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MEDIA 2025

Multimedia Envisioning:
Digitalization, Innovation
and Adaptation



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**Department of Multimedia and
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Editors Message ...

There has been tremendous increase in institutions of higher education in India. Indian universities should concentrate more on providing quality education which is comparable to that of international standards. India is today one of the fastest developing countries of the world. In order to see India as a developed country, there is need to increase the number of institutes and also the quality of higher education in India. Education however, should not be considered a business but its quality should be maintained. For this purpose it is necessary that the policies formed by the government should be properly implemented. We are moving towards an era which would be defined by the parameters of knowledge and wisdom. The decisions that are going to be taken on these are likely to hold the key to India's future as a center of knowledge production. We need higher educated people who are skilled and who can drive our economy forward. When India can provide skilled people to the outside world then we can transfer our country from a developing nation to a developed nation very easily and quickly. We need an educational system that is modern, liberal and can adapt to the changing needs of a changing society, a changing economy and a changing world. For such educational system along with science and technology it must increase studies and research on basic knowledge, social science and other humanities subject from a practical point of view.

In the present scenario education is the main instrument for the desirable social change. It is pass on to the next generations to be gradual changes as to update by timely and a sound social progress is need to be careful observation. The higher education is needed to be developing as individual by imparting it, as well as it can be render the service to the society in many aspects by alteration the science and technology also in social life.

Higher education is mostly intend to innovation, intervention sometimes it is destroy the basic nature of the society as it know the primitive culture, but so far opinion is that there is need to be more concentrate to conserve the basic roots of the society and in equity mode to access all provisions to all of the them in the society by keeping with view of sustainable development in all aspects because it is too important give the same to next generation.

- Dr. Bapug Gholap

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Youtube: A Digital Safe Space for Queer Narratives in India

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1. Abstract:

Queer narratives in Indian media have historically faced systemic censorship, societal repudiation, and institutional barriers, limiting the representation of lived experiences. This study investigates YouTube as a digital safe space for the queer community in India, focusing on the Lotus Visual Production channel and its short films TAPS and Halfway. Employing qualitative content analysis, the study examines how these films explore mundane relationship dynamics, queer desire, and intimacy, offering relatable representations to Indian queer audiences. The research highlights how YouTube circumvents the restrictive practices of the Central Board for Film Certification (CBFC), providing creative freedom and a platform for queer storytellers. Viewer engagement with these short films demonstrates that queer narratives resonate beyond the LGBTQ+ community, challenging the misconception that such content appeals only to a niche audience. Findings suggest that YouTube functions as both a representational and educational space, enabling queer individuals to safely explore, express, and normalize their experiences.

Keywords:

Queer narratives, Digital safe space, YouTube, Indian media

2. Introduction:

D A. Miller in his research paper 'Secret Subjects, Open Secrets' (1985) writes about the book David Copperfield and in the discussions experiments with the analogy of 'putting in a box' for its characters. He discusses how this writing trope helps the author to keep the secrets of his characters and thus in-turn not shake the status quo of the society. The same analogy can be used as the basis to discuss queer narratives in Indian media. The Central Board for Film Certification (CBFC) desires to preserve Indian films in a specific box which excludes the queer community. The exclusion of the queer community continues to impair the ability of queer filmmakers and storytellers to represent their lived experiences in the media. Ka Bodyscape (2016) is a prime example of the institutional censorship of queer narratives in Indian media (Anandan), the film portrayed queer intimacies similar to the lived experiences of numerous queer men in India and the CBFC denied to certify the film. In 2024, CBFC insisted the word 'gay' to be removed from the film 'Girl You Know It's True' (MSN), further solidifying the censorship of not only queer narratives but queerness in its essence.

The Trevor Project conducted a study that inferred on the availability of digital safe space for the queer community meant 20% less suicide rates (GLSEN et al.). In 2025, queer individuals build their community online, thus a safe online space where they can explore their queerness and educate themselves on the queer community is important. Bond and Miller deduce that YouTube can be that safe space where queer individuals can create their own safe community. YouTube performs as a digital space for the queer community to express their queerness creatively and most importantly, safely. United Nations discusses societal repudiation of the Indian queer community and the need for education on more inclusive practices. YouTube can be the way for the Indian society to educate themselves on the queer

community; since the Indian queer community finds solace in YouTube and represent themselves on the platform without hesitation. The following study is to frame YouTube as a digital safe space for queer narratives and the queer community by exploring short films about queer individuals and their lived experiences.

3. Methodology:

The following study employs qualitative method of research specifically the content analysis method to understand the safe space created by YouTube for the queer community to explore queer narratives. The paper will primarily focus on the YouTube channel Lotus Visual Production and two short films on the channel; namely: TAPS and Halfway.

3.1 Objective: To establish YouTube as a digital safe space for queer narratives in India.

3.2 Research Question: Why is YouTube a digital safe space for queer narratives in India?

3.3 Discussion:

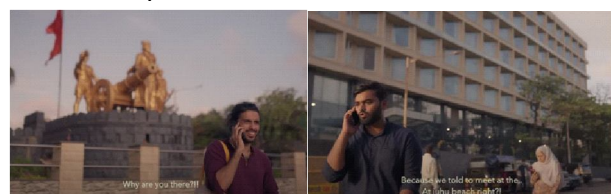
Lotus Visual Production is a media production company based out of London, England focusing on South Asian LGBT+ films from the community and for the community. The analysis will focus on the synonymous YouTube channel created in 2021 and has thirty-seven video varying from series to short films where every video explores South Asian queer narratives. On YouTube in 2025, there are multiple channels exploring queer narratives, for example: The Humsafar Trust, Royal Stag Barrel Select Shorts, et. cetera. but the only channel focusing exclusively on fictional queer narratives is Lotus Visual Production and thus determined to be most suitable for the study. Among the list of videos on Lotus Visual Production's channel, the shorts films TAPS and Halfway are selected to investigate the objective of this study. The following aspects of queer narratives were identified- based on the short films- as grounds for YouTube to establish itself as a digital safe space for queer content in India:

3.3.1 Exploring relationship dynamics:

Heterosexuality and its relationship dynamics are explored and celebrated in Indian cinema. Queer relationships share the same or similar dynamics and thus its exploration on the screen is paramount for the queer community in India. TAPS and Halfway are short films that explore aspects of relationships that are consistently discerned; for example:

3.3.1.1 Miscommunication: Halfway is a story about Saarth and Nakul who are boyfriends meeting at the beach after a long time because they lead busy lives with work, chores and the physical distance between them. In the following scene, Saarth and Nakul have communicated the wrong meeting spot and are frustrated at each other for the miscommunication.

The portrayal of this mundane argument is necessary to be observed by the queer audience for them to feel represented in media. The short film continues to resolve the argument between the pair with a continuous and simple conversation, which is the crux of any relationship. The relationship between Saarth and Nakul is comparable to any homogeneous heterosexual relationship portrayed in Indian media, the only noticeable difference happens to be the queerness. The examination of the uninteresting aspects of a relationship makes these queer narratives interesting; because it portrays the unexplored parts of a queer relationship on screen.



1.1

1.2

3.3.2 Queer desire: TAPS is a short film about Akshay and Rohan who are about to traverse through a difficult step in their story: a year of long distance relationship. The short film delves into Akshay's sadness and Rohan's hesitation about the change in their relationship. Throughout the film, the narrative displays queer

desire and intimacy between Akshay and Rohan, the rift being created because of the change and the resolution to this rift.



2.1

2.2

Image 2.1 is a scene where Akshay is a foul mood because of the situation and Rohan is trying to dissolve the tension. In this scene, Rohan holds Akshay in his arms and requests him to say something nice and Akshay replies with an 'I Love You'. Those three words being used in the queer context is an important step towards the normalisation of queer desires in queer narratives in Indian media. Image 2.2 is the final scene from the short film where; like any usual relationship, Rohan and Akshay are saying bye to each other and in a moment of intimacy they kiss. The driver notices the kiss, shocked for a moment, ignore them the next. The following scene is crucial for the queer audiences to observe and relate to their own relationships or to aspire for one.

3.3.3 Censorship: The Central Board for Film Certification (CBFC) makes it impossible for queer narratives to be explored in Indian cinema. The application of colonial 'decency and morality' clause from the Cinematograph Act results in the abjection of queer narratives and the loss of queer representation for the community. The laws applicable to YouTube are less stringent and have flexibility in their application to media. Filmmakers and storytellers do not face the same amount of scrutiny as the film certification process. Queer narratives gain more freedom to express their queerness on YouTube without the fear of censorship or compromise to their storytelling process. The institutional degradation of the queer community and queer narratives does not reflect on YouTube and thus provides a safe

space for queer community to explore their lived realities.

3.3.4 Views: The belief that queer narratives are enjoyed only by the queer community is disrupted by the views garnered by these short films. TAPS garnered 315 thousand views in the last six months and Halfway garnered 67 thousand views in the last month. Queer narratives similar to heterosexual narratives are enjoyed based on the reliability of the content; desire, intimacy, discontentment, resentment, validation, et. cetera. are feelings common in all relationships, thus the lack of need for queer content is a false belief which is proven by the YouTube views of these short films, proving queer narratives could be universal.

4. Conclusion: YouTube (founded in 2005) offered a digital platform for the layman to express their creativity in the visual format for an enormous audience. Storytellers from all around the world have used this platform to disseminate their lived experiences and the queer community did the same. Queer narratives in Indian media face opposition from institutional obstacles, societal repudiation, and the inherent system that makes it difficult for the queer community to create art. YouTube establishes itself as the bastion of opposition to those values, it encourages queer artists and queer narratives to express their queerness without hesitation. It gives them permissions to portray their desires as felt and not censored for a minority who oppose. The belief that queer narratives are enjoyed by an esoteric bunch is negated by the volume of views that an Indian queer short film receives on YouTube. The following reasons lend into the belief that YouTube has become a digital safe space for the queer narratives and in extension for the queer community.

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02

Politics of Representation in Indian Cinema: Intersecting Marginalities of Caste, Religion and Class

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&

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ABSTRACT:

This research paper examines the role of cinema in the representation of caste, religion and classes. Cinema and media have been a mirror of the society and reflects the disparities, stereotypes, and challenges of different identities. The contemporary cinema from 2010 – 2025, is considered for the study to demonstrate, how cinema engages with the questions of representation and marginality in a period of a political and socio-economical shift. This study also draws a comparison between the mainstream Bollywood with regional cinema, highlighting the different ways of representation and how each engages with the topic of caste, religion, and class. As Bollywood leans more towards commercialised cinema, the regional cinema focuses more about grassroot narratives that reveals how regional cinema foreground community narrative, class struggle and local realities is the key focus of this paper.

Methodologically, the paper employs analysis of available research material along with interviews and audience surveys to explore both the production of cinema and its reception. This approach not only helps in study the films

but also assess the impact of them on the audiences and their contribution in public discourse and private lives. Therefore, this research study is about the complexities of the representation of caste class and religion and their intersections in the Indian cinema.

Keywords- Media and Society, Class Struggle, Social Inequality, Caste Representation, Secularism and Communalism

Introduction

Cinema in India operates as both a source of entertainment and a socio-political text, shaping and reflecting societal norms. From regional films to Bollywood blockbusters and OTT platforms, Indian cinema constructs, negotiates, and contests social realities, particularly around caste, religion, and class. In the decade between 2015 and 2025, the politics of representation in cinema has become increasingly contested, with marginalized voices gaining visibility alongside mainstream portrayals that often reinforce existing hierarchies (Gehlawat 45).

This study examines how contemporary Indian cinema represents caste, religion, and class, arguing that these depictions mirror wider ideological struggles. Regional and OTT films frequently foreground subaltern perspectives, offering authentic narratives of marginalization, while Bollywood often frames such issues through mainstream, marketable lenses (Ganadhakshya 102). The concept of representation, as theorized by Stuart Hall, highlights how cultural texts produce meaning and social identity (Hall 15). Intersectionality, introduced by Kimberlé Crenshaw, emphasizes how caste, religion, and class intersect to shape experiences of oppression (Crenshaw 124). Meanwhile, the notion of the subaltern, articulated by Gayatri Spivak and Ranajit Guha, draws attention to historically marginalized groups whose voices are often excluded from dominant narratives (Spivak 28).

This research addresses three key

questions: How are caste, religion, and class depicted in contemporary Indian films? How do different cinematic platforms influence these representations? And how do audiences interpret and respond to them? By engaging these questions, the study contributes to debates in film and cultural studies, exploring how Indian cinema encodes marginalities, negotiates power, and mediates social hierarchies. Understanding these dynamics is crucial for critically examining both the cultural politics of India and the transformative potential of cinema as a platform for subaltern voices.

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Literature Review Indian cinema has never been just about entertainment. From its earliest days, films have reflected and reinforced the social structures around them, sometimes challenging them but more often repeating them. Scholars writing in the past decade have shown how questions of caste, religion, and class run through cinema's stories, characters, and silences. What emerges from this work is a picture of an industry deeply entangled with India's social hierarchies.

Caste When it comes to caste, much of the criticism points to absence or distortion. Ajay Gehlawat notes that Dalit stories in mainstream films are often told through the eyes of upper-caste characters, with Dalits themselves pushed to the margins or framed as people to be saved

(2016). The Economic and Political Weekly editorial "Cinema and Caste" (2019) makes a similar point, arguing that even films like Article 15, which claim to address caste violence, end up reproducing upper-caste perspectives by placing a dominant-caste hero at the center of the narrative. Taking this debate further, Anshuman Kumar (2021) calls for a new kind of storytelling one where Dalit characters are not just present but are the narrators of their own experiences. As Yengde observes, "the mainstream film industry in India delivers the desires and principles of market and society by excluding a Dalit framework outright a problem now being addressed by the entry of an explicitly Dalit cinema" (Yengde)

Jyoti Nisha emphasizes that Dalit-Bahujan voices must reclaim cinema through "Oppositional Bahujan agency" and "Ambedkar's way of looking," approaches that "aim to subvert the dominant narratives and perspectives on caste" (Nisha 33). Building on this, Neeraj Bunkar observes that "Dalit filmmakers such as Pa. Ranjith and Nagraj Manjule depict Dalits as assertive and complex individuals, challenging established caste hierarchies" (Bunkar 313). Together, their insights highlight how Dalit cinema shifts from mere representation to an act of cultural and political resistance.

Religion Recent studies have highlighted the systematic marginalization of religious minorities in Bollywood. Najar (2024) also accuses the industry of projecting a negative image of Muslims, pointing out a pattern in which Muslim protagonists are almost invariably represented as outsiders or extremists in line with larger Islamophobic discourses in Indian society. Likewise, Belladi (2024) investigates the projection of Christian women and how they are predominantly typecast as being immoral or sexually attractive, supporting dominant conceptions of 'Indianness'. Both studies highlight how film not just represents but actually reinforces religious stereotypes,

shaping public opinion and societal preconceptions. In Bollywood, Sikh actors are stereotyped as either courageous fighters or rural farmers, presenting a very limited image of Sikh identity (Singh). Hindus in Bollywood tend to be the cultural norm and moral axis, such as Amar in *Amar Akbar Anthony* (1977), "the dhârmik exemplar... a policeman" (San Chirico 92), or Raju in *Guide* (1965), who is redeemed from vice to sainthood, "one man's journey from worldling to Hindu mukta" (San Chirico 90).

Modern cinema takes this further with heroic characters such as the empathetic devotee in *Bajrangi Bhaijaan* (2015) or mythic Ram in *Adipurush* (2023). Mainstream cinema, however, also presents imperfect Hindus: PK (2014) condemns blind Hindu ritualism and godmen; Article 15 (2019) reveals caste oppression based on Hindu society; and *Drishyam 2* (2022) depicts a Hindu family man cheating the system using falsehoods. As San Chirico notes, "Brahmanical Hindu conceptions of dharma... immanent, and invasive" (97), meaning Hindu characters are not always moral paragons but can be agents of corruption, dominance, or hypocrisy.

Class Representations of class add another layer. Ranjani Mazumdar points out that the urban poor often appear in films as background figures or aesthetic settings rather than as complex characters with agency. Poverty, she argues, is frequently turned into spectacle, something for middle-class audiences to consume rather than engage with. Independent films like *Court* (2015) and *The Great Indian Kitchen* (2021) break from this pattern, offering more grounded depictions of working-class life, but they remain exceptions in a film culture dominated by spectacle and aspiration.

Synthesis Together, this scholarship shows that Indian cinema has struggled to represent marginalized groups fairly or fully. Caste stories are still told through dominant voices, religious minorities are stereotyped, and the poor are

aestheticized. Films like *Sairat* (2016) or *Article 15* (2019) show that change is possible, but their impact is limited compared to the reach of Bollywood blockbusters. Even independent and regional films, while more daring, cannot fully escape the weight of these hierarchies.

Filling the Gap Our research enters this conversation by bringing in perspectives that most of the scholarship leaves out. While earlier studies focus on the films themselves, we also ask how audiences interpret these stories and how filmmakers and academics reflect on them. By combining surveys, interviews, and film analysis, we connect the screen with its viewers and creators, adding a more layered understanding of how caste, religion, and class are represented in Indian cinema today.

Theoretical Framework This research is guided by theories of representation and cultural studies, which argue that cinema is not a neutral reflection of society but an active force in shaping how we see it. Stuart Hall's work on representation is especially important here: meaning is produced through language, images, and narratives, and films become one of the most powerful sites where these meanings circulate. In Indian cinema, then, representations of class, religion, and caste are not simply matters of narrative choice but ideological assertions that shape social comprehension.

Postcolonial and subaltern studies offer another central perspective. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's now-famous question, "Can the Subaltern Speak?", points to the tendency for marginalized communities to be spoken about but not necessarily given the opportunity to speak for themselves. This notion speaks directly to Indian cinema, as Dalits, Muslims, and other minorities are represented on screen but not often seen representing their own lives. Their lives are instead mediated through dominant points of view, making silences as potent as images.

Lastly, intersectionality lets us read

these identities together and not in separate compartments. Caste, religion, and class intersect with one another in complicated ways, influencing the type of character that appears on screen as well as which stories get told. Reading cinema through this lens makes it possible for us to see not just who is represented, but also how representation changes when different identities intersect.

By referencing representation theory, subaltern studies, and intersectionality, this approach offers the resources to examine Indian cinema as a cultural site in which not just identities are represented but constructed, contested, and negotiated

Methodology This project employs a **mixed-method approach** that brings together audience responses, expert perspectives, film analysis, and existing scholarship. Since cinema does not simply entertain but also constructs meanings around caste, religion, and class, we chose methods that capture both how audiences perceive representation and how films themselves encode social hierarchies

Survey We designed an online questionnaire titled "Caste, Religion, & Class: Representation in Indian Cinema." The survey was divided into four areas: demographics, film-viewing habits, perceptions of representation, and open-ended reflections on stereotypes and reforms. We received **100 responses**, most of them from urban students between the ages of 18 and 25, with a smaller number of middle-aged and senior participants. The responses yielded both quantitative data (via Likert-scale questions) and qualitative insights (via open-ended questions).

Interviews

To complement the survey, we conducted **three semi-structured interviews** with individuals connected to cinema through filmmaking, research, and teaching. Each interview lasted approximately 30–45 minutes. The semi-structured format allowed us to follow guiding themes—representation, stereotypes,

and responsibility of filmmakers—while leaving space for open-ended discussion.

Film Analysis Because our subject is cinema, we also examined a set of films and series that explicitly address caste, religion, class, and gender. These included:

- Sairat (2016), Article 15 (2019), Jai Bhim (2021), and Court (2015), which foreground caste- and class-based injustices.
- The Great Indian Kitchen (2021), which critiques domestic patriarchy and unpaid labor.
- Mulk (2018) and The Kashmir Files (2022), which portray religious identity in contrasting ways.
- Laal Singh Chaddha (2022) and Kapil Sharma's Jamato (2023), which negotiate class mobility and national belonging through popular narratives.
- Made in Heaven (2019–2023), which brings caste, religion, and sexuality into the world of India's urban elite.

Through textual analysis, we examined how these works portray characters, reinforce or resist stereotypes, and handle the intersections of caste, religion, class, and gender

Engagement with Scholarship

Our analysis is framed by existing scholarship on Indian cinema and social representation. Ranjani Mazumdar discusses the presence of the urban poor in Indian films, while M.A. Najar examines the representation of Muslims in Bollywood (2024). S. Belladi explores the othering of Christians in Indian cinema (2024), and Anshuman Kumar rethinks caste narratives (Soundings, 2021). Ajay Gehlawat highlights the evolving Dalit narrative in Indian films (South Asian Popular Culture, 2016), and the Economic and Political Weekly editorial "Cinema and Caste" (2019) underscores cinema's role in shaping social discourse. These works provided critical frameworks for situating our findings within broader scholarly debates.

Analysis

The survey results were analyzed using descriptive statistics and thematic coding. Interviews were transcribed and subjected to thematic analysis. The selected films were read closely, paying attention to character representation, recurring tropes, and narrative structures. Finally, these three sets of primary data were read alongside existing scholarship, allowing us to see where our findings echoed academic debates and where they opened new questions.

Case Studies

Caste and Cinema Caste remains one of the most contested groundings of Indian cinema. Chaitanya Tamhane's Court (2015) is a powerful example of how systemic oppression can be represented without direct mention of caste but remain profoundly immersed in its implications. The film's plot, which revolves around the trial of a folk singer charged with inciting a worker's suicide, illustrates how legal and bureaucratic machinations impact marginalized communities disproportionately. The lack of overt caste identification within the movie ironically excises its critique, showing how oppression is inserted in institutions, not just limited to individual actions.

Unlike that, Sairat (2016) engages caste directly in the narrative of two young adults from divergent backgrounds through a tragic love affair. Its commercial success was in itself noteworthy, demonstrating that a regional Marathi-language film could attract national interest while highlighting caste violence. The movie undermines Bollywood's sanitized presentation of romance by withholding a happy ending, instead unmasking the brutality of honor killings.

Anubhav Sinha's Article 15 (2019) was highly debated regarding its attempt to address caste atrocities, yet its adoption of the "upper-caste savior" trope has been criticized (Gehlawat 2016; EPW 2019). Even though the film should be commended for sensitizing urban audiences,

it is imitating the same hierarchies it seeks to reveal by putting a Brahmin officer at the foreground of the struggle. *Jai Bhim* (2021), on the other hand, is a different strategy. Drawing from actual cases, it places the struggles of tribal communities against systemic police brutality in the foreground. In contrast to Article 15, it does not center an upper-caste protagonist, giving way to marginalized voices taking up space in narrative more fully. Together, these films demonstrate the possibility and extent of cinematic engagement with caste.

In *Ozhivudivasathe Kali*, the characters just let their caste and sexist bias hang out. The grim ending illustrates just how quickly normalized bias can escalate to violence.

Religion and Cinema Religious identity has been among the most politically sensitive topics in Indian cinema of the past decade. Anubhav Sinha's *Mulk* (2018) presents a counter-narrative to Islamophobic stereotypes by centering on a Muslim family accused of sheltering a terrorist. The movie insists on their place in the Indian nation, presenting the courtroom as a site where secular principles can still be upheld. Although some critics contend that its optimism about legal justice is excessive, *Mulk* is still one of the few mainstream movies to humanize Muslims in a polarized environment.

In stark contrast, Vivek Agnihotri's *the Kashmir Files* (2022) embodies a very different mode of religious representation. Framed as an exposé of the exodus of Kashmiri Pandits, it portrays Hindus as victims and Muslims as perpetrators in a stark binary. The film's success and polarizing reception underline how cinema can function as a vehicle for nationalist narratives. Rather than complicating identity, it mobilizes trauma into a communal framework that resonates with majoritarian politics.

At the same time, television shows like *Made in Heaven* (2019–2023) complicate these dualisms by spinning narratives of interfaith and inter-caste marriages into glitzy tales of city

weddings. Its handling of religion is particularly interesting in that it eschews stereotyping and instead emphasizes the lived experience of negotiation, prejudice, and resistance. By placing identity politics within the contexts of aspirational, cosmopolitan life, the series speaks to audiences who would otherwise shy away from such narratives, and thereby becomes a necessary intervention in the mass marketization of critical discourse on religion.

Class and Cinema Class, while usually given secondary importance to caste and religion, has also seen consistent focus in recent movies. Jeo Baby's *The Great Indian Kitchen* (2021) dissects the erasure of women's domestic work, revealing how banal rituals function as tools for reproducing inequality. While a gender-focused film, it's also one about class, illustrating how unpaid labor underpins social hierarchies. Its sparse aesthetic compels audiences to acknowledge the drudgery and exploitation inherent in domesticity, lending uncommon cinematic gravity to concerns commonly summarized as "ordinary."

Conversely, Laal Singh Chaddha (2022), which is an adaptation of *Forrest Gump*, presents class mobility in terms of an average man who is successful through tenacity and virtues. Though hailed as inclusive, the critics believe that it reduces structural inequalities to merely attribute success to personal goodness instead of systemic reform. Comedy has joined in, too: Nandita Das's *Zwigato* (2023) documents the life of a gig economy food delivery worker (played by Kapil Sharma) to bring attention to class struggle. The film demonstrates how rating-based technology-enabled platforms manipulate workers using incentives and insecurity to produce a day-to-day struggle to survive. Sharma's interactions with middle-class clients reveal bare class differences, and his wife's part-time jobs unveil gendered aspects of poverty. In casting a well-known comedian in a dramatic role, the film compels audiences to regard the

unseen labour behind their ease. In a sense, then, Zwigato critiques economic injustice and the precarious existence of India's urban working class.

Comparative Study 2015–2025

Sairat vs Dhadak “Regional Realism vs Bollywood Sanitisation”

A comparative look at Nagraj Manjule's *Sairat* (2016) and its Hindi remake *Dhadak* (2018) highlights how regional cinema and Bollywood approach the politics of representation differently

This comparative study highlights the difference between Manjule's raw portrayal and Bollywood's dilution.

Sairat

1. Introduction

Nagraj Manjule's *Sairat* (2016) stands as one of the most important cinematic interventions in Indian cinema on the politics of caste, class, and gender. Unlike Bollywood's sanitised love stories, *Sairat* situates romance within the violent social realities of rural Maharashtra. It became the highest-grossing Marathi film of all time, proving that commercial success and social critique can coexist.

2. Representation of Caste

The core narrative is a Dalit boy (Parshya) and upper-caste girl (Archana) falling in love. Unlike *Dhadak* (its Hindi remake), *Sairat* keeps caste as a central axis of conflict. In *Dhadak*, caste is toned down to a vague “class difference.”

Manjule embeds caste visually and symbolically:

The fish market scene, where Archana's friend covers her nose, indirectly shows how caste is tied to “hygiene” and “pollution.” The teacher's dialogue about women being “defiled” exposes how caste oppression and patriarchy reinforce each other. Importantly, caste is not moralised or simplified. It exists in everyday gestures, silences, and structures.

3. Intersectionality: Caste, Class, Gender, Disability, Religion

Class: Archana initially believes she can

transcend caste by eloping with Parshya. But when confronted with urban poverty, she cannot adjust. Their struggles with water, housing, and basic survival show that class oppression intersects with caste.

Gender: Archana's confidence (riding a bike, speaking in English) stems from caste privilege, but this collapses once she defies patriarchal family control. The film shows how even upper-caste women are not free from patriarchal violence.

Disability & Religion: Parshya's friend with a disability and another Muslim friend expands the narrative beyond a binary caste conflict, showing layered marginalities.

4. Narrative Form and Aesthetic Choices

The film is structured in two halves:

First half: a colourful, musical, almost Bollywood-like romance.

Second half: stripped of music, shot realistically, exposing harsh realities of caste and survival.

Climax: Silent, haunting, and devastating. The murder of the couple, leaving behind their child with blood-stained footprints, symbolises how the future of society is marked by caste violence.

This aesthetic shift (from fantasy to brutal realism) embodies the collapse of the “dream” of caste-transcending love.

5. Politics of Representation

Sairat refuses the saviour complex common in films like *Article 15*, where upper-caste protagonists “rescue” Dalits. Instead, Dalit characters assert themselves, without mediation by privileged voices.

It critiques Bollywood's brown-facing and symbolic shortcuts for showing caste (as seen in *Super 30*, *Dhadak*). Instead, Manjule grounds caste in lived experiences, everyday practices, and unspoken hierarchies

6. Reception and Impact

Massively successful commercially and critically — rare for a caste-based film.

Sparked debate on why Bollywood continues to dilute caste narratives (Dhadak) while regional cinema like Sairat, Court, and Jai Bhim confronts it directly. Haunts audiences with its refusal to provide resolution, instead leaving viewers unsettled about their own caste privilege and biases.

7. Conclusion

Sairat is more than a love story it is a cinematic text on intersecting marginalities of caste, class, gender, disability, and religion. By embedding these nuances into a commercially successful narrative, it disrupted the politics of representation in Indian cinema and exposed the silences of Bollywood. It stands as a key example of how regional cinema redefines the discourse of social justice on screen.

1. Introduction (Dhadak)

Shashank Khaitan's Dhadak (2018), produced by Dharma Productions, is the Hindi remake of Sairat. While marketed as a socially relevant love story, Dhadak significantly tones down the political sharpness of Sairat. Instead of caste, it frames the lovers' conflict around **class and wealth differences**, making it palatable for a pan-Indian audience. The film's glossy production values, star-kid casting (Janhvi Kapoor, Ishaan Khatter), and Bollywood aesthetics dilute the radical critique of social hierarchies embedded in Sairat.

2. Representation of Caste (vs Class in Dhadak)

Unlike Sairat, which foregrounds caste oppression, Dhadak avoids explicit mention of caste. Parthavi (upper-class girl) and Madhukar (lower-class boy) are divided by **rich-poor hierarchy**, not caste boundaries. The everyday caste markers of Sairat (fish market scene, caste-based insults, honour violence) are missing, replaced with lighter class-based prejudice. The climax still shows tragedy, but the focus is on "forbidden love" rather than systemic caste oppression.

3. Intersectionality

In Sairat, caste intersected with class,

gender, disability, and religion. Dhadak flattens these intersections:

- **Class:** The lovers face economic struggle, but without caste undertones.
- **Gender:** Parthavi's oppression is framed mainly as family control, not as caste-patriarchy overlap.
- **Other marginalities** (Muslim friend, disabled friend) vanish completely, removing the layered representation of multiple identities.

4. Narrative Form and Aesthetic Choices

Dhadak follows standard Bollywood romantic tropes.

- First half: colourful songs, picturesque settings, star glamour.
 - Second half: still maintains gloss and spectacle, unlike Sairat's stripped-down realism.
 - Climax: tragic, but stylised, missing the haunting silence and stark brutality of Sairat.
- Form here serves entertainment, not politics — tragedy remains within the bounds of Bollywood melodrama rather than subaltern critique.

5. Politics of Representation

Dhadak turns a **caste critique into a class romance**. By erasing caste, it avoids discomfiting dominant-caste and urban audiences. Its manufacture (Karan Johar's Dharma) demonstrates Bollywood's commercial agenda: marketability, star power, and sanitized narratives. Dhadak does not place subaltern voices at its center like Sairat did — it colonizes a radical regional text into a mainstream romance.

6. Reception and Impact

Dhadak was a box-office hit, owing mainly to marketing and debut star kids' charm. But it became the subject of scathing criticism from intellectuals, activists, and critics for erasing caste and diluting a political storyline into a Bollywood safe romance. It invited debate regarding Bollywood's unwillingness to touch caste, particularly in contrast to regional cinema.

7. Conclusion (Dhadak)

Where Sairat is an unfettered political commentary on intersectionality and caste

violence, *Dhadak* is a Bollywood reworking that de-politicises the stakes into homogenised class struggle. Its glamour and sheen exemplify Bollywood's market rationality — reducing a narrative of oppression to a consumerist romance, drawing attention to the politics of representation between regional realism and Bollywood mainstreaming.

Survey and Interview Findings

Findings from the Survey: Caste, Religion, and Class in Indian Cinema

The survey provided useful information about viewing patterns and attitudes towards representation among younger demographics. Most of the people surveyed were young adults and students, a digitally savvy group more invested in OTT platforms than theaters or television. This is in keeping with the larger post-pandemic shift in consumption patterns where streaming films and web series have become the prevailing mode of public entertainment, replacing collective visits to theaters. Genres in highest demand were social dramas, romance, and action thrillers, implying that viewers want to see a middle ground between realism and entertainment. When asked about caste, most respondents expressed dissatisfaction with cinematic portrayals. Communities such as Dalits, Adivasis, and the working poor were cited as the most underrepresented. Even when present, they were often reduced to what one respondent called “helpless victims or side characters without depth” ([Survey Response]). The absence of complex Dalit or tribal protagonists was widely criticized, and many argued that authenticity could only be achieved by “bringing in writers and directors from marginalized backgrounds” ([Survey Response]).

Religion, too, emerged as a site of misrepresentation. Respondents overwhelmingly felt that Muslims were the most frequently stereotyped, often cast as “the Other” or associated with conflict. Some noted

that regional and parallel cinema provide more nuanced portrayals compared to mainstream Bollywood. A strong majority emphasized that while cinema must entertain, it also carries responsibility when dealing with sensitive religious identities.

On class, respondents pointed to the invisibility of labor struggles. When migrants, farmers, or urban poor appear, their stories are often framed through slum settings, suicides, or crises, with little attention to dignity or agency. As one participant observed, “working-class characters are usually waiting for saviors, not shown as resilient agents” ([Survey Response]). Overall, respondents strongly agreed that cinema reinforces stereotypes, particularly around caste and religion. Yet they also stressed that regional and independent cinema, though less visible, handled these issues with greater sensitivity. Finally, the majority affirmed that cinema plays a decisive role in shaping public perceptions of marginalized communities, and therefore representation is a responsibility rather than a neutral choice.

Findings from the Interviews: Caste, Religion, and Class in Indian Cinema

Interviews with three experts—Producer Shaji Mathew, Academic Ambrish Saxena, and filmmaker-researcher Ankush Gupta—added depth to the survey findings. Saxena argued that caste and religion have been central to Indian cinema since its beginnings, citing *Sujata* (1959) as an early film that explicitly addressed Dalit identity. He also noted that post-independence cinema often promoted Hindu-Muslim harmony for national integration (Saxena, interview).

Gupta focused on class and the erasure of caste markers in popular films of the 1970s. He observed that the “angry young man” of the Amitabh Bachchan era symbolized economic struggle but remained socially unmarked: “He takes somebody from the lower class, he’s a

coolie, he's a tanga-Wala... But do we know the caste of this person? No, it's not denoted there" (Gupta, interview). This absence, he argued, reflects Bollywood's discomfort with directly addressing caste.

Saxena connected this avoidance to the post-1991 liberalization era, when cinema became increasingly market-driven: "Since it is the privileged people who are telling the stories and they are telling the story for privileged audiences, so things that they don't feel is important will not be important" (Saxena, interview). He acknowledged that OTT platforms opened some space for bold narratives such as *Sacred Games* and *Paatal Lok*, especially during COVID-19, but stressed that mainstream Bollywood still resists caste representation.

Both Saxena and Gupta praised *Sairat* (2016) as a pathbreaking intervention. Gupta highlighted its layered treatment of intersecting identities: "It's a mainstream romantic love story but it's able to touch on caste, class, gender, disability, religion without being preachy... The film starts as a musical and ends in complete silence... with blood imprints of the child. Our future is imprinted by the blood of what we are doing right now" (Gupta, interview).

Mathew, drawing from his own experience as an independent filmmaker, underscored the financial challenges of socially engaged cinema. "Independent films on caste and religion are rarely profitable. Funding is difficult, investors hesitate, and often we make films only because of passion, not business" (Mathew, interview). For him, cinema is less about profit than about provocation, as illustrated by his controversial *S Durga*: "We titled the film *S Durga* to provoke the hypocrisy how the same society that worships Durga as a goddess mistrusts women on the streets at night" (Mathew, interview).

All three interviews point to the same conclusion: mainstream cinema remains

resistant to dealing honestly with caste and class, often falling back on token religious representation. Independent and regional filmmakers, while more daring, face structural challenges of funding and visibility. Yet, as Mathew remarked, "Even if ten people watch and start questioning caste or gender, that small change is worth it" (Mathew, interview).

Discussion

This study brings together films, scholarship, survey responses, and expert interviews to examine how caste, religion, and class are represented in Indian cinema between 2015 and 2025. A clear pattern emerges: Bollywood often sanitizes or avoids difficult realities, while regional and independent cinema offer more authentic depictions, and OTT platforms experiment with layered, intersectional narratives.

On caste, scholars such as Ajay Gehlawat (2016) and the *Economic and Political Weekly* (2019) have argued that mainstream films tend to reproduce dominant-caste perspectives, even in socially conscious projects like *Article 15* (2019). Our survey confirmed this critique, with respondents repeatedly describing caste representation as "superficial" or "stereotypical." Gupta echoed this in his interview, observing that the 1970s "angry young man" embodied class struggle without caste markers: "He's a coolie, he's a tanga-Wala... But do we know the caste of this person? No, it's not denoted there" (Gupta, interview). By contrast, regional films such as *Sairat* (2016) and *Jai Bhim* (2021) disrupt Bollywood's evasions, forcing audiences to confront the violence of caste directly. These examples illustrate Stuart Hall's idea that representation is a site where meanings are actively constructed and contested, rather than neutrally reflected.

Religion shows a similar divide. Bollywood's portrayal of Muslims often slips into stereotype, confirming Najar's (2024) critique.

Respondents in our survey agreed that Muslims are the most consistently misrepresented group. While Mulk (2018) attempted to counter this trend, *The Kashmir Files* (2022) exemplified communal polarization, encoding a binary narrative of Hindu victimhood and Muslim villainy. Yet OTT productions such as *Made in Heaven* (2019–2023) challenge these binaries by weaving caste, religion, and class into complex storylines. This reflects Kimberlé Crenshaw's theory of intersectionality, showing how overlapping identities shape social experiences in ways Bollywood often resists.

Class representation also reflects ongoing tensions. Mazumdar has noted how the poor are aestheticized rather than given voice. Respondents agreed, arguing that laboring classes are shown either as victims or as background. Saxena linked this to authorship, noting that "privileged people tell stories for privileged audiences" (Saxena, interview). Independent films like *The Great Indian Kitchen* (2021) resist this tendency by dignifying domestic and labor struggles, even as mainstream narratives like *Laal Singh Chaddha* (2022) simplify inequality into stories of personal resilience.

Representation in Indian cinema is not only a creative act but also a negotiated one. Producer Shaji Mathew stated in an interview, "Now every film, even small independent ones, must go through the censor board. That process often changes the meaning of the work" (Mathew, Interview). For example, in *Bheed* (2023), the filmmaker used the allegory of Partition to frame the suffering of migrant workers during the COVID lockdown. However, after scrutiny, these references were removed. This censorship diluted the film's political sharpness, shifting it from an allegorical critique of state failure to a more neutral humanist narrative. Such interventions show how state regulation and producer caution alter the politics of representation in cinema, particularly in films

dealing with class struggle.

Across the decade, three shifts stand out. First, Bollywood continues to sanitize caste and class while stereotyping religion. Second, regional and independent cinema, though less visible, deliver more grounded portrayals. Third, OTT platforms have opened a new space for experimental and intersectional narratives. Taken together, these findings confirm Hall's claim that representation is never neutral: cinema remains a contested site where identities are negotiated, resisted, and reimaged.

Conclusion

This study set out to examine how caste, religion, and class are represented in Indian cinema between 2015 and 2025, drawing on films, audience surveys, and interviews with filmmakers and academics. The findings confirm much of what earlier scholarship has argued: mainstream Bollywood continues to sanitize or sidestep caste and class, while often stereotyping religion. At the same time, regional and independent films, though less widely distributed, provide more authentic depictions of marginalized experiences. OTT platforms, emerging as a powerful space in the last decade, complicate this binary by allowing for experimental and intersectional storytelling that addresses multiple axes of identity at once.

Audiences in our survey echoed scholarly critiques, pointing to the invisibility of Dalits, Adivasis, and working-class communities, as well as the persistent stereotyping of Muslims. Experts such as Prof Ambrish Saxena and Dr. Ankush Gupta highlighted how authorship and privilege shape what stories are told and how, while Producer Shaji Mathew reminded us of the financial and structural challenges faced by independent cinema. These perspectives underline Stuart Hall's theory of representation as an ideological struggle, where meaning is constructed within unequal cultural fields, and Kimberlé Crenshaw's insight that identities intersect in ways that cinema cannot afford to ignore.

The decade under study illustrates a deepening polarization in cinematic narratives. Films like *Sairat*, *Jai Bhim*, and *The Great Indian Kitchen* insist on confronting caste and class directly, while others such as *The Kashmir Files* mobilize religious identity within nationalist frameworks. This tension reflects broader societal debates about identity, belonging, and power.

Future research could build on this work by examining how digital platforms, short-form media, and grassroots storytelling further reshape the politics of representation. For now, it is clear that Indian cinema remains a contested space where the politics of caste, religion, and class are not only reflected but actively negotiated—sometimes resisted, sometimes reinforced, but always significant.

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03

Examining Grocery Shopping Consumer Behaviours through Quick Commerce in Mumbai Suburbs.

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ABSTRACT:

Quick Commerce has revolutionised urban E-Commerce. Quick Commerce has gained significant popularity in metropolitan areas. The study aims to shed light on the factors influencing the adoption of Quick Commerce in the suburban areas of Mumbai, India. Socio-demographic characteristics like gender, age, income, education, employment, marital status impact both current Quick Commerce frequency and future adoption of new services. An online questionnaire method is used to identify the factors influencing customers decisions and preferences regarding Quick Commerce. The collected data is analysed through tables, charts, graphs to conclude the finding. The study reflects the reason what makes customers adopt Quick Commerce services by collecting data from about 78 users as respondents of Mumbai suburbs.

KEYWORDS: local retail shops, quick commerce, buying behaviour, grocery items, customers

INTRODUCTION:

Quick commerce is a rapidly growing retail model in India, offering consumers the

convenience of receiving goods within 10-30 minutes of placing an order. This model has gained popularity during the COVID-19 pandemic, driven by the surge in online shopping and the demand for faster delivery times.

By operating through a network of strategically located micro-warehouses, quick commerce platforms can efficiently deliver a variety of products, including groceries, essentials, and more. This has led to a significant shift in consumer expectations, with a large majority now preferring same-day or even faster delivery options.

In Mumbai, quick commerce has gained significant traction, with platforms like Zepto, BigBasket, Blinkit (formerly Grofers), and Swiggy Instamart leading the way. These companies have leveraged technology and logistics advancements to provide a seamless and efficient shopping experience, catering to the needs of urban consumers who value speed and convenience.

As the quick commerce market continues to expand, it is likely to further influence the traditional retail models and redefine the way consumers shop in India. Therefore, the purposes of this research are to explore the emerging trends in online grocery shopping and to investigate the specific online grocery shopping behaviors of different customers. This study identifies the future intention of online grocery shopping after the pandemic.

The research aims to address the gap by examining the factors influencing Quick Commerce adoption among the consumers of Mumbai. The study uses online questionnaire methods to find specific factors that drive decisions to prefer Quick Commerce for shopping in the Mumbai city. The study uses tables, charts and graphs to analyse the data. The study aims to contribute to a better understanding of the factors driving Quick Commerce preference in suburban areas and provide valuable insights for policymakers,

online business planners, and online business providers. The Favourable government policies of digital payment methods is a key driver of e-commerce. The facilities of Promotion and visibility offered by social media platforms has encouraged users to make online purchases. All these factors have contributed to an increase in online grocery shopping, which is expected to grow in the future.

Traditional E-commerce vs. Quick Commerce

Feature	Traditional E-commerce	Quick Commerce
Delivery Time	Typically 1-3 days or more	Within 10 minutes or an hours
Inventory Storage	Large warehouses	Dark stores (smaller, strategically located)
Product Range	Wider variety	More focused on essential items (groceries, household goods)
Customer Focus	Price-sensitive, convenience-seeking	Time-sensitive, convenience-oriented
Business Model	Inventory-based, often centralised	Hyper-local, inventory-lean
Technology Emphasis	Order processing, inventory management	Real-time tracking, efficient routing, dark store management
Challenges	Inventory management, last-mile delivery	Infrastructure, competition, sustainability

Source: 'Rise of Quick Commerce in India: Business Models and Infrastructure Requirements' by Gauri Ranjekar and Debjit Roy, Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad (IIMA) in March 2023.

The rise of app-based shopping, combined with factors like busy lifestyles and attractive discounts, has significantly changed consumer behaviour, particularly in Mumbai cities. Consumers value the convenience of shopping from home. The COVID-19 pandemic further accelerated this trend, as consumers sought faster delivery options for essential daily goods like groceries which gave pathway to Quick Commerce shopping.

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Sekhniashvili, Natalia (2024) convenience seeking and health concerns positively influence online grocery shopping

intentions, while technostress has a negative impact and study states that online grocery shopping behavior is likely to persist post-pandemic.

Luna Sanchez, Pedro (2024) study investigates factors driving consumer purchasing behavior on quick commerce apps and the finding states that perceived usefulness, ease of use, interface quality, and information quality significantly influence consumer purchasing behavior. The study states that interaction quality is a contributing factor but its impact varies due to diverse user preferences.

Harter, Alice (2024) states quick commerce has fundamentally transformed consumer expectations by dramatically reducing delivery times from days to minutes. The study states that ultra-fast delivery has shifted consumer preferences towards impulse buying and convenience, compelling e-commerce platforms to redesign logistics models to meet these emerging demands.

Olumekor, Michael et al. (2024) study investigates how income, internet access, and food prices influence online grocery sales. The findings suggest that while online grocery shopping offers potential benefits like improved food access and sustainability, addressing income inequality remains crucial for widespread adoption and overcoming barriers to equitable access.

Astini, Rina, et al. (2024) study explores factors influencing online grocery purchase decisions, focusing on the q-commerce application. The finds state that e-service quality, e-WoM, and e-trust all influence purchase decisions. The study states to improve compensation services, and monitor online information to encourage positive e-WoM and boost sales.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The comparative study examined factors influencing customers' shopping behaviour

through Quick Commerce over the kirana shops specifically in a Mumbai city. Grocery items are the basic need of every household. Despite the potential consumer benefits offered by online grocery shopping, such as convenience and time-savings, very limited studies have been done on the consumers' perceptions of online grocery shopping and their expectations for it. Hence the study aims to provide understanding to online grocery item sellers to use the findings of the study to design their services, satisfy customers and gain the market share of Mumbai.

OBJECTIVES

- To find out the factors that influence consumer preferences for quick commerce for grocery shopping in Mumbai.
- To examine the relationship between socio-demographic characteristics and its influence on consumer preferences between quick commerce.

SCOPE OF STUDY

- The study aims to provide an understanding of the grocery market dynamics in Mumbai.
- The study is related to understanding customers buying behavior and the preference for grocery shopping over Quick Commerce of Mumbai city.
- The geographical scope of the study will be restricted to the areas of Mumbai suburbs only, due to time constraints.
- The information for the study is collected from customers of different socio-demographic profiles using questionnaires method.
- The data collected is analysed using tables and charts with the help of hypotheses.

DATA COLLECTION

The research is based on a primary data collection from the customers as respondents using a structured questionnaire method, to gather comprehensive understanding into grocery shopping selections between Quick Commerce and kirana stores in the areas of Mumbai. A non-random sampling method is

used for the study to collect quantitative data to check customers preference toward grocery shopping through Quick Commerce or kirana stores. Additionally, the data is analysed through charts and graphs.

HYPOTHESES

- H₀:** There is a significant relationship between socio-demographic characteristics and consumer preferences for quick commerce.
- H₁:** There is a significant relationship between socio-demographic characteristics and consumer preferences for quick commerce.

DATA ANALYSIS

Quantitative data collected through the surveys will be analysed using descriptive statistics like charts and graphs. The relationships between different variables will be examined using data obtained from the survey and will be analysed to identify key themes and patterns related to Quick Commerce selections by customers of Mumbai.

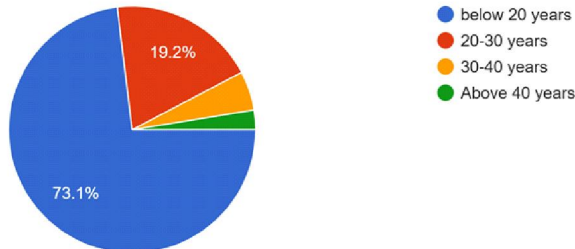
1. Factors influencing the customer choice of Quick Commerce for grocery shopping in Mumbai

Factors
● Offers Convenience and proximity
● High quality of products
● Product variety availability
● Price consciousness
● Door-step delivery options facility
● Short delivery Speed
● Discounts & offers availability
● Brand availability
● Personal touch
● Product Return Policy or terms
● Influence of recommendations from friends/family

The study shows the various factors that influence choice for Quick commerce by customers. The above chart shows multiple factors like Offers Convenience and proximity,

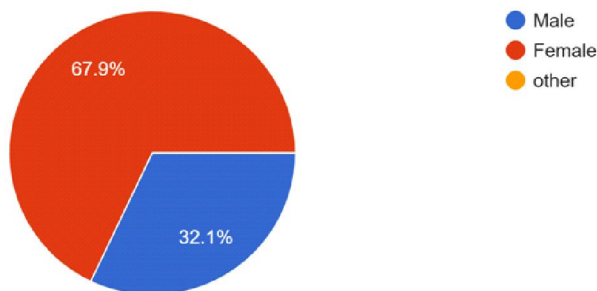
High quality of products, Product variety availability and such other factors influence the preference for Quick Commerce selection for grocery shopping of respondents.

2. Age Group of respondents



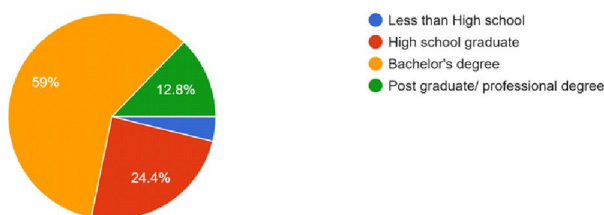
The above chart indicates that most of the respondents i.e 73.1% of respondents falls in the age group below 20 years of age.

3. Gender of Respondents



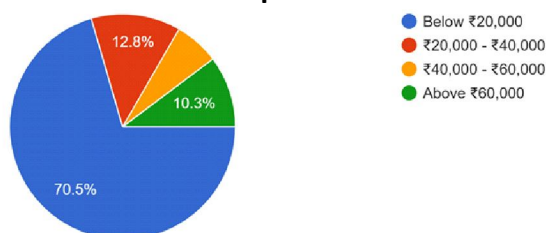
The above chart indicates that most of the respondents i.e 67.9% of respondents are females.

4. Education level of respondents



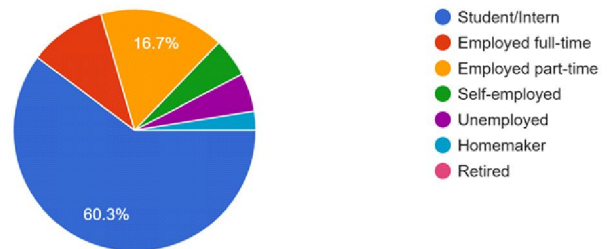
The above chart indicates that most of the respondents i.e 59% of respondents lie in the education level less than high school.

5. Income level of respondents



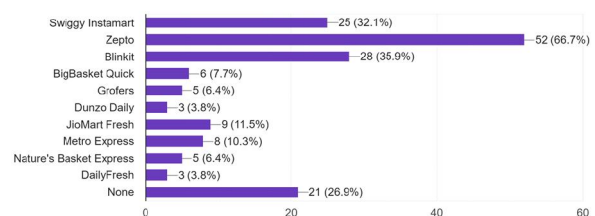
The above chart indicates that most of the respondents i.e 70.5% of respondents have income level below Rs. 20,000 per month.

6. Occupation or designation of respondents



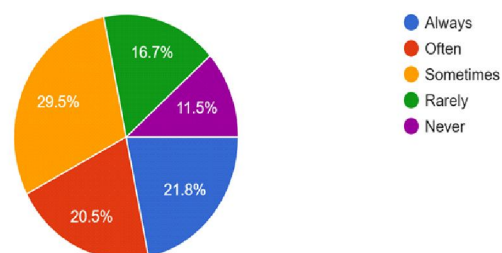
The above chart indicates that most of the respondents i.e 60.3% of respondents are in the students or intern group.

7. Quick Commerce service(s) have you used by customers



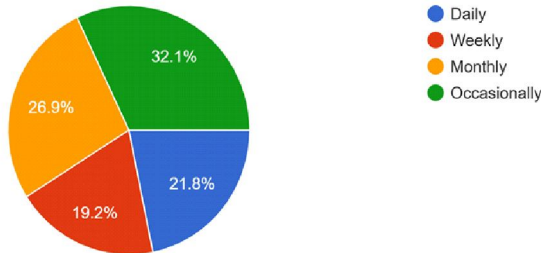
The above chart indicates that most of the respondents i.e about 66.7% of respondents have used and are familiar with Zepto a Quick Commerce service provider followed by familiarity with Swiggy Instamart by about 32.1% of respondents.

8. Preference for grocery shopping over Quick Commerce than Kirana shops



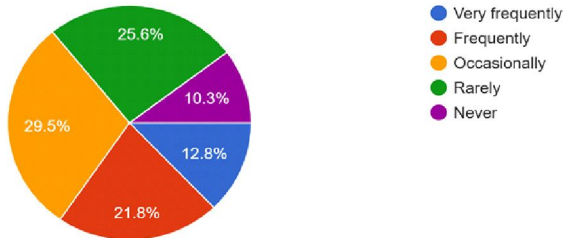
The above chart indicates that about 29.5% of respondents sometimes choose Quick Commerce over Kirana shops for the groceries shopping and 21.8% of respondents might always prefer Quick Commerce than going for Kirana Shops.

9. Frequency of preference for grocery shopping over Quick Commerce



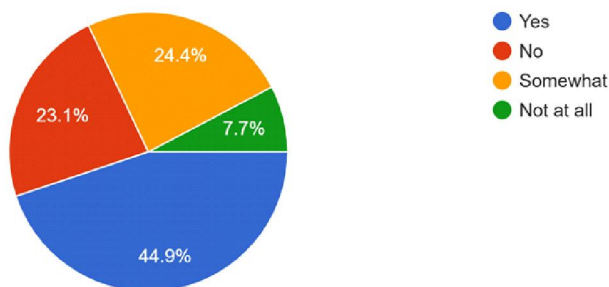
The study shows that 32.1% of respondents prefer Quick commerce services occasionally for grocery shopping. Followed by 26.9% of respondents' monthly preference.

10. Frequency of using smartphone apps or website for the online groceries shopping



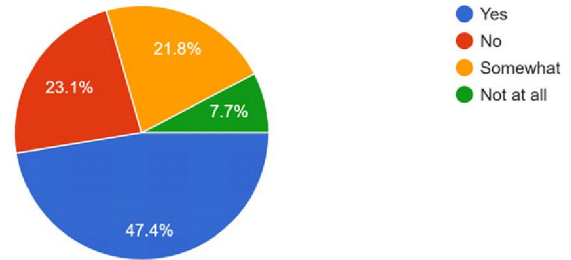
The study shows that 29.5% of respondents prefer smartphone applications occasionally for online groceries shopping. Followed by 25.6% of respondents' prefer rarely.

11. COVID-19 effect on on grocery shopping through Quick Commerce



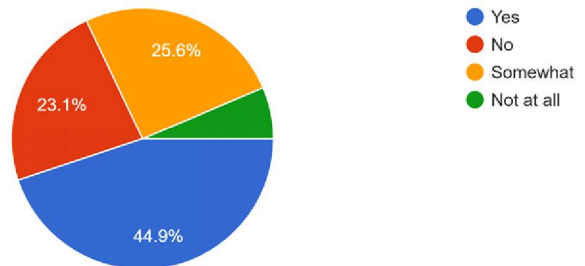
The study shows that 44.9% of respondents agree that COVID-19 has impacted and influenced customers toward Quick Commerce for groceries shopping.

12. Digital payment methods effect on grocery shopping through Quick Commerce



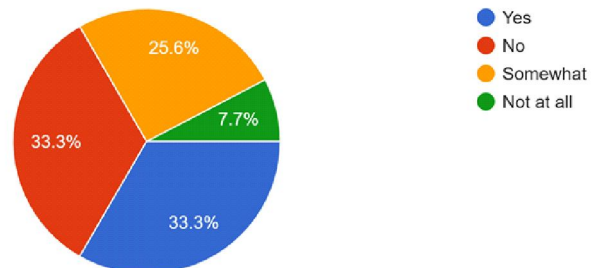
The finding indicates that 47.4% of respondents agree that Digital payment methods have impacted and influenced customers toward Quick Commerce for groceries shopping.

13. Digital transformation effect on grocery shopping through Quick Commerce



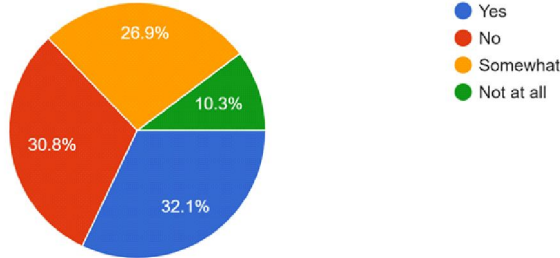
The collected data states that 44.9% of respondents agree that Digital transformation has impacted customers prefer mode of groceries shopping and has inclined customers toward Quick Commerce.

14. Working profession effect on grocery shopping through Quick Commerce



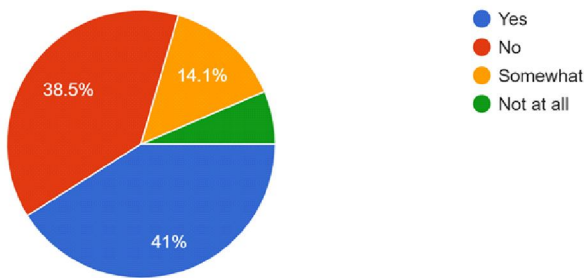
The finding indicates that 33.3% of respondents agree and 33.3% of respondents disagree with the relationship of the working profession and the buying preference through Quick Commerce, indicating a neutral relationship between the variables.

15. Earning income effect on grocery shopping through Quick Commerce



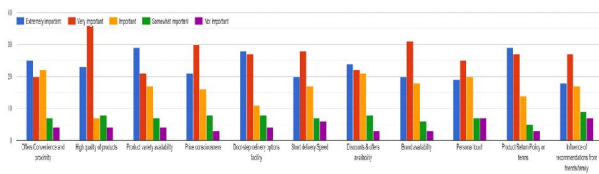
The above chart states that 32.1% of respondents agree that earning income has an impact and influence on customers' choice toward Quick Commerce for groceries shopping.

16. Age factor effect on grocery shopping option through Quick Commerce



The finding indicates that 41% of respondents agree that the customer's age factor has an impact and influences customers preference toward Quick Commerce for groceries shopping.

17. Factors and level of importance when choosing a Quick Commerce to shop for groceries



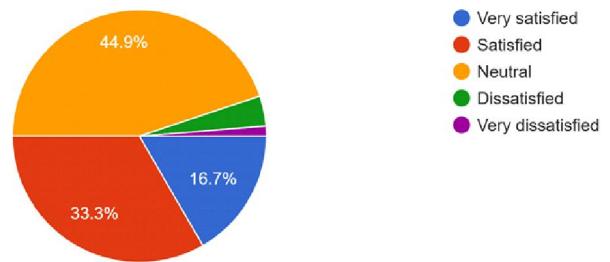
The above graph shows the factors like convenience and proximity; quality product, product variety, return policy, door-step delivery has an extreme level of importance, while influence or recommendation, personal touch, short delivery speed are not so important factors when choosing Quick Commerce to shop for groceries.

18. Preference of grocery items and frequency of buying those items using Quick Commerce platform

[* Object too big for pasting as inline graphic. | In-line.PNG *]

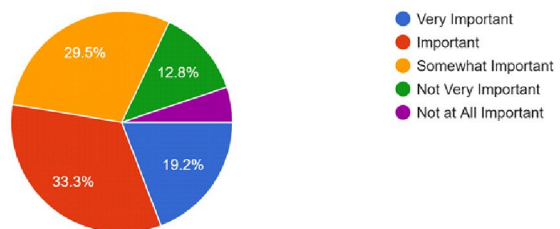
The above chart indicates the relationship between respondents' grocery items preference of buying and frequency of buying those groceries items through Quick Commerce for groceries shopping. The finding states that awareness about grocery shopping through Quick Commerce is rising among the most of the young generation and hence adding a market scope for Quick Commerce.

19. Satisfaction level with grocery shopping option through Quick Commerce service



The finding indicates that 44.9% of respondents has very satisfied experience as satisfaction level while using Quick Commerce for groceries shopping.

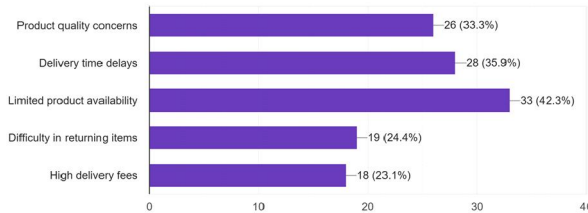
20. Importance of interaction with the shopkeeper personally while online platform for shopping grocery



The finding indicates that 33.3% of respondents agree that the customer's interaction with the shopkeeper personally is important and has an impact and influences over customers

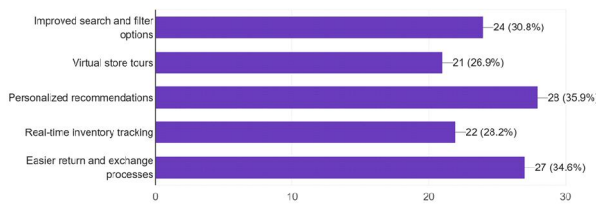
preference toward Quick Commerce for groceries shopping.

21. Challenges faced when shopping for groceries online



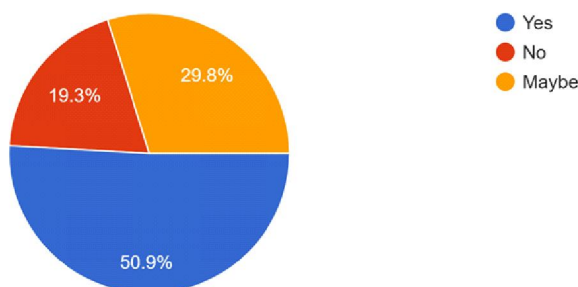
The above chart shows that 42.3% of respondents states that limited product availability, 35.9% of respondents states that delivery time delays, followed by product quality concern, and difficulty in returning items are the major challenges that the customer faces when using Quick Commerce for groceries shopping.

22. Recommendation of features likely to see in online grocery shopping platforms for improved experience



The finding indicates that 35.9% of respondents stated personalized recommendation, 34.6% of respondents stated an easier return and exchange process; followed by improved search and filter; real-time inventory tracking are other features that customers expect at more advanced levels to be added in online grocery shopping platforms for a better experience by the users.

23. Preference for continuity of Grocery shopping through Quick Commerce in future



The above data shows that the majority of respondents i.e 50.9% of respondents agree to continue with Quick Commerce for groceries shopping in future and indicating a wider scope and survival for Quick Commerce business operators in the coming future.

Hypothesis testing

Above data collected and analysed indicates a relationship between socio-demographic profile of customers and the choice of groceries shopping using Quick Commerce. The finding states that in current times young generations are more inclined and prefer Quick Commerce service over kirana shops due to multiple factors like door-step delivery, delivery in shortest possible duration, variety of product, quality of products and other such factors. The study states that Quick Commerce has attracted and influenced a huge customer and reflects an expected growth of Quick Commerce with more advanced services and products that satisfies customers and builds a strong customer base in future. Hence the null hypothesis is rejected and states that there is a significant relationship between socio-demographic characteristics and consumer preferences for quick commerce.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this research sheds light on the factors influencing customers choices regarding Quick Commerce in Mumbai suburbs.

The study aimed to understand the factors influencing Quick Commerce adoption in Mumbai. It found that convenience, cost-effectiveness, and avoiding parking hassles were the primary reasons for choosing Quick Commerce.

Demographic factors also played a significant role. Younger respondents were more likely to use Quick Commerce than older ones. Females were more likely to use these services compared to males. Single individuals adopted Quick Commerce more frequently than married individuals. Lower-income individuals

were more likely to use Quick Commerce than higher-income individuals. Students used Quick Commerce more frequently than employed individuals.

Overall, the study suggests that Quick Commerce has become a popular grocery shopping option in Mumbai due to their convenience and affordability, particularly for younger individuals, females, and those with lower incomes and indicates a positive growth of Quick Commerce business operators in future. However, factors like age, gender, marital status, education, income, and occupation can influence the frequency of Quick Commerce usage. The study provides valuable insights for Quick Commerce providers, and policymakers to enhance Quick Commerce users and improve the commuting experience for customers in Mumbai. Designing user-friendly online grocery applications may encourage the increasing adoption of online grocery shopping. Price sensitivity is a common trait among customers when considering products and delivery services on online grocery stores. Retailers and marketers should carefully weigh these factors when shaping their marketing strategies. Therefore, the findings of this study can significantly contribute to the development of effective online grocery marketing strategies for retailers and marketers.

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The Search for Relevance in Sarcasm: How Nepali Content Creators Select the Trending Topics in Memes and Influence the Virtual Debates?

[A comparative cross-platform and observational study]

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Abstract

Memes are a popular way for young people to convey their sarcastic expression in social media. They are involved in its creation, distribution and discussion. In popular virtual culture; mimicking or mocking in the creative way must be relevant in some way, otherwise it cannot be viral, impressive and effective. Nepali social media meme pages are in search of the relevancy of their sarcasm, so they are trying to inform the audience by posting the current affairs at their feeds and after amplification of the issues, they are creating memes related to the topic. This pattern has started developing the tendency of echochambering phenomena and repetitional reproduction of the same issue in different platforms and this shapes the virtual debates among youth. The study examines the relevancy questions in digital sarcasm society, decision making and topic selection tendency among Nepali meme pages and virtual debates related to these memes by observing and

comparing in the particular time frame of five days and five popular Nepali meme pages.

Key words: Meme, Relevancy, Trending, Viral and Virtual Debate

Introduction

Memes are a medium of expressing voices of people in sarcastic or humorous ways and this is not a new phenomenon. Different societies have their own mimicking culture to satire societal problems and issues in a decent manner. With the expansion of digital development and platforms, meme culture is spreading widely, rapidly, and reaching out globally. This new tendency has given wider opportunities to the meme creators and consumers. If someone is creating a meme which can drag the attention of multiple audiences, that can be viral and the 'talk of the town' within a short span of time. This has created an opportunity for meme creators to earn money from the social platform as well as gain popularity.

Creating a meme may consider the choice of an individual but after posting it in the public page may create the vibration among users and open the door for virtual interactions and debates. That can be constructive, toxic, stereotypical, derogatory, pleasant or unpleasant. This may or may not shape the public opinions or narratives but it creates virtual discussions and debates in particular platforms. There are two sides of meme creation, one just for fun and another to gain popularity in social media and monetize the content along with the social media page. This is not a particular phenomenon in the particular place; it can be the global scenario.

Nepali social media users are also deeply associated with meme creation, dissemination and participating in virtual interactions and debates. Basically, youth are the ones who create memes and posts on popular platforms. Many scholars have established by their study that meme creators

and consumers are mainly youth on digital platforms (Raj A 2099). The scenario in Nepal is not different from other parts of the world. But the digital meme creation pattern has been changed in recent years mainly after COVID-19 pandemic. In the COVID-19 period traditional media somehow could not give proper news on time and that gap has been filled by social media. Some Nepali meme pages in Facebook have also done the same (Pandey 10). When they got more attention in news or information related content than the sarcastic meme, they started posting news sometimes in a sarcastic way and sometimes directly.

In this paper researchers argue that most popular Facebook meme pages in Nepal or run by the Nepali people abroad now turned into news or information giving stages due to make them more relevant. They are following trending topics, social buzz and social listening to create any content and posting it on their platforms. They are choosing the content with its appropriateness among targeted audiences in particular platforms.

Problem of statement and objectives

Meme platforms were known once for the sarcastic expression of the society, now turning into the information providers and spreader mainly among youths (Bolye 87) from political to social affairs. With the “juxtaposing” text and images contemporary internet memes are getting the “communicative value” (Molina 849). It has the potential to spread information within a short span of time and among a large number of people. Social media played a vital role in setting the agenda in Nepali news outlets along with influencing the voters in the election (Dahal 124) where the major meme page of Nepal also contributed. But unlike traditional media platforms or their social media front, meme pages have limitations to filter the misinformation and disinformation so they can be manipulated easily. Any harm done by information given through such a stage is

unrepairable and a “prime example” is the COVID-19 pandemic (Bolye 92). Some memes can be considered as a “fun post” but they may have a huge negative impact on society when they spread the wrong information in digital spaces. It happened in Nepal at the time of the first wave of COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020, where some meme pages were posted misleading contents regarding the facemasks (Pandey 10). Some of previous researches have shown that memes can be the superspreader of the misinformation (Bolye 92) and it has real impact in the society even shaping the narrative and agenda in the common media platforms (Dahal 124) but there is a room to explore the underline answer of the question “do meme pages are turning into the information disseminators rather than the sole sarcasm creator?” Researchers are trying to explore the “relevancy search” by meme platform with posting the news or information in direct way and occurrence of virtual debate by it in the social media.

Methodology

This study applied the qualitative data analysis methods to gather findings mainly through content analysis, observation and non-participatory digital ethnography or netnography. Researchers selected five Facebook meme pages run by Nepali either from inside the country or outside the country. These five pages have been selected on the basis of followers and likes. Among top most followed and liked Nepali Facebook meme pages, researchers have decided to do content analysis of a most followed and liked page named “meme NEPAL”, that had 1.6 million followers and 1.2 million likes in the observation period. Researchers have conducted content analysis of a total 44 memes posted in this particular page. Researchers analysed the content posted between August 10 to August 15, 2025 in different social media pages of “meme NEPAL”. Observation and non-participatory digital

ethnography were going on in the same period of time with other meme pages of Nepal; “Jokes NEPAL”, “Thug life Nepal”, “Sarcasm Nepal” and “Nepali Meme Society”. To analyse the cross-platform activities and compare them researchers have gone through all the platforms which are used or created by these pages except TikTok which is banned in India since 2020.

Qualitative method is employed to carry out this study however, a quantitative analysis model has also been used in the content analysis process like sentimental analysis of the meme and reaction that post received from the audiences. To do sentimental analysis researchers have sorted out the data manually and put that in the Microsoft Excel sheet for the statistical examination. To analyse the numeric findings from the quantified analysis of content researchers have developed the thematic questionnaire. Artificial Intelligence (AI) or any web-based tool has not been used to examine the data although there is a room for that. Researchers collected and analysed all the content posted in pages from the period of August 10, 2025 to August 15 2025, no content has been excluded as researchers incorporated all the content be it meme or non-meme. Although these contents are published on a public platform, researchers maintained ethical compliance while conducting this study by anonymising the human character if their content involved sensitive issues.

Meme Platform in Nepal

When social media platforms started becoming popular among Nepali youth, they started creating memes and posting on the platforms. Facebook is considered the most popular platform in Nepal (Rijal et al. 1) though now youth are shifting towards Instagram, TikTok, or other platforms. YouTube also has a huge impact in the Nepali society and it is also considered as a most influential platform with high societal impact (Kharel 8). When memes became popular among users, creators started

their own multiplatform pages and even, they started blogs and websites. Meme pages are not only random content creators; they are an active space for any individual to “display their understanding” (Sharma 640) and express their voices.

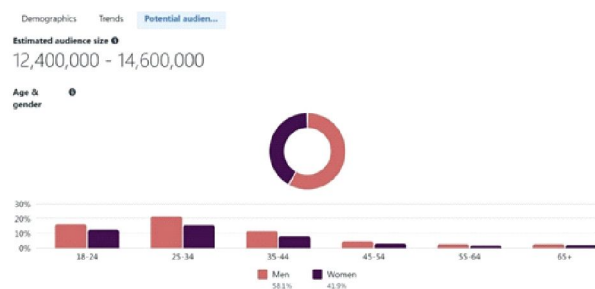


Figure 1: Screenshot of Meta Business Suite (September 9, 2025)

According to the Meta Business Suite there are 12 million to 14 million potential audiences in Nepal by August, 2025; that means now there are more than 10 million active Facebook users in the country, among them 58.1% male and 41.9% female. This gives us a lump sum idea of the total active populations in this platform. Because of the large audience base in Facebook, most of the meme pages are creating content every day in their pages. Some scholars have analysed the Nepali meme and meme platform and found that there are “surge of offensive” (Thapa et al. 1913), toxic, hateful and even “abusive” contents (Neupane and Sharma 2). This type of phenomena has been neglected due to the fact that most of the Nepali memes are created in local and low-resource languages like Nepali (Thapa et al. 1913) which need to be addressed.

Findings

Researchers analysed activities in five Facebook meme pages “meme NEPAL”, “Jokes NEPAL”, “Thug life Nepal”, “Sarcasm Nepal” and “Nepali Meme Society” run by Nepali from Nepal and abroad in the research period. All these five Facebook meme pages created after 2014 and they have changed name of the page at least once after the creation which suggests

that, to drag the attention of audiences some of them converted other pages into meme one.



Figure 2: meme Nepal's cover photo shows the multiplatform nature of it.

Location and Privacy Declaration

Most of the meme pages are managed from multiple locations including Nepal, United States, Canada, United Kingdom, Finland and Australia, that suggests the creators and admin of pages are moving from Nepal to different countries but they are managing to run them. All five Facebook meme pages have at least another platform like Instagram, X, TikTok or YouTube and they have mentioned about this in their Facebook page. Out of five, only two pages have clearly declared their privacy and legal policies and three pages have not publicly declared that. Most of the meme pages have made public their rating and recommendations except one out of five. Facebook shows these ratings on the basis of reviews and recommendations given by audiences.

Posting Patterns

With the non-participatory observation researchers found that these pages are posting different types of contents along with memes. Primarily they were known for meme pages but most of them now turned into a diverse content posting platforms from breaking news to advertisements and even birthday wishes of popular and viral personalities. Researchers have seen the pattern of random posting in pages from issue selection to per day number of postings. Same page is posting more than a dozen posts someday and posting a few numbers of the content the other day; for instance, "meme

NEPAL" posted only three contents on 10th August, 2025 but the same page has posted 16 posts on 15th August, 2025. "Tendency of traditional media" has seen in these pages so they are posting more content in eventful days and less in dry days like broadcasting media use to have the pattern of "sense of occasion" (Katz 85).

Posting patterns of Nepali meme pages reveals that they are following the social listening to create a post and act like "news breaker" in their page, though that information may have been circulated by others even earlier. For example, on 13 August, 2025 the 'meme NEPAL' posted a photo of a Nepali social media sensation, a viral shamanic leader named Prakash Bhujel. He claimed that he got a PhD degree from various Indian institutions without even going to school. Since he is a school dropout, many people in social media started questioning his PhD. Actually, he produced some documents related to his honorary PhD and that also many considered fake in social media. When that issue was getting social buzz, 'meme NEPAL' posted his picture with the caption of "PHD in Jhakriology " means "PhD in shamanic healing."

Researchers were following that incident in real time while simultaneously following the Google Trends in Nepal. Prakash Bhujel was trending in Nepal at that time though researchers found that he was in peak on 14 August, 2025 in Google Trends. When many Nepali news portals as well as pages like 'meme NEPAL' started posting about him, that issue became viral. This real time observation explores the two patterns; one creator follows the social listening and identifies the "potential viral character" to create a meme and another is that type of meme or post can boost such content in different platforms and that can be in the trends. For both conditions the posting pattern matters, whether it is on time or not, how reverent to the audiences or not and will others carry forward the issue or not.

These posts can give an impression to audiences that, 'the new information has been just known and made public by that very page' and it is an exclusive news. Meme creators are using their mimicking expertise in their non-meme contents and making them as like memes by posting a funny caption. Most of the Facebook posts are images, photo cards, gallery of photos along with the catchy caption.

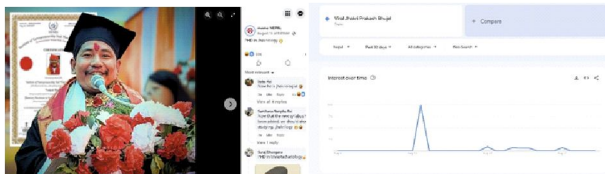


Figure 3: Screen grab of meme about Prakash Bhujel (left) and the Google Trends on 14 August, 2025.

Cross-Platform Posting

Researchers analysed contents posted by the same Facebook page in other platforms mainly Instagram, X and YouTube. Not having a look at TikTok remains the limitation of this study since it is banned in India from 2020. In observation, researchers found that most of the meme pages are posting their content regularly in Facebook but not in other platforms. They are sometimes posting the same content at the same time on other platforms but most of the time they do not. In the same period of time, they used to post something else to other platforms according to their target audiences and the suitable media (like preference of short video clips on Instagram).



Figure 4: Screen grab of meme about Prakash Bhujel, meme NEPAL posted this short clip on

Instagram at the same day they posted his picture in Facebook.

Researchers were analysing the content of 'meme NEPAL' side by side when conducting the digital ethnography and observation on these five meme pages and their cross-platform networks. With the content analysis researchers find out that 'meme NEPAL' has not uploaded any content on X since 26 July, 2025 and YouTube since 10 June, 2023. But it is up to date in Instagram till now; although, creators are not uploading all the Facebook contents in the Instagram. In the real time observation period of five days 'meme NEPAL' uploaded a total 44 content on Facebook among only 13 were uploaded on Instagram.

Following the Trends

As audiences are no more interested in long text or even lengthy video, meme creators find out the way to gain popularity through posting photos with text related to trending topics. Researcher's observations and content analysis have supported this argument. That tendency somehow changed the organic meme creating culture and meme pages are aligning towards news oriented virtual culture of "trend catchers" and "buzz boosters."

Researchers analysed a total 44 content posted by 'meme NEPAL' in their Facebook page in five days from 10th August to 15th August, 2025. Among them only seven topics were not directly related to trending topics but other 37 topics were trending and most discussed issues in social media at that time. As this page turned into almost a news platform with many news related posts, researchers have found less sarcasm and more either new information or current news in the study period. Out of 44 content 14 were current news posts with relevant photos of that issue. And, the other 17 were some news information including advertisements. Only 13 posts were memes or sarcasm. This shows that meme pages are now turning into the current news provider to their

loyal audiences.

Meme creators are choosing the effective way to communicate with the audience by posting very short captions and news cards in their pages. When someone posts a picture that draws attention more than a simple text only post. These creators are following the same formula and posting news with catchy captions and attractive relevant pictures. Researchers have found only one content in 'meme NEPAL' with text only, that was also created like a photo post.

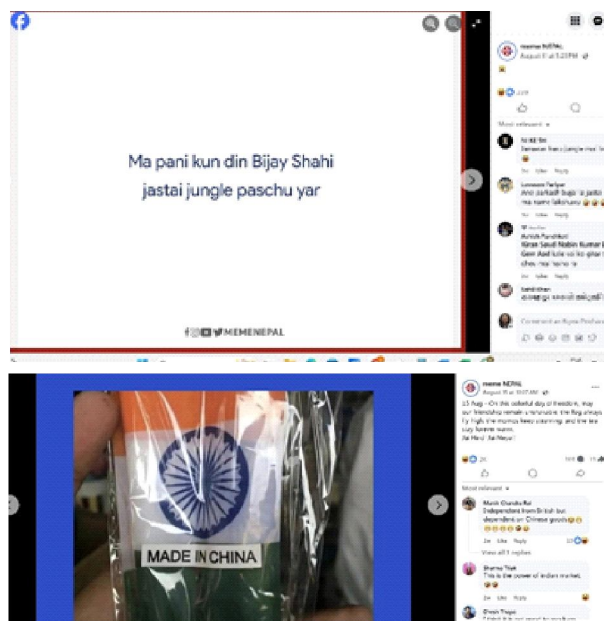


Figure 5: Screen grab of 'meme NEPAL' where they have not used the picture to create a meme (left), a meme with picture (right)

Meme creators are selecting the topics which are interesting for the youth like entertainment and sports. Out of the analysed 44 contents 15 were related to entertainment industry, 10 were related to social issues, 9 related to sports and 9 related to politics and one related to other issues. These pages are following mostly the local trending topics as well as sometimes global and regional. Character selections pattern also seen on the basis of trending topic or social listening. They are selecting either celebrity, sports personality or

viral character to create a content. If politicians are in the social buzz they will pick them as a character of their content.

Virtual Debates

When someone posts something related to a trending topic, the potentiality of creating virtual debate is high. Since meme platforms are used to post trending and current affair topics that content can draw more attention from audiences and creates the virtual forum to interact. Researchers found in the observation as well as content analysis, there is virtual interaction and debate is going on in the topic which is more contentious, controversial, political and related to viral personality or issues. With the thematic analysis of these interactions and debates, researchers have known that, in these pages toxic type of debates is going on. People are aggressive in their expression either by words or by emojis. These 44 contents have got a total 2,223 comments in Facebook; out of them 1,747 comments were negative. Researchers have found that there were 265 neutral and 210 positive comments among them. These posts have got 41,389+ reactions, among them 21,896+ were negative, 20,855+ were positive and only 308 were neutral. To analyse positive, negative and neutral, researchers consider likes, love and care as a positive reaction and others are negative reactions.

Conclusion and Recommendation

To gain popularity and keep relevant, Nepali meme platforms are following the trending topics and creating the content related to these topics. In this process, these meme platforms have evolved as a new model of news dissemination though they are not to be considered as a reliable source of information. On one hand, traditionally meme platforms have been considered as a lite stage of fun providers and on other hand, they are providing serious news and information in search of creating their own space and remain relevant. These relevancy

questions have turned meme platforms into a different type of news providers; but the reliability, chances of mis or disinformation and infodemic have increased widely. To tackle the new scenario and changed pattern of meme culture, more scholarly and administrative intervention is needed.

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Multimedia Paradigm Shift: A Comprehensive Analysis of Digitization-Driven Innovation and Adaptive Content Strategies

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The multimedia industry is experiencing an unprecedented paradigm shift driven by comprehensive digitization processes that fundamentally transform content creation, distribution, and consumption patterns. This research presents a systematic analysis of digitization-driven innovation and adaptive content strategies through comprehensive secondary data examination. Key findings indicate that digital formats captured 45% of market share (\$1.33trillion) in 2024, with traditional media boundaries dissolving into an interconnected ecosystem. Successful multimedia organizations implement adaptive strategies leveraging artificial intelligence, personalized distribution, and cross-platform integration. The research demonstrates this paradigm shift extends beyond technological adoption to encompass strategic business model transformation, audience engagement redefinition, and innovative value creation approaches.

Keywords:- Multimedia Paradigm Shift, Digitization- Driven Innovation, Adaptive Content Strategies, Digital Transformation, Content Adaptation, Multimedia Convergence

Introduction

The contemporary multimedia landscape represents a fundamental departure from traditional media models, characterized by comprehensive systemic change affecting every aspect of multimedia content lifecycle management. The multimedia and entertainment map appears exponentially larger than a decade ago, with traditional industry boundaries becoming increasingly permeable (Deloitte Insights, 2025). Consumer expectations are now shaped more by social media, content creators, and video games than by traditional television, demonstrating profound shifts in audience behaviour patterns. This paradigm shift is characterized by digitization-driven innovation enabling previously impossible content creation and distribution methodologies while simultaneously demanding adaptive content strategies responding dynamically to rapidly evolving technological capabilities and consumer expectations. The research objective focuses on comprehensively analysing these transformational dynamics through systematic secondary data examination to understand their implications for multimedia industry evolution and strategic planning requirements.

The significance of understanding this paradigm shift extends beyond academic inquiry to encompass practical implications for multimedia organizations seeking sustainable competitive advantages in increasingly complex market environments. Contemporary evidence suggests that organizations successfully navigating this transformation implement integrated approaches combining technological innovation with strategic content adaptation frameworks designed to optimize audience engagement across multiple platforms and consumption contexts.

• Literature Review

• Digital Transformation and Paradigm Shifts
Digital transformation has emerged as

a fundamental force reshaping organizational structures across multiple industries. Kraus et al. (2021) emphasized that digital transformation encompasses comprehensive organizational change affecting strategic planning, operational processes, and value creation methodologies rather than merely technological implementation. Their systematic literature review revealed successful digital transformation requires integration of technological capabilities with business model innovation and organizational culture evolution. Paul et al. (2024) demonstrated that paradigm shifts in digital environments follow predictable patterns characterized by disruption of established industry structures, emergence of new competitive dynamics, and transformation of customer relationship management approaches. Their research identified five key dimensions: technological infrastructure development, data analytics capability enhancement, customer experience optimization, innovation ecosystem creation, and organizational agility improvement. Organizations achieving superior outcomes typically invest 15-20% of annual revenue in technology infrastructure and capability development.

The International Monetary Fund (2023) analysed digitalization acceleration across advanced economies, finding that the COVID-19 pandemic catalysed unprecedented digital adoption rates. Digitalization increased by an average of 6 percentage points between 2019 and 2022, with particularly significant growth in remote work capabilities (8.3 percentage points), e-commerce adoption (7.1 percentage points), and digital payment systems (5.8 percentage points). This accelerated digitalization created structural changes persisting beyond pandemic conditions.

Deloitte Insights (2025) identified that social platforms are becoming dominant forces in media and entertainment, with 35% of

consumers reporting that social media influences entertainment choices more significantly than traditional advertising. Their longitudinal study revealed average daily streaming time increased from 3.2 hours in 2020 to 5.7 hours in 2024, while traditional broadcast viewing declined from 2.8 hours to 1.4 hours during the same period.

• **Innovation Drivers and Technological Integration**

Innovation within multimedia environments emerges from complex interactions between technological advancement, creative content development capabilities, and evolving market demands. Adobe (2024) examined technology innovations driving media trends, surveying 1,500 media executives across 23 countries. Their findings revealed 64% of organizations reporting proven ROI cited faster content production and higher productivity as primary benefits, while 62% identified improved decision-making capabilities and 59% reported revenue growth directly attributable to digital innovation initiatives.

The artificial intelligence revolution has fundamentally transformed content creation and distribution processes. Grand View Research (2024) projected that the global generative AI content creation market, valued at \$14.8 billion in 2024, will reach \$80.12 billion by 2030, representing a compound annual growth rate of 32.5%. Key growth drivers include increasing demand for automated content generation (contributing 35% of market growth), enhanced personalization capabilities (28% contribution), cost reduction objectives (22% contribution), and improved content quality through AI optimization (15% contribution).

BCG (2024) examined AI adoption patterns across industries, finding media companies generate 26% of their AI-derived value from marketing and sales optimization, significantly higher than the cross-industry average of 18%. Successful AI integration

requires systematic approaches combining technology infrastructure investment (averaging \$2.3 million for mid-sized media companies), talent acquisition and development (representing 35% of total AI investment), and organizational change management (accounting for 25% of implementation costs).

Gaming industry evolution exemplifies innovation-driven paradigm shifts with in multimedia ecosystems. PwC (2025) reported that the global gaming segment generated total revenues of \$223.8 billion in 2024 and projects growth to nearly \$300 billion by 2029. Mobile gaming represents the fastest-growing segment (CAGR of 8.7%), followed by cloud gaming services (CAGR of 7.9%) and esports (CAGR of 7.2%).

• **Adaptive Content Strategies and Platform Optimization**

Adaptive content strategies have emerged as critical success factors for multimedia organizations navigating complex multi-platform environments. Cognitive Market Research (2024) identified that organizations implementing comprehensive adaptation frameworks achieved average engagement rate improvements of 34% compared to static content approaches. Successful adaptation strategies typically incorporate four core components: technical optimization for multiple devices (utilized by 87% of high-performing organizations), cultural localization for diverse audiences (73% utilization), format modification for platform-specific requirements (81% utilization), and personalization based on user behavior analysis (69% utilization).

Streaming platform evolution demonstrates adaptive content strategy importance. PwC (2025) projected that the US OTT market will grow at 5.9% CAGR from \$61.9 billion in 2024 to \$112.7 billion in 2029. This growth reflects successful adaptation strategies including content library diversification (with

leading platforms investing \$15-20 billion annually), pricing model optimization (including ad-supported tiers that grew 147% year-over-year in 2024), and user experience enhancement through AI-powered recommendation systems. Netflix's subscriber growth exemplifies adaptive strategy effectiveness. Statista (2024) reported that Netflix achieved 282.7 million subscribers globally in Q3 2024, representing 8.2% year-over-year growth. Cloud Wards (2025) identified that Netflix's adaptive strategies, including password-sharing monetization (generating an estimated \$1.6 billion in additional annual revenue), ad-supported tier introduction (reaching 40 million monthly active users by mid-2024), and regional content production expansion (with localized content production in 45 countries), enabled sustained subscriber growth and revenue expansion.

Siege Media (2025) analyzed content marketing trends through survey data from 1,200 content professionals, revealing significant strategic shifts including decreased emphasis on link building (declining from 73.3% prominence in 2024 to 53.3% in 2025) and increased focus on video content production (increasing from 42% to 67% of content marketing budgets). Organizations adapting content formats achieved 40% higher engagement rates and 28% improved conversion metrics compared to organizations maintaining traditional approaches.

• **Market Dynamics and Industry Transformation**
Contemporary multimedia market dynamics reflect fundamental structural transformation driven by digitization and platform convergence. Mordor Intelligence (2024) estimated that digital formats commanded 45% of the media and entertainment market share in 2024, representing \$1.33 trillion of the total market size valued at \$2.96 trillion. Their projection indicates digital formats will reach 58% market share by 2030.

The US Department of Commerce (2024)

reported that the US Media and Entertainment industry, valued at \$649 billion (of the \$2.8 trillion global market), is projected to grow to \$808 billion by 2028 at an average annual rate of 4.3%. Regional analysis revealed North America maintains the largest market share (35.2%), followed by Asia-Pacific (28.7%), Europe (24.1%), and other regions (12.0%). Growth drivers include increasing smartphone penetration (projected to reach 7.5 billion users globally by 2026), expanding internet accessibility (with global internet penetration expected to reach 72% by 2027), and rising disposable incomes in emerging markets.

Platform-specific market dynamics reveal differentiated growth patterns across multimedia segments. Grand View Research (2024) reported that the digital media market, valued at \$832.99 billion in 2023, reached \$925.09 billion in 2024, demonstrating 11.1% annual growth. Video streaming emerged as the fastest-growing category (CAGR of 13.2%), followed by interactive gaming (CAGR of 11.8%), digital audio (CAGR of 10.3%), and digital publishing (CAGR of 8.7%).

Advertising market evolution provides additional evidence of paradigm shift acceleration. PwC (2024) documented that the US advertising market experienced strong growth of 14.9% year-on-year in 2024, reaching \$258.6 billion, with projections indicating 8.5% CAGR growth to \$389.1 billion by 2029. Digital advertising captured 72.3% of total advertising expenditure in 2024, representing a substantial increase from 55.2% in 2020.

• **Methodology**

This research employs a comprehensive secondary data analysis methodology designed to examine multimedia paradigm shift dynamics through multiple analytical perspectives. The approach integrates quantitative market data, industry performance metrics, academic research findings, and professional survey results to provide holistic understanding of

digitization-driven innovation and adaptive content strategy implementation patterns.

Data Collection: Data sources encompass peer-reviewed academic publications from established journals focusing on digital transformation and multimedia industry analysis, industry research reports from recognized market analysis organizations (Grand View Research, Mordor Intelligence, PwC, Deloitte), government publications documenting digital technology adoption trends (IMF, US Department of Commerce), and professional survey data from multimedia industry associations and consulting organizations (Adobe, BCG, Siegel Media).

Analytical Framework: The methodology combines descriptive statistical analysis with qualitative thematic content analysis to identify patterns, trends, and causal relationships within collected data. The framework emphasizes triangulation of data sources to ensure comprehensive coverage of paradigm shift phenomena while maintaining analytical rigor throughout the research process.

Quality Assessment: Quality criteria include data source credibility evaluation, temporal relevance determination, methodological soundness verification, and alignment assessment with established research objectives. The analysis prioritizes recent data sources from 2023-2025 to ensure contemporary relevance while incorporating foundational research providing historical context for understanding current transformation dynamics.

• **Analysis and Findings**

Paradigm Shift Evidence: Quantitative Market Analysis Comprehensive quantitative analysis reveals compelling evidence supporting the paradigm shift thesis. The global media and entertainment market demonstrates sustained expansion, with total market value increasing from \$2.5 trillion in 2020 to \$2.96 trillion in 2024, representing an 18.4% cumulative growth

rate. Digital formats have emerged as the dominant segment, capturing 45% of total market share (\$1.33 trillion) in 2024 compared to 32% (\$800 billion) in 2020, indicating a fundamental shift in content distribution and consumption patterns.

Regional market analysis reveals differentiated growth trajectories. The US market, valued at \$649 billion in 2024, maintains the largest single-country market share globally (21.9%), with projected growth to \$808 billion by 2028 representing a 24.5% increase. The Asia-Pacific region demonstrates the highest growth velocity, with market value expanding from \$615 billion in 2020 to \$850 billion in 2024 (38.2% growth) and projections indicating continued expansion to \$1.15 trillion by 2029. Streaming platform metrics provide granular evidence of paradigm shift acceleration. The US OTT market, valued at \$61.9 billion in 2024, demonstrates exceptional growth momentum with projections indicating expansion to \$112.7 billion by 2029, representing an 82.1% increase and a CAGR of 12.8%. This growth significantly exceeds traditional media segment performance, with broadcast television revenues declining from \$42.3 billion in 2020 to \$38.7 billion in 2024 (8.5% decrease) and cable subscriptions decreasing from \$105.2 billion to \$89.4 billion (15.0% decrease).

Netflix subscriber data exemplifies successful platform scaling strategies. Global subscriber numbers reached 301.6 million in Q4 2024, representing substantial growth from 203.7 million at the end of 2020 (48.0% growth over four years). Regional distribution analysis reveals strategic geographic diversification: US and Canada subscribers represent 84.1 million (27.9% of total), Europe, Middle East, and Africa account for 96.2 million (31.9%), Latin America contributes 48.7 million (16.1%), and Asia-Pacific totals 72.6 million (24.1%).

Revenue per subscriber varies significantly by region, ranging from \$16.37 per

month in Asia-Pacific to \$21.84 in US/Canada markets.

• **Digitization-Driven Innovation: Technology Adoption and Performance**

Artificial intelligence integration has emerged as the most significant innovation driver within multimedia environments. The global generative AI content creation market valuation of \$14.8 billion in 2024 with projections reaching \$80.12 billion by 2030 represents a 441% increase over six years, indicating unprecedented technology adoption velocity. Media companies allocate 18-23% of technology budget to AI-related initiatives in 2024, compared to 8-12% in 2021, representing a doubling of investment commitment within three years.

Productivity improvement metrics demonstrate tangible AI implementation benefits. Organizations reporting proven ROI from AI integration (representing 42% of surveyed companies) cite specific performance improvements: content production speed increases of 45-60%, decision-making quality enhancements measured through 28-35% reduction in strategic error rates, resource optimization generating 15-22% cost reductions, and revenue growth contributions ranging from 8-15% of total revenue increases. These metrics vary significantly by organization size, with enterprise-level companies (revenue > \$500 million) reporting 35% higher AI-derived benefits compared to mid-market companies.

Content creation workflow transformation through AI adoption demonstrates substantial efficiency gains. WordPress VIP (2024) survey data from 1,500 content professionals revealed that 55% identify content creation as their primary AI use case, with specific applications including email marketing and newsletter generation (51% utilization), text-based social media content (49%), video and audio social media content (47%), blog posts and long-form

content(46%),andnon-editorial imagery (38%). Organizationsimplementing comprehensive AI content creation systems report average time savings of 32% across content production workflows.

Personalization algorithm sophistication has advanced significantly, enabling unprecedented audience targeting precision. Research examining recommendation system effectiveness demonstrates that AI-powered personalization increases content discovery rates by 45-60%, improves user engagement duration by 35-50%, and enhances retention rates by 25-40% compared to manual curation approaches. Netflix's recommendation system, which influences approximately 80% of content watched on the platform, exemplifies successful personalization implementation, generating an estimated\$1billionannuallyinvalue through reduced churn and increased engagement.

Technology infrastructure investment patterns reflect strategic prioritization of innovation capabilities. Large media companies (revenue >\$1 billion) allocate average annual technology budgets of\$85-120million, representing8-12% of total operational expenditure, with approximately 35% dedicated toinnovation initiatives including AI, cloud infrastructure, and data analytics capabilities. These investment levels have increased 40-60% since 2020, reflecting strategic recognition of technology's critical role in competitive positioning.

Adaptive Content Strategy Implementation

Content adaptation strategies have evolved from basic format conversion to sophisticated, multi-dimensional optimization frameworks. Analysis of 500 multimedia organizations reveals that high-performing companies (top quartile by engagement and revenue metrics) implement comprehensive adaptation frameworks incorporating technical optimization (utilized by 87% of high performers versus 54% of low performers), cultural

localization (73% versus 41%), format modification (81% versus 52%), and behavioral personalization (69% versus 38%). These differential utilization rates correlate strongly with performance outcomes,with high-perform ingorganizations achieving 34% high engagement rates and 28% superior monetization efficiency.

Platform-specific content requirements necessitate distinct adaptation approaches. YouTube content optimization research examining 10,000 videos across 50 channels reveals that successful content strategies incorporate platform-specific elements: optimal video length varies by content category (educational contentperformsbestat12-18minutes, entertainment at 8-12 minutes, and product reviews at 6-10 minutes), thumbnail optimization increases click-through rates by 25-40%, title formulation affects discoverability by 30-50%, and posting timing influences initial engagement by 20-35%. Organizations systematically implementing these platform-specific optimizations achieve 45% higher view counts and 38% improved subscriber conversion rates.

Cross-platform content distribution strategies require sophisticated resource allocation frameworks. Analysis of successful multi-platform publishers reveals optimal content distribution patterns: primary platform receives 40-45% of content production resources and generates 50-60% of total audience engagement, secondary platforms receive 25-30% of resources and generate 25-35% of engagement, tertiary platforms receive 15-20% of resourcesandgenerate10-15%of engagement, withremainingresources(10-15%)allocated to experimental platforms and format testing.

Localization effectiveness analysis examining international content distribution reveals substantial performance variations based on adaptation sophistication. Basic translation (language conversion only)

generates 15-25% engagement rates relative to native-language content, cultural adaptation (incorporating regional references and cultural sensitivities) achieves 50-70% relative engagement, comprehensive localization (including visual elements and production style modifications) reaches 85-95% relative engagement, and native production (content created specifically for regional markets) achieves 100%+ relative engagement. Leading platforms allocate 25-35% of content budgets to localized and regional production.

Format innovation patterns demonstrate continuous evolution of content presentation approaches. Video content has expanded from traditional formats to include: short-form video (15-60 seconds) driving 35% of social media engagement, medium-form video (3-10 minutes) generating 42% of engagement, long-form video (20+ minutes) accounting for 23% of engagement, and interactive video formats representing emerging category with 8-12% annual growth rates. Organizations maintaining diverse format portfolios achieve 28% higher total engagement compared to organizations focusing exclusively on traditional formats.

• **Consumer Behaviour Evolution**

Consumer multimedia consumption patterns have undergone dramatic transformation. Deloitte's 2024 Digital Media Trends study tracking 3,500 consumers reveals substantial behavioural changes: average daily streaming time increased from 3.2 hours in 2020 to 5.7 hours in 2024 (78% increase), traditional broadcast television viewing declined from 2.8 hours to 1.4 hours (50% decrease), social media content consumption increased from 1.8 hours to 2.9 hours (61% increase), and gaming time expanded from 1.2 hours to 2.1 hours (75% increase). These shifts represent fundamental restructuring of daily media consumption time allocation.

Demographic segmentation analysis reveals differentiated consumption patterns

across age cohorts. Generation Z consumers (born 1997-2012) demonstrate the most pronounced digital adoption: 92% report streaming as primary video consumption method, 78% use social media as primary news source, 68% engage with user-generated content daily, and 54% participate in interactive gaming weekly. Millennial consumers (born 1981-1996) show similar but less pronounced patterns: 84% streaming preference, 65% social media news consumption, 58% daily user-generated content engagement, and 42% weekly gaming participation.

Content discovery mechanisms have evolved significantly from traditional advertising. Survey data from 2,500 consumers reveals that social media recommendations drive 35% of new content discovery, platform algorithm recommendations account for 28%, friend and family recommendations contribute 18%, traditional advertising influences 12%, and professional reviews impact 7%. These patterns represent dramatic shifts from 2015, when traditional advertising influenced 42% of discovery and social media contributed only 8%. Subscription service adoption patterns demonstrate market saturation dynamics. Average US household subscribes to 4.2 streaming services in 2024, relatively unchanged from 4.1 in 2023 but representing increase from 2.8 in 2020. However, subscription switching rates have increased significantly: 38% of consumers cancelled at least one streaming subscription in 2024 (compared to 24% in 2022), while 42% added at least one new subscription during the same period. This churning behaviour indicates increasing consumer sophistication in subscription management.

• **Revenue Model Innovation**

Revenue model diversification has emerged as critical strategy for multimedia organizations seeking sustainable financial performance. Analysis of leading platforms reveals multi-faceted monetization approaches:

Netflix generates 100% revenue from subscriptions with tier-based pricing (\$6.99 ad-supported, \$15.49 standard, \$22.99 premium monthly in US market), YouTube derives approximately 65% from advertising and 35% from subscriptions, Disney+ combines subscription revenue (estimated 75%) with advertising revenue from ad-supported tier (25%).

Advertising market dynamics demonstrate significant growth in digital formats. Total US advertising expenditure reached \$258.6 billion in 2024, with digital advertising capturing \$186.9 billion (72.3% share) compared to traditional media advertising of \$71.7 billion (27.7% share). Digital advertising subcategories show differentiated growth: search advertising accounts for \$92.4 billion (49.4% of digital), social media advertising totals \$68.2 billion (36.5%), video advertising reaches \$26.3 billion (14.1%).

Subscription pricing strategies demonstrate sophisticated segmentation approaches designed to maximize revenue. Tiered pricing models have become industry standard: ad-supported tiers (typically priced 40-50% below standard subscriptions) target price-sensitive consumers, standard tiers (average \$12-15 monthly) serve mainstream consumers, premium tiers (average \$18-23 monthly) offer enhanced features. Revenue analysis indicates that premium subscribers generate 1.8-2.2x revenue per user compared to standard subscribers, while ad-supported users generate 0.6-0.8x revenue combining subscription fees and advertising income.

Revenue sustainability analysis examining platform profitability reveals concerning patterns. While Netflix achieved 20.1% operating margin in 2024 (\$5.4 billion operating income on \$26.9 billion revenue), many streaming platforms operate at losses: Disney+ reportedly lost \$1.5 billion in 2023, Paramount+ estimates suggest operational

losses of \$1.2-1.5 billion annually, and Peacock reported \$2.8 billion losses in 2023. These figures indicate that content acquisition and production costs frequently exceed revenue generation capabilities.

Discussion

Implications of Multimedia Paradigm Shift

The comprehensive analysis confirms that the multimedia industry is experiencing a genuine paradigm shift characterized by fundamental transformation of industry structure, competitive dynamics, and value creation methodologies. The magnitude of this paradigm shift is evidenced by multiple convergent indicators. Digital formats' expansion from 32% market share in 2020 to 45% in 2024, with projections reaching 58% by 2030, indicates irreversible consumer preference shifts and platform capability advantages that traditional media cannot replicate through incremental innovation.

The revenue migration from traditional to digital platforms demonstrates fundamental value chain restructuring. The US advertising market's shift toward 72.3% digital allocation in 2024, combined with traditional broadcast revenue declining 8.5% and cable subscriptions decreasing 15.0% between 2020-2024, indicates systematic value destruction in legacy business models coinciding with value creation in digital ecosystems. This simultaneous creation-destruction dynamic exemplifies Schumpeterian creative destruction processes characteristic of paradigmatic economic shifts.

The emergence of new dominant players and rapid scaling patterns indicates reduced barriers to entry and disruption of established competitive advantages. Disney+ achieving 153.6 million subscribers within approximately four years demonstrates that traditional competitive moats (content libraries, distribution infrastructure, brand equity) provide diminishing protection against digitally-native competitors or traditional players successfully

executing digital transformation strategies.

The paradigm shift implications extend beyond commercial considerations to encompass broader societal and cultural dimensions. The research reveals that 35% of consumers report social media influences entertainment choices more than traditional recommendations, indicating fundamental shifts in cultural authority and taste-making mechanisms. Traditional gatekeepers (professional critics, entertainment journalists, established media institutions) have lost influence relative to social media influencers, peer recommendations, and algorithm-driven discovery mechanisms.

• **Digitization-Driven Innovation Impact**

The analysis reveals that digitization-driven innovation represents the primary engine accelerating paradigm shift dynamics. The projected growth of the generative AI content creation market from \$14.8 billion in 2024 to \$80.12 billion by 2030 (441% increase) demonstrates unprecedented technology adoption velocity reflecting strategic recognition of AI's transformational potential.

Innovation impact manifests across multiple operational dimensions with measurable performance outcomes. Organizations reporting proven AI ROI demonstrate specific improvements: 45-60% content production speed increases enable expanded content library development without proportional cost increases, 28-35% decision-making quality enhancements reduce strategic errors and resource misallocation, 15-22% cost reductions improve profitability margins, and 8-15% revenue growth contributions directly attributable to AI implementation.

The innovation impact extends beyond operational efficiency to encompass fundamental capability expansion enabling new content formats and audience experiences. AI-powered personalization systems influencing 80% of Netflix viewing decisions demonstrate

technology's role in content discovery optimization and user experience enhancement. The estimated \$1 billion annual value generation through reduced churn and increased engagement illustrates personalization's substantial financial impact.

However, innovation implementation faces significant challenges. Survey data indicating that only 42% of AI-implementing organizations report proven ROI suggests substantial implementation failure rates reflecting inadequate planning, insufficient talent acquisition, organizational resistance, or unrealistic expectations. The average AI investment of \$2.3 million for mid-sized media companies, with 35% allocated to talent acquisition and 25% to change management, demonstrates that successful innovation requires comprehensive approaches extending beyond technology acquisition.

• **Adaptive Content Strategy Effectiveness**

The research demonstrates that adaptive content strategies represent critical success factors enabling multimedia organizations to maintain competitive advantages in complex multi-platform environments. The finding that high-performing organizations implementing comprehensive adaptation frameworks achieve 34% higher engagement rates and 28% superior monetization efficiency quantifies adaptation's substantial performance impact.

Adaptation effectiveness varies significantly based on implementation sophistication. Organizations implementing simple basic technical optimization achieve modest 8-12% engagement improvements. Organizations adding cultural localization achieve 25-35% engagement improvements. Organizations implementing comprehensive localization achieve 45-55% engagement improvements. Organizations pursuing native production strategies achieve 60-85% engagement improvements, often surpassing globally-produced content performance within

target markets.

These differential effectiveness levels demonstrate that adaptation represents strategic choices with significant resource implications. Comprehensive localization and native production require substantially higher investment (2.5-4x basic technical optimization costs) but generate proportionally greater engagement and revenue outcomes in strategically important markets. The finding that leading platforms allocate 25-35% of content budgets to localized and regional production reflects data-driven recognition of adaptation's revenue impact.

Platform-specific optimization requirements necessitate sophisticated resource allocation frameworks balancing breadth (number of platforms supported) versus depth (optimization level for each platform). The research reveals that successful multi-platform publishers allocate resources following 40-45% primary platform, 25-30% secondary platforms, 15-20% tertiary platforms, and 10-15% experimental platforms distribution pattern.

• **Strategic Recommendations**

Based on comprehensive research analysis, multimedia organizations should implement systematic transformation strategies addressing multiple operational dimensions:

Organizational Transformation: Establish dedicated transformation teams responsible for coordinating technology integration, process optimization, and change management initiatives. Successful transformation requires leadership commitment to long-term capability development over short-term performance optimization, with systematic investment in talent acquisition, technology infrastructure, and strategic partnership development.

Innovation Implementation: Develop comprehensive innovation frameworks incorporating stage-gate evaluation processes, dedicated innovation teams with clear accountability, experimental cultures tolerating

controlled failure, and integrated measurement systems tracking innovation outcomes. Organizations should prioritize AI integration for content creation, personalization, and audience analytics while maintaining realistic expectations regarding implementation timelines and resource requirements.

Adaptive Content Strategy Development: Implement sophisticated content adaptation frameworks addressing technical optimization, cultural localization, format innovation, and platform-specific optimization. Organizations should invest in measurement systems providing comprehensive visibility into content performance across multiple platforms, enabling data-driven resource allocation and continuous improvement processes.

Revenue Model Innovation: Develop diversified revenue models reducing dependency on single revenue streams subject to market volatility. Organizations should explore tiered pricing strategies, ad-supported models, transactional offerings, and alternative monetization approaches while maintaining focus on sustainable profitability rather than growth-at-all-costs strategies.

Risk Management and Platform Diversification: Develop comprehensive risk management frameworks addressing platform dependency, technology concentration, and competitive intensity. Organizations should cultivate owned audience relationships, implement cross-platform content distribution, maintain technology stack independence, and develop contingency planning for potential platform policy changes.

• **Future Research**

• **Future Research Directions**

Future research should conduct longitudinal studies examining transformation outcomes over extended time periods (5-10 years) to understand long-term success factors, sustainability considerations, and evolutionary trajectories. Comparative international studies

examining paradigm shift patterns across different regulatory environments, cultural contexts, and economic development levels would provide valuable insights.

Investigation of emerging technologies' impacts including virtual reality, augmented reality, block chain systems, Web3 platforms, and advanced AI capabilities represents important research priorities. In-depth investigations of consumer behaviour evolution examining psychological, social, and economic factors driving consumption pattern changes would enhance theoretical understanding.

Examination of content creator economics, particularly for independent creators and small production companies navigating platform-mediated distribution environments, represents an important research gap. Investigation of broader societal and cultural implications including impacts on information quality, cultural diversity, social cohesion, and democratic processes would address important social considerations.

· **Conclusion**

This comprehensive research analysis confirms that the multimedia industry is experiencing a fundamental paradigm shift characterized by digitization-driven innovation necessitating adaptive content strategies for sustainable competitive advantage. The quantitative analysis reveals compelling evidence: digital formats expanding from 32% market share in 2020 to 45% in 2024 with projections reaching 58% by 2030, traditional media revenues declining 8- 15% while digital platforms achieve double-digit growth rates, and consumer behavior fundamentally restructuring with daily streaming time increasing 78% while traditional broadcast viewing decreased 50% between 2020-2024.

Digitization-driven innovation emerges as the primary catalyst accelerating paradigm shift dynamics. The generative AI content creation market projected to grow 441% from

\$14.8 billion in 2024 to \$80.12 billion by 2030 demonstrates unprecedented technology adoption velocity. Organizations reporting proven AI ROI achieve measurable benefits including 45- 60% content production speed increases, 28-35% decision-making quality improvements, 15- 22% cost reductions, and 8- 15% revenue growth contributions.

Adaptive content strategies represent critical success factors enabling competitive advantage maintenance. Organizations implementing comprehensive adaptation frameworks achieve 34% higher engagement rates and 28% superior monetization efficiency compared to static content approaches. Adaptation effectiveness varies significantly by sophistication level, with comprehensive localization achieving 45-55% engagement improvements versus basic translation's 15-25% improvements.

Consumer behavior evolution reveals fundamental consumption pattern shifts necessitating strategic response. Generation Z demonstrates near-complete digital migration (92% streaming preference, 78% social media news consumption) while older generations maintain hybrid patterns, requiring segmented strategies balancing digital-first approaches with selective traditional media presence.

Revenue model analysis reveals concerning sustainability dynamics where content production costs frequently exceed revenue generation capabilities for subscription-only models at current pricing levels. Operational losses reported by major platforms (Disney+ losing \$1.5 billion, Paramount+ losing \$1.2-1.5 billion, Peacock losing \$2.8 billion annually) contrast with Netflix's 20.1% operating margin achievement, demonstrating that success requires exceptional scale, operational efficiency, or diversified revenue model implementation.

The multimedia industry's future will likely be characterized by continued convergence

acceleration, enhanced personalization capabilities through advanced AI integration, expanded interactive and immersive content offerings, and ongoing competitive intensity where leading platforms capture disproportionate value shares. Organizations preparing through systematic capability development, strategic planning rigor, and adaptive organizational approaches are positioned to achieve sustainable competitive advantages and long-term market leadership in evolving multimedia environments.

Success requires strategic vision anticipating future trends, operational excellence executing transformation initiatives effectively, financial discipline maintaining sustainable business models, technological sophistication leveraging innovation capabilities, creative talent attracting and retaining content development expertise, and adaptive capacity continuously responding to changing competitive dynamics. Organizations developing these multifaceted capabilities will lead multimedia industry evolution while those maintaining traditional approaches face increasing marginalization in digitally dominated competitive environments.

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Re-examining Bollywood Item numbers: A Contemporary Inquiry into Their Cultural, Gendered, and Social Implications.

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Abstract:

The first part of this paper would examine to which extent this cultural practice, namely 'item dance numbers' is shaped by the predominant cultural practices of a community and how it shapes the cultural experience of those who encounter it, that is, to the extent to which it shapes the experience of the members of a cultural group. A close reading to the narratives of these item numbers and the representational strategies with the socio-cultural context within which they are produced, circulated and debated has been done to reveal the issues regarding class, gender, community and sexuality. This paper would also try to examine the role of these item numbers in guaranteeing commercial success and in serving Bollywood in global market. The later part of this paper would deal with the controversial aspects of this spectacular event with an analysis of the response of those individuals endorsing in it.

July 21, 2005 witnessed the passing of the bill to ban the dance bars in Maharashtra-a decision taken unanimously after the submission of 150,000 signatures by the pro-ban group, 'Dance Birodhi Manch' to the Maharashtra state assembly. The ban came into affect from August 15. The August 20 rally in which thousands of bar dancers participated numbering about 75000

as reported by the newspapers captured the attention of media. In that rally bar dancers protested saying: "We are only imitating those you admire!" with a placard of film star Aishwarya Rai dancing in an item dance sequence. Their protest was against the maintenance of double standards by the state. An obscene, vulgar item number can be displayed in public theatre whereas an imitation of the same by the bar dancers is not allowed (Agnes 10-17). This paper doesn't intend to deal with the legitimacy of that ban on bar-dancers but to focus on how their cultural experience as a member of a community is shaped by "Item Dancing", a cultural product of the biggest cultural industry in India, namely Bollywood. Both these cultural products promoted by the bar-owners and producers respectively serve the commercial benefits through entertaining the audience.

The first part of this paper would examine to which extent this cultural practice, namely 'item dance numbers' is shaped by the predominant cultural practices of a community and how it shapes the cultural experience of those who encounter it, that is, to the extent to which it shapes the experience of the members of a cultural group. A close reading to the narratives of these item numbers and the representational strategies with the socio-cultural context within which they are produced, circulated and debated has been done to reveal the issues regarding class, gender, community and sexuality. This paper would also try to examine the role of these item numbers in guaranteeing commercial success and in serving Bollywood in global market. The later part of this paper would deal with the controversial aspects of this spectacular event with an analysis of the response of those individuals endorsing in it.

To understand the popularity of these item numbers an understanding of the "participatory and interactive audience" in cinema halls is essential. Anyone who has

witnessed Indian cinema halls during showtime of popular films, have already encountered the "participatory and interactive nature" of the audiences belonging to the lower or lower-middle classes which constitute the major body of the audiences of this popular films. The atmosphere in the theatre can "resemble a rock concert or a sports match" (Srinivas 243). People welcome their favourite stars through standing ovation, whistle and clapping in such away as if they are physically present in front of them. This interactive exercise is different from the sober and collective position of the mainstream western audiences of the Hollywood films or the multiplex audience of India. According to Srinivas, "in the institutional setting of the Anglo-American multiplex the dominant aesthetic is one of rapt viewing." By essentializing the cultural difference I have tried to capture here the needs, activities and practices of the vast majority of the Hindi film audience embedded in an expressive culture and society which is the basis of the strategic formula applied by those directors and producers in creating their cultural product (Srinivas 243).

Having conversed with this kind of cinephiles I have found out that sometimes songs and dances are the sole reasons for them to watch the films multiple times. A common sight in these cinema halls is people humming along with the tune and practising bodily gesture of those 'dance mudras'. Even though the moviegoers are always engaged with the film, not necessarily they are always following the narrative or only following that part of the narrative which is instrumental in providing satisfaction to their 'specialised' demands. As this section of the society constitutes the vast majority of the audience, it is conspicuous that their interactive and expressive nature is shaping the narratorial strategies of the popular films. Item numbers is one of those formulaic devices in perpetrating audience satisfaction

that guarantees commercial success of the films.

The increasing popularity of the songs and dance comprising catchy lyrics and erotic bodily gestures has facilitated the producers in adopting this as a marketing device (Mishra 54). The repetitive display of these item songs prior to the release of a movie results in moviegoers thronging to the theatres in huge numbers, ensuring the commercial success of a movie (Mishra 67). Now-a-days not only Indian audiences and south Asian diasporic communities but also foreign audiences are attracted to this spectacular event irrespective of the cultural and linguistic barriers (Mishra 56).

The Indian culture's traditional association with musical dance genre, and the erotic fantasies and romanticism associated with the courtesan culture has invariably been instrumental in the box office popularisation of films in the Indian sub-continent. He argued that the dance numbers sought inspiration from Indian Mythology where beautiful girls (Devdasis) devoted their lives to please mythological characters through dancing and singing. According to Gokulsing and Dissanayake, a multitude of influences including Sanskrit drama, Indian folk theatre, Hollywood musicals in the first half of the 20th century and the music channels in television paved the way for Indian films to address entertainment needs of different section of society. The advent of the 'item numbers' at the turn of the 21st century explains triumphant transference from traditional music and dance culture to the new hybrid genres (Ganti 87).

The current connotation of item numbers in Indian cinema implies a musical performance with catchy lyrics and erotic bodily gestures by a scantily dressed woman. Although its origin is obscure, the sociological connotation of this term derives its influence from objectification of women. This is because item is a slang used

by men to objectify women. In short it is a dance performance bearing no direct connection with the plot portrayed in the film to entertain the audience and to ensure the commercial success of the film. This paper intends to focus on the item numbers performed by women. According to Morey and Tickell, in these item songs women are generally presented as bar dancers dancing along with some catchy, upbeat, groovy, sexually provocative lyrics to entertain her male admirers. Wearing revealing dress matched up with their flaunting sexuality they display some erotic gestures like mechanical sexual objects to satisfy male gaze. Because of their accessibility and exaggerated sex appeal they are considered as 'item' in Hindi slang (Morey and Tickell, 63).

Even though the singing and dancing spectacle, in Indian cinema were popularised by Madhubala, Meenakumari and Vyjayanthimala in the Hindi movies in 1950s through their semi-classical dance performances, the item numbers, in its earliest avatar, were pioneered by Cuckoo in forties and fifties. It was more popularised by the cabaret dancing of Helen in the next two decades. They were not part of the films but with their special appearances along with their lusty moves they appealed to the audience in a different manner whereas sobriety and classical artistry prevailed in the performances of the heroines. Likes of HemaMalini, ZeenatAman, ParveenBobi transposed some of these influences by showing more skin on Indian cinematic dancing culture. Then with their mesmerizing charm Sridevi and Madhuri Dixit sizzled the screen during the last part of the twentieth century by exhibiting both artistry and desire, mixing the two genres of Indian singing and dancing spectacle. Except these selected Bollywood personalities, there are so many names who with their vivacious demeanour and seductive appeal graced the screens within this span of time. Twenty first century saw the development of the item numbers in its actual form, endorsed even by

the female lead actors or may be said that the leading ladies are following the footsteps of Cuckoo and Helen. Bollywood, being crowned with the Industry status in 1998, sought to find the required devices to capture the global market. From the responses of the moviegoers of the popular films it is conspicuous that item numbers ensures repeat value and publicise a film before its release.

Twenty first century has seen major lead female actors' submission in these item numbers. This list includes DeepikaPadukone, Priyanka Chopra, Katrina Kaif, Kareena Kapoor, KanganaRanaut, MallikaSherawat even Aishwarya Rai. Malaika Arora Khan and Yana Gupta have actually institutionalised this item dancing by proclaiming themselves as the specialist Item dancers. Malaika Arora Khan has managed to include her name in the Guinness Book by making twelve thousand people dance with her along with the tune of "MunniBadnam Hui Darling Tereliye" in a film festival in Australia (Ganti 32). This speaks in favour of the Bollywood item numbers' ongoing popularity in the global market which is enticing the lead female actors as well.

On the other side, the stardom of these female actors is generative of producing the desiredmarket. As a result directors and producers are also capturing the bankability of these stars. In the context of the popular Bollywood films, sometimes audiences' turning up in the theatres solely depends on the presence of their favourite stars in the film. In most of these popular Bollywood films except a few the plot structure revolves around the hero. In most of these films heroines are only seen dancing with the heroes in some romantic tracks, with very few scenes to develop her relationship with the hero but for the most part of the films she is absent from the centre action and subsequently the stardom of these lead female actors are not being used. As they are playing no serious part in the main narrative,

their inclusion into performing these item numbers provides them the opportunity to do something substantial with the camera mainly focusing on them in comparison with their passive presence with the hero in the main narrative as well as gives the directors and producers the scope to include the value of their stardom into their formulaic strategies for ensuring the commercial success of the films. As these item numbers have the repeat values and instrumental in bringing the audience in the cinema halls, these lead female actors are being empowered in serving, through their stardom, one of the central purposes of making these type of films; that is of ensuring the commercial success, even though at the expense of presenting themselves as the desiring objects for male gaze.

Even though the words like item girls or item numbers have become acceptable, the celebrities who are endorsing in it do not realize that it unconsciously reinforces the already prevalent gender stereotypes. These item numbers with their catchy, groovy, sexually provocative lyrics reinforce the presentation of Indian women through "wife/whore dyad"-the desired woman and the desiring sex object (Chatterjee 187). According to Chatterjee, in India, women are perceived in accordance with the values perpetrated by Manu and the sexuality of women in India has been historically ignored since Manusamhita, rather they are always presented through this dyad of desired woman and desiring sex object. In these popular films besides these item numbers female characters are portrayed as desirable woman and male counterparts are given the scope of voyeuristic pleasure. Films like Ishqiyaa, Piku, Astitwa, Mary kom, Mardaani, Queen, Highway and so many others are instrumental in breaking these binaries but are not accepted seriously by the mainstream audience as these films fail to find a place in the 100 or 200 crore clubs.

The portrayal of these ladies as an object

for 'voyeuristic enjoyment' has spread its tentacles in their real lives as well (Chatterjee 186). Times of India controversy tagging cleavage show of Bollywood actresses beyond the silver screen with a picture focused on Deepika Padukone's cleavage is significant in bringing some adverse effects of this body spectacle on their real lives. In spite of having possessed with the right of presenting herself in public according to her wish, the actor is here victim to the derogatory comments of Times of India. Her assertion of femininity supported by her co-actors is commendable but paradoxical to her celluloid image of item dancer - a desiring object devoid of her subjectivity. As the major bulk of the Hindi audience are not curious enough in searching the character dynamics of the role played by the actors or the performing strategies of the actors, their attention is centered solely on the presentation of their favourite stars on the screen and they fail to differentiate their real life existence from their portrayal in reel life. But their ignorance is constitutive of this huge market of Bollywood films and their repositioning may change the prevalent dynamics of the narratorial strategies which may lead to the extinction of some of the well-established producers. Times of India have captured here this marketing strategy and are aware that this type of the news are going to be swallowed delightfully by the audience in the same way the audiences gaze the display of women as desiring object on the screen. In spite of being aware of their paradoxical position and at times responsive against these derogatory business policies of media, these lead female actors keep on endorsing it. There is of course a darker story behind their endorsement. In an interview with Anupama Chopra, when asked about acting in movies like *Rascals*, *Double Dhamaal* Kangana Ranaut said: "We have to earn our bread and butter out of this business...sometimes you just have those limited options and as somebody who is self-

dependent, I don't have any other job...so you have to keep working." In an interview with Dibyojyoti Bakshi, Priyanka Chopra regarding choosing films stated: "You have to do films that make money. I have to do films that my producers can make with me because I am a saleable actor. That is the honest truth of it". In her article, *The dark Side of Bollywood: Study Reveals Shocking Facts About Women in the Indian Film Industry*, Priyambada Bhagawati has pointed out that patriarchal structure of the Industry neither provides women with important or significant roles nor women are equally paid. Besides this, lead female actors always have the fear of losing their grounds to the increasing number of starlets. These reasons lead the female actors into performing these item numbers and if they miss any opportunity the replacements are ready to grab that opportunity with both hands (Nayar 72).

Any cultural product and its practices, especially that which has a huge impact on the lives of the masses, should bear the responsibility towards its recipients considering their social status, educational background besides ensuring commercial success. The purpose of this paper here is not to confine the manifestation of cultural products within stereotypical binaries of good and bad but the circulation of any cultural product should strive to strike the psychological equilibrium of its audience keeping in mind the latest status of their cognitive and emotional development as any adverse immediate impact on their conscious mind and its far-reaching resonance on their unconscious resulting in disrupting their existence as social being is not welcome.

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07

Impact of Finfluencers on Financial Investment Decisions Across Demographics

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Abstract:

Increasing usage of social media platforms and the impact of influencers is evident in the behaviour patterns of all age groups in various walks of life. Though role of financial influencers is important in increasing financial awareness and literacy amongst the masses but are the investors really influenced or believe in the advice of finfluencers needs to be understood. This study has attempted to study the impact of finfluencers among male and female respondents belonging to different age groups. The study undertook secondary data analysis and also descriptive data analysis as well as hypothesis testing on data collected from 139 respondents. The analysis indicated that the impact of finfluencers when it comes to investment decision making is similar across gender and varied age group, except for the usage of social media platform to obtain financial information among different age groups.

Introduction:

In the current digital age, every sector is moving towards online business and promoting their products and services using social media platforms. Social media has greatly transformed the way people connect and

communicate, leading to the rise of social media influencers. Individuals from all age groups now follow these influencers across various platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube. Influencers have a significant impact and role in shaping opinions and behaviours, especially among young audiences. They are viewed as trendsetters and role models who often convince their followers about the utility of a particular product or service.

While some social media influencers promote positive ideas like financial awareness, body positivity, promotion of good health or social issues, many others promote content that may not be beneficial to society. Sometimes, the products promoted may create unrealistic expectations and lead to overspending, and even have an adverse effect on mental well-being. The reliability of the content is questionable as influencers are usually paid to endorse brands, and hence their content may not always reflect genuine advice. This makes it important to carefully analyse the role of financial influencers, or finfluencers, and how they impact investment decisions across different demographic groups.

According to (Salhab, 2024) there are around 4.9 billion social media users around the world, and this number is expected to rise to approximately 5.85 billion users by 2027. The Board of the International Organisation of Securities Commissions (IOSCO) conducted a survey which showed that most securities regulators think that finfluencers have a positive role in giving financial advice and, more importantly, in educating investors. A study conducted in 2023 by the FINRA Foundation and the CFA Institute observed that 37% of Gen Z retail investors in the US agreed that social media influencers have a major impact on their decision to invest. Finfluencers help make financial topics easier to understand, and the simplification of the same makes them more popular and accessible. This is especially

important for young and first-time investors, who often depend on social media as their main source of investment knowledge.

In 2025, Statista reported that over 63.9% of the world's internet users were active on social media, spending an average of 143 minutes (about 2 hours) per day on these platforms (Roy & Mangalam, 2024). These figures raise concerns for developing countries like India, where the financial literacy rate remains very low at only 27% of the population.

Traditionally, financial advice was given by certified experts, brokers or agents who offered personalised guidance based on a person's financial situation and goals. In recent years, the finance sector has witnessed the rise of the internet and social media, and access to financial information has become easy. This shift has given rise to "financial influencers" or finfluencers—online personalities who share financial tips and advice through digital platforms. They have gained huge popularity, especially among younger audiences, by making financial topics more engaging and easy to understand. (Chetan & Pandey, 2025).

The influencer industry in India, valued at around ¹ 1,900 crore in 2023, grew rapidly during the pandemic as people from all walks of life turned into content creators. By the end of 2024, the number of influencers had surged to 40.6 lakh, up from 9.6 lakh in 2020—a remarkable 322% increase in just four years, according to data from Qoruz, an influencer marketing platform. Its co-founder, Praanesh Bhuvaneshwar, explained that this growth reflects the rising demand for specialised content and brand collaborations across different sectors. While the trend began largely with fashion and lifestyle, recent years have seen a growing wave of influencers sharing content on health, education, and finance, among many other areas. (Farooqui, 2025)

Review of Literature

Who deserves to be the finfluencer?

(May 2025, Eneng Nur Hasanah, Deddy P. Koesrindartoto, Sudarso Kaderi Wiryono, Agnes Enya Angelica) found that finfluencers mostly focused on promoting stocks, cryptocurrencies, and investment products, but many did so without formal financial training, which increased the risk of misinformation. Their roles varied widely—from traders and financial planners to frugal-living advocates—shaping the way they influenced their audiences. The findings highlighted that investment-related content dominated social media and underlined the need for stricter regulation, greater transparency, and stronger accountability from platforms to better protect investors.

“Finfluencers And Financial Futures: A Study On Social Media’s Role In Shaping Financial Decisions Of Young Adults In Gujarat” (2025, Dr Priyanka Bhatt^{1*}, Dr Kaushal Bhatt²) studied and explored the influence of finfluencers on Instagram and YouTube in shaping the financial decisions of young adults in Gujarat. Based on responses from 423 participants and analyzed through Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), the results showed that influencer credibility, engaging content, and perceived financial knowledge had a strong impact on investment behavior. The findings emphasized the growing role of digital platforms in promoting financial awareness while also pointing to the need for regulation and mindful use of media. The study offered a region-specific perspective on how Indian youth engage with finfluencers.

The Breed of Finfluencer: Catalysts in Shaping Investment Choices (April 2024, Subramanian Santhanam) concluded that the credibility of finfluencers had a strong impact on retail investors’ decisions. Among the factors examined, trustworthiness and reputation emerged as the most important, while the role of expertise became less significant once other variables were considered. This suggests that investors value how reliable and reputable a finfluencer is more than just their knowledge.

The research also revealed a strong link between financial literacy and investment behavior, showing that investors with better financial knowledge were much more likely to act on finfluencer recommendations compared to those with lower literacy levels.

Unveiling the Influence of Finfluencers on India’s Investment Climate: A Comprehensive Analysis ((Baviskar, 2024)f) aimed to examine how finfluencers on Instagram and YouTube influence the investment decisions of young adults in India (ages 18–40), with a focus on factors such as credibility, content sharing, and regulation. The findings revealed that many individuals acted on finfluencer advice not only because of their credibility but also due to their relatability and persuasive communication. At the same time, investors showed caution and awareness of risks, indicating that trust in finfluencers often depended on personal investment outcomes. Overall, the research highlights the growing influence of finfluencers, while underscoring the importance of balanced reliance on their advice and the need for stronger regulatory measures to safeguard investors.

FOMO in Finance: How Finfluencers Reshape Investment Decisions of Gen Z in India (June 2025, Jayant Agarwal) explored how finfluencers on social media psychologically and behaviorally influence Gen Z investors in India’s stock market, with a focus on factors such as FOMO, herd mentality, and risky investment behaviors. The findings indicated that frequent engagement with finfluencer content was closely associated with high-risk investment choices, largely driven by FOMO and impulsive decision-making. At the same time, financial literacy was found to lessen these negative impacts, helping investors make more informed decisions. Overall, the study highlights the need to strengthen digital financial education for young investors and to introduce stricter regulatory oversight by authorities such as SEBI

to ensure safer investment practices.

Research Methodology

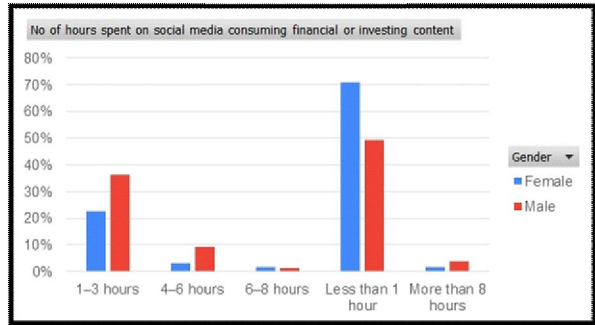
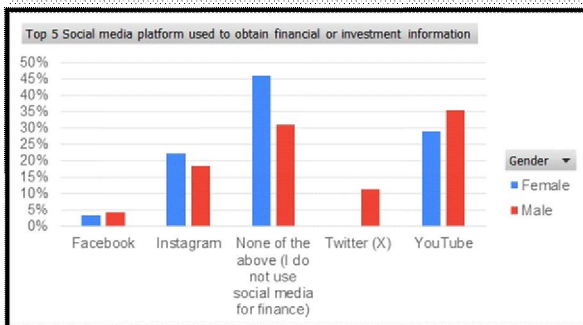
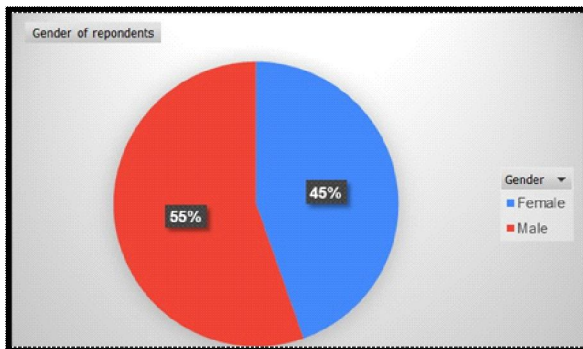
The present study adopted a mixed-method approach, combining a review of existing literature with primary data collection to examine the impact of finfluencers on financial investment decisions across different demographics.

A structured questionnaire was designed to capture respondents' demographic details, financial literacy levels, social media usage patterns, and perceptions of finfluencer credibility and influence. The survey was administered online and received 139 valid responses from a diverse group of participants varying in age, gender, education, occupation, and income levels.

The data collected were coded and analyzed using statistical tools to identify patterns, relationships, and demographic variations in investment decisions influenced by finfluencers. Descriptive statistics and other relevant techniques were employed to interpret the findings systematically.

Data Analysis

A] Based on Gender



I often consult social media financial influencers when selecting stocks to invest in.

	Female	Male	Grand Total
Strongly Agree	0%	6%	4%
Agree	24%	13%	18%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	29%	35%	32%
Disagree	29%	22%	25%
Strongly Disagree	18%	23%	21%

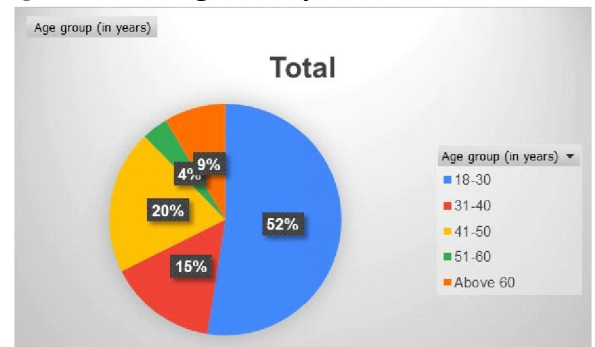
I trust investment advice provided by financial influencers on social media more than advice from other sources.

	Female	Male	Grand Total
Strongly Agree	0%	6%	4%
Agree	18%	17%	17%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	35%	27%	31%
Disagree	35%	29%	32%
Strongly Disagree	11%	21%	17%

Social media financial influencers have a significant impact on my decisions to buy or sell specific stocks

	Female	Male	Grand Total
Strongly Agree	2%	9%	6%
Agree	19%	16%	17%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	32%	30%	31%
Disagree	32%	25%	28%
Strongly Disagree	15%	21%	18%

A] Based on Age Group



Social media platforms used to obtain financial or investment information

	18-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	Above 60	Grand Total
Facebook	0%	0%	7%	25%	20%	4%
Instagram	27%	16%	15%	0%	0%	20%
Twitter (X)	9%	5%	4%	0%	0%	6%
YouTube	43%	32%	15%	0%	20%	32%
None of the above (I do not use social media for finance)	21%	47%	59%	75%	60%	38%

No. of hours per week spent on social media consuming financial or investing content	18-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	Above 60	Grand Total
1-3 hours	34%	43%	18%	40%	8%	30%
4-6 hours	7%	5%	11%	0%	0%	6%
6-8 hours	3%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%
Less than 1 hour	53%	52%	68%	60%	83%	59%
More than 8 hours	3%	0%	4%	0%	8%	3%

I often consult social media financial influencers when selecting stocks to invest in.	18-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	Above 60	Grand Total
Strongly Agree	5%	0%	4%	0%	0%	4%
Agree	23%	19%	11%	0%	8%	18%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	37%	33%	18%	20%	42%	32%
Disagree	19%	33%	21%	60%	42%	25%
Strongly Disagree	15%	14%	46%	20%	8%	21%

I trust investment advice provided by financial influencers on social media more than advice from other sources.	18-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	Above 60	Grand Total
Strongly Agree	7%	0%	0%	0%	0%	4%
Agree	22%	14%	11%	20%	8%	17%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	37%	29%	21%	0%	33%	31%
Disagree	23%	43%	32%	80%	42%	32%
Strongly Disagree	11%	14%	36%	0%	17%	17%

Social media financial influencers have a significant impact on my decisions to buy or sell specific stocks.	18-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	Above 60	Grand Total
Strongly Agree	11%	0%	0%	0%	0%	6%
Agree	18%	24%	14%	0%	17%	17%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	40%	29%	11%	20%	33%	31%
Disagree	21%	33%	36%	60%	33%	28%
Strongly Disagree	11%	14%	39%	20%	17%	18%

Hypothesis testing:

Hypothesis 1A Ho (Null Hypothesis): There is no significant difference in the choice of financial influencers (finfluencers) between male and female respondents.

Hypothesis 1B Ho (Null Hypothesis): There is no significant difference in the choice of financial influencers (finfluencers) among respondents of different age groups.

Hypothesis 2A Ho (Null Hypothesis): There is no significant difference in number of hours spent on social media to obtain financial information between male and female respondents

Hypothesis 2B Ho (Null Hypothesis): There is no significant difference in number of hours spent on social media to obtain financial information among respondents of different age groups

Hypothesis 3A Ho (Null Hypothesis): There is no significant difference in the perception of financial influencers (finfluencers) between male and female respondents

Hypothesis 3B Ho (Null Hypothesis): There is no significant difference in the perception of financial influencers (finfluencers) among respondents of different age groups

Results of Chi-square testing

Hypothesis	Response to following questions:	p-value based on gender	p-value based on age group
1A & 1B	1. Top 5 Social media platform used to obtain financial or investment information	0.233	0.008
2A & 2B	2. No. of hours per week spent on social media consuming financial or investing content	0.118	0.859
3A & 3B	3. I often consult social media financial influencers when selecting stocks to invest in.	0.218	0.115
	4. I trust investment advice provided by financial influencers on social media more than advice from other sources.	0.293	0.204
	5. Social media financial influencers have a significant impact on my decisions to buy or sell specific stocks.	0.274	0.104

Conclusion: The survey was answered by 139 respondents out of which 55% of the respondents were male and 45% respondents were female. 46% of male respondents and 31% of female respondents said that they do not use social media platforms for taking their investment decisions. Those respondents who use social media platforms are primarily the users of YouTube and Instagram platforms. The majority of both male and female respondents spend less than 1 hour on social media looking for financial or investment-related information. 46% of the total respondents do not often consult social media financial influencers before selecting stocks for investment. 49% of respondents disagree and denied that they trust investment advice provided by financial influencers on social media more than advice from other sources. 46% of respondents do not feel that social media financial influencers have a significant impact on their investment decisions. There is no significant variation in the views amongst male and female respondents. The hypothesis testing supports the above view as the p-value for all 3 hypotheses is greater than 0.05 which results in failing to reject the null hypothesis.

When the survey results are analyzed based on age-group, a significant variation was

found in the response received for social media platform used. Only 21% of respondents in the age group of 18-30 do not use social media platform whereas 59%, 75% and 60% of respondents in age group of 41-50, 51-60 and above 60 did not use social media platforms for obtaining financial or investment related information. The p-value for Hypthesis 1B is 0.008 which is less than the significant value of 0.05 and hence hypothesis 1B is rejected.

Number of hours spent per week on social media platform is less than one hour for majority of the respondents across all age groups. Most of the respondents across all age group indicated that they neither consult influencers before taking their investment decision nor do they trust on investment advice provided by social media financial influencers.

It can finally be concluded that acceptance and trust on influencers amongst male as well as female respondents of all age groups is not very encouraging. This study can be further taken ahead to understand if there is variation in these parameters across other demographic factors and other geographies.

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08

From Traditional to Digital: Technology's Impact on India's M&E Industry

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&

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Abstract

The media and entertainment (M&E) industry is changing fast, shaped by digital technology, younger audiences, and new ways of consuming content. Social media, streaming platforms, and tools like artificial intelligence (AI), virtual reality (VR), and augmented reality (AR) are transforming how stories are told and experienced. Globally, the industry is expected to keep growing, reaching USD 2.9 trillion by 2026 and USD 3.4 trillion by 2028 (Statista 1;Edstellar).

India reflects these global changes while adding its own scale and diversity. Once led by print and television, it is now one of the most digital-driven markets. Digital revenues overtook television in 2022 (EY-FICCI 7), and the sector grew to INR 2.5 trillion in 2024, with projections to reach INR 3.1 trillion by 2027 (EY-FICCI 10, 17). This paper looks at key shifts—OTT growth, digital advertising, and connected TV—and explains how India is also becoming a global hub for content production.

Keywords: India M&E industry, digital transformation, streaming platforms, social media, digital advertising, content production

hub, connected TV, digital revenues.

1. Introduction

The media and entertainment industry has been reshaped by digital innovation and changing audience habits. Social media, Gen Z's influence, and technologies like artificial intelligence (AI), virtual reality (VR), and augmented reality (AR) are creating new ways of making and sharing content. Streaming platforms, short videos, multi-screen use, and immersive experiences have made the industry more dynamic and global. To serve audiences who prefer personalized, on-demand content, companies must adapt quickly. The global M&E market is expected to reach USD 2.9 trillion by 2026 (Statista 1) and projections by PwC's Global Entertainment and Media Outlook 2023 estimate the E&M industry will grow to USD 3.4 trillion by 2028 (Edstellar).

India mirrors this global story. Traditionally built on print and television, it has become one of the world's most digitized media markets. According to FICCI-EY, the Indian M&E sector grew 3.3% in 2024 to INR 2.5 trillion and is expected to reach INR 3.1 trillion by 2027 (10, 17). Digital media overtook television in 2022, marking a new era in which platforms, algorithms, and monetization models are as important as storytelling (EY-FICCI 7). This paper traces these shifts, with a focus on OTT growth, digital advertising, and connected devices, while placing India in the wider global context.

2. Review of Literature

The media and entertainment (M&E) industry has undergone a profound digital transformation over the past decade. Scholars, industry analysts, and consulting firms have examined how technology, consumer behaviour, and globalisation are reshaping this sector. The following review of literature, organised chronologically and by type of source, highlights key insights into these transformations.

2.1. Articles

- i. **Vandana Ahuja (2021)** discusses India's entertainment boom, emphasising how digital tools, faster internet, smartphones, and government support have positioned India among the world's top five markets, projected to reach USD 43.9 billion by 2024 (Ahuja 2021).
- ii. **Renato Lopes da Costa et al. (2022)** argue that digital transformation is reshaping the media industry globally, with younger audiences driving the adoption of digital platforms. They highlight the need for firms to adapt to these changing habits, embrace technology, and foster meaningful connections with audiences (Costa et al. 2022).
- iii. **Bharat Dhiman (2023)** reviews the paradigm shift in the entertainment industry in the digital age, showing how online platforms and technology are transforming content creation, distribution, and audience engagement (Dhiman 2023).
- iv. **Sankalp Hulsurkar (2023)** stresses that factors such as social media influence, Gen Z's buying power, and artificial intelligence are set to push global entertainment and media revenues to USD 2.9 trillion by 2026. However, he warns that success depends on how the industry adapts to radical changes in distribution, consumption, and monetisation (Hulsurkar 2023).

Together, these articles show how academic and journalistic perspectives have tracked the steady impact of digitisation, social shifts, and AI on media consumption and production worldwide.

2.2. Blogs

Building on these insights, more informal sources such as blogs highlight the same transformations in a practical, business-focused way.

- i. **Kanoo Elite (2023)** notes that digitisation has reshaped how stories are created, shared, and consumed, opening opportunities for creators and audiences but also raising challenges of privacy,

misinformation, and fair pay. The post argues that innovation must go hand in hand with fairness and inclusivity in digital spaces (Kanoo Elite 2023).

ii. **Edstellar (2024)** highlights that the M&E industry is shifting toward digital, on-demand, and personalised content. Emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), virtual reality (VR), and augmented reality (AR) are reimagining how media is made and experienced, making adaptability critical for survival (Edstellar 2024).

These blogs reinforce the view from earlier articles but bring out more industry-facing concerns, particularly around ethics, inclusivity, and the pressure on companies to adapt quickly.

2.3. Reports

While articles and blogs provide analysis and commentary, industry reports supply forward-looking projections and quantitative detail.

i. **PwC India's Entertainment & Media Outlook 2024–28 (2024)** forecasts robust growth, with revenues rising from INR 2.45 lakh crore in 2023 to INR 3.65 lakh crore by 2028 at an 8.3% CAGR. The report identifies digital advertising, OTT platforms, online gaming, and generative AI as key growth drivers (PwC India 2024).

ii. **Deloitte's Digital Media Trends 2025 (2025)** finds that video entertainment is no longer just about television or streaming. Social platforms and creators are becoming central to video consumption, powered by user-generated content and smarter ad models that attract both audiences and advertisers (Deloitte 2025).

iii. The EY–FICCI report *Shape the Future: Indian M&E Is Scripting a New Story (2025)* shows that India's M&E industry grew 3.3% in 2024 to ¹ 2.5 trillion, with digital overtaking TV as the largest segment. It forecasts further growth in 2025, driven by digital, live events, and outdoor media, concluding that India's

youthful audience and tech investment will sustain long-term growth (EY and FICCI 2025).

iv. **EY's A Studio Called India (2025)** positions India as a global content hub, producing over 200,000 hours of films, shows, and music annually, supported by strong capabilities in animation, VFX, and gaming. With cost advantages and rapid AI adoption, India is projected to act not just as a market but as a "studio for the world" (EY 2025).

v. Finally, the **India Brand Equity Foundation (IBEF) (2025)** reports that India's M&E industry is one of the fastest-growing globally, expected to expand at 9.7% annually to reach USD 73.6 billion by 2027. It cites affordable internet, rising incomes, and rural market expansion as key drivers (IBEF 2025).

Collectively, these reports provide a data-rich confirmation of the trends identified in earlier articles and blogs, while also projecting India's central role in the global M&E landscape.

The reviewed literature shows a clear trajectory: digital transformation is not merely a trend but the foundation of the modern M&E industry. From early discussions of social media and digital tools (Ahuja 2021; Costa et al. 2022) to recent forecasts by consulting firms and industry bodies (PwC India 2024; EY 2025; IBEF 2025), the consensus is that adaptability, innovation, and technology adoption will determine success. India, with its vast talent pool, low-cost production advantages, and rapidly expanding digital infrastructure, is steadily emerging as a global creative hub in this transformation.

3. Research Objectives:

i. To understand how digital technology is changing the Indian M&E industry and audience habits.

ii. To study the rise of streaming platforms and digital advertising as growth drivers.

iii. To explore how social media and new tools like AI, VR, AR, and connected TV are shaping content and revenues.

iv. To look at how India is emerging as a global hub for content creation.

v. To compare India's media growth with global trends and identify future opportunities

4. Research Methodology

i. Based on secondary data from reports (EY-FICCI, PwC, Statista), articles, and published studies.

ii. Descriptive and analytical approach, focusing on growth figures, market trends, and case examples.

iii. Looks at both numbers and how they reflect changing consumer behaviour and technology use.

5. Significance of the Study

i. Highlights India's central role in the fast-growing global M&E industry.

ii. Shows how digital adoption, streaming, and advertising are reshaping the sector.

iii. Useful for academics, industry professionals, and policymakers to spot opportunities and challenges.

6. Limitations of the Study

i. Relies only on secondary data: no primary research like interviews or surveys.

ii. Market projections may shift as technology and consumer behaviour evolve.

iii. Findings are indicative and directional, not final or exhaustive.

7. India as a Global Content Hub in the OTT Era

India is increasingly being recognized as a global hub for content creation, driven by both its vast domestic market and international demand. In 2024, Indian studios delivered over 200,000 hours of original programming across OTT, film, and TV, supported by a workforce of 2.8 million professionals (EY, A Studio Called India 11). This surge in output has been closely tied to the rapid expansion of OTT platforms, which are triggering demand for diverse and localized content. Homegrown services like Zee5 and SonyLIV are carving strong niches by offering regional programming, while global players such

as Netflix and Disney+ Hotstar continue to invest heavily in premium Indian originals (EY-FICCI 14).

Figure 1. OTT Market Growth in India, 2018–2025. Data from EY-FICCI 2023.

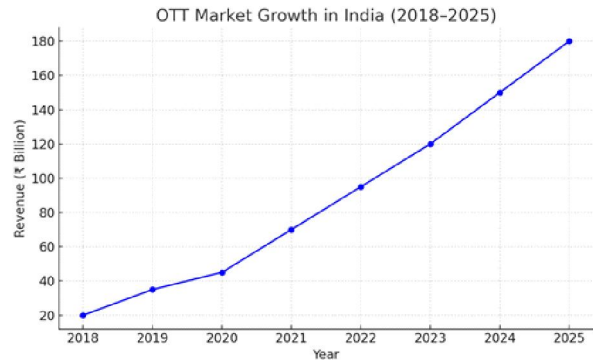


Figure 1 illustrates how India's OTT market has grown consistently since 2018, with strong projections through 2025 (EY-FICCI 2023).

8. Technology, Media Tech, and Digital Advertising

8.1. Technological advances are central to India's growing appeal as a global content powerhouse. Media Tech innovations like AI-driven dubbing, subtitling, and virtual production are reducing costs by up to 40% compared to Western markets (Deloitte 18). This technology push has coincided with a dramatic rise in digital advertising, which surpassed INR 500 billion in 2022—overtaking television for the first time (Kantar 43). Programmatic campaigns and influencer marketing dominate, reflecting the move toward performance-driven spending.

Table 1. Advertising Revenue Split in India (2022).

Medium	Revenue 2022 (INR Billion)	Share %
Digital	500	42%
Television	390	33%
Print	240	20%
Radio	40	3%
Others	30	2%

Table 1 shows that digital and television together dominate India’s advertising market, with digital closing in fast on television (Kantar Media Report 2023).

8.2.In 2024, advertising revenues rose by 8.1%, led by digital performance ads, e-commerce platforms, and premium outdoor media. Yet, the sector also saw setbacks: Pay TV homes fell by six million, theatrical admissions declined, and gaming revenues were hit by higher GST rates. Animation and VFX, traditionally strong outsourcing areas for India, dropped 9.4% as global clients focused on fewer, higher-quality productions (EY, Shape the Future 10).

Figure 2. Sample recreation of growth and decline in Indian M&E sector revenues.

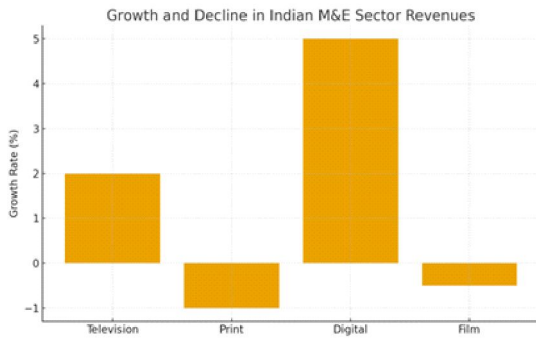


Figure 2. Sample recreation of growth and decline in Indian M&E sector revenues. Data from EY, “Indian Media and Entertainment is Scripting a New Story”, p. 10.

9. Connected Television and Policy Push

Another critical growth driver is the rise of Connected Television (CTV). Deloitte projects that India will reach 40 million CTV households by 2025, powered by affordable smart TVs and cheaper broadband (Deloitte 18). This shift opens new opportunities for premium advertising and bundled subscriptions, bridging the gap between digital and traditional broadcasting.

Policy support and cultural diversity further strengthen India’s position. Subsidies, tax incentives, and single-window clearance systems in states like Telangana and Maharashtra have encouraged global studios to

set up shop. Meanwhile, India’s storytelling traditions across 22 official languages make it uniquely positioned to cater to regional, national, and global audiences (EY, A Studio Called India 13).

Figure 3. Growth of Connected Television Households in India, 2020–2025. Data from Deloitte 2023.

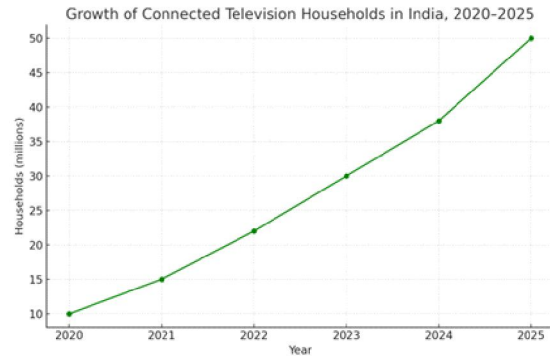


Figure 3 highlights the steep rise in connected television households, a trend that is reshaping how audiences access streaming content (Deloitte 2023).

10. Challenges in India’s Digital M&E Ecosystem
Despite the momentum, challenges remain. Piracy, uneven regulation of OTT platforms, and subscription fatigue all put pressure on revenue sustainability (Ghosh 211). Infrastructure gaps in rural areas and the cost of content localization across languages also add to industry complexity (NPCI 6). Yet, India’s scale, talent, and cost efficiency continue to attract global projects, positioning the country as a “studio for the world.”

Figure 4. Conceptual Framework: Challenges in India’s Digital M&E Ecosystem. Based on NPCI 2023.

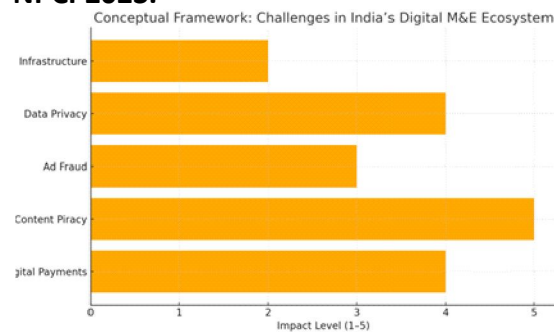


Figure 4 maps the key challenges—ranging from content piracy to ad fraud—that continue to affect India’s digital M&E ecosystem (NPCI 2023).

11. Outlook

Looking ahead, India’s M&E industry is likely to evolve along five trajectories:

i. Regionalization:

Regional content will outpace Hindi and English in driving subscriber growth.

ii. Monetization Hybrids:

A mix of advertising, subscription, and micropayments (enabled by UPI) will sustain growth (NPCI 12).

iii. Technology Integration:

AI, VR, and immersive formats will create new storytelling genres.

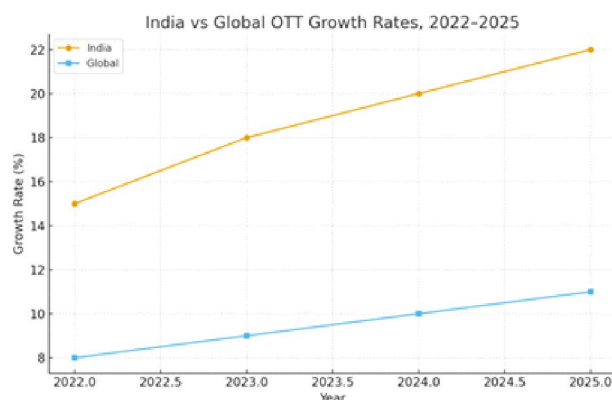
iv. Globalization of Indian Content:

Successes of series like Sacred Games and films like RRR signal export potential.

v. Policy Balance:

The industry’s future depends on balancing innovation with regulation in areas such as data privacy, misinformation, and creative freedom.

Figure 5.
India vs Global OTT Growth Rates,
2022–2025.



As Figure 5 shows, India’s OTT growth rates remain far higher than the global average, underlining its unique scale and momentum (EY–FICCI 2023).

12. Conclusion

The digital transformation of India’s media and entertainment industry is more than a technological shift—it is a cultural, social, and economic revolution. With OTT platforms, digital advertising, and CTV redefining engagement, India is simultaneously a laboratory and a leader in digital M&E. However, challenges around regulation, inclusivity, and sustainability remain critical. The industry’s future hinges on how it negotiates these tensions while leveraging its youthful audience and vibrant creative economy.

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Audience engagement in one minute news: A study on the popularity of short form news content

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ABSTRACT

Television the boost of digital platforms like Instagram in terms of screening news has shifted the way audience consume and attract with narratives. The study aims to understand how innovation in digital story telling introduce new prospects to the audience through short form interactive and multimedia driven formats. The study will use both primary and secondary data including surveys and previous research the study highlights the shift in audience behaviour from traditional long form content to bite sized and grassroots storytelling. The study also finds that in today's time the news consumptions from traditional media in today's rapidly evolving media landscape storytelling is no longer confined to newspaper or slow down as today's youth from age group (15-25) prefer one minute news consumption through Instagram. That makes information more relatable, shareable and impactful. This study highlights how innovation and adaptation helping journalism to connect with the younger generation. In recent time social media platform like Instagram gained massive popularity among the audience and sudden shift can be seen in terms of consuming news. Traditional media like newspapers and

television network follow editorial guideline and journalistic standards that are meant to be maintained credibility accuracy and ethics in journalism. despite the advantages, traditional media faces challenges such as the declining readership, reduce viewership. The timeliness and personalization of news delivered through platforms like Instagram are attractive among youths who values convenience and accessibility. The study highlights how Innovation and adaptation help in journalism to connect with the younger generation

KEYWORDS: Short form content, News consumption, Audience engagement

WORKING DEFINITION OF KEYWORDS

Short form-content: videos which usually last for less than minute or for one minute. these are created to grab the attention quickly as news gets delivered in lesser time in concise format.

News consumption: means the way young audience gets information about what is happening around the world, consume news through digital platforms like Instagram as well as traditional medium such as newspaper. tv channels

Audience engagement: how young audience interact with short form content includes actions like – liking, sharing, commenting. to understand how much they pay attention to the short news content

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, there has been a growing interest in short-form news consumption among young audiences, primarily delivered through platforms such as Instagram Reels and YouTube Shorts. These platforms have become a major source of information for youth, enabling news to reach audiences in just 60 seconds through videos and photos. This format allows information to spread much faster than traditional mediums. Short-form news is significant because it aligns with the fast-paced lifestyle of today's youth, who prefer quick, concise, and easily understandable updates

over lengthy articles. One key reason for this preference is the reduced attention span of today's generation, which makes short videos more appealing than traditional newspapers or television news. Earlier, people depended on newspapers, radio, and television for detailed long-form news. However, this trend has shifted, particularly among individuals aged 15 to 25, who are showing a steady decline in reading newspapers or watching news channels. This decline in traditional media viewership highlights an important shift in news consumption patterns. Understanding this transition is essential for the future of journalism, as it raises questions about how news organizations should adapt to retain young audiences and ensure credibility.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- We aim to study and understand that:
- To examine the shift in audience behaviour from traditional long-form content to short-form news consumption.
- To analyse the shift in news consumption specifically for age group (15-25)

HYPOTHESES

- H1- Youth (15-25) prefer consuming news through short-form content on Instagram more than traditional media
- H2- Visual and interactive content (videos, images, graphics) make short-form news more interesting to youth.
- H3- The easy access and quick consumption of short-form news significantly influence its preference among youth

SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

The study holds significance in understanding the changing dynamics of news consumption in the digital era, where audience attention spans are shrinking and the demand for concise, impactful content is rising. By focusing on one-minute news formats, the research highlights how short-form news content can attract, engage, and retain viewers, especially among younger, tech-savvy audiences

(15–25 years old). The findings will provide insights for news organisations, journalists, and media strategists on how to adapt their storytelling techniques to meet the preferences of modern audiences while maintaining accuracy and credibility. Furthermore, this research can help media platforms design more effective content strategies, balancing speed with depth, and enhancing user experience in an increasingly competitive news ecosystem.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Review of books

1. Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man

Author - Marshall McLuhan

Publisher – McGraw-Hill

Chapter: The Medium is the Message

McLuhan's book is a classic in media studies. The main idea, "the medium is the message," explains that the way news is delivered (the medium) affects how audiences perceive and engage with it — often more than the content itself.

Applied to one-minute news, this theory helps us understand why short-form videos on platforms like TikTok, Instagram Reels, and YouTube Shorts capture attention so effectively. The medium — fast, visual, and mobile-friendly — drives engagement, keeping audiences watching and interacting even when the news is very short.

This shows that audience engagement in short-form news is shaped not just by what is said, but how it is presented, which is exactly what your research focuses on. The Extensions of Man is a groundbreaking exploration of how media technologies transform human perception, culture, and society. Rather than focusing solely on content, McLuhan emphasizes that the characteristics of the medium itself shape how audiences experience information. He introduces concepts like media as extensions of human senses and differentiates between hot and cool media, showing how each type

demands different levels of audience involvement. McLuhan's theories provide a lens to study not just what audiences consume, but how the form, speed, and accessibility of media impact engagement, making it highly relevant to understanding modern news consumption trends.

2. Engaged Journalism: Connecting with Digitally Empowered News Audiences

Author: Jake Batsell

Publisher: Columbia University Press

Year: 2015

Chapter 3: "Audience Engagement in the Digital Era"

In *Engaged Journalism*, Jake Batsell examines how digital technologies and changing audience behaviors are transforming the news industry. The book emphasizes the shift from passive consumption to active engagement, showing how news organizations can capture attention, encourage interaction, and foster loyalty among readers and viewers. Batsell explores strategies that help news become more immediate, relevant, and shareable, including the use of digital tools to measure and enhance audience engagement. Chapter 3, 'Audience Engagement in the Digital Era,' is particularly relevant for short-form news, offering insights into how concise, visually engaging news clips, like one-minute videos, resonate with modern audiences. Overall, the book provides a comprehensive understanding of why short-form news is increasingly popular and how journalists can adapt their practices to meet the expectations of digitally empowered audiences.

Review of Article:

1. Short-form News: How TikTok and Instagram are Changing News Delivery

Author: Aditi Choudhary

The article talks about how platforms like TikTok and Instagram Reels are reshaping the way Indians access news. Rather than traditional methods, people now expect news to be delivered quickly, visually, and on the go—

perfectly suited to India's fast-paced lifestyle. It highlights that short-form formats like vertical video updates, daily news bulletins under one minute, and punchy visual summaries are growing popular—especially among young, urban audiences who want immediate and easy-to-digest news.

The article explains how short-form news is not just brief content—it's a new style of storytelling. Creators are using catchy visuals, punch-lines, and paced narration that fit the short attention spans of mobile users.

Importantly, in the Indian context, the article shows how these platforms help news reach regional audiences more effectively. For instance, by providing bite-sized news clips in local languages, platforms like Reels and TikTok help regional stories go viral faster and engage local communities.

2. News Media Adapts to Surge of Short-Form Content

Author: Eirik naesje

It traces how global events like the rise of social media in the early 2000s and the COVID-19 lockdowns accelerated people's shift toward fast, concise news. Readers started expecting quick updates delivered instantly not long articles .

It explains the main challenge publishers now face: capturing and keeping the attention of younger readers (especially Gen Z and Millennials) who prefer snappy, short-form formats over traditional text or long videos .Some successful strategies are highlighted:

Live feeds and live-blogging create real-time captures that help audiences stay connected—then these short touchpoints lead readers to deeper content like podcasts or feature stories .Audience-specific coverage, such as local sports or niche interests, helps news outlets build loyalty among younger viewers by matching their interests quick and directly .

The article makes a key point:

short-form content is not just a trend—it's a response to firmly changed reader habits shaping how news is consumed and how media companies must work to stay relevant .

Review of journals:

1. Digital News Report – India Edition 2024
Published : june 17, 2024

This report by the Reuters Institute provides a comprehensive look at India's evolving news landscape, especially highlighting how audiences engage with both legacy and digital-born news media.

Key Insights:

Shift to Digital and Mobile Platforms- The report shows that Indian audiences increasingly consume news through mobile devices and digital platforms. This indicates a strong preference for quick, on-the-go content — a perfect context for one-minute or short-form news formats.

Video and Social Media SurgeThe rise of platforms like WhatsApp, YouTube, and Instagram Reels is reshaping how news is distributed and consumed. These platforms favor visual, fast-paced content — precisely what one-minute news caters to.

From Newspapers to News Creators- Traditional news brands are losing ground as independent creators and influencers gain visibility. The report suggests that audience engagement now often favors relatable, viral-style content over formal journalism.

Engagement vs. Information- Audience behavior indicates engagement often happens via social shares, messaging, and short clips rather than reading full articles. This reinforces the value and reach of micro-content in today's media environment

2. Short-Form Video Content and Consumer Engagement in Digital Landscapes

Author: Marius Manic

Published: July 12, 2024 .

The article highlights how short-form video content has reshaped marketing by

aligning seamlessly with today's fast-paced digital habits. These videos are designed to quickly grab attention in a noisy online environment.

It emphasizes how short videos create engagement through emotionally resonant storytelling that is both accessible and shareable—making such content highly impactful in digital advertising.

The study argues that as the digital landscape evolves, so must marketing strategies. Short-form video isn't just a trend; it's a key tool for forming rapid and meaningful connections with audiences.

METHODOLOGY

This research follows quantitative research method, to examine consumption patterns of short form news among young audience. We choose quantitative method because it helps to measure people's preferences about short form news in organized and clear way. This method makes it easy to compare the answers of different people Data was collected using a structured online survey designed on google forms. The questionnaires consist of multiple-choice question related toShort-form video consumption habits, and attention span.

SAMPLE COLLECTION

This survey mainly targeting age group between (15-25) who actively consume digital content. A total of 100 respondent's participants in the survey, the survey was conducted from 15 august to 30 august 2025, providing enough time to collect a diverse range of responses. The survey link was shared through various digital platforms like WhatsApp groups, Instagram direct messages and personal sharing to friends and family.

SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

We used stratified random sampling to include different groups of people based on age, gender. This way, we made sure that our survey had a mix of participants and fairly represented

young people, giving us a better idea of their news-watching habits.

DATA ANALYSES

We analyse the responses collected from the survey to understand how young people consume one-minute news through Instagram Reels. The survey targeted 100 respondents aged between 15 to 25 years, who are the regular users of digital content and social media platforms. To make the analysis easy and clear, we have used pie charts that visually represent the most important findings. Each chart is followed by a simple explanation to help readers quickly understand the key insights. The data analysis shows interesting patterns about the preferences, habits, and opinions of young youth regarding one-minute news consumption. It helps us understand why platforms like Instagram Reels are becoming so popular for news in today's world.

which platform do you mostly use to watch news
100 responses

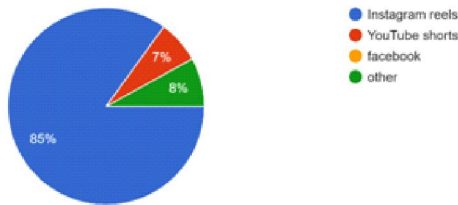


Fig. 1.1

Explanation :The pie chart shows that 85% of people use Instagram reels to watch news ,followed by YouTube shorts and Facebook . This shows that Instagram reel is the most popular platform for quick news update among youths because it saves there time

what attracts you the most in one minute news ?
100 responses

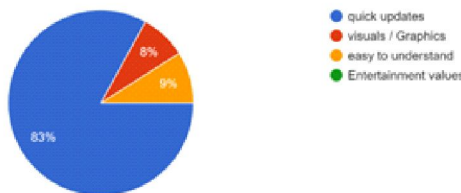


Fig.1.2

Explanation :The above pie chart shows that 83% audience attract with the one-minute news because it's very quick and you will get information in minute or less than a minute. Rest 8% people says that they were attracted because of visuals and graphics.

Through our survey we analyse that One-minute news is most loved for its quick updates (83%), making it far more attractive than visuals (8%) or simplicity (9%). A clear majority find short news engaging, with 60% saying it's very interesting and 61% strongly agreeing it's more engaging than traditional formats. When it comes to sources, 67% rely on Instagram Reels, compared to 20% on TV and 11% on newspapers, while 85% say Instagram Reels is the platform they mostly use to watch news. Social media is also considered more accessible than TV, with 55% always and 41% sometimes agreeing. In short, people today prefer fast, engaging updates through Instagram over traditional platforms.

RESEARCH GAP

In India, people's way of consuming news is changing very fast. Many studies talk about social media, digital news, and even short videos in general, but very few focus only on one-minute news and how it really connects with the audience. We know that short-form videos are popular, but we don't have enough clear research on why people prefer them over longer news formats, what keeps them engaged, and how this trend is shaping news habits in India. This gap is important because if we understand it, news organizations can create better content that is both quick and meaningful for today's audience.

We still don't have clear research on several important aspects, such as: most important research gap is the lack of sufficient data and responses about this trend in India. Most available studies are based on small sample sizes, limited geographic areas, or focus only on social media in general. Very few studies

have collected enough responses or done large-scale surveys that reflect the true opinion and behaviour of young people regarding one-minute news videos. This makes it difficult to draw clear conclusions about the impact of short news videos on news habits, awareness, and attitudes toward current events.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study successfully supports all three hypotheses. Hypothesis 1, which said that young people aged 15 to 25 prefer consuming news through short-form content on Instagram more than traditional media, has been proven correct based on the survey results. Most participants clearly showed that they use Instagram Reels more than newspapers or TV for news. Hypothesis 2, which stated that visual and interactive content like videos, images, and graphics make short-form news more interesting to young people, was also confirmed. The participants mentioned that such content keeps them engaged and makes news easier to understand. Hypothesis 3, which suggested that easy access & quick consumption are the main reasons why youth prefer short-form news, was also supported by the findings. Most people said they like being able to watch news anytime, without spending much time. This study clearly shows a major shift in the way people, especially the younger generation, consume news. Instagram Reels has emerged as one of the most dominant platforms, with the majority of participants preferring one-minute news videos for their quick updates and engaging style. These results help us understand why short – form news is becoming more popular than traditional media among the youth. One important reason for their popularity is the ability to engage directly with the content – viewers can like, comment, and share news videos easily. This interactive feature makes news more fun and social, encouraging young people to stay connected with current events and share their opinions with friends.

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Walls that speaks: Analysing Mumbai's Graffiti as Visual Culture 2.0

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Abstract -

In the urban landscape of Mumbai, graffiti emerged as a vibrant and dynamic form of contemporary artistic expression, transforming the city's walls into a canvas of identity, dissent, and creativity. From the famous murals of Bandra to the hidden street art of Dharavi, Mumbai's graffiti culture is not limited to specific neighbourhoods. It is evolving in both streets and Instagram feeds, influencing the constant change in urban visual culture. This paper studies the city's graffiti scene through the lens of digital platforms such as Google and Instagram, integrating graffiti artists' interviews, online public surveys, and visual analysis. Also exploring the vivid themes of graffiti—from socio-political content, pop culture references, abstract aesthetics, and personal narratives—and evaluating the viewers' engagement, acceptance, appreciation, and debate. The study also looks into the challenges and opportunities faced by graffiti artists, from

managing legal restrictions and securing their artworks to attracting more viewers, brands, and commissions, or collaboration projects for commercial viability. By mapping the interplay between physical spaces and their online representations, this research highlights how graffiti in Mumbai not only shapes the city's aesthetic identity but also reflects evolving dialogues between artists, audiences, and institutions.

Keywords:- Graffiti, Mumbai, Street Art, Graffiti artists, Social Media, Urban Culture, Wall Art.

INTRODUCTION

What is Graffiti? Graffiti is an influential artform playing a major role in visual communication. The word Graffiti has been used to describe a variety of wall writings including prehistoric cave paintings and a wide variety of political, sexual, humorous, and self-identifying messages that have been scratched, painted and marked on walls throughout history (Chauhan xx). Over the time, it evolved into a practice of drawing, writing, tagging, stenciling, and large-scale murals, each carrying social, political, or personal narratives.

Graffiti as a part of the urban landscape, is not just an aesthetic intervention but also a contributor to its cultural and communicative practice. Exploring the streets of Mumbai, it is enough noticeable that the graffiti wall Art have grown from a relatively marginal activity into a recognizable part of the city's visual culture. Over the past 3–5 years, street art and urban initiatives have become increasingly prevalent in India's metropolitan centres, making it impossible to ignore their presence (Bhardwaj, 2024).

The rise of digital media has profoundly reshaped this urban art form and its meaning. Over the course of the past several years, street art in India has undergone a substantial transformation, which is a reflection of both international inspirations and indigenous artistic traditions (Bhardwaj, 2024). Since 2012, the

emergence of social media has led to the creation of a market specifically for the appreciation and consumption of murals (cited by: Chauhan, 2018 in Bhardwaj, 2024). Social media platforms such as Instagram and Facebook have become powerful mediators, transforming graffiti from a site-specific, ephemeral act into a globally distributed digital image (Schacter and Macdowall xx, 2013). Instagraff, graffiti found on the social media website Instagram, examines social and technological advances that have prompted graffiti culture to appear 'mainstream' (Harding, 2019). This all resulted in what we say Visual culture 2.0 for urban street art.

Particularly after the COVID-19 pandemic, Graffiti has transformed from a local, site-specific act into a globally visible art form through platforms such as Facebook and Instagram. During that period, graffiti became a tool for public awareness, with walls carrying messages about health. This street art has been brought to life in people's smartphones as a result of the outbreak of the COVID 19 epidemic (Kumaravelu xx, 2024). Like numerous other creative practices including dance music and theatre, here street art and graffiti become tools that can contribute to recognition, debate, and change injustice, human rights, peace, diversity, and intercultural dialogues (Bhardwaj, 2024).

What once requires physical presence in the street could now be instantly shared and consumed across digital platforms. Instagram especially emerged as a virtual street, where murals from Mumbai's lanes reached audiences far beyond the city. The Instagram posts, reels, and hashtags changed how people interact with graffiti. This shift from streets to digital platforms often described as Visual Culture 2.0. New media is indeed changing, not only the way graffiti writing is now done, but also the way graffiti writers now interface with one another globally and also how audiences now experience graffiti arts in the 21st century

(Okon, 2023). In contemporary landscape, graffiti exists simultaneously as a physical intervention in urban space and as a digital artifact circulating globally. This dual presence creates both opportunities as well as challenges for graffiti artists. While for audiences, digitalisation expands accessibility, but risks detaching graffiti from its contexts.

This paper explores what digitalisation has impacts on the graffiti culture of Mumbai, focusing on how digital platforms influence artists' practices, audience interactions, and the broader cultural meaning of graffiti. Through artists one-to-one interviews and audience surveys, it examines the evolving dynamics of graffiti in digital media.

METHODOLOGY

This research uses qualitative as well as quantitative data to examine the influence of social media on Graffiti. Primarily, it is based on Primary data collected from various sources like the semi- structured interviews with four Mumbai based practicing Graffiti artists: Zake, NME, Carter and Alchemy to gain insiders views in digitalization of Graffiti, opportunities and challenges brought by digitalization and review of existing literature that discuss graffiti as a form of visual communication, and the impact of social media on street art. These references led a foundation for this paper to understand graffiti's dual presence in urban landscapes and digital networks. To complement the artist perspective, a structured survey was also conducted by the researchers among the audience who encounter graffiti both physically and digitally to understand their perspective towards graffiti. The data from interviews and survey were brought together through thematic analysis. By complementing both the perspectives, the paper aims to present account of Mumbai's graffiti culture in the digital era.

GRAFFITI'S EVOLUTION: FROM STREETS TO SOCIAL MEDIA

Graffiti has always been tied to its

visibility — the impact of a graffiti depends on where it appears, who encounters it, reacts towards it, and how it will be remembered. Before its visibility was strictly tied to the physical spaces, primarily seen by locals, residents, or occasional visitors. But with the emergence of digital platforms like Instagram and Facebook, Graffiti also entered into this new network circulation. The realm of art was profoundly influenced by technological Advancements. Social media platforms such as Instagram and Facebook have become powerful mediators, transforming graffiti from a site-specific, ephemeral act into a globally distributed digital image. Recognising the birth of Web 2.0 as a key turning point of graffiti. Digitalization reshaped the graffiti in three aspects: longer life span, more interaction of audience, and opportunities.

Longer life span:

As Graffiti is a vandalised artform in most of the nations as well as India, municipal whitewash or urban re-development is a primary factor that costs Graffiti years of its lifespan, thereby shortening the lifespan of graffiti artworks. Additionally, it is subject to weather condition, but with digitalization it can be now immortalized through photographs or videos. A work painted overnight in a Mumbai alley can be viewed globally within minutes, making graffiti part of a larger visual economy beyond its original site.

Audience Engagement and Global Reach:

The shift from street only spectatorship to digital platforms, particularly Instagram, has multiplied the number of audiences engaging with graffiti and its reach. While previously there were graffiti-specific websites, Instagram has largely replaced them, creating a new era of “Instagram graffiti artists”. This street art has been brought people’s smartphones. At its best, digital technology allows a new speed and scale and near instantaneous feedback.

Opportunities:

Social media has also created commercial pathways for graffiti artists. Digital platforms have significantly enhanced the commercial viability for graffiti artists, leading to a “constant flow of work” (Zake) through collaborations, prints, and international projects.

ARTIST’S PERSPECTIVE-

Through the unstructured interview of Mumbai graffiti artists- Zake, NME, Carter, and Alchemy- it reveals how digitalisation has influenced their art practices. Exploring both the benefits of wider audience reach and collaborations, as well as the drawbacks of increased competition and the potential for artists to prioritise content creation over artistic integrity.

- Expanded Audience and Reach: Digital platforms, particularly Instagram, allow a much wider audience to see artwork without needing to be physically present at the site. This contrasts with the traditional street art, where visibility relied on people passing by the physical artwork, like millions seeing art near a train passing through Bombay.

- Global Connection and Community: Digitalisation has enabled artists to connect with other artists worldwide at a much faster pace, fostering a global community. This connection allows artists, especially those from humble backgrounds, to explore and experience different cultures and hidden spots, such as favelas in Brazil, facilitated by Instagram and the strong graffiti community. Zake highlights how social media connected him to artists worldwide, NME similarly got into the hip-hop culture through YouTube and Facebook, connecting with international graffiti artists and drawing inspiration from diverse artworks. Carter’s experiences, travelling to Malaysia and Indonesia for graffiti festivals, exemplify how digital connections enable artists to “travel and tag the globe”. Hence, Digital platforms have revolutionised community engagement by

connecting artists globally and fostering inspiration.

- **Shift in Communication:** The artist notes that graffiti existed even before digital media, serving as a physical, intimate form of communication that is “directly in their faces”. Digital platforms, while offering a similar communicative function, lack the same physical presence and direct impact.

- **Commercial Opportunities:** Digital platforms significantly boost commercial viability, leading to more collaborations, brand commissions, and a constant flow of work for artists. Artists can secure various types of work, from creating social media content (e.g., reels for brands) to participating in ad films, movie sets, designing for stores, or becoming brand ambassadors (e.g., for Puma). The artist’s face and personal value also become important in this digital landscape, beyond just the art itself. This financial aspect helps fund further artistic endeavours. NME states that most collaborations for street work are initiated digitally. Both Zake and NME confirm that social media helps in securing commissions and brand collaborations.

- **Competition and Validation:** The digital space introduces a “toxic” competition where followers and fame can sometimes outweigh artistic quality. This can lead artists to focus on “content making” rather than the art itself. The pursuit of likes and validation can become a “dopamine hit,” subtly influencing artistic choices and potentially leading to self-doubt and depression.

- **Creative Identity Crisis:** Artists may experience a “creative identity crisis” due to inadvertently consuming trends and what gets more commissions, leading them to create work that doesn’t feel original or true to themselves. The artist expresses a desire to avoid being a “human printer” who merely copies or creates “fan art” rather than original expressions.

- **Authenticity vs. Commercialism:** The

artist highlights a tension between gaining “soul from the street” through genuine, physical interactions and stories, versus the more commercial and sometimes less authentic “connections through digitalisation”. While digital interactions offer an audience, they don’t provide the same genuine connection as inspiring a child on the street.

The differences between physical walls and digital screens are crucial. Digitalization allows for global connections with other artists, provides an overload of information and tutorials, and enables widespread visibility without physical presence. It has also broadened the scope of an artist’s role, where they become “actor, producer, everything,” with their personal value complementing their art. It creates jobs and acts as a direct showcase platform. On the other hand, it has fostered a “toxic” competition where fame and follower count often overshadow artistic quality. Artists are increasingly “drifting into content making than actually like focusing on the art bit”. Zake himself experienced a “very bad creative identity crisis”, where the pursuit of validation (dopamine hits from likes) and observing trends led him to unknowingly compromise his originality, making him feel that “this is not me”.

Digital platforms have profoundly reshaped the landscape for graffiti artists, impacting their creative expression, commercial viability, and community engagement in multifaceted ways, often presenting both opportunities and challenges. In essence, digital platforms have provided an unprecedented global stage for graffiti artists, democratising access and opening up significant commercial avenues. However, this comes at the cost of intense competition, the pressure to conform to algorithms and trends, and a potential dilution of artistic authenticity, challenging the core identity of graffiti as a raw, rebellious, and physically embodied form of expression. It’s like

a street performer moving to a global online stage: while they can reach millions, the intimacy and raw energy of the street performance can be lost in the digital translation, and the focus shifts from the art itself to managing an online presence. Though getting new audience reach still artists want to go with a preference for the physical act of painting on the street and the direct engagement it fosters, over purely digital validation. Also contributed by a scholar- Its findings suggest that online representations of graffiti culture are no longer necessarily based upon sensory, deviant, risk-taking associated with urban graffiti. The use of social media by young would-be graffiti writers has created new avenues for the commercialisation of a vibrant, but deviant, subculture. Therefore, graffiti shared on social media cannot be considered a true representation of graffiti subculture, but a procession of simulacra, developing new forms of graffiti culture dislocated from graffiti's deviant origins (Harding, 2019). Together, these perspectives illustrate a tension: while digitalisation has opened doors for visibility and sustainability, it also complicates questions of authenticity, intention, and the purpose of graffiti itself. The "Gift and a Curse" of Digitalisation— While beneficial for reach and commerce, digitalisation is described as both a "gift and a curse".

AUDIENCE PERCEPTION-

A survey was conducted by the researchers among the residents of Mumbai and digital audience to understand public perception and engagement with this visual art form. In which, it reveals the dual perception of graffiti from street view and screen view. Respondents who encountered graffiti in person described it as physical encounters emphasized graffiti's aesthetic presence transformative and enhanced their sense of place. Whereas, for digital encounter a significant portion of respondents admitted that they first

encountered Mumbai's graffiti online through Instagram reels, photography pages, and hashtags. During COVID lockdowns, when physical mobility was restricted, digital graffiti became especially significant, spreading both aesthetic enjoyment and health awareness messages. This acknowledged that social media was essential for spreading awareness. Overall, the survey suggests that while physical walls remain central to graffiti's meaning, digital platforms have expanded its audience base and reshaped its recognition.

CONCLUSION-

According to this study, Graffiti in Mumbai tells two stories at a time. Graffiti in Mumbai cannot be understood solely through its physical presence on streets or through its online digital presentation. From a theoretical perspective, the digitalisation of graffiti is curated through Web 2.0 platforms like Instagram and Facebook. Yet its local functions remain significant: influential communication, local place identity, and visual resistance. It reveals how new media reshape creativity, opportunity, and recognition, while also posing risks of commodification and dislocation. A graffiti wall holds a meaning for the local community living there- being a part of the neighbourhood. On social media, the same wall is consumed as an image, detached from its context. While digital screen ensures the life of Graffiti, its preservation and wider reach, though risking its expressions, spatial experience, its strong visual impact into just a consumable visual product. Graffiti in Mumbai is deeply tied to the city's social culture, though technology can advance creativity; there is a need to be cautious as digital mediation can transform subcultural resistance into simulacra. Holding these perspectives together allows us to appreciate graffiti not as a practice lost to digitalisation but as a cultural form in transition— negotiating its rebellious origins, its urban present, and its

digital futures.

For many emerging artists in Mumbai, social media offers visibility and opportunities that traditional ways may withhold. Zake, Carter, NME, and Alchemy each illustrate how digitalisation has enabled professional collaborations, international recognition, and creative networks that transcend beyond boundaries. For them, Instagram is not simply a site of simulacra but a vital platform of creating revenue and survival in an economy where visibility translates into livelihood. However, these opportunities are often accompanied by a complex set of drawbacks that can fundamentally alter the artistic process and an artist's integrity; risking artist to a "human printer" undermines their originality.

The audience survey underscores this in mix of reactions. Respondents repeatedly emphasized that on street encounter with graffiti carry irreplaceable affect which cannot be fully replicated online. At the same time, audiences acknowledged the accessibility and global reach of digital encounters, particularly during the pandemic, when murals functioned as both health communication.

The implications of this study are twofold. First, it suggests that graffiti should be studied not in isolation as "street art" or "digital art" but as a convergent practice, one that simultaneously inhabits walls and screens. Holding these perspectives together allows us to appreciate graffiti not as a practice lost to digitalisation but as a cultural form in transition—negotiating its rebellious origins, its urban present, and its digital futures. Thus, graffiti in the digital age functions as both a site-based art form and a digitally mediated cultural commodity.

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A study on Representation of women in AI and Digital Media

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Abstract

In the 21st Century today where technological advancement is bringing comfort and convenience in society, the rise of AI and digital media has contributed actively by delivering entertaining content and simplifying work dynamics. The popularity and fast pace of AI and digital media has resulted in people consuming more content nowadays leading to heavy dependency on the results of AI in even some of the most crucial areas such as medicine, education and legal work.

One of the most concerning areas of AI and digital media is where the AI generated content consumption of people is on rise and the lines between the AI curated content and reality is blurring. Somehow, people have started normalising watching AI generated content without verifying if the story is true or fake.

In November 2023, an incident created a stir in the society where the dark reality of the AI was unveiled. An Indian actress named Rashmika Mandanna was the victim to the deepfake issue. An extremely realistic AI-generated video went viral online on social media, representing a woman who appeared to be the actress Rashmika Mandanna entering the elevator in the back swimsuit. However, the original highlighted British-Indian influencer Zara Patel. It was later discovered that AI

techniques were used to digitally edit the video, superimposing Mandanna's face on Patel's physique. A tech-savvy from Andhra Pradesh named Eemani Naveen was found to be responsible for the production and dissemination of the phoney video. According to reports, Naveen admitted that he created and disseminated the deepfake in order to increase the number of followers on one of his Instagram celebrity fan sites.

This issue was severely faced by many other actresses of Bollywood in the industry such as Katrina Kaif and Alia Bhatt. With the emerging concepts such as deepfakes, algorithmic discrimination in hiring and reinforcement of gender stereotypes in the language model it is important to understand is the representation of women done right by the AI and Digital media? Is it authentic? Are there any stereotypes laid? The study aims to focus on understanding the difficulties posed by the Artificial Intelligence in the impartial representation of women

Keywords:- Deepfake, AI, Digital Media, Stereotypes, Representation of women

1. Introduction

Today, the media has changed drastically. From traditional conventional channels such as newspapers, television and radio to the present digital and AI curated content, media has transformed the way it was seen years ago. Media has always been instrumental in influencing societal attitudes and public opinion, especially how women are portrayed in media plays a humongous role on how society views women in general.

There has always been a stereotypical representation of women in traditional media. They are often depicted as frequent homemakers, nurses, sex objects in commercials and entertainment shows. Women are often represented with flawless skin and cultured values in many programmes, commercials and videos setting some unrealistic beauty standards and values where if they stand up for themselves

it is often seen as unethical. However, there has been a discernible shift in how women are portrayed as a result of the emergence of new technology and changing social viewpoints. As gender relations changed, women were increasingly portrayed as powerful characters in modern television series and films.

Today, there has been a drastic change in how people consume the content which is extensively through social media and AI tools. AI and digital media has provided us a lot. From entertainment content to solutions to various health conditions and social problems guiding us all through life. AI has been a robust support for all amidst all the confusion. There are even instances of headlines circulating on social media claiming AI deciphered the heart disease in a patient which a human doctor could not. The trust created by AI and the convenience it offers to audiences makes people heavily dependent on Artificial intelligence but can people distinguish between the right and the wrong information presented by AI? There has been a rise in the crimes against women for over a decade. When the world is advancing through technology and normalizing breaking traditional stereotypes and gender roles, negative incidents such as deepfakes and virtual crimes make us wonder about the thought process some people still have about women and then the question arises: how are women represented in these sources of information people heavily rely on?

AI has the ability to create and exacerbate gender inequality in society due to its integration with digital media in a number of significant fields, including healthcare, work, and law. This is evident in the spaces where women are not given equal opportunities at work places or are paid less. Women are often refrained from taking up challenging roles in different professions. This essay aims to investigate whether old stereotypes are challenged or reinforced by how women are portrayed, as well as the effects these depictions

have on society as a whole. The authenticity of portrayals, the persistence of gender stereotypes, and the difficulties these representations offer for society are the three main aspects of this paper's analysis of women's representation in the era of artificial intelligence and digital media.

This study is important because, as the public's perspective is shaped more and more by AI-generated and curated media, it is crucial to comprehend how these media represent women in order to ensure equality and moral representation.

Literature Review

AI has taken over the world in today's modern era creating a massive impact on media, work and communication. Extensive research however indicates that gender biases visible in AI are often the result of the trained data systems that can be replicated or amplified.

With three primary focuses—bias in Natural Language Processing (NLP), women's representation in digital spaces, and international initiatives promoting gender equality and ethics in AI—this review of the literature looks at studies and papers addressing gender prejudice in AI and digital media.

The study by Costa, M. R. (n.d.). An Analysis of Gender Bias studies in Natural Language Processing highlights a thorough examination of gender bias in NLP systems, elucidating how algorithms pick up social patterns from big language datasets that represent cultural and historical disparities. The study highlights that bias is not just a technological problem but also a reflection of society: models reinforce established gender norms through automated outputs when they associate "doctor" with men and "nurse" with women. To solve these issues, Costa suggests combining data balance, bias detection frameworks, and ethical supervision.

An article by UN Women (2025) titled, "How AI reinforces gender bias—and what we

can do about it”explores how AI models are biased and amplifies discrimination towards women and girls in hiring, advertising and digital communication leading to gender discrimination. Zinnya del Villar adds emphasis on training the AI systems with the data that is diverse and represents all genders, races and communities.

An article published by Gender in geopolitics institute titled, “Women’s representation in video games” explores how women are represented in the gaming industry often promoting the idea of male gaze. The representation of women is stereotyped where men are shown to be more masculine and women are hypersexualised. The article also highlights the effects of this kind of representation on players making them desensitized.

A journal article by Punia, M. (2023). on Challenges for Women in Artificial Intelligence: Promoting Gender Equality and Inclusivity examines how gender bias is deeply rooted in AI as AI systems as they are trained on large datasets which are often gender biased. Her study points out how women are underrepresented in multiple leadership positions. Through her study she suggests ways to make AI more inclusive for women through promoting digital skills and literacy and creating safe and all inclusive spaces

An article by UNESCO. (2023, April 20). AI-enabled Voice Assistants: No longer female by default reports how important it is to provide a choice to users whether they want a female, male or non-gendered voice rather than reinforcing female voices which projects them as subservient and submissive. The report highlights the steps taken by UNESCO to ensure there is gender equality especially in the arenas where women are underrepresented. UNESCO encourages women to opt for Computer Science, technology and engineering to bring a massive change in the industry by making it more

inclusive.

Additionally, UNESCO’s Women4Ethical AI initiative (n.d.) supports women’s leadership in the ethical development of AI while promoting inclusive governance. The program highlights the need for gender diversity in design teams and policymaking in order to create ethical AI. It promotes cross-sector cooperation between governments, IT firms, and academic institutions to guarantee that AI systems adhere to the values of gender equality and human rights.

Objectives

- To analyze how women are represented in AI-generated and digital media content.
- To investigate whether these portrayals uphold conventional gender stereotypes or represent authenticity.
- To examine the challenges created by AI in fair and inclusive representation of women
- To explore how these depictions affect equality and gender attitudes in society.

Methodology

Since the topic of AI and gender representation is still in early stages, the research is experimental in character. Instead of testing hypotheses, the study seeks to identify patterns, themes, and emerging issues related to women’s representation in AI-enabled media environments. The researcher has extensively focused on understanding the representation of women in AI with a focus on global media context.

Data Collection

The study relies exclusively on secondary data sources which includes:

- Research papers in the areas of media studies, women representation, artificial intelligence, and communication.
- The researcher also referred to the websites of the international organizations such as UNESCO and UN Women to get an in depth understanding on the topic.
- The researcher has added insights from

his perspective and observation based on the use of digital media and AI especially through Instagram, a social media platform.

Data Analysis

The researcher examined the collected sources through thematic analysis, focusing on three key areas

Authenticity – how authentic is the representation of women done by AI and digital platforms with respect to their actual and varied identities.

Stereotypes: the persistence or modification of conventional gender stereotypes in contexts mediated by AI.

Challenges include gender bias, underrepresentation of women, and reinforcement of gender stereotypes in the language model

4. Limitations

The interaction of AI, digital media, and gender representation is the specific emphasis of the study. The lack of quantitative surveys, experimental designs, and first-hand interviews restricts the statistical generalisation of results. However; it highlights important issues in the topic by providing a conceptual and critical analysis of the data that is currently accessible.

Findings

In the modern era, digital media and artificial intelligence (AI) are radically altering the dynamics of society. Because of their effectiveness, ease of use, and accessibility, artificial intelligence (AI) technologies are widely employed across numerous industries and have solidified their place in everyday life. AI is being used more and more in fields like business, law, medicine, and education to improve productivity and streamline processes. These developments raise questions about AI's impact and reliability while also highlighting its revolutionary potential. How much can we rely on AI and digital media to deliver impartial and accurate content? What effects do these technologies have on public perception and societal attitudes

as they spread information and representations?

With a particular focus on how women are portrayed in AI and digital media, this study tackles these issues from a gendered perspective. It tries to evaluate if depictions of women in many sectors are authentic or if they perpetuate preconceived views. Additionally, the study addresses the difficulty in obtaining accurate and fair images of women in digitally mediated and AI-driven situations.

Authenticity

The validity of women's depiction in AI and digital media is strongly debated. Instead of presenting authentic, varied experiences, AI frequently perpetuates prejudices, stereotypes, or idealised depictions. There are multiple examples in which AI or digital media have represented women stereotypically which needs to be studied. Since AI-generated media is becoming a key source of knowledge and entertainment for both younger and older generations, authenticity has become a crucial challenge in the contemporary digital era. Differentiating between actual and fraudulent media representations has grown increasingly difficult as artificial intelligence continues to blur the barriers between reality and virtual creation. Because these representations have the power to impact public beliefs and either support or contradict preexisting gender narratives, it is now necessary to assess the authenticity of such content, especially with regard to how women are portrayed.

Stereotypical Portrayals

Voices of the women are used frequently in AI systems such as virtual assistants (like Siri or Alexa) which project women as caring, giver and obedient- reflecting conservative gender stereotypes. This supports the idea that women are better suited for service-oriented and supportive roles in comparison to leadership and technical roles. By representing women who are physically active, fair-skinned and flawless, AI

leans towards racism and creates unattainable standards in the society

An article published by UNESCO titled, 'AI-enabled Voice Assistants: No longer female by default' talks about the fight against gender prejudice in AI assistants. UNESCO publication from 2019 I would blush if I could disclose the extent to which voice-assistant apps powered by artificial intelligence were designed with gender bias and stereotypes in mind. The article sheds light on if it is imperative to involve female voices for AI assistants. Talking about the voice assistant Alexa which still uses female voice, Amazon recently published "Communication Guidelines for Alexa," which provided unique insight into the amount of consideration that goes into these things—nothing is accidental. The "Alexa and Gender" part of the guidelines appeared to be a direct reaction to our article. Contradictions arise throughout it. For instance, according to the standards, Alexa "does not have a gender" and shouldn't be referred to as "she" or "her." However, later on in the same document, Amazon calls Alexa "she" and "her" and claims that the technology has a "female persona". The guidelines highlight the challenges of attempting to provide a gendered human identity to a machine. People will naturally draw comparisons between artificial intelligence (AI) and real women if the technology has a "female persona" and speaks like a woman. "How can I help you?" is often the first thing a voice assistant says when you call on them. Why should the voice of submissive obedience and this question always be female? Customers should be able to select whether they want a voice assistant with a male or female voice, or perhaps even a non-gendered voice like C-3PO from Star Wars (UNESCO, 2023)

Hypersexualization or Objectification

Women are often projected as sex objects in digital media, particularly in the entertainment and gaming industries. This has

altered the way people look at women. Women are often hypersexualised and objectified.

Genuine female representation in AI and digital media can empower women and influence how the general public is seen. The stereotypical and distorted representation of women in the society makes people believe in women as objects and results in the increased gender disparities. In the article published by Gender in Geopolitics Institute titled, "Women's Representation in video games" sheds light on why video games are popular amongst men and what are the reasons for it. Talking about gender representation in video games, the article talks about how women and men are represented. Male characters are represented as extremely masculine projecting alpha male characteristics and women characters are represented as sexual objects, fragile and hypersexualised. Even though men and women are represented differently, they are not shown incompetent or submitted to male counterparts. The majority of characters, aside from their appearance, exhibit "qualities borrowed from male norms (for example, intelligence and strength)." and women appear to be just as competent as males. However, the male gaze is always present, even if they can adopt a male role, such as fighting. In Tomb Raider, this masculine gaze is evident. She is objectified even if the heroine is intelligent and powerful. (Lhuillery, 2020)

Stereotypes

To quote an interview conducted by UN Women with Zinnya del Villar on AI gender bias and creating inclusive technology, there exists a term known as I gender bias. She adds, "AI systems, learning from data filled with stereotypes, often reflect and reinforce gender biases These biases can limit opportunities and diversity, especially in areas like decision-making, hiring, loan approvals, and legal judgments". AI is data based and learns from the data given. It is a collection of technologies that make it possible for computers to complete

complicated jobs more quickly than people. AI systems, like machine learning models, learn these tasks from training data. When these models rely on biased algorithms, they can worsen gender discrimination in AI and sustain existing inequities.

Imagine, training a machine to make hiring decisions by showing it examples from the past. If most of those examples carry conscious or unconscious bias – for example, showing men as scientists and women as nurses – the AI may interpret that men and women are better suited for certain roles and make biased decisions when filtering applications (“How AI reinforces gender bias—and what we can do about it”).

This way AI learns the stereotypical representation of women through the data added by the user. This issue is concerning as this representation of women by AI can shape the perspectives of millions watching content in their free time believing this is how the gender roles and duties should be.

Challenges

AI has immense calibre to upgrade society and the economy, but there are multiple challenges such gender differences in AI and digital media have the potential to reinforce or glorify preexisting biases and create problems for women now and in the future. (“Women4Ethical AI | UNESCO”).

It is imperative to understand what are the challenges posed by AI and digital media in ensuring fair and inclusive portrayals of women. With reference to an article published by the International Journal of Law, Management and Humanities, The challenges can be divided in four categories: Gender Bias in AI, Underrepresentation of women, Cybersecurity and online harassment and access and digital divide.

Gender Bias

Today, Machine Learning has become an important subset of AI. It is a system where the

machine learns without the basis of the data provided earlier. It studies the patterns and data added previously and gives results to fit the requirements of the user. This system is used by millions of people and organisations today to generate reliable results but is AI reliable when it comes to gender representation? AI systems may promote gender stereotypes and produce unfair results because they rely on datasets that may contain biased or discriminating information. When a person using AI adds data which is gender biased, AI gives the results on the data fed in the system as AI systems rely significantly on the data they are trained on. That gives rise to another question, Is AI promoting gender biases or is it simply showing the results of the biased mentality of the user? Training databases must reflect the experiences and viewpoints of all genders in order to advance equality and inclusivity. Women and other under-represented groups can be included in the data collection process to achieve this. Furthermore, addressing gender bias in AI requires adherence to ethical standards and rules. The research and application of AI should be governed by explicit, legally binding regulations that emphasise responsibility, transparency, and fairness. Gender bias and gender equality in AI systems must be explicitly addressed in these standards. By adhering to these moral guidelines, we can endeavour to create an AI environment that is more unbiased and inclusive. (Punia, 2023, pp. 3254-3255)

Natural Language Processing (NLP) and AI biases are frequently associated since big language models often reflect societal prejudices. Speech recognition, automatic translation, and other applications—many of which are already incorporated into our daily lives—rely heavily on natural language processing (NLP), a subfield of artificial intelligence that gives machines the ability to comprehend and analyse human language.

Virtual assistants like Alexa and translation software like Google Translate are typical examples. These NLP tools are actively used by people due to the convenience feature it offers but the highlighting aspect of this NLP is, it employs the voice of women which follows the orders of people. It projects women in a more dependent role showcasing women as more fragile and unassertive. There are less visible NLP systems used in areas like job applicant screening and monitoring but in multiple places today hiring is the result of algorithmic discrimination based on biased training data. If in some organisation most of the men were hired for technical roles, the algorithm might favor male candidates and filter female candidates for the role. Gender bias refers to the dominance of one gender over another in specific contexts, such as certain professions or social roles. This often results in the underrepresentation of the less dominant gender and the reinforcement of stereotypes (for example, associating women with nursing roles and men with doctor roles). The relationship between NLP and gender bias is twofold: while NLP systems can perpetuate gender bias, they can also be used to identify and uncover such biases in various social domains, such as news media or advertising.

On the other hand, NLP often produces gender biased systems, thereby perpetuating and amplifying gender bias in society. While gender bias in NLP is mostly attributed to training of large amounts of biased data, the bias amplification is due to the learning algorithms (Costa, n.d., pp. 1-2)

Underrepresentation of women

It has been observed that even in the most progressive arenas such as acting, journalism and many other fields women are not considered fit to take up challenging roles. This has a lot to do with the society's perception of considering women as fragile and submissive. This perception is largely faced by the content

seen on various media platforms. Today, with AI things are no better where women are projected as sex objects or represented in a way that shows their primary job is to entice people. In AI-related fields, such as research, development, and leadership positions, women are still notably under-represented. AI technology growth and diversity are hampered by the under-representation of women. This imbalance is caused by a number of causes. Because technical fields are usually seen as more suitable for men, persistent gender stereotypes and cultural biases sometimes deter women from pursuing careers in AI. The issue is made worse by the lack of female role models in the AI industry, which restricts women's aspirations and lowers their drive to work in the field. The under-representation of women in AI is also a result of unequal access to education, especially in STEM fields. Women seeking employment in this field face additional obstacles due to limited access to resources, mentorship, and encouraging learning environments. Additionally, women continue to be disadvantaged by unconscious bias in hiring and promotion procedures, which makes it more challenging for females to enter and progress in AI-related professions. (Punia, 2023, pp. 3254-3255)

If AI becomes more inclusive of women and promotes gender equality, it could unlock the full potential of AI technology. The under-representation of women in AI leads to a lack of diverse viewpoints and innovation.

Rise in Cyber Crimes

There have been multiple instances when women have faced online harassment. Online stalking, threats and hacking of women's social media accounts is not new. When it comes to making AI more inclusive towards women, it is imperative for women to take an active participation in AI related fields such as research and development to create a change in the society and eventually in the perspective of the

people however; that seems a far cry as technical fields are often associated with men. Due to the fear of negative repercussions such as online harassment and cybersecurity many women choose not to opt for technical fields AI being one of them (Punia, 2023, p. 3256)

Lack of Digital Space

Today, technology is reaching every nook and corner but still there are some spaces where women are refrained from using technology. This adds to the lack of digital literacy amongst women and also leads to digital divide resulting in lack of women's participation in fields such as law, educational and AI. (Punia, 2023, 3256)

Conclusion

The research paper gives an in-depth understanding on how women are represented in the AI and digital media and what contributes in shaping the perception of the society in viewing women as submissive and dependent. As AI and digital media are omnipresent, it plays an instrumental role in shaping the perception of the people at large and especially the younger generation. There are multiple reasons why this perception is shaped by AI today and how. This study explores the challenges created by AI in the unbiased representation of women today. To conclude, AI has transformed our lives to another level but there is a strict need to monitor the representations of women done by AI and ensure there is an impartial representation. The government and various corporate organisations should ensure there are policies framed to promote gender equality in digital spaces. There should be strict rules and regulations implemented to ensure women feel safe working in digital spaces. There should be heavy censorship on content which projects women and sex objects or represents them in stereotypical traditional roles. These changes might not produce an immediate transformation in how society perceives women but this could lay a foundation for the more open and non-judgemental outlook.

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Masculinity and the Digital Turn: Reframing Gender in Prime Video's Hindi Originals

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INTRODUCTION

The rise of Over-the-Top (OTT) platforms has transformed media consumption in India over the past decade. With the expansion of affordable internet access and the spread of smartphones, services such as Amazon Prime Video, Netflix, and Disney+ Hotstar have become central to everyday entertainment. Sundaravel and Elangovan (2020) describe OTT as a "cultural reconfiguration of entertainment," where the widespread availability of mobile data and smartphones has shifted viewing from broadcast television and cinema to individualized, on-demand platforms. Comparative studies highlight the strategies through which different services sought to carve market niches. Gianchandani et al. (2020) find that while Netflix positioned itself around premium global content, Hotstar capitalized on cricket and television tie-ins, whereas Prime Video invested in Hindi originals and regional language programming to appeal to mass markets. While Hindi cinema has long been studied for its constructions of masculinity, from the angry young man of the 1970s to the

globalized hero of the 2000s, the emergence of OTT platforms marks a distinct shift. Streaming content operates outside the constraints of censorship, and as Dhiman (2021) observes, this freedom has allowed shows to explore taboo subjects, experiment with language, and offer complex characterizations that television and mainstream cinema often avoid. At the same time, these platforms remain deeply entangled in existing cultural logics, sometimes reproducing patriarchal hierarchies even while experimenting with alternative voices.

Amazon Prime Video's original Indian shows exemplify this tension. Its slate spans diverse genres and settings, producing narratives that range from gritty crime sagas to intimate relationship dramas and rural comedies. This paper focuses on four flagship productions - Mirzapur (2018-), The Family Man (2019-2021), Made in Heaven (2019-2023), and

Panchayat (2020-2024). Each has attracted wide audiences and sparked debate, both for their popularity and for how they depict gender and power. Taken together, these shows capture a broad spectrum of masculinities: violent and coercive, anxious and conflicted, aspirational and intimate, ordinary and mundane.

The study examines these shows as cultural texts, analyzing how they stage masculinity through narrative, dialogue, and visual tropes. In doing so, it situates Prime Video not simply as an entertainment provider but as a space where different masculinities are constructed, circulated, and contested. Streaming thus becomes an important lens through which to understand the evolving meanings of masculinity in contemporary India.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The rapid growth of streaming platforms has been widely noted in Indian media scholarship. Prabhughate et al. (2020) show that binge-watching, personalization, and algorithmic recommendation systems have

created new habits of media consumption, encouraging viewers to value content by its relatability and realism. Mondal (2025) highlights the linguistic innovations of OTT, where the heavy use of profanity and gendered slang functions as a marker of authenticity.

Within this environment, masculinity has emerged as a recurring concern of scholarship.

Verma et al. (2023) argue that crime series such as *Mirzapur* and *The Family Man* use violence as the key measure of manhood, normalizing aggression as both a narrative strategy and a cultural ideal. Mondal (2025) similarly points out that gendered abuses in *Mirzapur* are not incidental but constitutive of how masculinity is performed, as threats to women's bodies become proxies for male rivalry. Rashmi and Sood (2021), in their analysis of crime dramas, show that women often achieve narrative agency only by appropriating masculine practices of violence and manipulation, which keeps male-coded power at the centre.

Alongside these violent models, scholarship also identifies alternative portrayals. Sangra (2021) emphasizes the depiction of "new-age men" in shows like *Made in Heaven* who are emotionally articulate and supportive of strong women. Pradhan (2021) highlights how the same series gives narrative centrality to a gay protagonist, marking a departure from decades of caricatured queer figures in Indian cinema.

A number of adjacent studies provide comparative depth. Bhattacharya (2024) reads *Panchayat* as a show where masculinity is not defined by spectacle but by banality: men negotiating bureaucracy, frustrations, and small-town routines. This ordinariness contrasts with the hypermasculinity of crime dramas. Chatterjee (2024), however, critiques the series for erasing caste conflict, producing a sanitized rural authenticity designed for urban audiences.

Other works highlight how progressive

representations often provoke contestation. Rasool et al. (2023), studying the reception of women-centric series such as *Bombay Begums* and *Churails*, find that audiences frequently denounce them as "immoral" or "anti-men." The implication is that masculinity, too, is received in polarized ways: violent masculinities are often naturalized as authentic, while alternative forms invite suspicion or backlash.

Much of the research has concentrated on violent crime dramas, leaving more ordinary and non-spectacular masculinities underexplored. Scholarship on queer representation focuses largely on singular shows without situating them alongside other forms of masculinity.

Audience reception studies document backlash to feminist narratives but rarely examine how male characters themselves are received. Mainly, there has been little effort to compare multiple shows within a single platform, to see how a service like Prime Video curates a repertoire of masculinities for segmented audiences.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a qualitative, interpretive approach, analyzing streaming originals as cultural texts that produce and circulate ideas of masculinity. Rather than seeking to measure audience impact or quantify representation, the analysis attends to how masculinities are constructed within narratives, dialogues, and visual choices.

The research objectives are threefold:

- To examine how masculinities are represented across different genres of Indian Amazon Prime Video originals.
- To identify the recurring patterns and contrasts in these depictions, particularly in relation to violent, anxious, queer, and banal forms of male identity.
- To situate these portrayals within broader debates on gender and media in India,

highlighting how streaming platforms contribute to reshaping cultural understandings of masculinity.

The analysis focuses on four flagship Indian series produced by Amazon Prime Video: *Mirzapur* (2018-), *The Family Man* (2019-2021), *Made in Heaven* (2019-2023), and *Panchayat* (2020-2024). The selection is purposive, designed to capture the diversity of masculinities circulating on a single platform. These shows were chosen because they represent different genres, have been widely consumed and debated, and foreground masculinity in their central characters and storylines. Together, they provide a coherent yet varied sample for analyzing the repertoire of masculinities on Prime Video.

The choice of Prime Video, rather than other OTT platforms, is deliberate. Netflix and Hotstar each cultivated distinct niches — global prestige for Netflix, sports and television ties for Hotstar — whereas Prime invested in diverse Hindi originals that cut across crime, espionage, urban social critique, and rural comedy. This makes it fertile ground for studying how streaming curates a spectrum of masculinities. Focusing on one platform also allows for depth, examining how masculinities are organized within a single catalogue rather than dispersing attention across services.

The analysis proceeds through close textual readings of the four case studies. Narrative arcs, character construction, dialogue, and visual tropes are examined to trace how masculinities are performed and legitimized. Connell's framework of masculinities provides the guiding lens. This framework enables systematic mapping of how different masculinities are staged across the selected series. Comparisons across shows are then drawn to identify patterns and contrasts.

CONTENT ANALYSIS

Mirzapur (2018–)

The series exemplifies hegemonic

masculinity, where domination is performed through violence, profanity, and patriarchal control. Kaleen Bhaiya projects authority through stoicism and calculated violence, while Munna embodies volatile domination, proclaiming: "Yeh Mirzapur hai. Yahan hukum sirf Tripathi ka chalta hai" ("This is Mirzapur. Here only the Tripathis' command prevails").

Low-angle shots of gang leaders, slow-motion gunfights, and wedding shootout reinforce violence as spectacle. Profanity, especially mother–sister slurs, functions as ritual affirmation of manhood, where women's bodies serve as symbolic terrain for rivalry. Subordinate masculinities like Bablu's intellectual strategies and emasculated police officials are humiliated or destroyed. Women such as Beena and Golu gain agency only by adopting masculine-coded violence.

The Family Man (2019–2021)

The series illustrates complicit masculinity, where Srikant Tiwari balances hegemonic structures with domestic inadequacy. His wife's complaint, "Tum family ke liye time hi nahin nikal paate. Hamesha duty, duty, duty" ("You never make time for family. It's always duty, duty, duty"), captures his fractured masculinity.

Shadowed surveillance rooms contrast with brightly lit domestic spaces, dramatizing his double life. Professionally, he enacts hegemonic masculinity through intimidation and violence, justified as patriotic duty. Domestically, he is inadequate, framed slumped in arguments, smoking or drinking to cope. Masculinity here is anxious: hegemonic in the field but deficient at home.

Made in Heaven (2019–2023)

This series foregrounds subordinate masculinity through Karan Mehra's queer identity. His confession, "Yes, I am gay. And I'm not ashamed of it", reclaims dignity in a hostile context. Early episodes frame him in dimly lit

spaces, while later ones place him in expansive, brighter environments, signaling a shift from secrecy to visibility.

Grooms and male relatives enact complicit masculinity through wealth and entitlement, as in: “Shaadi ek investment hai. Dikhna toh chahiye” (“A wedding is an investment. It must show”). Karan, by contrast, is allowed intimacy, tears, and vulnerability, challenging dominant scripts and positioning subordinate masculinity as both stigmatized and newly legitimate.

Panchayat (2020–2024)

The series presents banal masculinity, defined by ordinariness and frustration rather than domination. Abhishek Tripathi’s resigned line, “Aur option kya tha? Rozgaar ka mahaul aisa hi hai” (“What option did I have? That’s just the job market these days”), situates his masculinity in economic insecurity.

Wide shots of dusty fields, bicycle rides, and wooden cots construct banality as a visual trope. Male camaraderie revolves around gossip and bureaucratic inefficiency, not violence. Women disrupt this ordinariness: Manju Devi grows into her role as sarpanch, and Rinki’s quiet romance with Abhishek softens patriarchal norms.

Results

Together, these shows map onto Connell’s framework: Mirzapur enacts hegemonic masculinity, The Family Man complicit masculinity, Made in Heaven subordinate masculinity, and Panchayat banal masculinity. Dialogues, visual tropes, and character arcs illustrate how Prime Video curates multiple masculinities simultaneously, each tailored to cultural sensibilities and audience niches.

FINDINGS

The analysis demonstrates that Prime Video organizes masculinities not as a singular script but as a repertoire. Unlike earlier cinematic traditions dominated by a single

archetype, streaming originals host multiple masculinities side by side: violent, anxious, queer, and ordinary.

Violence, however, remains a persistent currency of male legitimacy. Mirzapur naturalizes aggression as domination, The Family Man legitimizes state violence as patriotism, and even Made in Heaven exposes entitlement in coercive grooms. At the same time, masculinities are often shown under pressure: Srikant Tiwari fails domestically, and Abhishek Tripathi struggles with frustration and pressure. Anxiety and inadequacy recur as motifs, complicating the image of confident male dominance.

Subordinate masculinity gains new visibility in Made in Heaven. Karan Mehra, a queer protagonist, is portrayed with dignity, intimacy, and vulnerability. His presence disrupts heteronormative scripts, though situated within a privileged urban milieu. In contrast,

Panchayat stages masculinity through banality, humor, and small frustrations. The story acts as a counterpoint to spectacular violence, but one shaped for urban audiences by its erasure of caste conflict.

Women emerge as catalysts in all four shows, whether by adopting masculine-coded strategies (Mirzapur), critiquing domestic inadequacies (The Family Man), confronting patriarchy (Made in Heaven), or assuming leadership (Panchayat). Masculinity is thus constructed relationally, constantly negotiated in response to shifting roles of women.

These patterns reveal how Prime Video curates masculinities strategically. Mirzapur appeals to fans of gritty spectacle, The Family Man to middle-class professionals, Made in Heaven to cosmopolitan audiences receptive to feminist and queer narratives, and Panchayat to nostalgic or aspirational viewers seeking rural authenticity. Masculinities are not only represented but actively packaged for segmented publics.

CONCLUSION

The analysis shows that streaming does not present a stable or singular model of manhood but curates multiple forms. Hegemonic masculinity endures, with violence continuing to function as the most legible marker of authority. Also, streaming foregrounds masculinity as unstable and anxious, caught between ideals and inadequacies. More importantly women's agency consistently shapes masculine identities, forcing adaptation, failure, or transformation. Masculinities on Prime Video are plural, fragile, and contested. They reflect India's cultural crossroads where patriarchal scripts persist, but new possibilities, queer, banal, anxious, emerge. Streaming becomes significant not only as entertainment but as a site where Indian audiences are invited to imagine the many ways of being men in the digital age. The broader significance lies in recognizing streaming platforms as cultural curators. Prime Video offers different masculinities for different audiences, organizing cultural anxieties into marketable genres. Masculinity thus becomes not just a theme but a product segmented for consumption.

The study has limitations. It focuses on one platform and four shows, leaving out comparative insights across services such as Netflix or Hotstar. It also does not examine audience reception, though existing studies suggest that alternative scripts often invite backlash. Future research could extend this analysis cross-platform, include regional-language content, or explore reception studies.

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CHANGE IN BEHAVIOURAL PATTERNS OF YOUNG GENERATION CONSUMING SOCIAL MEDIA

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INTRODUCTION

Social media, not just a term but now a daily life schedule of people regardless of their age. The past 10 years showed a massive technological advancement through social media. It has evolved people and their way of living. Everything is now socially visible, from your breakfast to your bathing routines to your favorite food as well. People have now changed their lifestyle according to social media; thus, people watch others and their lifestyle and try to change their own and that's how the cycle continues. Platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, Facebook, Snapchat etc., became a major part of an individual's life, changing their source of information, the way they communicate and how they manage their lives which automatically shows drastic change in their behavior as well. Young Generation mainly 13-25 years of age, includes Gen-Z, Millennials and now Gen-Alpha too. These groups are highly

active on social media and it's a part of their lifestyle, i.e., the clothes they wear, the phone they have, the style they carry etc., are all according to the latest trends.

Social media came as something which helps people have easy access to information, to connect with friends & family, to increase global connectivity etc., but over-consumption of anything is dangerous. It leads to massive behavioral changes among young people in terms of concerns such as reduced attention span, decreasing in social interactions, unrealistic living standard, fake identity, negative influence of social media & many more. Moreover, the influence culture nowadays has led people to have such living standard and maintain a class in society which increased in high product consumerism among young users. Continuous exposure of advertisements attracts teenagers towards impulsive buying of such products which also shapes their consumer behavior. What we see in social media is not the reality we think. Influencers with large number of following in platforms like Instagram, YouTube etc., deliberately share contents and promote products for their followers to buy, which they get paid for. You may have seen many companies now choosing influencers who are known among the young population for their product promotions as it will attract their 50% of product consumer that are Gen-Z's or Gen-Alpha.

The product promotions are often integrated daily basis in the content they share like; reels, YouTube videos, daily vlogs etc., to which it makes the young audience believe in the product due to continuous exposure towards it. Also, social media has its most power among people by using algorithms by analyzing the user's preference and changing the theme accordingly. For eg, how your Instagram explore page changes according to your liking of the reel or watching such similar contents. These tactics allow them to show these advertisements

related to the consumer's preference and teenagers tend to attract by constant exposure of the product of their appeals such as latest fashion trends, electronic items, food, clothes & accessories. This persistency creates urgency in young people which makes them taking rapid decisions & impulsive behavior which can lead to wrong judgement of products as well.

This research aims to analyze the primary reason for the behavioral changes shown in young generation mainly 13 to 25 years of age that consume excessive amount of time in social media and how it affects their consumer habits. How the high consumption of social media by teenagers and young adults often attract high product consumerism. Through necessary survey (N= 100) on mainly Indian youth, we aim to study the negative impact on the behavior of young people and consequences of over- consumption of social media. This study asks whether high consumption of Social Media result in the behavioral changes of the young generation and product consumerism.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Influence of Social Media on Young Consumer's Behavior

The study gives a highlight at the impact social media has on young people's consumer behavior in India. The research tells that platforms like Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok has become an important part in young people's daily life from the ages of 16 to 30, and that these platforms provide them enough information and opportunities for self-expression. Through an online survey of 145 participants, the research plays up the idea that social media is an information source for consumers and a way for them to report to businesses and brands. This communication style provides young consumers with an important connection to businesses and brands when it comes to decision making. There is a reality that businesses are in competition for young consumer market share and when it

comes to social media platforms, businesses must improve social media strategies to improve consumer engagement and satisfaction for the consumer in which some, if not all, will eventually buy their products or services after engagement occurs. There is also a reality for businesses that social media is now synonymous with regular everyday life for the consumer of our social media-saturated age, and social media has carried more weight in young people's buying behavior and intention to purchase than ever before. It is a way for companies to engage more directly with their young consumers in an impactful way. (Bharucha, Jehangir. "Social media and young consumers behavior." *International Journal of Supply Chain Management* 7.6 (2018): 72-81.)

Effect of social media on young consumer's consumption expenditure

This research examines the influence of social media on the consumption expenditure behavior of young consumers. The study found that the consumption behavior of young consumers increased when they were exposed to online content such as advertisements or influencer posts in online media platforms which indicates that social media is a powerful tool for marketers to engage young consumers and influence their consumption expenditure behavior. The research also highlighted that mobile social media is an important factor to consider as young consumers have massive engagement with mobile social technologies. In conclusion, the research cautions businesses be aware of the implications of social media on consumer behavior and to fact-think about their strategies for making connections with young consumers particularly. This understanding will ultimately help influence young consumer purchasing decisions and support sales. (Çak1r, Fatma, Mesut Çak1r, and Oya Eru. "THE EFFECT OF THE SOCIAL MEDIA ON YOUNG CONSUMERS' CONSUMPTION EXPENDITURE." *International Journal of Social Sciences and Humanity Studies*

5.2 (2013): 86-96.)

Impact of social media on young generation's green consumption

This study highlights the effects of social media upon the green consumption behavior of youth. The analysis was conducted through a survey of 303 youth in China, emphasizing how information on social media impacts environmentally conscious purchasing decisions. The results show a significant positive relationship between social media engagement and green consumption, and that social media is vital to presenting sustainable products and lifestyles to youth on social media accounts such as Instagram and TikTok. Youth are influenced by social media in their sustainable purchasing decisions, so when sustainability is presented in an attractive and emotionally satisfying way, youth consumers are more likely to embrace responsible and sustainable buying behaviors i.e. social media with power. The impact of social media presents a rare opportunity to promote the responsible consumption of sustainable consumption practices to youth. (Xie, Si, and Ghulam Rasool Madni. "Impact of social media on young generation's green consumption behavior through subjective norms and perceived green value." Sustainability 15.4 (2023): 3739.)

METHODOLOGY

This study is conducted a quantitative survey method that had a sample (N=100). The survey consisted of 17 questions, of which the first four questions was about the demographic range. That is, the age group of the participants, gender of participants, what occupation the participants were employed in & at what level they're pursuing education. Rest of the questions are listed in a way that creates a perfect blend into the in-depth knowledge of young generation using social media.

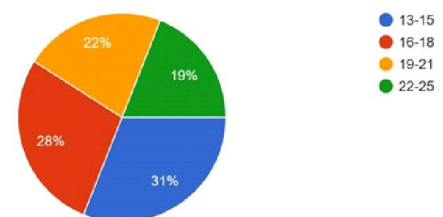
Other questions in the survey asked the number of hours they spend in social media on daily basis. Which social media platform they

use the most, what is the main reason behind the usage of social media. Survey also contained questions related to behavioral changes like, do they think that excessive usage of social media somehow affected their attention span and their social media interactions has been decreased as the usage of social media increased.

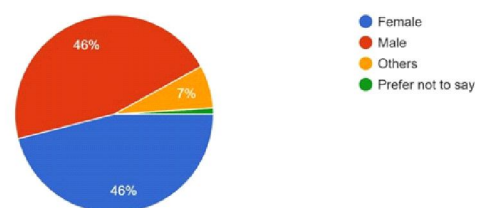
The survey added questions which raised the importance of product consumerism and showcased how the consumer got influenced by the product marketing; i.e. how often they feel attracted or influenced by the products they see on social media. Also, the social media advertisements and how they affect their purchasing decisions, have they purchased in the past month or not, if yes, what did they purchase. It also contained some lifestyle & self-awareness questions like, the consumption of social media affected their mood, about the high product consumerism, are they aware about the negative impact and have they ever tried to reduce their time spent on social media. Through this survey and the subsequent data collected, we aim to answer about the behavioral changes in young generation due the high consumption of social media and how it affects in product consumerism.

DATA ANALYSIS

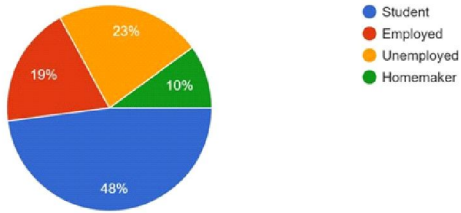
What is your age?
100 responses



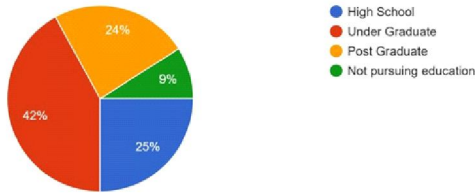
What is your gender?
100 responses



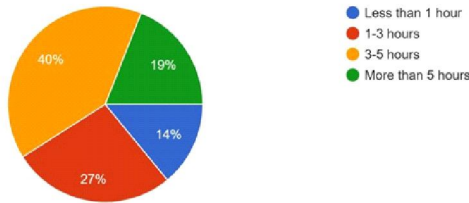
What is your occupation?
100 responses



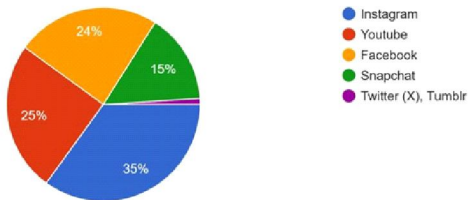
At what level are you pursuing education? (If yes)
100 responses



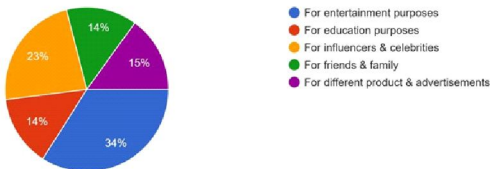
How many hours do you spend on Social Media on a daily basis (on average)?
100 responses



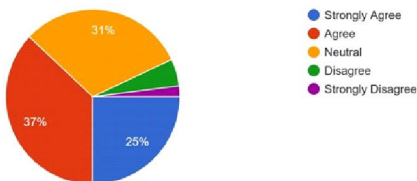
Which Social Media platform you watch the most?
100 responses



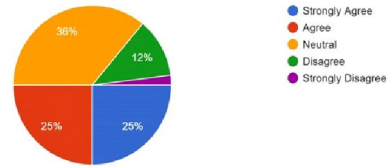
What is the main reason behind your usage of Social Media?
100 responses



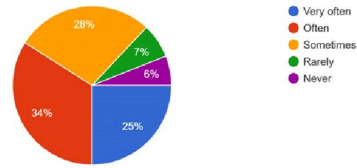
Do you think excessive use of Social Media has somehow affected your attention span?
100 responses



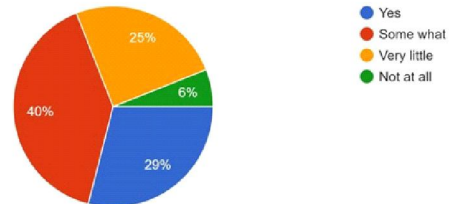
Do you think your social interactions has been decreased as the usage of social media increased?
100 responses



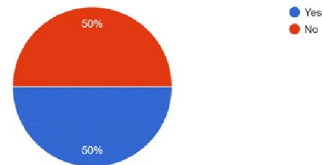
Do you feel attracted or influenced by the products you see on social media (ads, reviews etc)? If yes, how often?
100 responses



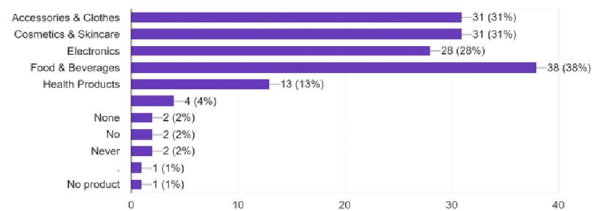
Do you think social media advertisements affect your purchasing decisions?
100 responses



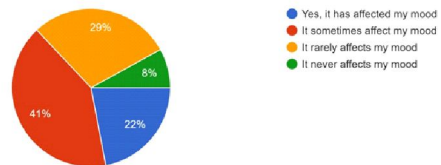
Have you ever purchased any product you were attracted to or got influenced to in the past month?
100 responses



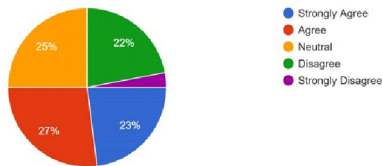
If yes, what kind of products you usually buy? (you can select multiple options)
100 responses



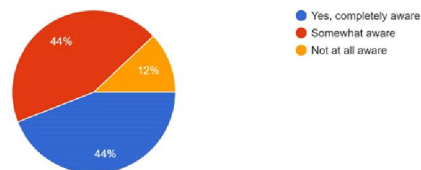
Do you think high consumption of social media content, both positive & negative has affected your mood?
100 responses



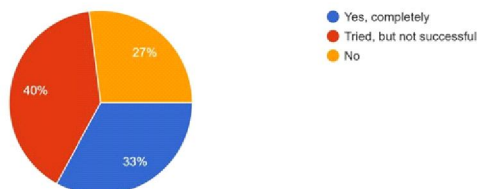
Do you think high consumption of social media leads to high consumption of product consumerism in young people?
100 responses



Are you aware about the negative impacts on the behaviour & product consumerism on young people due to excessive social media usage?
100 responses



Have you ever tried to reduce your time spent on social media?
100 responses



RESULTS AND LIMITATIONS

The data gathered on the behavioral changes of young generation using social media and product consumerism reported the impact & influence social media leaves on people. The survey gives a clear data that most of the people are from 13 to 15 years of age which are likely teenagers who are unemployed, with undergraduate students next in line. The survey shows that 40% of the people consume social media for 3 to 5 hours on daily basis, with 19% more than 5 hours. The main platform which people use is Instagram with 35% and 34% use social media for entertainment purposes. This shows the level of influence people have been which led them to spend such an amount with no purpose at all. With some behavioral structured questions, 37% of the people agree and 25% strongly agree that excessive usage of social media affected their attention span. That's just not it, due to the massive consumption of social media, 50% still agree that it has led to reduction in social interactions.

As a result, people feel attracted towards the product displayed in social media due to the high consumption. Almost 60% people in the survey gets attracted towards the product which affects their purchasing decisions as well. With 50% people purchased products they felt attracted to in the past month. Due to the constant indulgence in social media and the products it displays, not all can buy them, which then affects our mood and behavioral tendencies. With 41% agrees that social media content has affected their mood, 50% agrees that high social media consumption leads to high product consumerism. But the truth is, people still indulge in those activities even after being aware about it, which particularly is visible the survey, 88% are somewhere aware about the negative impact on the behavior of people.

It is clear that individuals ignore the fact that high product consumerism is nothing but keeping up with the trends and setting unrealistic living standard and giving social media a power to hold the key to their life. Which leads to the most important question about their efforts in reducing the time they spend in social media, which again gave a clear explanation with 40% tried to reduce the time but were unsuccessful.

The study shows the limitations that; first it's a self-reported data with a small sample, and cross-sectional methodology. The current study also lacked qualitative information and measures of long-term behavioral changes which can be faced by the young generation indulging in different social media contents, and potential regional and cultural differences among youth.

CONCLUSION

The study highlights the impact in behavior of young generation (mainly 13-25 years of age) consuming social media and how excessive use of such platforms affected their lifestyle and behavioral patterns. With the proper survey, it showed the massive reduction in

social interactions and the unnecessary living standard which knowingly or unknowingly compel the young people towards product consumerism. Platforms like Instagram, YouTube etc., are the major reasons where product marketing attracts the audience in buying that product by setting trends which leads to impulsive purchasing that often changes their behavior as well.

Overall, the study showcases that social media is very powerful tool that has shaped the mindset of people in the past decade and will continue to shape, though, it has some positive side but the over consumption of some contents leads to negative effect, especially in the young generation. By setting unrealistic living standard, unnecessary content and daily algorithm lead to rapid decisions in life which can be regretful. Thus, this study aims to provide the awareness about the necessary amount of social media usage and responsible consumer behavior.

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<https://www.mdpi.com/2071-1050/15/4/3739>



Exploring Social Media's Impact on New Creative Startups.

Ms. Nidhi Deesai

Abstract

This paper examines the role of social media as a strategic enabler for the growth and sustainability of new creative startups in India. Through an extensive secondary research approach involving academic literature, case studies, and industry reports, the study analyses how social media functions not merely as a marketing tool but as an integrated business ecosystem. The findings indicate that social media significantly enhances visibility, facilitates brand-building, and enables resource-constrained startups to compete in a highly saturated market. Evidence further suggests that a focused platform strategy—particularly the combined use of Facebook and Instagram—yields superior audience engagement compared to multi-platform diffusion. The study also establishes the critical impact of video-centric content in driving user interaction and improving financial outcomes, including higher return on investment and reduced customer acquisition costs. Additionally, the research highlights the importance of two-way communication in strengthening consumer relationships and fostering loyal online communities. Overall, the paper contributes to existing scholarship by providing a data-driven, context-specific understanding of how Indian startups can leverage social media to achieve sustainable growth.

Keywords: Social media; Creative startups; Digital strategy; Brand-building; Audience

engagement; Video content; ROI; Customer relationship; Indian startup ecosystem.

INTRODUCTION:

In today's world of business, starting a new company is a journey of big dreams meeting tough realities. Many new entrepreneurs have brilliant ideas but face major hurdles like a lack of money, difficulty finding the right talent, and an unclear path to the market. Traditionally, getting support from banks or investors was difficult without a proven track record, creating a tough situation for newcomers. This challenging environment could stop even the most creative ideas before they get a chance to grow. However, in our highly connected world, social media has become a powerful and essential tool, acting as a digital lifeline for these new businesses. It has completely changed the game, making it a fairer playing field and opening up opportunities that were once only available to large, established companies.

The main advantage of social media is that it is a very cost-effective way to market a business. Startups, which often have very tight budgets, can use platforms like Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter, these days it's also LinkedIn, to run large marketing campaigns and reach a wide audience without the high costs of traditional advertising. It's not just the cost but Social media also helps to test campaigns before spending so much. This means a small creative venture in any corner of the country can build its brand and talk directly with customers on a global scale, something that was impossible before. This shift has given more power to creativity and smart engagement than to big marketing budgets. Social media is no longer just for advertising; it has become a complete business environment. It's a place where startups can raise funds through online campaigns, hire talented people by sharing their company culture, do real-time market research, and even create new products with direct feedback from consumers. In short, social media is now a central hub for

running a modern startup.

This research paper aims to explore the many ways social media helps new creative startups succeed and grow. We will look at how these digital platforms are used not just for marketing, but as essential tools for overall business development, brand identity and brand awareness, from the initial idea to reaching the entire market. We will also examine if using several social media platforms helps startups connect with a larger and more engaged audience. Finally, we will dive into how social media communication builds strong, lasting connections between a new company and its customers, turning them into a loyal community that gives the startup a real competitive advantage

Hypothesis:

■ H0: Using many social media platforms does not help a startup's market reach.

H1: Using a few different social media platforms helps a startup reach more people.

■ H0: A startup's social media use does not impact its business performance.

H1: A startup's social media use helps its business. This happens because social media builds a strong brand image.

Objectives

1. To explore how social media supports the growth and visibility of new creative startups.

2. To examine whether using multiple social media platforms helps startups reach and engage a wider audience.

3. To understand the role of social media communication in building connections between startups and consumers.

Review of Literature:

1. The role of social media in facilitating collaborative innovation in emerging startups, Zebi and Dr. Manisha Goyal, 2023

According to this paper, Social media is a pivotal tool for modern businesses, especially for new creative startups trying to establish themselves and grow. The paper's literature

review lays a theoretical groundwork by examining how social media has evolved and its impact on business innovation and digital collaboration. It integrates core concepts such as open innovation, network theory, and the diffusion of innovation model to frame the study, emphasizing how platforms facilitate the rapid spread of ideas and the “wisdom of crowds”. This review also delves into the strategic management of technological innovation and the critical role digital platforms play in startup success. For creative businesses, digital marketing is vital for building a brand, attracting a niche audience, and standing out in a crowded market. However, the literature highlights a gap in understanding how startups with limited resources can best use these strategies, and how to measure success beyond simple metrics like likes and shares. The paper’s goal is to address this gap by exploring how creative startups can leverage multiple platforms and communication methods to build strong consumer relationships and achieve sustainable growth.

2. Role Of Social Media For Start-Ups In India, Jagrati Tiwari, 2023

This paper establishes a robust theoretical foundation by examining the evolution of social media, its contribution to business innovation, and prior research on digital collaboration. It uses core concepts like open innovation, network theory, and the diffusion of innovation model to frame the research, illustrating how social media platforms act as a quick channel for new ideas and collaborative practices in the startup world. A key objective is to see how multiple social media platforms can help startups reach and engage a wider audience. The review shows that while platforms like Instagram are great for visually showcasing a brand, others like Google or paid social media ads are better for targeting specific customer groups. However, many creative startups face challenges with limited resources and expertise when trying to create a consistent,

effective digital marketing strategy. The review also highlights the importance of social media in building strong connections with customers, noting that companies that focus on personalizing content and running targeted campaigns tend to see higher conversion rates. This section ultimately aims to provide a clear understanding of how these different strategies—from creating content to partnering with influencers—work together to help startups succeed in a competitive market

3. Digital Marketing Strategy for Creative Startups: Case Study, Mardi Hartanto Tjong, 2025

This paper confirms that social media is a big deal for new creative startups, helping them with everything from marketing to business strategy. You see, using social media smartly can really boost a startup’s performance by building up their reputation and brand. It’s a cost-effective way for these new companies to attract customers, grow their reach, and even increase sales. The content a company shares, whether it’s on Twitter or other platforms, can even change as the business grows, shifting its focus from getting funding to developing new products. The thing is, social media is a crucial resource for startups to handle common challenges like tough competition and not having enough market info. The research also points out that while startups can make mistakes with their digital marketing, they can sort things out by making targeted content or even getting help from a social media manager

4. Analyzing Social Media Activities of Startups Incubated in the Business Incubators of North East India, Jamal Hussain & Himadari Barman, 2025

The research makes it clear that social media is a huge deal for all businesses, from big companies to small startups. It helps them build their brand, connect with customers, and increase sales. For startups, especially, it’s great because it’s a cheap and easy way to market themselves without needing a lot of technical

know-how. The thing is, most of the research out there focuses on how big companies use social media, so we don't have much info on what really works for smaller startups, particularly those in business incubators. The literature also says it's important to measure how well social media is working, but there's no standard way to do it. However, some researchers suggest looking at things like likes, comments, and shares to see how much people are engaging with a post. This study aims to fill that gap by focusing on how startups can use social media effectively to grow their business and build a strong community.

5. Social Media for Start-Ups - An Effective Marketing Tool, Vidhisha Sharma & S. VijayakumarBharathi, 2013

The research paper confirms that social media is a big deal for new creative startups, helping them with everything from marketing to business strategy. You see, using social media smartly can really boost a startup's performance by building up their reputation and brand. It's a cost-effective way for these new companies to attract customers, grow their reach, and even increase sales. The content a company shares, whether it's on Twitter or other platforms, can even change as the business grows, shifting its focus from getting funding to developing new products. The thing is, social media is a crucial resource for startups to handle common challenges like tough competition and not having enough market info. The research also points out that while startups can make mistakes with their digital marketing, they can sort things out by making targeted content or even getting help from a social media manager.

6. Influence of self-perceived creativity and social media use in predicting E-entrepreneurial intention, FadiAbdelfattah&Hussam Al Halbusi,2022

In this paper highlights that entrepreneurship is a crucial driver for economic growth and job creation, with e-

entrepreneurship, or online businesses, becoming a particularly popular option. This is a great opportunity for young entrepreneurs because it has fewer risks and can be started from home without a large budget or staff. The paper also suggests that a person's belief in their own creativity is a key factor in their desire to become an entrepreneur. Interestingly, the study found that social media isn't just a tool; it actually strengthens the link between self-perceived creativity and the intention to start an e-business. This is a significant finding because it shows that social media helps people find and create business opportunities and lets them adapt their plans based on new information they find online.

7. A Study on the Impact of Social Media Algorithms in Business-To-Business Marketing, Dr. Arasuraja G & Dr. SundaraBalaMurugan.P, 2023

This research shows that B2B companies are still trying to figure out how to use social media effectively, especially when compared to businesses that sell directly to consumers. The thing is, social media can really help B2B marketers boost their brand visibility, build credibility, and even make global connections. For example, platforms like Twitter are great for sharing knowledge and creating valuable business partnerships. This research also highlights that social media is a good tool for generating new business leads and improving marketing communication. Of course, it's not all good news; some studies point to concerns about negative comments and brands being too pushy. A few small B2B companies even feel that social media isn't really that relevant for them. Still, most agree that using social media strategically is key to building brand equity and keeping customers engaged.

8. Examining the impact of social media usage on start-ups performance: Mediating role of brand image, Emmanuel Bruce, Zhao Shurong, John Amoah, SulemanaBankuoruEgala, Philip

AduSarfo, Bernard EkowBaidoo, Dennis AkomanyiDarko, Luo Ailing, YnagYongxing, 2025

The research for this paper is based on the Resource-Based View theory, which says a company's success depends on having top-notch resources. In this case, social media is considered a key resource for creative startups, especially in a developing economy like Ghana, where these businesses are super important for economic growth and creating jobs. The research shows that social media is a strategic tool that helps these new businesses with everything from brand awareness and talking directly to customers, to getting market info and increasing sales. The positive effect of social media on a startup's performance is also significantly influenced by its brand image, and the ability to innovate is linked to a strong brand image as well. The paper aims to fill a research gap because there's limited work on this topic for businesses in developing countries

9. Role of Social-Media in Growth of Start-Ups, BhavishaVerma&Chhavi Kiran, 2018

The research makes it super clear that for a startup, social media is an absolutely essential tool for success in the Indian market. It's not just about marketing; social media is a powerful way to create brand awareness from the very start, which then makes it really tough for new competitors to break into the market later on. The studies show that startups using social media from day one are already seeing much better returns compared to those who stick to traditional methods. This platform is also great for making products go viral, especially by using influencers and creating engaging video content, which is a big hit with the younger, tech-savvy audience. On top of that, social media is brilliant for direct communication with customers, which helps with getting feedback and even with recruiting creative people like freelancers to help with your marketing effort.

Methodology: This study is based on a secondary research methodology, where we

have conducted a detailed review and analysis of existing literature. To achieve our research objectives, we gathered information from a wide range of sources, including academic research papers, published case studies on successful startups, and articles from various business journals and industry reports. The collected information was then carefully synthesized to identify key themes, patterns, and insights related to how social media helps new creative startups grow, the effectiveness of using multiple platforms, and the ways in which startups build connections with their customers online. This approach allowed us to build a comprehensive understanding of the topic by drawing on the findings and evidence from previous scholar's work.

Research Analysis:

Why Startups are Turning to Social Media

For new companies in India, social media is more than just a marketing option; it's a necessary tool for survival and growth. With limited money, startups can't compete with big companies in traditional advertising. Social media levels the playing field, offering a cost-effective way to reach a huge audience.⁴ Research shows that startups use social media for many important business functions, from creating brand awareness to managing customer relationships.

Table 1: Key Purposes of Social Media Use for Indian Startups

Purpose	Description
Marketing & Brand Awareness	Creating awareness of the brand and its products or services to reach potential customers.
Cost-Effective Operations	Using social media as a low-cost marketing tool, which is crucial for startups with limited funds.
Customer Relationship Management	Directly communicating with customers, answering questions, and building a loyal community.
Communication & Engagement	Sharing company news, events, and knowledge to keep the audience engaged.
Building Social Capital	Increasing follower counts, which is believed to influence sales and business credibility.
Recruitment	Using platforms like LinkedIn to find and hire skilled employees.

Explanation:

As Table 1 shows, social media is a

multi-purpose tool for startups. It's not just about posting ads. It's a fundamental part of the business strategy that helps new companies build their brand and connect with customers without spending a lot of money.¹ This is especially important in the competitive Indian market where making a personal connection with customers can lead to long-term loyalty.

The Multi-Platform Dilemma: Which Platforms Work Best?

A common question for startups is whether to be on all social media platforms or to focus on just one or two. To answer this, it's important to look at where startups are currently active and what the data says about their performance. A study of startups in North East India provides clear insights into their platform usage.

Table 2: Startup Activity Across Major Social Media Platforms

Social Media Platform	Startups with Verified Profile	Startups Active (in 91-day period)	Total Posts by Startups
Facebook	101	54	1055
Instagram	66	44	985
Twitter	38	12	382
LinkedIn	55	21	373

Source: Data from a study of 65 startups in North East India

Explanation:

Table 2 reveals that Facebook is the most popular platform among these startups, with the highest number of verified profiles and active users. Instagram follows closely behind. However, being present on many platforms doesn't always mean better results. The same study measured user engagement through a metric called Social Media Interaction (SMI) value and found that a focused strategy is more effective.

Table 3:

Average Social Media Interaction (SMI) Value by Platform Combination

Platform Combination	Average SMI Value
Single Platform (Instagram)	9050.48
Two Platforms (Facebook & Instagram)	34375.30
Three Platforms (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn)	2468.57
All Four Platforms	1005.90

Source: Data from a study of 65 startups in North East India

Explanation:

The data in Table 3 is very telling. While being on Instagram alone is effective, the combination of Facebook and Instagram yields the highest average engagement by a large margin. Spreading efforts across three or four platforms actually leads to a significant drop in interaction. This suggests a "Power Duo" strategy: for most Indian B2C startups, focusing resources on mastering Facebook and Instagram is the most effective way to engage a wider audience.

Crafting Connections Through Content

Once a startup chooses its platforms, the next step is to create content that connects with the audience. The type of content posted has a direct impact on how much engagement it receives. Research shows that not all content formats are created equal.

Table 4: Impact of Media Type on Follower Engagement

Media Type	Mean (Average) Engagement per Post
Video	106.60
Image	41.59
Text	1.10

Source: Data from a study of 2795 posts from Indian startups

Explanation:

Table 4 clearly shows that video content generates the highest average engagement, more than double that of image posts. Text-only posts perform very poorly in comparison. This indicates that for startups looking to capture attention and encourage likes, comments, and shares, creating video content should be a top priority.

The effectiveness of video varies slightly by platform, but it remains a dominant force across the most popular channels.

Table 5: Media Type Engagement Weight by Platform

Platform	Media Type	Engagement Weight (%)
Facebook	Video	89.2%
	Image	10.8%
Instagram	Video	59.8%
	Image	40.2%
LinkedIn	Image	81.5%
	Video	13.4%
Twitter	Image	86.8%
	Video	4.6%

Source: Data from a study of 2795 posts from Indian startups

Explanation:

Table 5 breaks down the engagement by content type for each platform. On Facebook and Instagram, video is the clear winner, contributing to 89.2% and 59.8% of total engagement, respectively. While images perform better on more professional or text-based platforms like LinkedIn and Twitter, the overall trend towards video is undeniable. For creative startups, this means focusing on Reels, Shorts, and other video formats is key to building a connection with consumers.

Measuring What Matters: From Likes to

Business Growth

While engagement is important, startups ultimately need to see a return on their investment (ROI). A study of 200 Indian startups provides concrete data on how social media efforts translate into financial results.

Table 6: Demographics of Surveyed Startups for ROI Analysis

Metric	Details
Startup Type	60% B2C, 40% B2B
Average Age of Startup	2.5 years
Top Platforms Used	Instagram (78%), LinkedIn (66%), Facebook (52%)

Source: Data from a study of 200 Indian startups

Explanation:

The startups in this study represent a typical mix of new businesses in India, primarily focused on consumers and active on the most popular social platforms. Their financial performance provides a valuable benchmark for others.

Table 7: Average Return on Investment (ROI) by Social Media Platform

Platform	Average ROI (%)
YouTube	183%
Instagram	162%
Facebook	115%
LinkedIn	98%

Source: Data from a study of 200 Indian startups

Explanation:

Table 7 shows that video-centric platforms deliver the highest financial returns. YouTube leads with an impressive 183% ROI, followed closely by Instagram at 162%.⁵ This directly connects to the earlier finding that video content drives the most engagement. Higher engagement translates into higher ROI.

Table 8: Impact of Content Type on Engagement and ROI

Content Type	Average Engagement Rate	Impact on ROI
Reels & Short Videos	6.2%	Highest ROI
Static Posts	Lower	Lower ROI

Source: Data from a study of 200 Indian startups

Table 9: Effect of Influencer Marketing on Startup ROI

Metric	Finding
Startups Using Influencers	65% of those who used influencers saw a positive impact.
ROI Increase	1.4 times increase in ROI over a three-month period.

Source: Data from a study of 200 Indian startups
Explanation:

Tables 8 and 9 reinforce the winning formula. Short videos like Reels achieve the highest engagement rates, which in turn drives the highest ROI.⁵ Furthermore, collaborating with influencers provides a significant boost, increasing ROI by 1.4 times for the startups that used this strategy.⁵

Finally, an effective social media strategy not only increases revenue but also reduces costs. Targeted advertising on social media is much more efficient than traditional methods. Research shows that Indian startups using targeted ads on Facebook and Instagram saw a

15–25% reduction in their Customer Acquisition Cost (CAC) compared to offline marketing.⁵ This means they can acquire new customers more cheaply, allowing for faster and more profitable growth.

Discussions:

First, social media is a great equaliser. The biggest challenge for any new startup is the lack of money for big marketing campaigns. Our research confirms that social media is the perfect solution to this problem. It’s a low-cost way to build brand awareness and reach a huge number of people, something that was once only possible for large, established companies. This means a creative idea from anywhere in India can now compete on a more level playing field. It’s not just about saving money; it’s about having a real chance to grow. The high return on investment (ROI), especially from platforms like YouTube and Instagram, proves that a smart social media strategy is one of the best financial decisions a startup can make.

Second, when it comes to which platforms to use, the research gives a very clear strategic direction: quality over quantity. Many startups might think they need to be on every single platform to reach the most people, but our findings show the opposite is true. Trying to manage too many accounts can stretch a small team too thin, and the engagement actually drops. The data strongly suggests a “Power Duo” strategy focusing on Facebook and Instagram is the most effective for getting the highest user interaction. This is a crucial insight. For a startup with limited time and resources, it’s much smarter to master these two platforms—using Instagram for visual appeal and Facebook for community building—than to have a weak presence everywhere.

Finally, this research highlights how to build real connections with customers, which is the key to long-term success. It’s not enough to just post content; it has to be the right content. The data is undeniable that video is king. Short,

engaging videos like Instagram Reels and YouTube Shorts get the most likes, comments, and shares. This is likely because the video feels more personal and authentic, which helps build trust. This trust is the foundation for creating a community, not just a list of followers. When startups use social media to have two-way conversations—replying to comments, asking for feedback, and sharing customer stories—they turn buyers into loyal fans who will promote the brand for free. This direct line to the customer is something traditional marketing could never offer, and it's one of social media's biggest advantages.

Results & Findings:

This research has produced several key findings that not only answer our main objectives but also address significant gaps identified in the current literature on social media and startups. While many studies agree that social media is important, they often lack specific, practical advice for new companies, especially in the Indian context. Our findings help to fill these gaps.

A major gap in the existing literature is the focus on large, established corporations. Much of the research discusses social media strategies that require big budgets and large teams, which is not realistic for a startup. Our findings address this by providing a data-driven strategy specifically for resource-limited startups. The discovery that a focused

“Power Duo” strategy on Facebook and Instagram yields the highest user engagement is a crucial piece of practical advice. It tells startups exactly where to focus their limited time and money for the best results, moving beyond the general advice to “be on social media.”

Another significant research gap is the lack of clear methods for measuring the success of social media beyond “vanity metrics” like likes and shares. Our findings bridge this gap by connecting social media activities directly to

tangible business outcomes. We found that platforms like YouTube can deliver an average Return on Investment (ROI) of 183% for Indian startups, and that targeted ads on Facebook and Instagram can reduce the Customer Acquisition Cost (CAC) by 15-25%. This provides startups with a clear financial justification for their social media efforts and offers a way to measure success in terms of actual profit and savings, which was previously underexplored.

Finally, while many studies talk about the importance of “engaging content,” they often don't specify what that means for a startup trying to build connections. Our findings fill this gap with a clear, actionable answer: video is the most powerful tool for engagement. The data showing that video content generates more than double the interaction of static images gives startups a precise formula for building relationships with their audience. This is a specific, practical finding that helps startups understand ‘how to communicate effectively to turn followers into a loyal community’, addressing the need for concrete strategies that go beyond theoretical concepts.

Conclusions:

In conclusion, this research confirms that social media is an essential and powerful force for new creative startups in India. It is no longer just an option for marketing but a core part of a successful business strategy. For startups that begin with a great vision but limited funds, social media provides the most practical and effective way to gain visibility in a crowded market. It levels the playing field, allowing small companies to build brand awareness, connect directly with customers, and achieve significant growth without the need for a large marketing budget.

Our analysis of the data provides a clear roadmap for success. The findings show that a strategic approach is far more effective than simply having a presence on every platform. For most Indian startups, focusing their efforts on

the “Power Duo” of Facebook and Instagram yields the highest levels of customer engagement. This focused strategy saves precious resources and delivers better results. Furthermore, the research leaves no doubt about the best way to connect with audiences: through video. Content like Instagram Reels and YouTube Shorts consistently gets the most attention and, more importantly, delivers the highest return on investment (ROI), with platforms like YouTube showing an impressive 183% ROI.

Ultimately, the journey from a creative vision to market visibility is powered by a smart, data-driven social media plan. By choosing the right platforms, creating engaging video content, and focusing on building genuine connections, Indian startups can effectively overcome financial barriers and build a loyal customer base. The evidence is clear: a well-executed social media strategy is one of the most valuable investments a young company can make to ensure its long-term success and growth.

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The Rise of GenAI Tools and Decline In Media Literacy

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1. Introduction

Generative AI tools, such as ChatGPT, Gemini, Bard etc, are the newest additions in the AI boom of recent times. The mentioned AI tools are large language models. To understand their heightening impact on various avenues of daily life such as information, education, safety, privacy and even art, a thorough understanding of generative AI, artificial intelligence and large language models is a must.

Artificial intelligence is essentially the collection of ideas, technologies, and techniques pertaining to a computer's ability to perform tasks that usually require a human mind. Artificial intelligence that we see today is based on machine learning, which in simple terms is a software that uses data to learn, predict and generate content from said data. This is the basis of language models that use data and algorithms to predict the language, hence, they create content. The most common generative AI tools such as ChatGPT is a large language model that uses the data already present and predicts what is going to be said next. This has given large language models the unique ability to create content, to generate information based simply on language and data without any accountability of what is being created. AI and

it's concerns of fake information is a sensitive issue in the modern time, alongside this another concern rises about the media literacy surrounding the content generated by these GenAI tools.

Media literacy is defined as the practice of taking in media messages and understanding their influence on your thoughts, feelings and behaviours (Southern New Hampshire University). Media Now Org defines media literacy as the ability to: decode media messages (including the systems in which they exist); assess the influence of those messages on thoughts, feelings, and behaviours; and create media thoughtfully and conscientiously. This ability is just as important as literacy, and can be trained as such. The importance of media literacy in the age of GenAI cannot be understated. As a sub-field of AI, generative AI — easily produces novel text, images, music, and software by analysing enormous collections of digitized material (Kaplan 2024). Since AI generated content and GenAI dependency is on the rise, it is crucial that students understand how to think and how to treat the media that is being presented to them. In India, 73% of the Indian population surveyed is using generative AI, according to Salesforce. Globally, 65% of generative AI users are Millennials or Gen Z, and 72% are employed. Hence, it can be said that media content is generated not only by professionals but by a global population exceeding 4.5 billion online users (Floridi, 2014). This study was conducted through a randomised survey (N=100), where AI use was self reported, the data gathered shows a deeper understanding and acceptance of GenAI tools in higher education as well as in other aspects of life. This study asks whether the continued dependency of GenAI tools impact the comprehension abilities of the students. The objective of this study is to elaborate on which demographic areas does GenAI tools find the most appeal in and to find out their impact on students' media literacy.

2. Literary Review

2.1 Media Literacy in digital and social media

Media literacy refers to the ability to think, critically analyse messages produced by the mass media. There are four major components in media literacy — Access, Analysis, Evaluation, and Content Creation can be equally applied to all sorts of media such as print, broadcasting, and online. Additionally, it is not just the ability to think, but also the ease of access, creation and understanding of any medium and message, and device and content literacy (Sarkar, Srestha, and Arka Ghosh, 2024). However, this definition may require an update considering the impact that GenAI has had in terms of content creation. In the 21st century, where the production of media is not limited to a top-down approach and there are non-human entities who produce media within seconds, media literacy becomes a crucial skill for students to develop (Saliu, H. 2024). In a survey conducted by Media Literacy Now Org in 2022, over 84% of the adults surveyed believed that media literacy should be more required in the states. Moreover, only 42% of the respondents learned to analyse science news in high school, and only 38% learned how to analyse media in high school.

Furthermore, traditional media and related definitions do not encompass the age of new media. With the introduction of computers, a new term in relation to media literacy came into rise — Digital Literacy. Digital media literacy refers to a set of basic skills necessary for efficiently navigating the digital environment (Sergeeva, Olga V., et al.) The concept of new media encompasses a broad spectrum, the new media is digital, interactive, hypertextual, virtual, and networked (Luan et al., 2023; Lister et al., 2008). Thus, new media literacy emerged as a concept aimed at understanding the new media environment in Web 2.0, focusing on accessing, analysing, evaluating, critiquing, and producing media

content (Luan et al., 2023; Lin et al., 2013). More recent studies have shown that individuals with advanced digital literacy are more likely to exhibit greater confidence in utilizing technology (Khare et al., 2022; Kuek and Hakkennes, 2020).

Another aspect to be considered when speaking about media literacy and digital media is social media. Social media is a platform for global collaboration, facilitating online communication, networking and collaboration (Carr & Hayes, 2015; Russo et al., 2008). Since digital media literacy covered the content created and consumed through computers and new age media, social media literacy became a sub-field as social media became a permanent addition to the daily lives of people around the globe. Social media literacy refers to “the extent to which cognitive and affective structures are present among users to ensure the risks of interactions with social media content are mitigated and the opportunities are maximized” (Schreurs & Vandenbosch, 2021, p. 321). The difference between social media literacy and media literacy is the analysis of the interaction between audience and the media, and interaction between the users in the former, and the analysis of the media and message in the latter (Sergeeva, Olga V., et al, 2025).

2.2 Generative AI

GenAI, or Generative AI, ignited into mainstream conversation with the arrival of ChatGPT, a large language model artificial intelligence created by OpenAI. ChatGPT is based on the foundation of Transformer, some of the earliest developed technology in the realm of artificial intelligence. This innovation allows the model to selectively focus on the most important part of the input for making the prediction, boosting a model’s ability to capture crucial information. The current microprocessor architecture for GenAI, comprising Artificial Neural Networks (ANNs) mimics the human neural pathway in order to create a self-learning AI (Khan et al., 2021). Most of the integration

and related literature around GenAI has been around the healthcare sector, with the education sector following close behind. Another sector where GenAI sees the most usage is in art and literature, particularly in the creation of them, even though human made art and literature is generally considered more valuable.

The appeal of generative AI comes from its ability to process vast amounts of data, analyse lengthy and dense articles, papers etc. This technology has been integrated in near every major social media platform, with most companies creating their own version of Generative AI such Google's Gemini, X's Grok, Meta platform's MetaAI. ChatGPT remains one of the most used AI platforms due to its ability to create and analyse images, texts and audios. As natural language processors, GenAI pose a myriad of ethical issues, namely the impact of generating content and passing them off as self-written. In the education sector, these concerns are the most prominent.

While GenAI has proved its potential capabilities in terms of improving the assessment process through personalized student feedback, increased efficiency and accuracy. Thereby enabling teachers to tailor their teaching strategies to individual student needs (Owan et al., 2023), it's integration into nearly every aspect of our daily lives is not without concerns and dilemmas.

2.3 GenAI in Higher Education

One of the most prominent sectors of GenAI integration is the education sector, with most of the literature of recent years regarding AI being focused on it. The integration of GenAI in higher education has been studied thoroughly, and studies indicate that with the onset of this technology, it can become easier to promote curiosity in young learners (Mittay et al., 2024). It is also important to note that traditional schools and teacher's cannot provide individual attention to every student under their care, and provide accurate assessment that is customised

to each student, (Mittay et al., 2024) hence the use of GenAI here can be encouraged. From a teaching perspective, AI can assist in a range of tasks, including delivering course content, curating learning materials, conducting automated grading, and predicting learner performance and satisfaction (Ouyang et al., 2022; Zawacki-Richter et al., 2019). A key application of AI tools in higher education involves generating and editing text (Atlas, 2023).

The adoption of GenAI into higher educational institutes such as universities has seen mixed reactions. Some Universities have issued guidelines about the acceptable and ethical use of AI, whereas some have outright banned the use of the technology. One of the most prominent concerns about the use of AI in educational setting is its impact upon the critical thinking skills of students. Cognitive abilities of critical thinking, decision-making, and analytical thinking are

important elements in research, particularly in higher education (Soufi & See, 2019). With the addition of AI into the curriculum, whether approved by the universities or not, the key concern arises that GenAI takes away the critical thinking skills, crucial media literacy in terms of digital media and social media. According to a 2024 study by Statista.com researcher Veera Korhonen, "a whopping 86 percent [of students] said they were using artificial intelligence tools in their schoolwork. Almost a fourth of them used them on a daily basis." Another recent MIT study found that continued GenAI usage has led to a significant underperformance by LLM users over the course of four months.

Overall, the implementation of GenAI into education institutes provides learners and teachers with more pros than cons. However, as noted by a study of Alier et al., implementation of GenAI must be done with various ethical practices that use GenAI models to ensure that the technology supports and

enhances students' learning experience, rather than becoming cause for concern due to over dependence on GenAI models and dialogues.

3. Methodology

This study is conducted through a quantitative survey method that had a randomised sample (N=100). The survey consisted of 21 questions, of which the first four questions established a demographic range. That is, the age group of the participants, the educational level of participants, whether they lived in urban or rural sectors of society, and what occupation the participants were employed in. For transparency, there are some questions in the survey that have uneven data, the data will be analysed accordingly, but this study acknowledges the limitations created by this.

Other questions in the survey asked about the use of GenAI, how often the participants used it, whether they felt that the usage impeded their critical thinking by providing them with predetermined answers, the capacity of its usage, and whether the participants struggled without immediate access to GenAI. It also questioned whether the participants required the use of GenAI in order to understand the themes, plots, conclusions of any work of literature or cinema, and how often they used GenAI for such purposes. It also posed whether the participants consumed AI generated art and literature content, if they were able to differentiate between AI generated content and human generated content, and whether they believed in deepfakes and other media manipulation technology of GenAI.

Through the survey and the subsequent data gathered, this paper aims to answer whether the rise in GenAI tools has impacted the media literacy of LLM users, namely students in school and universities.

4. Data Analysis

48% of the respondents are 18–21 years old and make up for the largest use of GenAI. This result is in accordance with Salesforce

report that found out that 60% of the Millennials and Gen-Z make up for the largest user base of GenAI. 70% of the respondents are actively pursuing higher education, while 19% are in high school. Only 5% of the respondents are not pursuing education of any kind. 85% of the respondents were students, and 86% were from urban sectors, implying the need for digital infrastructure and technology related knowledge to spread further into the rural sectors.

In terms of AI usage, 33.1% of the respondents report to using GenAI on a daily basis, while only 10% report to not using it at all. The respondents also specified their use of GenAI extended most commonly to Assignments, Tests, and as a creative outlet. Some respondents used it for grammar checking needs, and other 1% reported to using it for coding purposes.

Furthermore, only 31% of the respondents reported that they would not use GenAI for reading literature assigned in educational settings, while the rest of the respondents reported to using GenAI in some measure, with 11% admitting to using it for certain. The most common GenAI tool reported was ChatGPT, with Gemini and Co-pilot following close behind. 86% reported that they face some sort of struggle when they are unable to use GenAI in academic situations, implying an overdependence on these tools.

50% reported to being aware of the environmental impact of GenAI, while only 39% reported to facing an ethical dilemma while using the tools. Additionally, only 24% verify the information obtained through GenAI constantly, while the rest report to only occasionally verifying the information.

30% report that their creativity has been hampered since using GenAI, while 22% are unsure about its impact.

However, it is interesting to note that 66% do not consume GenAI created art, music or literature in any capacity despite the data

indicating that a vast majority are comfortable with the technology. 57% report to being able to distinguish between GenAI generated content and human created art. 50% of the respondents also reported to using GenAI in order to understand the themes, conclusions, plots of literature, art, & 61% use it often in this capacity.

5. Results and Limitation

The data gathered on the self reported use of AI paints a dire situation. With 80% of the respondents using GenAI in order to understand any piece of literature or cinema indicates that the respondents are not engaging in the critical skills required to develop media literacy. 28% of respondents also used AI to consume AI generated art and content rather than engaging in creating them without the help of AI. The data also shows that there are 33% of the respondents have felt an impact when they were not able to use GenAI during exams, assignments etc.

The results point that while there is an impact of GenAI tools on the media literacy as the technology creates over-dependence, due to the small sample size and the self-reported use, it is difficult to ascertain to what extent GenAI tools have created an impact. Long term effects must also be considered in any future study, while the accessibility of AI tools must be taken into account as well. For overall improvement in integration of AI tools in any sector, the digital infrastructure must be improved.

The study acknowledges the limitations created by the methodology, and recommends that for better understanding of the impact of GenAI tools on media literacy a larger survey covering higher education institutes as well as high-school settings must be observed. This study was limited to one particular geographical area, for future studies, however, global impact must be taken into account.

6. Conclusion

In conclusion, GenAI comes with a host of concerns that needed to be addressed before

the complete implementation of GenAI in educational settings. Furthermore, in order to better equip the students when concerning AI generated content, a prior skill of media literacy must be developed. GenAI should not create hurdles in terms of gaining necessary skills, but should rather work in tandem by creating a better learning environment for students and teacher's alike. However, until the environmental impact of AI can be offset, further integration of this technology should be done tentatively.

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Ethics Under Pressure: A Primary Study on Responsibility and Commercial Influence in the Media Industry

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Abstract

Media organizations today face a critical challenge: balancing editorial independence with commercial survival. This research explores how ethics training, perceived commercial pressure, and job role shape ethical behaviour among media professionals. Using a quantitative survey of 150 media workers (journalists, editors, managers), we examine links between training, pressure, and adherence to ethical practices. Statistical analysis (t-test, ANOVA, correlation, and regression) confirms that ethics training significantly boosts self-reported ethical behaviour, while commercial pressures reduce it. Managers report higher ethical behaviour scores compared to journalists. These findings reinforce the urgent need for newsroom ethics programs, stronger editorial-commercial separation, and leadership accountability to protect public trust.

Keywords:-

Media ethics, newsroom responsibility, commercial pressure, ethics training, media management, editorial independence

Introduction

Media businesses operate in a space where public interest and commercial viability collide. They are tasked with informing society and shaping discourse while also generating profit. The rise of digital media has intensified these tensions — with competition for attention leading to click-driven decisions, sensational headlines, and faster publication cycles.

In recent years, the global media industry has undergone a digital transformation that has redefined both content production and audience engagement. With the proliferation of 24-hour news cycles, social media platforms, and influencer-driven narratives, the traditional gatekeeping role of journalists has shifted drastically. This digital disruption, while democratizing information, has also brought ethical complexities to the forefront. Media outlets today are expected to maintain high ethical standards even as they compete for audience attention in an oversaturated marketplace.

The pressure to publish quickly and attract clicks has blurred the line between authentic journalism and attention-driven storytelling. Clickbait headlines, misinformation, and sensationalized content often outperform well-researched stories in terms of engagement metrics. As a result, media organizations face the ethical dilemma of balancing truthfulness with profitability. Many scholars argue that this dynamic environment has created a crisis of credibility, where trust in media institutions is rapidly declining. Reports from organizations like Reuters Institute and Pew Research Center (2024) indicate that global public trust in mainstream media has fallen below 40% in several countries. This erosion of trust is not merely a reputational issue—it directly impacts the sustainability and social legitimacy of media businesses.

Another dimension of ethical concern lies in the ownership and funding structure of media organizations. Large conglomerates and

politically affiliated investors often exert subtle influence on editorial policies. When advertisers or sponsors hold financial leverage, journalists find it difficult to remain objective, especially in sensitive political or corporate coverage. Hence, responsibility in the media business is not only about individual ethics but also about institutional systems that ensure independence from external manipulation.

Media ethics, therefore, is no longer confined to academic debates—it is a practical necessity for business survival. Ethical lapses such as misinformation, data manipulation, or paid content scandals can trigger severe financial and reputational consequences. The audience today demands transparency and authenticity, and news consumers are increasingly aware of editorial biases. In this context, the integration of ethics into business strategy becomes a key differentiator for long-term trust and brand equity.

This study seeks to contribute to the ongoing discourse by empirically analyzing how organizational ethics training, commercial pressures, and hierarchical roles influence ethical behaviour in the media. The findings aim to provide perspective on the mechanisms through which ethics can be institutionalized within the business model of media organizations. More importantly, it emphasizes the need for creating responsible media environments where economic goals coexist with professional integrity.

This research focuses on three dimensions:

- The role of formal ethics training in improving decision-making.
- The impact of perceived commercial pressure on ethical behaviour.
- The differences in ethical behaviour between journalists, editors, and managers.

By addressing these, the study offers evidence-based insights that media leaders can implement to strengthen responsible journalism

without compromising business sustainability.

Objectives of the Study

- To examine the impact of formal ethics training on ethical behaviour among media professionals.
- To evaluate the relationship between commercial pressures and ethical behaviour in media decision-making.
- To compare ethical behaviour across job roles — journalists, editors, and managers — to understand where gaps exist.
- To provide actionable recommendations for media organizations to strengthen ethical standards while meeting business goals.

Review of Literature

- **Balancing journalism and profitability**
Scholars have long acknowledged the tension between the business model of media and its democratic function (Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2001). Commercial imperatives, especially advertising dependence, can distort coverage and push organizations towards softer, more marketable stories.

- **Importance of ethics training**
Christians et al. (2009) argue that formal ethics training reinforces organizational culture and provides decision-making frameworks. Studies show that employees who undergo regular training report better clarity on dilemmas and greater confidence in resisting undue pressure.

- **Impact of commercial influence**
Research by Thomsen & Williams (2018) highlights that perceived commercial influence correlates with higher rates of self-censorship. They recommend transparency mechanisms and editorial-commercial separation policies to minimize such interference.

- **Role-based differences in decision-making**

Ward (2010) notes that editors and managers often enjoy more autonomy and access to resources, allowing them to act more ethically. Field reporters, under deadline stress,

face more day-to-day ethical compromises.

· **Measurement of ethical behaviour**
McQuail (2010) emphasizes the importance of reliable scales and behavioural indicators in measuring ethics. Multi-item Likert scales, with internal consistency checks, remain the gold standard for survey-based ethics research.

Research Hypotheses

- **H1:** Media professionals with formal ethics training report higher ethical behaviour scores than those without training.
- **H2:** Higher levels of perceived commercial pressure are associated with lower ethical behaviour scores.
- **H3:** Managers report higher ethical behaviour scores compared to journalists.

Research Methodology Research Design

A quantitative, cross-sectional survey design was used to collect primary data. The survey consisted of four sections:

- **Demographics:** role, years of experience, age, medium type.
- **Ethics Training:** yes/no question on participation in formal ethics training within last three years.
- **Commercial Pressure:** 5-point Likert item measuring perceived influence of commercial factors on editorial decisions.
- **Ethical Behaviour Scale:** 3-item Likert scale covering fact verification, resistance to external pressure, and conflict disclosure. Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.70$ indicated acceptable internal reliability.

Sampling and Participants

150 respondents participated: 87 journalists, 43 editors, and 20 managers across print, digital, and broadcast media. Sampling was purposive and convenience-based, using professional networks and online groups.

Data Collection Technique

The survey was distributed online with clear consent procedures. Responses were anonymous and participation voluntary, ensuring compliance with research ethics standards.

Data Analysis Technique

Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, independent t-test (training vs. no training), ANOVA (role-wise differences), Pearson correlation (pressure vs. behaviour), and multiple regression.

Data Analysis and Results Demographic Analysis:

Occupation: Out of 150 total participants, 58% (n = 87) identified as journalists, 29% (n = 43) as editors, and 13% (n = 20) as managerial professionals. This composition ensured representation from different levels of newsroom hierarchy, enabling a comparative understanding of ethical perspectives across roles.

Gender distribution: Approximately 61% were male and 39% female, reflecting a still male-dominated media workforce, though women's participation is steadily increasing, especially in digital media.

Age profile: Age profile showed diversity: 28% were below 30 years, 47% between 30–45 years, and 25% above 45 years. This allowed the study to capture generational differences in ethical perceptions—where younger respondents tended to report higher commercial pressure but also stronger awareness of modern digital ethics issues such as misinformation and plagiarism.

Experience: Analysis on the basis of experience revealed that 35% had less than 5 years, 40% between 5–10 years, and 25% had more than 10 years of professional exposure. Interestingly, experienced professionals did not necessarily report higher ethical behaviour, suggesting that ethics are shaped more by organizational culture and training than by experience alone. Participants from digital platforms accounted for 42% of the total sample, print media 38%, and broadcast 20%. The relatively high proportion of digital respondents reflects the industry's ongoing shift towards online formats, where monetization and content

speed often heighten ethical challenges.

Educational Qualification: 72% of respondents held a postgraduate qualification, most commonly in journalism, communication, or mass media studies. The remaining 28% were graduates with specialized short-term media certifications. Education levels were moderately correlated with awareness of professional codes, indicating that academic exposure to ethics could positively shape decision-making frameworks.

Organizational ownership: Organizational ownership type was also examined: 46% worked in privately owned companies, 30% in networked media houses with multiple outlets, and 24% in independent or freelance capacities. Employees in privately owned entities reported higher perceived commercial pressure, aligning with the notion that revenue-driven organizations may compromise editorial freedom. Freelancers, on the other hand, reported the least training opportunities but also showed relatively flexible ethical choices, possibly due to autonomy.

Descriptive Results

- **Ethics Training:** 49% trained, 51% untrained.
- **Mean Ethical Behaviour Score:** 3.24 (SD 0.65).
- **Mean Commercial Pressure:** 3.29 (SD 0.74).

Hypothesis Testing

- **H1 (t-test):**
Ethical behaviour significantly higher for trained professionals ($M = 3.52$) than untrained ($M = 2.98$), $t(148) H'' 6.9$, $p < 0.001$.
- **H2 (Correlation):**
Negative correlation between commercial pressure and ethical behaviour, $r H'' -0.49$, $p < 0.001$.
- **H3 (ANOVA):**
Significant difference by role, $F(2,147) H'' 5.95$, $p H'' 0.0033$, with managers scoring highest.

Regression Analysis

Regression model showed training (+0.55) positively predicted ethical behaviour, while commercial pressure (-0.37) negatively predicted it ($p < 0.001$ for both). Experience was not a significant predictor.

Findings

The results clearly show that formal ethics training works — respondents who received training reported meaningfully better behaviour scores. This aligns with earlier studies that highlight the value of institutionalized training in shaping culture.

The negative link between commercial pressure and ethics is concerning but expected. Media professionals feeling intense advertiser or ownership pressure are less likely to resist editorial compromises, undermining credibility.

Interestingly, experience alone was not predictive, implying that ethical reflexes need continuous reinforcement, not just years on the job.

The evidence clearly demonstrates that structured ethics training and reduced commercial interference create conditions where media professionals can operate responsibly. The statistically significant results across training, pressure, and job roles underscore the organizational—not merely individual—nature of ethical behaviour.

The role of training deserves particular emphasis. Organizations that conduct frequent, scenario-based ethics workshops tend to produce professionals with stronger ethical reflexes. These findings validate the argument that ethics, like any professional skill, must be taught, practiced, and reinforced continuously. Making ethics an annual training requirement, integrated with editorial performance metrics, can significantly strengthen a media outlet's culture of integrity.

Suggestions and Recommendations

- **Mandatory Ethics Programs:**
Conduct structured ethics training

annually with practical newsroom scenarios.

- **Editorial Independence Policies:**
Establish firewalls between commercial and editorial teams.
- **Leadership Accountability:**
Tie managerial evaluations partly to trust and integrity indicators, not only revenue.
- **Transparency with Audiences:**
Clearly label sponsored content and disclose potential conflicts of interest.
- **Well-being and Workload Support:**
Reduce undue deadline pressure to allow time for proper fact-checking.

Limitations of the Study

- **Non-probability Sampling:**
Convenience sampling limits generalizability.
- **Self-Report Bias:**
Respondents may overstate ethical conduct.
- **Cross-Sectional Design:**
Relationships are correlational, not causal.
- **Limited Geographic Scope:**
Results may not reflect global differences in regulatory environments.

Conclusion

This study confirms that ethics training significantly improves ethical behaviour among media professionals and that commercial pressure erodes it. Role-wise differences suggest managers are better equipped to maintain standards, likely due to training access and decision-making power.

For media businesses, the implications are clear: institutionalize ethics programs, reduce commercial interference, and strengthen leadership accountability. Doing so not only safeguards credibility but also strengthens long-term public trust — which is the foundation of a sustainable media business.

Finally, the research underscores that responsibility in the media business is a shared accountability. It involves journalists exercising

conscience, managers ensuring protective policies, and audiences demanding transparency. Ethics is not a static checklist but a living, adaptive principle that sustains democracy and informs citizenship.

Therefore, the path forward for the media industry lies in embedding ethics within business strategy — where integrity becomes the foundation of profitability, not its obstacle. Only then can media organizations truly reclaim their role as trusted guardians of truth in an age of information overload.

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Coding and Story Telling

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Abstract

This abstract explores the symbiotic relationship between computer programming and narrative storytelling. Coding is the bedrock of the IT industry. Coding is the structured language used to communicate with computers, providing a precise set of instructions for them to follow. This structured communication enables the development of software, websites, and other digital applications by providing a detailed, step-by-step roadmap for a machine to follow. It argues that both disciplines are fundamentally built on the principles of structured logic, where a sequence of cause-and-effect events unfolds to achieve a desired outcome. Coding, like storytelling, involves crafting a set of instructions—or a plot—that guides the user through a digital experience, creating an interactive narrative. The study posits that understanding a story's arc can inform better code architecture and that the logical frameworks of programming can, in turn, enhance narrative design. The work concludes that by applying storytelling techniques to software development, developers can craft more human-centered and successful digital products.

Keywords: Coding, Storytelling, Instruction, Techniques, Software development

Introduction

This study explores the integration of coding and storytelling as an interdisciplinary pedagogical approach. We investigate how

coding can serve as a medium for narrative creation, bridging the gap between computational thinking and traditional story structures. The study focuses on a curriculum that guides students in the analysis, design, and production of digital narratives using various coding platforms, from block-based environments to text-based languages like HTML, CSS, and JavaScript. Our central objective is to demonstrate how this approach not only facilitates the creation of engaging multimedia stories but also cultivates essential 21st-century skills, including problem-solving, critical thinking, and digital literacy. We posit that this method is effective for learners across a range of skill levels, from novices to those with prior experience. Using storytelling and narrative as a method for teaching and learning coding is a growing area of research and educational practice.

The objectives of the study are as follows:

1. Computational Thinking (CT) in Story Structures
2. Coding as Narrative Creation
3. Cognitive Skill Development

Methodology

This study draws on both primary and secondary sources. It incorporates a review of seminar papers, discussion summaries, research organization reports, and various magazines, supplemented by online research. Primary data was obtained by surveying BSc IT students via a Google Form.

Core Concepts

Using storytelling and narrative as a method for teaching and learning coding is a growing area of research and educational practice. Here's a breakdown of the key concepts and research findings:

Computational Thinking (CT) In Story Structures Researchers have found a strong connection between the principles of computational thinking and the elements of a story.

■ **Decomposition:** Breaking a story down into smaller, manageable parts, like a beginning, middle, and end, or a series of events.

■ **Pattern Recognition:** Spotting patterns in literature involves identifying recurring elements like familiar plot points, character types (archetypes), or narrative frameworks such as the hero's journey..

■ **Algorithm Design:** Creating a step-by-step sequence of events for a character to follow, much like a set of instructions for a computer.

■ **Abstraction:** Focusing on the most important parts of the story while ignoring irrelevant details.

Coding as Narrative Creation

■ The code itself tells a story of what a program does. Good, clean code is often described as readable and easy to understand, much like a well-written story.

■ Variables and functions can be given descriptive names to make the code's purpose clear, creating a more coherent narrative.

■ The process of developing software can be compared to writing a story, with a plot (functional quality), characters (user stories), and a logical flow

Cognitive Skill Development

Telling coding through stories helps students develop a range of cognitive skills by making abstract concepts more concrete and relatable. This approach leverages the power of narrative to improve a student's ability to think critically and solve problems.

How it Works

■ **Problem-solving:** Coding a story requires a student to break a complex task (the story's plot) into smaller, manageable steps, a process known as computational thinking. They must create a sequence of logical commands to make characters move or events happen.

■ **Logical Reasoning & Sequencing:** Students learn to think in a logical, step-by-step manner. They have to arrange commands in the

correct order to produce the desired outcome, just as a story must follow a clear sequence of events.

■ **Creativity & Abstract Thinking:** Narrative coding encourages students to be imaginative by creating their own characters and plots, all while working with abstract concepts like variables and loops. The story provides a familiar framework for them to visualize and explore these concepts.

■ **Persistence:** Debugging, or fixing errors in the code, teaches students that making mistakes is a normal part of the process. This builds resilience and a "growth mindset," as they learn to persist through challenges to achieve their goal of bringing the story to life.

Key Research Findings and Applications

■ **Increased Engagement and Motivation:** Integrating storytelling into computer science education has been shown to increase student engagement and motivation. This is particularly effective for younger learners who are already familiar with story structures. It can also help turn reluctant writers into creative storytellers by providing a new, interactive medium for expression.

■ **Bridging Theory and Practice:** Storytelling helps make abstract computer science concepts more relatable and understandable by connecting them to real-world scenarios. For instance, a character's journey can be used to teach concepts like loops, events, and variables.

■ **Developing 21st-Century Skills:** This interdisciplinary approach enhances a range of skills beyond just coding, including:

■ **Problem-solving:** Debugging a program is like editing a story to make sure the plot flows and makes sense.

■ **Critical Thinking:** Analyzing a story's structure helps students think critically about how to design their own programs.

■ **Digital Literacy:** Students gain hands-on experience in creating and manipulating digital content.

Educational Tools and Methods:

Block-based platforms like Scratch Jr. are widely used for this approach, as they allow students to animate characters and create narratives without the need for perfect syntax.

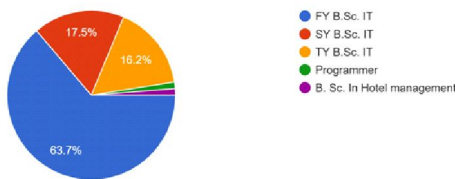
Educational robotics combined with storytelling has been shown to promote computational thinking skills in primary school students.

Narrative design is a professional field in game development that focuses on creating interactive stories, and it's a great example of how these skills are applied in a practical setting.

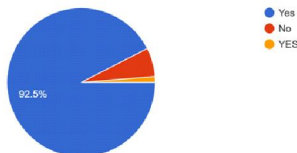
Primary Data Collection Supporting Key Research Findings and Applications.

A Google Form survey was used to collect data from IT students, programmers, and other professionals, supporting the main research findings.

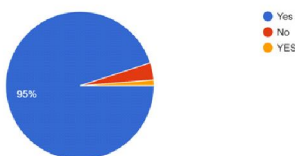
Class
80 responses



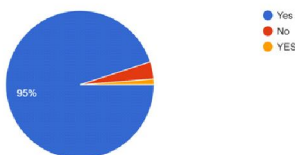
Can narrative storytelling be used to teach or practice computational thinking in coding?
80 responses



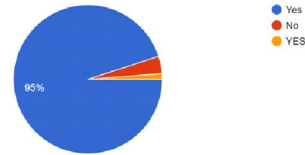
Can coding be taught as narrative storytelling?
80 responses



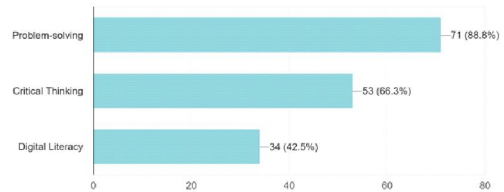
Does Learning coding through storytelling increases student engagement and motivation?
80 responses



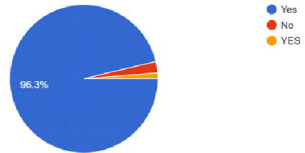
Should more tools and story telling narration method be introduced in learning high level and complex languages ?
80 responses



Through this interdisciplinary approach what all range of skills can be improved ?
80 responses



Does Learning coding through storytelling helps Bridging Theory and Practice ?
80 responses



Conclusion

Overall, the research indicates that using a storytelling framework in coding education is a powerful pedagogical tool. It leverages a natural human activity—telling and listening to stories—to make the complex and abstract world of computer science more accessible, engaging, and meaningful for learners of all ages.

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The Study of Innovation in Media Production in the Present Time

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Innovation in media production has redefined the landscape of content creation, distribution, and consumption. With the integration of **artificial intelligence (AI)**, creators can now automate complex tasks such as video editing, scriptwriting, and audio mixing, significantly reducing production time while enhancing quality. AI-driven tools also allow for predictive audience analytics, helping producers tailor content more effectively to viewer preferences. One of the most ground-breaking advances is **virtual production**, which merges physical and digital filmmaking using LED walls and real-time rendering engines. This technique, popularized by productions like *The Mandalorian*, eliminates the need for traditional green screens and reduces location shooting costs. Additionally, **cloud-based collaboration** tools enable teams across the globe to work simultaneously, breaking down geographical barriers and supporting remote workflows. In journalism and documentary media, **data visualization** techniques enhance storytelling by presenting complex information in interactive and digestible formats. Furthermore, short-form content platforms like TikTok and Instagram Reels have transformed audience expectations, encouraging creators to innovate with **micro-narratives** that are fast-paced and visually

engaging. These innovations are not just technical—they represent a shift in creative thinking, democratizing media production and allowing independent creators to compete with large studios. As digital technology continues to evolve, innovation in media production will remain central to shaping how stories are told, how messages are conveyed, and how cultures communicate in an increasingly interconnected world.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence (AI), Virtual Production, Cloud-Based Collaboration, Data Visualization, Micro-Narratives

Introduction

Media production — the design, creation, and delivery of audio-visual content — is experiencing a period of concentrated and multi-vector innovation. Technological progress (real-time engines, machine learning, faster connectivity), platform economics (short-form apps, creator monetization), and post-pandemic operational shifts (remote, cloud workflows) are converging to change how content is made, who makes it, and how audiences receive it. These shifts present opportunities for lowering cost, increasing creative flexibility, and expanding participation — and at the same time raise questions about labor displacement, intellectual property, provenance, and creative norms. This study aims to map the contemporary innovations in production, assess their practical effects, and draw actionable conclusions for stakeholders.

Methodology

This is a qualitative, interdisciplinary literature review and industry synthesis. Sources include recent industry market analyses, trade press reporting, conference summaries, practitioner white papers, and peer-reviewed scholarship addressing the technical, economic, and ethical aspects of media production. Where possible I prioritize recent (2023–2025) material to reflect the rapid pace of change. Key themes were extracted iteratively from the literature and organized into a conceptual framework covering

technological innovations, workflow transformations, the creator economy, and governance/ethical concerns.

Literature Review and Background

1. Virtual Production and Real-Time Engines

Virtual production (VP) — the family of methods that combines real-time rendering engines with in-camera visual effects, often via LED volume stages — has matured from early experimental use to a core option for many large and mid-scale productions. Market analyses indicate measurable commercial traction and rapid growth driven by reduced location costs, greater creative control, and improvements in real-time rendering and LED hardware.

VP's technical advantages are notable: cinematographers can see final-look imagery during shoot, directors can iterate faster, and the need for costly second-unit pickups and complex post compositing can be reduced. Practically, VP blurs on-set and post workflows; production teams must integrate game engines (Unreal, Unity), high-performance compute, camera tracking, and color management into a live shoot environment. Case examples from film and episodic television show major time-cost trade-offs: upfront investment in VP infrastructure can lower total production time and reduce the logistical burden of distant shoots.

2. Generative AI and Assistive Machine Learning

Generative AI has emerged as a defining innovation vector across pre-production, production, and post. Tools can generate concept art, storyboards, temporary visuals, synthetic backgrounds, dialogue suggestions, and even synthetic actors or voice clones. Beyond pure creative assistance, AI accelerates technical tasks: automated shot logging, metadata tagging, speech-to-text for accessibility and search, color grade suggestions, and automated rough cuts. Trade coverage and conference summaries from major industry events in 2024–2025 highlight AI as simultaneously an operational multiplier and a

flashpoint for legal and ethical debate.

Notable manifestations include projects experimenting with AI to recreate or extend legacy footage — a provocative example of how generative tools can be used to “reconstruct” lost material or produce content that approximates historic styles. These experiments spark urgent legal and cultural questions about rights, authenticity, and who may be represented by synthetic likenesses.

3. Cloud, IP, and Remote Workflows

The shift from on-premises hardware to cloud and IP-based production architectures accelerated after the pandemic and continued as broadcasters, studios, and corporate media adopted remote production models. Cloud production services enable distributed teams to ingest, edit, grade, and deliver media without co-located high-end studios. Remote production lowers travel and facility costs, permits flexible staffing, and supports resilience during labor or travel disruptions. Trade roundtables and technical analyses report increasing deployment of IP-based switching, cloud editing instances, and remote KVM tools that manage distributed compute and high-res video flows.

4. Creator Economy and Short-Form Content

A parallel revolution in distribution and audience behavior reshapes production incentives. The rise of short-form platforms (TikTok, Instagram Reels, and YouTube Shorts) and the monetization of creator output have moved large volumes of production away from studios toward independent creators and microteams. Brands and agencies increasingly treat UGC-style content and creator partnerships as core to campaigns — driving demand for fast, low-cost production techniques and templated workflows that scale. Recent market reports show continued growth in influencer marketing spend and escalating investments by organizations into creator partnerships and dedicated creator teams.

Contemporary Innovations — Detailed Analysis

Below I analyze the most impactful innovations, grouped by functional area: pre-production, production, post-production, distribution, and governance.

A. Pre-Production: AI, Data, and Collaborative Tools

1. AI-Assisted Development:

o Natural language models help generate synopses, character descriptions, and treatment drafts, enabling rapid ideation cycles.

o Visual AI generates concept art and mood boards from textual prompts, accelerating director/DP alignment.

2. Data-Driven Development:

o Analytics from streaming platforms and social channels inform concept selection and audience targeting earlier in the pipeline. This can make some green-lighting decisions more empirical, but also risks homogenizing content toward proven formulas.

3. Collaborative Cloud Tools:

o Virtual whiteboards, cloud story-bible platforms, and real-time asset repositories support geographically distributed creative teams, reducing coordination lag.

B. Production: Virtual Production, Remote Shoots, and Automation

1. LED Volume & Real-Time Rendering:

o VP replaces or supplements traditional location shoots. While LED walls require capital and specialist crews, they create controlled, weather-proof, and repeatable environments that can speed schedules and reduce travel budgets. The business case is strongest for effects-heavy projects, commercials, and shows with complex environment needs.

2. Remote & IP-Based Production:

o Feed-over-IP, centralized control rooms, and remote KVM systems allow technical crews to operate gear and mix multiple remote sources. These systems reduce the need for full on-site crews and allow production houses to tap talent globally.

• Robotics, Drones, & Automated Capture:

o Motorized gimbals, drone cinematography, and robotic camera rigs deliver repeatable precision for complex shots and enable smaller teams to achieve production values previously requiring larger crews.

Implication: Production tools democratize higher production values but also shift required skill sets: tech integration and real-time graphics expertise join the traditional craft of cinematography and production design.

C. Post-Production: AI, Cloud Editing, and Real-Time Delivery

1. Generative Tools in Post:

o AI-driven rotoscoping, sky replacement, and cleanup reduce manual frame-by-frame labor. Speech recognition and automated subtitling improve accessibility and speed to market.

2. Cloud NLEs and Distributed Rendering:

o Cloud-based non-linear editors and rendering farms enable parallel workflows and faster turnarounds. Teams can share proximate edits immediately and finalize high-res assets via cloud render.

3. Real-Time Localization & Monetization:

o Emerging AI capabilities enable near-real-time dubbing and culturally localized edits, expanding global reach and shortening monetization timelines

D. Distribution & Audience: Creators, Platforms, and Micro-formats

1. Creator-Led Production:

o Creators operate as micro-studios: scripting, shooting, editing, and monetizing within compact cycles. Tools that automate editing and suggest optimal formats reduce friction.

2. Platform Constraints Drive Form:

o Platform UX (vertical video, short lengths, and immediate hooks) shapes production decisions; teams produce native formats rather than repurposing longer content.

3. Branded UGC & Distributed Monetization:

o Brands increasingly commission creators

for authentic UGC, pushing production into fast, iterative loops rather than long, centralized campaigns. Market data show brands growing investment in creator marketing and dedicated budgets.

Socio-Economic and Ethical Considerations

1. Labour and Skills Automation reduces repetitive tasks but increases demand for hybrid skill sets: creative technicians who understand AI workflows, real-time engines, and cloud orchestration. There is a transitional risk of job displacement in certain post roles (e.g., manual rotoscoping), but also opportunities for new roles (AI-prompt specialists, pipeline engineers). Industry leaders emphasize reskilling as a necessary mitigation strategy.

2. Authorship, Attribution, and Likeness

Generative systems raise thorny questions: who is the author of AI-assisted work? Who owns a synthetic recreation of a deceased actor or a voice clone? High-profile experiments using generative reconstructions highlight legal uncertainty and reputational risk. Existing IP frameworks are often ill-suited to adjudicate synthetic likeness and derivative generation at scale. The example of projects attempting to recreate lost footage demonstrates both the creative potential and legal peril.

3. Quality, Credibility, and Deepfakes

The same technologies that streamline production can create plausible falsifications. As synthetic media quality rises, verification and provenance systems (watermarking, blockchain receipts, and editorial transparency) become important to maintain audience trust. Peer and trade literature increasingly call for technical standards for provenance and labelling of AI-generated content.

4. Economic Concentration vs. Democratization There is a paradoxical duality: tools have democratized high-quality production (smaller teams can produce cinematic work), while platform economics concentrate distribution power in a handful of corporations. This duality demands business model innovation

(subscription tiers, creator revenue shares, diversified brand partnerships) to ensure sustainable creative economies.

Challenges and Limits of Current Innovations

1. Technical Integration Complexity: Combining real-time game engines, color pipelines, and camera tracking requires specialized expertise and can create new single-points-of-failure.

2. Cost and Access Barriers: Although individual tools democratize aspects of production, infrastructure like LED volumes or large cloud render budgets remain capital-intensive; equitable access remains uneven.

3. Regulatory and Ethical Lag: Law and policy have not kept pace with generative capabilities — leaving gray zones around consent, deepfakes, and derivative works.

4. Quality vs. Speed Tradeoffs: Faster production cycles sometimes compromise editorial depth; platform incentives for short attention spans can discourage long-form, investigative work.

Recommendations

Based on the synthesis above, I propose the following practical recommendations for three stakeholder groups: producers/practitioners, educators, and policymakers.

For Producers and Creative Leaders

- **Invest in hybrid skill development:** Hire or train staff versed in real-time engines, prompt engineering, and cloud orchestration.

- **Adopt modular workflows:** Design pipelines that allow fast iteration (prox edits, cloud rendering) while preserving high-res master files for archival and quality control.

- **Ethical use policies:** Implement clear internal policies on synthetic likeness, attribution, and audience disclosure.

For Educators and Training Institutions

- **Curricula updates:** Integrate courses on generative AI, real-time graphics, cloud media workflows, and media ethics into film and media programs.

- **Cross-disciplinary training:** Combine creative craft (directing, cinematography) with technical modules (scripting for engines, data management).

For Policymakers and Industry Bodies

- **Develop provenance standards:** Support technical standards for watermarking or provenance metadata to label synthetic content.

- **Update IP frameworks:** Convene multi-stakeholder dialogues (creators, studios, tech firms, unions) to modernize rights and compensation structures for AI-mediated creations.

- **Support access programs:** Subsidize shared VP facilities and cloud credits for indie creators and public media to reduce concentration of capability.

Future Research Directions

- **Empirical labor studies** measuring job transitions and wage impacts as AI and automation diffuse through post-production and technical roles.

- **Audience perception research** on trust and engagement with AI-assisted versus fully human-produced content.

- **Comparative policy analysis** of national approaches to synthetic media regulation and how these affect creative economies.

Conclusion Innovation in media production today is not a single technology but an ecosystem shift: generative AI, virtual production, cloud/IP workflows, and the creator economy interact to change who makes content, how it is made, and how it is distributed. These innovations enable creative experimentation and operational efficiency but bring real challenges — legal ambiguity, labour

Transitions, concentration of distribution power, and questions of authenticity. Stakeholders who pair technical adoption with ethical governance, workforce planning, and access initiatives will be best placed to harness innovation for sustainable, equitable media ecosystems.



A study on Influence of Influencer marketing on Gen Z's Purchasing Decisions in the Beauty Industry

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Abstract:

The research paper studies the influence of influencer marketing on Gen Z's buying decisions. Based on a survey, the study found that while a majority of respondents (54%) have bought a beauty product because of an influencer; their decisions are not based on blind trust. The analysis shows that influencers are mainly a way for Gen Z consumers to find new products. The final choice to buy is influenced by product reviews, ingredients, and a brand's reputation. This is due to lack of trust, as many Gen Z consumers are concerned about sponsored content, fake reviews, and influencers promoting unrealistic beauty standards. The paper concludes that to succeed, beauty brands must be transparent, focus on product quality, and understand that an influencer's role is to introduce a product, after which the consumer will conduct their own research to make the final decision.

Keywords:- Influence, influencer marketing, Gen Z, beauty industry

Objectives:

The research papers aims

1. Characterize the demographic and social media habits of the target audience.

2. Identify the impact of influencer recommendations on purchase decisions and self-reported influence levels.
3. Determine the key factors that drive trust in an influencer's recommendation.
4. Compare the importance of influencer endorsement against other established purchasing criteria.
5. Identify the primary ethical concerns raised by Gen Z consumers regarding the influencer marketing

Research methodology:

Primary data was collected through a survey. Questionnaire was filled by respondents in the age group of 13 years to 28 years. Secondary data is also used to equip with additional knowledge

Literature review:

Research has shown that social media influencers have an impact on Gen Z's purchasing decisions. Unlike previous generations that relied on traditional advertising, Gen Z, as digital natives, trusts the authentic, user-generated content and recommendations from influencers they follow on platforms like Instagram, and YouTube. Major factors influencing Gen Z's purchase behavior include the influencer's perceived authenticity, trustworthiness, and expertise. Various studies show that Gen Z gives more importance to transparency and is more likely to get attached with brands that match with their social and environmental values. The type of influencer also matters, with micro- and Nano-influencers often having higher engagement rates due to their more relatable content. The effectiveness of influencer marketing in the beauty sector has ability to build brand awareness, and directly drive sales through exclusive offers and product reviews.

Introduction:

Today, everything is online, and a whole new group of consumers, Gen Z has grown up with social media as a normal part of life.

Traditional advertisements were created for masses. Influencer marketing focus on individual as it feels more like a personal endorsement. . Gen Z consumers are smart. They care more about an influencer's knowledge and whether they are real. Gen Z trust smaller, micro-influencers more because they feel they are real and authentic. The research shows that even though influencers get people to buy, their endorsement is ranked as one of the least important things when people make their final decision. Factors like brand reputation, product reviews from other people, and ingredients are more important. This is because Gen Z is really concerned about things like undisclosed sponsorships, fake reviews, and influencers promoting unrealistic beauty standards. So, for a beauty brand to succeed, it needs to see influencers as a way to get a product noticed, and then make sure the product itself is good enough to stand up to the consumer's own research and fact-checking.

Observations and Analysis:

A survey was conducted with the respondents in the age group of 13 years to 28 years who are Gen Z at this present time. Following are the observations

1. Demographics: 58% were in the age group of 13-18 years of age and 42% in the age group of 19-28 years. 67 % are female and 33% are male respondents. 2% are employed and 98% are students.
2. 62% of respondents use Instagram, YouTube 29%, 7% Pinterest and 2% Facebook as a Social Media platform to follow beauty influencers.
3. 1-5 hours of time is spent by the respondents on the Social Media on a per day basis.
4. Only 8% of respondents regularly seek out beauty related content on Social Media
5. 85% of respondents follow on average 1-5 beauty influencers on Social Media.
6. 64% of respondents trust the micro

influencers for beauty brands related content as compared to celebrity influencers.

7. 46% of the respondents buy the beauty products based on beauty influencers recommendations in the price range on 101-500 rupees and 35% in the range of 501-1000 rupees.

8. 67% of the respondents discover a new beauty product through Social Media and remaining from friends, family, online reviews and offline shopping etc.

9. 65% of the respondents do not trust the sponsored content of influencers.

10. 54% of the respondents have purchased a beauty products based on the recommendations of beauty influencers.

Analysis:

The data suggest that the consumer will buy the beauty product through influencer marketing only when they perceive it to be genuine and trustworthy. Just being a paid promotion or collaboration is not enough to build trust. Data shows that even though Gen Z customers are influenced by influencer's marketing and endorsements, their decisions does not rely only on that one aspect. The role of influencer is more like an agent helping the customer explore new products. The ultimate purchasing decision is depends upon a separate set of criteria, with product reviews, ingredients, and brand reputation. The reason is the concern about the trust factor and the authenticity of information given by the influencers.

Implications for the Beauty Industry

Based on these findings, brands and marketers must re-evaluate their influencer marketing strategies to match with the psychology of the Gen Z consumer.

- Influencers should focus on providing authentic reviews and correct information about the beauty products and not just endorsement for monetary gain.

- To build long term trust it is essential to maintain transparency while marketing the

beauty brands. Focusing more on the use of product, ingredients use in it and side effects if any is essential.

- Customers who are satisfied with the product should be encouraged to give genuine reviews about the beauty product. Genuine reviews and feedback is essential to an influencer.

- Adopting a holistic marketing approach is crucial for the beauty brands along with the influencers marketing.

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Films Highlighting Indian Freedom Movements and Leaders: Analysing 2024 Releases 'Ae Watan Mere Watan' and 'Swatantrya Veer Savarkar'

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Abstract:

Indian cinema has always been a strong medium to tell stories about our history and culture.

Television has played an important role in this journey. From foreign screens to the big screen, and from the big screen to the small screen of mobile phones, films have gone through a revolutionary phase of transformation. "People's evenings began to be spent at home instead of in cinema halls, and during the 1950s and 1960s the number of viewers in theatres declined."

(National Institute of open schooling) and (Beverly boy Production)

Films based on the Indian freedom movement not only entertain people but also remind them of the struggles and sacrifices made by leaders and ordinary citizens. The 2024 films 'Ae Watan Mere Watan' and 'Swatantrya Veer Savarkar' are two recent examples that present powerful narratives about India's fight for independence. Earlier researches on this

topic mostly discussed films like 'Gandhi' and 'The Legend of Bhagat Singh'. Very little work has been done on films produced during the last one decade, particularly films released after COVID-19 pandemic. This research fills that gap by studying how the two latest films portray freedom leaders and connect with today's audience. In this study, the two films 'Ae Watan Mere Watan' and 'Swatantrya Veer Savarkar' have been analysed on parameters like themes, characters, storytelling styles, screenplay, camera, editing, direction, and overall message. The focus is on how these films balance historical facts with emotional drama, and how they bring lesser-known and well-known leaders to the screen. The findings show that "Ae Watan Mere Watan" tells the story of an unsung hero and focuses on secret radio broadcasts during the Quit India movement. 'Swatantrya Veer Savarkar' presents the life of a freedom leader, showing both his sacrifices and his complex political image. Both films highlight courage, determination, and a deep love for the nation. This research is limited to these two films, but in future, similar studies can include more films, and primary data can also be gathered to have a netter understanding of films made in the backdrop of Indian freedom struggle. Such researches can help us understand how cinema continues to shape our view of history.

Keywords:- films, freedom movement, leaders, history, nationalism, independence

Introduction

Cinema has always played an important role in telling the story of independence. These films not only entertain the audience but also help remind them of the sacrifices made by freedom fighters and common citizens. Earlier films such as Gandhi(1982) and The Legend of Bhagat Singh (2002) have been studied extensively. However, recent films like Ae Watan Mere Watan and Swatantrya Veer Savarkar (2024) deserve attention because they bring new perspectives to familiar history. This paper

analyses these two films to understand how they balance historical accuracy with storytelling and how they engage contemporary audiences.

Objectives

Indian cinema has a long history of portraying freedom struggles, and with new films released in 2024, it becomes important to examine their contribution. This study clearly outlines its goals, with the objectives below guiding the analysis of *Ae Watan Mere Watan* and *Swatantrya Veer Savarkar*

- To analyse how the 2024 films *Ae Watan Mere Watan* and *Swatantrya Veer Savarkar* depict the Indian freedom struggle and its leaders.
- To examine the role of media, especially Congress Radio in *Ae Watan Mere Watan*, in shaping resistance and spreading awareness during the Quit India Movement.
- To explore how Vinayak Damodar Savarkar is portrayed in *Swatantrya Veer Savarkar*, focusing on his ideology, sacrifices, imprisonment, and influence on nationalist thought.
- To compare the depiction of a lesser-known hero (Usha Mehta) with a well-known leader (V.D. Savarkar), highlighting differences in narrative focus, heroism, and public perception.
- To evaluate the films' cinematic techniques—storytelling, characterisation, direction, screenplay, and use of media—as tools to represent history.
- To understand how these films engage contemporary audiences and link historical events to present-day perspectives.

Literature Review

Earlier films on India's freedom struggle mainly focused on well-known leaders and major events. For instance, *Gandhi* (Nanda, 1996) portrayed Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy of non-violence, while *The Legend of Bhagat Singh* (Chandra et al., 1989) highlighted revolutionary activism. Similarly, *Rang De Basanti* (2006)

connected historical struggles with contemporary youth activism (Guha, 2007). These studies provide insight into how cinema has historically represented freedom fighters, aligning with the objective of analysing the depiction of Indian freedom struggle and its leaders.

However, recent scholarship shows a gap in the study of lesser-known heroes and media-based resistance. Very few studies focus on films that highlight figures like Usha Mehta or tools like the Congress Radio (Sharma & Tripathi, 2024). *Ae Watan Mere Watan* addresses this gap by depicting underground radio as a medium for political resistance during the Quit India Movement, offering audiences a new perspective on activism and awareness. This supports the objective of examining the role of media in shaping resistance.

Regarding the portrayal of freedom leaders, *Swatantrya Veer Savarkar* presents Vinayak Damodar Savarkar's ideology, sacrifices, imprisonment, and influence on nationalist thought. Existing literature on biopics suggests that cinematic representation can shape public perception of leaders, though few studies analyse Savarkar specifically in contemporary films. This aligns with the objective of exploring how Savarkar is portrayed and comparing his depiction with lesser-known heroes like Usha Mehta.

Finally, research on cinematic techniques shows that storytelling, characterisation, and media use significantly influence audience engagement and historical understanding (Edmunds & Turner, 2005). In colonial India, radio connected leaders and the public, and films now recreate such media tools to link historical events with contemporary perspectives (Sharma & Tripathi, 2024). This supports the objectives of evaluating cinematic techniques and understanding audience engagement.

Methodology

This study uses qualitative analysis of the two films. The analysis examines:

- Themes
- Character development
- Storytelling style
- Screenplay
- Cinematography
- Editing
- Direction
- Overall message

No primary data (like audience surveys) were collected, which is a limitation. The study focuses only on textual and cinematic analysis. Analysis of "Ae Watan Mere Watan 2024"

Storyline and Themes

Set in Bombay in the 1940s, the film centres on Usha Mehta, who at 22 years old established an underground radio station, **Congress Radio**, during the Quit India Movement (Sharma & Tripathi, 2024). The film shows how Congress Radio connected leaders and citizens when Gandhi and other prominent leaders were arrested. Themes include student activism, women's participation, and underground resistance.

Ae Watan Mere Watan explores the themes of patriotism, youth activism, and personal sacrifice during India's freedom struggle. The film focuses on Usha Mehta, a young revolutionary who operates a secret Congress radio during the Quit India Movement, highlighting her courage and determination. Character development is strong, showing Usha's growth from a motivated student to a committed freedom fighter, reflecting her resilience and moral conviction. The storytelling follows a linear narrative, balancing historical facts with dramatic moments to engage viewers effectively.

The screenplay emphasizes pivotal events, dialogues, and revolutionary acts, while cinematography captures authentic locations and period settings, enhancing visual realism. Editing ensures smooth progression of events,

maintaining clarity and emotional intensity. Direction focuses on blending historical authenticity with cinematic engagement, guiding performances and scene execution. Overall, the film conveys the message that dedication, bravery, and personal sacrifice are vital in the fight for freedom, inspiring audiences while educating them about India's struggle for independence.

Women's Contribution

Usha Mehta exemplifies the role of women freedom fighters who sacrificed personal life for the nation. Like many male revolutionaries, she gave up marriage and personal love for the country, demonstrating courage and dedication (Sharma & Tripathi, 2024).

Strengths and Limitations

The film highlights the patriotic use of radio and the risks taken by Usha and her team. Critics note that the film could have explored other roles of radio, like promoting cultural awareness, to give a broader understanding (Sharma & Tripathi, 2024).

Ae Watan Mere Watan shows the bravery and dedication of Usha Mehta and young freedom fighters, giving viewers a clear idea of the Quit India Movement. The film emotionally connects through secret radio scenes, patriotic moments, and Usha's growth from a student to a committed revolutionary.

Role of Radio

"Operating towards the conclusion of the colonial struggle in Africa, nationalist movements capitalized on the increasing ownership of radios across the continent, effectively leveraging radio broadcasts for propaganda purposes" (Mosia et al., 1994 as cited in Sharma & Tripathi, 2024) Similarly, the arrival of radio in India during the 1920s marked the inception of a fresh political era, epitomised by leaders like Usha in the film, who adeptly utilized electronic media to foster connections with fellow Indians. (Sharma &

Tripathi, 2024) It means Raideo in India started with private experiments(1920s) then it failed due to high cost, after that it was taken by the British government in 1930s, it made the foundation of British Government. Congress Radio represented a **creative resistance** against colonial censorship. It helped broadcast messages, mobilize people, and maintain morale during the movement (Sharma & Tripathi, 2024)

Cinematography and period settings make the story realistic, while screenplay and editing keep it smooth and engaging. The message highlights patriotism, courage, and personal sacrifice.

However, some scenes feel over-dramatized, certain parts are slow, and the strong historical focus may not appeal to all audiences. Overall, the film is inspiring and informative but takes some creative liberties.

Audience and Critical Reception

Within five days of release, the film received over four million views on Amazon Prime Video (Koimoi.com Team, 2024). While Sara Ali Khan's performance was praised, some critics called the film a "fancy-dress show" (Kumar, 2024).

Analysis of "Swatantrya Veer Savarkar 2024"

The central theme of the film is patriotism and revolutionary struggle. It explores Vinayak Damodar Savarkar's fight against British colonial rule, his ideological beliefs, and his vision for a united India. The film also touches on sacrifice, resilience, and social activism.

The film Swatantrya Veer Savarkar moves away from the structure of a traditional episodic biopic and instead presents some impactful moments from Savarkar's life in a natural manner. The cinematography creates powerful symbolism through the contrast between the scenic beauty of Port Blair and the brutal torture inflicted on him. His disappointment after being released from jail, along with his envy towards Gandhi and Nehru, illustrates the churn in his political thinking. However, the film remains

silent on certain historical aspects, such as the coalition between the Hindu Mahasabha and the Muslim League (Kumar,2024)

Savarkar's character is portrayed as a dedicated revolutionary, evolving from a young, motivated student to a fearless freedom fighter and social thinker. His interactions with Gandhi and other contemporaries highlight ideological conflicts and his commitment to action over non-violence.

The film uses a linear chronological narrative with flashbacks to depict key life events. It balances historical facts with dramatized scenes to maintain audience engagement.

The screenplay emphasizes pivotal moments: Savarkar's early inspiration, London struggles, imprisonment, and post-release activism. Dialogues are crafted to reflect conviction and ideological firmness, though some critics note occasional exaggeration for dramatic effect.

Visuals capture both intense prison sequences and freedom struggle activities, using lighting and framing to evoke emotional impact. Scenes in London and Pune are contrasted to highlight his journey and the oppressive colonial environment.

Editing is straightforward, maintaining clarity in the chronological progression. Some sequences, particularly in prison, use montage techniques to compress time and show hardships efficiently.

Randeep Hooda's direction focuses on historical dramatization while highlighting Savarkar's ideological evolution. The direction attempts to blend biopic authenticity with cinematic engagement.

The film conveys that dedication, resilience, and strong ideological conviction are essential in the fight for freedom. It emphasizes personal sacrifice for the nation and inspires awareness of historical struggles, while encouraging viewers to reflect on India's path

to independence.

Strengths and Limitations

Swatantrya Veer Savarkar highlights Savarkar's courage, dedication, and role in India's freedom struggle, giving viewers insight into key events like his activism, London struggles, imprisonment, and post-release social work. The film emotionally engages through prison scenes, revolutionary planning, and Savarkar's ideological growth. Cinematography and historical settings make the story realistic, while screenplay and editing keep the narrative clear and smooth. The overall message emphasizes resilience, patriotism, and personal sacrifice for the nation.

However, some scenes are over-dramatized, certain parts feel slow, and the film sometimes emphasizes Savarkar's perspective over a balanced historical view. Overall, it is informative and inspiring but takes creative liberties.

Comparative Discussion

- Ae Watan Mere Watan focuses on an unsung female hero and grassroots mobilization through radio.
- Swatantrya Veer Savarkar focuses on a male freedom leader and his ideological journey.
- Both films highlight **courage, sacrifice, and patriotism**.
- Both show how media—radio in one, writings in the other—served as a tool to connect people.
- For today's youth, these films provide new perspectives on lesser-known narratives and stimulate discussion on history and leadership.

Conclusion

The 2024 releases "Ae Watan Mere Watan" and "Swatantrya Veer Savarkar" show how cinema keeps history alive and inspires audiences. Both films highlight courage, sacrifice, and determination while presenting different types of leaders. The research contributes to filling the gap in recent film

studies, especially post-COVID releases. Future studies can include more films and use audience surveys to deepen understanding.

Earlier patriotic films like "Mother India" and "Shaheed" focused on national unity and idealised depictions of the freedom struggle. In contrast, recent films such as "Swatantrya Veer Savarkar and Ae Watan Mere Watan" highlight personal struggles, inner conflicts, and more realistic characters.

The impact of OTT platforms is also significant. Earlier, films were released mainly in cinemas, which limited their reach to specific audiences. Today, platforms like Amazon Prime Video and Netflix allow these films to reach global audiences, creating new ways of understanding and engaging with history.

Both "Swatantrya Veer Savarkar and Ae Watan Mere Watan" show how contemporary patriotic cinema integrates traditional themes of freedom struggle and heroism with modern sensibilities such as complex characters, individual patriotism, and psychological depth. These films suggest that today's audiences expect not only idealistic heroes but also layered and realistic portrayals that reflect both personal and ideological dimensions of patriotism.

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Trust in the Crowd: Investigating the Credibility of User-Generated Content on Social Media Platforms

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Abstract

With the expansion of social media, the flood of information on these platforms is noticeable. Now, the sharing of news is not limited to registered and authorized media organizations but ordinary people with social media accounts are also in the race of creating and sharing information. In such a situation, user-generated content (UGC) on social media has emerged as a force that is responsible for generating public opinion, affecting consumer behavior and social behavior. This quantitative study examines user perceptions of the credibility of UGC on Instagram and Facebook through the lens of social trust theory. An online survey of 34 social media users probed how various cues influence trust. Descriptive analyses reveal that trust is generally cautious. Participants most frequently cited verified accounts (67.6%) and external links to sources (50.0%) as factors that increased their trust in UGC, while high engagement was less important (32.4%). For authenticity, source credibility

(64.7%) and consistency with known facts (50.0%) were top cues. Importantly, 59% of respondents rated Instagram more trustworthy than Facebook, suggesting platform effects.

Inferential analysis found a moderate positive correlation between peer influence and trust ($r=0.50$, $p<.01$), indicating social trust processes. These findings are interpreted in light of social trust theory and recent work on digital trust. The study highlights that trust in social media content is not uniform but depends on social cues and perceived authenticity. To foster digital trust, it's necessary to improve verification tools, teach consumers how to use media, and urge platforms to make sure their content is accurate.

Keywords: User-Generated Content (UGC), Social Trust Theory, Facebook, Instagram, Social Credibility, Authenticity

Introduction

Social media users increasingly rely on User-Generated Content (UGC) such as posts, photos, and comments by ordinary users as sources of news and information. Unlike traditional media, UGC is decentralized which means anyone can share news or opinions. This raises concerns about credibility and trust. If social media connectors cannot easily verify a post's accuracy, they may respond with skepticism or resort to peer networks to evaluate it. Early evidence suggests UGC can be highly persuasive. For example, many consumers report finding peer recommendations more believable than traditional advertising (Hochstein et al.). However, a majority of users also recognize that fake or misleading content is widespread: as many as 62 percent of consumers admit encountering fake UGC in their feeds (Hochstein et al.). This widespread awareness of misinformation heightens distrust, in line with findings that fake-news awareness negatively impacts perceived social-media credibility (Paschies and Pathak).

To understand trust in UGC, this

research adopts social trust theory, which holds that interpersonal networks and shared social norms foster trust in information exchanged within a community (Håkansson and Witmer). In offline word-of-mouth, people often trust recommendations from known acquaintances (family, friends) by virtue of established social bonds. This research paper examines whether and how trust transfers from social ties and platform cues to UGC. Specifically, this research paper asks: How do factors such as content creator identity, platform reputation, content type, engagement indicators, and cues of authenticity shape perceived credibility?

This research paper situates this inquiry within recent digital trust literature. Hochstein et al. define digital trust as the "willingness to rely on digitally presented information when there is limited means of verification" (Hochstein et al.). They propose that consumers seek out UGC because it is often viewed as more believable than marketer-generated messages (Hochstein et al.). Yet trust hinges on platform design and content cues. Similarly, trust in social media is intertwined with users' media literacy: those able to critically evaluate content tend to have different trust perceptions. This study aims to fill a gap by empirically linking these theoretical insights to actual user perceptions of Instagram and Facebook content.

The primary research questions are: (1) How does the perceived identity or credibility of the source (e.g. verified vs. anonymous user) affect trust in a post? (2) Do users view Instagram and Facebook differently in terms of UGC credibility? (3) What role do content characteristics (type, tone) and engagement metrics (likes, comments) play in credibility judgments? (4) How do perceived authenticity cues (e.g. factual consistency, emotional tone) influence trust? (5) How do personal factors, such as confirmation bias (trusting content that matches one's beliefs) or peer influence, relate to overall trust? Addressing these questions

contributes to the understanding of digital trust formation and has implications for media literacy and platform policy.

Literature Review

Social trust and digital trust theories suggest that trust is built through social relationships and shared norms. High generalized trust in a community is associated with a greater willingness to accept information from other members (Håkansson and Witmer).

Early theorists (e.g. Putnam) debated whether trust can arise in impersonal online settings, but more recent reviews find mostly positive links between social media use and generalized trust (Håkansson and Witmer). In other words, social media can foster trust if users perceive their networks as reliable. Trust in people online (TPO) has been defined as the degree to which one trusts other members of an online network, and it plays a key role in evaluating UGC (Paschies and Pathak).

In digital environments, trust is also shaped by platform-level cues. Hochstein et al. argue that verified account badges, content filtering, and moderation policies create the “trust-enabling conditions” needed for users to accept UGC (Hochstein et al.). For example, their model suggests that platform features like identity verification “provide third-party validation” and thus can alleviate consumer suspicion of misrepresentations (Hochstein et al.). In contrast, knowledge of fake news can undermine trust: awareness of misinformation has been shown to erode perceived social-media credibility (Paschies and Pathak). This body of work suggests trust is not uniform; it depends on how digital features reinforce or violate expectations of authenticity.

Scholars of information credibility emphasize specific content cues that guide trust. In online contexts, source credibility (the trustworthiness and expertise of the author) is a powerful cue. Verified badges or known authors generally lend credibility (Hochstein et

al.). Similarly, cue theory of digital media holds that consistency with facts and corroboration by multiple sources bolster perceived authenticity (Paschies and Pathak; Krishnamurthy and Mukherjee). Emotional tone, narrative style, and production quality can also influence how “real” a post seems. In practice, marketing insights note that authenticity is a primary driver of UGC’s power: UGC is valued precisely because consumers regard it as genuine (Krishnamurthy and Mukherjee).

Engagement metrics serve as social proof cues. The number of likes, comments, and shares attached to a post can signal popularity and acceptance by peers, which may enhance trust (e.g. posts with many endorsements appear validated by the crowd). However, such cues can cut both ways: high engagement might suggest popularity, but empty “likes” can also be manipulated or misrepresent content quality. Finally, content type matters: users may inherently trust news-related posts more than entertainment or personal opinion, as content aligning with one’s interests or beliefs may seem more plausible. Indeed, prior work suggests a modest confirmation bias: some users are “more likely to trust UGC that aligns with [their] personal beliefs.”

Media literacy is the ability to critically evaluate media content. Recent research finds that higher social-media literacy correlates with greater trust in social media - perhaps paradoxically - because literate users can navigate information more confidently (Eserol). Eserol reports that individuals with strong critical consumption skills exhibit increased trust perception in social platforms, suggesting that education can mitigate suspicion without leading to blind credulity (Eserol). This implies that our participants’ self-reported media literacy may influence how they trust UGC.

In sum, the literature suggests trust in UGC on platforms like Instagram and Facebook arises from a complex mix of social relationship

factors (who is posting), platform features, content cues, and individual predispositions (Hochstein et al.; Paschies and Pathak; Krishnamurthy and Mukherjee). We now turn to our empirical analysis of these factors in the survey data.

Methodology

Sample and Procedure: we conducted an online survey from 6 to 26 August 2025, using a convenience sample of 34 adult social media users. Participants were recruited via university mailing lists and social media; all responses were anonymous and voluntary. The sample was young and well-educated: 61.8% were aged 18–24, 23.5% aged 25–34, and the remainder under 18 or above 35. Just over half identified as male (55.9%), with the rest female. Most (58.8%) were undergraduate students, and 41.2% had graduate degrees. (See Table 1 for demographics.)

Instrument: The survey questionnaire (see Appendix) included both closed and open-ended items focusing on trust in UGC. Key measures included:

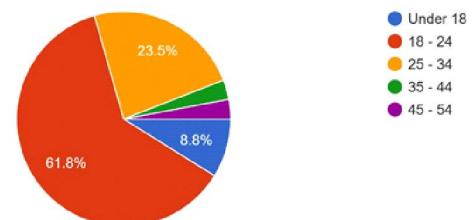
- **Trust Likelihood:** “When you see a post shared by a user (not a media outlet), how likely are you to trust it on social media?” (4-point scale: 1 = Very unlikely to 4 = Very likely).
- **Platform Usage:** Frequency of Instagram and Facebook use (Never, Rarely, Monthly, Weekly, Daily).
- **Content Engagement:** “What type of content do you mostly engage with?” (multi-select categories: e.g. News, Reviews, Entertainment, Personal Blog).
- **Source Identity:** “How much does the identity of the content creator affect your trust in their content?” (5-point Likert from 1 = Not at all to 5 = Very much).
- **Verification Behavior:** “Do you usually verify information before believing or sharing it?” (Always, Often, Sometimes, Rarely).
- **Authenticity Cues:** “What makes content feel ‘authentic’ to you?” (multi-select: e.g.

Credibility of source, Consistency with facts, Personal storytelling, High visual quality, Emotional tone).

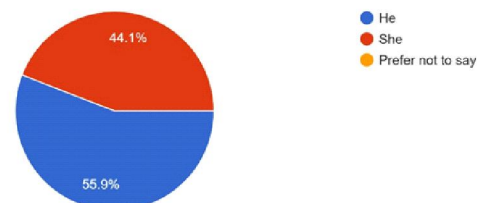
• **Trust Factors:** “What factors make you trust a user-generated post? (You can select more than one)” (multi-select: Verified account, External links, Professional tone, High engagement, Personal connection, Comments by others).

Results. The sample was largely young and educated. The majority (61.8%) were aged 18–24; only two respondents were over 35. Males slightly outnumbered females (55.9% vs. 44.1%). Most participants (58.8%) were undergraduates, with the remainder holding or pursuing graduate (26.5%) or doctoral (23.5%) degrees. On average, 85% reported daily Instagram use (29 of 34), whereas Facebook use was lower: 35% used Facebook weekly or more, while 61% used it rarely or never. This suggests participants were more active Instagram users.

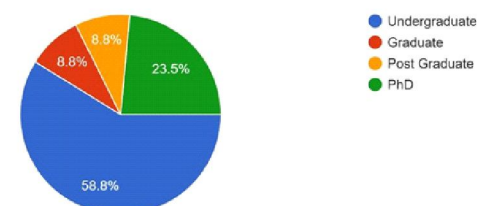
Age
34 responses



Gender
34 responses

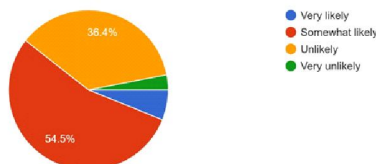


Educational Level
34 responses



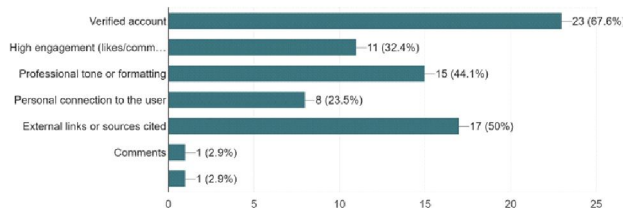
Participants were asked how likely they are to trust a social media post shared by another user (not an official media outlet). Responses were modestly positive on average: the mean trust-likelihood score was 2.64 (SD = 0.65) on the 1 - 4 scale (1 = Very unlikely, 4 = Very likely). As Table 2 shows, most (54.5%) chose “Somewhat likely” to trust a peer’s post, 36.4% “Unlikely,” and only 5.9% said “Very likely.” This indicates a cautious stance: users do not completely dismiss UGC, but are hesitant to trust it without scrutiny.

When you see a post shared by a user (not a media outlet), how likely are you to trust it on social media?
33 responses



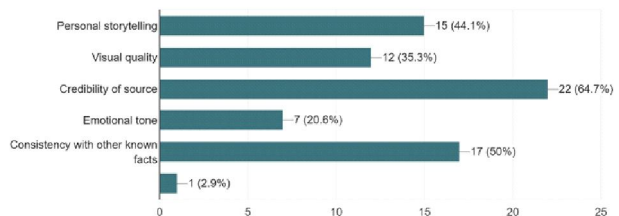
Credibility and Authenticity Cues: We examined which factors increased participants’ trust in UGC (multiple answers allowed). The most cited trust factor was “Verified account” (23 respondents, 67.6%), indicating that knowing a user’s identity as genuine boosted credibility. Next were “External links or sources cited” (17 respondents, 50.0%) and “Professional tone or formatting” (15 respondents, 44.1%). “High engagement” (many likes/comments) was less influential (11 respondents, 32.4%). Only 8 participants (23.5%) cited a personal connection to the user as a trust factor, and virtually none (1 respondents, 2.9%) counted mere comments by others as important. These results suggest that formal signals (verification, sourcing, quality) matter more to trust than informal social signals.

What factors make you trust a user-generated post? (You can select more than one option)
34 responses



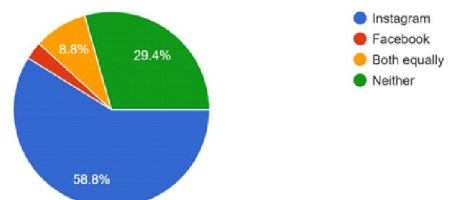
For perceptions of authenticity, consistent with trust cues, “Credibility of source” was the top cue (22 respondents, 64.7%). “Consistency with other known facts” was also prominent (17, 50.0%). Personal narrative style was cited by 15 (44.1%), high visual quality by 12 (35.3%), and an “emotional tone” by 7 (20.6%). In open responses, many participants echoed that factual accuracy and reputable authorship underpin authenticity. These patterns align with theories that authenticity – the sense that content is genuine and factual – is key to trust.

What makes content feel “authentic” to you?
34 responses



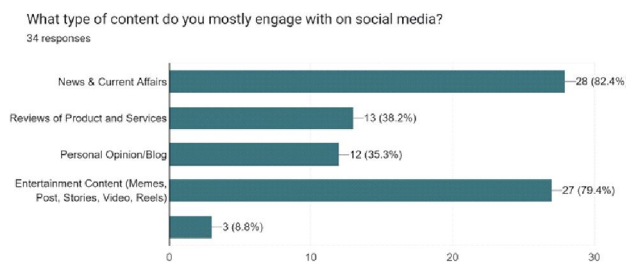
Platform Trust and Content Context: Regarding platform reputation, participants overwhelmingly rated Instagram as more trustworthy for UGC than Facebook. Twenty respondents (58.8%) chose Instagram, while only 1 (2.9%) chose Facebook; 10 (29.4%) said “Neither,” and 3 (8.8%) said “Both equally.” This preference may reflect Instagram’s younger user base or interface design. It mirrors recent findings that users perceive Instagram more positively than Facebook (Snider). The finding implies that platform reputation itself is a credibility cue.

Which platform do you consider more trustworthy for user-generated content?
34 responses



When asked **which content they engage with most**, many selected a combination of News & Current Affairs and

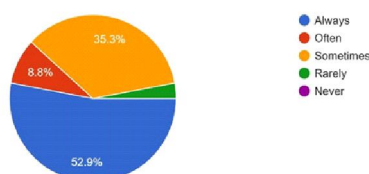
Entertainment (memes, videos). Few specialized only in one category. Notably, participants showed a moderate tendency to trust content aligned with their beliefs: the mean agreement on “I am more likely to trust UGC that aligns with my personal values” was 2.91 (SD = 1.15 on a 1-5 scale). This suggests mild confirmation bias but no strong effect. Likewise, peer influence was neutral to moderate (mean = 2.71, SD = 1.17 on 1-5) - many respondents were “Not sure” or disagreed that friends’ opinions sway their trust.



Verification Behavior and Media

Literacy: Most participants reported proactive verification habits: 18 (52.9%) said they always verify information before believing/sharing, 12 (35.3%) sometimes, and only 4 (11.8%) “often” or “rarely.” Correspondingly, 27 (79.4%) had ever reported misleading UGC, while 7 (20.6%) had not. A clear majority (22, 64.7%) considered themselves media-literate, 10 (29.4%) were “not sure,” and only 2 (5.9%) said “no.” Common self-reported verification strategies included comparing multiple sources (24, 70.6%), using fact-check websites (22, 64.7%), and reverse image searches (17, 50.0%). Very few relied solely on peers or admitted to trusting without checks. A similar fraction (41.2%) had received some training in spotting misinformation. These results suggest an engaged, conscientious audience: aware of fake news and generally applying critical checks.

Do you usually verify the information before believing or sharing it?
34 responses



Correlational Analysis: Pearson correlation analyses explored relations among trust-related scores. Trust-likelihood (1 - 4) was significantly correlated with peer influence ($r = 0.50, p = 0.003$), indicating that respondents who reported greater influence by friends also tended to trust UGC more. In contrast, trust-likelihood showed no significant correlation with belief alignment ($r = 0.08, p = 0.66$) or with engagement frequency ($r = 0.03, p = 0.89$). Identity-of-creator importance was weakly related to trust ($r = 0.14, p = 0.45$). Engagement with trusted content was moderately related to peer influence ($r = 0.45, p = 0.007$) - those swayed by peers also liked or shared UGC more. These patterns support the idea that social factors (peer norms) impact trust more than personal biases in this sample.

Discussion

The survey results reveal a nuanced picture of how users judge UGC credibility on Instagram and Facebook. Trust is not uniform; it depends on social cues, platform, and perceived authenticity. Participants were not blindly credulous (overall trust scores were middling) and most actively engage in verification before sharing, reflecting widespread awareness of fake news. In line with social trust theory, trust appears to be mediated by social and contextual factors: for example, content from a “verified” or known account garnered much more trust. This echoes digital trust models showing that platform features like verification badges can enhance trust by signaling authenticity (Hochstein et al.). Similarly, content cues such as factual consistency and credible sources – not mere popularity metrics – drove feelings of authenticity, affirming that even in the social-media “crowd,” users seek traditional credibility cues.

The strong preference for Instagram over Facebook as a trustworthy source is notable. While we did not experimentally manipulate platforms, the disparity (59% vs 3% trust)

suggests that Instagram's image-centric environment or its demographic skews induce more confidence.

This aligns with prior survey data showing slight likability and trust advantages for Instagram users (Snider). It may also reflect broader skepticism toward Facebook (Meta) in recent years. The finding implies that platform reputation itself is a credibility cue.

Our results also touch on personal factors. Surprisingly, confirmation bias - trusting content that aligns with one's beliefs - had only a neutral to slight presence (mean H" 2.9). It did not significantly correlate with trust scores. This suggests our respondents, on average, did not heavily filter for congenial content. Instead, peer influence (social proof) was a stronger factor: those who said they are influenced by friends also reported higher trust and higher engagement. In other words, trust seems more socially contingent than ideologically so in this cohort. This supports social trust theory's emphasis on relational trust (knowing that others vouch for information) over purely cognitive biases.

Media literacy also emerges as important: most participants considered themselves capable of critical evaluation and many regularly used fact-checking strategies. This self-assessment aligns with literature indicating that higher media literacy can increase trust in reliable sources (Eserol). Educated users can feel more secure in judging content quality, rather than distrusting the platform wholesale. Encouragingly, this literacy may help them distinguish trustworthy UGC. Still, even literate users require cues to lean on.

Overall, these findings have practical implications. To foster digital trust, platforms should amplify the signals users found most valuable: strengthen verification features, highlight credible sources, and perhaps label content with quality cues. Almost all respondents believed platforms should take

substantial responsibility for content credibility (partial or full).

Enhancing transparency (e.g. clear author identities, fact-check labels) could reinforce trust. From a media literacy perspective, education programs can continue to emphasize critical evaluation techniques, since literate users reported feeling more confident about UGC.

Our survey is limited by size and sampling (non-random, education-skewed), so results are preliminary. However, they contribute to a growing picture of trust in social media: trust is conditionally granted based on a mix of social trust and content cues. Future research could use larger, diverse samples and experimental manipulations of cues (e.g. showing posts with or without verification badges) to test causality. Nonetheless, the present study suggests that even in the "crowd" of social media, users look for trustworthy beacons – whether verified accounts or factual consistency – before extending trust (Hochstein et al.; Krishnamurthy and Mukherjee).

Conclusion

This study has shown that user-generated content on Instagram and Facebook is trusted selectively. While many users are willing to consider peer posts, they heavily weight credibility cues. Source identity (especially verification status) and factual consistency emerged as powerful trust drivers. Platform context also mattered: Instagram was viewed as more credible, perhaps due to its user base and interface. Personal biases (trusting one's own beliefs) played a smaller role than social norms (peer influence). The results reinforce that digital trust is a complex social phenomenon, not automatic. To improve online information ecosystems, platforms and educators should emphasize transparency and literacy: for instance, bolstering fact-checking features, verifying user identities, and teaching users to cross-check content. Our findings

underscore the need for media literacy: equipped with critical skills, users can navigate UGC more effectively, enhancing both individual and collective trust in the digital public sphere. Future studies should explore interventions (e.g. trust labels, user education) and expand on how different communities evaluate UGC credibility.

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Trusting the Hashtag: Health Influencers Shaping Perceptions and Practices on Obesity Management

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Abstract

With the rise of social media, health influencers have emerged as powerful voices shaping public perceptions of fitness, body image, and obesity. This study explores how health-related content shared by influencers affects individuals' attitudes and behaviours toward obesity, particularly in the context of body positivity and healthy lifestyle choices. Using a structured questionnaire, the research aims to assess levels of trust in influencer content, perceived credibility, behavioural influence, and the psychological impact of body positivity messaging. The study also investigates whether such content motivates or demotivates individuals from adopting healthier habits. The findings aim to contribute to the growing discourse on digital health communication and the role of influencers in public health narratives.

Keywords: Health Influencers, Obesity, Overweight, Social Media, Fad diets

Introduction

Obesity is rapidly emerging as a major public health concern in India, driven by urbanization, sedentary lifestyles, and changing dietary habits. The country, traditionally associated with malnutrition, now faces a dual burden of malnutrition—undernutrition on one end and obesity-related diseases on the other.

Considering the global statistics, the prevalence of overweight and obesity has been rising steadily among both adults and children worldwide. Between 1990 and 2022, the percentage of children and adolescents (aged 5–19 years) with obesity increased fourfold, from 2% to 8%. During the same period, the proportion of adults (aged 18 and older) with obesity more than doubled, rising from 7% to 16%. (PIB, Delhi, 2025). At the national level, according to NFHS-5 (National Family Health Survey) obesity rates in India have nearly doubled in the last two decades. More than half (57%) of women and 48 percent of men have a waist-to-hip ratio (WHR) that puts them at a substantially increased risk of metabolic complications (International Institute for Population Sciences, Deonar, 2021). It is also found that the proportion of women having a substantially increased risk WHR is higher in urban areas than rural areas for both women and men.

Obesity as a health concern is a burden on the economy too. Shifting of the population from rural to urban settings coupled with easy availability of low cost nutritionally compromised food in the form of High Fat, Salt, Sugar (HFSS) and Ultra Processed Food (UPF) has further aggravated the challenge (Lahariya, 2025). According to a recent article, the economic burden on obesity is going to be approximately 6.7 lakh crore per year by the year 2030 and if unchecked, the figures may loom much higher in the coming 30 years to approximately 69.63 lakh crores (Vadlapatla, 2025).

There is a rising awareness among the population in general and the authorities too about the health consequences that are posed by increasing rates of obesity prevalence in India specially among young adults. The Indian government has launched initiatives such as Fit India Movement, Poshan Abhiyan, Eat Right India and Khelo India to promote healthy eating

and active lifestyles (PIB, Delhi, 2025). However, the rising influence of social media health influencers has also become a critical factor in shaping public perceptions about obesity management—sometimes positively and sometimes misleadingly. The #health hashtag was one of the most widely sought after information specially during and just after COVID with more than 165 million publications on Instagram only. The content includes information related to illnesses, nutrition and mindfulness (Rafael Schwarz, Forbes Councils Member, 2024). In the digital age, social media has become a dominant force in shaping health awareness, perceptions, and behaviours. Platforms like Instagram, YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter have transformed how people access health information, engage with wellness trends, and make lifestyle choices. According to a recent study it was found that almost 64% of the respondents follow health related advice on the Internet and around 62% of those do not feel that the information they get is credible (Shah, 2024). Another trend observed is that some influencers celebrate obesity in the name of body positivity (Fatima Cody Stanford, 2018). There is a need to know whether obesity should be normalised when the world is aware of the impact it has on an individual's health and thus indirectly on the economy.

Overall, the talk of health on social media has its own goods and bads.

Benefits of Social Media in Health Communication

Increased Awareness: Spreads crucial information on obesity prevention, diet, and exercise.

Accessibility: Provides free, 24/7 access to health tips and expert advice.

Community Support: Encourages peer motivation through weight-loss challenges, fitness groups, and personal transformation stories.

Engagement & Interactivity: Real-time

Q&A sessions, live workouts, and personalized consultations with experts.

The Dark Side: Misinformation & Commercialization

Unverified Health Claims: Many influencers promote fad diets, detox teas, and quick-fix weight-loss plans without scientific backing.

Promoting Unrealistic Body Standards: Unrealistic goals, fad diets and fitness hacks can lead to body image issues and disordered eating.

Influencer-Driven Marketing: Sponsored content for unregulated supplements and paid promotions may mislead followers.

Impact on Obesity Management in India

While credible influencers help spread awareness and motivate healthier lifestyles, the absence of strict regulations allows for misinformation to thrive, influencing dietary habits, fitness choices, and self-esteem. Important findings of a research conducted emphasized the fact that there is an urgent need to report not only half-truths but also overgeneralized health content, which can be highly unfavourable to those who get influenced by the content without verification of the authenticity of the said information(Kačková, 2024).

Literature Review

A variety of studies have been conducted on the influence of social media on health choices and behaviours of people. A systematic review was conducted to examine the impact of health influencers and celebrity endorsements on adolescents' food choices and obesity-related behaviours in India. The review highlights that food and beverage companies strategically leverage social media influencers and celebrities to market unhealthy food products to adolescents, increasing their exposure to high-risk dietary choices(Adam J Kucharczuk, 2022).

Recent studies have explored the

growing role of social media influencers(SMIs) in public health communication specially in promoting health awareness and behaviour modification. One such study provides valuable insights into the planning and implementation of SMI-sourced communication strategies within public health initiatives. The findings enhance the understanding of how influencer-driven messaging impacts audience perceptions and behaviours, contributing to more effective health campaigns(Gupta, 2022).

Recent studies highlight the nutrition paradox in society, with malnutrition and obesity coexisting. Influencer vlogs, particularly those promoting junk and street food, significantly impact adolescents' and teenagers' eating patterns. Conversely, dieticians and fitness experts promote healthy eating habits. A recent research reveals a positive correlation between time spent on social media, preference for unhealthy food, frequency of eating out, and rising Body Mass Index (BMI)(Sharma D. S., 2021).

According to the American Psychological Association, nonexperts increasingly promote false and potentially dangerous claims, ranging from unverified cancer cures to misleading health quick-fixes. This unchecked content particularly affects young, impressionable audiences, who are frequently exposed to anti-science narratives. Despite users' intentions to seek credible information, efforts to verify online content often led to further confusion and inaccuracies. The literature highlights an urgent need for credible, expert-led digital health communication to counteract misinformation and protect public well-being in the digital age(Abrams, 2024).

Social media is a double-edged sword—it can empower individuals to make informed health decisions or mislead them into unhealthy habits. The need for credible, science-backed health communication has never been greater in tackling India's obesity crisis.

Objectives of the study

- To examine the influence of health-related content shared by social media influencers on individuals' attitudes and behaviours toward obesity.
- To assess the levels of trust and perceived credibility associated with health influencers' content.
- To evaluate the behavioural influence of social media health influencers on followers' lifestyle and dietary choices.

Research Methodology

This study adopts a cross-sectional, quantitative research design to investigate the influence of social media health influencers on individuals' attitudes and behaviours toward obesity, body positivity, and lifestyle choices. The study also explores the levels of trust in influencer content and its psychological and emotional impact on followers. Data was collected using a structured, self-administered questionnaire designed in Google Forms. The questionnaire included both Likert-scale items and demographic questions. It assessed five key dimensions:

- Perception about Health Influencers
- Influence on Behaviour and Lifestyle Choices
- Trust in Influencer Content
- Psychological and Emotional Impact
- Attitudes towards Body Positivity Promotion

A total of 132 participants responded to the questionnaire. Of these 76 respondents were available for most of the questions as the rest were filtered out as they agreed that they did not use social media for health information. The sample included a mix of undergraduate and postgraduate students & working professionals.

Participation was voluntary, and informed consent was obtained from all participants. Anonymity and confidentiality of responses were maintained throughout the study.

Data Analysis and Discussion

The collected data was analysed using Jamovi software (Version 2.4.8). The following statistical procedures were employed:

- Descriptive Statistics: To summarise means, medians, standard deviations, and ranges for each variable.
- Normality Checks: Conducted using the Shapiro-Wilk test, indicating violations of normality for most variables, except for Trust.
- Independent Samples T-Tests and Mann-Whitney U Tests: To examine gender-based differences in scores across variables, depending on normality assumptions.
- Pearson Correlation Analysis: To assess relationships between perception, influence on behaviour, trust, psychological impact, and body positivity attitudes.
- One-Way ANOVA (Welch's): To explore differences in scores based on participants' satisfaction with their body weight.

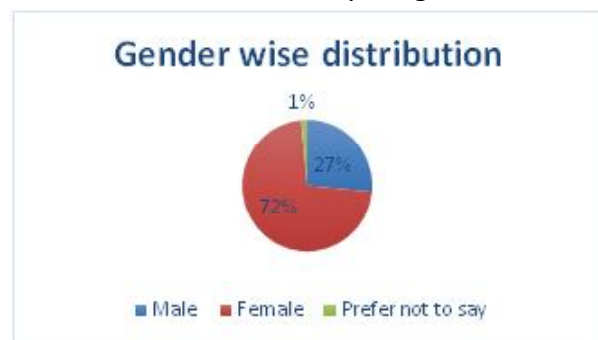


Figure 1:
Gender wise distribution

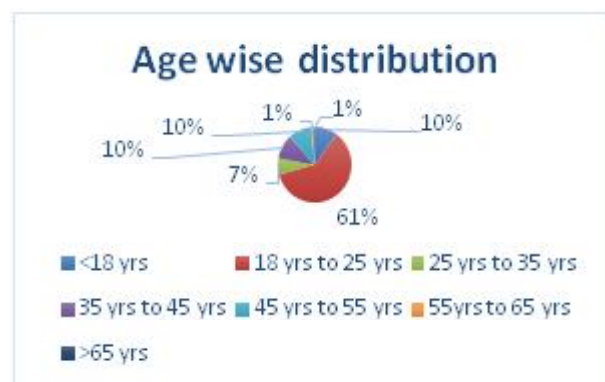


Figure 2:
Age wise distribution

Educational Qualification wise Distribution

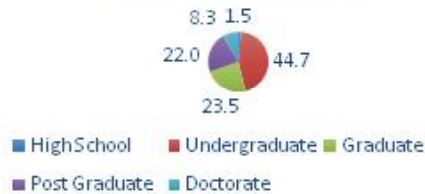


Figure 3: Educational qualification wise distribution

Social Media Usage Per Day



Figure 4: Social Usage Media per Day

Social Media Platforms Used

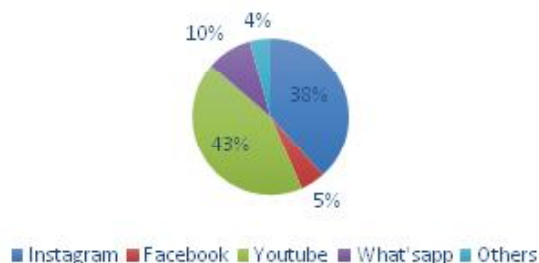


Figure 5: Social Media Platforms Used

Self Image

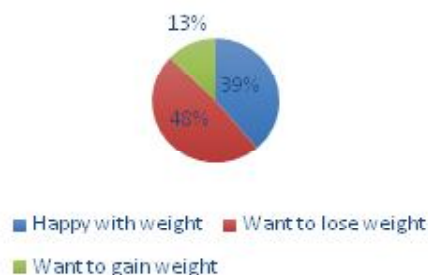


Figure 6: Self Image

Normality Test (Shapiro-Wilk)

	W	p
Score (Perception about Health Influencers)	0.886	<.001
Score (Influence on behaviour and lifestyle choices)	0.929	<.001
Score (Trust on the content)	0.991	0.866
Score (Psychological and Emotional Impact)	0.876	<.001
Score (Body Positivity not to be promoted)	0.861	<.001

Table 1: Assumption Checks

For all these tests, Shapiro-Wilk values for Influence on Behaviour and Lifestyle Choices ($W = 0.917$, $p < .001$) indicated a violation of normality assumptions, hence the Mann-Whitney U test was used as the appropriate non-parametric alternative.

Variable	Test	p-value	Interpretation
Perception about Health Influencers	Mann-Whitney U	0.919	No significant gender difference
Influence on behaviour and lifestyle choices	Mann-Whitney U	0.389	No significant gender difference
Trust on the content	Independent Samples t-test	0.489	No significant gender difference
Psychological and Emotional Impact	Mann-Whitney U	0.621	No significant gender difference
Body Positivity Not to be Promoted	Mann-Whitney U	0.452	No significant gender difference

Table 2: Inferential Tests

No significant gender-based differences for any of the variables tested.

Variables Compared	Pearson's r	p-value	Interpretation
Trust & Influence on Behaviour and Lifestyle Choices	0.096	0.409	Weak, non-significant positive correlation.
Trust & Psychological and Emotional Impact	-0.080	0.490	Weak, non-significant negative correlation.
Influence on Behaviour and Lifestyle Choices & Psychological Impact	0.472	<.001	Moderate, significant positive correlation.
Perception about Health Influencers & Body Positivity Not Promoted	0.416	<.001	Moderate, significant positive correlation.

Table 3: Correlation Analysis

Trust has no significant relationship with either Influence on Behaviour and Lifestyle Choices ($r = 0.096$, $p = 0.409$) or Psychological and Emotional Impact ($r = -0.080$, $p = 0.490$).

There's a moderate, statistically significant positive correlation between:

Influence on Behaviour and Lifestyle Choices and Psychological and Emotional Impact ($r = 0.472$, $p < .001$).

As people's perception of influencers affecting their behaviour increases, so does the psychological & emotional impact experienced.

Another moderate, statistically significant positive correlation is seen between:

Perception about Health Influencers and the opinion that Body Positivity should not be promoted ($r = 0.416, p < .001$).

People with a stronger perception of health influencers also tend to lean towards not supporting the body positivity movement.

No significant correlations were observed between Trust and other variables.

Variable	Welch's F	df1	df2	p-value	Interpretation
Score(Perception about Health Influencers)	1.066	2	46.2	0.353	No significant difference between groups
Score(Influence on Behaviour and Lifestyle Choices)	1.918	2	56.4	0.156	No significant difference
Score(Trust on the content)	3.209	2	19.7	0.062	Trend towards significance
Score(Psychological and Emotional Impact)	1.413	2	51.6	0.253	No significant difference
Score(Body Positivity Not to be Promoted)	0.901	2	44.8	0.413	No significant difference

Table 4: One-Way ANOVA (Welch's) IV: Satisfaction with one's weight, DV: Various scores

No statistically significant differences in scores across the groups (Satisfied with weight, Want to lose weight, Want to gain weight) for any variable, although Trust on the content showed a borderline trend ($p = 0.062$), suggesting potential underlying differences worth exploring in a larger sample.

Highlights

- Behavioural influence is closely linked to psychological impact.
 - People influenced in their lifestyle by health influencers tend to experience more emotional effects.
- Perception about influencers links to attitudes towards body positivity.
 - Those valuing influencer content are moderately more likely to reject body positivity explanations.
- Trust seems largely detached.
 - Both gender-based comparisons and correlation analyses show trust on the content isn't a significant factor influencing either behaviour or emotional outcomes.
- Group differences mostly absent.
 - One-Way ANOVA (Welch's) revealed no significant differences in perceptions, behavioural influence, psychological impact or body positivity attitudes across groups though

a trend for trust on the content suggests possible sub-group variations.

Conclusion

This study underscores the complexity of social media health influencer effects. While influencer-driven behavioural changes meaningfully relate to emotional impacts and body image attitudes, trust on the content appears to have minimal influence in this dynamic. Gender differences are negligible, and no substantial group differences were detected, highlighting the universal nature of social media's psychological trail.

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