



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CREATIVE RESEARCH THOUGHTS (IJCRT)

An International Open Access, Peer-reviewed, Refereed Journal

‘Use of Social Media: Exploring Research Experiences of the Naga Scholars at Interdisciplinary Level’

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Abstract:

Social media is dominating our lives in the contemporary times. It has already penetrated in almost every organization, be it business, entertainment, universities, etc. It is giving people the power to share, access and communicate with one another across the globe. The use of social media today is not limited only to professionals in other areas but has been widely used now in educational sectors by the students, scholars and teachers. With the coming of social media, Naga researchers today are utilizing the different social media tools not for personal communication purpose but also for research communication. The study is expected to provide clarity on how social media is having impact in the lives of the Naga scholars, which may further provide better understanding on the different experiences of using social media by the Naga scholars from across interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary studies. The study would help in understanding and analyzing how social media tools are benefitting the scholars, understand how it is helping them for research communication and also their experiences on the use of social media tools in teaching-learning.

Keywords: Social Media, Scholars, Research Communication, Tools, Interdisciplinary, Multidisciplinary, Teaching-Learning, Web 2.0.

Introduction

The use of social media platform has become an integral part of millions of people's life in the contemporary times, where people communicate with others; share one's ideas, opinions, and innovative creations. Social media today has become a powerful tool for sharing of information and creating awareness about anything and everything around us. Social media is actually an outcome of Web 2.0. **Wikipedia** refers Web 2.0 as websites that emphasize user-generated content, ease of use, participatory culture and interoperability for end users. The term was invented by Darcy DiNucci in 1999 and later popularized by Tim O'Reilly and Dale Dougherty at the O'Reilly Media Web 2.0 Conference in late 2004. Web 2.0 enables users to generate their own contents thus enabling interactivity between the user and the websites. **Anderson, P, (2007)**, also refer "Web 2.0" as technologies that allow individuals to interactively participate with information and with other individuals, and to build networks based on mutual personal or professional interest. Web 2.0 facilitates social networking, therefore, is also referred to as the social media.

Anamika, (2016), further stated that the Web 2.0 heralded an unprecedented phenomenon of social networking through engaging websites such as Wikipedia, Facebook, Flickr and Tweeter. If Web 1.0 was all about information storage, Web 2.0 was about information sharing. Web 2.0 is basically a shift for state models on information exchange to a dynamic one. Since the academy too is about the exchange of knowledge and information, it was natural for the changes in the web to start reflecting in the academic systems of information exchange. **Sadhya Aggrawal (2016)**, opined that the term social media will fade away and become mass media from 25 years. It is also stated that “social media in future will become part of the fabric of our clothes, part of the glasses we wear and the shoes we put on and the gadgets we no longer see as gadgets but part of our very selves” said Sadhya Aggrawal.

The use of social media in education provides students and scholars with the ability to get more useful information, to connect with learning groups and other educational systems that make education convenient. Social network tools also provide students, researchers and institutions with varieties of opportunities to improve learning methods and skills. Initially, when social media was launched, many people looked at social media as an addictive tool for wasting time or with much negativity. However, the manner in which social media is making our communication mode easier in so many different ways, it is today is changing the attitude of the people from negative to positive. Many changes in teaching methods in higher education have changed over the last few decades, where the emphasis is more on student-centred pedagogy. Hence, there is more expectation on the role of technology for bridging the gaps to harness effective teaching-learning.

With the coming of social media as a useful tool, many Naga researchers today are utilizing different social media tools not only for personal communication but also for research communication, or sharing and access to information resources. The word ‘Naga’ used here is a generic term that refers to a group of over thirty tribes inhabiting not only in Nagaland but also some hilly region of the states of Manipur, Assam and Arunachal Pradesh and some parts of Myanmar. **Wikipedia**, defined scholar as person who pursues academic and intellectual activities, particularly those that develop expertise in an area of study. Therefore, the word Naga scholars used here means Nagas who works as teachers or researcher at a university or other higher education institution.

Since, no such studies have been conducted concerning social media usage by Naga scholars; the present study can be stated as a significant one. The study will throw lights on having better understanding on the experiences of the Naga scholars who are engaged in academic activities at interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary studies in different universities across India. The study can provide clarity on how social media impacting their lives. Hence, the present study can provide better understanding on the different experiences of using social media by the Naga scholars from across interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary in the following ways: the use of different social media tools, how social media tools benefits the scholars community, understand how social media tools are helping them in their research communication and analyze their attitude towards use of social media tools for teaching learning. In recent times, it is observed that social media has penetrated almost every organizations, which also include higher education. In fact, the rise of social media gives many opportunities for universities to adopt it to further their teaching-learning experiences

Use of social media:

Dave Chaffey (2020), as per the latest survey, says social media users are now spending an average of 2 hours and 24 minutes per day multinetworking across an average of 8 social networks and messaging apps. **Vijay Kumar Bharati1 and M.P. Singh (2018)** in their study on use of social networking sites found that 70% to 90% of the research scholars are using Facebook, whatsapp and YouTube. The study also revealed that at least 95% PG student are using Whatsapp followed by 68% Facebook and 47% YouTube. **Dave Chaffey (2020)**, in his study on global social media research summary 2020 came up with the latest findings of social media users across the globe. It says, as of Jan 2020, there are more than 4.5 billion internet users across the globe and out of which 3.8 billion are social media users. This mark an increasing number by

more than 9 percent (321 million new users) as compared from 2019 study. With this statistics, it can be assumed that by the end of 2020, more than 50% of world's total population will be social media users. **S.Renuka (2017)**, did a research on usage of internet and came up with finding that student uses online websites to connect with only with their friends but also with their professors for sharing their ideas and clarify their doubts. The study came up with an impressive finding that the use of internet by students in more related to academic purposes rather than personal purpose.

Inclusion of Social Media at University:

Inspirationfeed, mentioned Singapore is a perfect example of a country who recognizes the importance of technology which is seen in the growing number of universities in Singapore that are integrating studies of social media marketing with their Executive 'Masters Programs'. This transition's goal is to help students meet the challenges of social media as well as how to benefit from this new medium of marketing and communication. Aventis School of Management, which is leading business school in Singapore, offers Professional Graduate Certificate in Social Media Marketing. It is specially designed for executives who want to fully understand the nuances of this radically different form of corporate communication. **University of Florida (UF)** today offers Master of Arts in Mass Communication with a specialization in social media which is a 36 credit hour program consisting of 12 credits of core social media courses, nine credits of core mass communication credits, nine elective credit hours, four practicum credit hours, one professional development credit hour, and a three-credit capstone featuring a real client. **Inspirationfeed**, it is again stated that there are number of schools in USA which offers programmes in social media, for example, the University of Washington offers Master of Communication in Digital Media, University of San Francisco offers Advanced Social Media Marketing Certificate, Southern New Hampshire University offers MBA in Social Media Marketing, and so many others. In terms of time spent by web users, social media websites and blogs are topping the list, with online games and instant messaging services following their lead.

Benefits of Social Media:

Stefan Stieger (2019), social networking sites (SNS), such as Facebook, attract millions of users worldwide by offering highly interactive social communications. Although this has many advantages, previous research has suggested there are also drawbacks (e.g., stalking, addiction, invasion of privacy). The question, therefore, arises as to whether Facebook – currently the largest social network – makes us more satisfied with our lives. **Jessica Roger (2019)**, Social media is an omnipresent part of everyday life. It provides users with an easy way to engage and connect with others without meeting face-to-face. This form of communication provides a lot opportunity for companies and individuals to reach a massive audience. **Brad McKenna et al (2017)**, looked at the potential using social media in qualitative research in information systems. It discusses some of the challenges of using social media in information systems and suggests how qualitative study in information system researchers can design their studies by capitalizing the data available on social media. **Mattessich, P, Murray (2001)**, says another vital benefit of social media is that they foster collaboration. Collaboration means working together jointly, intellectually, and socially to achieve common goals. Within an online learning community, collaboration refers to any instructional method in which students work together in groups towards a common goal. As such, collaborative learning can be viewed as encompassing all group-based instructional methods, including cooperative learning. **Jones V. F. & Jones, L. (1981)**, opined understanding the students' problems, fear, or confusion will help faculty better understand students' learning difficulties. The more connected the teachers are to their students, the more likely they are able to help students learn quickly and at a high level.

Social Media in Teaching-Learning:

The use of social media in higher education is changing the nature of the relationships of learners and teachers. Social media provides a unique stage for interaction amongst students and teachers and amongst students themselves. Through social media, students find it easy as well as convenient to communicate, access information, and to provide information. Studies have shown that in the recent years academics have

been expanding their social media usage to offer after-hours support for students, deliver and host lectures, disseminate information and engage in discussion. The use of social media has also demonstrated increased teacher-student and student-student interaction. With social media, students also become adept at the use of online technologies in learning environments. Studies have indicated that the use of social media in higher education has enhanced learning, increased participation and engagement, improved content dissemination and improved pedagogy and information sharing.

Simeon Edosomwan (2011), in his study stated that social media forum acts as a powerful way to communicate the brand value and brand attribute as they facilitate open forms of communication in situations like: promote open communication, helps in sharing knowledge and experience, helps to communicate collaboratively between current and potential customers, in receiving feedback. **Wasim Ahmed (2019)**, stated Twitter remains the most popular platform for academic research, as it still provides its data via a number of Application Programming Interfaces (API). In contrast, the aftermath of the Cambridge analytica 'data breach' has led to certain social media platforms to limit data provided through their Application Programming Interfaces. However, although, it may not be possible to get data from all social media platforms, it is still possible to conduct qualitative and quantitative research such as interviews and surveys, with members of online communities.

Social media continues to transform pedagogy and can be used to support learning and teaching activities that were traditionally confined to classrooms. The use of social media in higher education presents many challenges but its importance cannot be ignored. Research has established that a majority of academics are of the perception that social media may be employed successfully in supporting the provision of student-centered learning approach. With the usage of social media, students no longer continue to remain passive absorbers of knowledge but become co-producers and contributors. In the current educational environment, learning has become more of a social process and the use of social media strengthens that process.

The use of social media, like in many other areas, is here to stay in higher education settings too. What needs to be worked out is how higher education institutions globally continue to embrace social media to their own benefit. **Ritesh Chugh**, opined, the rapid rise of social media provides numerous possibilities for higher education institutions to adopt it to further their learning and teaching endeavors. The ubiquity and unusually high uptake of social media makes it suitable for administrators, managers, learners and teachers in higher education institutions too. **Lee Andrew Dunn (2010)**, also talks about how the technology is used and how it is integrated into the learning process is important. Zepke and Leach (2010), suggest that motivation and student dispositions will influence their ability to engage in interactive learning. **Ritesh Chugh**, mentioned, in the current educational environment, learning has become more of a social process and the use of social media strengthens that process. The use of social media, like in many other areas, is here to stay in higher education settings too. What needs to be worked out is how higher education institutions globally continue to embrace social media to their own benefit. **Volery, T & Lord, D (2000)**, also talk about that there is increasing trend that online learning platforms are becoming more important. And these online learning platforms comprehensive to functions to teaching learning.

Research questions:

The present study will find answer to the following research questions:

RQ.1: What is the popularity and usage of social media tools by scholars?

RQ.2: What is the level of dependency on social media tools by scholars?

RQ.3: In what way social media tools are benefiting the scholars?

RQ.4: What are the purposes for which scholars are dependent on social media tools?

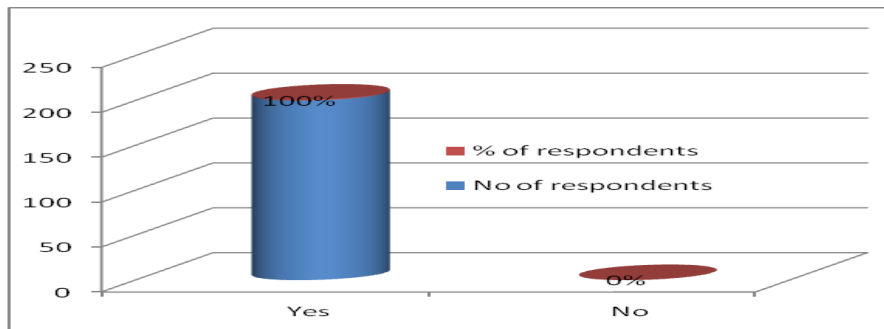
RQ.5: What are the attitudes of the scholars in using of social media tools for teaching-learning experience?

Methodology:

The present study is based on a case study among Naga scholars who are teaching and doing research in different colleges and universities across India. For the purpose of the study, both primary and secondary sources were used. The study used an unstructured open ended questionnaire with an in-depth interview for achieving the objectives mentioned in the study. Sample size was 100 across multidiscipline ranging from science, social sciences, humanities and environmental sciences.

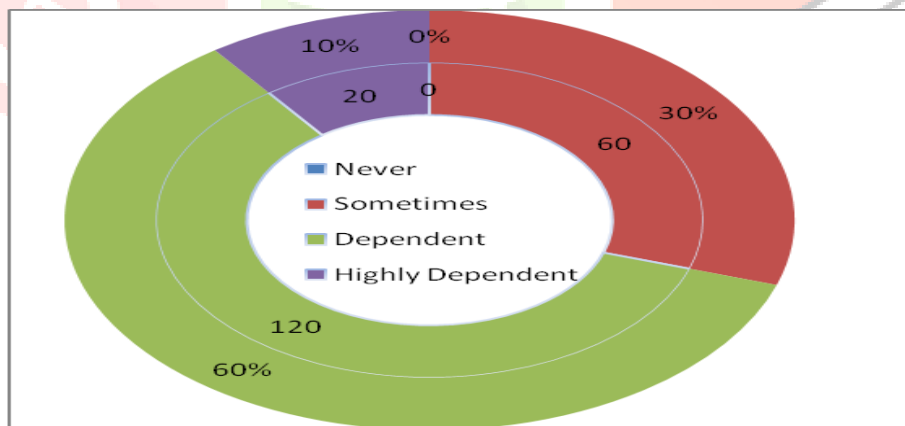
The Findings and Discussions:

Figure.1: Use of social media by scholars



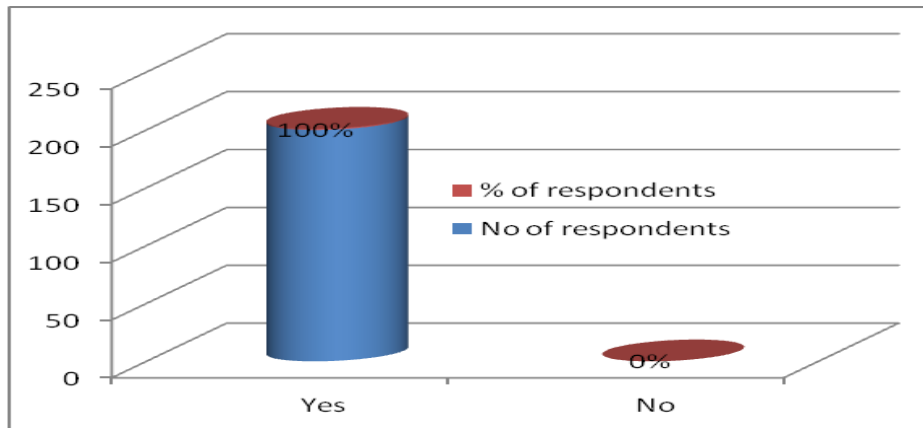
The study came up with a revelation that all the scholars under the present study are user of social media with almost 100% (Figure.1). In the contemporary world today, social media is almost everywhere, hence, it has become an essential research tool, especially for instant communication not only for sharing ideas and doubts but also updating each other on recent findings and development. The way social media is rapidly growing today, it is expected that by the end of 2020, more than 50% population in the world will be social media users.

Figure.2: Level of dependency on social media



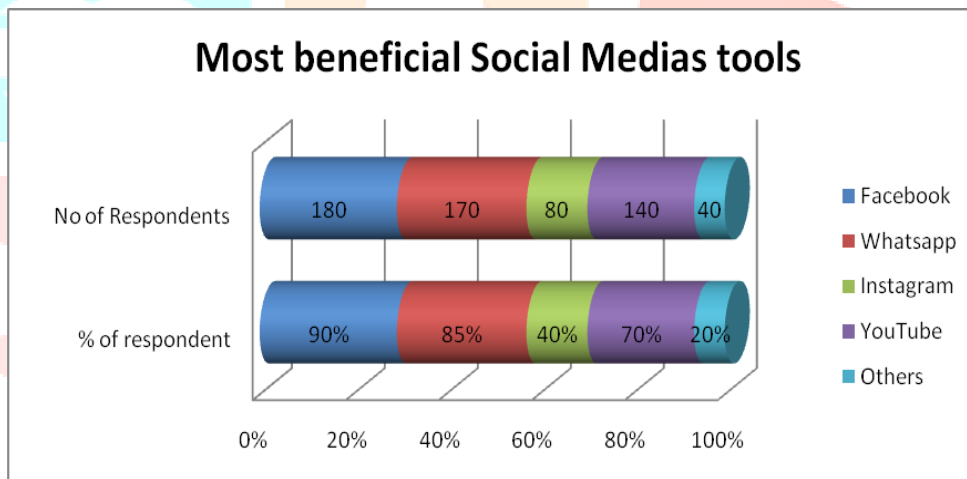
The findings on the level of dependency on social media, it says nearly 60% respondents said they are dependent on social media, 30% mentioned dependent but only sometimes, whereas, 20% respondents said that they are highly dependent on social media as shown in Figure.2. Today, there are endless resources available online which can be shared using different channels and social media tools are one such channels which are popularly used by students, scholars and others for easy instant sharing and communication. Many expressed that the reason for their dependency is because of the easy accessibility

Figure.3: Benefits of social media:



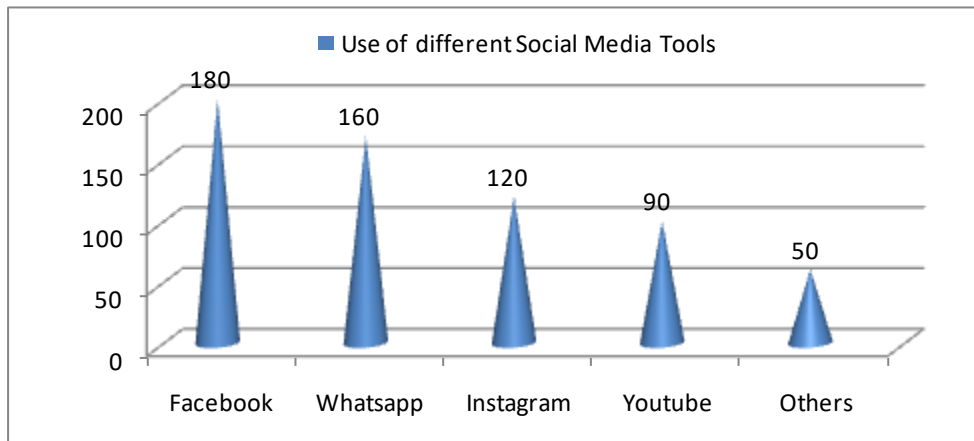
The question of whether social media is beneficial, it came out with almost 100% response that they found social media beneficial for them as given in **Figure 3**. The question here was specifically on whether they found social media beneficial and not how they find it beneficial. Through social media, scholars find it easy as well as convenient to communicate, access information, and to provide information, hence, it is justified that such response is expected.

Figure.4: Most beneficial social media tools:



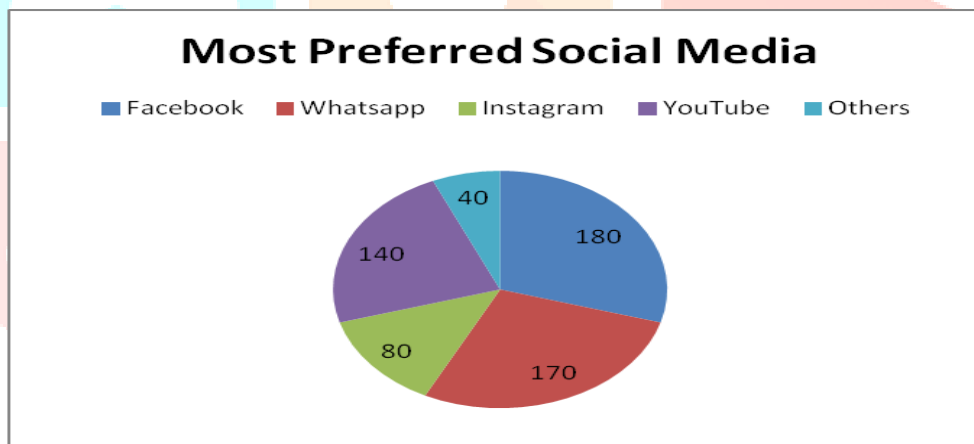
Regarding the most beneficial social media tools, the respondents gave the following response: Almost 90% said Facebook is found to be the most beneficial social media tools followed by Whatsapp with 85%, YouTube with 70% and Instagram with 40% and others with 20% which includes Tweeter, Google talk, Telegram etc given in Figure.4. The study also reveals that there is rise in multi-platform use of social media and depending on the benefits the users shift from one tool to another.

Figure.5: Use of different social media tools by scholars



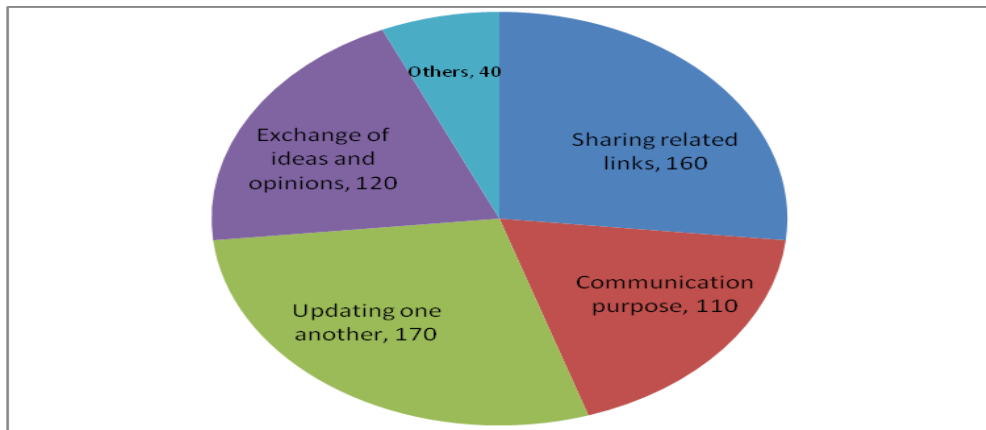
Regarding the use of different social media tools by scholars, the following are the popular tools: Facebook with 90%, whatsapp 80%, Instagram 60%, Youtube 45% and others with 25% which includes Tweeter, Google talk etc. Facebook continues to be the most popular social media tools. The study also revealed that if we see the past surveys, it shows that all other social media platform have shown significant growth since 2016. Instagram showed very significant growth in almost every demographic group.

Figure.6: Most preferred social media tools



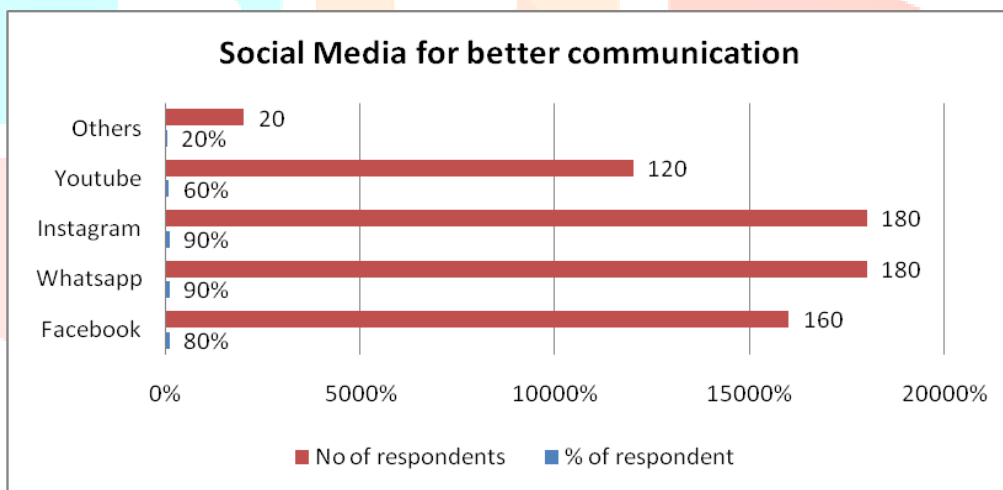
The figure 6, reveals the most preferred social media tools are, Facebook with 90%, Whatsapp with 85%, Youtube with 70% followed by 40% Instagram and others with 20% which includes Tweeter, Googletalk etc. The interview results came up with complete agreement on the contribution of social media on positive contribution to the communication and cooperation of scholars for research communication purposes. The preference of social media tools may keep changing, however, there seem to be agreement among scholars that social media tools as a helpful educational tool.

Figure.7: Dependency on Social Media Tools for Teaching-Learning

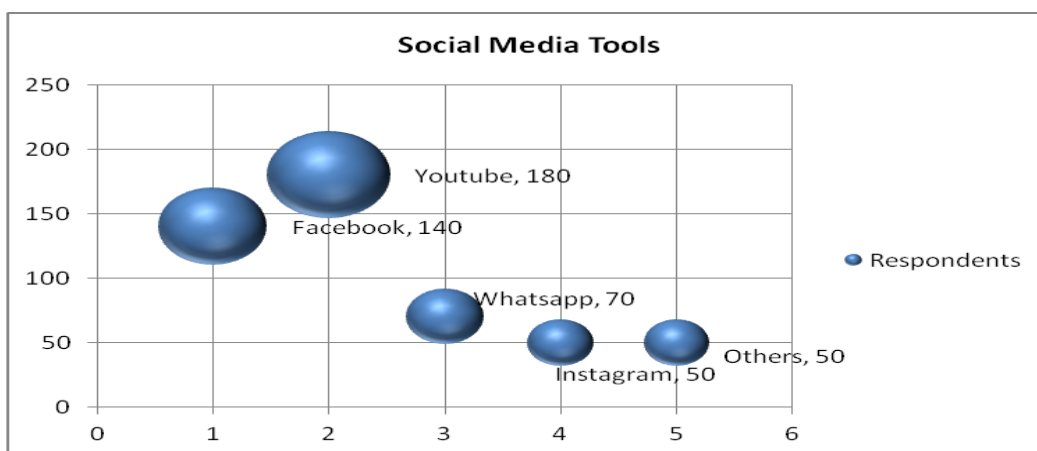


Regarding dependency on Social Media Tools for learning related issues, 80% said they use social media for updating with one another relating to recent updates, reading resources, sharing links and updating their research works etc, 80% respondents mentioned that they use social media for sharing links related to their works. Whereas, 60% mentioned that they use for exchanging ideas and opinions, and 55% mentioned as for communication purpose etc.

Figure.8: Social media for better communication



The figure 8 reveals the different social media tools used by scholars in finding suitability for better communication. Here by communication it means user friendliness in communicating with others which may not be always related to academic activities. Almost 90% of the respondents mentioned that whatsapp and Instagram are found to be the best social media tools for better communication followed by Facebook with 80% and Youtube 60% and others with 20%. This finding also indicates the different social media tools used by scholars. It is also showing that many are multiple social media platform users.

Figure.9: Social media tools for better learning experiences in research

The figure 9 reveals some of the social media tools which the scholars find it helpful for learning experience in their research works. The findings say 90% mentioned Youtube as the most helpful social media tools for having better learning experiences as Youtube not only provides audio recordings but also visual recordings as well, which helps in better experience of learning and communication. About 70% mentioned Facebook as helpful tool for better learning experience as they not now get a chance to read others postings but also get the opinion of others using the comments. About 70% mentioned Whatsapp which is helpful or effective for faster communication as a result it also contributes to better learning experience. About 35% stated that Instagram and others with 25% are also helpful depending on the purpose.

Answers to the research questions:

RQ.1. What is the popularity and usage of social media tools by scholars?

The study came with a revelation that all the scholars under the present study are user of social media with almost 100% (Figure.1).

RQ.2. What is the level of dependency on social media tools by scholars?

The findings says nearly 60% respondents said they are dependent on social media, 30% mentioned dependent but only sometimes, whereas, 20% respondents said that they are highly dependent on social media as shown in Figure.2.

RQ.3. In what way social media tools are benefiting the scholars?

Regarding the most beneficial social media tools, the respondents gave the following response:

Almost 90% said Facebook is found to be the most beneficial social media tools followed by Whatsapp with 85%, YouTube with 70%

RQ.4. What is the purpose for which scholars are dependent on social media tools?

Regarding dependency on social media tools for learning related issues, 80% said they use social media for updating with one another relating to exams, reading resources, sharing links and updating their research works etc, 80% respondents mentioned that they use social media for sharing links related to their works. Whereas, 60% mentioned that they use for exchanging ideas and opinions, and 55% mentioned as for communication purpose etc.

RQ.5. Is social media tools helpful for research learning experience?

Figure 9 revealed some of the social media tools which the scholars find it helpful for learning experience in their research works. The findings say, 90% mentioned Youtube as the most helpful social media tools for having better learning experiences as Youtube not only provides audio recordings but also visual recordings as well, which helps in better experience of learning and communication. About 70% mentioned Facebook as helpful tool for better learning experience as they not now get a chance to read others postings but also get the opinion of others using the comments.

Major findings and Discussions:

The present study came up with a significant finding that there is popularity in the usage of social media among the Naga scholars across interdisciplinary or multidiscipline studies. The finding says almost 100% of the Naga scholars under the present study are user of social media tools such as Facebook, Youtube, Instagram, Tweeter, etc. The study also revealed that all the scholars found social media to be beneficial for several purposes, such as: easy instant communication, easy accessibility, etc. Almost 100% respondents in the present study expressed that they found social media tools beneficial. The most popular social media tools are Facebook, whatsapp, YouTube, Instagram, Tweeter etc, which in my opinion did not differ with any of the study conducted across India. Based on the literature reviews, Facebook is still considered to be the most popular social media not only in India but also in all countries.

Another major finding was the dependency on social media tools by scholars for learning related issues. The findings indicates that 80% Naga scholars said they use social media for updating with one another relating to reading resources, sharing links and updating their research works etc, 80% respondents also mentioned that they use social media for sharing links related to their works. According to the finding, the most preferred social media tools are, Facebook with 90%, Whatsapp with 85%, Youtube with 70% followed by 40% Instagram and others with 20% which includes Tweeter, Googletalk etc.

Regarding findings on better communication, it was found that almost 90% of the respondents found whatsapp and Instagram to be the best social media tools for better communication and it helps in faster and easy to communicate and also easy accessibility. However, findings on best social media tools for learning experience, it was found that almost 90% mentioned Youtube to be the most helpful social media tools for having better learning experiences as Youtube not only provides audio recordings but also visual recordings which adds better learning experience.

Areas for further research:

The present study has given some insights for further research in the following areas:

- A comparative research may be conducted on the impact of social media tools for teaching-learning in post Covid-19
- A case study can be conducted on the use of social media tools for research communication
- A detail research may be conducted on the effectiveness of social media tools for teaching-learning

Conclusion:

The present study clearly indicates that as far as the Naga scholars are concerned, most are active user of social media tools. The study also indicates that most scholars are getting the benefit of using social media for research communication. Based on the present study, it has also revealed that the biggest advantage of social media tools is the experiences of better communication and easy access. Scholars can connect with anyone at any point in time via any social media. They can use social media platforms for exchanging ideas, make phone calls or video calls to solve their queries instantly. Moreover, Social media promote learning by offering support with sharing documents or videos which are related to class room teaching-learning. The presence of social media turning as an integral part of our lives cannot be denied. In fact, it has already penetrated in every part of our lives. Hence, challenge now is, how best scholars and researchers can make

the best of social media tools for better communication, better information sharing and storing and also for the purpose of research and teaching-learning experiences.

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