowned social networking site that facilitates online content sharing and communication among family and friends. Originally designed for college students in 2004, it has now grown into the world's largest social network, boasting over 1 billion users. Creating a Facebook profile and providing personal information serves as a reminder and tool to connect with people in our surroundings. Facebook also serves as a platform for sharing content from across the globe.

Instagram, operated by the American business Meta Platforms, is a social media platform primarily used for sharing pictures and videos. Users can upload media, apply filters, categorize posts using hashtags, and associate them with specific locations. Posts can be shared with public or pre-approved followers. Users can view trending material, follow other users to curate a personal feed, and explore content based on tags and locations.

YouTube owes its success to user-generated videos. Rather than relying solely on movies produced by major television networks and film studios, YouTube offers a platform for incredibly talented and inventive individuals to showcase their creations. It is not a one-way street; users can join the community by recording and sharing their videos.

Twitter started as a web platform but maintained its 140-character limit, which aligns with its brand identity. Twitter aims to provide easily digestible content for our tech-heavy, attention-deficit era. Over the years, Twitter has grown significantly, with its primary objective being the rapid dissemination of information, even if not necessarily serious. Twitter holds eternal significance and potential, allowing users to connect with people worldwide and curate their feeds with industry professionals, news sites, celebrities, comedians, or friends.

The aforementioned social media platforms are just a few examples where content is created and consumed. This paper will explore users' preferences and behaviors on social media platforms, focusing on the possibilities these platforms offer.

Especially after the Covid era, the mind-set of the users has changed, and consumption of content online and shift towards the digital channel has increased; there is a "Historic and

dramatic shift in consumer behaviour", according to the latest research of PwC users are expecting quality and engaging substance in online platforms.

If there is no substance given for digital users from the digital platforms, users may likely leave the digital platforms, which is now happening with Facebook; according to a recent meta report, there is a loss of 5 00,000 users every day on an average there are various reasons for this loss it can be the monotonous features by Face book over the years by not giving the necessary ingredients for users it all comes down to creativity and engagement on the social media platform

Review of literature

Dave, K. (2021). Exploring the Impact of Social Media Marketing on Consumer Brand Preference. Branding plays a crucial role in consumer decision-making as it helps consumers in their search for alternatives. Social media serves as an extended medium that aids customers in recognizing and recalling brands. It provides channels for effective brand reminders, user acknowledgment, and brand engagement. Through the free flow of content, ideas, information, opinions, and reviews, social media facilitates rapid and effective brand creation. This inclusivity promotes social media marketing engagement strategies that converge cognitive factors across demographic groups. Additionally, social media serves as a rich source of consumer knowledge, allowing businesses to gather information about consumer habits, demographic profiles, targeting, segmentation, and product placement. Increasingly, businesses rely on social media for brand development and have achieved measurable success. This study aims to shed light on how social media marketing and brand-related activities positively and negatively influence consumer brand preference and how intelligent online social media marketing enhances brand preference and customer base.

Chintan, R. (2017) examined Users Behaviour towards Social Media. The growth of the online and social media population can be attributed to constant technological advancements, improved wired and wireless infrastructure, the increasing popularity of smartphones, and the affordability of accessing the internet. To maximize the potential of social media platforms for brand promotion and influencing purchase decisions at a lower cost, more businesses should establish a strong presence on various social media platforms. In the future, we can expect significant effects resulting from the rapid evolution of online and social media across multiple industries and in our daily lives.

Sharma, S. (2014) conducted Social Media Analysis. Marketers must actively engage customers on social media platforms to shape consumer dialogues, as these platforms provide uncontrolled spaces for interaction. This study builds upon relationship marketing and customer engagement research by identifying four social media engagement characteristics: cognitive, behavioural, emotional valence, and activation. Analyzing

consumer social media involvement helps marketers enhance the online experience and improve marketing campaign efficacy through better communication and targeting strategies. The study recommends considering different social media platforms to meet diverse needs and communication preferences. It also highlights the role of social media at each significant step of the consumer decision-making process, emphasizing the need for a unique communication strategy for each stage.

Joshi, N. (2019) conducted a Study of Well-being among Teenagers about Social Media. Social media platforms offer numerous advantages, such as facilitating quick global connections. However, it is crucial for health professionals, including those working with children, teenagers, parents, educators, and families, to recognize the spectrum of difficulties associated with excessive reliance on social media. The addictive nature of social media usage poses challenges for diagnosis and treatment. Screening, prevention, and treatment for social media addiction require expertise due to the wide range of manifestations and its coexistence with other mental health conditions. Addressing social media addiction and its associated mental health conditions should be approached by professionals, as research in this area is still in its early stages.

Duhan, P. (2020) examined Influence of Social Media on Consumer Decision-Making Process. As users become increasingly concerned about the authenticity of digital content, social network developers should focus on improving platform credibility. Credibility enhances virtual footfalls, big data availability, profitability, and attracts more marketers to utilize the platform for promotion. Marketers should target social media channels that customers trust and employ distinct techniques for highly engaged and less engaged clients. To effectively engage Delhi social media users, marketers should provide relevant, current, exclusive, functional, informative, thought-provoking, branded, entertaining, and remunerative content through experiential, interactive, and visually appealing images across multiple platforms. Campaigns should incorporate slang, jargon, and culturally relevant images and media. Marketers can foster personalized conversations, sponsor customer-initiated activities, create brand communities, hold contests and polls, and provide rewards and incentives to encourage easy interactions, prompt responses, and engagement.

Research Gap

The statement highlights the objective and scope of a particular study, which aims to investigate the age of digital users and their preferences on social media platforms. Here's an elaboration of the key points:

1. Digital User Engagement: The study recognizes that the level of engagement and interaction of digital users is influenced by the specific digital platform they use and the content they prefer within those platforms. Different social media platforms offer

varying features, functionalities, and content types, which can impact user behaviour and engagement.

2. **Content Consumption:** The study acknowledges that content consumption patterns differ according to both age and the social media platform being used. Different age groups may have distinct preferences and interests when it comes to consuming and interacting with content on social media. Moreover, the nature of content on various platforms can also shape user preferences and behaviours.
3. **Insight into Gaps:** By focusing on the relationship between age and social media platforms, the study aims to provide valuable insights into the gaps or differences that exist between different age groups in terms of their social media preferences. It seeks to identify and understand the variations in user behaviour, content consumption patterns, and engagement levels across different age brackets.

In summary, the study aims to explore how the age of digital users influences their preferences on social media platforms. By examining the interplay between age, digital platforms, and content consumption, the study seeks to uncover valuable insights into the gaps that exist in terms of age-related preferences on various social media platforms.

Objectives:

The aim of this study is to analyze and examine the social media presence of individuals, companies, and institutes across different platforms. Through careful observation, we intend to provide a comprehensive explanation of their usage patterns. Furthermore, we seek to gain insights into the features offered by digital platforms and evaluate their current standing. By analyzing user requirements and preferences, particularly in relation to age and social media platforms, we aim to better understand user engagement on these platforms.

Research Method

The study employed a survey methodology to gather data, and the analysis and interpretation of this data were carried out systematically. The process can be broken down into the following steps:

1. **Data Collection:** The researchers collected data through a survey, which allowed them to gather information directly from the participants. The survey included questions that aimed to understand the participants' social media usage patterns and preferences. Additionally, the survey also captured demographic information to create a profile of the participants.
2. **Demographic Profile:** The first section of the study presents a demographic profile of the participants. This profile provides an overview of the characteristics of the individuals

who took part in the study, such as their age, gender, location, or any other relevant demographic information. Understanding the demographic composition of the sample helps in interpreting the findings and drawing accurate conclusions.

3. **Data Presentation:** The subsequent section of the study presents the collected data. This includes the responses and information provided by the participants in the survey. The data is likely to include details about social media usage patterns, such as the frequency of usage, preferred platforms, types of content consumed, or specific activities performed on social media.
4. **Data Analysis:** To analyze the data, the researchers employed statistical software tools such as SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) and Excel. These software tools offer various analytical capabilities to derive meaningful insights from the data. In this study, a non-parametric approach was used, specifically chi-square analysis. The analysis focused on examining the relationship between age and social media platform usage.
5. **Variable of Age and Social Media Platform:** The researchers investigated how age, as a variable, influences social media platform preferences and usage patterns. Given that respondents belonged to different age groups, it was acknowledged that they may not exhibit similar behaviours or attributes when it comes to social media usage. By analyzing the data using the chi-square analysis, the researchers aimed to uncover any associations or significant differences between age and social media platform preferences.

In summary, the study used a survey to collect data, which was then analysed using statistical software. The analysis focused on the relationship between age and social media platform preferences. By applying a non-parametric approach and utilizing the chi-square analysis, the study aimed to identify any variations or associations between different age groups and their behaviours related to social media usage.

Data collection

The sample for this study consisted of participants from five different age categories: 16-20, 21-25, 26-35, 36-45, and above 45. A total of 105 participants were included in the sample. The study focused on determining the top three social media platforms that were most commonly used by the participants, namely Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube.

While WhatsApp, a cross-platform instant messaging application, was also considered, it was noted that engagement on WhatsApp primarily relies on contacts rather than content. Twitter, on the other hand, is a social media and online news platform known for short-text messages. However, the study found that respondents from the below demographic categories had limited usage of Twitter. As a result, the analysis was narrowed down to Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube.

Out of the initial 109 respondents, only the sample of 105 respondents was considered for the analysis. The primary question posed to the participants was to determine their most preferred social media platform. Participants were instructed to select only one social media platform and provide details regarding their content consumption from that particular platform.

It is important to acknowledge a limitation of the study, which pertains to the scope of respondents' selection of social media platforms. The focus of the research, however, was content-oriented. The objective was to examine the potential considerations for creators when developing content across different social media platforms.

In summary, the study collected a sample of 105 participants from different age categories and identified Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube as the top three preferred social media platforms. The analysis focused on content consumption within these platforms. The limitation of the study was the restricted selection of social media platforms by respondents, which was mitigated by the research's main objective of exploring content creation across various platforms.

Results and Discussions

In this section, the preference for social media type by the users is analysed according to the age and gender. Results interested in the following sections

Table 1: Age, gender and preferrece for social media Type

Age by Gender	Preference For Social Media			
	Facebook	Instagram	You Tube	Grand Total
16-20	1	17	8	26
Female		11	4	15
Male	1	6	4	11
21-25	3	37	13	53
Female		19	7	26
Male	3	18	6	27
26-35	2	7	12	21
Female	1	3	2	6
Male	1	4	10	15
36-45	2			2
Male	2			2
Above 45	1		2	3
Female	1			1
Male			2	2
Grand Total	9	61	35	105

The analysis of the data collected from 109 respondents reveals that Twitter was chosen as the preferred social media platform by only 3 respondents (2.8%). Due to the small sample size, the study did not consider Twitter for further content analysis and excluded it from the analysis. Instagram emerges as the dominant platform, with 61 respondents (57.8%) selecting it as their preferred social media platform. This dominance can be attributed to a higher number of respondents belonging to the age group of 21-25, closely followed by the 16-20 age groups. This suggests a preference for Instagram among college-going students. The accompanying table and graph illustrate the total number of respondents and their preferred social media platforms categorized by age. Notably, Instagram exhibits a clear majority with 61 respondents (57.8%).

In contrast, the data reveals a decline in the usage of Facebook, making it the least preferred social media platform among the respondents. However, male respondents above the age of 25 specifically prefer YouTube, with 35 respondents (29.4%) selecting it as their preferred platform. YouTube emerges as the second most dominant platform. These findings indicate that as age increases, preferences for social media platforms also change.

Based on the above information, a qualitative analysis was conducted, considering the association between age and preferred social media platforms. The data collected on the relationship between age groups and social media usage was subjected to a chi-square analysis using SPSS. The results of this analysis, along with the detailed findings, are presented below.

Based on the above analysis, it is evident that the obtained p-value is less than 0.005, indicating that the alternative hypothesis is accepted. This implies that there is an association between the age group of respondents and their preference for social media platforms.

The cross-tabulation table reveals a clearer pattern between the age groups of 16 to 20 and 21 to 25, where over 50% of respondents prefer Instagram. Conversely, respondents aged 25 to 45 shows a preference for spending time on YouTube. Facebook emerges as the least utilized social media platform based on the collected data. However, due to a smaller representation of respondents above the age of 45, the usage pattern among this age group remains unclear from the analysis. Nonetheless, it can be inferred that respondents aged between 16 and 35 are more active on digital platforms compared to those above the age of 45.

Moving on to content preferences, the provided image illustrates the data collected from Facebook, indicating that 18% of respondents prioritize education and history, while another 18% prefer travel-related content. Meanwhile, on Instagram, respondents exhibit different preferences, with 23.8% favouring memes and jokes, 12.7% showing interest in travel-related videos, and 11.1% engaging with music-related content. Notably, Instagram's

content format, such as reels, receives greater attention compared to photos, posts, or videos.

In contrast, YouTube showcases a more focused content preference, with over 50% of respondents favouring educational videos, followed by comedy and video blogs. This highlights how social media platforms are utilized for distinct purposes based on different age groups.

Overall, the analysis establishes an association between age groups and social media preferences. Furthermore, it underscores the varying content preferences across platforms, shedding light on the diverse usage patterns observed within different age brackets.

Suggestions and conclusions

In summary, social media marketing involves utilizing social media platforms and websites to promote products or services. Its primary objective is to achieve marketing and branding goals by creating and sharing content across various social media networks. Goals may include enhancing brand awareness, driving website traffic, generating leads or sales, and improving customer service.

There is a wide range of social media platforms available for businesses to utilize in their marketing efforts, such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Pinterest. Each platform possesses unique features and caters to distinct audiences. Consequently, it is crucial to select the appropriate platforms for your business and develop a cohesive marketing strategy that spans across all chosen platforms.

To effectively engage in social media marketing, it is essential to have a comprehensive understanding of your target audience. This understanding enables the creation of compelling and relevant content that resonates with the intended audience. Furthermore, it is vital to monitor and analyze the performance of social media marketing campaigns to continually optimize and enhance the overall strategy.

Additionally, content creation plays a pivotal role in social media marketing. Each social media platform has a unique audience with specific requirements that may vary according to age and generation. Consequently, social media platforms face the challenge of adapting and evolving to meet the distinct needs of their users. Content creators must therefore tailor their content to suit the requirements of different social media platforms in order to achieve success.

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