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COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS ON USAGE OF INSTAGRAM Vs FACEBOOK AMONG YOUNGSTERS WITH REFERENCE TO COIMBATORE CITY

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ABSTRACT :

In the era of digitalization, social media platforms play a vital role in shaping communication and interaction, especially among the youth. This study explores the usage patterns of Instagram and Facebook among youngsters in Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu. It analyzes their preferences, time spent, reasons for platform choice, and behavioural patterns. The findings provide valuable insights into how youth in urban India engage with different social media environments, contributing to broader discussions on digital behaviour and media influence.

Keywords: Instagram, Facebook, Social Media, Youth Behaviour, Coimbatore, Digital Communication

INTRODUCTION

In the digital world, social media platforms have become integral to the daily lives of millions. Among the most prominent are Instagram and Facebook, each offering unique features catering to different user preferences and behaviors. Usage patterns, especially among younger users, vary widely. Instagram, launched in 2010, and Facebook, launched in 2004, have both grown to dominate the social media landscape. This study focuses on how youth in Coimbatore—a city that blends tradition with modern lifestyle—engage with these platforms.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In the evolving digital landscape, social media platforms such as Instagram and Facebook have become integral to everyday communication, particularly among the youth. While both platforms offer unique features and cater to diverse user preferences, there exists a significant variation in their usage patterns. Young users, especially in urban regions like Coimbatore, exhibit different levels of engagement, purpose of use, and content preferences on these platforms. Despite the widespread adoption of social media, limited research has been conducted to understand the comparative usage of Instagram and Facebook among the youth in this specific regional context. This study seeks to bridge this gap by analyzing and interpreting the behavioural trends, engagement levels, and motivational factors influencing platform preference among young individuals in Coimbatore.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

- ✓ **Dumas et al. (2017):** Apply Festinger's (1954) social comparison theory to explain why Instagram may lead to more comparison behavior among youth compared to Facebook.
- ✓ **Phua et al. (2017):** Examine how Instagram and Facebook differ in their impact on young consumers, with Instagram being particularly influential for influencer marketing among the younger audience.
- ✓ **Primack et al. (2017):** Discuss the potential mental health effects of social media, showing that platforms emphasizing visual content, such as Instagram, may contribute more significantly to anxiety and depression than Facebook.
- ✓ **De Veirman et al. (2017):** Explore brand engagement, noting Instagram's visual format encourages young users to engage with brands more actively than on Facebook.
- ✓ **Smith & Anderson (2018):** Discuss how social media platforms like Instagram and Facebook differ in terms of user engagement, with younger users generally favoring Instagram due to its visual appeal.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To analyze the frequency and nature of Instagram and Facebook usage among youth.
- To compare preferences and user engagement across both platforms.
- To assess the impact of social media usage on daily routines and social behaviour.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The primary data used in this study through questionnaire method. The secondary data were collected from various books, journals, magazines and websites. The sample size has been taken among 120 respondents. The random sampling technique used in this study.

STATISTICAL TOOLS FOR ANALYSIS

The following statistical tools are used in this study for the purpose of analysis:
- Simple Percentage Analysis
- Weighted Average

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- The study is restricted to the youth in Coimbatore and may not reflect the social media behavior of youth in other regions or rural settings.
- The research is based on a limited sample, which may not accurately represent the entire youth population.
- The study concentrates only on Instagram and Facebook, excluding other widely used platforms that might influence youth engagement and preferences.

ANALYSIS& INTERPRETATION OF DATA

PERCENTAGE ANALYSIS

Exhibits showing primary motivation for using Instagram among respondents

Primary motivation for using Instagram	Frequency	Percentage
Socializing with friends/ family & posting personal updates	33	27.5
Following celebrities or influencers	20	16.67
Entertainment (memes, Reel's, etc..)	38	31.67
Shopping	12	10
Discovering new trends	17	14.17
TOTAL	**120**	**100**

Interpretation

The data reveals that entertainment (memes, reels, etc.) is the top reason for using Instagram with 31.67% of respondents citing it. This is followed by socializing with friends/ family & posting personal updates at 27.5%, and following celebrities or influencers at 16.67%. Additionally, 14.17% use Instagram for discovering new trends, while only 10% primarily use it for shopping. Overall, Instagram is largely seen as a platform entertainment and social connection, with shopping being minor use case.

Exhibit showing primary motivation for using Facebook among respondents

Primary motivation for using Facebook	Frequency	Percentage
To stay in touch with friends and family	31	25.83
For news and current events	52	45.33
To share personal updates (posts, status updates)	18	15.00
Professional networking (e.g., LinkedIn-like activity)	7	5.83
For entertainment	12	10.00

TOTAL	120	100

Interpretation

The data indicates that Facebook is primarily used for news and current events, with 43.33% of respondents identifying it as their main reason. Staying connected with friends and family is the second most common reason at 25.83%, while sharing personal updates accounts for 15%. Only a small portion of users engage with Facebook for entertainment (10%) or professional networking (5.83%), emphasizing its focus on information sharing and personal communication over other uses.

WEIGHTED AVERAGE METHOD

Table showing usage of social media platforms

Platforms	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Never	Total	Weighted average score	Rank
Instagram	109	8	1	2	464	3.87	1
Facebook	34	38	44	4	342	2.85	2

Interpretation

Instagram has the highest weighted average score of 3.87, ranking first, indicating it is the most frequently used platform, with 109 users accessing it daily. Facebook ranks second with a weighted average score of 2.85, showing lower daily usage (34 users) but higher weekly and monthly engagement compared to Instagram.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

- ✓ A significant number of participants prefer Instagram over Facebook.
- ✓ Instagram is used more for entertainment and self-expression.
- ✓ Facebook remains relevant for group communication and information sharing.
- ✓ Time spent on social media is significantly high among students.

SUGGESTIONS

- ✓ Students should balance academic and social media time.
- ✓ Educational institutions could promote awareness about healthy digital habits.
- ✓ Further studies could explore psychological impacts of prolonged usage.

CONCLUSION

The study effectively highlights the contrasting usage patterns of Instagram and Facebook among youth in Coimbatore. The findings indicate a clear preference for Instagram, primarily due to its visually rich interface, interactive features like reels and stories, and a fast-paced content flow that resonates more with the interests of younger users. Facebook, though still in use, is gradually losing popularity among this demographic, being used more for academic groups, event participation, and maintaining existing connections rather than active engagement. This shift in platform preference emphasizes the changing dynamics of social media behavior among the youth. The study underscores the importance of visual appeal, trend-driven interaction, and peer influence in shaping digital choices. These insights can guide educators, marketers, and mental health professionals in understanding youth engagement better and tailoring their approaches accordingly. It also opens avenues for future research to explore the psychological, academic, and social impacts of prolonged social media usage among young individuals.