

TO STUDY ON PURPOSE OF USING SOCIAL MEDIA IN DIFFERENT OPINION ABOUT THE CONSUMER

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Abstract

This study aims to explore the various purposes behind consumers' use of social media and to analyze how these purposes differ based on individual opinions and demographic factors. Social media platforms serve multiple functions, including entertainment, communication, information gathering, brand interaction, and online shopping. However, the reasons for using these platforms can vary widely among users, influenced by factors such as age, gender, lifestyle, and personal interests. By examining different consumer perspectives, this research seeks to identify patterns in social media usage and understand how consumers perceive the value and impact of these platforms in their daily lives. The findings of this study will provide valuable insights for marketers, businesses, and content creators to develop more targeted and effective social media strategies.

Keywords: Consumers, Individual, Entertainment, Communication, Information, Brand Interaction, and Online Shopping.

Introduction

Social media has become an essential part of everyday life, influencing how people communicate, access information, and interact with brands. Consumers use social media for various purposes, such as entertainment, staying connected, learning about products, and making purchasing decisions. However, the reasons for using social media can differ from person to person based on their age, background, lifestyle, and personal preferences. This study aims to understand these different consumer opinions and explore the main purposes behind social media usage from diverse perspectives.

Purpose of using social media

The primary purpose of using social media is to connect, communicate, and share information with others. It allows individuals to stay in touch with friends and family, discover news and trends, express opinions, and build online communities. Social media also serves as a platform for entertainment, self-promotion, education, and business activities. For consumers, it plays a key role in product discovery, brand interaction, and making informed purchasing decisions. Overall, social media fulfills both personal and professional needs, making it a powerful tool for engagement, expression, and information exchange.

The foundational purpose of social media is facilitating interpersonal communication and community building. According to boyd and Ellison (2007), early platforms like MySpace and Facebook were designed to help users "articulate and make visible their social networks."

Subsequent research (Ellison et al., 2007; Subrahmanyam et al., 2008) found that social media enhances both strong and weak social ties by supporting continuous contact.

- **Uses and Gratifications Theory** (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1973) has been applied to understand motivations for social media use, such as social interaction, entertainment, and information-seeking.

Identity Formation and Self-Presentation

Social media offers users tools for curating and projecting their identities. Goffman's (1959) theory of self-presentation has been widely used to analyze online behavior. Studies by Marwick and boyd (2011) suggest that users engage in "context collapse," where diverse audiences (friends, family, employers) complicate how individuals present themselves online.

- Instagram and TikTok, in particular, have been studied for their impact on youth identity and performativity (Tiggemann & Slater, 2014).

Commercial and Marketing Purposes

The monetization of attention has shifted social media from a purely social tool to a key driver in digital marketing. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) categorize social media types (e.g., blogs, content communities, social networks) and analyze their value in business communication. Influencer marketing has emerged as a major trend, where personal branding intersects with advertising (Abidin, 2016).

- Businesses use social media for branding, customer engagement, and targeted advertising (Mangold & Faulds, 2009).
- Social media platforms have rapidly evolved from simple tools for social interaction to multifunctional spaces serving diverse purposes such as personal expression, business marketing, education, and political engagement. Despite the widespread use of social media across various demographics, there remains a lack of clarity and consensus regarding its primary role in individuals' lives and in society at large. Users often engage with social media for multiple, overlapping reasons, which complicates efforts to understand its actual impact.
- Moreover, while some studies highlight the positive effects of social media—such as enhanced communication, access to information, and self-expression—others reveal concerning issues like mental health deterioration, misinformation, identity distortion, and data exploitation. This duality raises questions about whether the intended purposes of social media align with their real-world consequences.
- Here's a **sample "Statement of the Problem"** related to the **purpose of social media** that you can use or adapt for a research paper, thesis, or project proposal:

Statement of the Problem

Social media platforms have rapidly evolved from simple tools for social interaction to multifunctional spaces serving diverse purposes such as personal expression, business marketing, education, and political engagement. Despite the widespread use of social media across various demographics, there remains a lack of clarity and consensus regarding its

primary role in individuals' lives and in society at large. Users often engage with social media for multiple, overlapping reasons, which complicates efforts to understand its actual impact. Moreover, while some studies highlight the positive effects of social media—such as enhanced communication, access to information, and self-expression—others reveal concerning issues like mental health deterioration, misinformation, identity distortion, and data exploitation. This duality raises questions about whether the intended purposes of social media align with their real-world consequences.

Table: 1PURPOSE OF USING SOCIAL MEDIA

S l. n o	Purpose of using	Age group of the Respondents									
		Adolescence (13-20) (148)		Young adult-hood (20-35) (126)		Middle adult-hood (35-50) (102)		Late adult-hood (50-65) (99)		Total number of respondents	Rank
		Number of respondents	Rank	Number of respondents	Rank	Number of respondents	Rank	Number of Respondents	Rank		
1	To share Opinion	14 (9.45)	VII	45 (35.71)	IV	38 (37.25)	IV	24 (24.24)	III	121 (25.47)	V
2	Know National issues and Sports	71 (47.97)	II	82 (65.08)	II	64 (62.74)	II	42 (42.42)	II	259 (54.52)	II
3	To make online purchases	42 (28.38)	IV	68 (53.97)	III	39 (38.23)	III	18 (18.18)	V	167 (35.16)	III
4.	To view advertisement	18 (12.16)	VI	13 (10.32)	VII	6 (5.88)	VII	5 (5.05)	VII	42 (8.84)	VII
5	Entertainment	117 (79.05)	I	98 (77.77)	I	72 (70.58)	I	67 (67.67)	I	354 (74.53)	I
6	Maintain Relationship with family and friends	22 (14.86)	V	39 (30.95)	VI	21 (20.58)	V	24 (24.24)	III	106 (22.5)	VI
7	Academic purpose	59 (39.86)	III	42 (33.33)	V	21 (20.58)	V	15 (15.15)	VI	137 (28.84)	IV
8	Target audience	5 (3.37)	VII	6 (4.76)	VII	3 (2.94)	VII	2 (2.02)	VIII	16 (3.37)	VII

Source: Computerized from primary data

The main purpose for using Social Media is for Entertainment with 74.53 per cent, the next being to know national issues and sports with 54.52 per cent and the third main purpose is for being through online with 35.16 per cent. Irrespective of age, all the respondents give preference to entertainment. One interesting fact is Late adulthood respondents give 'second' rank to the purpose to maintain relationship with family and friends. It is known from the table all age groups except late adulthood, gives higher weightage for buying online goods.

Suggestions

1. For Users (General Public)

Purpose:

- **Engagement:** To keep users active and returning by showing content they're likely to enjoy.
- **Personalization:** To tailor the feed, ads, and recommendations based on behavior, interests, or interactions.
- **Discovery:** To help users find new people, communities, trends, or content.
- **Convenience:** To reduce the effort required to search or explore topics manually.

Examples:

- Instagram suggesting reels based on what you've watched.
- Twitter/X suggesting accounts you might follow.
- TikTok's "For You Page" adapting to your interests.

2. For Businesses and Marketers

Purpose:

- **Targeted Marketing:** Reach the right audience with the right message.
- **Customer Insights:** Understand audience behavior and preferences through social listening and analytics.
- **Brand Awareness:** Promote visibility by appearing in users' suggestions or trending topics.
- **Content Strategy:** Identify what content performs well and optimize accordingly.

Examples:

- Using Facebook Audience Insights to tailor ad campaigns.
- Monitoring sentiment about a product via social media analytics tools.

3. For Social Media Platforms

Purpose:

- **User Retention:** Keeping users engaged so they spend more time on the platform.
- **Ad Revenue Optimization:** More personalized suggestions = better ad targeting = more ad clicks.
- **Network Growth:** Encouraging users to connect, follow, or join groups to increase platform activity.

Examples:

- LinkedIn suggesting connections based on your job title or company.
- YouTube recommending videos to increase watch time and ad exposure.

4. Ethical or Social Considerations

Purpose (or concerns):

- **Influence Behavior:** Sometimes platforms nudge users toward content that can shape opinions, positively or negatively.
- **Combat Misinformation:** Suggesting fact-checked or reliable sources to prevent the spread of fake news.
- **Promote Well-being:** Suggesting mental health resources or limiting harmful content.

Examples:

- Instagram providing eating disorder support when users search for triggering terms.
- YouTube limiting recommendations of conspiracy theory content.

Conclusion

The primary purpose of social media–related information and suggestions is to enhance user engagement, personalize content, and improve overall user experience. By analyzing user behaviour, preferences, and interactions, social media platforms can recommend relevant posts, friends, groups, or advertisements that align with individual interests. These suggestions not only help users discover new content more efficiently but also support businesses in reaching targeted audiences and increasing brand visibility. Furthermore, platforms use this information to maintain user retention and generate revenue through targeted advertising. In conclusion, social media suggestions serve as a strategic tool that benefits both users and platforms by creating a more engaging, personalized, and commercially effective online environment.

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