

Understanding Social Media Habits and Their Influence on Mba Students in Chennai

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Abstract

MBA students in Chennai, India, spend a lot of time on social media. This research looks at how frequently the use of social media might affect their academics. A structured questionnaire was issued to 120 students which was given out randomly among MBA students from different colleges in Chennai. Among them, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, X (formerly known as Twitter), YouTube, WhatsApp, and Snapchat were ranked as the most favourite sites. Most of them said that they spend 2-4 hours per day also younger ones had higher internet usage rates than elder students. It is significant to note that according to this study, there exists a relationship between time spent on these platforms with recent exam marks achieved by an individual student – females' perception towards positive impacts created by these channels vis-a-vis their male students. Such discoveries indicate multiple influences exerted by social media upon educational experiences undergone through post-graduate programs like MBA courses offered at various institutions situated in Chennai city. The investigation underscores potential educational advantages associated with the use of this medium and also calls for deliberate integration of such tools into college curricula aimed at enhancing learning outcomes while minimizing possible distractions.

Keywords: social media, MBA students, academic performance, learning, India

INTRODUCTION

The rise of social media platforms like Facebook, X (formerly known as Twitter), and Instagram has significantly transformed connection, study and sharing of information among people. By allowing individuals to generate and share their own materials, these platforms advance real-time conferencing. In a city such as Chennai with its varied educational terrain, social media presents a set of unique prospects for MBA students. A great advantage of social media is easier communication. Students collaborating on assignments are not hindered by geography. Furthermore, social media allows for an extensive collection of learning resources and opportunities to access world-famous professionals in various fields. These might be highly beneficial in large competitive MBA programs. On the other hand, there are drawbacks attached to using this platform. Continuous engagement can make it hard to concentrate on studies when one engages with it too much (Ziegler 2015). In addition, students must be selective about what they read or view online because much of what appears on social networks is false or misleading (Fox & Griggs 2007). Moreover, not everyone has equal access to technology and the internet; hence creating a 'digital divide' that can prevent many from experiencing the educational merits that come with it in Chennai through social media (Bassett et al., 2009). Finally, networking is complicated by Chennai's unique cultural background as well as multilingualism (English, Tamil etc.). This will require understanding both positive and negative aspects of social media for educational institutions and their learners so that they can enhance its advantages while minimizing possible setbacks.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Nowadays, MBA students in Chennai habitually use social media as part of their lives. Therefore, it was important to comprehend how social media had influenced them academically. It could be used to communicate and share information important but some feared that the platform may be a source of distraction for students. Consequently, there were only a few studies at the time specifically investigating how MBA students in Chennai used social media to their education. Whether there is any relationship between academic performance and their usage pattern, as well as attitude towards the same, remains unclear. In addition, clear guidelines needed to be put in place on how social media should be used responsibly in the MBA curriculum structure. The purpose of this

research was therefore to fill these gaps. This study provided insights by examining the value perception among MBA students from Chennai using Social Networking Services (SNS) and investigating possible associations between online habits and academic outcomes among them. These results would in turn enlighten pupils and teachers on how they can maximize educational benefits derived from social media while minimizing its possible negative effects thereby promoting its strategic use for learning.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study sought to examine the intricate interplay between social media utilization and academic results among MBA students in Chennai, India. It sought to find which social media platforms were favoured by MBA students (like Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, X (formerly Twitter), Threads, YouTube, WhatsApp and Snapchat) and how they used them for their studies. The study also explored how attitudes towards learning were shaped through social networking sites by looking into the strategies students use to acquire knowledge. Another dimension considered in this research involved examining if there exists a relationship between their social media habits such as usage frequency of various types of activities on these platforms with their academic outcomes which are primarily defined by grades or overall performance (and any other relevant variables). 120 structured questionnaires were distributed to MBA students from different colleges across Chennai city. Ultimately this research pursued insights that could enable strategic use of social media among MBA learners and educators. The aim was to present social media as an instrument for achieving educational goals and reducing distractions.

RESEARCH QUESTION

- i. Can the exam marks of MBA students be influenced by the time they spend on social media?
- ii. Do MBA students engage in academic activities through social media? If yes, does this utilization of social media contribute to higher marks among them?

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objective of the study is to explore how students use social media in higher education and its influence on their attitudes and knowledge.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Ankuran Dutta (2020), In his study on the emergency adoption of social media in Indian higher education during COVID-19 disruptions. He points out how many academic hours were lost due to university closures and examines how institutions made use of social media to disseminate knowledge. What he discovered through interviews, focus groups and student feedback is that students widely used social media platforms, and these played a great role in preventing educational losses. This research highlights the transformative nature of the pandemic when it comes to remote learning where instead of traditional classes becoming non-existent – they become unnecessary because now every learner has an opportunity to learn from home with only their gadgets as companions.

Mahmoud Alghizzawi et al., (2019), investigated students' acceptance towards e-learning platforms at the British University in Dubai based on their social media habits. According to them, sharing knowledge among peers via Facebook or Twitter can positively affect perceived usefulness and ease of use for any given educational application such as YouTube. Given this point, more learners will accept these systems if they find them useful since motivation also plays a part here too; thus showing that even those who were not motivated might still come around after some time which leads to another aspect of motivation – intrinsic vs extrinsic types...etc. In addition, this study provides a model that could act as the basis for further research into optimal adoption strategies within UAE higher education institutions.

Georgios Zachos et al., (2018) conducted a literature review on the effects of social media in higher education. They also considered the potential advantages for students learning including; enhanced backing, conversation, working together, and academic achievement, as well as student personality traits, learning styles, and use of social media as an online learning platform. However, the review has depicted that despite some positive impacts found in these areas educators and institutions have not tapped fully into how effective social media can be used

for educational purposes. The result is a lack of exploring more on this matter along with strategies to implement in the future.

Raymond Owusu Boateng and Afua Amankwaa (2016) conducted a study on social media in China. They aimed to find out if it has an impact on critical thinking skills among students. However, the results showed that there is a need for further research because these findings are not enough to connect social media with academic development.

Abu Elnasr E. Sobaih et al., (2016) examined how social media could be applied as a teaching and learning tool in the Egyptian tourism and hotel management programs. The lecturers recognized the importance of social media but they did not use it. Interviewees gave obstacles that are unique to developing countries. Nevertheless, there is agreement among many students that these problems can be solved and thus allow for more innovative uses of social media in education besides implications for both researchers and policymakers.

Waleed Mughed Al Rahmi and Mohd Shahizan Othman (2015) looked at how social media can be used as tools for collaborative learning; their focus was on the University of Teknologi Malaysia where they found out that through collaborative learning students are able to interact with peers better thereby leading into improved engagement levels among themselves even with instructors too which later translates into higher academic performance levels recorded by those concerned hence no wonder why some people say “social networks kill more birds than one stone” but still others may argue against this point citing lack of privacy...etc.

Waleed Mughed Al Rahmi and Mohd Shahizan Othman (2015) examined the role played by social media as a collaborative learning tool and its potential for enhancing academic performance at the University of Teknologi Malaysia. The findings made by these researchers indicate that collaborative learning positively influences the interaction with peers, lecturers as well as student engagement. It is these factors that result in an improved performance of students academically. The study therefore emphasizes the significance of social media in an academic setting.

Munienge Mbodila, Clever Ndebele and Kikunga Muhandj (2014) explored the influence of using Facebook on student learning in a South African university's Foundation course in Information Technology. The study revealed that students' collaboration and engagement were significantly boosted through using Facebook for academic purposes. Consequently, the authors concluded that this is an indication of how social media can be used as a means to improve student interaction and advised universities to utilize social media platforms in education.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study used a mixed-methods research design to explore the connection between social media behaviour and the attitudes of MBA students in Chennai, India. A structured questionnaire was designed using Microsoft Forms to gather data concerning social media habits, perceptions and impact on learning. The questionnaire targeted a population of 120 MBA students drawn from various institutions in Chennai where a convenient sampling method was used. Quantitative analysis was done using the SPSS program. Frequency and percentage (descriptive statistics) were used to analyze the general trend of using social media by participants. Also, inferential statistics like ANOVA and t-test were used to check for possible variations among habits as well as attitudes based on demographics or other factors. This mixed method provided an extensive understanding of how MBA students in Chennai use social media and its different influences on their learning process.

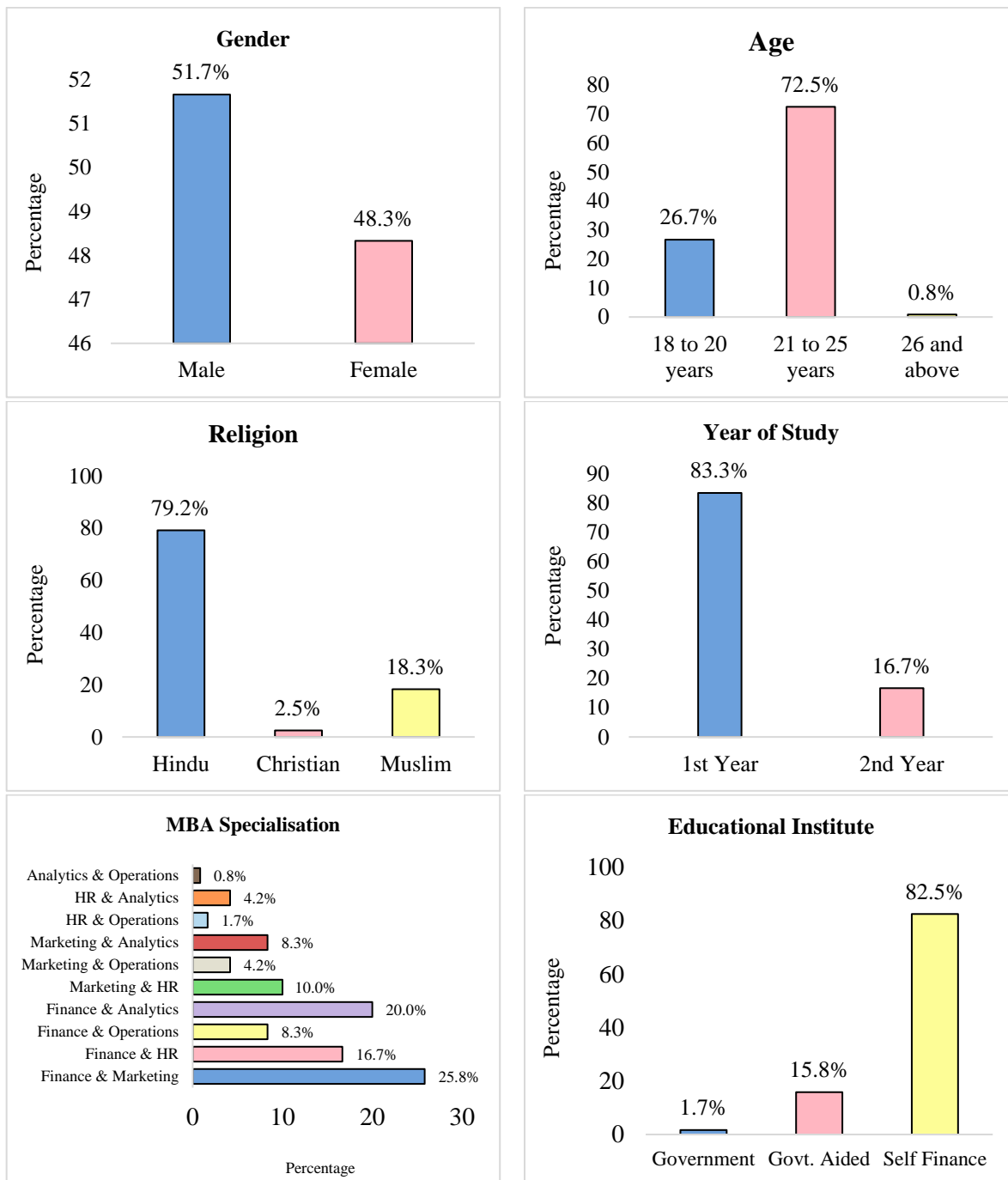
RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The demographic profile of the respondents is displayed in Table 1. The frequency analysis shows that the gender distribution is well-balanced (51.7% male, 48.3% female). Most participants fall within the 21-25 age bracket (72.5%), while there are fewer 18-20-year-olds (26.7%) and very few over age 25 (0.8%). The samples are largely composed of first-year students (83.3%). Hinduism is the most widely practised religion among them (79.2%), followed by Islam (18.3%) and Christianity (2.5%). Finance-related specialisations have gained popularity, with Finance & Marketing being the most preferred option (25.8%). Lastly, a majority of the respondents attend Self

Finance MBA institutes (82.5%), whereas smaller proportions come from Govt Aided (15.8%) and Government programs (1.7%).

Table 1: Demographic Profile of the Respondents

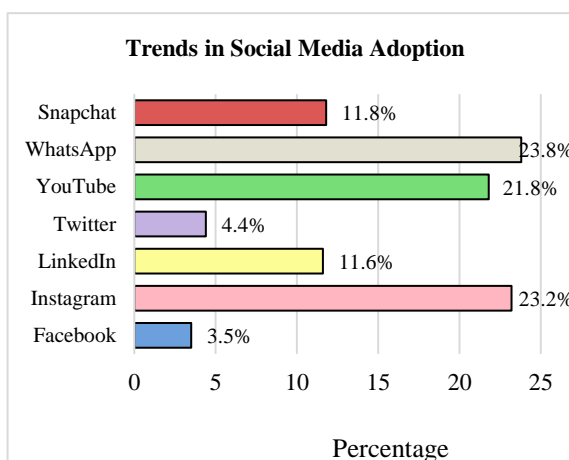
Description		Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	62	51.7
	Female	58	48.3
Age	18 to 20 years	32	26.7
	21 to 25 years	87	72.5
	26 and above	1	0.8
Religion	Hindu	95	79.2
	Christian	3	2.5
	Muslim	22	18.3
Year of Study	1 st Year	100	83.3
	2 nd Year	20	16.7
MBA Specialisation	Finance & Marketing	31	25.8
	Finance & HR	20	16.7
	Finance & Operations	10	8.3
	Finance & Analytics	24	20.0
	Marketing & HR	12	10.0
	Marketing & Operations	5	4.2
	Marketing & Analytics	10	8.3
	HR & Operations	2	1.7
	HR & Analytics	5	4.2
	Analytics & Operations	1	0.8
Educational Institute's Type	Government	2	1.7
	Govt. Aided	19	15.8
	Self-Finance	99	82.5



Social Media Apps Most Used by MBA Students are shown in Table 2. The most popular app is WhatsApp (23.8%); followed by Instagram (23.2%) and YouTube (21.8%). Facebook is the least common one with a few individuals, only (3.5%). In all probability, WhatsApp is the most favourite because it allows people to message each other, send voice notes, pictures, and videos for free; can be used on many different devices; and protects chats from unauthorized persons which helps the most for academic purposes. YouTube has a variety of videos including music, learning as well as funny clips among others which make it popular. For photos and videos, Instagram is ideal because it involves sharing knowledge with others easily either in images or video format. It also makes it interesting to use and hence more preferred by younger people in particular.

Table 2: Trends in Social Media Adoption

Description	Frequency	%
Facebook	42	3.5
Instagram	282	23.2
LinkedIn	141	11.6
Twitter	53	4.4
YouTube	265	21.8
WhatsApp	290	23.8
Snapchat	144	11.8
Total	1217	100.0



The duration of using social media is indicated in Table 3. A few new users (5%) who have used it for less than one year indicate the continued growth of the new adopters of social media. The majority are those who have been utilizing it for a period ranging from three to five years (36.7%) and more than five years (39.2%). This shows that much of our sample has some familiarity with social media indicating that it has become part of communicating and gathering information.

Table 3: Duration of Social Media Usage

Description	Frequency	%
< 1 Yr	6	5.0
1 to 3 Yrs	23	19.2
3 to 5 Yrs	44	36.7
> 5 Yrs	47	39.2
Total	120	100.0

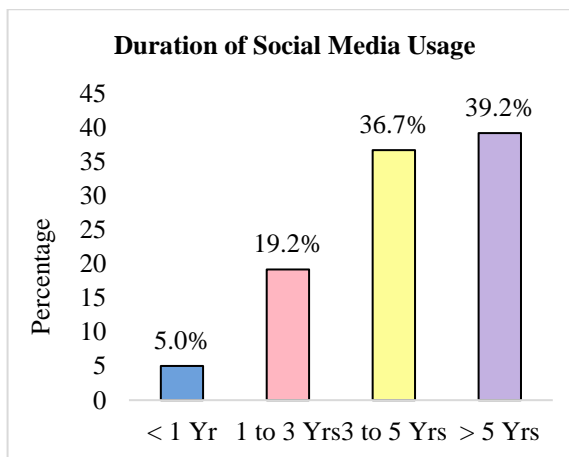


Table 4 is a revelation of the daily patterns that the people under survey have, in terms of their internet use. This frequency analysis result shows a wide variety of internet usage among people included in this sample. A few (7.5%) spend less than one hour daily online, while many others (39.2 %) dedicate between two and four hours per day to it. Also, some devoted even more time to such activities (21.7%) spent from four to five hours daily and (10.8%) went beyond five hours every day. As such it can be inferred that for some people, social media has an important place in their academics, social life, or free time.

Table 4: Average Daily Internet Usage Across All Activities

Description	Frequency	%
< 1 Hr	9	7.5
1 to 2 Hrs	25	20.8
2 to 4 Hrs	47	39.2
4 to 5 Hrs	26	21.7
> 5 Hrs	13	10.8
Total	120	100.0

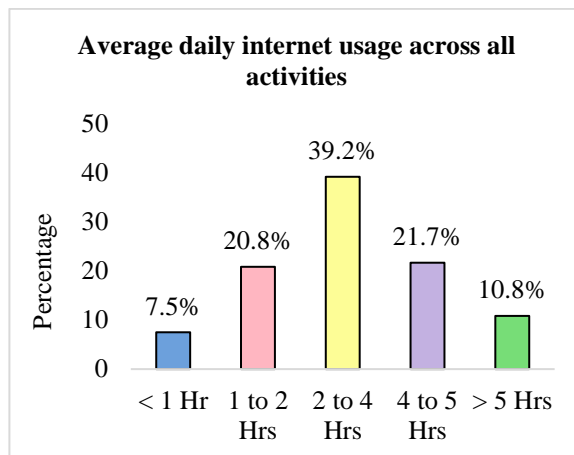


Table 5 shows the ANOVA test results which checked if there is a relationship between the primary devices that individuals mainly use for social media accessibility like PCs, smartphones, laptops, or tablets, and their age group. The outcome signifies that there is no significant relationship ($F=1.420$; $p=0.246$; $\alpha=0.05$). Consequently, it implies that people's age groups are not highly related to what they use as their primary device to use social media. However, this decision of the primary device may depend more on the specific use case for social media rather than age.

Table 5: ANOVA test on the Primary Device used for Social Media access and Age

	Age	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	F	Sig.
Primary Device	18 to 20 years	32	2.875	0.492	0.087	1.420	0.246
	21 to 25 years	87	2.989	0.241	0.026		
	26 and above	1	3.000				
	Total	120	2.958	0.328	0.030		

Table 6 shows the ANOVA test that was used to explore the relationship between age groups and hours spent by students on the Internet. According to the results, there is a significant relationship ($F=6.173$, $p=0.003$; $\alpha=0.05$). Thus, this implies that the mean daily internet usage time of individuals varies across different age categories. It might be due to their exposure; younger people have been brought up with computers at home leading them to use them more frequently for academics, communication, or entertainment purposes rather than older persons who are not tech-savvy enough because they did not grow up in such an era.

Table 6: ANOVA test on hours spent on the internet per day and age

	Age	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	F	Sig.
Hours spent on the Internet (Considering All Online Activities)	18 to 20 years	32	2.594	1.103	0.195	6.173	0.003
	21 to 25 years	87	3.230	1.008	0.108		
	26 and above	1	5.000				
	Total	120	3.075	1.078	0.098		

An ANOVA test was to determine if there is any relationship between a student's age bracket and his/her degree of agreement with the statement (It is a good idea to use social media for my coursework) in Table 7. No significant association is apparent from our findings ($F = 0.065$, $p = 0.937$; $\alpha=0.05$). Consequently, it can be said that students across different age groups have similar opinions about the usefulness of social media in their academic studies.

Table 7: ANOVA test on Perceptions of Social Media Impact on Academics and Age

	Age	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	F	Sig.
It is a good idea to use Social media for my coursework	18 to 20 years	32	1.969	1.031	0.182	0.065	0.937
	21 to 25 years	87	1.908	0.757	0.081		
	26 and above	1	2.000				
	Total	120	1.925	0.832	0.076		

The ANOVA outcomes of Table 8 show a significant difference in the final exam results which are based on the social media usage indications ($F = 3.454$, $p = 0.019$; $\alpha=0.05$). This suggests that there is an association between time spent on social media and academic performance. In addition, there can be several potential explanations for this relationship such as reduced study time because of using social media, distractions from social media or social media use that might indicate deeper problems (e.g., procrastination) and these negatively impact grades. Moreover, it may be likely that poor exam results could result in more use of social media as a coping strategy.

Table 8: ANOVA test on Last Exam Marks and Time Spend on Social Media

	Time Spend on Social Media	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	F	Sig.
Last Exam Marks	< 1 Hour	13	3.076	1.187	0.329	3.454	0.019
	1 to 2 Hours	37	2.243	0.983	0.161		
	2 to 3 Hours	64	2.203	0.839	0.104		
	> 3 Hours	6	2.666	1.211	0.494		
	Total	120	2.333	0.973	0.088		

The Perceived Impact of Social Media Use on Academic Performance based on Gender t-test results are shown in Table 9. It indicates that there is a notable difference between the way males and females view their academic performance with social media use ($t = 4.980$, $p= 0.028$; $\alpha=0.05$). More precisely, females seem to think that using social media has positive effects on their studies more than males do. One possible reason for this might be that females utilize online platforms as a means of establishing educational networks with other students who have similar interests or majors; likewise, they foster wider cooperation among themselves while working on different projects related to coursework besides gaining extra motivation from subject-specific groups they come across when browsing through various websites which mainly cater for educational purposes only.

Table 9: T-Test on Impact of Social Media Use on Academics based on Gender.

Using social media with classmates and teachers helps enhance my academic performance	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	t	Sig.
	Male	62	2.129	0.877	0.111	4.980	0.028
	Female	58	2.328	1.098	0.144		

CONCLUSION

Social media can be useful as it makes it easy for students to connect with each other and find out where they can learn from. Notwithstanding, it can also serve as a form of distraction hence leading to poor performance by those who spend most of their time using them. Interestingly, female students felt that social media helped them more in their studies than males did; this implies that we should not only prohibit its usage but instead guide teachers and schools towards making learners utilize this resource wisely and purposefully. In addition, they ought also to teach learners how to differentiate between false or true information found through these channels so that one may take advantage while avoiding pitfalls associated with such platforms for gaining knowledge. The results showed that females believed that using social media was beneficial for their education more than males thought which means banning it altogether would not be logical but rather enable institutions to incorporate online networking into curriculums strategically; also educators should provide skills necessary for verifying authenticity among various sources accessed via internet platforms like Whatsapp, Facebook, Instagram where news articles could easily be shared without proper verification methods thus leading many people astray if not careful enough about what they believe happened somewhere else based on what they saw posted by friends who were miles away from the scene.

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