

SOCIAL MEDIA CONSUMPTION AND SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT: A STUDY ON PG STUDENTS OF MANIPUR

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Abstract: In an age when social media is fast replacing TV, radio and print, media consumption scenario solely dwells on social media especially for the youths. Social media not only delivers news about friends but also the mainstream journalistic news from the apps one subscribes to. Besides this, its interactive platform facilitates social engagement activities among the adults. Hence media consumption and digestion pattern takes a new dimension. This paper examines the influence of social media consumption on civic engagement especially on youths who are post graduate. Univariate analysis on Social media consumption pattern are categorize into low, medium and high users. Civic engagement activities, online and offline, has covered involvement in activities on community programs, political participation and social issues. Bivariate analysis is conducted between media consumption index and different civic engagement activities. The outcome of the study is that here is no relevance of time devoted in SNS and the degree of their involvement in civic engagement activity. FB users in some way are involved in many community / social related programs and issues. But in many cases, a fair number of them do not participate in it like in the cases of political rallies, public rallies and volunteering services. The study has given a new insight into how social media can promote a democratically desirable attitudes and behaviour for a strong civil society to enable political institutions and authorities accountable in a democratic country.

Key words: media consumption, civic engagement, civil society, community programs.

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Introduction:

We live a life soaked in a media world. We are informed, entertained, provoked, enticed, and empowered by a variety of pieces of fabric of media. Not to leave the social media which is an interactive media, it has given a platform to coerce, enforce, build a strong network among like-minded people to share, to build community oriented enterprises. The idea of civic engagement comes fervent and comes an active visible step in case of social media users in many instances. This is not a denying fact that media is a powerful tool in shaping the worldview of an individual mind. The interesting aspect is understanding the influence of media, the uses of media in shaping the minds of people, invoking the spirit of civic engagement through collective action. The universal aspiration of a better world we habitate and making it a reality can be linked with hands of media to some extent. The study can explore the pattern of media consumption among adults and its relevance in social engagements. There is no dearth of community issues or areas which can be worked out or placed in a better position than before with participatory activities among the civic members.

Media users in this context can be assumed as individuals who are embedded in a social context that influence their lives, their patterns of action and their media use. Audience study has shown in the past that media use is a part of self-gratifying process, an integral part of everyday life, a routine response to recurring problems like boredom, relaxation and entertainment. At the same time individuals use media for surveillance, personal identity construction, social relationship and information acquisition. When people use media for information acquisition especially hard news, there is no a denying fact that he is positive about his individual-level production of social capital and participation. Media especially social media can promote democratically desirable attitudes and behaviour when individuals use sites to keep up with the news about public affairs or about their community. Consequently, it fosters a strong civil society and makes political institutions and officials more responsive making authorities accountable. Civic engagements like volunteering for a cause, attending public rallies, working on community programmes and offline/online political participation show unavoidable relationship with individual media use. The impact can be in fostering strong civil society seeking to influence government action and policymaking translating into effective political system. Discourses like talking, discussing,

debating, deliberating online/offline on issues on local as well as national and international are a part of media effect or a facet of media.

The ubiquity and inconspicuous nature of media has deeply ingrained in what we take for granted as the essential component of contemporary experience. Living in an increasingly mediated world, the relationship between the consumption of media and shaping of individual lives and in turn, inducing change the facet of society through media, by media is a significant study. The confrontation and transition of society as evident in media or as a consequent of people's social activism, political engagements needs to portray in a bigger frame. The study on the centrality of the characteristics of social media consumption among youths and its relevance to civic engagement, political activism is in fact a test on the state of progressive democracy.

The profusion of the media today, with new imaginations, new choices and contradictions generate a critical condition for reflexivity, engaging everyday people to have a resource for the learning of self, culture and society in a new light. Media culture is creating new connections, new desires and threats, and the identities of people are being reworked at individual, national, regional and global levels. The multiple manifestations of such transformations on society are under discussion.

Review of literature:

It is a fact that internet is fast becoming an embedded part of adult's world as well as a key domain of political interaction and communication in the present day world. Young people are often at the core of rising alternate forms of civic engagements and voice expressions, culture jamming and 'subvertising'(such as the AdBusters movement); flash-mobbing and impromptu protests; virtual networks spilling over to offline communities; the rise of citizen-reporters through blogging, vlogs and podcasts, online petitions, charity sites and other causes such as natural disaster aid. In the Pew Internet and American Life Project's study of online content creation, Lenhart et al., (2004) find that young people are the most dynamic and creative group online; they largely comprise what is known as the 'power creators'. Moreover, Coleman and Rowe (2005) find that it is not young people that are disconnected from formal politics, but political institutions that are disconnected from young people'. These young people , through

practices such as sampling and remixing, are building their own culture online. Dahlgren like many others (e.g. Bakardjieva 2009, Castells 2012, Lievrouw 2012) speaks of the emerging (and more informal) modes of civic participation, discussing the role of the new media in these novel activities and a changing political culture. Because democratic participation involves more than media access and interactivity. There happens optimistic visions of empowering minor political groups and transforming power relations, new media do also have something more to offer in the offering. They can help citizens and civil society organisations (in a number of events) attain their social objectives (for example, the anti-globalisation and Occupy protests, the Arab Spring).

Discursive participation and public deliberation, and arguably related forms of civic and political engagement such as voting, volunteering, protesting, and direct public problem solving through community engagements cannot be denied without the citizen's collective engagement with media. The community's social capital will increase as people bring deliberation to their civic activities (Fishkin 1995; Putnam 2000). The legitimacy of the constitutional order will grow because people have a say in and an understanding of that order (Chambers 1996; Gutmann & Thompson 1996). To cut short, citizen's deliberation especially on the part of youths is an exercise of empathy with each other and a broadened sense of people's own interests of a well defined democratic, egalitarian, open-minded and reciprocal process of reasoned argumentation. This is a way to bring the citizens more enlightened about their own and others' needs and experiences. It paves a better way to resolve deep conflict, people become more engaged in politics, place their faith in the basic tenets of democracy, perceive their political system as legitimate, and lead a healthier civic life. Hence an overall improvement in social capital in the social structure is come up. The focus on individual reason of viewing, initiation, but also on social influence might also be a part of civic engagement. Media especially social media can promote democratically desirable attitudes and behaviour when individuals use sites to keep up with the news about public affairs or about their community. Consequently, it fosters a strong civil society and makes political institutions and officials more responsive making authorities accountable.

Conceptual framework:

A study on social media consumption and civic engagement can highlight meaningful picture of a democratic society. In an age when social media becomes a major media in of our lives especially for youths, its implication in our personal life as well as social and political life is overwhelming. Younger generation, especially the adults who are considered as solid foundation of nation comprises the greatest pool of potential for bringing change in the society. Their involvement in social activities can foster a strong civil society, make political institutions and officials more responsive thereby making authorities accountable. Civic engagements like volunteering for a cause, attending public rallies, working on community programmes and offline/online political participation have unavoidable relationship with individual's media use. The impact can be in fostering strong civil society seeking to influence government action and policymaking translating into effective political system. There is no gainsaying that discourses like talking, discussing, debating, deliberating online/offline on issues on local as well as national and international are a part of media effect.

Their media consumption pattern comes up as an antecedent to their reflexive social participatory activities. The framework of the study will revolve round social media using patterns and their response and engagement in social embedded activities- political and social.

Aims and objectives of the study: the study will have the following specific objectives.

1. To find out how much time they devote on facebook. From the amount of time they use facebook, the audience will be categorized as heavy user, moderate users and low users.
2. To find out whether there is a relationship between facebook usage and their involvement in community programs of the neighbourhood. Programs like public rallies, cleanliness drive, blood donation camps, tree plantation etc. will be covered.
3. To find out whether there is a relationship between Facebook usage and their involvement in political affairs of the state. Participation in political rallies, discussion on governmental policy programmes, political parties and political figures will be covered.
4. To find out whether there is a relationship between facebook usage and consequent involvement in social issues of the society. Issues on violence against women, issues on corruption in society and ethnic conflicts will be explored.

Research Methodology:

Survey method will be employed. Questionnaires have been employed to collect the data

The media variables include time spent on social media., especially Facebook. Other dependent variables will revolve round civic engagement activities.

Sampling:

The study will cover on the present post graduate students of Manipur.

Method of sampling: It will cover students from different universities and post graduate colleges of Manipur.

Sample size: 174

Analytic Strategy:

The research strategy is designed keeping in view of the objectives enumerated.

The analytic strategy is to examine the relationship between media variable and the adult's civic engagements viz: community activities, political activities and involvement in social issues.

Data Analysis:

1. Amount of time devoted on FB

	Frequency	Percent	Mean	Mode	Std Deviation
Less than 45 min. a day	52	29.9			
46 min to 1.5 hrs a day	68	39.1	2.01	2	0.783
More than 1.5 hrs. a day	54	31.0			
Total	174	100.0			

Analysis: 39% of the post graduate students are found to be moderate users of social networking sites especially FB. They devote 46min to 1.5 hrs daily on an average. Around 30 % of the PG students each use FB daily less than 45 min. Another 30% use FB 1.5 hr to 3hrs daily on an average.

Table No.2: Participation as a part of volunteering team for raising a social cause online/offline

		FB users			Total (%)	Chi-square value (P-value)
		Low (%)	Moderate (%)	High (%)		
participation	Never	28 (53.85)	37 (54.41)	34 (62.96)	99 (56.90)	1.634 (0.803)
	Sometimes	20 (38.46)	25 (36.76)	15 (27.78)	60 (34.48)	
	Most of the times	4 (7.69)	6 (8.82)	5 (9.26)	15 (8.62)	
	Total	52 (100.00)	68 (100.00)	54 (100.00)	174 (100.00)	

Analysis: In the analysis of participation in the volunteering team for raising social cause, more or less the same volume of low users and moderate users of PG students had never participated in such an activity. Around 5% each of the there categories of FB users are found that they had participated most of the time in the volunteering work for raising social cause.

The chi square test shows that there is no relevance between heavy users, low users moderate users of FB and their involvement in the volunteering work for raising social cause.

Table-3: Attending public rallies

Participation	FB users				Chi-square (P-value)
	Low (%)	Moderate (%)	High (%)	Total (%)	
never	35 (67.31)	46 (67.65)	33 (61.11)	114 (65.52)	1.499 (0.96)
sometimes	16 (30.77)	20 (29.41)	19 (35.19)	55 (31.61)	
most of the time	1 (1.92)	1 (1.47)	1 (1.85)	3 (1.72)	
always	-	1 (1.47)	1 (1.85)	2 (1.15)	
Total	52 (100.00)	68 (100.00)	54 (100.00)	174 (100.00)	

Analysis: In the analysis of participation of public rallies, more than 60% of each of the three categories of FB users are found that they had never participated in this activity. 1% each of the category had participated in it sometimes. Another 1% each of the heavy users and moderate users have participated always.

The chi square test shows that there is no relevance between heavy users, low users moderate users and their involvement in the activity of public rallies.

Table-4: Participation in community programs like cleanliness drive, blood donation camp, tree plantation etc.

Participation	FB users				Chi-square (P-value)
	Low (%)	Moderate (%)	High (%)	Total (%)	
never	20 (39.22)	31 (46.27)	18 (33.33)	69 (40.12)	5.773 (0.449)

sometimes	22 (43.14)	21 (31.34)	22 (40.74)	65 (37.79)	
most of the time	5 (9.80)	11 (16.42)	12 (22.22)	28 (16.28)	
always	4 (7.84)	4 (5.97)	2 (3.70)	10 (5.81)	
Total	51 (100.00)	67 (100.00)	54 (100.00)	172 (100.00)	

Analysis: In the analysis of participation in community programs like cleanliness drive, blood donation etc, more than 33% of each categories have never participated in it, the highest among them occurs among the moderate users (46%). More than 5% of the low and moderate users have always participated in it. Around 3% of the high users have participated the program always.

The chi square test shows that there is no relevance between heavy users, low users moderate users and their involvement in this activity.

Table-5: Participation in political rallies during election

Participation	FB users				Chi-Square (P-value)
	Low (%)	Moderate (%)	High (%)	Total (%)	
never	30 (57.69)	35 (51.47)	20 (37.04)	85 (48.85)	14.799 (15.799)
sometimes	9 (17.31)	15 (22.06)	22 (40.74)	46 (26.44)	
most of the time	13 (25.00)	12 (17.65)	10 (18.52)	35 (20.11)	
always	-	6 (8.82)	2 (3.70)	8 (4.60)	
Total	52 (100.00)	68 (100.00)	54 (100.00)	174 (100.00)	

Analysis: In the analysis of participation in political rallies, more than 50% of the low and moderate users have never participated in this activity. 37% of the high users have also never participated in it. 3% of the high users and 8% of the moderate users have always participated in political rallies.

The chi square test shows that there is no relevance between heavy users, low users, moderate users and their involvement in this activity.

Table-6: Voicing for / against political parties/figures

Participation	FB users				Chi-square P-value
	Low %	Moderate %	High %	Total %	
never	2 (3.85)	13 (19.12)	8 (14.81)	23 (13.22)	9.647 (0.142)
sometimes	27 (51.92)	27 (39.71)	28 (51.85)	82 (47.13)	
most of the time	20 (38.46)	20 (29.41)	13 (24.07)	53 (30.46)	
always	3 (5.77)	8 (11.76)	5 (9.26)	16 (9.20)	
Total	52 (100.00)	68 (100.00)	54 (100.00)	174 (100.00)	

Analysis: In the activity of voicing against political parties or political figures, it is found that 50% of low users and the high users each have voiced it sometimes. 3% of low users and 5% of high users have always voiced against it. Around 25-38% of each category of FB users have voiced most of the time.

The chi square test shows that there is no relevance between heavy users, low users moderate users and their involvement in this activity.

Table-7: Discussion of policy/ programs of political parties online/offline

Participation	FB users				Chi-square P-value
	Low %	Moderate %	High %	Total %	
never	5 (9.62)	3 (4.41)	2 (3.70)	10 (5.75)	3.767 (0.708)
sometimes	21 (40.38)	35 (51.47)	28 (51.85)	84 (48.28)	
most of the time	23 (44.23)	28 (41.18)	21 (38.89)	72 (41.38)	
always	3 (5.77)	2 (2.94)	3 (5.56)	8 (4.60)	
Total	52 (100.00)	68 (100.00)	54 (100.00)	174 (100.00)	

Analysis: In the analysis of involvement of discussion of policy/ program of political parties, 40-50% of all categories discuss it sometimes. 40% of them discuss it most of the time. 5% of the low and high users discuss it always.

The chi- square test shows that there is no relevance between heavy users, low users, moderate users and their involvement in this activity.

Table-8: Discussion about violence against women

Participation	FB users				Chi-square P-value
	Low %	Moderate %	High %	Total %	
never	1 (1.92)	2 (2.94)	4 (7.41)	7 (4.02)	5.962 (0.202)
sometimes	34 (65.38)	52 (76.47)	32 (59.26)	118 (67.82)	
most of the time	17 (32.69)	14 (20.59)	18 (33.33)	49 (28.16)	
Total	52 (100.00)	68 (100.00)	54 (100.00)	174 (100.00)	

Analysis: In the Analysis of the discussion about violence against women, 60% or more of all the FB users have discussed it sometimes. Very less no.of peopleie. 2% have never discussed it. More than 20% of all categories discuss it most of the time.

The chi square test shows that there is no relevance between heavy users, low users, moderate users and their involvement in this activity.

Table-9: Voicing against the issue of corruption in society

Participation	FB users				Chi-square P-value
	Low %	Moderate %	High %	Total %	
never	0 (0.00)	3 (4.41)	1 (1.85)	4 (2.30)	6.715 (0.152)
sometimes	32 (61.54)	51 (75.00)	36 (66.67)	119 (68.39)	
most of the time	20 (38.46)	14 (20.59)	17 (31.48)	51 (29.31)	
Total	52 (100.00)	68 (100.00)	54 (100.00)	174 (100.00)	

Analysis: In the analysis of issue of voicing against corruption in the society, no low users of FB have voiced against corruption. 60% and more of the all categories of users have voiced against it sometimes.

The chi square test shows that there is no relevance between heavy users, low users moderate users and their involvement in this activity.

Table-10: Discussion about ethnic conflicts

Participation	FB users				Chi-square P-value
	Low %	Moderate %	High %	Total %	
never	0 (0.00)	2 (2.94)	1 (1.85)	3 (1.72)	2.161 (0.706)
sometimes	39 (75.00)	47 (69.12)	36 (66.67)	122 (70.11)	
most of the time	13 (25.00)	19 (27.94)	17 (31.48)	49 (28.16)	
Total	52 (100.00)	68 (100.00)	54 (100.00)	174 (100.00)	

Analysis: In the analysis of discussion about ethnic conflicts, a very less no. of people have never discussed it. More than 65% of all categories have discussed it sometimes.

The chi square test shows that there is no relevance between heavy users, low users, moderate users and their involvement in this activity.

Findings:

Despite of using social networking sites, huge or little time they devote on it, the study gives the result that there is no relevance of time devoted in SNS and the degree of their involvement in civic engagement activity.

FB users in some way are involved in many community / social related programs and issues. but in many cases, a fair number of them do not participate in it like in the cases of political rallies, public rallies and volunteering services.

Conclusions:

The profusion of the media today, with new imaginations, new choices and contradictions has generated a critical condition for reflexivity, engaging everyday people to have a resource for the learning of self, culture and society in a new light. Media culture is creating new connections,

new desires and threats, and the identities of people are being reworked at individual, national, regional and global levels. The multiple manifestations of such transformations on society are worth discussion.

Living in an increasingly mediated world, the relationship between the consumption of media and shaping of individual lives and in turn, inducing change the facet of society through media, by media is a significant study.

The confrontation and transition of society as evident in media or as a consequent of people's social activism or political engagements needs to portray in a bigger frame.

The study on the centrality of the characteristics of media consumption among youths and its relevance to civic engagement, political activism is in fact a test on the state of progressive democracy

This study has analysed the consequences of social media consumption in everyday lives' of adults in Manipur at a time when the political, socio-economic and cultural forces by which the media operate are rapidly globalizing and confronting innumerable socio-cultural ethnic issues.

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