



The Impact Of Social Media Spaces On News Consumption Among The Youngsters Of Kerala.

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ABSTRACT

This paper explores the transformative influence of social media on the news consumption habits of Youngsters in Kerala, India. Employing a questionnaire-based research methodology, the study investigates two primary objectives: first, to examine the impact of social media spaces on the news consumption patterns of youngsters in Kerala, and second, to assess how social media platforms are shaping the flow of news and information within the state. The research aims to provide insights into the factors influencing news choices, the role of social media in shaping opinions, and the broader implications for the traditional flow of news in the cultural and regional context of Kerala. By focusing on the perspectives of the youth, the study contributes to our understanding of the evolving media landscape in the digital age, offering practical implications for media practitioners, policymakers, and educators in Kerala.

Keywords : Social Media, News Consumption, Youngsters, Digital Media, Information Flow, News Dissemination, Media Influence.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary digital age, the influence of social media on various facets of society has been both profound and transformative. One area that demands meticulous scrutiny is the impact of social media spaces on news consumption, particularly among the youth. This paper delves into the unique sociocultural context of Kerala, a state in southern India renowned for its cultural diversity, high literacy rates, and close-knit communities. Our focus is to empirically examine the intricate relationship between social media spaces and news consumption patterns among the youngsters of Kerala.

• Social media spaces

In the ever-expanding realm of communication and information dissemination, social media spaces have emerged as dynamic platforms that profoundly influence how individuals interact with news and content. These virtual arenas, ranging from popular platforms like Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, and Twitter, to a myriad of messaging apps and online forums, serve as the modern-day public squares where ideas, opinions, and news are shared at an unprecedented pace particularly among the youth of Kerala, social media spaces have become integral to their daily lives, shaping not only their social connections but also playing a pivotal role in shaping their perspectives on current events. This study delves in to the impact of social media spaces on news consumption among the young populace of Kerala, unraveling the intricate dynamics that define the relationship between these platforms and the information seeking behaviors of the demographic. Understanding the nuances of this relationship is crucial for comprehending the evolving media landscape and fostering media literacy in a digital age.

• News consumption

News consumption, a fundamental aspect of societal engagement, has undergone a transformative shift with the advent of social media spaces. Traditional modes of news dissemination, such as television, newspapers, and radio are now accompanied, and often supplanted, by the instantaneous and interactive nature of social media platforms. The analysis of respondents' opinions in this study unveils a nuanced pattern of preferences, with a substantial percentage favoring social media as their primary source of news. As individuals navigate the vast landscape of digital information, the types of news that captivate their interest span a diverse spectrum, including political updates, sports highlights, health information, educational insights, and entertainment news. Unraveling the intricate threads of news consumption on social media is essential not only for understanding the evolving information habits of the younger generation in Kerala but also for gauging the broader implications on media credibility, information reliability, and the societal dynamics influenced by these digital ecosystems.

• Youngsters in Kerala

The study's focus on the youngsters of Kerala brings into sharp relief the distinctive characteristics of demographic that is both shaping and being shaped by the digital age. In the vibrant cultural landscape of Kerala, the youth play a crucial role as early adopters of technological trends, including social media platforms. The state's youngsters, known for their tech-savvy nature, exhibit a discerning approach to news consumption, as evidenced by the significant percentage that favors social media as their primary source of information. Their preferences not only reflect the changing dynamics of media consumption but also highlight the influence of these platforms in molding their perspectives on various societal issues. Understanding the news consumption patterns among the youngsters in Kerala is pivotal not only for recognizing the evolving media landscape but also for tailoring communication strategies and media literacy initiatives to resonate with this dynamic and digitally immersed demographic. The study thus serves as a lens through which to explore the symbiotic relationship between the tech-savvy youth of Kerala and the transformative influence of social media on their information seeking behaviors.

2. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The study aims to provide nuanced insights into the intricate relationship between social media spaces and the well-being of youngsters in Kerala. The finding of the study can contribute to the development of informed policies, interventions and educational programs that address the challenges and harness the potential benefits of social media in the context of Kerala's youth.

3. OBJECTIVES

- To Examine the impact of social media spaces on news consumption among the youngsters of Kerala.
- To examine how social media are affecting the flow of news and information among Kerala.

4. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The study of influence of social media in news habits of Canadians examines the attitudes to the news and news sources of social media by Canadians based on online survey. Researchers found that social media plays an important role in news consumption among Canadians. Respondents opinioned that they valued social media because it keeps up them updated with news and events. (Alfred Hermida, 22 Mar 2012). In the paper titled "Examining news engagement on Facebook: Effects of news content and social networks on news engagement", explains the influence of social media news engagement based on Facebook. This paper studies on news content attributes, social networks, and news engagement on social media. The study reveals that social networking sites play a vital role in news consumption. The respondents used Facebook on average 75 minutes daily for knowing social activities and for news consumption. (Victoria Y Chen, 2020). "Networked Emotional News on Social Media" elaborates news and emotions by studying Facebook reactions (emojis) that were introduced in February 2016. This study discloses that social media readers are emotionally engaged with news. They express their reactions through emojis to the news. Researcher indicates that there is a tendency exists in the selection of social media news based on the number of emojis given to the news. (Ahmed Al-Rawi, 2019) In the paper "News in Social Media, Digital Journalism" investigates how young people get news from their social networking sites, whether it is incidental or deliberate. In addition to this the study looks at the role of friends and followers in social media for news consumption. The findings indicate that mostly young people receive news from social media. The respondents opinioned that they get news feeds on different topics incidentally but also from people in their networks (Annika Bergström & Maria Jervelycke Belfrage, 2018) The study "What's This? Incidental Exposure to News on Social Media, News-Finds-Me Perception, News Efficacy, and News Consumption", examines the influence of social media in news consumption through incidental news exposure. This study also observes the importance of *news-finds-me perception* and *news*

efficacy on social media. The finding reveals that social media users consume news incidentally and also they spend a little time for receiving news from traditional and online media. Another finding of the study brings out that incidental exposure on social media boost up the 'news-finds-me' perception, Chang Sup Park & Barbara K. Kaye (2019).

The paper "News literacy, social media behaviors, and skepticism toward information on social media" describes the correlation between news literacy and news literacy factors which leads into motivations, efficacy, and norms surrounding news literacy, social media habits. Also this paper examines the skepticism toward information on social media. The result of the study finds out that news literacy and related orientations gives out who watch and share information on social media. The person who is more news literate will not look and share much on social media. Besides the news literate persons are skeptic towards the quality of news on social media. So this study recommends that news literate plays a vital role in shaping awareness of information shared online, Emily K. Vraga & Melissa (2019).

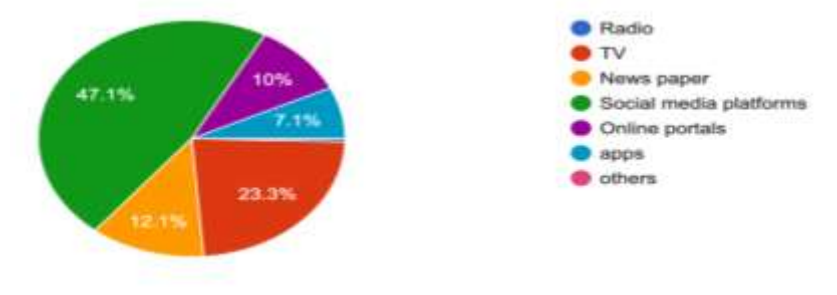
Another study "Online News User Journeys: The Role of Social Media, News Websites, and Topics" delineates online news consumption patterns by analyzing online user behaviour, context features (i.e., the type of website) and content features (i.e., the news topic). In this study researchers utilize automated content analysis and evaluate Markov chains to detect news consumption. The study reveals that news consumers look in on their favourite news portals and read many contents in that portal. Moreover, this study found that entertainment news is most preferred one among them, Susan Vermeer, Damian Trilling, Sanne Kruikemeier & Claes de Vreese (2020). In this study the paper "Viral News on Social Media, Digital Journalism" speaks about the elements that make news viral on social media platforms. The study initiates a mixed model to evaluate viral news, examining previous studies on emotions and on news worthiness. The finding of the study explores that there is always a preference among social media news readers to read and share positive news. Furthermore, the study mention that the most enchanting viral news factors depends on the social significance and unusual happening in the news stories, Ahmed Al-Rawi (2017).

5. METHODOLOGY

A questionnaire survey is employed here to generate the primary sources. Most of the secondary sources are collected from newspapers, and research articles and websites as there are fewer books. A convenient sampling survey is conducted among 240 youngsters across Kerala.

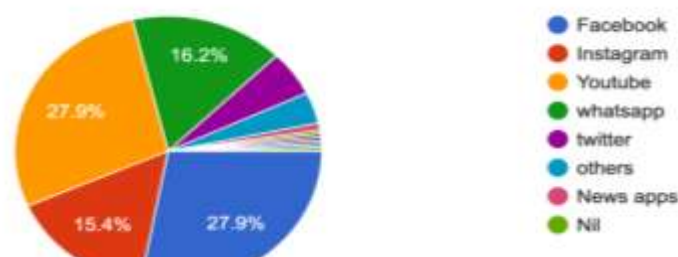
6. ANALYSIS

1. Major source of news consumption



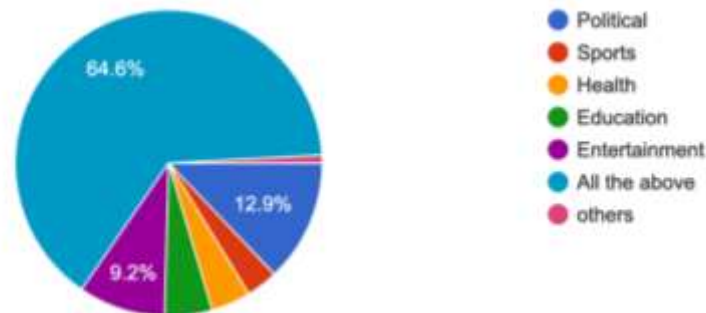
The respondent's opinions are as follows: 47.1% of the youngsters of Kerala opined that they are using social media platforms for consuming news. 23.3% of the youngsters opined that they use television for consuming news. 12.1% of the youngsters opined that they are using Newspaper for consuming news. 10% of the youngsters opined that they are using Online news portals for consuming news. 7.1% of the youngsters opined that they are using Apps for consuming news. 0.4% are using radio for consuming news.

2. Favourite social media platform for consuming news.



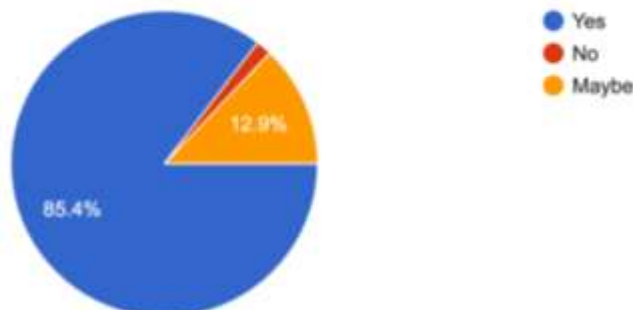
27.9% of the respondents opined that their favourite social media platform for consuming news is Facebook while other 27.9% of the respondents opined that their favourite social media platform for consuming news is Youtube.16.2% of the respondents opined that their favourite social media platform for consuming news is whatsapp.15.4% of the respondents opined that their favourite social media platform for consuming news is Instagram. 5.4% of the respondents opined that they use Twitter for consuming news.

3.Type of news like to know more through social media platforms.



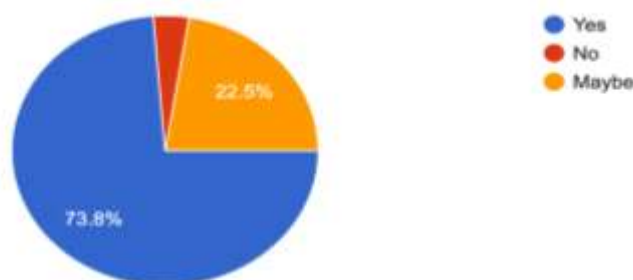
64.6% of the respondents' types of news they would like to know through social media platforms are Political, Sports, Health, Education and Entertainment. 12.9% of the respondents opined that they prefer to know more political news through social media platforms while 9.2% of the youngsters opined that they would like to get more entertainment news through social media platforms.5% of the respondents opined that they would like to know more educational news through social media platfroms.4.2% of the respondents opined that they would like to know more Health news through social media platforms.3.3% of the respondents opined that they prefer to know more spots news

4. Social media platforms help to know the news.



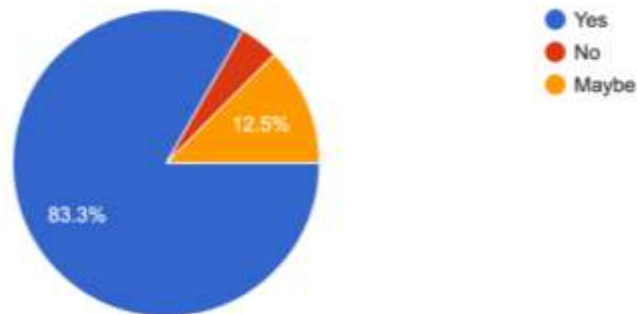
85.4% of the respondents opined that social media platforms helps them to know the news while 12.9% opined that social media platforms may be help them to know the news. 1.7% of the respondents opined that social media platforms do not help them know the news.

5. Social media helps as an entry point to access news.



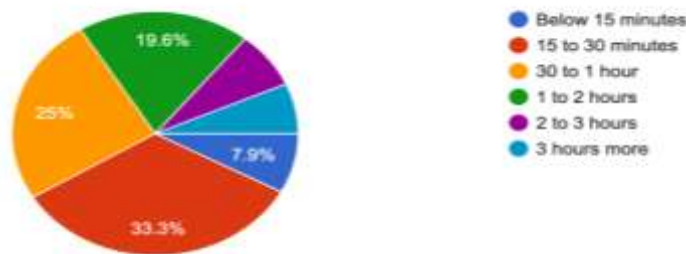
73.8% of the respondents opined that social media helps as an entry point to access news. 22.5% of the respondents opined social media may be as an entry point to access news while 3.7% of the respondents opined that social media platforms do not help them as an entry point to access news.

6. Social media news consumption is increasing daily.



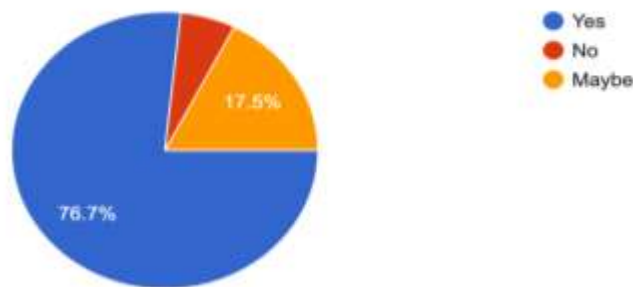
83.3% the respondents opined that social media news consumption is increasing daily. 12.5% of the respondents opined 'May be' to this question. Only 4.2% of the respondents opined that social media news consumption is not increasing daily.

7. Time spends on social media for knowing news in a day.



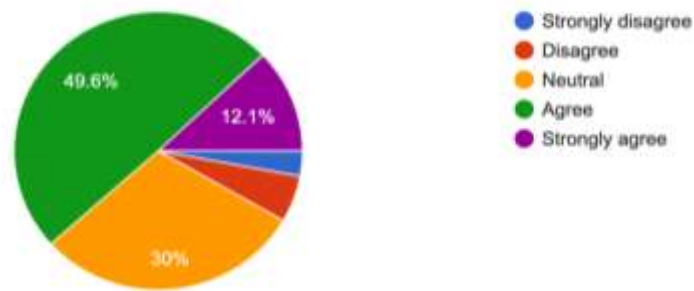
33.3% of the respondents opined that they spend 15 to 30 minutes on social media for knowing daily news. 25% of the respondents spend 30 to 1 hour for daily news consumption on social media platforms. 19.6% of the respondents spend 1 to 2 hours for social media news consumption.

8. Social media keeps updated with news and events.



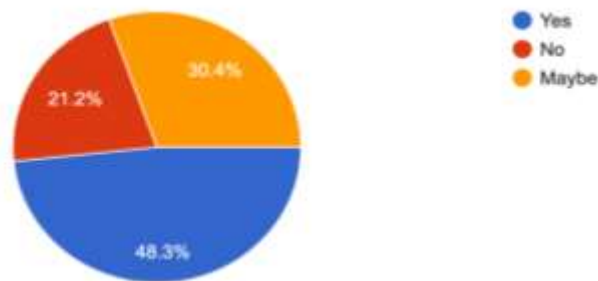
76.7% of the respondents opined that social media keeps them updated with news and events. 17.5% of the respondents opined 'may be' to this question and only 5.8% of the respondents opined 'No' to this question.

9. Television channels are shifting their daily updates to social media timely in order to get more views.



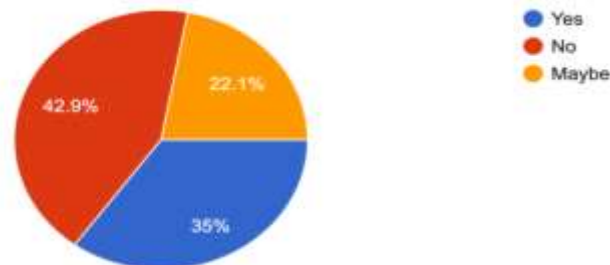
49.6% of the respondents opined that television channels are shifting their daily updates to social media timely in order to get more views. 30% of the respondents opined 'neutral' to this question. 12.1% of the respondents strongly agreed to this question. 5.4% of the respondents disagreed to this question. 2.9% of the respondents strongly disagreed to this question.

10. Share the news appeared in the social media platform



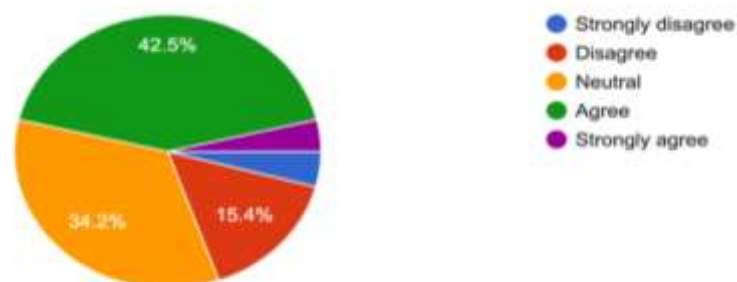
48.3% of the respondents opined that they share the news appeared in the social media platform. 30.4% of the respondents opined 'Maybe' to this question while 21.2% of the respondents opined 'No' to this question.

11. Emojis to express your reactions to social media news



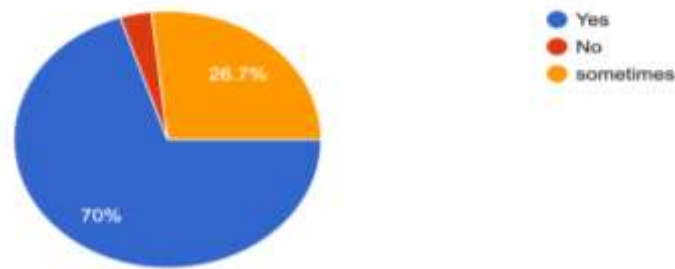
42.9% of the respondents opined that they do not use emoji to express their reactions to social media news while 35% of the respondents opined that they use Emoji to express their reactions to social media news. 22.1% of the respondents opined 'May be' to this question.

12. Important news is automatically given in social media page.



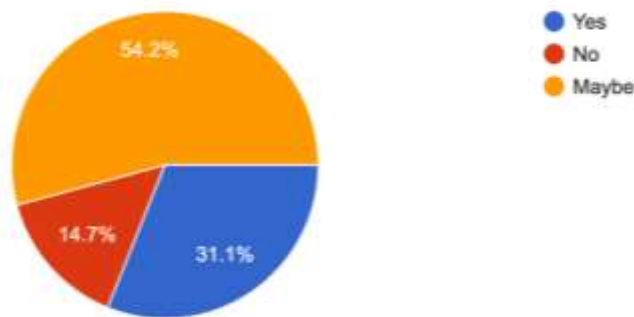
42.5% of the respondents agreed that important news is automatically given in social media page. 34.2% of the respondents remained Neutral to this question while 15.4% of the respondents disagreed to this question. 4.2% of the respondents strongly disagreed to this question. 3.7% of the respondents strongly agreed to this question.

13. Social media are becoming a medium for sharing and recommending news to friends, family and others.



70% of the respondents opined that social media are becoming a medium for sharing and recommending news to friends and family and others. 26.7% of the respondents opined 'Sometimes' to this question. Only 3.3% of the respondents opined 'No' to this question.

14. Believe in the reliability of the news of social media platforms



54.2% of the respondents opined that they 'May be' believing in the reliability of the news of social media platforms while 31.1% of the respondents opined that they believe in the reliability of the news of social media platforms. Only 14.7% of the respondents opined 'No' to this question.

7. CONCLUSION

The objective of this study was to examine the impact of social media spaces on news consumption among the youngsters of Kerala and to understand how social media are affecting the flow of news and information in the region. The analysis reveals several key findings that shed light on the preferences, behaviors, and perceptions of the respondents.

The study indicates that a significant proportion of youngsters in Kerala, 47.1%, prefer using social media platforms for consuming news, surpassing traditional sources such as television (23.3%), newspapers (12.1%), and online news portal (10%). Facebook and YouTube emerge as the leading social media platforms for news consumption, each garnering 27.9% of the respondents' preferences. The types of news that attract the most interest include political, sports, health, education, and entertainment.

Furthermore, the majority of the respondents (85.4%) believe that social media platforms help them stay informed, with 73.8% considering social media as an entry point to access news. The analysis also indicates a trend of increasing daily news consumption on social media, with 83.3% of respondents stating that their social media news consumption is on the rise.

Interestingly, the study highlights the role of social media in facilitating news sharing and recommendation, as 70% of respondents see social media as a medium for sharing news with friends and family. However, there is a mixed perception regarding the reliability of news on social media, with 54.2% expressing a belief in its reliability, 31.1% fully trusting it, and 1.7% remaining skeptical.

Overall, these findings underscore the evolving landscape of news consumption among the youth in Kerala, with social media playing a pivotal role in shaping their information preferences and behaviors. As social media continue to grow as a primary source of news, it is essential for media organizations, policymakers, and

educators to understand and adapt to these changing dynamics to ensure a well informed and media literate society.

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