



CHETANA
INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF EDUCATION (CIJE)

Peer Reviewed/Refereed Journal

(ISSN: 2455-8729 (E) / 2231-3613 (P))

Impact Factor
SJIF 2023 - 7.286



Prof. A.P. Sharma
Founder Editor, CIJE
(25.12.1932 - 09.01.2019)

First draft received: 12.06.2023, Reviewed: 18.06.2023, Accepted: 26.06.2023, Final proof received: 30.06.2023

Role of Social Media in forming young mind's opinions

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Abstract

The purpose of the study is to determine Facebook's function as a social media and how it influences young people's opinions on several crucial subjects, such as: To gain insight into "corruption in political party-related matters to comprehend governmental policies; to form an opinion on socio-political topics, etc. One million users joined Facebook before the end of 2004 after it launched on January 4th. After that, the number of Facebook users has been steadily growing year after year. Facebook reached a new milestone in October 2012 when its user base surpassed one billion. There are 2.95 Billion Monthly Active Users on Facebook. According to Facebook statistics India boasts a seriously impressive start of a total of 329 million Facebook users. That's approximately 23.88% of India's total 1.38 billion populations.

Key Words : Social Media, young mind, opinion etc.

Introduction

For people to comprehend the topic of our research, the researcher needs to provide a definition of "youth." According to UNPY8 (The United Nations Programme of youth) the United Nation defines "Youth" as person aged between 15 to 24 years. On the other side according to African Youth Charter - 2006, the term „Youth“ refers to every person between the ages of 15 and 35 years. The art of persuasion, which frequently involves the use of social media, has grown in significance in contemporary culture. Mass communication and persuasion are strongly tied to the formation of public opinion. While stable public opinion can play a significant role in resistance to social change, changing public opinion frequently gives a society new directions. The way the media covers these events has a big impact on how the public feels.

Methodology

This study aims to investigate how young people use social media, notably Facebook, and what effects it has on its users (youth). The researcher's primary goal is to comprehend and investigate Facebook's

communication patterns and the function they play in young people's opinion formation. How are the younger generations interacting with one another on Facebook? What do they enjoy and find objectionable? Do their Facebook activity follow any kind of pattern? How do teenagers act on Facebook? Is it possible to influence young people's (Facebook users) opinions in a deliberate way after learning about their behaviours, preferences, and dislikes? or Is it possible for a person, organisation, institution, or government to sway the opinions of young people by posting propaganda on Facebook?

The researcher employed a "Exploratory cum Descriptive" methodology for the study in order to determine the answers to these questions, and the study's nature is qualitative. Given that the researcher has no control over the variables and can only report on what has happened or is happening, the primary motivation for choosing exploratory or descriptive research is to provide a summary of the situation as it is.

In this setting, the researcher's goal is to determine the answers to the following study questions.

- 1 - Do you have a profile on Facebook?
2. Is Facebook a place where one ideology may be spread??
3. Do you participate in political discussion on Facebook?
- 4- Do you ever share your own opinions on Facebook regarding topics relating to the "Reservation Policy of Government?
- 5- Do you ever share your own opinions on Facebook regarding the topic of "corruption in political parties"?

Variables

Age, sex, marital status, education, religion, category, and occupation were employed by the researcher as independent variables in the current study. Independent variables are those that the researcher has no control over and which are thought to be in charge of causing changes in a phenomenon or circumstance.

Sampling

The researcher employed "Snow ball" sampling to get primary data from the respondents in the current study. The researcher chose "snow ball" sampling to get around the issue of fraudulent Facebook profiles. A non-probability sampling is the "Snow ball" sampling. The snowball sampling is a limited, multi-stage sampling method in which a predetermined number of sample units (respondents) are initially chosen at random. Later, more sampling units are chosen based on the referral procedure. This indicates that the initially chosen respondents give the interviewers the addresses of additional respondents.

Size Of Universe

In the current study, the researcher seeks to comprehend how young people use social media, notably Facebook. How is Facebook affecting young people? Is Facebook possible to influence or change young people's opinions about any social issue? What is the pattern, if that is the case? Therefore, the researcher chose the "size of universe" for this study in the context of all these problems. All Facebook users in India who are between the ages of 15 and 35 will be included in this study's universe.

SAMPLE SIZE

In the current study, the researcher employed the "Snow Ball" sampling method to choose 30 respondents from a pool of potential participants.

TOOLS FOR DATA COLLECTION

The researcher used both primary and secondary sources of data in the current investigation. Researchers utilised a questionnaire to collect primary data, and they continued to rely heavily on books, documents, reports, periodicals, newspapers, articles, and internet-based information for secondary data. A bilingual questionnaire was created by the researcher for gathering primary data.

AGE WISE ANALYSIS OF THE Five QUESTIONS

Before dividing the samples into age-based groups, the accumulated responses are analysed. Out of 30 respondents, 2 (6.7%) were in the 16-20 age range, 7 (24.3%) were in the 21-25 age range, 11 (36.7%) were in the 26-30 age range, and 10 (32.3%) were in the 31-35 age range. The analysis will next determine how respondents (young) feel about the topics raised in the questionnaire, assuming that each group has a 100% response rate, and compare that information to each question.

1. The researcher's primary goal in posing this question is to find out how much youth use social media. Based on these responses, it can be concluded that all (30) respondents use Facebook, and 22% of respondents also use Linkdin. In addition to Facebook, Twitter is used by 24.4% of respondents, while other social networking sites are used by 25.3% of respondents.

You have a profile on Facebook * Age Cross tabulation

			AGE				To tal
			16-20	21-25	26-30	31-35	
1.1- You have a profile on Facebook	selected	Count	2	7	11	10	30
		% with AGE	10.0%	10.0%	10.0%	10.0%	10.0%
Total		Count	2	7	11	10	30
		% with AGE	10.0%	10.0%	10.0%	10.0%	10.0%

This question reflects that the Facebook users are 100% because researcher used snowball sampling for responses collection.

2. Is Facebook a place where one ideology may be spread? * Cross-tabulation of ages

			Age				Total
			16 to 20	21 to 25	26 to 30	31 to 35	
Is Facebook a place where	Never	Count	0	0	1	1	2
		% with	0.0%	0.0%	3.3%	3.3%	6.7%

one ideology may be spread?	Sometimes	AGE					
		Count	3	8	4	5	20
	Always	% within AGE	17%	18.1%	15.2%	16.4%	66.7%
		Count	1	1	2	1	5
	Don't know	% within AGE	6.0%	7.9%	4.6%	4.8%	23.3%
		Count	0	1	2	0	3
Total	% within AGE	0.0%	1.2%	2.1%	0.0%	3.3%	
	Count					30	
		% within AGE					100%

As stated in the introduction that adding the responses "sometimes" and "always" for analysis purposes, comparing it with responses "never," and continuing the study in this manner. As can be observed, the percentages of "Sometimes" and "Always" equal 90% and "Never" is 6.7%, plainly showing that the majority of respondents accept Facebook as a medium to spread one viewpoint. Another thing that stands out is that when the proportion of respondents who indicated "sometimes" and "always" are compared, it is clear that the percentage of respondents who indicated "sometimes" is substantially greater than the number of respondents who indicated "always," which is 23.3%. This suggests that the vast majority of respondents agree that Facebook may be used to spread ideas.

The table and pattern of analysis show the researcher that 95% (70% + 25%) of respondents from the age range of 16 to 20 chose "sometimes" or "always," and no one else. Never and "don't know" made about 5% of the responses So it's obvious that the 16 to 20 age group strongly accepts or believes that Facebook is a tool for spreading one's ideology. When the researcher looks at the next three age groups in the same way, they find that 93.1% (71.2% + 21.9%) of respondents from the 21 to 25 age group, 91.8% (68.2% + 23.6%) of respondents from the 26 to 30 age group, and 84.5% (60.8% + 23.7%) of respondents from the 31 to 35 age group.

One further thing to note is that when researchers examined the percentages of "sometimes" and "always" responses across age groups, it was clear that the percentage of "sometimes" responses was significantly greater. One further item to note is a very modest decline in the percentage of "sometimes" or "always" selected respondents when the researcher moves from the 16-20 age group to the 31-35 age group. It gives us the impression that acceptability levels gradually decline as youth become more and more mature.

3.

Do you participate in political discussion on Facebook? * Cross-tabulation of ages							
			Age				Total
			16 to 20	21 to 25	26 to 30	31 to 35	
Do you participate in political discussion on Facebook?	Never	Count	4	5	7	1	17
		% within AGE	0.0%	0.0%	3.3%	3.3%	58.0%
Sometimes	Count	Count	1	2	5	3	11
		% within AGE	17%	18.1%	15.2%	16.4%	36.7%
Always	Count	Count	0	0	1	0	1
		% within AGE	0.0%	0.0%	3.0%	0.0%	3.0%
Don't know	Count	Count	0	0	1	0	1
		% within AGE	0.0%	0.0%	2.3%	0.0%	2.3%
Total	Count	Count					30
		% within AGE					100%

To assess this question, the researcher will add the percentages for "sometimes" and "always" and compare them to the percentage for "never." As can be seen, the percentages of "Sometimes" and "Always" are equal to

39.7% (36.7% + 3%) and "Never" is 58.0%, which clearly shows that the vast majority of respondents from various age groups never engage in political conversation on Facebook. There are many possible explanations for such behaviours, including respondents' ignorance of the problem or their lack of understanding of its significance, their desire to avoid upsetting their relationships, or their reluctance to express their ideologies in public.

The researcher added a percentage for "sometimes" and "always," then compared it to a percentage for "never," to evaluate age groups. For respondents in the 16-20 age range, 25% (25% + 0.0%), 21-25 age range, 34.2% (30.1% + 4.1%), 26-30 age range, 43.6% (40% + 3.6%), and 31-35 age range, 42.3% (40.2% + 2.1%), chose "always" or "sometimes." In contrast, according to their age groups, 70%, 64.4%, 53.6%, and 55.7% of respondents chose "never". Based on these responses, it can be concluded that the majority of respondents from each group agree they never engage in political discourse on Facebook. Another thing to note is that, in comparison to other age groups, the 26-34 age range is the one where the majority of respondents (43.6%) engage in political conversation on Facebook.

4.

Do you ever share your own opinions on Facebook regarding topics relating to the "Reservation Policy of Government"? * Cross-tabulation of agesulation of ages							
		Age				Total	
		16 to 20	21 to 25	26 to 30	31 to 35		
Do you ever share your own opinions on Facebook regarding topics relating to the "Reservation Policy of Government"?	Never	Co unt	1	2	4	7	14
		% wit hin AGE	80.0 %	71.2 %	49.1 %	68.0 %	62.7 %
	Som etimes	Co unt	0	1	4	2	7
		% wit hin AGE	0.0 %	37.4 %	43.6 %	29.9 %	33.0 %
	Alwa ys	Co unt	0	0	3	1	4
		% wit hin AGE	0.0 %	0.0 %	2.0 %	1.3 %	3.3 %
	Don't know	Co unt	2	0	3	0	5
		%	5.0	0.0	1.8	0.0	1.0

	wit hin AGE	%	%	%	%	%
Total	Co unt					30
	% wit hin AGE					100 %

The analysis of this question follows previous trends by adding the percentages of "sometimes" and "always" replies before comparing them to "never." The table clearly shows that the percentages for "sometimes" and "always" are identical to 36.3% (33% + 3.3%), whereas the percentage for "never" is 62.7%. It is obvious that the majority of respondents across all age categories agree that they never share their own opinions on Facebook about issues relating to the "Reservation Policy of Government." It also illustrates how most people are unwilling to voice their opinions about reservation policies, even in the virtual world.

When the percentages of "sometimes" and "always" are added to this question and the proportion of "never" is compared, more information is revealed regarding the age groups. For respondents in the 16-20 age range, 15% (10% + 5%), 21-25 age range, 28.8% (27.4% + 1.4%), 26-30 age range, 49.1% (43.6% + 5.5%), and 31-35 age range, 32% (29.9% + 2.1%) chose "always" or "sometimes." On the other hand, according to their age groups, 80%, 71.2%, 49.1%, and 68% of respondents selected "never."

According to this analysis, the majority of respondents from each group agree that they never post their own opinions about the "Reservation Policy of Government" on Facebook, with the exception of respondents aged 26 to 30, where the percentage of those who never opted is equal to the percentage of those who opted either occasionally or always. Another thing to note is that, in comparison to other age groups, the 26-30 age group has the highest percentage of respondents (49.1%) who publish their own opinions on Facebook about issues relating to the government's reservation policy.

5.

Do you ever share your own opinions on Facebook regarding the topic of "corruption in political parties"? * Cross-tabulation of ages							
		Age				Total	
		16 to 20	21 to 25	26 to 30	31 to 35		
Do you ever share your own	Never	Co unt	1	3	4	7	15
		% wit hin	70.0 %	60.3 %	43.6 %	50.5 %	51.7 %
	Alwa ys	Co unt	0	0	0	0	0
		%	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

opinion s on Faceboo k regardi ng topics relating to the "Reserv ation Policy of Govern ment"?	Somet imes	AG E						
		Co unt	1	2	4	1	8	
	Alwa ys	% wit hin AG E	13. 8%	31. 5%	40. 9%	13. 8%	36. 3%	
		Co unt	0	1	2	1	4	
	Don't know	% wit hin AG E	0.0 %	1.3 %	10. 9%	1.3 %	8.3 %	
		Co unt	0	0	2	1	3	
	Total	Co unt						30
		% wit hin AG E						100 %

In order to examine this question, the researcher added a percentage for "sometimes" and "always" and then compared it to a percentage for "never." As can be seen, the percentages of "Sometimes" and "Always" are equal to 44.6% (36.3% + 8.3%), while the percentage of "Never" is 51.7%. This clearly shows that the majority of respondents from various age groups agree that they never post their own thoughts on a topic related to "Corruption in political party" on Facebook. There are a variety of reasons why young people might choose not to express their opinions on Facebook about the topic of "corruption in political parties," such as the fact that they don't want their opinions to be made public, that they've come to accept corruption as a normal part of Indian society and the establishment, or that they're afraid to speak up.

To analyse the class interval of age-groups separately, it can be seen that respondents in the 16-20 age group selected either "always" or "sometimes," while respondents in the 21-25 age group selected 37% (31.5% + 5.5%), 26-30 age group selected 51.8% (40.9% + 10.9%), and respondents in the 31-35 age group selected 46.4% (37.1% + 9.3%). In contrast, 46, 70%, 60.3%, 43.6%, and 50.5% of respondents in each age group chose "never" (Table No. 1.16). Based on these responses, it is clear that the majority of respondents in the 16-20, 21-25, and 31-35 age groups acknowledge

that they never post their own opinions on Facebook regarding the topic of "corruption in political party," with the exception of the 26-30 age group, where the majority of respondents do so.

Conclusions-

It is clear that majority of respondents (youth) accept that Facebook provides them a platform for debate or discussion on 'socio-political issues' related subjects with others. Additionally, it demonstrates the respondents' (young) interest in Facebook discussions of sociopolitical problems in decreasing order. Using these analyses as a foundation. It can be inferred that respondents (young) believe Facebook to be the finest forum for sociopolitical discourse among respondents (youth).

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