

## Social Media's Role in Shaping News Consumption Patterns

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### ABSTRACT

The research paper delves into the increasing popularity and usage of social media platforms as a primary source of news among tech-savvy individuals in India. Through a collaborative study conducted by Nielsen and Absolut, it was found that a significant number of Indians are not only active on social networking sites but also spend more time on these platforms than on personal email. The study explores the motivations behind sharing news online, including factors such as information dissemination, entertainment, connection maintenance, perspective alteration, individuality assertion, and community belonging. Additionally, the research highlights the complex dynamics between traditional journalism and online news consumption, emphasizing the need to move beyond a strict media dichotomy and focus on the interactions between different actors in the media landscape. The study underscores the importance of social media verification in journalism, especially in the face of information overload and the rapid spread of rumors. By identifying user requirements and emerging verification practices, the research contributes to the development of innovative approaches to verifying content on social media platforms. Overall, the paper provides valuable insights into the evolving strategies employed by individuals to engage with news content in the digital age, shedding light on the pivotal role of social media as a primary source of information.

**Keywords:** *Digital, Media, News Source, Social Media, Technology*

The digital age has ushered in a paradigm shift in the way individuals consume news and information, with social media platforms emerging as central players in the dissemination of content. The pervasive influence of social media on modern society has transformed the traditional news landscape, offering users unprecedented access to a vast array of news sources and perspectives at their fingertips. In this context, understanding the extent to which individuals rely on social media as a primary source of news is crucial for unraveling the evolving patterns of media consumption in the digital era. This research endeavors to delve deep into the intricate dynamics between individuals and social media platforms as primary sources of news. By conducting an empirical study that incorporates survey data from a diverse pool of respondents, this research aims to shed light on the increasing significance of social media as a primary conduit for news dissemination. Through an analysis of the behaviors, preferences, and attitudes of individuals towards news

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consumption on social media, this study seeks to uncover the underlying trends that shape their information-seeking practices in the digital realm.

In a landscape characterized by concerns over the proliferation of fake news and misinformation on social media, users are increasingly cognizant of the need to verify the authenticity of the news they encounter. This study seeks to explore how individuals navigate the complex terrain of news content on social media platforms, examining their strategies for discerning credible information amidst the deluge of digital information. By investigating the patterns of behavior related to news consumption on social media, this research aims to provide insights into the evolving strategies employed by individuals to engage with news content in the digital age.

The findings of this study are poised to offer valuable insights into the changing dynamics of news consumption in the digital era, highlighting the pivotal role that social media plays as a primary source of news for a significant segment of the population. By examining the impact of social media on news consumption behaviors, this research contributes to a nuanced understanding of the evolving media landscape and the ways in which individuals interact with and interpret news content in the digital realm.

In conclusion, this research aims to illuminate the multifaceted relationship between individuals and social media platforms as primary news sources, offering a comprehensive analysis of the evolving trends and patterns in media consumption habits in the digital age. Through a rigorous examination of user behaviors and preferences, this study seeks to provide valuable insights into the role of social media in shaping the contemporary news ecosystem and influencing the information-seeking practices of individuals in the digital era.

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The paper titled "Utilizing Social Media for Forecasting Future Outcomes" presents a novel approach to predicting box-office revenues of movies using Twitter data. The study highlights the effectiveness of analyzing the rate of chatter on Twitter, sentiments in tweets, and their correlation with future outcomes. By constructing a linear regression model, the authors demonstrate superior accuracy in predicting box-office revenues compared to traditional methods like the Hollywood Stock Exchange. The findings suggest that social media can serve as a powerful indicator of future outcomes across various topics beyond movie revenues, showcasing the collective wisdom expressed through online platforms (Asur et al, 2010).

Tang, Gu, and Whinston (2012) delve into the dynamics of content contribution in social media, focusing on the case of YouTube. The study constructs a dynamic structural model to elucidate the underlying incentives that drive content providers to contribute to public viewing platforms. By differentiating between short-term payoffs derived from ad revenue sharing and long-term payoffs linked to reputation building, the authors offer a novel perspective on the motivations of content creators in the digital realm. Through empirical analysis of top video providers on YouTube, the study reveals that content providers value incremental subscribers as much as incremental video views, underscoring the significance of audience engagement in shaping reputation. Furthermore, the findings suggest that accumulative subscribers play a more influential role in enhancing reputation than accumulative video views, shedding light on the evolving landscape of content creation in social media platforms. By shedding light on the intricate interplay between incentives, reputation, and content contribution, Tang, Gu, and Whinston's study contributes valuable

insights to the understanding of user behavior in social media environments. The empirical findings not only enrich scholarly discourse on content creation dynamics but also offer practical implications for platform design and content strategy in the digital age (Tang et al., 2012).

The case study of Britain highlighted the complex dynamics between traditional journalism and online news consumption. It emphasized the importance of moving beyond a strict dichotomy of media and focusing on the interactions between different actors, such as the press and networked individuals. While the press strategically uses the internet to maintain its communicative power, networked individuals utilize it to access information independently and network with others. However, rather than competing, they are part of a media ecology where they complement and reinforce each other. Over time, trends indicate shifts in news consumption behaviors, such as a plateau in online news reading and the rise of social media as a primary source of information. Tracking these patterns is crucial to understanding evolving media landscapes (Newman et al., 2013).

In the chapter "Social Media" from the book "Social Media in Industrial China" by Xinyuan Wang, the author delves into the role of social media in shaping relationships and information dissemination in China. The chapter discusses the emergence of specialist aggregation services like Open and Shut, which cater to specific interests and facilitate community engagement. Additionally, the chapter explores the use of Twitter as a platform for quick engagement in the social media sphere, emphasizing its role in connecting communities of interest and potentially mobilizing political action. The chapter underscores the significance of social media in addressing information gaps and fostering community cohesion (P, 2013).

The article "Social Media as Primary Source: The Narrativization of Twenty-First-Century Social Movements" by Cayce Myers and James F. Hamilton delves into the use of social media as a primary source in documenting contemporary history, particularly focusing on social movements in the twenty-first century. Published in the journal *Media History*, the research critically examines the role of social media in shaping narratives and historical accounts of modern-day protests and activism. Myers and Hamilton explore the transformative impact of social media on historical documentation, highlighting its emergence as a revolutionary departure from traditional media forms. They discuss how social media platforms provide users with greater agency, facilitate social dialogue, and promote global exchanges in an egalitarian manner. The article critically analyzes the narrative structure of classical liberalism that influences the perception and utilization of social media as a primary historical source. The research underscores the need for scholars and historians to engage in substantive theoretical scrutiny when utilizing social media as a primary source for documenting social movements. By questioning the narrative frameworks and biases inherent in social media platforms, the authors advocate for a nuanced approach to interpreting and analyzing digital content within the context of historical research. Moreover, the article emphasizes the complexities of using social media as a primary historical source, acknowledging the challenges and opportunities it presents for understanding contemporary social movements. Myers and Hamilton's work encourages scholars to critically evaluate the implications of relying on social media data for constructing narratives of popular protests and activism in the twenty-first century (Myers, 2014).

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Your study underscores the pivotal role of social media verification in journalism, highlighting the complexities involved in verifying content under time pressure. While traditional journalistic methods dominate current verification practices, the evolving landscape of social media demands advancements in verification knowledge and tools. The emergence of real-time networked journalism presents both opportunities and challenges amidst information overload and the rapid spread of rumors. This necessitates a shift towards standardized verification routines to mitigate the risk of disseminating false information. By identifying user requirements and understanding emerging verification values and practices, your study contributes to the development of innovations in social media verification within journalism (Brandtzaeg et al., 2015).

Social media is a means of connecting with diverse audiences, and it can create an environment where one will be able to reach many people at once. Its popularity and use has never been so high. The number of people using social media has been estimated to be over 4.5 billion by 2021. More than one billion people use Facebook every day, the most popular social network in the world. (Zuckerberg, 2015).

The research paper examines the impact of sentiments expressed in tweets on predicting box-office revenues of movies. By analyzing the ratio of positive to negative tweets and the polarity of sentiments, the study identifies a correlation between sentiment trends and movie performance. The findings reveal that movies with predominantly positive sentiments tend to be more successful, influencing their box-office revenues. The study employs sentiment analysis techniques and regression models to enhance revenue predictions, showcasing the relevance of sentiment analysis in forecasting outcomes based on social media data (Wang, 2016).

This research delves into the multifaceted motivations behind sharing news online, highlighting factors such as informing, entertaining, maintaining connections, changing perspectives, asserting individuality, and belonging to a larger community. While this study provides a broad perspective, further research is warranted to delve into these factors at a more detailed level, exploring specific instances of news sharing and the intricate interplay between the sharer, content, and intended audience. Additionally, comparing data from different time periods can provide insights into evolving trends in news consumption and societal influences on sharing behavior (Wong & Burkell, 2017).

In particular, with the proliferation of smartphones and Internet enabled devices, the internet's ubiquitous presence has fundamentally changed everyday life. The various actors involved, including politicians, journalists, political institutions and the media, face both challenges and opportunities to engage with citizens in this change. In this volume, three main perspectives are examined: the regulatory state, the political use of social media and the public sphere, with a view to exploring these dynamics within Western democracies and China. The chapters explore innovative research questions and offer theoretical and empirical perspectives on digital transformation through interdisciplinary lenses such as political science, communication science, and journalism studies (Brands et al., 2017).

Biały's discourse on social media and the information environment offers valuable insights into the strategic utilization of social platforms for communication campaigns and narrative advocacy. The author emphasizes the importance of creating attractive and tailored content to engage target audiences effectively. By focusing on developing a compelling narrative and branding strategy, organizations can enhance their online presence and resonate with

their audience in a competitive digital landscape. Furthermore, Biały underscores the significance of immunizing the audience against psychological operations and hostile activities on social media platforms. The author advocates for raising awareness among citizens about online deception and manipulation, emphasizing the power of truth as a potent weapon against misinformation. By promoting education and exposing hostile activities, individuals can build resilience against online threats and enhance their critical thinking skills. In conclusion, Biały's insights on social media and the information environment provide a strategic framework for leveraging social platforms effectively. By prioritizing audience engagement, narrative advocacy, and audience immunization, organizations and individuals can navigate the complexities of social media with resilience and integrity (Biary, 2017).

Identifying social media content used as a source in news articles poses challenges due to linguistic variations, such as citing tweets or Facebook posts. In our study, we focused on text format only, manually analyzing 400 news articles containing keywords like "Facebook," "X," "post," or "tweet." From this, we curated 212 citation patterns. Our manual analysis identified 393 social media source usages, categorized as 60 Quotations, 63 Paraphrases, and 270 Embeddings. Our program detected 372 sources, with 364 accurately identified. However, 8 were falsely marked, and 29 true sources were missed. While Embeddings were accurately identified, Quotation and Paraphrase recall were lower due to uncommon linguistic patterns not included in our pattern list to avoid overfitting (Rony et al., 2018).

Viewing news through social media networks (SNSs) is widespread, especially among young Swedes, where daily news consumption on social media surpasses that of specific news outlets. The content of news feeds plays an important role in people's SNS, as young adults rely on them to keep up with the latest developments. Social networks are a place where news consumption is both intentional and incidental, enabling an individual to have more information. The term "news snacking" was introduced by Costera Meijer and Kormelink in 2014 to describe the consumption of short news items frequently for entertainment or transitory purposes, but can serve as a gateway into deeper media engagement. The interviewees in the study mainly consume news this way, and network friends play an important role in stimulating interest. Opinion leaders are a major feature of the SNS's news consumption, and young people see them as essential to keep in touch with trends. The sharing behavior of friends is crucial, as individuals are more likely to read news stories shared by friends who share their interests. However, they remain aware of the news sources (Bergstrom & Belfrage, 2018).

Chugh and Ruhi (2018) present a comprehensive literature review on the integration of Facebook as an educational tool in higher education. The review meticulously examines the benefits, challenges, and guidelines associated with incorporating Facebook into teaching and learning practices. By synthesizing a range of scholarly articles, the authors provide a nuanced analysis of the potential of social media platforms, particularly Facebook, to enhance educational experiences. The identification of benefits such as increased interaction, improved performance, and heightened engagement underscores the transformative impact of social media on pedagogical outcomes. Moreover, the review adeptly navigates the complexities of privacy concerns, educator dominance, and data ownership, urging educators to consider the implications of utilizing third-party platforms for educational purposes. The proposed guidelines offer practical strategies for educators to leverage Facebook effectively in academic settings. While acknowledging the need for further

empirical research, Chugh and Ruhi's review serves as a valuable resource for educators and researchers interested in harnessing the educational potential of social media platforms in higher education (Chugh, 2018).

The study conducted by Martin, Wang, Petty, Wang, and Wilkins (2018) delves into the intricate relationship between middle school students and social media. The research sheds light on the evolving landscape of social media platforms and their impact on the behavior and motivations of young users. One key finding of the study is the shift in users' motivations from purely social interactions to a quest for information, aligning social platforms closer to traditional media. This transition highlights the changing dynamics of social media engagement among middle school students. Moreover, the researchers highlight the significance of understanding the implications of social media use on educational technology and society. By exploring how middle school students interact with social media, educators and parents can gain valuable insights into supporting students in navigating these platforms responsibly. The study emphasizes the need for a nuanced approach to addressing social media use among young individuals, considering the psychological and sociological aspects rather than solely focusing on the technological aspects (Martin et al., 2018).

The article "In a World of Social Media: A Case Study Analysis of Instagram" provides a comprehensive examination of Instagram's marketing strategies and its role as a mobile app for businesses and consumers. Authored by Dr. Daryl D. Green, Dr. Richard Martinez, Amalan Kadja, Lauran Evenson, Lisa MacManus, and Stephanie Dirlbeck, the study delves into the significance of Instagram in the realm of social media and digital marketing. The research highlights the increasing dependence on digitalization and the transformative impact of social media on information dissemination and influence in today's society. It emphasizes the need for businesses to integrate social media into their strategies to engage with customers effectively. The study underscores the importance of understanding digital marketing and utilizing various social media platforms like Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, and others to reach a global audience. Moreover, the article explores Instagram's unique features as a mobile app that allows users to create visually appealing images for instant sharing within a vast network. It discusses how Instagram serves as a platform for individuals to exchange ideas and engage with a community continuously. The study aims to evaluate Instagram's potential for enhancing its mobile app for both businesses and consumers. Furthermore, the research employs qualitative content analysis as a methodological approach to assess Instagram's social media strategy. By examining Instagram within the context of real-life scenarios, the study provides valuable insights into digital marketing strategies and the evolving landscape of social media platforms. It also emphasizes the importance of social media engagement for businesses in building brand awareness, customer loyalty, and driving financial performance. "In a World of Social Media: A Case Study Analysis of Instagram" offers a comprehensive analysis of Instagram's marketing strategies, shedding light on its significance as a social media platform for businesses and consumers. The study contributes to the understanding of social media dynamics and provides practical insights for leveraging Instagram as a strategic tool in the digital marketing landscape (Green et al., 2018).

It seems that regardless of whether users relied on online social networks (OSNs) or traditional media for news about EU politics, those with a negative predisposition towards the EU maintained consistently negative beliefs and attitudes about various aspects of the EU. Post-hoc tests further confirmed that there were hardly any discernible differences

between OSN-first users and those who relied on other sources for EU political news (Nguyen & Vu, 2019).

It's intriguing to explore the potential of social media as a source of additional information, and your insights into using clustering approaches and alternative text similarity measures are valuable for improving relevance and reflecting commonly asserted opinions. Additionally, integrating word sense disambiguation could enhance the accuracy of relatedness between content and suggested information snippets. Analyzing comment volume and sentiment could also offer deeper insights into paragraph-related information. Your work opens up promising directions for future research in this field (Bradshaw et al.,2020).

### **Research Objective**

- To explore use of social media among people.
- To find how much people rely on social media for news.
- To evaluate their behavior regarding news consumption on social media.
- To identify their habits about the treatment of news on social media.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This paper is an exploratory study in which a survey of 56 respondents is considered using simple random sampling. Questionnaire includes 10 questions related to social media and its usage regarding news consumption among them. An online survey was designed which is answered by people of different age groups who are active on social media and data was quantified and analyzed based on the survey. Small sample is taken to ensure the feasibility of the study and to represent small part of macroscopic study. This study is a pilot study which will set the base for similar study the results can be applied to population of larger size with same sets of respondents. Name of the respondents kept anonymous and the choice to fill the survey was voluntary. No one is bringing forced while undertaking the study. The purpose of study is not to generalize the findings but to understand the psyche of the users regarding social media and their treatment of news related content on it.

**Table 1: Sample characteristic of study participants**

Characteristics	Percentage	Sample(N)
<b>Age</b>		
18-35	67.85	38
36 or above	32.14	18
<b>Sex</b>		
Male	46.43	26
Female	53.57	30

Source – Primary Data

The data in Table 1 represents the sample characteristics of study participants. The table provides information on the percentage and sample size (N) for each characteristic. The total sample size is 56 which is collected in the campus of Central University of Haryana (Mahendergarh) which has a diverse population of students and research scholars from different regions of the country, representing 100% of the study participants. In terms of age, 67.85% of the participants fall within the 18-35 age range, with a sample size of 38. On the other hand, 32.14% of the participants are 36 years or above, with a sample size of 18.

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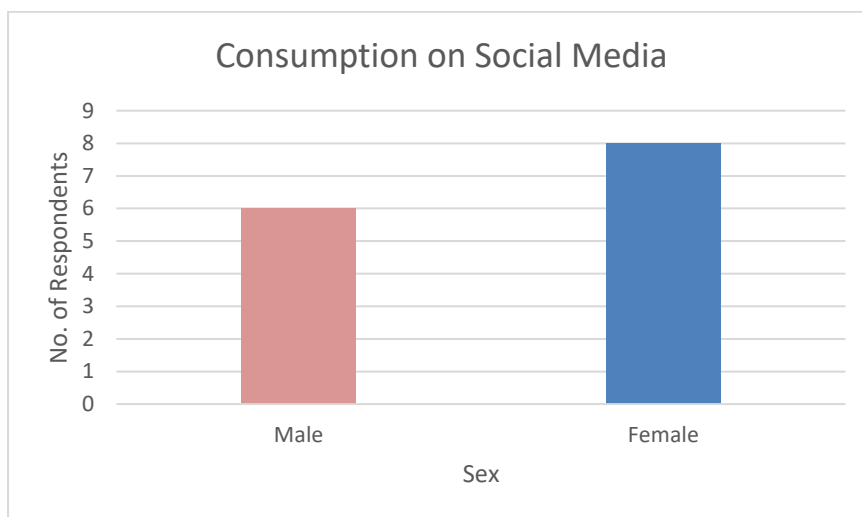
Regarding sex, 46.43% of the participants are male, with a sample size of 26. The remaining 53.57% are female, with a sample size of 30.

This data provides an overview of the age and sex distribution within the sample, which can be useful for further analysis or comparisons in the study.

### Data Collection and Analysis

#### A. Content on Social Media

The study indicates that a significant portion, approximately 47.1% of the respondents (consisting of 30 female and 26 male respondents), demonstrate a practice towards news consumption on social media platforms. This indicates a level of awareness regarding the reliability of information. Such behavior suggests a potential trend towards verifying the accuracy of news content before sharing, which could be attributed to growing concerns about misinformation and fake news prevalent on social media platforms.



**Figure: 1**

#### B. Social Media Uses

The study shows YouTube and X are popular for news. Users have different preferences for each platform. YouTube offers engaging news experiences with videos, while X is favored for quick updates, fitting its emphasis on brevity and immediacy. In different areas, social media use varies due to factors like internet availability, culture, and economy. India's high usage shows how it affects how people get news and communicate. Overall, the research analysis underlines the evolving landscape of news in the digital age, characterized by the increasing prominence of social media platforms as primary sources of news and information dissemination.

## FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

- 47.1% people double-check news content they receive on social media before sharing.
- 49% of people subscribe to social media only for news.
- Almost 65% depend on YouTube and X to access news.
- Social media is highly popular among the people of India.

In this paper we have examined habits of people regarding news consumption on social media. People do think that social media could replace traditional media of news and



information sharing. “Apart from that they also consider both media have their own merits and demerits, it's difficult to choose one over the other. Most of the people surveyed consider digital platforms followed by YouTube and Newspaper. Around 47.1% people surveyed do cross check news content they receive on social media before sharing and 49% subscribe social media for News only. YouTube is highly popular and supported media to access news and to a large extent they are dependent on YouTube and X in order to access news. Social media is highly popular among people of India as anticipated. Blogging, social media posts, and all other online content should be carefully considered.” Digital and online journalism should be promoted but keeping in focus its challenges also. As a matter of concern both social media and traditional media are countering each other and in competition with each other for our attention, the onus is on us to be cautious while using both these media and in case of social media it becomes even more important because most of the content is unregulated. We need to ensure what and how we are getting news and need to cultivate our understanding to differentiate opinion from news. These platforms as news source are vulnerable and depend on many variables which include his background related to formal education, profession, interest, critical thinking etc. “A study regarding these variables affecting our news consumption habits on social media can be considered for future study.”

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### ***Conflict of Interest***

The authors of this article said that they had no potential conflicts of interest when they conducted their research, became authors, and published it.

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