

Usage of Social Media Platforms for News among the Students of Central Agricultural University, Mizoram

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Abstract: *There has been an emerging change in the news consumption habits with the advent of internet. With the growth of usage of mobile device, the online news consumption is increasing day by day among the students. News being an important part of our everyday life, people seeks news from different news platforms according to their selection of news. One of the news platforms is the social networking sites which make the users very convenient and easily available. Many studies have done about the social media usage for news. The present paper tries to examine the usage of social media for news among the students of Central Agricultural University, Mizoram. This paper also investigates about the news discussion and sharing of news among friends and family. A survey method has adopted for the study through structured questionnaire.*

Index Terms - Social Media, News sharing, Discussions, University, Students, Central Agricultural University

I. INTRODUCTION

Online news sources like news websites and social media sites have become one of the most effective news sources among the students. The habit of online news consumption is increasing day by day with the rapid growth of mobile device usage among the students. Eight percent of social media news consumers like to interact with their family and friends through discussions, sharing news and opinions of others. The social media news consumers like the convenience, speed and social interaction of social media (Pew Research Center Survey, 2018). Most of the young adults depend on internet for many reasons. One of them is the news gathering. Many of the Social media users choose different social networking sites to get the updates of the news. The social networking sites become one of the most use platforms for getting instant news and other information. The social media has also given the platform for active participation in the news discussion and sharing among the students. News sharing and giving opinions on issues through social networking sites is also another activity of social media users. News discussion among the friends and family make more aware and in-depth understanding of the news. University students mostly depend on internet for academic purposes as well as for gaining knowledge of what is happening around the world.

2. Review of Literature:

Rodrigues and Ranganathan (2015) in “Indian News Media: From Observer to Participant” discussed that there is a tremendous pressure of traditional model of journalism from the new media technologies because of audiences increasing usage of new media and some other socio-economic factors.

Rosengard, McLaughlin & Brown, (2014) has done a study on news consumption and sharing of news content by the young news consumers through social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter. The study also examined how the news consumers seek news directly from the news websites and mobile apps. The study found that the students get news from the social media but for the confirmation of the news they go for other internet sources.

Casero-Ripollés (2012) found that there is declination of traditional media particularly newspaper with the emergence of social networking sites as a news medium. The study also highlighted that the news consumption patterns and the concept of news are changing among the young people.

Cauwenberge, Haenens and Beentjes (2010) found that the use of television news enhanced the use of online news and vice versa. The study also found that young people consume news from both online and traditional media complementarily.

Eugenia and Pablo (2010) suggested that there is not much changed in news consumption from traditional media with the influence of news consumption on internet.

Wok, Tamam&Maria (2010) examined the pattern of news media consumption and interpersonal news discussions. The study explored the news media consumption and interpersonal news discussions in terms of age,gender,race and it was found that internet are mostly used by the older youth which is more than twenty one years old than the younger youth. The older youth discussed the current national news with their friends and family more than the younger youth.

Meenu (2008) in her book “Journalism and Mass Communication” emphasized the powerful role played by the news media in a changing society. She mentioned that the message given by the news media is necessary in the changing society. The audience consumed the mass media for various purposes like seeking information, education and entertainment.

Nath (2002) in his book “News, Audiences and Everyday Life” discussed the uses and gratification theory as people use media because of different purposes among them are surveillance, socialization and diversion. Mass media provide the information to the individuals so that they can make decisions for better living in the society. The author wrote, “ the news media provide a surveillance function for their audiences, surveying the world for information that people want and need to know”(2002,p.211). People seek information in order to participate in conversations with other individuals .This news information is provided by media.

3. Objectives:

- a. To study the usage pattern of social media among the students
- b. To examine the types of news share and social interaction

4. Methodology:

For the present study a survey method was adopted. Structured questionnaire was used for the data collection. A sample of 79 students was selected by using convenient sampling method. The respondents are from the students of Central Agricultural University, Mizoram.

5. Data Analysis and Interpretation:

5.1.Usage pattern of Social Media for News:

The researcher tries to analyze the data regarding the reasons of using social media for news. The below table 1 shows the main reasons for usage of social media news in Mizoram. From the table it was found that majority of the students want to get news update information through the platforms of social networking sites. The respondents also used the social networking sites for taking part in the news discussion and sharing the opinions about the news. In the third rank the respondents also seek the celebrity and entertainment news through the medium of social networking sites. In the fourth rank the respondents used social networking sites for keeping in touch with their friends and maintain the relationships.

Table.1. Main Reasons for usage of Social Media News

Main Reasons for usage of Social Media News	Total	Rank
To get the up-to-date information and to gain knowledge	368	1
To take part in the news discussion and sharing of opinions	292	2
To get the news of entertainment and celebrity	253	3
To stay in touch and make relationships with friends	182	4
Others	95	5

Table 2. Mostly used device by the respondents

Device	Frequency	Percentage
Laptop	5	6.3
Mobile	63	79.7
Laptop and Mobile	9	11.4
Mobile, Desktop Computer	1	1.3
Laptop, Mobile, Desktop	1	1.3

The above table 2 indicates the mostly used device by the respondents for accessing news through social media .Majority of the respondents 79.7% used mobile device for social media news.6.3% respondents used laptop for news through social media.11.4% respondents used both laptop and mobile while 1.3% respondents used both mobile and desktop computer.1.3% respondents used the three device namely laptop, mobile and desktop computer.

Table 3. Most used social media sites

Social media sites	Frequency	Percentage
Facebook	37	46.8
Whatsapp	11	13.9
Instagram	13	16.5
Facebook ,Whatsapp	05	6.3
Facebook ,Instagram	2	2.5
Facebook, Whatsapp, Twitter	1	1.3
Others	10	12.7

The above table 3 shows that majority of the respondents 46.8% used Facebook for news.16.5%used Instagram while 13.9% respondents used WhatsApp. 6.3% of the respondents used both Facebook and Whatsapp while 2.5% of the respondents used Facebook and Instagram.1.3% of the respondents used Facebook, Whatsapp and Twitter all three social networking sites for the news. 12.7% of the respondents used other social networking sites for seeking news.

Table 4. Favourable place for using social media

Place	Frequency	Percentage
Home	4	5.1
Workplace	3	3.8
Hostel	6.1	77.2
Department	5.1	5.1
Others	6.1	6.3

The above table 4 shows that 77.2% of the respondents access social media at hostel while 3.8% prefer at workplace. 5.1% of the respondents favor to use from home and department while 6.3% of the respondents choose to use social media from other places.

5.2. To examine the types of news share and social interaction

The below table 5 indicates that 88.6% of the respondents share and discuss the news through social networking sites among the friends and family. 11.4% of the respondents do not share and discuss the news even though they used social media.

Table 5. Sharing and Discussion of social media news

Sharing and discussion	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	70	88.6
No	9	11.4

Table 6. Selection of news type for sharing and discussion

Types of news	Percentage
International news	8.9
National News	19
Regional/Local News	24.1
Political News	7.6
Sports News	8.9
Entertainment News	8.9
Education/Career News	13.9
Weather Forecast	2.5
Science News	1.3
Others	5.1

The above table 6 shows the news which is share and discuss by the respondents through social media among the friends and family. Majority of the respondents 24.1% share and discuss the regional and local news while 13.9 % of the respondents go for education and career news. 19% of the respondents share and discuss the national news while 8.9% is for international, entertainment and sports news. 7.6% of the

respondents share and discuss the political news.2.5% of the respondents share and discuss the weather forecast while 1.3% go for science news.5.1% of the respondents choose the other news.

Table 7. Exposure on social media in terms of news sharing and discussion

Time	Frequency	Percentage
Daily	23	29.1
Once in a week	20	25.3
3to 4 days	9	11.4
5 to 6	19	24.1
Not at all	8	10.1

From the table 7 it indicates that 29.1% of the respondents do sharing and discussing the news among the friends and family daily while 25.3% go for only once in a week.24.1% of the respondents share and discuss the news five to six days in a week while 11.4% of the respondents go for three to four days in a week.10.1% of the respondents don't share and discuss the news at all.

6. Conclusion:

Most of the students seek news from different news sources for many reasons. With the fast growing of the mobile phones the usage patterns of social media for news keep changing. The study examines how the students use social media platforms to get news. From the study it is found that the students use social media for getting news up-dates and aware of the information very easily and conveniently. It also suggested that the news that get from the social media used to share and discuss with comments and opinions. Majority of the students use Facebook for news followed by Instagram. Students use Twitter very rarely. Mostly the students used mobile phones for accessing news through social media. Regional and local news are widely discussed and shared among their friend groups and family members. The study also showed that majority of the students access social media daily for news and they prefer to access from hostel. Some of the suggestions given by the students are even though they get news from social media but prefer to go to the news websites for accuracy since fake news are also very common these days. Sometimes the students also come across the fake photos in the news. The results of the study limited to the students of Central Agricultural University, Mizoram, who are sampled for the study only. More New Media studies and its influence on teenagers of Mizoram can take up in the future.

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