Sociological Perspectives of Social Media, Expression, and Opinions: An Empirical Evidence

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Abstract: This study examines the association between social media and new styles in the expression of opinion among students at Dhaka International University. Data were collected from 100 students from four departments of the university using a structured questionnaire. The study found that social media has become increasingly popular among students because it allows them to express their opinions freely and quickly. The study also explored the negative aspects and potential benefits of social media use. On the negative side, the study found that social media can contribute to the flourishing of foreign cultures among students, which can lead to new styles in expression of opinion that may be at odds with traditional values. On the positive side, the study found that social media can be used to attain knowledge, promote education, and facilitate social movements.

Keywords: Social-media, quantitative method, potential benefits, cognitive development

Introduction

The developed world, including Bangladesh, has recognized the significance of social media as a crucial communication channel. Without a shadow of a question, social media has become an indispensable component of the lives of the vast majority of people, particularly the younger generations. In point of fact, people use social media not just for communication but also for a variety of other reasons in today's world; nonetheless, the primary reason people use social media is to express their opinions (Kramer, 2011).

The rise of social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Messenger, Imo, WhatsApp, and YouTube, amongst others, has resulted in the emergence of a novel mode of opinion expression that did not exist in earlier eras. This study was conducted on 100 students in some selected departments of Dhaka International University which all of them use social media more than one type and have availability of internet connection. Most of them use it for more than 3 hours. All of them have a Facebook account (Amedie, 2015).

Watching mainstream media, one would get the feeling that the public has accepted the idea that social media has an effect on people's beliefs and actions. Additionally, there is a wealth of marketing and

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behavioral literature that has thus far concentrated on retrospectively analyzing data regarding social media's impact on consumers' purchasing decisions (Baird & Parasnis, 2011; Lee & Oh, 2017).

The eight sections of this study are as following introduction, the Sociological significance of the study and objectives of the paper are discussed in the second and third section respectively, while the objectives is presented in the fourth. The following sections provide a systematic breakdown of the study's Background of the Study, background of the study, methodology, results and discussion, discussion of the Findings, and final thoughts.

Sociological significance of the study
The study of social media and new style in expression of opinion is one of the most important areas of interest in sociological research. Sociological research extensively deals with the lifestyle of people, new style of expression of opinion, freedom of speech. This new style of expression is influenced by globalization, urbanization, modernization liberalization, westernization, commercialization, corporatization and marketization, industrialization. These kind of globalization, urbanization, modernization liberalization, westernization, commercialization, corporatization and marketization, industrialization are spreading and disseminating through social media. Foreign culture (Indian serial, Hindi serial, movie) plays role in making new style in expression of opinion. These all are the major discussion of sociology which have been discussed in this study.

The phenomena of social media are one of great significance. It is mostly related to Globalization and technology. Sociology of Globalization which major aspect is social media because globalization is disseminated through social media is a distinct discipline in sociology.

Socio economic status including culture, economy, power, lifestyle, educational background and other aspects such as social movement, crime, depression also cover a vast area of sociology which also have been discussed here. Inequality, discrimination based on access to social media are also key point in sociology.

Beside these, this study has been conducted by using various sociological perspectives including functionalism Conflict, globalization, modernization, dependency theories of social media.

Objectives of the Study
Some major objectives of the study are:

- To investigate the nature of social media.
- To explore the way of expression of students through social media.
- To find out the impact of this new style of expression of opinion on students.

Background of the Study
Social media are one of the most important inventions of 21th century. It is abundantly clear that the significance of social media in our everyday lives is growing at an exponential rate, and it is even capable of serving as a driving force behind global movements. Unavoidably, it will have an influence on people as individuals, particularly students. 21th century is moving ahead with tremendous technological upgrading and innovative things, where people were unable to talk, meet and see in far areas.

Social networking sites are online internet based social media where people can communicate with each other and express their opinion they want. Social media are Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, Twitter, LinkedIn, Snapchat, Messenger, Skype etc. which sties help students to share information, like the updates, comment on status or updates, online discussion and chatting for expressing their opinion that was not available in previous time and period when these social were not invented. In Bangladesh

there is increasing trend of using Facebook, people from rural areas to highly profiled people share the same social network and can express their opinion easily and raise their voice through social media. The speed of internet has changed the way people receive the information. Many people who have access to the Internet at school, home and at work place use the Internet for the purpose of recreation, r doing research or education, sending and receiving mail etc. All are the part of expression of opinion. Social media now creates a new style in expression of expression as these media are not seen before and this new style of expression of opinion was not possible. People especially students can easily express and share their thought and idea through social media.

Through social media, individuals can utilize connections of online friends and group membership to stay in touch with current friends, reconnect with past friends, or create real-life friendships based on shared interests or membership in groups.

By joining groups and forums, members of social media can share their interests with other users who share the same passions, in addition to establishing essential social relationships. Personalizing their profile page to reflect their individuality allows members to convey themselves with ease. Evidently, the significance of social media in our daily lives is growing exponentially, and social media can even lead global movements. It will undoubtedly have an effect on individuals, particularly students. The video section of YouTube also helps to express their opinion that is now a new style of expression of opinion through social media.

These impacts specially on the students is significant. This new style in expression of opinion is also influenced by foreign culture that are disseminated through social media widely especially in Bangladesh and affect the students very significantly.

Literature Review
A literature review is an integral and indispensable element of the research process. The evaluation of the literature enables the scholar to formulate the problem in terms of particular elements of the broader field of study. It allowed us to become acquainted with the topic and methodology of the research. Researchers conduct a literature review based on their particular areas of interest. They organize the literature review according to their research methodology. Here, in this study the intended to organize my literatures according to the issues raised in the literatures.

SJ (2020) investigated young online perceptions. The investigation found three themes. Start vowless-exciting and growing, freedom, power, and connection. Third, virtual partnerships explore self and identities. Youth who use the internet multitask, he found. They played games, hosted conversations, made magazines, designed their website, researched, acted politically, and communicated with pals. All these online activities excite and deepen relationships. Online, teens felt calm and liberated. Online space connected them and allowed them to share interests with peers. Personal space assist's identity search. She said young people found a home in social media because they could express themselves differently. The survey found teen answers differed online and in person. On the ground, they assumed they lied. They could speak freely online. Internet exposed digital life's many truths. No one considers the digital self-fixed. Digital identities developed and emerged.

Lee (2014) examined a study links Facebook use to demonstrations. In another route study, Facebook does not affect protest participation. Facebook promoted political expression and news consumption, fueling protests. After accidental Facebook news exposure, political viewpoints were not posted. Cheap smartphones and tablets enable online communication. Many communicate via social media. Celebraters are happy. When angry or excited, they post on social media. Young people post online. It accommodates individual and generational demands modestly. Knowledge sharing on social media is great, but not for meaningful relationships. Teens communicate on social media. Young adults use Facebook, Myspace, WhatsApp, etc. Many uses rely on age and experience. Younger users prioritize

tastes, interests, and personal preferences, whereas older users prioritize friends and social group messages. Social media enable chatter. College students communicate with old and new peers their age, academic interests, and vocations on social media. It goes beyond linking them online to discuss, debate, publish photos and videos, and do online banking and commerce.

Van Dijck (2013) found social media allowed self-expression, representation, and marketing, according to. Online users utilize social media for several objectives and have changed their presentation techniques as platforms have evolved. Social media platforms like Facebook were initially used for self-expression and friendship. Users learned the skill of online self-presentation and the value of social media for self-promotion. Social media like Facebook and LinkedIn have elevated 'mass self-communication' They influenced users to reveal personal information knowingly and unconsciously. They require several self-stories about different aspects of their identities for a limited audience. The new Facebook layout carefully integrates self-expression and self-communication into one interface.

Shafie & Osman (2012) examined how Malaysian university students used Facebook profiles, photos, nicknames, and languages to create online identities. The study found that social media gave users plenty of possibilities to build their online persona through profile photographs and nicknames that matched peer perception. The study revealed that boys were more comfortable using their personal identities online because they were comfortable presenting themselves. Girls loved catchy, innovative, and appealing names. These innovative names were seen as more entertaining because they change online and offline personas.

Mesch (2009) explored the phenomenon of Internet culture, which encompasses the analysis of various aspects such as consumption patterns, content production, online communication, social interaction, expression, and identity formation. This study aims to understand how these activities are established and maintained within the digital social space, and emphasizes that Internet culture can be considered as a distinct social realm. This literature review compiles findings from several studies that have explored the effects of allowing users a safe online environment in which to express themselves freely.

Siibak (2009) examined how young people use social media photos to define themselves. Young folks used social media to make friends and gain approval. They were compelled by friends with social media profiles or by a desire to make new friends and possibly date. This study found that young individuals carefully choose photographs for their social media pages. The survey found that young people failed to make a good impression on a broad audience. However, we could only treat positive perceptions by assuming what others anticipate from us. They chose photographs from an adult's perspective to improve their self-image. The images they chose showed crucial moments in their lives, their personalities, or photos with important people to create an ideal self.

Mazalin & Moore (2004) examined the association between internet use and wellness factors such social relationship-identity and social anxiety in young adults, which are crucial for their development. Increased internet use has been associated to decreased social network and familial communication, as well as depression and loneliness. Loneliness is the subjective feeling of emptiness caused by the absence of close relationships. Due to excessive online activity, people are physically isolated from their friends, causing a loss of intimacy. Social worries, identity status, and internet use are linked, with men using the internet more than women. Internet use was connected to higher social anxiety and less mature identity statuses among men. Internet use and social anxiety in women were not correlated.

McLuhan (1964) explored the cultural impact of media events. McLuhan sees media as an extension of the body, like a telescope and camera for sight. Tech changes how we perceive and communicate, but also who we are. Preliterate people used their senses...mainly hearing. Readers interacted with books and reality. Unliterate people are assaulted with cultural expressions in random sequence. Myths, images, and symbols evoke these sentiments. Read words, literati experience culture. Words must be

linked rationally and cannot replace real objects. Literati culture may die. Electronic media change the world, claims McLuhan. Future 'post literate' era. TV diminishes literacy. Eyes and ears are needed. Viewers must actively engage with its non-sequential, illogical impressions. The characters—real people from around the world—engage TV viewers. Televisions, phones, and tape recorders link people globally. Myths and symbols trumped logic and rigorous thinking in post-literate humans.

Methodology of the Study

Sampling, Study Area and Data Collection

A quantitative approach was followed in this study to collect primary data. Surveys are the main tool for data collection. This study covers the four (4) departments of Dhaka International University. Data were collected from 100 respondents (students). The target groups for primary sources of information are the students of Dhaka International University's four departments as a purposive sample. All the students use multiple types of social media; this sample consists of both undergraduate and graduate and postgraduate students living in those departments of Dhaka International University. The sample size was 100 respondents. Then, using random sampling, select students. For collecting data, a standardized questionnaire consisting of both open-ended and closed-ended questions were used. The data collecting period spanned from June 2023 to July 2023.

Table 1: Sampling Design of the Study

Name of Departments	Number
Dept. of Sociology	25
Dept. of English	25
Dept. of Civil	25
Dept. of Pharmacy	25

Source: Field Survey 2023

Results and Discussion
Demographic profile of the respondents
This study covers four departments at Dhaka International University. All students use multiple types of social media; this sample consists of both undergraduate and graduate and postgraduate students living in those departments of Dhaka International University. The sample size was 100 people from the Sociology, English, Civil, and Pharmacy departments. The majority of respondents were between the ages of 21 and 23. By the table 2 the demographic profile of the students is given below:

Table 2: Demographic profile of the respondents

Categories	Sub categories	Respondents		Total
Age of the respondents	18-20 years	3		100
	2 1-23 years	84		
	24-26 years	13		
Sex	Male	50		100
	Female	50		
Departments	Dept. of Sociology	25	50	100
	Dept. of English	25		

	Dept. of Pharmacy	25	50	
	Dept. of Civil	25		
Educational status	Under graduate	72		100
	Graduate	28		
Current cgpa	Below 3.00	1		100
	3.00-3.24	36		
	3.25-3.49	49		
	3.50-3.75	14		
User of social media	Male	50		100
	Female	50		

Source: Field Survey 2023
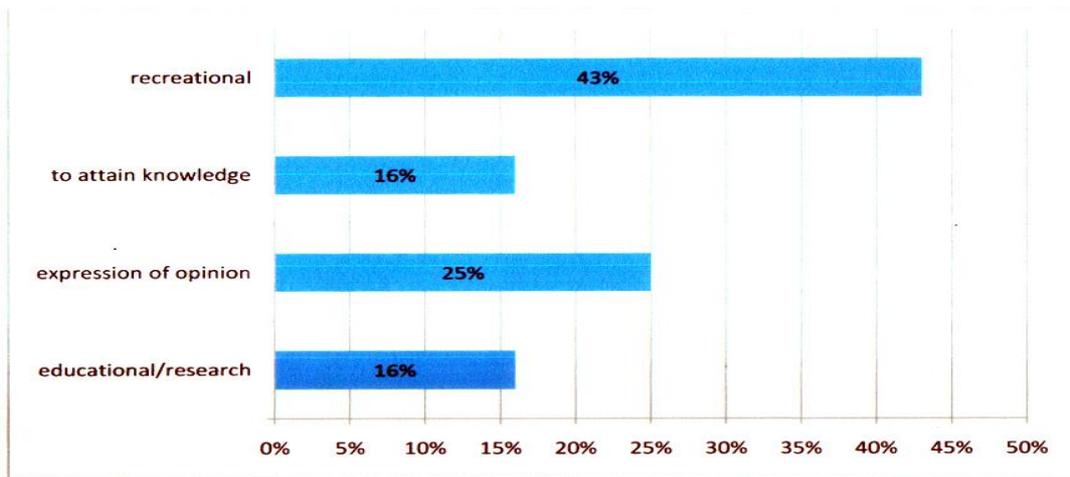
Purpose of using social media most

Figure 1: Purpose of using social media most

Source: Field Survey 2023

The findings indicate that 43% of individuals employ social media platforms for recreational purposes, while 16% utilize them to acquire knowledge. Additionally, 25% of users employ social media as a means to express their opinions, and another 16% employ it for educational or research-related objectives.

Recreation emerges as the predominant purpose for students' utilization of social media platforms. This phenomenon can be attributed to the availability of several recreational opportunities on social media platforms, including video consumption, gaming, and socializing with acquaintances and relatives.

The findings indicate that students employ social media platforms in diverse manners, encompassing both advantageous and detrimental aspects. It is imperative for educators and parents to possess an understanding of the diverse methods through which children engage with social media platforms, and to actively facilitate their utilization in a manner that prioritizes safety and responsibility.
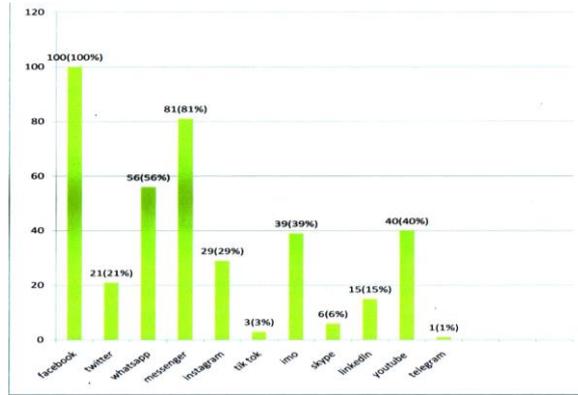
Type of using social media among respondents

Figure 2: Type of using social media among respondents

Source: Field Survey 2023

A recent survey of students found that all of the respondents used more than one social media platform at a time. The most popular platform was Facebook, which was used by 100% of the respondents. Other popular platforms included WhatsApp (56%), Messenger (81%), Instagram (29%), and YouTube (40%).

This study also found that a significant number of students were using social media for educational and professional purposes. For example, 15% of the respondents used LinkedIn, which is a platform for professional networking. This suggests that students are becoming more aware of the potential benefits of using social media for their careers.

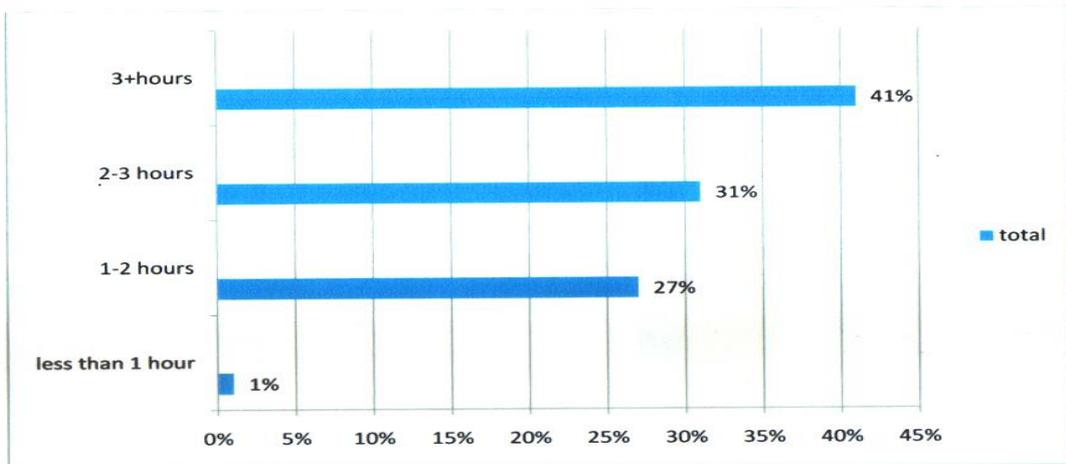**Respondents spending time on social media (Daily)**

Figure 3: Respondents spending time on social media (Daily)

Source: Field Survey 2023

This study found that 41% of internet users spend more than three hours per day online. This is a considerable quantity of time, which raises the question of whether or not students spend too much time online.

Utilizing the Internet has a variety of potential advantages. Students can, for instance, use the internet to access educational resources, collaborate with peers on assignments, and gain knowledge of current events. Internet addiction, cyberbullying, and online predators are a few of the potential dangers associated with excessive Internet use.

Opinion on social media working as a new style in expression

Table 3: Opinion on social media working as a new style in expression

Categories	Number	Percentage
Yes	75	75
No	1	1
Maybe	24	24
Total	100	100

Source: Field Survey 2023

The data from the table above reveals that 75 percent of students agree that social media represents a new way of expressing one's opinions, while only 1 percent of students disagree.

Expressing opinion through social

Table 4: Expressing opinion through social

Categories	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	50	50
No	10	10
Sometimes	40	40
Total	100	100

Source: Field Survey 2023

Table 4 shows that, of the 100 respondents, 50 (50%) express their opinions through social media, 10 (10%) do not express their opinions through social media, and 40 (40%) sometimes express their opinions through social media.

This suggests that a majority of respondents use social media to express their opinions. It is also worth noting that a significant number of respondents sometimes express their opinions through social media, which suggests that they may be hesitant to do so all the time.

There are a number of reasons why people might choose to express their opinions through social media. For example, social media can provide a platform for people to share their thoughts and ideas with a large audience, and it can also connect people with others who share their views. Nevertheless, it is crucial to acknowledge that social media platforms can serve as fertile grounds for the dissemination of false information and the propagation of hate speech. Therefore, it is imperative to exercise discernment and scepticism while engaging with content encountered on social media.

Type of opinion that respondents wanted to express in social

<p align="center">Table 5: Type of opinion expressing in social</p>

What type of opinion do you express through social media?	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
	Political	12	13.5
	Educational	16	18
	Societal	21	23.6
	Recreational	22	24.7
	Ideological	18	20.2
	Total	89	100

<p align="center">Source: Field Survey 2023</p>

In this study of 89 respondents found that the most common types of opinions expressed on social media are recreational (24.7%), societal (23.6%), ideological (20.2%), political (13.5%), and educational (18%).

Recreational opinions are those that are shared for entertainment or amusement, such as opinions about movies, TV shows, music, and sports. Societal opinions are those that are about social and political issues, such as opinions about climate change, racial justice, and gender equality. Ideological opinions are those that are about personal beliefs and values, such as opinions about religion, morality, and philosophy. Political opinions are those that are about government and politics, such as opinions about candidates and policies. Educational opinions are those that are about teaching and learning, such as opinions about schools and curricula.

These results suggest that social media is a platform for a wide range of different types of opinions. This is both a positive and a negative thing. On the one hand, it is positive that people have a platform to share their opinions and to connect with others who share their views. On the other hand, it is negative that social media can also be used to spread misinformation and hate speech.
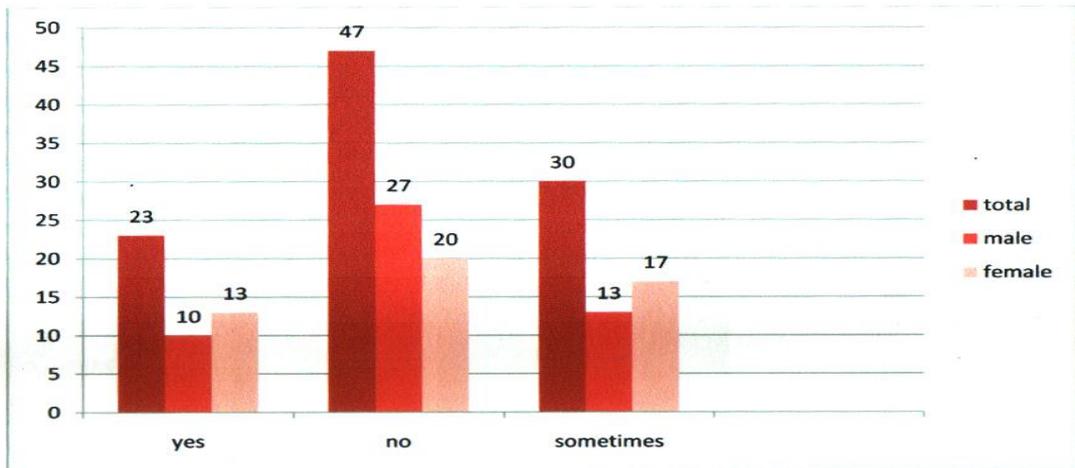
Believe the news spread through social media

<p align="center">Figure 4: Believe the news spread through social media</p>

Source: Field Survey 2023

The graphic shows interesting student views on social media content. It shows that 23% of pupils trust anything they see online. We find a gender-based nuance in this group: 10% of male and 13% of female students.

Conversely, 47% of respondents are distrustful of social media content. A closer look shows that 27% of male students and 20% of female students are doubtful.

Most noteworthy is the 30% of respondents who say they trust social media content conditionally. This category includes 20% of male and 23% of female students who occasionally believe these outlets' content.

These findings illuminate how students traverse social media's immense sea of information by revealing the intricate relationship between trust, skepticism, and gender in the digital era.

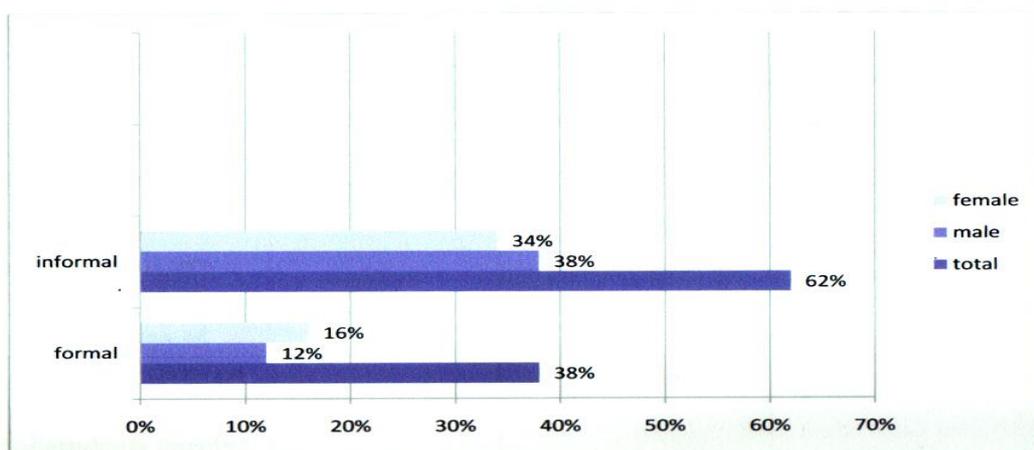**Language usually used for expressing opinions through social media**

Figure 5: Language usually used for expressing opinions through social media

Source: Field Survey 2023

Above chart shows that 62 % students use informal language for expressing opinion in social media of which 38% are male and 34% are female students, 38% of respondents use formal language of which 12% are male and 16% are female students.

Effect of social media on the respondents

Table 6: Effect of social media on the respondents

How does the new way of expressing opinions that is made possible by social media effect students in particular?	Category	Frequency	Percentage
	Positive	58	58
	Negative	42	42
	Total	N=100	=100

Source: Field Survey 2023

The table shows that 58% answered social media positively affected the students and 42% answered it negatively affected the students mostly.

Social media expression of opinion enables the students to increase their knowledge

Table 7: opinion enables the students to increase their knowledge

Is it possible for the respondents to get more information by using this novel method of expressing their opinions?	Category	Frequency	Percentage
	Yes	51	51
	No	8	8
	May be	41	41%
	Total	100	100

The above table shows that 51% of respondents think this new style of expression of opinion through social media enables the students to increase their knowledge; 8% do not think that; and 41% think it may enable the students to increase their knowledge.

Role of social media on social movement

Table 8: Role of social media on social movement

Do social media play important role in social movement?	Categories	Frequency	Percentage (%)
	Yes	79	79
	No	0	0
	Maybe	21	21
	Total	100	100

Source: Field Survey 2023

In that study found that 79% believe that the new style of expression of opinion through social media plays a vital role in social movements. No respondent disagreed with this statement, and 21% were unsure.

This study showed that there is a strong consensus among respondents about the importance of social media in social movements. Social media can be used to raise awareness of important issues, to mobilize people for action, and to build communities of support.

Here are some specific examples of how social media has been used to support social movements:

- The upheavals of the Arab Spring in 2011 were predominantly orchestrated and synchronized via social media platforms (Noueihed & Warren, 2012).
- The Black Lives Matter movement has effectively utilized social media platforms as a means to generate public consciousness on instances of police brutality and racial inequity (Lindsey, 2015).
- The #MeToo campaign has utilized social media platforms as a means to amplify the voices of individuals who have experienced sexual assault (Tuttle, 2020).

Social media possesses considerable potential as a tool for amplifying the voices of underrepresented communities and contesting prevailing norms and values. Social media has emerged as a crucial instrument for social movements, and its influence is anticipated to persist as a prominent catalyst for societal transformation in the foreseeable future.

Foreign culture creating new style of expression of opinion

Table 9: Foreign culture creating new style of expression of opinion

Do you think foreign culture (Indian serials, western serials, movies) plays an important role in creating a new style of expression of opinion through social media?	Category	Frequency	Percentage
	Yes	90	90
	No	1	10
	Total	100	100

Source: Field Survey 2023

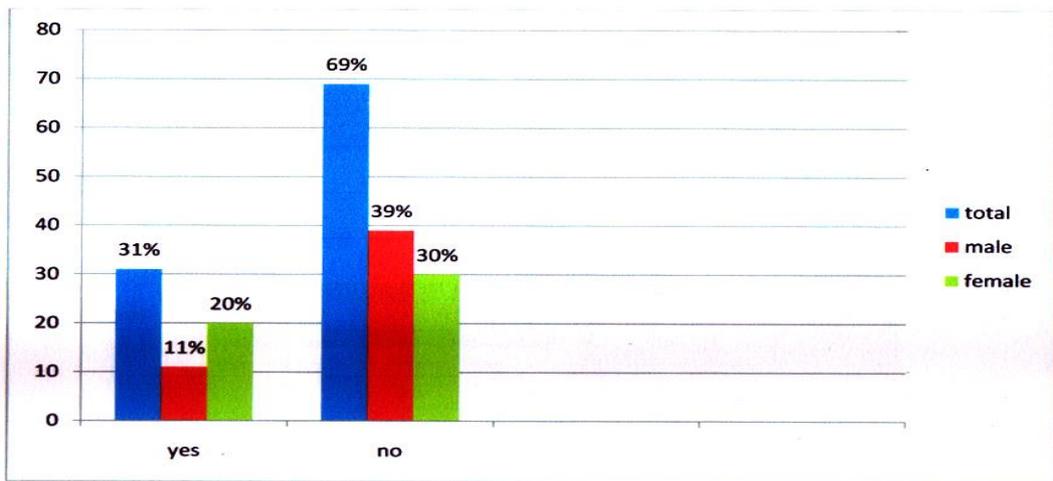**Victims of cyberbullying among the respondents**

Figure 6: Victims of cyberbullying
Source: Field Survey 2023

Above chart shows that 31% students are the victim of cyber bullying through social media of which 11% are male and 20% are female students, 69% of respondents aren't the victim of cyber bullying of which 39% are male and 30% are female students.

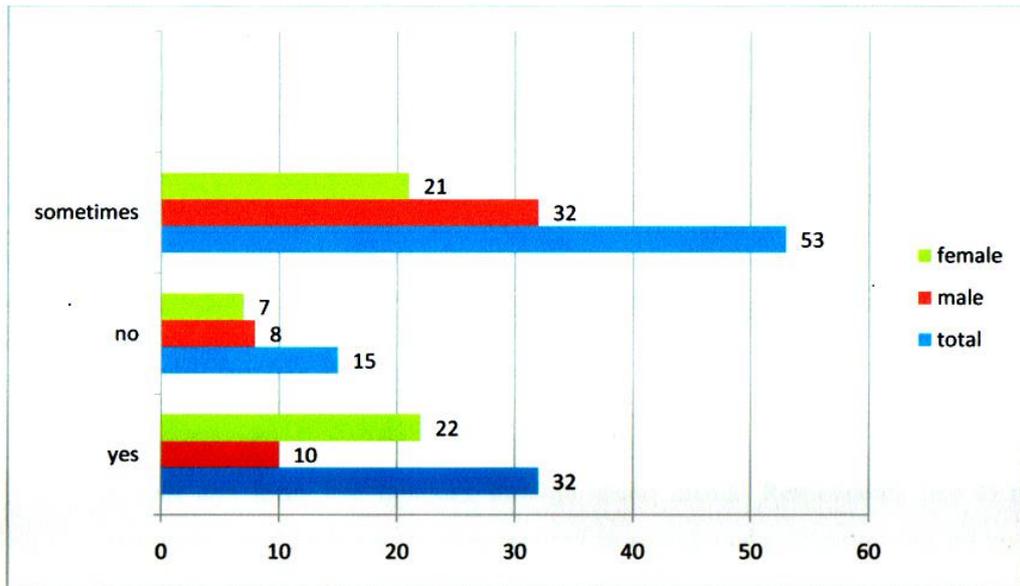**Feel the physical and psychological stress due to social media usage among the students**

Figure 7: Students physical and mental stress is caused by the use of social media.
Source: Field Survey 2023

According to the findings of this study, a significant proportion of participants, specifically 32%, reported experiencing a considerable degree of physical and psychological stress as a result of their engagement with social media. Further analysis revealed that this stress level was reported by 22% of female participants and 10% of male participants. A total of 7% of the participants reported not experiencing this particular degree of stress, with 8% of male participants and 7% of female participants belonging to this subgroup. The remaining 53% of participants occasionally experience a significant degree of stress as a result of their engagement with social media, with 32% of male participants and 21% of female participants experiencing such stress levels.

The results of this study indicate that the utilization of social media platforms can exert a notable adverse influence on the levels of stress experienced by students, with a specific emphasis on female students.

Discussion of the Findings

Social media include online platforms and software programs specifically created to facilitate the rapid, efficient, and instantaneous sharing of digital content among individuals.

All respondents have the availability of internet connection and all use different kinds of social media for expressing different kinds of opinion such as educational, political, societal etc. All of the respondents use Facebook especially for the purpose of expressing opinion through social media. Some Impact of social media and new style in expression of opinion:

Positive Impact:
- Social media contribute significantly to education.58% of respondents believe social media and new forms of expression have a positive impact on education. Social media can provide

students with access to a wealth of educational resources, such as articles, videos, and podcasts.

- Social media contribute significantly to social movements
- Social media creates a new form of expression;
- Social media can help students to develop their critical thinking skills by exposing them to different perspectives and viewpoints.
- Social media platforms offer students an opportunity to enhance their communication abilities by serving as a medium for the expression of their thoughts and ideas.

Negative Impact:
- Social media can be addictive and can lead to students spending too much time online.
- Social media platforms can foster cyberbullying, harassment, and other forms of online abuse.
- Social media can expose students to misinformation, hate speech, and other harmful content.
- Social media can be used to spread viruses and malware.

In this study it is also found that, the respondents usually use informal language for expressing their opinion through social media, and the respondent also waste a huge part of time by browsing their social media account.

Conclusion

Social media has become an integral part of the lives of students, and it plays a significant role in their education, collaboration, and professional development. Educational institutions are embracing social media to make group discussions on various topics, to provide support for learning, and to facilitate communication with families. Facebook is the most popular social media platform used by educational institutions.

In addition to its educational benefits, social media can also be used for business, reading global journals, and getting the latest news and information. However, social media also has a number of detrimental effects, such as cyberbullying, data theft, viruses, and cybercrime. One of the most dangerous aspects of social media is that people can claim to be someone they are not, which can be deceptive and harmful. Social media can be a valuable tool for students, but it is important to use it responsibly.

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