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# Social media uses among youths and matured person

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**Abstract.** Social media usage is ubiquitous among all age groups. The purpose and needs may vary with age and environment. It is general observations that youngsters use Snapchat and Instagram more frequently and working professionals use LinkedIn or Twitter. The theory of user and gratification defines the uses of different media and reasons for consumption. Individuals now tilted more towards hedonic activities like enjoyment and relaxation and find digital platform more convenient to satisfy their psychological and social needs. The usage of inbound and outbound active platforms like Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram and Twitter is increasing as compared to passive media like television and radio.

This study is an attempt to identify the uses and gratifications found by youngsters and others by using social networking sites? A preliminary review of the literature was done to understand the usage pattern of social media and identifying why individuals spend reasonable time on social media platforms. Well, ahead a questionnaire is formed to collect data on the usage pattern of individuals.

The analysis discloses that age does not have any significant role in the usage pattern of various social media platforms. It means all individuals use social media platforms for similar purposes. Even there is no association between age and influence of social media on the purchase decision. Although age influences preference of combination of social media platforms. This study shall be useful for online marketers to design their online promotion strategy. This will also be useful for digital marketing agencies to target the right social media platform for specific brand-related activities.

**Keywords:** Social media, user gratification, social networking sites

## 1. Introduction

The worldwide users of social media platforms are 2.95 billion. The total social media users in India are 680 million. The Facebook users are 280 million, Instagram users are 88 million, LinkedIn users are 65 million and Snapchat users are also growing very fast. The most preferred platforms among Indian are Facebook, WhatsApp and YouTube. India has hugged the internet with open arms, and its digital population has been swiftly mounting in the past decade with active internet users (Diwanji Sanika, 2020)8.

After Reliance Jio introduction in 2007, the internet user base has increased fast. Reliance Jio offered very attractive schemes which were affordable irrespective of the income levels and socio-economic classes. The impact was significant as over 60 per

cent of the mobile data traffic coming from Jio services in less than ten years of its introduction in the market.

An individual with a smartphone is using either one or many social media sites. The gender, age and socioeconomic status is not a boundary. The individuals are using social media platforms according to their choice and likings subject to fulfil their drives. According to age and working status, their usages may differ. There is some common usage which applies to every user like stay connected to friends and family, networked with people and entertainment.

According to a survey conducted by Ipsos on the state of happiness, about 43 per cent of Indians thought that the time they spend on social media was a source of some happiness for them, while 29 per cent of respondents stated that it did not or could not give them happiness. Globally only 42 per cent of respondents viewed their time on social media as a source of happiness.

Young adults (ages 18 to 29) are the most likely to use social media – fully 90% do. Still, the usage among those 65 and older has more than tripled since 2010 when 11% used social media. Today, 35% of all those 65 and older report using social media, compared with just 2% in 2005.

Women were more likely than men to use social networking sites for some years, although since 2014 these differences have been modest. Today, 68% of all women use social media, compared with 62% of all men. (Andrew Perrin'2015) Social networking site users can be categorized based on usage. It depends on user interest and purpose. Facebook and WhatsApp are the most common among other social media platforms usage in India. The use of twitter and LinkedIn is more inclined to professionals, organizations and for socio-economic-political interest. Snapchat and Instagram is common among youngsters because this gives a privacy feature and they can send text and photos privately which is difficult to monitor by anyone else.

SNS	Purpose
Facebook	Facebook supports communicating online chat and the gift to comment on your friend's profile pages to keep in touch, share information or to say "something". Facebook supports group pages, fan pages, and business pages that let businesses use Facebook as a vehicle for social media marketing.
WhatsApp	Connectivity - Sending messages, and making calls have a new destination, WhatsApp. So even without a balance, we can reach our loved ones. Sharing: It has a fitness to share wide range of media, be it photos, audio, video, and even documents
LinkedIn	Professionals, professional bodies and organizations uses it for showcasing their capabilities, achievements and for any professional activities.

Instagram	Use of visual marketing features on this platform. It build up user generated content.
Snapchat	Snapchat is a mobile messaging application used to share photos, videos, text, and drawings. It's free to download the app and free to send messages using it. It has become hugely popular in a very short space of time, especially with young people because of its privacy

**Table: 1**

If we study why individuals use social media? The theory of Uses and gratification (Jay Blumler and Denis McQuail, (1969) explained why individuals use media and reasons for consumption? Does the UG theory explain why individuals use various media platforms to satisfy their social and psychological needs? The UG perspective has led to a new understanding of audiences as active media users who chosen media based upon a variety of needs. Since both the production and consumption of social media are fundamentally user-driven (Shao, 2009). Social media users can be broadly classified according to active users and the activities performed on various social media platforms. These activities can be contribution (post) or consumption like Loitering and Witnessing (Schlosser, 2005; Shao, 2009). They suggested that consumption is more than a contribution.

There are various theories and models used by many kinds of research in social media practice and individual's behaviour towards social media in social media research, Colliander and Dahlen (2011) used PSI to study user behaviour concerning brand attitudes and purchase intentions. Uses and Gratification (UGT) is another theory of mass communication (Eighmey & McCord, 1998) which is appreciated well in social media research to understand consumer need and behaviour.

A communication tool that allows users to create a network with a public or private profile and interact with people in that network (Boyd & Ellison, 2008). Social media sites fulfil many wants and needs via virtual communication. It is what social media sites do college students use most? Social media is a convenient method of communication which provides the ability to stay connected with friends and family at the discretion of the users' rate and time (Urista, Dong, & Day, 2009)<sup>18</sup>. Social media are highly efficient because they are one of the many methods of communication that allow users too quickly and widely disseminate information. According to Duggan and Brenner (2012)<sup>10</sup>, 83% of 18-29-year-olds disseminate information via social networking sites. Social media are increasing student engagement outside of the classroom and they are creating new and innovative ways to learn Knight-McCord et.al. (2016)<sup>12</sup>

Uses and gratifications theory applies to social media because of its roots in the communications literature. Social media is a communication mechanism that allows users to communicate with thousands, and perhaps billions, of individuals all over the world (Williams et al., 2012). The basic evidence of uses and gratifications theory is that people will seek out media among participants that fulfill their needs and chiefs to ultimate gratifications (Lariscy et al., 2011).

Dolan, R., Conduit, J., Fahy, J., & Goodman, S. (2016)<sup>9</sup> reconnoitered relationship between social media and engagement behaviour. This paper examined the Facebook users' gratification and the relationship between users' gratification and their political

participation offline. A factor analysis revealed four primary needs for participation which are socializing, entertainment, self-status seeking and information. Valenzuela, S. et.al. (2009)<sup>20</sup> explained the uses and gratification of social media. Their study test and quantifies the reciprocal causal relationship between needs, social media use and gratification as well as their self-sustaining endogenous (feedback) effect. Social media use is significantly driven by all four categories of needs examined (emotional, cognitive, social and habitual) but only gratify some of them. Ungratified needs accumulate over time drive subsequent social media use. Interpersonal social environment also affects social media use. Brooks S (2015) explained the adverse effect of social media usage that leads to negative effects, both on efficiency and well-being. Specifically, social media usage is associated with lower task performance, increased technostress, and lower happiness. Social media will remain and grow in the future. As more and more people spend increased amounts of time with the technologies, the potential for these negative effects may grow. Whiting, A., & Williams, D. (2013)<sup>17</sup> study identifies ten uses and gratifications for using social media. The ten uses and gratifications found in their study are social interaction, information seeking, pass time, entertainment, relaxation, communicatory utility, expression of opinions, convenience utility, information sharing, and surveillance and watching of others.

Social media usage is increasing at a rapid rate due to better availability of smartphones and data. The previous research work talked about uses and gratification of social media by individuals but how uses vary with age factor is not explained. How the social media uses and preference of using a particular social network changes along with age is important to learn from a marketer viewpoint to design their social media marketing strategy. Henceforth our proposed conceptual framework outlining the antecedents and consequences of Youths and mature individuals.

## **2. Review of Literature**

Bo Xie, Ivan Watkins, Jen Golbeck & Man Huang (2012)<sup>3</sup> explained in their study that the adoption of social media among elderly individuals is inhibited by the concern of privacy, technology use and negative perception. But the education to them helps to improve the adoption of social media among them. Haddon, L. (2015)<sup>11</sup> expressed in his study that youth are a continuous learner and learn technology very fast. They are also malleable to understand the issues and practices. Dhaha, I. S. Y., & Igale, A. B. (2013)<sup>7</sup> explained in their study that youth in Somalia use Facebook to portray the positive image of their country and help the word to know what is happening in the country. Barker V. (2012)<sup>1</sup> stated that Regardless of age, participants reporting high collective self-esteem and group identity were more likely to use social networking sites for peer communication and social identity gratifications, while those reporting negative collective self-esteem were more likely to use social networking sites for social compensation.

Berger Paul D. & Mathur Pooja & Black Jennifer E. & Cao Jiangmei & Weinberg Bruce D., 2012<sup>22</sup> researched about the relationship between social media use and the overall impact social media marketing has on purchase behaviour.

Malik (2016)<sup>12</sup> identified six different gratifications which are affection, attention-seeking, disclosure, habit, information sharing and social influence behind sharing digital photos on Face book. It was found that age has a positive correlation with disclosure and social influence gratifications. Frequency of posting on Facebook is negatively correlated with habit and information sharing gratifications.

### 3. Methodology

This study has been designed to understand the need of individuals for social media usage in a structured manner and classifying them based on demographic variables. This study tried to measure social media as a habit among users like how many hours they spend on social media? What is the level of satisfaction when they get a like or comment on their posted content? How do they feel about social media Good or Bad and how they are addicted to social media.

The uses and gratification framework available in the literature, this study focus on basic two frameworks which are: Papacharissi and Rubin's (2000)<sup>16</sup> and Ko et. al. (2005)<sup>15</sup>. The Palmgreen and Rubin's scale is selected because it looks at both uses and gratification together and it has been applied in television viewing studies which is similar to social media engagement. The Palmgreen and Rubin (2000) and the Ko et al. (2005) framework were selected because it looks at uses and gratification concerning the internet. Considering the above two frameworks there are seven themes along with one component from the PSI framework to study the influence of social media endorsement on buying behaviour of its users that will cover in this study.

- (1) Social interaction;
- (2) Education and awareness
- (3) Entertainment;
- (5) Relaxation;
- (6) Communicatory utility;
- (7) Convenience utility and
- (8) Influence of Social media endorsement on the purchasing behaviour of its users.

A questionnaire was developed to interview users of various age group individuals. It was promised with each respondent not to disclose the identity and their responses. To collect the responses a list was prepared according to the age group to collect the responses. The age groups were like individuals up to 25 years age and the second age group of the mature one above 25 years of age. The sample size was taken 200. The weightage was given more to youths less than 25 years of age in data collection.

The questionnaire was sent to respondents either via a link on their email IDs or through personal interview. The collected responses were tabulated according to demography for analysis and interpretation. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and non-parametric chi-square test method.

### 4. Findings and Discussion

**Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	2.505 <sup>a</sup>	2	.286
Likelihood Ratio	2.513	2	.285
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.289	1	.256
N of Valid Cases	400		

**Table-2 a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 35.24.**

A chi-square test of independence was performed to examine the relation between age and influence of social media in purchase decision. The relation between these variables was not found to be statistically significant,  $X^2(2, N = 400) = 2.505$ ,  $p = .286$ . This indicates that there is no association between age and influence of social media on the purchase decision.

#### Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	1.882 <sup>a</sup>	4	.757
Likelihood Ratio	1.869	4	.760
Linear-by-Linear Association	.329	1	.566
N of Valid Cases	400		

Table-3 a. 3 cells (30.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.91.

A chi-square test of independence was performed to examine the relation between age and purpose of use of social media. The purpose of use considered included are: entertainment and work, enlarge social network, to create new useful content, image management and making new friends. The relation between these variables was not found to be statistically significant,  $X^2(4, N = 400) = 1.882$ ,  $p = .757$ . This indicates that there is no association between age and purpose of use of social media. This indicates that the usages of social media does not differ for those who are below 25 years and those who are above 25 years.

#### Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	3.834 <sup>a</sup>	2	.147
Likelihood Ratio	3.649	2	.161
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.897	1	.168
N of Valid Cases	400		

Table-4 a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 5.08.

A chi-square test of independence was performed to examine the relation between age and purpose for which social media is used. In this analysis purpose for which social media is used included: mixed use, professional use and personal use. The relation between these variables was not found to be statistically significant,  $X^2(2, N = 400) = 3.834$ ,  $p = .147$ . This indicates that there is no association between age and

purpose of use of social media. This indicates that the usages of social media does not differ for those who are below 25 years and those who are above 25 years.

#### Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	27.966 <sup>a</sup>	4	.000
Likelihood Ratio	28.812	4	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	3.011	1	.083
N of Valid Cases	400		

Table-5 a. 2 cells (20.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .32.

A chi-square test of independence was performed to examine the relation between age and preference for combination of social media platforms. The relation between these variables was found to be statistically significant,  $X^2(4, N = 400) = 3.834, p = .147$ . This indicates that there is an association between age and preference for combination of social media platforms. This indicates that the preference for combination of social media platforms differ for those who are below 25 years and those who are above 25 years. Less than 25 years customer show more preference for Facebook/WhatsApp/Instagram combination, while the preference for WhatsApp/Facebook/LinkedIn is similar across the two age groups.

#### Count

	Average_time_spending			Total
	1.00	2.00	3.00	
1.00	64	115	94	273
2.00	31	64	32	127
Total	95	179	126	400

Table-6

#### Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)



Pearson Chi-Square	3.705 <sup>a</sup>	2	.157
Likelihood Ratio	3.775	2	.151
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.647	1	.199
N of Valid Cases	400		

Table-6A a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 30.16.

The two age groups (below 25 years and those who are above 25 years) do not differ in the time spent on the social media.

#### Age \* reaction exit Cross tabulation

Count		reaction exit					Total
		1.00	2.00	3.00	4.00	5.00	
Age	1.00	121	126	15	9	2	273
	2.00	38	74	5	4	6	127
Total		159	200	20	13	8	400

Table-7

#### Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	14.398 <sup>a</sup>	4	.006
Likelihood Ratio	13.982	4	.007
Linear-by-Linear Association	7.345	1	.007
N of Valid Cases	400		

Table-7A a. 2 cells (20.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.54.

A chi-square test of independence was performed to examine the relation between age and reaction on exit of social media platform. The relation between these variables was found to be statistically significant,  $X^2(4, N = 400) = 14.398, p = .006$ . This indicates that there is an association between age and reaction on exit of social media platform.

<i>Social Media is Good or Bad</i>	
Mean	1.14
Standard Error	0.020050063
Median	1
Mode	1
Standard Deviation	0.401001253
Sample Variance	0.160802005

Table-8

Almost all age group social media network users see value in using it because the most of them confirmed that social media is good (Median -1)

<i>Average Spending Time</i>	
Mean	2.0775
Standard Error	0.037008898
Median	2
Mode	2
Standard Deviation	0.740177957
Sample Variance	0.547863409

Table-8A

The average spending time by social media users per day is 2 hours which is significant if used during working hours.

## 5. Conclusion

It is found in the data analysis that age is not a barrier in using social media networks. Even there is no significant difference in social media in buying behaviour of individuals due to the age group. The study also indicates that there is no association between age and purpose of the use of social media. It means the usages of social media does not differ for those who are below 25 years and those who are above 25 years. The preference for a combination of social media platforms differs for those who are below 25 years and those who are above 25 years. Less than 25 years customer show more preference for Face book/WhatsApp/Instagram combination, while the preference for WhatsApp/ Facebook/ LinkedIn is similar across the two age groups. Although the affinity towards social media is more in youngsters as compared to mature individuals. It means marketers have to look at the use of social media platform while designing their digital brand communication strategy according to age groups. The limitation of this

study is that data collection for the study is majorly from northern India and college-going individuals.

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