

Use of Social Media among Housewives in Hyderabad, Sindh Province, Pakistan

Rashid Ali Khuhro¹, Bashir Memon², Nabiha Ahmed³

ABSTRACT

In recent times, social media has emerged as a powerful communication tool. It has proved as a powerful medium for its users, and no one can deny its power. Over the last two and a half decades, social media has made a tremendous difference in people's daily lives in Pakistan. Social media has provided a platform to users who have no access to any other forum, especially housewives who cannot pursue their careers because of their marital status, being married after just completed their studies. The main purpose of the study was to evaluate the usage of social media by housewives and how it empowers them. A cross-sectional survey was conducted to collect data from a purposively and conveniently selected sample of housewives residing in the sub-division- Latifabad, District Hyderabad, Sindh province, Pakistan. The findings show that the use of social media platforms made by empowers housewives. It was also found that the surveyed housewives mostly used Facebook, WhatsApp, YouTube, and Instagram. Added that they mostly accessed social media on a smartphone for duration of 2 to 3 hours. The three main purposes of using social media platforms by housewives were seeking entertainment, interacting with friends, and learning skills. However, a smaller number of the housewives said that they used social media for business and earning. The housewives also said that they had their social media groups. The popular groups among them, in descending order, were WhatsApp and Facebook. Finally, the housewives also taught some skills through social media platforms. The most common skills they taught were cooking and makeup.

Keywords: Social Media, Social Networking Sites, Housewives, Usage Patterns

INTRODUCTION

In recent times, social media has emerged as a powerful communication tool. It has proved as a strong medium for its users, and no one can deny its capability. Over the last two and a half decades, social media has had a tremendous effect on people's daily lives. (Chauhan, 2020; Herhold, 2018; Lutkevich & Wigmore, 2021). It has provided many

¹ CRDC, University of Sindh, Pakistan.

² The Department of Media and Communication Studies, University of Sindh, Pakistan.

³ The Department of Media and Communication Studies, University of Sindh, Pakistan.

platforms for users to communicate, entertain, and share information and content (in the form of text, photos, and videos) (Campbell et al., 2006). By connecting people without geographic, economic, and political hindrances (Divatia & Patel, 2017) Social media has emerged as an instant two-way communication medium worldwide. The most popular of them are Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, Twitter, TikTok, and many others. (Chauhan, 2020).

Further, as social media use grows, the number of social media users is increasing day by day (Ennis-O'Connor, 2019). In a Blog Post, Oberlo mentioned that there were 3.5 billion active social media users worldwide in 2019, which is 45% of the total population. Although Facebook is widely used socially daily 68% are active users (Mohsin, 2020). The world's population is more than 7 billion. More than 3.5 billion people are online across various social media platforms and SNSs. This is a large number of users of these platforms. It means that every fourth person in the world uses social media (Ortiz-Ospina, 2019). According to one survey by the Pew Research Center, 72% of older adults are using social media (Davis, 2013).

Furthermore, people of all ages (young and old), diverse genders (male, female, and transgender), and all walks of life use it. It does not bind them to factors like age, generation, gender, ethnicity, and belief. (Novianti & Fatonah, 2020). People use it for different purposes (social interaction, information seeking, passing the time, entertainment, relaxation, communicatory utility, convenience utility, expression of opinion, information sharing, and surveillance/knowledge about others. (Khuhro & Shoukat, 2020; Whiting & Williams, 2013). Similarly, women also use social media. It has emerged as a convenient medium for housewives too; who want to explore the world based on their talents and provide them a new direction to excel in their talents and skills. Many housewives earn a livelihood from it and build their identity individually in society and the world. (Jenzen, 2017).

Moreover, like the developed world, people in developing countries like Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, etc., also use social media. (Keelery, 2020; Rathore & Farooq, 2020). Especially in Pakistan, social media provides a platform for users who have no access to any forums. (S. Batool & Sultana). Both males and females use social media on a daily basis. (Akman & Turhan, 2018).

In Pakistan, women are forcibly excluded from online spaces. (Khan & Du, 2017). Though Pakistani society follows patriarchal social values, women face many social and

cultural restrictions, (S. A. Batool & Batool, 2018). Hence, being a minority on online sites, they are subject to cyber harassment, hate speech, and privacy violations (Zaheer, 2018). These threats limit women from socializing in online spaces (Habiba et al., 2016; Ali et al., 2020). Despite the critical situation with the women in the country, a large number of them are using social media. According to Rasheed (2022) only 37% women in Pakistan use mobile phones, and 22% use social media sites.

The above analysis shows that in Pakistan, women are a downtrodden section of society. They are also underrepresented in the use of social media. There is insufficient research literature in the context of Pakistani society on how housewives use social media, which social media Apps or SNSs they use the most, for what purposes they use them, and how it affects them. This study aims to evaluate social media usage preferences, patterns, and effects on housewives in Hyderabad, Sindh, Pakistan.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- 1:** To determine the social media usage patterns among housewives in Hyderabad, Sindh, Pakistan
- 2:** To determine the social media usage preferences and purposes of housewives in Hyderabad, Sindh, Pakistan.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This study aims to evaluate social media usage preferences, patterns, and effects on housewives in Hyderabad, Sindh, Pakistan. The analysis of results revealed that studies about social media and women are focusing on the use and impact of social media in general, the entrepreneurship of women through social media. However, a few studies focusing specifically use of social media among housewives/homemakers are found. The analysis of those follows:

According to Sadeghzadeh (2017) currently, many factions of society are using social media, and several people use it actively. Housewives can be counted as mainstream users of social media. This excessive use led to addiction to the medium. In this context, this research aimed to recognize the factors influencing housewives' addiction to social media and its potential consequences. Housewives are also among the major users of this medium, and excessive and inappropriate use of virtual social networks may lead to addiction. This study aimed to identify factors affecting housewives' addiction to virtual social networks and their

possible consequences. In this qualitative study, the data were collected through structured interviews with social media-addicted housewives. The results exhibited that “feelings of loneliness, lack of social support, and depression are among the main reasons for addiction to virtual social networks. Improper use of these networks also resulted in depression and isolation of users (Sadeghzadeh, 2017).”

In a study on selected social media app usage among homemakers, Divatia and Patel (2017) discuss that, like most people, homemakers also use different social media applications. In recent times, they are even higher users than college students and women in the workforce. Further, the study elaborates that Indian housewives are making their presence felt on social media. This study recommends that a comparative analysis of social media usage practices of homemakers and working women should be conducted by future researchers.

Chen (2015) A survey discovered that motivation drives such as information, engagement, and recreation of women for using social media. In this context, the result shows that recreation or entertainment motives are higher than other motives among women bloggers while using social media. By discussing results according to need theory, this study showed that “psychological needs for affiliation and self-disclosure are related to the engagement motivation, and self-disclosure is associated with the information motivation.”

By using Jean Baudrillard's Hyperreality theory, Damayanti and Hidayat (2019) evaluated the self-perceptions of housewives using Facebook in Rengel Village, Tuban Regency. The data was collected from purposively selected primary and secondary data with the help of a qualitative approach (phenomenological approach). The findings revealed that housewives identify themselves in different ways, from photo uploads using an expensive camera to make the results look more perfect than they are, to Facebook statuses that show everyday life, to get answers from other Facebook users. Through photos of daily activities, so that other Facebook users know what is being done each day, and get responses from other Facebook users. Through marked images, there are various beauty products to attract more interest in the products presented (Damayanti & Hidayat, 2019).

In a study about the reasons for the usage of WhatsApp among Bahraini women, Elareshi and Ziani (2019) conducted an empirical study of 1137 respondents. The results showed that Bahraini women use WhatsApp to communicate and share information, and to engage in recreational activities.

In a qualitative study about media literacy among housewives of a Kanoman village in Indonesia, Novianti and Fatonah (2020) collected through a multi-method technique such as observation, in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, and document analysis techniques. Findings revealed that housewives were social literate (Novianti & Fatonah, 2020).

Tan et al. (2020) conducted a study about a smartphone app, Kuaishou, *in China*. The study analyzed the appeal of app actors, cultivating and maintaining their fans to monetize their activities, and considered Zhubos as 'digital housewives', using user data, two values, and producing effects like those of offline house workers. Zhubos may earn money from their work, but they ultimately provide Kuaishou with highly exploited labor under the guise of harmless sport. In fact, by selling her unpredictable influences, Zhubos is even more than Jared's original formulation of the 'digital housewife' figure. (Tan et al., 2020).

Selsa and Usha (2022) conducted a survey about the awareness and use of Internet service among homemakers in the Kollam district in Kerala, India. This study concluded that, most of the time, internet applications facilitated homemakers in easing their work.

In another study, Nurfalah et al., (2013) examined the motivations of housewives regarding the use of social media and its impact on their well-being. This study found that most social media users in Cirebon, Indonesia, who are housewives, have bachelor's degrees and a personal income of Rp. 5,000,000, use of social media apps WhatsApp and Instagram for at least five hours per day. Further, housewives are encouraged to use social media as a communication tool to interact with other users. 3) Effects of the use of social networks among housewives: they support each other and share the activities they do, find health advice and advice on how to take care of the house chores. In which you can finally live and enjoy your daily activities and communicate well. Through social networks, engaging in meaningful activities can help them better manage their problems, live a good life, believe in their future, and feel others respect them. Their emotions are often positive and often good, frequently pleasant, usually happy, and never angry (Nurfalah et al., 2013).

In a study about the influence of TikTok on housewife users in Indonesia, Wibawa et al. (2022) the study interviewed respondents and concluded that the TikTok App has gained popularity among housewives. The users have made short videos and shared them on the application, and it has become popular.

In a study, Hamid et al. (2022) examined, in the light of the uses and gratifications theory, the motivations for housewives' use of social networks and their impact on their well-being and development. The data was collected through two approaches: surveys and focus group discussions. In the first study, the researchers surveyed 268 active social media users in Malaysia who were housewives. At the same time, in the second study, focus group discussions of ten housewives were conducted. The results of the study revealed that “motivations for social media use among housewives have significant and positive effects on both well-being and flourishing.” In comparison, FGDs discovered five themes that developed from the thematic analysis: “strengthening relationships, emotional support, encouraging thoughts and roles, supplemental income and support systems, and acknowledgment of enrichment (Hamid et al., 2022).”

RESEARCH METHOD

This study applied a cross-sectional survey method. As defined, a survey is used as a method for collecting and analyzing social data via a highly structured questionnaire or, often, very detailed interviews to obtain information from many respondents presumed to be representative of a specific population. The researcher used a cross-sectional quantitative survey to collect data, (Babbie, 2020; Creswell & Creswell, 2017). The purpose of choosing a survey method is to allow the collection of a larger sample, as opposed to interviews or other forms of data collection (Welman et al., 2005). The survey is used because it provides the main idea about the research topic and is based on a questionnaire that is provided to respondents to record their answers.

The population of this study was female-specific housewives of District Hyderabad, Pakistan. It is one of the biggest cities in Pakistan. The study employed a purposive and convenient sampling technique. Thus, the sample of 50 housewives in the sub-division Latifabad, District Hyderabad, was surveyed for data collection.

The survey was conducted with the aid of a questionnaire. The questionnaire took a maximum of ten minutes to complete, and it contained only closed-ended questions covering the respondent's social media usage frequency, information-gathering methods, social media use habits, attitudes, and demographics. The data was entered into the SPSS software and then analyzed to present the findings in tabular form for further discussion.

FINDINGS

The findings, according to the research objectives of the study, are interpreted below:

Table 1: Education and age of the respondents

| Variable | Frequency | Percent (%) |
|--------------------|-----------|--------------|
| Education | | |
| Matriculation | 6 | (12.0) |
| Intermediate | 11 | (22.0) |
| Bachelors | 24 | (48.0) |
| Above Bachelors | 9 | (18.0) |
| Total | 50 | (100) |
| Age | | |
| Under 20 years | 6 | (12.0) |
| 21 to 25 years | 17 | (34.0) |
| 26 to 30 years | 20 | (40.0) |
| 30 years and above | 7 | (14.0) |
| Total | 50 | (100) |

The data in Table 1 reports on the education level and age categories of the surveyed housewives. In this way, it was observed that the highest among all proportions sizing almost fifty percent (48.0%) of the housewives had an education at the bachelor level. Added the second-highest proportion of a little higher than one-fifth (22.0%) had Intermediate education. However, the third-highest proportion, about one-fifth (18.0%) of the housewives, had obtained education above bachelor level, and the remaining proportion, a little bigger than one-tenth (12.0%), was educated till matric level. Thus, summarily it was found that the greatest number of respondents had a bachelor's degree.

Regarding the age of the surveyed housewives, it was known that the first highest proportion sizing two-fifths (40.0%), was 26 to 30 years old. The second-highest proportion, slightly over one-third (34.0%), was 21 to 25 years old. In comparison, the third-highest proportion little greater than one-tenth (14.0%), mentioning that their age was still 30 years and above. Conclusively, it was found that the highest number of the surveyed housewives were in the age bracket 26 to 30 years old.

Table 2: Social media platforms used by the housewives

| Social media platform | Yes (%) | No (%) | Total (%) |
|------------------------------|----------------|---------------|------------------|
| Facebook | 48 (98.0) | 2 (2.0) | 50 (100.0) |
| Whatsapp | 45 (90.0) | 5 (10.0) | 50 (100.0) |
| Twitter | 12 (24.0) | 38 (76.0) | 50 (100.0) |
| Instagram | 27 (54.0) | 23 (46.0) | 50 (100.0) |
| Youtube | 37 (74.0) | 13 (26.0) | 50 (100.0) |
| Pinterest | 13 (26.0) | 37 (74.0) | 50 (100.0) |

See Table 2, which mentions data about the social media platforms used by the housewives. It was observed that the first popular social media platform among housewives was Facebook, with 48 respondents (98.0%) using it. The second highly used social media platform reported by the housewives was WhatsApp (90.0%). Whereas, the third most widely used social media platform was YouTube, as the great majority of the housewives (74.0%) said they used It. Similarly, Instagram was also used by the majority of housewives (54.0%). However, the two less popular social media platforms among the housewives were, in descending order, Pinterest (26.0%) and Twitter (24%).

Table 3: Device and duration of social media platform

| Devices | Frequency | Percent (%) |
|--------------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| Smartphone | 39 | (78.0) |
| Tab | 2 | (4.0) |
| Laptop computer | 9 | (18.0) |
| Total | 50 | (100.0) |
| Duration of usage | | |
| Up to 2 hours | 16 | (32.0) |
| 2 to 3 hours | 22 | (44.0) |
| Above 3 hours | 11 | (22.0) |
| Total | 50 | (100.0) |

The data in Table 3 reports the devices used for accessing social media platforms and the extent of duration for which social media is used. Thus, regarding devices, it was found that a proportion of almost four-fifths (78.0%) expressed that they accessed social media platforms on their smartphone. The other proportion sizing nearly one-fifth (18.0%), mentioned that they used laptop computers for accessing social media. However, the remaining which is less than one-tenth (4.0%) used tab. As a result, it was deduced that the

most common device for accessing social media among the surveyed housewives is a smartphone.

About duration of social media usage, it was observed that the proportion sizing almost one-third (32.0%) used social media for duration of up to 2 hours. And the second proportion of over two-fifths (44.0%) said that they used social media for a duration of 2 to 3 hours. Whereas, the remaining proportion bigger than one-fifth (22.0%), mentioned that they used social media for a duration above than 3 hours. Hence, it was found that the most housewives used social media for 2 to 3 hours.

Table 4: Purposes of social media usage

| Purposes of social media usage | Yes (%) | No (%) | Total (%) |
|--------------------------------|-----------|-----------|------------|
| Entertainment | 46 (92.0) | 4 (8.0) | 50 (100.0) |
| Interacting with friends | 40 (80.0) | 10 (20.0) | 50 (100.0) |
| Learning skills | 26 (52.0) | 24 (48.0) | 50 (100.0) |
| Doing business | 7 (14.0) | 43 (86.0) | 50 (100.0) |
| Earning | 10 (20.0) | 40 (80.0) | 50 (100.0) |

Regarding the purposes of social media usage, Table 4 presents data that the first important purpose (92.0%) for which housewives use social media is seeking entertainment. The second important purpose for using social media was 'interacting with friends', as a proportion of four-fifths (80.0%) of the housewives used social media for entertainment purposes. Whereas, the third important purpose reported is 'learning skills' because the simple majority of housewives (52.0%) used social media for learning skills. However, the remaining two comparatively less important purposes, in descending order, were using social media for earning (20.0%) and doing business (14.0%). Thus, overall, it developed that the two main purposes of using social media by housewives were entertainment and interaction with friends.

Table 5: Social media groups by the housewives

| Social media platform | Yes (%) | No (%) | Total (%) |
|-----------------------|-----------|-----------|------------|
| Facebook | 32 (64.0) | 18 (36.0) | 50 (100.0) |
| WhatsApp | 37 (74.0) | 13 (26.0) | 50 (100.0) |
| Snapchat | 9 (18.0) | 41 (82.0) | 50 (100.0) |
| Instagram | 6 (12.0) | 44 (88.0) | 50 (100.0) |

Table 5 reports data about social media groups of the surveyed housewives. Thus, it was known that the respondents have groups following four different social media platforms that are Facebook, WhatsApp, Snapchat, and Instagram. First, regarding Facebook, it developed that the proportion sizing over three-fifths (64.0%) expressed having a Facebook group. Second, about WhatsApp, the proportion of almost three quarters (75.0%) said that they operate a WhatsApp group. Whereas, subject to the third social media platform, that is Snapchat, the proportion of almost one-fifth (18.0%) of respondents had a Snapchat group. Regarding Instagram, the proportion accounting for little more than one-tenth (12.0%) of the respondents mentioned that they also run an Instagram group. Overall, it was observed that the most used social media platform for having a group of the surveyed housewives in this study was the 'WhatsApp group' and the 'Facebook group'. Against it, the least-used social media group among housewives was Instagram.

Table 6: Skills taught through social media by the housewives

| Skills taught | Yes (%) | No (%) | Total (%) |
|---------------|---------|-----------|------------|
| Cooking | 4 (8.0) | 46 (92.0) | 50 (100.0) |
| Makeup | 3 (6.0) | 47 (94.0) | 50 (100.0) |
| Sketching | 2 (4.0) | 48 (96.0) | 50 (100.0) |
| Mehndi | 1 (2.0) | 49 (98.0) | 50 (100.0) |
| Stitching | 2 (4.0) | 48 (96.0) | 50 (100.0) |
| Marketing | 1 (2.0) | 49 (98.0) | 50 (100.0) |
| Photography | 1 (2.0) | 49 (98.0) | 50 (100.0) |

See Table 6, which has data about the skills that were being taught through social media platforms, as the surveyed housewives reported. In this regard, it was observed that overall, a small number of housewives taught skills through social media platforms. Yet, those who used social media platforms for teaching skills, among them the most taught skills were Cooking, Makeup, and then Stitching, and sketching. However, Mehndi, Marketing, and Photography were the least taught skills.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Social media has brought both positive and negative changes to its users' lives. It has provided widespread access to those previously socially limited. Thus, in this study, it has assessed how the use of social media platforms by housewives has affected them. In this regard, it was observed that the highest number of the surveyed housewives had a bachelor's

level of education and belonged to the age bracket of 26 to 30 years old. Regarding social media platforms, the surveyed housewives mostly used, in descending order, Facebook, WhatsApp, YouTube, and Instagram. However, the two most used social media platforms by them were Pinterest and Twitter. Added: they mostly accessed social media on a smartphone for 2 to 3 hours. It was also observed that the three main purposes of using social media platforms by the surveyed housewives were seeking entertainment, interacting with friends, and learning skills. However, a smaller number of the survey participants' housewives said they used social media for business and earning. The social media users, housewives, also said they had created their social media groups. Thus, the first two most popular groups among them, in descending order, were the WhatsApp and Facebook groups. However, the least popular of the two groups was Snapchat. The housewives also expressed that they taught some skills through social media platforms. In this way, the two main skills they taught were cooking and makeup.

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