

TITLE: EFFECTS OF POLITICAL IDEOLOGIES CONSTRUCTION ON YOUTH WHILE EXPOSING TO FACEBOOK POLITICAL CONTENT

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Abstract

This study aims to understand how the political materials on Facebook help young adults build and nurture political beliefs and ideals with the help of a survey. Facebook is one of the most used platforms, which makes it an ideal interface for participating in political activities like gathering information, debates, and sharing opinions. The study at hand deals with the question of how the political content of posts, videos, and comments shapes the users' political beliefs and orientation. The study uses a survey method to analyze university students in Pakistan to understand the patterns of content consumption and engagement behaviors and their impact on the respondents' political beliefs. The survey reflects data on the level of exposure, type of content and trust to the information that people share on Facebook about politics. It was discovered that algorithmic content personalization is user preference-oriented, which leads to the formation and maintenance of echo chambers, in which users receive more frequently than not, are only presented with viewpoints that reinforce their ideology and thus beliefs. Conversely, in a more isolated case, other political opinions tend to sometimes replace the prevailing views when they are exposed. The paper also highlights the significance of incendiary content in the further polarization and the disinformation contribution to the political perception. This means that the users must be digitally literate so that they can question the political posts on Facebook in a more efficient manner. This is useful information to understand the role of social media in political socialization and offers a ground to further research and policy recommendations to oversee the excessive polarization, as well as, to promote informed civic participation.

INTRODUCTION

Facebook and social media in general have radically transformed how people consume political content and how they make their ideologies. It is among the most used advertising devices of communication in addition to any kind of political action since it allows users to

locate and interrelate any type of material, like news, articles and debates with ease. As a result, Facebook has played a significant role in the development of users' political opinions, and tends to increase users' focus on specific already held beliefs. Studies imply that the way content is

prescribed to users through algorithms cultivates echo chambers since users continue to receive the same type of content, and do not have the option of changing their established views (Cinelli et al., 2021). However, through its interactive functions like commenting and sharing, Facebook allows its users to engage with different content, which leads to users being challenged with alternative viewpoints, albeit less often. These two dynamics highlight the changing political landscape of society today, as one can observe, younger users, more active and engaged in social media discourse with pivotal social power, tend to be more willing to engage in politics.

Despite the fact that Facebook has the capacity to enhance political participation, its role in shaping political ideologies raises certain questions. The existence of such content can fuel disdain, misinformation, and political realities that do not necessarily align with the facts (Guess et al., 2020). Additionally, adults in their early twenties are heavily influenced by social media, as they are usually more active on social media platforms. The intended study aims to find out the impact of political content on Facebook on the political ideology formation among university students in Pakistan. The research uses a survey approach to analyze the relationship between content consumption and political members' attitudes and offers implications for teaching, policymaking, and digital education.

Key Terms and Concepts

1. Political Ideologies

Political ideologies are a collection of beliefs, values and ideas that describe how a society ought to operate and determine the political actions and inclinations of people. These ideologies tend to shape the perception of the individuals towards the political events, policies, and leaders. Facebook is the platform in which these ideologies are strengthened or disproved by being exposed to filtered political content. Ideologies do not exist in vacuums and they are subject to change by interacting with new information and opinions. (Jost, 2006).

2. Echo Chambers

Echo chambers: social media is one place where people are exposed to information and views that reinforce their ideological positions, especially on social media. Algorithms in the content curation of Facebook are aimed at the priority of those content that it correlates with the preference of the user, thus restricting the exposure to the variety of opinions. This process may result in an increase in polarization and the lack of tolerance towards the opposite opinions (Cinelli et al., 2021).

3. Algorithmic Content Curation

This is the process through which social media websites such as Facebook utilize algorithms to personalize the information shown to the users according to previous behavior, interests, and patterns of engagement. Although this improves user experience as it provides relevant content, it is also a source of selective exposure, which strengthens the existing beliefs and may even reduce the worldviews of users (Pariser, 2011).

4. Political Socialization

Political socialization refers to the process that involves individuals to formulate their political beliefs, values and attitudes. The social media such as Facebook is very important in this process particularly among the young adults who learn about politics in the cyberspace. Users can also communicate and access political information and debate through the platform and this will shape their perception of the political systems and ideologies (Loader et al., 2016).

5. Misinformation

Misinformation can be described as any kind of information that gets distributed as falsely or misleading information knowingly or unknowingly. The misinformation and fake news, the manipulated statistics or the twisted news is also the form of misinformation on Facebook that shapes the political opinions and ideologies of individuals. The fact that the fake news is distributed on a mass basis can distort the truth on the political facts and aggravate the

situation in making informed decisions (Guess et al., 2020).

Objectives of study

1. To examine the role of Facebook's political content in shaping the political ideologies of university students in Pakistan.
2. To analyze the relationship between content consumption patterns on Facebook and the reinforcement or diversification of political beliefs among youth.

Hypothesis

1. H1: Exposure to political content on Facebook significantly influences the formation of political ideologies among university students.
2. H2: Frequent engagement with politically aligned content on Facebook reinforces pre-existing political beliefs, creating echo chambers.
3. H3: Exposure to diverse political content on Facebook broadens the ideological perspectives of university students.
4. H4: Higher levels of engagement with emotionally charged political content on Facebook contribute to increased political polarization among youth.

Questions of study

1. How does exposure to political content on Facebook influence the formation of political ideologies among university students?
2. What types of political content are most frequently consumed by university students on Facebook?
3. Does Facebook's algorithmic content curation reinforce echo chambers, limiting students' exposure to diverse political viewpoints?
4. To what extent does engagement with emotionally charged political content on Facebook contribute to political polarization among university students?
5. How does the diversity of political content on Facebook impact the broadening or narrowing of students' ideological perspectives?

Problem Statement

The growing use of social media such as Facebook as a source of political information has

drastically changed the political socialization front especially among the youth. Although Facebook offers access to a broad spectrum of political-related content, its algorithmic personalization process tends to make the platform an echo-chamber, exposing users to a narrower scope of views mostly having the same ideology, which may be seen as polarizing current ideas and reinforcing them (Cinelli et al., 2021). This brings issues regarding the quality of political participation and distortion of objective realities among young users. Also, these problems are aggravated by the misinformation and emotionally colored content that is readily available on the site, which influences the political ideologies differently than informed decision-making (Guess et al., 2020). Regardless of its impact, little is known about the dynamics of these dynamics among the university students in Pakistan, a group that is actively using social media and is a significant group in the political future of the country. This paper aims to fill this gap by considering the impact of the content of Facebook politics in building political ideologies among university students, which necessitates the adoption of digital literacy programs to avert the possibility of adverse effects.

Significance of the Study

The study is very applicable when considering how Facebook, as a mainstream social media develops to define political ideologies among university students, which form a major segment in the determination of the future political landscape. The study provides insights on the interaction between technology and socialization surrounding politics among the youth in a developing nation as it aims at Pakistan where youths and the middle-aged use social media extensively.

To identify how the personalization of the content according to algorithms contributes to the creation of an echo chamber, which can also be polarized further through ideology, the findings will be used (Cinelli et al., 2021). The paper will also shed light on the misinformation and emotional content in influencing political

beliefs and the necessity to increase digital literacy (Guess et al., 2020).

These insights can be applied by policymakers, educators, and social media sites to develop interventions that will foster critical thinking and responsible content consumption. The research also adds to the scholarly literature because it helps to fill the gap in the knowledge of the effects of social media on political socialization in South Asia.

Research Methodology

This paper takes the quantitative research design using survey research method to investigate the influence of Facebook political content on the development of the political ideologies amongst Pakistani university students. The survey technique is selected because it can gather information regarding a big sample, and it will be possible to make general conclusions about the impact of political content on Facebook on the political beliefs of young adults.

Sampling Technique

The sample will be selected using a stratified random sampling method in order to have the representation of students in different universities in Pakistan considering the variables like their gender, age and their academic fields. The population to be targeted will be student populations in the universities between 18-30 years and those who are Facebook users and view political issues in Facebook. The sample will have a size of about 300 students so as to have statistical power and representativeness.

Data Collection

A structured questionnaire will be used to collect data, where the main variables will be the frequency of Facebook use, the kind of political content updated on, the degree of engagement with the political posts (like, comment, share), and political beliefs and affiliation. The questionnaire will also cover the perceived credibility of the political information that they come across in Facebook and whether they have

strengthened or undermined their current perceptions.

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics will be used to analyze the collected data to identify the trends in the use of Facebook and patterns of content consumption. The relationships that exist between the number of times that they are exposed to political content and the force of their political beliefs will be analyzed through the use of correlation analysis. Moreover, the effect of particular content types (e.g., news, opinion, or emotionally colored posts) on the formation, as well as polarization of political ideology, will be investigated with the help of regression analysis.

Ethical Considerations

The research will be carried out under ethical standards since the participation of the respondents will be voluntary and the information will not be disclosed. Each participant will be informed with an informed consent, which will outline them on the purpose of the research and they can withdraw at any time.

This method will provide the analytical summary of the impact of Facebook political materials on political ideologies among Pakistani university students and shed some light on the greater implications of social media as far as political socialization is concerned.

Variables

1. Independent Variable: Exposure to Political Content on Facebook

These are variable measures that determine the level of exposure of the students of the university to the political content on Facebook. It includes factors such as the frequency of political posts viewed, the types of political content consumed (e.g., news, opinion pieces, political ads), and the level of engagement with these posts (e.g., liking, commenting, sharing).

2. Dependent Variable: Political Ideology Formation

This variable refers to the political beliefs and ideologies that are shaped or reinforced as a

result of exposure to Facebook's political content. It includes the political affiliations of students, their opinions on various political issues, and the degree to which their beliefs align with the content they encounter on Facebook

Conceptualization and Operationalization

1. Independent Variable: Exposure to Political Content on Facebook

Conceptualization:

Exposure to political Facebook content can be defined as the level and the number of times that the university students are exposed to political content on Facebook. This material may be political commentary, news articles, opinion pieces, political advertisements, political posts shared by political figures, pages, or groups. The information may be true and partial, and it is part of the formation or strengthening of political ideologies.

Operationalization:

Exposure to political content will be measured using the following indicators:

Frequency of Exposure: How often respondents encounter political content on Facebook (e.g., daily, weekly, rarely).

Types of Content: The specific kinds of political content consumed, including news articles, opinion posts, videos, memes, and political advertisements. Respondents will be asked to rate the frequency of exposure to each type.

Engagement Level: The degree of interaction with political content, such as liking, sharing, commenting, or following political pages. This will be measured on a Likert scale (e.g., never, occasionally, frequently, always).

Measurement:

Survey item examples:

"How often do you see political posts on your Facebook feed?" (Likert scale: Never, Rarely, Occasionally, Frequently, Always)

"What types of political content do you engage with on Facebook? (Select all that apply: news articles, opinion pieces, political ads, videos, memes, other)"

"How often do you like, comment, or share political content on Facebook?" (Likert scale: Never, Rarely, Occasionally, Frequently, Always)

2. Dependent Variable: Political Ideology Formation

Conceptualization:

Political ideology formation means the creation or strengthening of political ideology and political affiliations due to the exposure to political messages on Facebook. It entails the way people view the political events, party affiliations, social issues, and policies. It also indicates the consistency or inconsistency of the ideas of an individual with certain political ideologies (e.g., liberal, conservative, progressive).

Operationalization:

Political ideology formation will be assessed through the following indicators:

Political Affiliation: The political party or ideology the respondent most identifies with (e.g., conservative, liberal, centrist).

Attitudes Toward Political Issues: The respondent's stance on key political issues (e.g., taxation, human rights, environmental policies) based on their exposure to political content on Facebook.

Political Polarization: The degree to which exposure to Facebook content increases polarization between opposing political views. This can be measured by respondents' self-reported attitudes toward people with differing political views.

These conceptualizations and operationalizations allow the study to measure the relationship between Facebook exposure and political ideology formation accurately, providing insights into the influence of social media on political beliefs.

Theory of Selective Exposure

The theoretical concept underpinning the given research is based on the Selective Exposure Theory according to which people tend to seek information that can support what they already believe, think, and value and avoid information

that can decrease their positions (Stroud, 2008). This theory specifically applies to Facebook politics where the personalization based on the algorithm supports further the inclination of users to work with ideologically consistent content. Selective exposure may also aid in the development and strength of their political beliefs by university students, as they browse through political content in the social media, which can result in the development of echo chambers and ideological polarization Stroud N. J. (2008).

DATA Analysis

The popularity of Facebook among the youth has seen it become an influential tool of socialization in politics as well as ideological building. Exposed to all forms of political information on the platform such as news articles, opinion pieces, user generated discussions, or viral posts, the young people are being continuously shaped and re-shaped in their understanding and perception of the political ideologies. This chapter will be a discussion of the collected data in detail to ascertain the effectiveness of being exposed to

political content in Facebook in shaping political ideologies amongst the youth. The findings will attempt to provide significant information about the way social media can change political thinking and identity by discussing the patterns of content consumption, engagement patterns and perceived credibility of the information.

Such themes as the type of the political content that young users are inclined to read, the levels of their activity and the influence that they experience being exposed to different points of view will serve as an analysis base. Furthermore, the question of whether the ideological diversity is being reinforced or encouraged by the very concept of content personalization, which is algorithm-driven, is also discussed in the chapter. This study aims to identify correlations between Facebook exposure and the formation of political ideologies by examining survey answers and user interaction data and provides a detailed insight into how Facebook has influenced the politics of the current youth generation.

Please provide the following demographic details:

90 responses

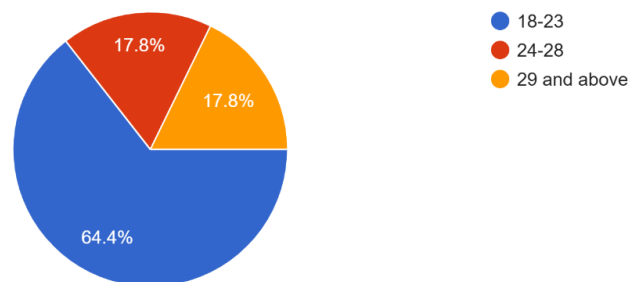


Figure 1.1

Explanation: Table shows the demographics analysis of different age groups who are engaged with Facebook content. According to table majority of Facebook users are 18-23 age groups which is 64.4% and 17.8% are 24-28 age group

and 17.8% are 29 and above age group are the users of Facebook.

Gender

93 responses

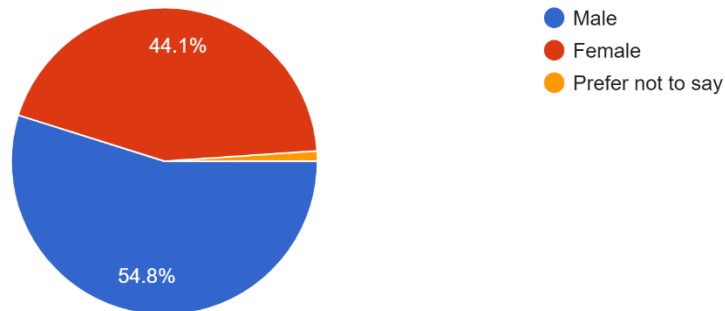


Figure: 1.2

Explanation: According to the Table 54.8% are Male users of Facebook, 44.1% are female users while remaining prefer not to show their identity.

Qualification

92 responses

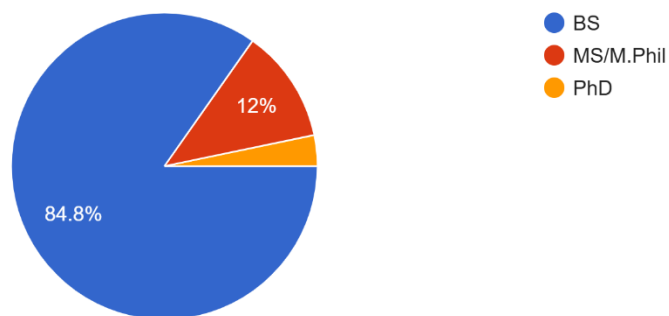


Figure: 1.3

Explanation: According to the table majority of Facebook users are under graduate students of universities while 15% are Post Graduate

How often do you use Facebook?

91 responses

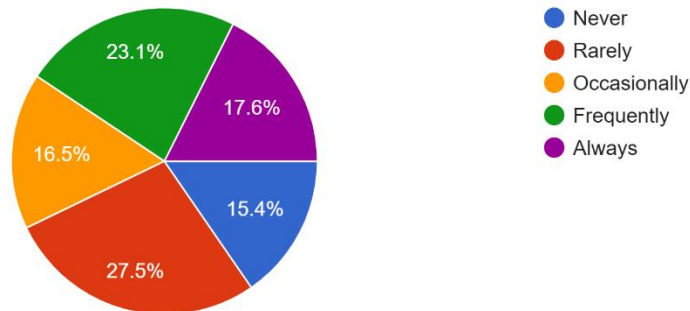


Figure 1.4

Explanation: According to the Table 17.6% students use facebook always, 23.1% use

Frequently, 16% use Occasionally, 27.5% use rarely while 15.4% never used facebook.

How often do you encounter political content (news, opinion pieces, political discussions) on Facebook?

93 responses

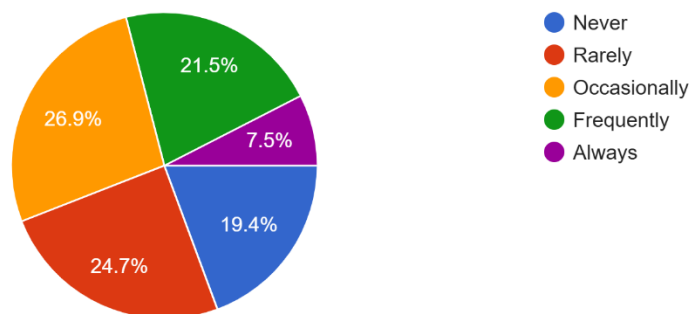


Figure 1.5

Explanation: According to the table 7.5% students encounter Political Content always, while 21.5% encounter frequently, 26.9% occasionally, 24.7% rarely while 19.4% never encounter political content on Facebook.

Which types of political content do you most often encounter on Facebook? (Select all that apply)

93 responses

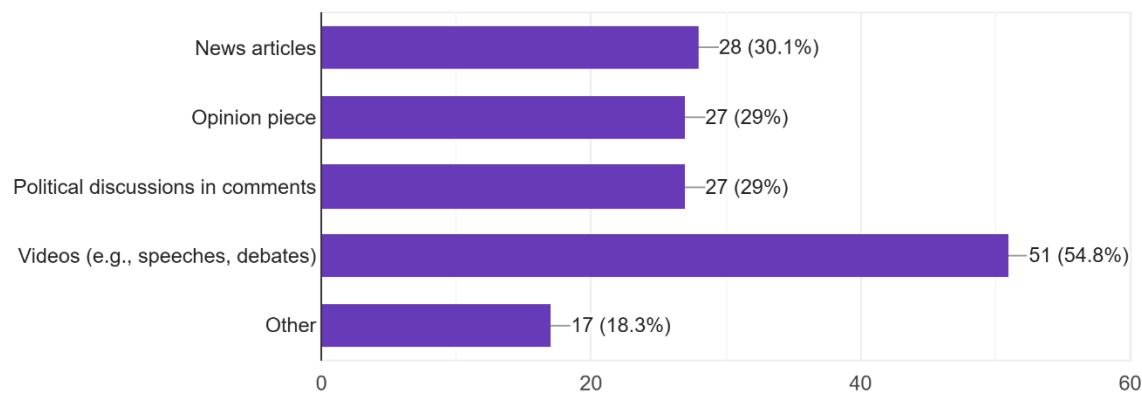


Figure 1.6

Explanation: According to the figure, 54.8% respondents are engaged with Political Videos, 29% are engaged with Political discussions in

comments, 27% expose to opinion pieces, 30.1% expose to News articles while 18.3% used it for some other purposes.



How often do you engage with political content on Facebook (like, comment, share, etc.)?

93 responses

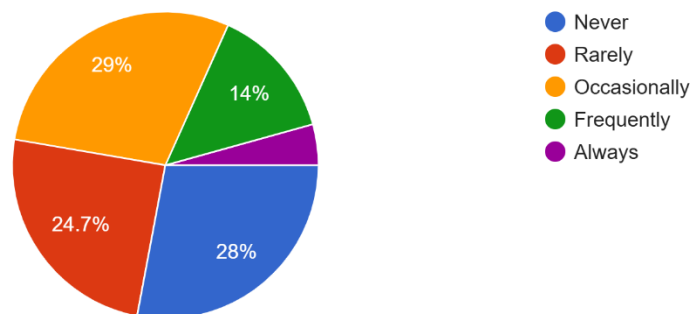


Figure 1.7

Explanation: the figure shows 14% respondents engage with political content on Facebook always, 14% Frequently, 29% occasionally, 24.7% rarely

and 28% never engage with political content shown on Facebook

Do you follow any political pages or groups on Facebook?

93 responses

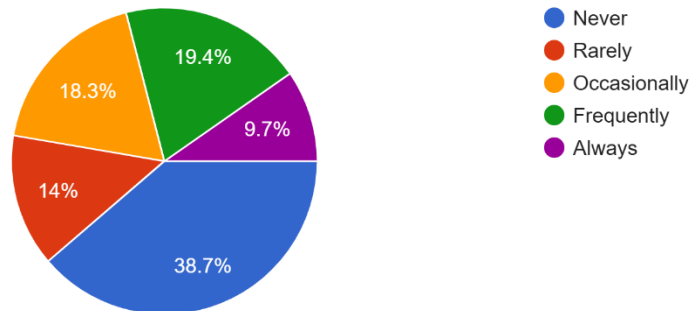


Figure 1.8

Explanation: figure shows 9.7 respondents follow political pages on Facebook, 19.4% frequently,

18.3% occasionally, 14% rarely while 38.7% never follow any political pages or groups.

Which political ideology or party do you most identify with?

90 responses

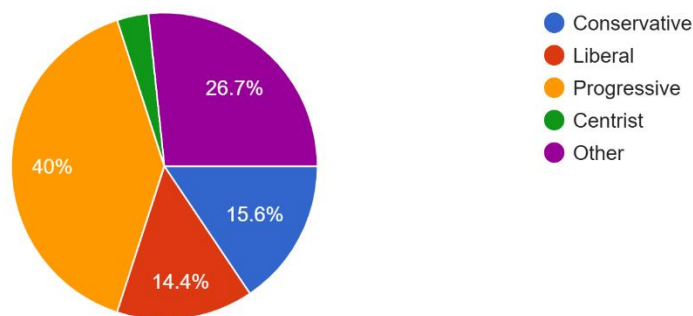


Figure 1.9

Explanation: figure shows 15.6% respondents supports conservative political system, 14.4% supports Liberal system, 40% supports progressive system few supports centrist and 26.7% supports some other kind of political system.

How would you describe your views on the following political issues? (Rate each statement)

93 responses

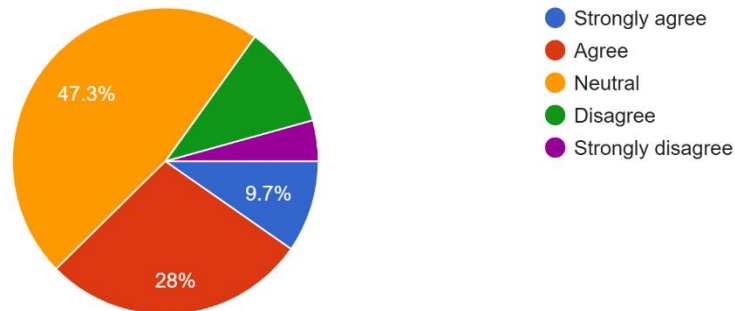


Figure 1.10

Explanation: 47.3% respondents are neutral on political issues presented on facebook, 28% has effects and reacts, 9.7 strongly reacts to political issues and very few are not agree to react and

engage with the political issues presented on Facebook.

Do you think your political views have been influenced by the political content you encounter on Facebook?

92 responses

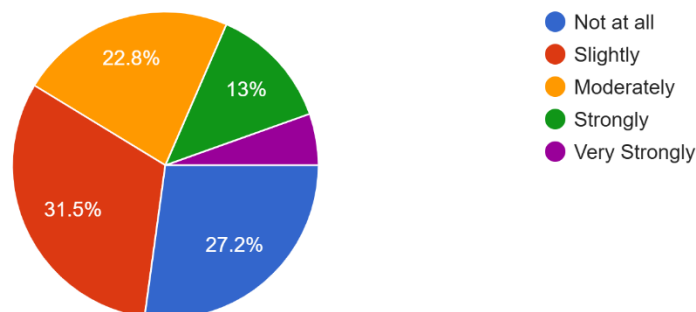


Table 1.11

Explanation: figure shows that the political views of 5.5% respondents are very strongly influenced by circulated political content on Facebook, 13% respondents have strong effects, 22.8%

respondents hold moderate effects, 31.5% has less effects.

How often do you encounter political views on Facebook that are different from your own?

91 responses

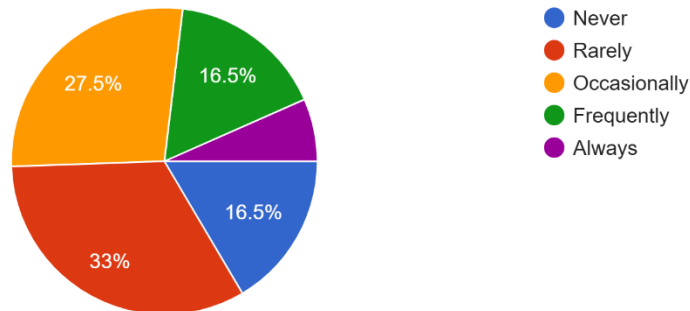


Figure: 1.12

Explanation: less respondents supports that they encounter large frequency of political views that are different from their own views, 16.5% frequently encounter such contents, 27.5% occasionally expose to such contents, 33% rarely

expose to such contents and 16.5% never encounter such kind of political contents.

How do you feel about individuals who hold political views different from your own?

92 responses

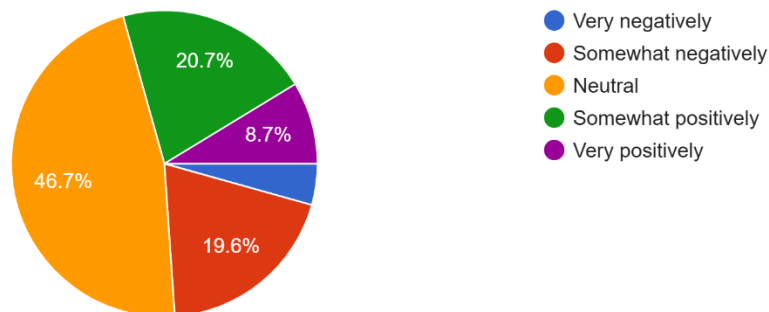


Figure 1.13

Explanation: figure shows that 8.7% respondents feel very positively when they encounter opposing views, 20.7% somewhat positive but 46.7% are placed on neutral, 19.6% feel somewhat negative when they expose to different views and

remaining feel totally negative when they expose opposite views from their own.

Has exposure to diverse political content on Facebook influenced your political perspective?

88 responses

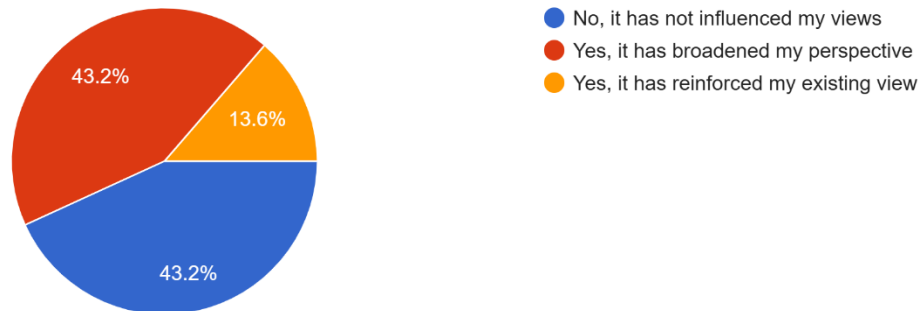


Figure 1.14

Explanation: figure shows that the diverse political content from the respondents own has

43.2% no influence on existence perspectives, 43.2% has effects to broadened the perspectives while on 13.6% respondents it has zero effects.

Has your exposure to political content on Facebook ever caused you to feel more polarized in your political beliefs (more strongly aligned with your ideology or more hostile toward opposing views)?

89 responses

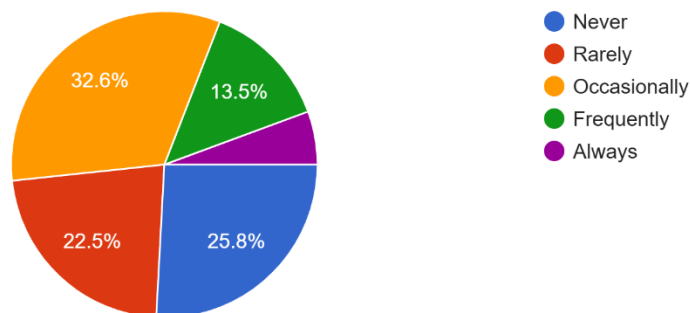


Figure 1.15

Explanation: figure shows 13.5% feel more polarized, 32.6% occasionally polarized, 22.5% rarely polarized and 25.8% showed no concern.

How do you feel about the political content shared by your Facebook friends or connections?

91 responses

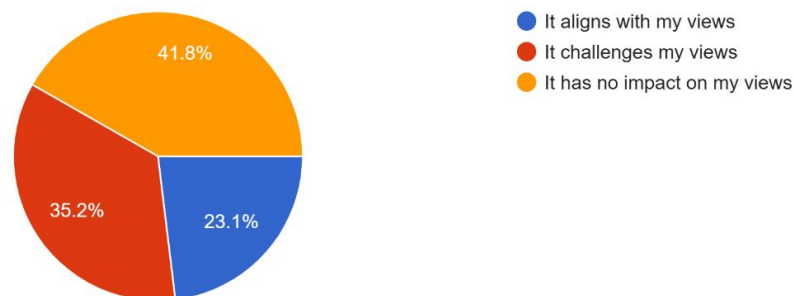


Figure 1.16

Explanation: figure shows Facebook's shared contents aligns with the already generated views in 23.1%, but it challenges the formed views of

35.2% and on 41.8% respondents showed that it has no impact on their views.

How much trust do you place in political content found on Facebook?

91 responses

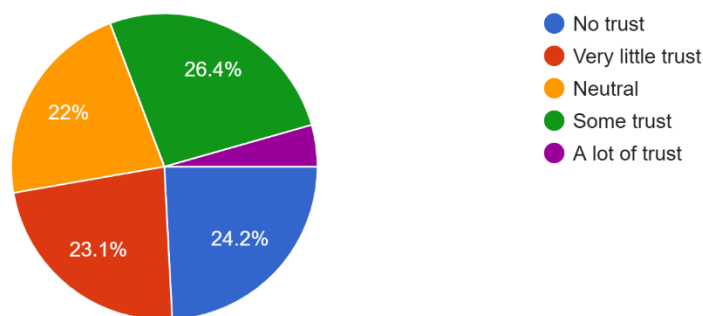


Figure 1.17

Explanation: figure shows that 24.2% respondents don't trust on presented political content on Facebook, 23.1% respondents has very little trust, 22% are neutral, 26.4% believe and trust on political content found on Facebook while remaining said they trust a lot on presented content about politics.

How often do you encounter misinformation or biased content when consuming political content on Facebook?

90 responses

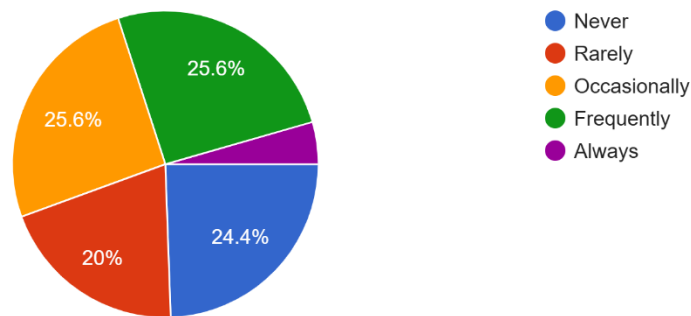


Figure 1.18

Explanation: figure shows 20% respondents rarely encounter misinformation while consuming political contents on Facebook, 25.6% occasionally encounters such content,

25.6% frequently encounter such content and remaining always encounter such content on Facebook.

Do you verify political information encountered on Facebook through other sources (e.g., news websites, fact-checking)?

93 responses

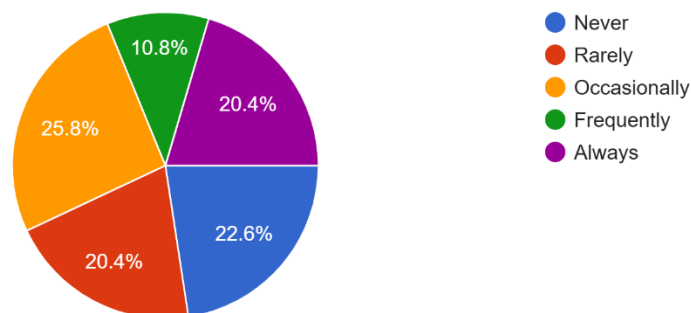


Figure 1.19

Explanation: figure shows 20.4% people rarely verify political content that either it is real or fake, 25.8% occasionally verify, only 10.8% frequently verify the authenticity of content while 20.4% always verify the presented political content on Facebook.

Results and Discussion

The results of the research paper indicate some important trends in the determination of the role of Facebook political news in shaping political ideologies among the young population. The statistics show that most of the respondents regularly receive political content on Facebook, the most frequently viewed types of content being

news articles, opinion pieces, and political memes. The first trend is that politically aligned content tends to reinforce preexisting ideas and this has resulted in ideological echo chambers whereby people interact mainly with content that supports their opinions. However, a smaller proportion of the respondents equally purported to receive a range of opinions due to the purported content and posts left by their friends with divergent opinions, which shows that at least ideological variety can be facilitated by the exposure algorithm available on Facebook.

Also discussed are the implications of the findings by establishing how the nature and the content to which a youth is subjected affects their perception and critical thinking abilities of politics. Although there is a possibility that the repeated exposure to partisan information can further entrench the ideological divide, there is a question of misinformation and the contribution of the misinformation by the echo chambers to one-sided political narratives. However, respondents who stated that they have had discussions with someone who has opposite views were more open to other opinions and provided a more nuanced approach to the issue of politics. These findings highlight the dual influence of the political content on Facebook as it gives people a platform to engage in and be aware of politics, it also presents the issue of ideological polarization and misinformation. The chapter ends by highlighting the importance of having media literacy programs to teach the young ones to be critical evaluators in their political coverage to help them handle the content more efficiently.

Results

How does exposure to political content on Facebook influence the formation of political ideologies among university students?

The findings show that political content on Facebook plays an important role in shaping political ideologies among students in universities as it affects their perceptions, attitudes, and opinions on different sociopolitical matters. A considerable number of interviewees indicated that their political ideologies have been changing over the years as a result of the overall interaction

with political information especially through reading of news stories, political commentaries and discussions in comment boxes. The results also indicate that the regular exposure of politically aligned material is more likely to prove the relevance of the already held views of the students and occasional exposure to the opposing opinion leads to the development of the critical thinking and ideological re-evaluation.

What types of political content are most frequently consumed by university students on Facebook?

The statistics show that the most popular political content is news articles, opinion articles, political memes, and video clips. Out of these, news articles of mainstream media sources were mentioned the most often, and there was a bias towards local and national political news. Also, political memes and short video were especially popular among students because of the easy digestible format and the possibility to share it. It is also revealed that students are more likely to engage with the content that corresponds to their interests and political orientation, and many of them subscribe to certain pages or groups content that are regular on their production of a content that points to their ideology preferences.

Does Facebook's algorithmic content curation reinforce echo chambers, limiting students' exposure to diverse political viewpoints?

The findings indicate that the algorithmic content curation by Facebook actually helps to reinforce the process of the echo chambers since most students stated that they see more content that mirrors their prior beliefs over content that challenges them. Machine-powered suggestions (or recommendations) that are based on user interactions (likes, shares and comments) build a feedback mechanism that boosts the content of the corresponding ideological standpoints. Nevertheless, a minor proportion of students reported that they sometimes experience varying perspectives due both to a mutual content that is shared by friends and through the active search of an alternative opinion by visiting various pages and groups.

To what extent does engagement with emotionally charged political content on Facebook contribute to political polarization among university students

The results show that emotionally laden political news, including news that includes sensational headlines, polarizing language, or provocative images, is important to developing political polarization in university students. The respondents reported that their attitudes changed to a certain degree of emotional responsiveness (anger or frustration) when they read such content, thus becoming more polarized and willing to get involved in online fights with the opposite opinions. In addition, emotionally-charged information would also prompt students to become more adamant in their opinions on political matters which further polarize the ideological standpoint and makes them less ready to hear the other point of view.

How does the diversity of political content on Facebook impact the broadening or narrowing of students' ideological perspectives?

The findings are that the content diversity has a mixed effect on the ideological perspectives of the students. Although there was an experience of the diversification of perspectives by being exposed to a range of political content in a way that exposed students to different opinions, it happened in a number of students who were narrowed down by the exposure and attraction to ideologically oriented content. Learners who actively sought alternative sources and interacted with people of other opinions to discuss politics more often had a more nuanced outlook, and those who were staying in their ideological subcultures were reinforced in their existing stance, which resulted in a stronger worldview.

Recommendations

1. **Promoting Media Literacy Programs**
Media literacy courses preventing students to make critical judgments concerning political information on Facebook should be presented at universities. Such programs must aim at assisting the students to recognize bias, misinformation, and propaganda and motivate them to explore other views. One of the ways students can be informed about the functionality of social media algorithms and their impact on the content consumption patterns is through workshops and seminars.
2. **Encouraging Exposure to Diverse Political Content**
To overcome the issue with echo chambers, the students are expected to diversify their information streams by subscribing to pages and groups with a variety of political views. Universities and student groups can join forces to design awareness programs that will encourage media consumption to be balanced and encourages open-mindedness in political debate.
3. **Developing Fact-Checking Initiatives**
Schools ought to coordinate with the fact-checking agencies to give students the reliable sources to counter political information they come across on Facebook. Economic measures such as the promotion of fact-checking tools and encouraging students to cross-verify the sources prior to sharing political content can also help prevent the propagation of misinformation and facilitate ideological polarization.
4. **Encouraging Constructive Political Discourse**
Universities are supposed to create forums and discussion groups where the students can hold a constructive and respectful political discourse. To promote critical thinking and the ability to tolerate alternative opinion, it is possible to encourage students to engage in debates and discussion that reflect various perspectives and polarization is less likely to occur.
5. **Social Media Algorithm Awareness Campaigns**
Awareness initiatives ought to be undertaken to teach students the working of the algorithm of Facebook,

where it filters the content according to the interactions and preferences of the students. The knowledge on the effects of algorithmic bias in their content exposure would enable students to take active measures in seeking a variety of perspectives and leave filter bubbles.

6. **Incorporating Political Education in Curricula**

Academic curricula should incorporate modules on political awareness and responsible social media usage. Courses that explore the impact of social media on political opinions and democracy can help students develop a more comprehensive understanding of the role of digital platforms in shaping political ideologies.

7. **Encouraging Emotional Regulation Strategies**

Given the influence of emotionally charged political content on polarization, students should be encouraged to practice emotional regulation strategies such as reflective thinking, mindful engagement, and avoiding reactionary interactions. Universities can offer counseling services and workshops to help students navigate emotional responses to online political content.

8. **Collaboration with Social Media Platforms**

Universities and policymakers should collaborate with social media platforms to advocate for algorithmic transparency and the promotion of diverse, fact-based content. Working with Facebook to enhance content recommendations that prioritize balanced and verified news sources can contribute to a more informed and less polarized student population.

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