

Double-Tapping into Democracy: The Role of Instagram on Political Awareness of Students in Delhi Colleges

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Abstract

This research study aims to investigate the role of Instagram in shaping political awareness among college students in Delhi. With the rise of social media, Instagram has emerged as a popular platform for sharing information and opinions on various issues, including politics. However, the extent to which Instagram influences political awareness amongst college students in Delhi remains unclear. To address this, we surveyed 115 college students from various colleges in Delhi to explore their social media habits and political awareness. The study will employ a mixed-methods approach, including a survey, to explore how Instagram is used to disseminate political information and its impact on the political awareness and students engagement. Our findings suggest that Instagram has a significant influence on political awareness amongst college students in Delhi, with many respondents reporting that the platform helped them stay informed about political issues and events. Furthermore, we found that political posts on Instagram were more likely to receive engagement, suggesting that the platform can encourage political discussion and engagement among college students. Ultimately, the study seeks to contribute to the ongoing debate on the relationship between social media and democracy, particularly in the context of India's burgeoning youth population.

INTRODUCTION

The global landscape of democratic discourse has undergone a profound transformation with the advent and proliferation of social media platforms. As digital spaces become increasingly intertwined with political narratives, the impact of these platforms on shaping public awareness, particularly among the youth, has become a subject of heightened scrutiny. This research aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of the intricate relationship between Instagram, a ubiquitous social media platform, and the political consciousness of college students in the dynamic metropolis of Delhi.

BACKGROUND

The 21st century has witnessed an unprecedented surge in the use of social media as a powerful tool for information dissemination, opinion formation, and public engagement. Among the myriad platforms, Instagram has emerged as a distinctive space, characterized by visual storytelling, user-generated content, and

real-time interactions. While initially perceived as a platform for sharing personal moments through images, Instagram has evolved into a multifaceted arena where discussions on a myriad of topics, including politics, unfold in real time.

In the context of India, a nation marked by its diverse socio-political landscape, the role of social media in shaping political narratives has garnered considerable attention. Among the demographic tapestry, the youth, particularly college students, represents a segment whose engagement with digital platforms is both extensive and influential. As political discussions unfold in virtual spaces, it becomes imperative to explore the extent to which platforms like Instagram influence the political awareness and engagement of this demographic.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: USES AND GRATIFICATIONS APPROACH

This research study is firmly grounded in the Uses and Gratifications (U&G) approach, a theoretical framework that provides a lens to understand why individuals actively choose and engage with specific media. Originating in communication studies, U&G theory focuses on individual motivations, shedding light on the diverse reasons people seek out and consume media content.

UNDERSTANDING USES AND GRATIFICATIONS THEORY

At its core, the Uses and Gratifications theory posits that individuals are not passive recipients of media messages but active agents who actively select and use media to fulfill specific needs and desires. Rather than focusing solely on what media does to people, the theory emphasizes what media does for people. In the context of this study, the primary aim is to unravel the motivations that drive young people to use Instagram in the realm of politics.

MOTIVATIONS OF INSTAGRAM USAGE AND POLITICAL BEHAVIORS

This study is uniquely positioned to explore how the motivations underlying Instagram usage influence the political behaviors of young

individuals. The motivations encompass a spectrum of activities, including seeking political information, expressing political opinions, and engaging with political figures and news media accounts on the platform. By applying the U&G lens, we aim to identify and dissect the multifaceted motivations that lead individuals to actively participate in political discourse on Instagram. This could include the desire for information, the need for self-expression, or the quest for a sense of belonging and community engagement within the political sphere.

DEMOGRAPHIC VARIANCES IN MEDIA USE

Studies grounded in the Uses and Gratifications approach have consistently highlighted that individuals from different demographic sections use media for distinct purposes. The motivations for media consumption vary based on factors such as age, gender, socio-economic status, and cultural background. This research recognizes the importance of acknowledging these demographic nuances in understanding the diverse ways young people in Delhi engage with Instagram for political purposes. As a platform that has rapidly gained popularity among the youth, Instagram holds unique characteristics that may satisfy distinct needs and motivations compared to traditional media. The visual nature of the platform, coupled with interactive features, contributes to a unique user experience that goes beyond the consumption of textual information.

MEDIA FUNCTIONS AND USER MOTIVATIONS

Furthermore, within the broader landscape of media, each medium, from traditional forms to emerging social platforms, serves different functions, and its characteristics satisfy specific needs and motivations. Understanding these functions is crucial for deciphering how and why individuals choose Instagram as their medium of choice for political engagement. For instance, traditional media may be sought for its authority and comprehensive coverage, while social

media platforms like Instagram offer immediacy, interactivity, and visual appeal. By exploring the functions and motivations associated with Instagram usage, this study aims to provide a nuanced understanding of why young people in Delhi turn to this platform for their political engagement needs.

IMPLICATIONS

By embracing the Uses and Gratifications approach, this research contributes to the existing body of knowledge by offering insights into the active role of individuals in shaping their media consumption patterns. The study recognizes that individuals are not passive recipients of political content on Instagram but deliberate users with specific motivations.

Understanding these motivations has implications for policymakers, media professionals, and educators alike. It provides a basis for tailoring political communication strategies on Instagram to align with the diverse needs and motivations of the youth audience. Moreover, it offers insights into the potential of Instagram as a tool for fostering civic engagement, political discourse, and information dissemination. In essence, the Uses and Gratifications approach forms the theoretical backbone of this study, guiding the exploration of the dynamic interplay between Instagram, individual motivations, and the political behaviors of young people in Delhi. By unraveling these motivations, we aim to contribute not only to the theoretical understanding of media consumption but also to the practical implications of leveraging social media in political awareness and engagement.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To examine the relationship between Instagram, use and political awareness among college students in Delhi.
- To identify the types of political issues and events most likely to generate engagement on Instagram.
- To evaluate the potential impact of Instagram on political discussion and engagement among students.

RATIONALE FOR OBJECTIVES

Understanding the Instagram-Political Awareness Nexus:

The first objective aims to establish a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between Instagram use and political awareness among college students in Delhi. By probing into the frequency and nature of political content consumption on Instagram, the study seeks to unveil the platform's role in shaping the political consciousness of the youth.

Uncovering Engagement Patterns in Political Content:

The second objective delves into the types of political issues and events that garner significant engagement on Instagram. By categorizing and analyzing content that resonates with the audience, the study aims to identify patterns that shed light on the political preferences and priorities of the college student demographic.

Assessing Instagram's Impact on Political Discussion:

The third objective focuses on evaluating the potential impact of Instagram on political discussions and engagement among students. Understanding the platform's role as a catalyst for political discourse is essential for grasping its broader influence on shaping political opinions and fostering active participation.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The influence of social media on political awareness and engagement has become a subject of significant scholarly interest, particularly among the youth. This review aims to provide a comprehensive overview and theories relevant to the exploration of Instagram's role in shaping political awareness among students in Delhi.

Social Media and Political Engagement

Scholars such as Bennett and Segerberg (2012) have explored the transformative impact of social media on political engagement, emphasizing the role of online platforms in fostering new modes of political participation. They highlight how digital media can

facilitate personalized politics, where individuals engage in politics based on personal experiences and networks rather than traditional organizational structures. Sunstein's (2017) work on online echo chambers and filter bubbles offers insights into how social media platforms, including Instagram, can contribute to the polarization of political opinions. His research indicates that the algorithms used by social media can reinforce existing beliefs, leading to increased political polarization.

Recent studies have further elaborated on these themes. For instance, Freelon *et al.* (2020) discuss how social media platforms can serve both as tools for democratization and as arenas for disinformation, affecting political engagement in complex ways. Similarly, Kearney (2019) examines how social media usage influences political knowledge and participation among young adults, suggesting that frequent users are more likely to engage in political activities.

Youth Political Participation

Research by Kenski and Stroud (2006) has delved into the factors influencing youth political participation, highlighting the importance of media consumption patterns in shaping political attitudes. They argue that young people's engagement with news media is a significant predictor of their political knowledge and participation. Bennett and Segerberg (2013) suggest that social media platforms may act as mobilization tools for youth political engagement, providing spaces for information exchange and activism. Their research underscores the role of digital media in facilitating collective action among youth.

Additional research by Theocharis and Quintelier (2016) supports these findings, showing that social media usage is positively correlated with various forms of political participation among young people, including voting and protesting. Furthermore, a study by Xenos *et al.* (2014) found that social media can enhance political engagement by making information more accessible and engaging to younger audiences.

Instagram as a Political Medium

Marwick and Lewis (2017) have examined Instagram's unique characteristics, emphasizing its visual nature

and the potential for political communication through images. They note that Instagram's emphasis on visual content can make political messages more relatable and impactful. Tufekci's (2017) exploration of the impact of visual content on social movements offers valuable insights into how visual elements on Instagram may contribute to political awareness. Her work highlights the power of visual storytelling in mobilizing support for social and political causes.

More recent studies, such as those by Highfield and Leaver (2016), focus on the role of Instagram in political expression, demonstrating how users employ the platform for political commentary and activism. They argue that Instagram allows for new forms of political engagement that are visually oriented and often more personal and emotional than traditional media. Similarly, Sharma and Brooker (2021) explore how Instagram influencers and celebrities use the platform to engage with political issues, thereby influencing their followers' political attitudes and behaviors.

Uses and Gratifications Theory

The application of the Uses and Gratifications theory to social media, as discussed by Ruggiero (2000), provides a framework for understanding how individuals actively seek out and use Instagram for political information and expression. This theory posits that users are active participants who select media channels that best satisfy their needs and desires. The study by Papacharissi and Mendelson (2011) on social media's role in the Arab Spring aligns with the Uses and Gratifications approach, illustrating how users actively engage with these platforms during political events. Their research shows that social media can fulfill various user needs, including information seeking, social interaction, and self-expression.

Recent applications of this theory, such as the work of Whiting and Williams (2013), further elucidate why users turn to social media for political content, highlighting factors such as entertainment, social interaction, and information seeking as primary motivators. Additionally, Alhabash and Ma (2017) explore how different gratifications influence the type and intensity of social media use, including political activities.

Social Media, Democracy, and Civic Engagement

The works of Norris (2001) and Dahlgren (2009) offer perspectives on the relationship between social media, democracy, and civic engagement, emphasizing the potential for these platforms to contribute to a more participatory democratic process. Norris argues that digital media can enhance democratic engagement by making information more accessible and facilitating greater public discourse. Dahlgren focuses on the concept of “civic cultures” and how social media can nurture these cultures by providing spaces for public discussion and participation.

Gil de Zúñiga *et al.* (2012) present findings on the positive impact of social media on civic engagement, stressing the importance of platforms like Instagram in shaping the political behavior of the youth. Their study indicates that social media use is associated with higher levels of political participation, particularly among younger demographics. Further, a study by Boulianne (2015) reviews the impact of social media on civic and political engagement, finding consistent evidence that social media use enhances both forms of engagement.

Methodological Approaches in Social Media Research

Scholars like Boyd and Crawford (2012) have discussed methodological considerations in social media research, emphasizing the need for a nuanced understanding of user practices and behaviors on platforms like Instagram. They argue for the importance of ethical considerations and the need to contextualize data within broader social practices. The study by Jungherr *et al.* (2012) on predicting election outcomes through social media data provides insights into the methodological challenges and opportunities of utilizing social media as a source of political information. Their research highlights the complexities of data interpretation and the potential biases inherent in social media data.

More recent contributions, such as those by Freelon and Karpf (2015), address the evolving methodologies in social media research, advocating

for mixed-method approaches that combine quantitative and qualitative data to better understand the multifaceted nature of online political engagement. Similarly, González-Bailón *et al.* (2014) discuss network analysis as a valuable tool for understanding the spread and impact of political information on social media platforms.

Regional Context of Social Media Use

Given the regional focus of the study, literature examining the influence of social media within specific cultural contexts becomes pertinent. The work of Chadha and Gottfried (2019) on social media and politics in India offers a lens to understand the unique dynamics of political awareness in the region. They highlight how social media platforms have become integral to political communication and mobilization in India, often reflecting and amplifying existing societal divisions.

Additionally, the research by Kumar and Najar (2020) on the role of social media in Indian elections provides insights into how platforms like Instagram are used for political campaigning and voter engagement. Their study shows that social media has become a crucial tool for reaching younger voters and shaping public opinion. The work of Thakur (2021) further explores the impact of social media on political participation among Indian youth, emphasizing the role of digital literacy and access in influencing engagement levels.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Nature of the Study

This research adopts an exploratory approach with a normative perspective. The exploratory nature and normative approach allow for an in-depth investigation into a specific Instagram's potential role.

The exploration will extend beyond mere identification to an in-depth examination of the various dimensions of Instagram usage, the nature of political content, and the dynamics of user engagement. By adopting an exploratory stance, the study aims to generate hypotheses, theories, and insights that can inform future research endeavors in this rapidly evolving field. Complementing the exploratory approach, the normative perspective

adds an evaluative dimension to the research design. Beyond merely describing the current state of affairs, the normative approach seeks to assess, critique, and establish benchmarks or norms. In the realm of political awareness on Instagram, this involves evaluating the effectiveness of the platform in fostering informed civic participation among college students in Delhi.

The normative perspective will allow to identify best practices, potential areas for improvement, and establish evaluative criteria. By taking an evaluative stance, the study aims not only to understand the impact of Instagram on political awareness but also to contribute to the establishment of ethical and effective practices in leveraging social media for civic education.

Sample Size and Selection

115 respondents were selected using a stratified sampling method, ensuring representation from different colleges, academic disciplines, and demographics (gender, age, socio-economic background). Stratified sampling was done to generalize the applicability of the findings. The choice of universities aims to capture a broad spectrum of perspectives within the college student population in the Delhi metropolitan area.

Data Collection Instrument

To elicit relevant information, a well-structured questionnaire was designed. The questionnaire, tailored to the exploratory and normative objectives of the study, included a mix of closed-ended and open-ended questions. This instrument facilitated the systematic gathering of data about Instagram usage, political awareness, and the perceived role of the platform in shaping political opinions.

Data Collection Method

The primary data collection method employed was an online survey distributed through social media channels. Leveraging the prevalence of social media usage among college students, the online survey method allowed for efficient and widespread data collection. The survey link was disseminated through platforms like Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter to ensure a diverse pool of respondents.

Sampling Technique

Convenience sampling was employed as the sampling technique in the collection of data. This method involves selecting participants based on their accessibility and willingness to participate, rather than utilizing a random or stratified sampling approach. Given the nature of the study and the focus on college students using Instagram, convenience sampling was deemed appropriate for its practicality and efficiency in reaching the target population.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data obtained from closed-ended questions will be analyzed using statistical tools and techniques. Descriptive statistics, including frequencies and percentages, will be employed to summarize and interpret the survey responses. Qualitative data from open-ended questions will undergo thematic analysis to identify recurring patterns and themes related to Instagram's role in political awareness.

Ethical Considerations

The study adheres to the ethical standards in research. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, ensuring they were aware of the study's purpose and their right to withdraw at any stage. The anonymity and confidentiality of respondents were preserved, with data reported in aggregate to prevent the identification of individual participants.

LIMITATIONS

While convenience sampling offers practical advantages, it introduces a potential bias in the sample composition. The findings may not fully represent the entire college student population in Delhi. Additionally, the reliance on self-reported data and the online survey method may introduce response bias.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Frequency of Instagram Usage

- **86.1%: Multiple times a day:** - This majority indicates that a significant portion of the respondents use Instagram frequently

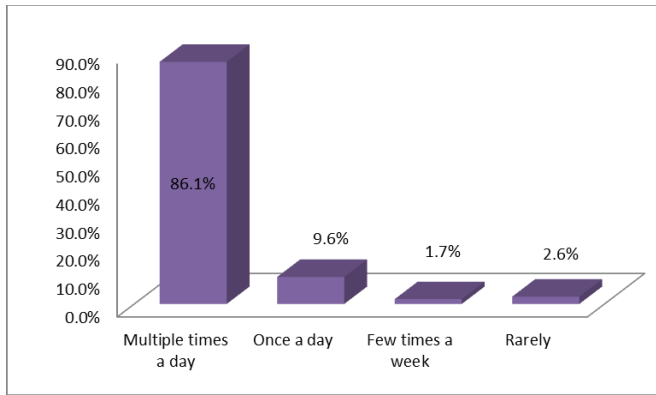


Figure 1: Frequency of Instagram Usage

throughout the day, suggesting a high level of engagement with the platform.

- **9.6%: Once a day:** - A smaller but still notable percentage of respondents reported using Instagram once a day, indicating a regular but less frequent engagement pattern.
- **1.7%: A few times a week:** - A very small percentage mentioned using Instagram a few times a week, suggesting a more sporadic usage pattern compared to the daily users.
- **2.6%: Rarely:** - The smallest percentage, indicating that a minority of respondents use Instagram rarely, suggesting infrequent engagement with the platform.

Main Reasons for Using Instagram

The analysis of Instagram usage patterns among students reveals a nuanced landscape where the

platform transcends its traditional role as a source of entertainment. While Instagram remains a prominent channel for recreational content, a noteworthy shift is observed, with an increasing number of students turning to the platform for news and information. This suggests that Instagram is evolving into a multifaceted space where users seek both entertainment and relevant, timely updates. Interestingly, the data also highlights a prioritization of social connections over celebrity content, emphasizing the platform's role in facilitating genuine interactions among friends and family. This dual nature, blending entertainment and information dissemination, underscores Instagram's dynamic influence on the information-seeking behaviors of the student demographic.

Understanding the importance of awareness regarding political issues and developments

The responses indicate a clear acknowledgment among the surveyed students regarding the significance of political awareness. The majority of respondents express a strong agreement with the notion of staying informed about political events. This recognition underscores the understanding that being politically aware is considered valuable and essential among the student demographic. The results suggest that these students perceive the importance of staying abreast of political issues and developments, emphasizing a conscientious attitude toward staying informed about the dynamic

What are the main reasons for using Instagram?

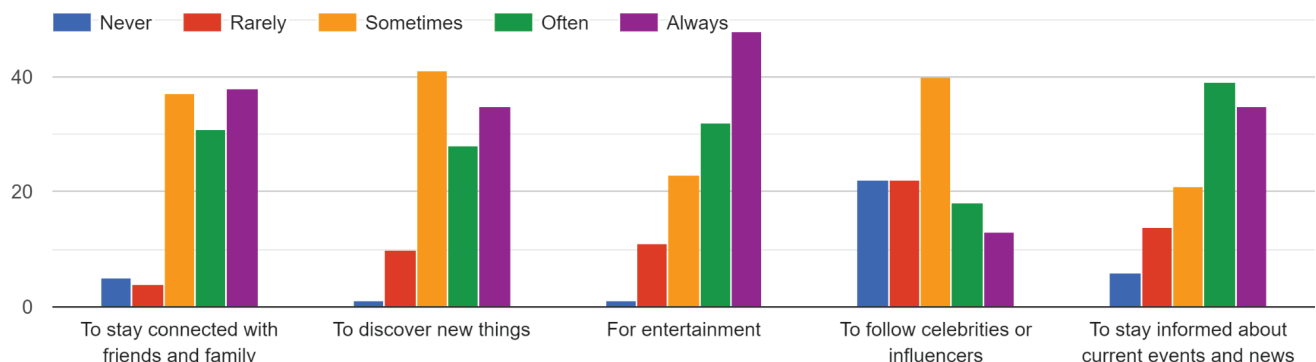


Figure 2: Reasons for using Instagram

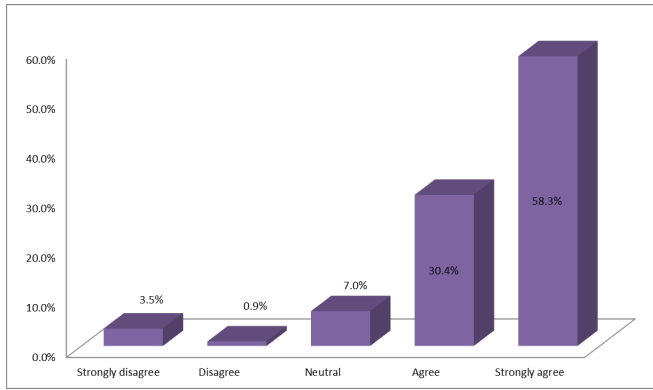


Figure 3: Students survey regarding the significance of political awareness

political landscape. This positive affirmation aligns with the broader societal recognition of the role political awareness plays in fostering an engaged and informed citizenry.

Political Discussions with Friends or Family Members

The data reveals a notable connection between the virtual world of political discussions and the real-world engagement of the respondents with their friends and family. A significant portion, comprising 74 respondents, actively participates in political discussions with their family and friends from time to time. This suggests that their virtual involvement in political discourse on platforms like Instagram transcends the online realm, manifesting in meaningful conversations within their immediate social circles. The findings underscore the idea that online political engagement is not isolated but rather serves as a catalyst for real-world

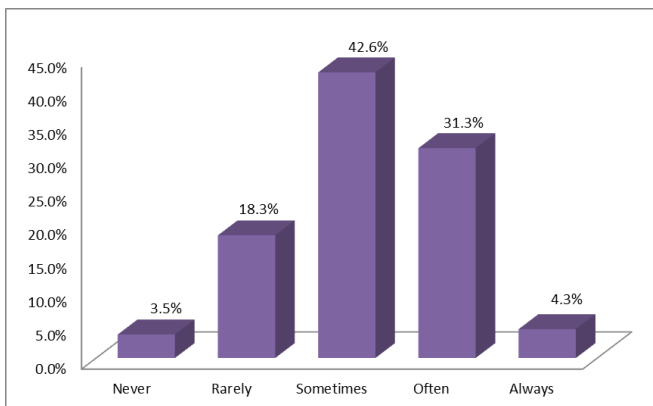


Figure 4: Political discussions with friends or family members

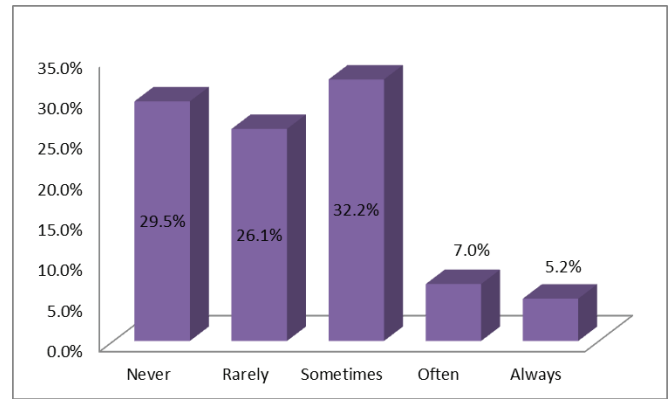


Figure 5: Respondents expressing their political views on Instagram

discussions, fostering a bridge between the virtual and physical dimensions of their social interactions. This integration further emphasizes the potential impact of digital platforms in shaping interpersonal relationships and contributing to a more politically engaged community.

Ever-shared, Reposted, or Commented on a Political Post on Instagram

The data indicates that, despite being aware of political issues, the respondents tend to refrain from actively expressing their political views on Instagram. They do not engage in sharing, reposting, or commenting on political posts, choosing to keep their political perspectives private. This cautious approach suggests a hesitancy among the respondents to publicly reveal their political stances on the platform. This finding may reflect a desire for privacy, avoidance of potential conflicts, or a preference for using Instagram primarily for non-political content. The reluctance to openly share political views highlights the complex dynamics of expressing opinions on social media platforms, where individuals weigh the benefits of engagement against potential repercussions.

If Political Content shared on Instagram is Informative

The responses suggest that a significant portion of the respondents, accounting for 54%, adopt a neutral stance concerning the informativeness of political content shared on Instagram. This indicates that a substantial number of individuals

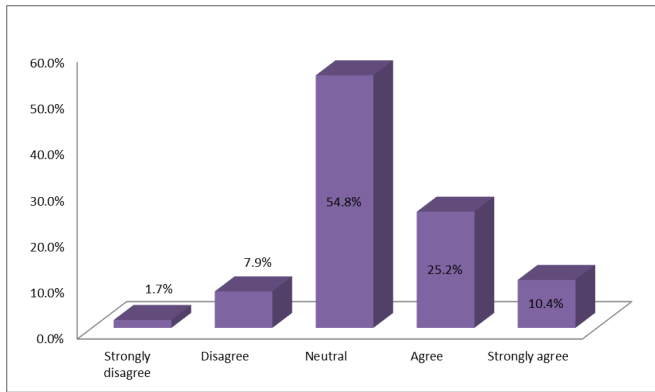


Figure 6: Political content shared on Instagram is informative

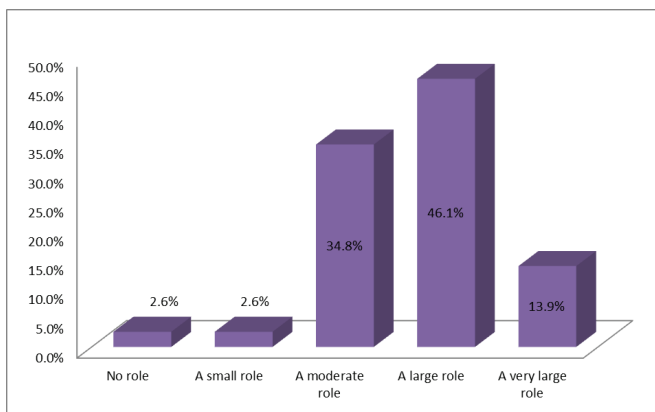


Figure 7: Instagram in promoting political awareness and engagement

neither strongly agree nor disagree that the political content on Instagram is informative. The neutrality suggests a varied perception among respondents, with some potentially viewing Instagram as one of several sources for information rather than the sole or primary source for political insights. This finding underscores the need for a nuanced understanding

of how individuals perceive the informativeness of political content on Instagram, with diverse attitudes and considerations influencing their perspectives.

Role of Instagram in Promoting Political Awareness and Engagement amongst College Students

The data reveals a significant trend among college students, indicating that a substantial proportion not only uses Instagram to stay politically aware but also associates the platform's popularity with an increased political perception within the age group of 18-24. This suggests that Instagram plays a noteworthy role in promoting political awareness and engagement among college students, particularly within the demographic of young adults. The findings emphasize the platform's influence in shaping the political perspectives of this age group, showcasing its effectiveness as a tool for fostering political awareness and engagement among the college student population.

Interest in the Various Topics

The exploration of students' areas of general interest reveals a socially conscious and globally engaged demographic. Notably, students express a keen interest in social justice issues, highlighting their commitment to matters of equity and inclusivity. Gender-related topics emerge prominently, indicating a strong focus on issues of equality and representation. Furthermore, the significance placed on education, literacy, and employment underscores a practical concern for matters directly impacting their academic and professional

How interested are you in?

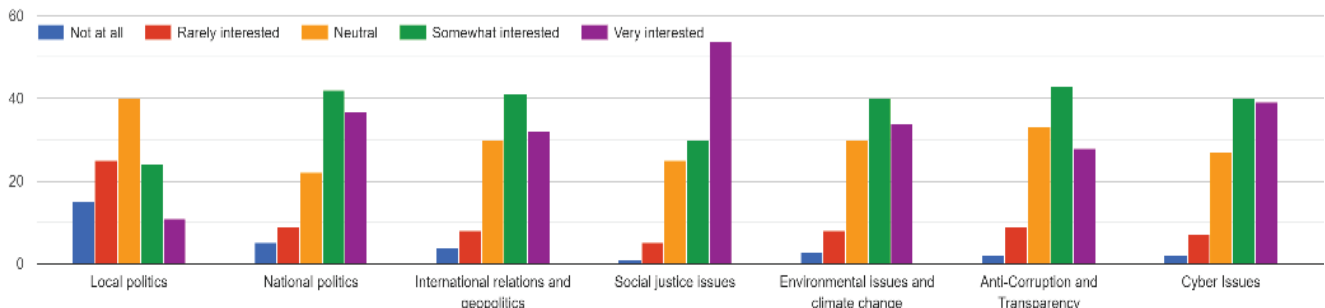


Figure 8: Exploration of students' areas of general interest

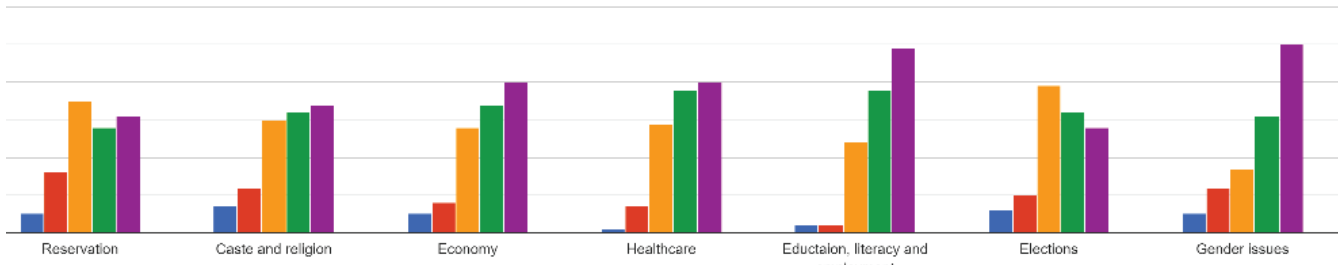


Figure 9: Level of interest among students in issues related to caste, religion, gender issue, healthcare, elections, and reservation.

journeys. Surprisingly, students exhibit a greater interest in national and international politics over local politics, reflecting a global perspective and an aspiration to engage with broader geopolitical issues. These identified areas of interest collectively portray a dynamic and socially aware student body, providing valuable insights for educators, content creators, and policymakers aiming to resonate with the concerns and priorities of the college student demographic.

The data indicates a lower level of interest among students in issues related to caste, religion, reservation, corruption, and local politics. These topics, which hold significant societal implications, appear to be less prioritized within the areas of general interest among the student demographic. The findings suggest that, compared to other themes, students may exhibit a relatively lower engagement or preference for information and discussions related to caste dynamics, religious matters, reservation policies, corruption, and local political affairs. Understanding these areas of lower interest provides insights into the nuanced preferences of the student population, informing strategies for effective communication and engagement on topics that may require tailored approaches to capture their attention and foster meaningful dialogue.

Action Taken as a Result of Political Content seen on Instagram

The responses highlight that a significant number of respondents, constituting the majority, have taken specific actions as a result of political content encountered on Instagram. The primary action taken is the signing of petitions, indicating a proactive engagement with political issues and a willingness to participate in advocacy efforts.

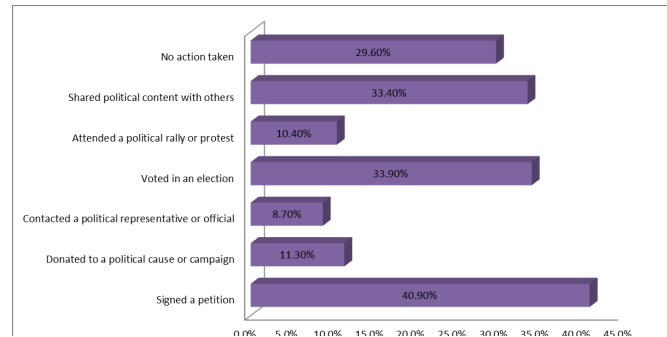


Figure 10: Action taken as a result of political content seen on Instagram.

Additionally, it is noteworthy that a considerable proportion of respondents share political content with others through direct messages (DM), indicating a form of information dissemination within their immediate social circles. The most impactful action identified is the influence on voting decisions, suggesting that exposure to political content on Instagram has a tangible effect on the respondents' democratic decision-making processes. These findings underscore the potential of Instagram as a platform not only for raising awareness but also for mobilizing civic participation and shaping the political choices of its users.

Concern regarding misinformation on Instagram related to political issues

The responses indicate a notable level of concern among respondents regarding the spread of misinformation on Instagram, particularly in the context of political issues. While a majority of respondents consume political content on the platform, there is a shared apprehension about the credibility of Instagram as a medium for accurate and reliable information. This concern suggests that, despite the engagement with political content

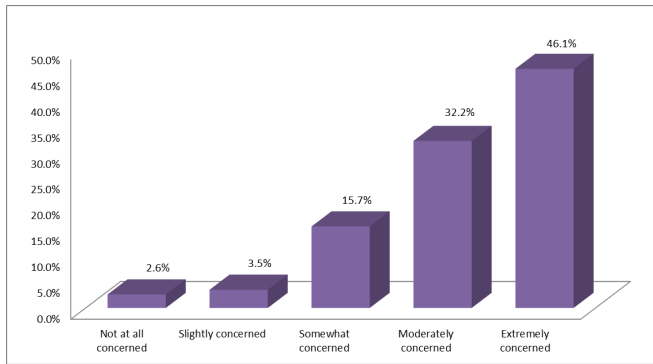


Figure 11: Concern among respondents about misinformation on Instagram related to political issues.

on Instagram, respondents are wary of potential misinformation and may seek out other social media platforms for news consumption where credibility is perceived to be higher. The findings emphasize the importance of addressing issues related to misinformation on Instagram to maintain user trust and ensure the responsible dissemination of political information on social media platforms.

Key Findings

- The study reveals a noteworthy trend in the evolving role of Instagram among young people, transforming it into a prominent medium for political awareness. Recognizing the importance of staying politically informed, an increasing number of students are turning to Instagram for political news and information, showcasing a shift from traditional platforms like Facebook and Twitter. The preference for staying connected with friends and family over following celebrities underscores Instagram's significance as a social hub.
- This transition is not only seen in the platform preference but also in the shift of uses and gratification, with content consumption transitioning from primarily entertainment to a more significant focus on news. This suggests that Instagram is becoming a versatile platform catering to diverse informational needs.
- Among the topics of interest, respondents spending time on news consumption via Instagram show a strong inclination toward social justice, gender issues, education, and employment, in addition to national and

international politics. Conversely, there is a lower interest in caste-related matters, religion, reservation, corruption, and local politics.

- While there is a concern about Instagram's credibility, the study indicates that respondents are still influenced by the content consumed on the platform. This complex relationship suggests that, despite reservations about credibility, Instagram remains influential in shaping the perspectives and actions of its users, indicating the platform's growing significance as a driver of political awareness and engagement among the younger demographic.
- Moreover, the research highlights a nuanced change in the content consumption pattern, signaling a departure from Instagram's traditional entertainment-focused role. The platform is increasingly becoming a space where users gratify their need for political information, indicating a broader spectrum of utility.
- The diverse range of topics capturing the attention of respondents engaged in news consumption on Instagram underscores the platform's versatility. It has evolved into a space where users delve into critical societal issues such as social justice, gender dynamics, and educational and employment concerns, indicative of a socially conscious user base.
- Despite concerns about Instagram's credibility, the study underscores the platform's considerable influence on its users. The fact that individuals are still swayed by the content they consume on Instagram reveals the platform's power to shape opinions and perceptions, highlighting its growing impact as a catalyst for political awareness and discourse.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study illuminates a positive correlation between motivations for entertainment and information-seeking and the frequent use of Instagram, underscoring the platform's dual role as both an entertainment hub and an information source. Instagram emerges as a dynamic space with a diverse array of political information, providing

users with convenient tools for engaging in various political activities. Notably, the study indicates that utilizing Instagram for political discussions significantly enhances political interest among users.

The implications of these findings extend beyond individual behavior, holding relevance for politicians and political parties shaping their strategies. Understanding the influential role of Instagram in fostering political engagement can inform targeted approaches for political communication and marketing.

In the broader context, the study suggests that social media platforms, including Instagram, contribute to enhancing political awareness among the youth. While the impact may be nuanced, the platform's ability to facilitate political discussions and cultivate political interest among users underscores its potential as a valuable tool for advancing democratic participation and awareness among the younger demographic.

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