

**Facebook, WhatsApp and Youtube as a learning tool: A comparative study  
among university students of Guwahati**

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**Abstract:**

*Social media refers to digital platforms and tools that allows users to create, share, and exchange content and information through virtual communities and networks. Integrating social media platforms like Facebook, WhatsApp and YouTube into the educational landscape has revolutionized the way students learn and interact. From facilitating group collaborations to providing instant communication channels, these tools have become indispensable in modern education. In today's digital age, Facebook, WhatsApp and YouTube has transcended their traditional roles as mere communication tools and have become integral components of the educational experience. Students can harness the power of Facebook and WhatsApp to enrich their educational journey and maximize their academic potential. This paper explores the usage patterns of different social media platforms by university students and determines the degree of feasibility in their learning process.*

**Keywords:** Social Media, Usage Patterns, Learning, University Students, Guwahati

**Introduction**

Social media has become the new mainstream media. Its role however is not limited to providing news but also become the ultimate choice for students to help them better engage in their learning. Facebook as a learning tool provides a versatile platform for collaborative learning like groups and pages where educators can create groups or pages for specific courses, subjects, or learning communities. These spaces allow for sharing resources, posting updates, and fostering discussions. WhatsApp as a learning tool offers a more intimate and immediate form of communication, suitable for quick exchanges and group collaborations. Educators can create groups for classes or study groups, enabling easy sharing of documents, links, and quick updates. Teachers can send announcements or information to multiple students without creating a group chat. Students and teachers can share images, videos, voice notes, and documents instantly, enhancing the learning experience through multimedia.

YouTube as a learning tool is a powerful platform for visual and auditory learners, providing a vast repository of educational content. Numerous channels offer tutorials, lectures, and explanatory videos across various subjects. Teachers can curate playlists of videos that align with their curriculum, providing structured learning paths. Live streaming allows for interactive teaching sessions, webinars, and live Q&A. Students can engage in discussions, ask questions, and provide feedback on video content.

Through these social media platforms, students can access learning materials anytime and anywhere, making education more flexible. These platforms foster collaborative learning environments, where students can work together and support each other and allow immediate communication channels for quick feedback and clarification of doubts. Facebook, WhatsApp, and YouTube provide diverse and rich opportunities for enhancing the learning experience. When used thoughtfully, these platforms can support traditional education methods, making learning more engaging, interactive, and accessible.

### **Literature Review**

Manca and Ranieri (2016) explored the multifaceted uses of these platforms in educational contexts, finding that Facebook, in particular, excels at creating collaborative learning environments. This platform allows students to form study groups, share resources, and engage in academic discussions, fostering a sense of community and enhancing collaborative learning. Junco (2012) highlights a dual aspect of Facebook usage; while it can significantly boost student engagement and motivation by providing an informal space for learning and interaction, it also carries the risk of distraction if not used with discipline. This calls for a balanced approach to harness its potential effectively.

Bouhnik and Deshen (2014) focused on WhatsApp, revealing its high effectiveness for collaborative learning due to its user-friendly interface and real-time communication features. Students can use WhatsApp for group discussions, sharing study materials, and providing instant feedback, making it a valuable tool for continuous engagement beyond the classroom. The immediacy and convenience of WhatsApp make it particularly suitable for quick queries and ongoing academic support, enhancing peer-to-peer learning.

Burden and Atkinson (2008), demonstrated YouTube as an extensive educational resource. YouTube offers access to a vast array of educational videos, including lectures, tutorials, and documentaries, which can supplement traditional classroom instruction. For students at Royal Global University, YouTube provides alternative

explanations and diverse perspectives on complex topics, aiding in better understanding and retention. However, the study also highlights the necessity of curating quality content to maximize educational benefits, pointing out that not all available videos meet academic standards.

Chen and Bryer (2012) conducted a comparative study on the effectiveness of these social media platforms in education, concluding that their impact largely depends on how they are integrated into the learning process. They suggest that a blended approach, utilizing the strengths of each platform, could provide a more comprehensive learning experience for students. For instance, Facebook can be used for networking and collaboration, WhatsApp for real-time communication and support, and YouTube for accessing diverse and extensive educational content. This integrated use can cater to various learning needs and preferences, enhancing the overall educational experience.

Tess (2013) investigated student perceptions and usage patterns of social media in education, finding that students generally view these platforms as valuable tools for enhancing learning and academic performance. Students might prefer different platforms based on specific academic needs: Facebook for its robust community-building features, WhatsApp for its immediacy and ease of use, and YouTube for its wealth of educational resources. Understanding these preferences allows educators to design more effective learning strategies that leverage the unique advantages of each platform

### **Study Gap**

Despite the increasing integration of social media platforms in educational settings, there is a noticeable study gap in the comparative analysis of Facebook, WhatsApp, and YouTube as learning tools, particularly among students of Royal Global University, Guwahati. Existing research largely focuses on the individual impacts of these platforms on student engagement and learning outcomes in diverse educational contexts. However, there is limited scholarly work that directly compares these three platforms in a single academic environment, assessing their relative effectiveness, user preferences, and specific educational benefits. Furthermore, the unique socio-cultural and technological landscape of students at Royal Global University remains underexplored, raising the need for localized studies that can provide nuanced insights. Addressing this gap could help educators and policymakers optimize the use of social media in educational strategies, ensuring that the potential of these tools is fully leveraged to enhance learning experiences.

1. How frequently and in what manner do students use Facebook, WhatsApp, and YouTube for educational purposes?

2. What is the impact of using Facebook, WhatsApp, and YouTube on students' academic performance and learning outcomes?
3. How accessible and convenient are Facebook, WhatsApp, and YouTube for learning purposes according to students?

The increasing integration of digital platforms in education has revolutionized the way students engage with learning materials and collaborate with peers. This study aims to comparatively analyse the efficacy of Facebook, WhatsApp, and YouTube as learning tools among students of Royal Global University in Guwahati. Despite their primary design for social networking and entertainment, these platforms have been repurposed for educational use, offering unique features that cater to various learning needs. The research will explore how these platforms facilitate communication, resource sharing, and knowledge acquisition, while also examining student preferences and the impact on their academic performance. By investigating these aspects, the study seeks to provide insights into the most effective use of these digital tools in enhancing the learning experience in higher education.

The objectives of the research are:

- To identify the frequency and manner in which students use Facebook, WhatsApp, and YouTube for educational purposes.
- To evaluate the impact of using Facebook, WhatsApp, and YouTube on students' academic performance and learning outcomes.
- To examine the accessibility and convenience of using Facebook, WhatsApp, and YouTube for learning purposes.

### **Methodology**

The research adopts a quantitative approach, which is suitable for examining the use of Facebook, WhatsApp, and YouTube for educational purposes. This approach is chosen to deeply understand the perceptions, experiences and significance of Facebook, Whatsapp and Youtube as a learning tool particularly among university students. Thus, a case study is conducted, which includes all UG and PG students enrolled in The Assam Royal Global University. As per the data given by the university, the total population of UG and PG students in The Assam Global University is 3020 students. Therefore, the researcher has taken a sample size of 120 respondents out of the population of 3020 students.

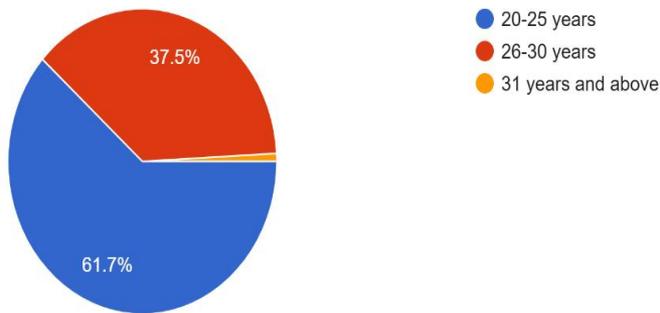
For this purpose, a structured questionnaire is developed to gather quantitative data on: the frequency of usage of Facebook, WhatsApp, and YouTube for educational purposes; types of educational activities students engage in on these platforms and the perceived impact on academic performance and learning outcomes.

**Data Analysis and Interpretation**

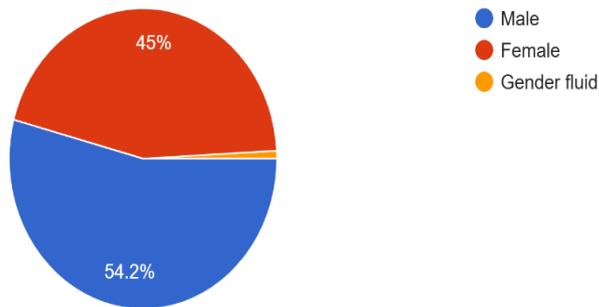
An in-depth analysis of data collected from the students of The Assam Royal Global University offers variety of observations in the field of Facebook, WhatsApp and YouTube as learning tools. The charts and graphs illustrate a variety of key areas.

**Section 1: Background Information**

Age  
120 responses



Gender  
120 responses

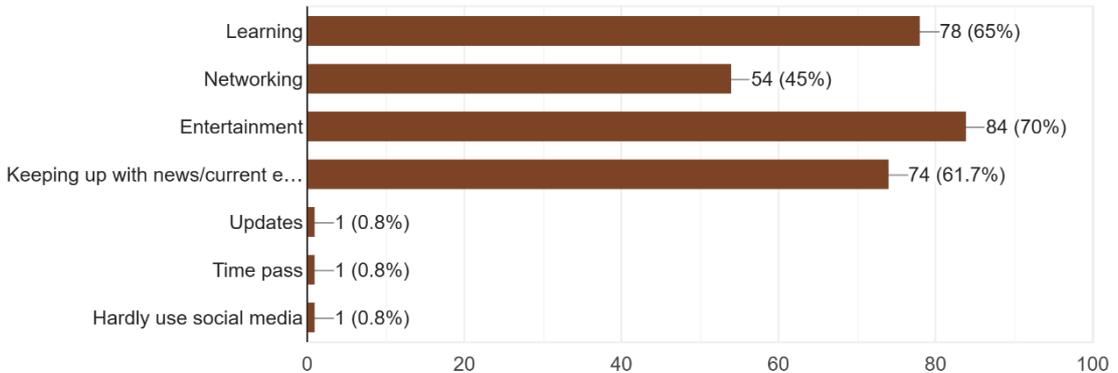


The background information section gathers data of the respondents, including age and gender. This section is essential to understand the profile of the participants and to contextualize their responses in the subsequent manner.

### Section 2: Questions and Responses

2. What is the main purpose of your social media usage?

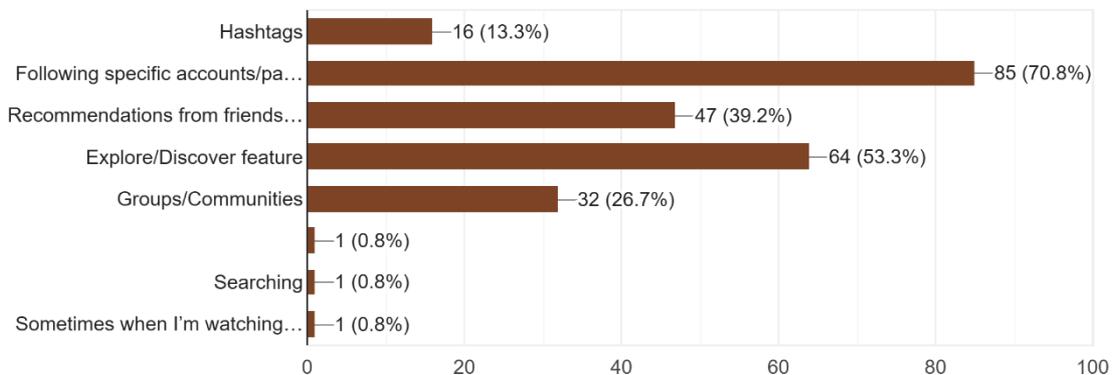
120 responses



The data indicates that the majority of people use social media for entertainment, followed by learning, and keeping up with news/current events. Networking is also a significant purpose, but less prevalent compared to the top three categories. Very few respondents use social media for updates, time pass, or hardly use it at all.

8. How do you discover educational contents on social media?

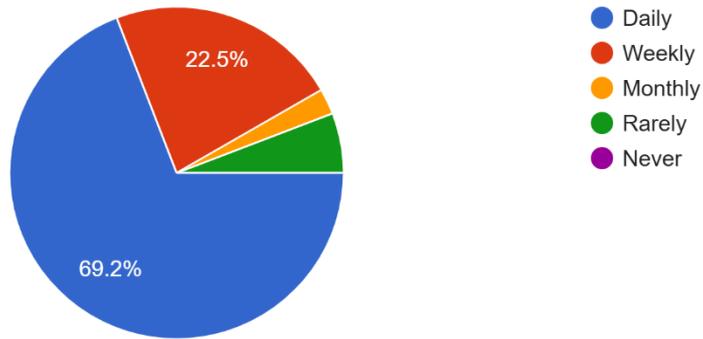
120 responses



The data indicates that the majority of respondents discover educational content by following specific accounts or pages, followed by using the explore/discover feature, and through recommendations from friends or family. Groups and communities also play a role, but less significantly. Few respondents use hashtags, search directly, or occasionally come across educational content.

### 1. How often do you use social media for learning purpose?

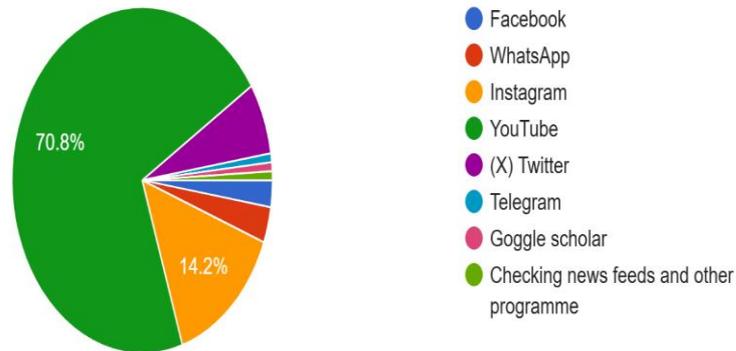
120 responses



The pie chart illustrates how often 120 respondents use social media for learning purposes. The data suggests that a significant majority of respondents actively engage with social media for learning purposes on a daily or weekly basis, indicating its importance as a tool for educational content. Only a small fraction of respondents uses it monthly or rarely for learning.

### 3. Which is your best Social media for learning purpose?

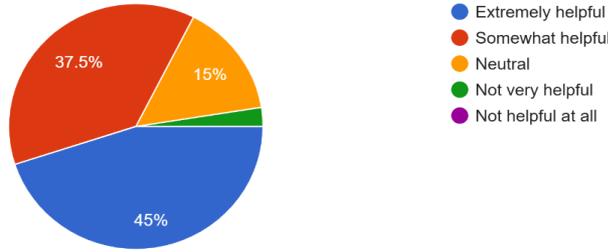
120 responses



The pie chart displays the preferences of 120 respondents for the best social media platform for learning purposes. YouTube is overwhelmingly the most preferred platform, with 70.8% of the responses. Facebook, Instagram, (X) Twitter, Telegram, and Google Scholar each have very small segments, indicating minimal preference.

4. How far do you think social media helps you in preparation of your notes and assignments?

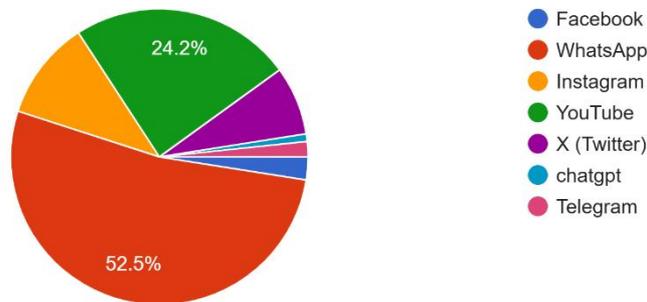
120 responses



The pie chart illustrates responses from 120 participants on how helpful they find social media in preparing their notes and assignments. Represented by the blue section, 45% of respondents find social media extremely helpful for their academic preparations. Shown in red, 37.5% consider it somewhat helpful. The orange segment shows that 15% have a neutral stance on the usefulness of social media for this purpose. The green slice indicates that a small fraction, around 2.5%, find it not very helpful. Represented by the purple section, approximately 0% of respondents believe social media is not helpful at all. Overall, a significant majority (82.5%) find social media either extremely or somewhat helpful in preparing their notes and assignments, indicating a positive perception of its utility in academic work.

5. Which social media is most convenient for sharing information/knowledge?

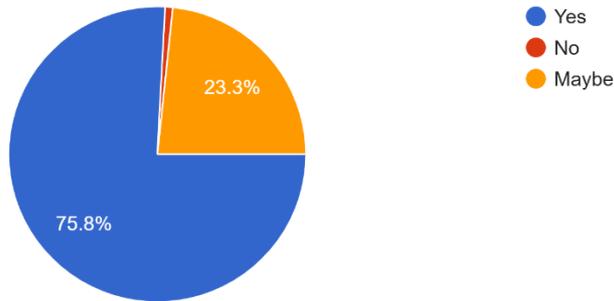
120 responses



The pie chart shows the results of a survey asking which social media platform is most convenient for sharing information/knowledge, with 120 responses. WhatsApp is the most preferred platform, with 52.5% of the responses. YouTube follows, chosen by 24.2% of the respondents. Other platforms like have significantly smaller shares, each with less than 10% of the responses. This indicates a strong preference for WhatsApp and YouTube for sharing information and knowledge among the respondents.

6. Do you think social media platforms have a responsibility to combat misinformation?

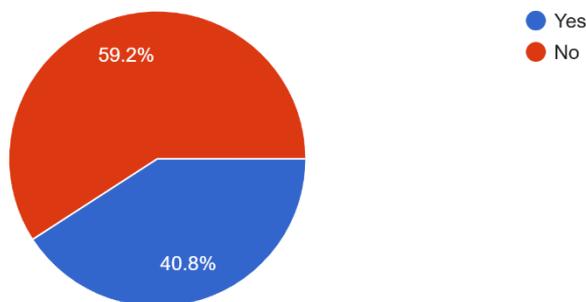
120 responses



The pie chart displays responses to the question, “Do you think social media platforms have a responsibility to combat misinformation?” based on 120 responses. 75.8% of respondents believe that social media platforms do have a responsibility to combat misinformation. 0% of respondents believe that social media platforms do not have a responsibility to combat misinformation. 23.3% of respondents are unsure or believe that social media platforms might have a responsibility to combat misinformation. The overwhelming majority (over three-quarters) of respondents think social media platforms should actively combat misinformation, indicating strong support for such measures. A smaller portion is uncertain, while no respondents believe that social media platforms have no responsibility in this matter.

7. Have you ever collaborated with others on social media for learning purpose?

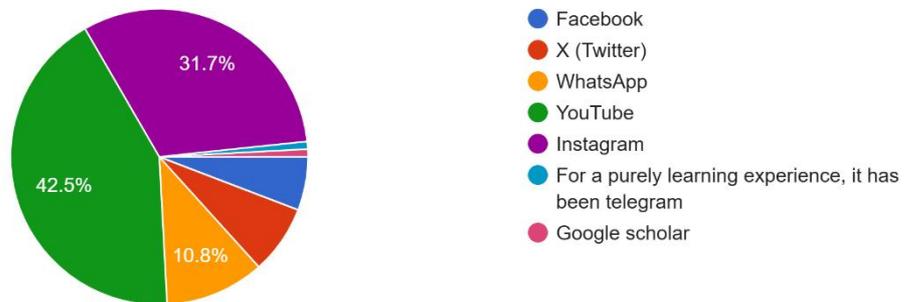
120 responses



The pie chart shows the responses to the question, "Have you ever collaborated with others on social media for learning purposes?" with a total of 120 responses. A majority of the respondents, 59.2%, indicated that they have not collaborated with others on social media for learning purposes. This could suggest that many individuals either prefer traditional methods of collaboration, are not aware of the collaborative features available on social media platforms, or simply haven't had the opportunity or need to collaborate in this way. A significant minority, 40.8%, have collaborated with others on social media for learning purposes. This indicates that a considerable number of people are using social media to connect with others for educational purposes

9. Which is the best social media you have experienced?

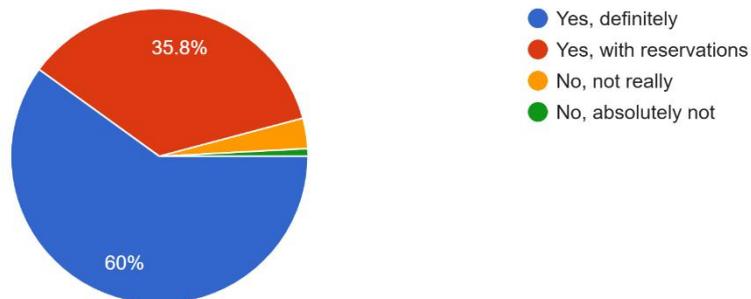
120 responses



The pie chart represents the responses to the question, "Which is the best social media you have experienced?" with 120 responses. The highest percentage of respondents, 42.5%, consider Google Scholar as the best social media they have experienced. The second-highest percentage, 31.7%, chose YouTube as the best social media experience. A smaller percentage of respondents, 10.8%, regard WhatsApp as the best social media experience. Facebook, X (Twitter), and Instagram have very small segments in the pie chart, indicating that few respondents consider them the best social media experience.

## 10. Would you recommend social media as a learning tool to others?

120 responses



The pie chart represents responses to the question: "Would you recommend social media as a learning tool to others?" A majority of the respondents, 60%, believe social media is definitely a useful learning tool and would recommend it to others. A significant portion, 35.8%, would recommend social media as a learning tool but with some reservations. This suggests they see potential benefits but also have some concerns or caveats. A small percentage, roughly 2.5%, are not inclined to recommend social media as a learning tool, indicating they don't find it particularly effective. An even smaller group, about 1.7%, strongly oppose recommending social media as a learning tool, likely due to perceived ineffectiveness or other issues. Overall, the majority of respondents (95.8%) see some value in using social media as a learning tool, either fully or with some reservations, while a small minority (4.2%) are against it.

### Findings and Conclusion

Facebook, WhatsApp, and YouTube platforms offer unique opportunities and challenges for enhancing learning experiences. Facebook groups promote peer-to-peer interaction and support, WhatsApp ensures efficient communication and real-time problem-solving, and YouTube serves as a valuable supplementary resource for visual and auditory learners. However, according to the responses, YouTube and WhatsApp are the most efficient and preferred learning tools for the students of The Assam Royal Global University Guwahati. The findings suggest that these platforms can significantly enhance the learning experience when used strategically. Social media platforms inherently foster greater engagement and motivation among learners. Facebook's interactive features, WhatsApp's instant communication capabilities, and YouTube's vast repository of educational videos provide diverse ways to captivate students' attention and sustain their interest in learning. These

platforms facilitate collaborative learning environments. Facebook groups and pages, WhatsApp group chats, and YouTube comment sections and live streams enable students to work together, share resources, and provide mutual support, thereby enhancing their collective learning experience. Using social media platforms for learning helps students develop important digital literacy and communication skills. Navigating these platforms, creating content, and engaging in online discussions are valuable skills in the modern digital world.

The study concludes that the use of Facebook, WhatsApp and YouTube as learning tools is indeed extremely beneficial and helpful for the students in their day to day life. Facebook, WhatsApp, and YouTube can serve as effective learning tools when used appropriately. Each platform offers unique features that can enhance learning experiences, such as Facebook's groups and pages for educational content, WhatsApp's communication capabilities for collaborative learning, and YouTube's vast library of instructional videos. However, it's essential to be mindful of potential distractions and misinformation on these platforms and to ensure that users critically evaluate the content they encounter. Additionally, educators and learners should consider how to integrate these platforms into their overall learning strategies to maximize their effectiveness. Facebook , WhatsApp, and YouTube offer powerful tools for modern education, capable of transforming traditional learning methods and making education more engaging and accessible.

However, their successful integration depends on strategic implementation, continuous evaluation, and a commitment to addressing the inherent challenges. As educational institutions evolve, embracing these platforms thoughtfully can lead to enriched learning experiences and better educational outcomes. By continuing to adapt and innovate, the educational potential of social media can be fully realized, fostering more engaging, collaborative, and flexible learning environments. The research found that while Facebook, WhatsApp, and YouTube hold substantial promise as learning tools, their success largely depends on thoughtful integration into the curriculum, appropriate training for both educators and students, and ongoing evaluation of their impact on educational outcomes. Hence, the use of WhatsApp , Facebook and YouTube for learning purpose is highly used by the students and is also extremely beneficial for their knowledge and study as well.

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