



USING OF SOCIAL MEDIA: INSIGHTS FROM UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS OF WEST BENGAL

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Abstract: In the post Covid-19 World, People have become ‘slaves’ to mobile phone and electronic gadgets. Everyone is locked in their electronics device in whole day. Undergraduate Students were not left out of this slavery. The social media show many opportunities and pose several risks. Social media affects our lives; hence research is needed because its effects are hotly debated. The present study has been designed to know the perceptions regarding social media along with investigate primary purpose for using social media, and to identify the effects of social media on their mental health and well being among the undergraduate students of West Bengal, India. The study has been conducted during the month of March, 2025 in West Bengal, India. Primary data have been collected through the self-made questionnaire scheduled in Google form from the students who are presently studying in different undergraduate courses across West Bengal by applying purposive sampling technique. We have received data from 331 students from ten districts across the said state. Findings from the present study indicate that social media can control undergraduate youths’ life today. While social media can enhance academic/educational purpose (41.99%), socializing with friends and family (11.18%), news and current affairs (7.55%), and networking and career opportunities (4.84%). The salience of its negative effects on users’ mental health and well-being are increases anxiety, comparison, distraction, etc.

Keywords: Social Media, Undergraduate Students, West Bengal

Introduction: In the post Covid-19 World, People have become ‘slaves’ to mobile phone and electronic gadgets. Everyone is locked in their electronics device in whole day. Undergraduate Students were not left out of this slavery. Today, they are engaging a huge amount of time in social media for either educational/academic purposes or entertainment and increasingly more have their own online devices. The social media show many opportunities and pose several risks. They can make famous themselves with electronic devices very quickly. In this age group, it is difficult for them to measure the opportunities and risks of using social media platforms. Thus, the popularity of the internet and social networks (Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, You Tube, etc.)



are gradually high among this age group. They can familiarize themselves in social media platform very quickly with ‘Like, Comments, and Subscriptions’. So now all the enjoyments, emotion, sorrow of youth are caging in electronic device.

Social media networks are growing worldwide. Now a day, Facebook stands as the most popular social media platform worldwide, with 3.07 billion monthly active users—the highest among all social platforms. This figure accounts for 37.81% of the global population and 59.38% of all social media users worldwide. Twitter has 388 million monthly active users in 2024. Instagram reached 2 billion monthly active users, whereas YouTube has more than 2.70 billion monthly active users as of April 2025.

Social media affects our lives; hence research is needed because its effects are hotly debated. Privacy, misinformation, cyberbullying, and social media addiction are common controversies. We must comprehend social media's effects to solve these problems and maximize its benefits. With this background, the present study has been designed to know the perceptions regarding social media along with investigate primary purpose for using social media, and to identify the effects of social media on their mental health and well being among the undergraduate students of West Bengal, India.

Objectives of the Study: The objectives of the present study are—

1. To know the perceptions regarding social media among the undergraduate students of West Bengal, India.
2. To investigate primary purpose for using social media among undergraduate students.
3. To identify the effects of social media on their mental health and well being.

Methodology of the Study: The present study is a survey type research. The study has been conducted during the month of March, 2025 in West Bengal, India. Primary data have been collected through the self-made questionnaire scheduled in Google form from the students who are presently studying in different undergraduate courses across West Bengal by applying purposive sampling technique. We have received data from 331 students from ten districts across the said state. The secondary data have been collected from different sources like research articles, news-paper articles, website etc. Then the collected data have been analyzed qualitatively. We highlighted some key features of respondents in the following sub-sections:



a. Background of Respondents:

Table 01 shows characteristics of study population. It has been revealed from the present study that the most of respondents belong to female students which are 78.25% and the male students are 21.45%. There are also one other gender respondent. The girl students are relatively higher among the general students population proportion. The age wise distribution of respondent in this present study is shown below in table 01. Rural area students (60.12%) are major reported than urban and semi-urban area students (19.94%) each.

Table 01: Background of Respondents

Background		N	Percentage
Gender	Male	71	21.45
	Female	257	78.25
	Others	01	0.30
Location of Residence	Rural	199	60.12
	Semi-urban	66	19.94
	Urban	66	19.94
Age	18 th years	58	17.52
	19 th years	114	34.44
	20 th years	83	25.08
	21 st years	59	17.82
	22 nd years	09	2.72
	23 rd years	03	0.91
	24 th years	02	0.60
	25 th years	03	0.91

Total N=331

Source: Primary Data

b. District wise Distribution of Respondents: We have received data from 331 undergraduate students from ten districts of West Bengal, India. In this present study, majority of the respondents (84.59%) reside in Purba Medinipur district. Significant numbers of students (10.88%) belong to Paschim Medinipur district. There are very small number of respondents found in Jhargram, Bankura, Kolkata, Birbhum, South 24 Parganas, Hoogly, Purba Bardhaman, and Howrah districts those data has been depicted in the following figure 01.

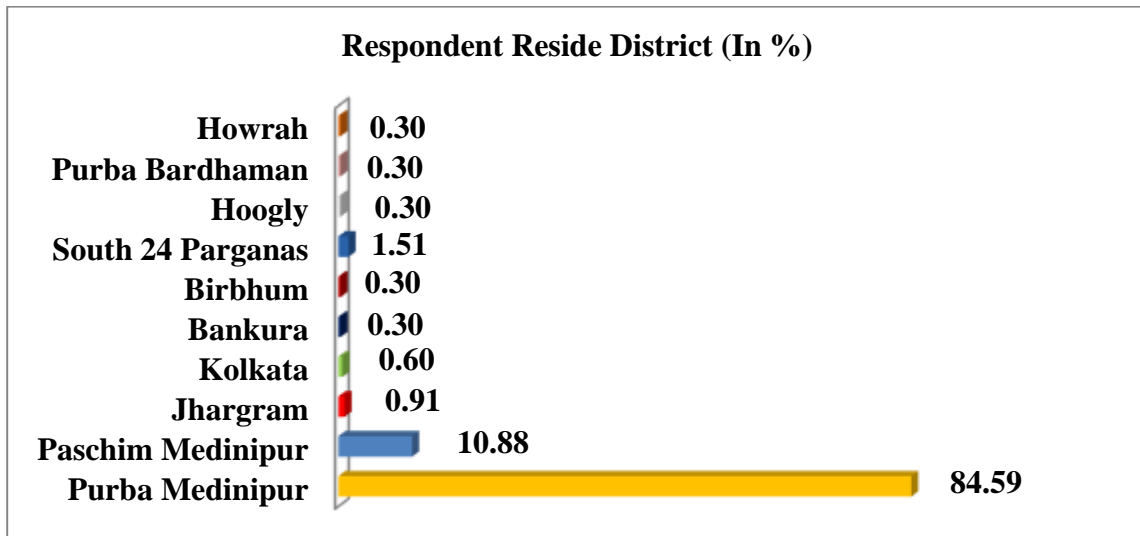


Figure 01: Resident Reside District

Source: Primary Data

- c. Respondent's Academic Discipline:** It has been revealed from the present study that the most of the respondents (90.94%) read in Arts and Humanities section. Some of them study in Professional course (like B.Ed., L.L.B. etc.) which is 3.32% and Science 3.63%. Very small portion of student's academic disciplines are Commerce, Engineering & Technology, and Medical & Health Science.

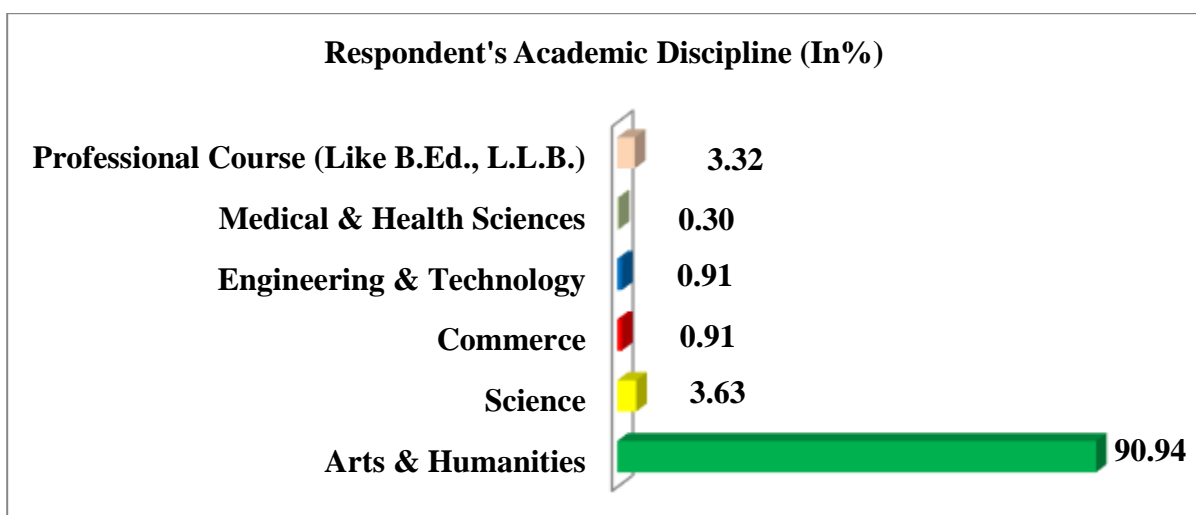


Figure 02: Respondent's Academic Discipline

Source: Primary Data

Findings and Discussion: The findings of the study along with discussion are given below:



- a) **Using Preference of Different Social Media:** It has been found from the present study that the most of respondents (30.82%) utilize Facebook, Whats app, and You Tube. 30.82% of respondents also used Facebook, Whats app, Instagram, Telegram, and You Tube. Some of respondents also accessed You Tube (5.74%), Instagram (3.63%), Whats app (23.56%), Facebook (0.60%) as a social media platform. 5.44% of respondents expressed that they used Facebook, Whats app, Instagram, Twitter (now X), and You Tube.

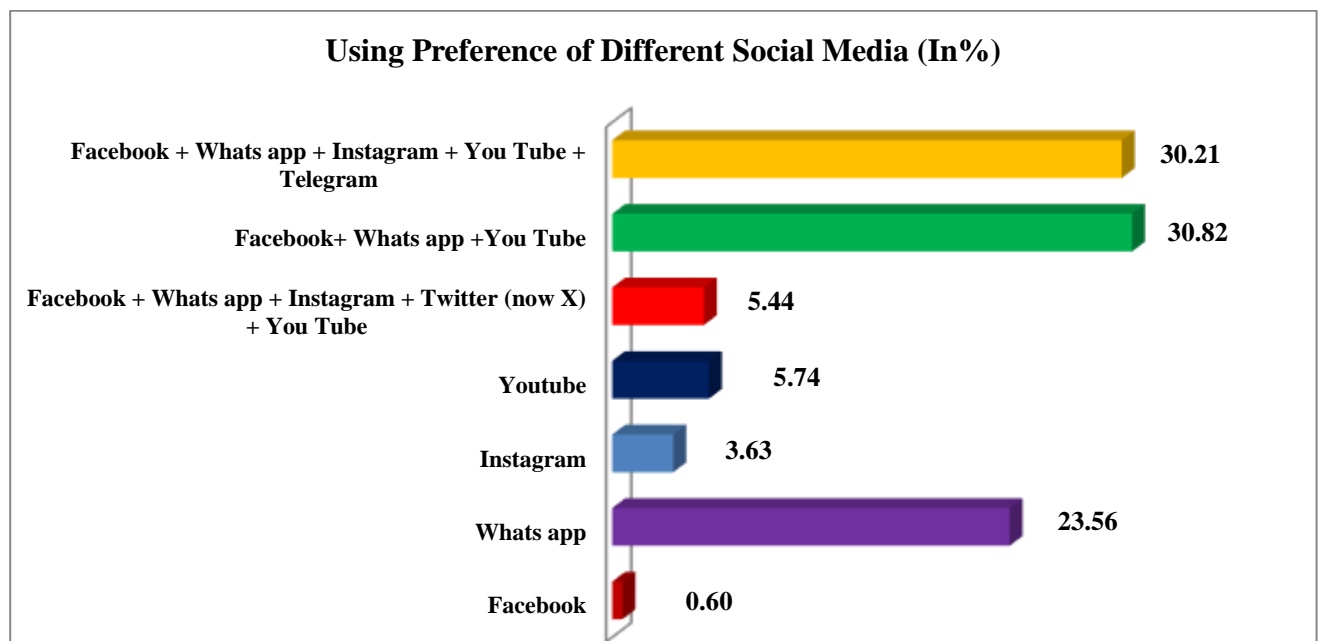


Figure 03: Using Preference of Different Social Media

Source: Primary Data

- b) **How Often Respondents Use Social Media:** It has been revealed from the present study that the most of the respondents (67.37%) used social media multiple times in a day. 18.43% and 6.95% of respondents spent time in social media once a day and few times a week respectively. Some respondents (5.74%) used such things rarely. 1.51% respondents never used social media.

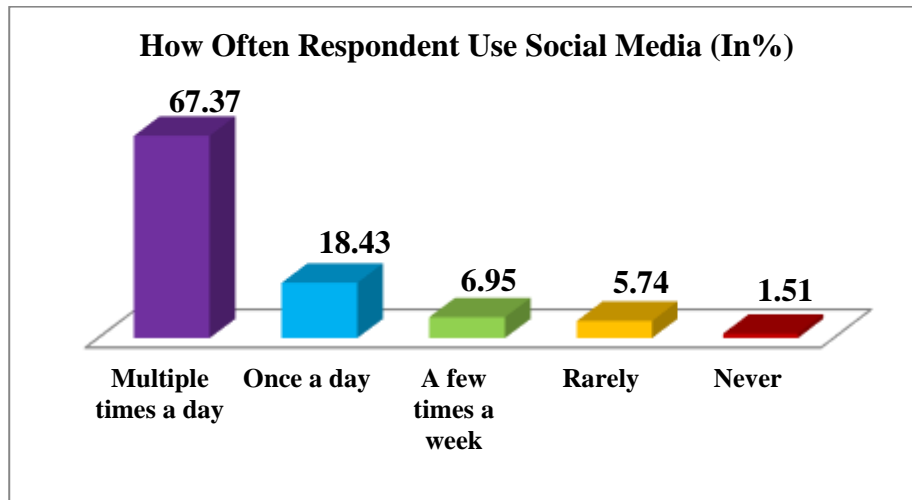


Figure 04: How Often Respondents Use Social Media Source: Primary Data

- c) **Spending Time on Social Media Daily:** In this present study, we show that the majority numbers of students (40.48%) spent time in social media 1-2 hours daily. Some of them (28.40%) engaged 2-4 hours. Some students also expressed that they used social media less than 1 hour (17.52%) and more than 4 hours (13.60%) daily.

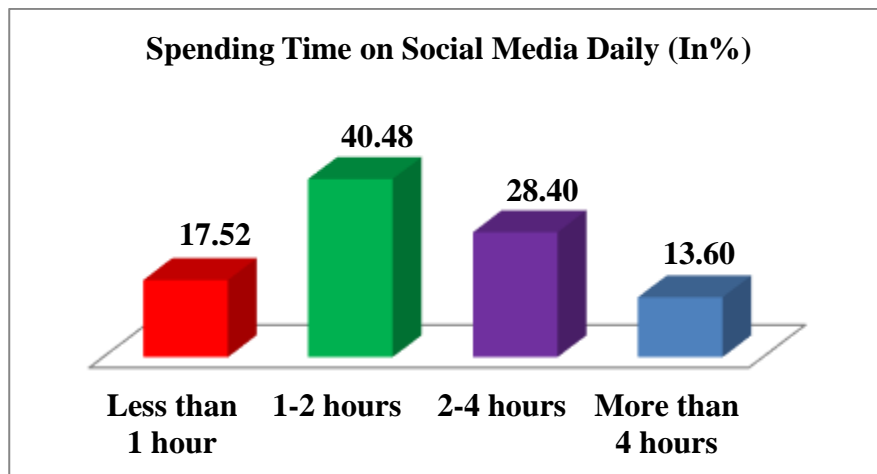


Figure 05: Respondent's Spent Time on Social Media Daily Source: Primary Data

- d) **Primary Purpose for Using Social Media:** It has been found from present study that the majority of respondents (41.99%) are using social media for academic/educational purpose. Significant number of students (34.44%) reported that their primary purpose for using social media is entertainment (videos, music, reels, memes etc.). The rest of respondents are use social media in different purposes which are socializing with friends and family (11.18%), news and current affairs (7.55%), and networking and career opportunities (4.84%).

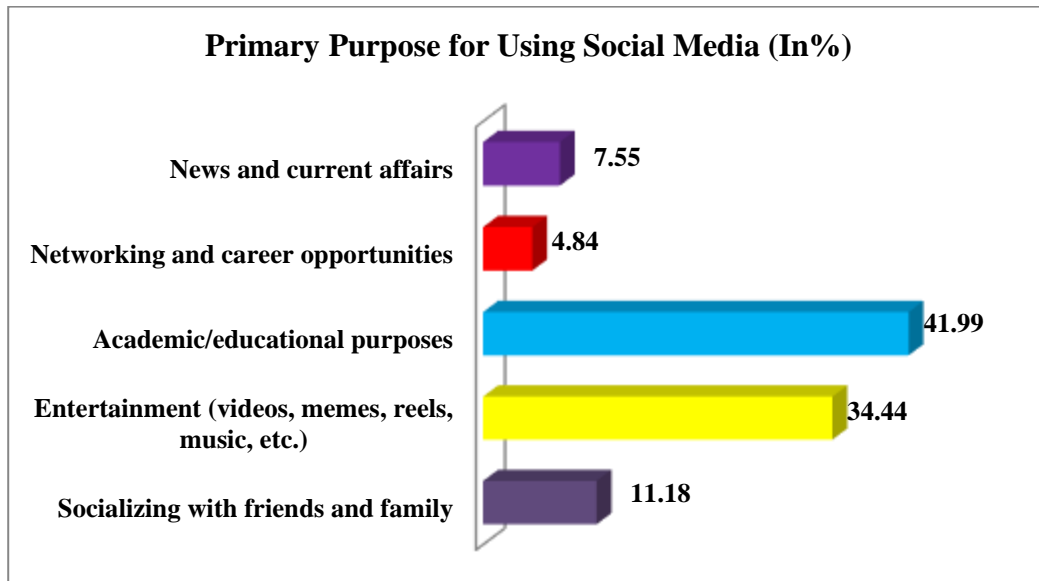


Figure 06: Primary Purpose for Using Social Media Source: Primary Data

- e) **Social Media Helped in Respondent's Studies:** In this present study, it has been found that the most of students (58.31%) got help from social media for their studies significantly. Some respondents (36.86%) expressed that social media helped to some extent in their course. Respondents also reported that it has no impact in their studies (2.72%) and social media is distracting their studies (2.11%).

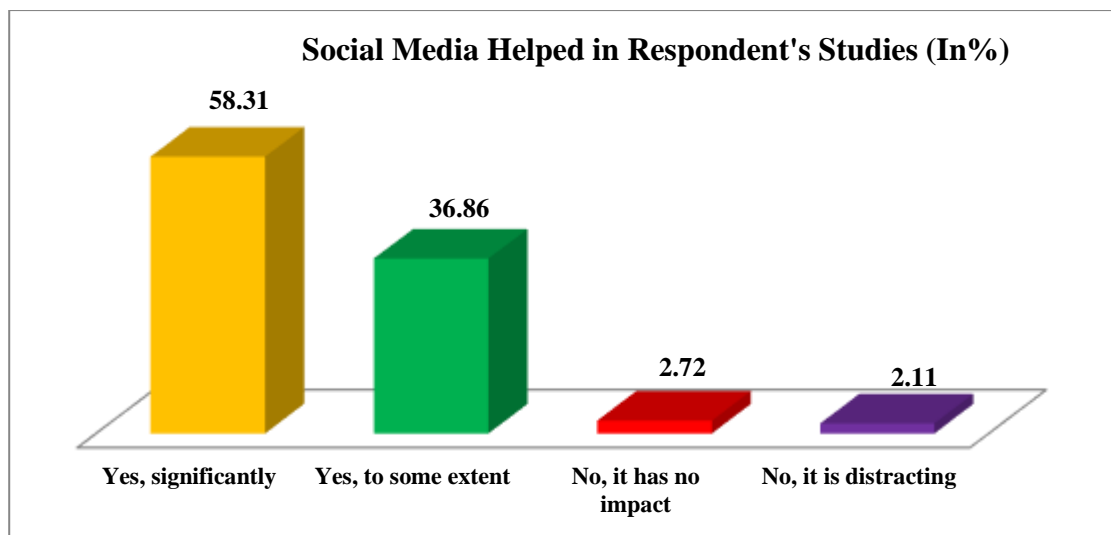


Figure 07: Social Media Helped in Respondent's Studies Source: Primary Data

- f) **Social Media and Their Effect on Mental Health:** In this present study, we also focus on respondent's mental health which is influenced by social media. It can be learnt that the



33.84% of respondents have no significant impact influence by social media in their mental health. The majority of respondents (55.59%) said that social media is positively (reduce stress, connects with people, etc.) influenced in their mental health. Some of students (10.57%) reported that their mental health influenced by social media negatively (increases anxiety, comparison, distraction, etc.).

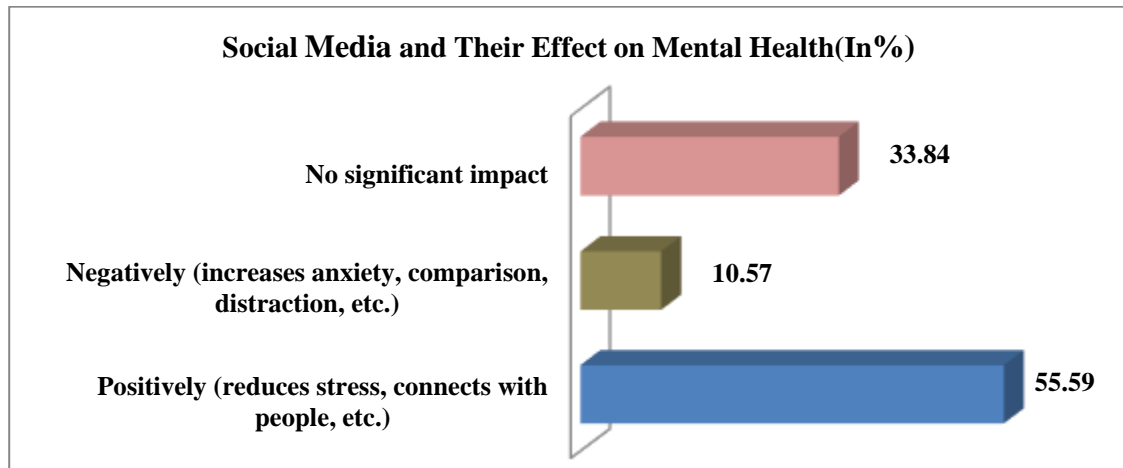


Figure 08: Respondent's Mental Health Influenced by Social media Source: Primary Data

Major Findings: The major findings of the present study are:

1. The most of respondents (30.82%) used Facebook, Whats app, and You Tube.
2. 30.82% of respondents also used multiple social media, those are Facebook, Whats app, Instagram, Telegram, and You Tube.
3. The most of the respondents (67.37%) used social media multiple times in a day.
4. Some respondents (5.74%) used such things rarely.
5. 1.51% respondents never used social media.
6. The majority numbers of students (40.48%) spent time in social media 1-2 hours daily.
7. Some students also used social media less than 1 hour (17.52%) and more than 4 hours (13.60%) daily.
8. The majority of respondents (41.99%) are using social media for academic/educational purpose.
9. Significant number of students (34.44%) reported that their primary purpose for using social media is entertainment (videos, music, reels, memes etc.).
10. The most of students (58.31%) got help from social media for their studies significantly.
11. Respondents also reported that it has no impact in their studies (2.72%) and social media is distracting their studies (2.11%).



12. Some respondents (36.86%) expressed that social media helped to some extent in their course.
13. It can be learnt that the 33.84% of respondents have no significant impact influence by social media in their mental health.
14. The majority of respondents (55.59%) said that social media is positively (reduce stress, connects with people, etc.) influenced in their mental health.
15. Some of students (10.57%) reported that their mental health influenced by social media negatively (increases anxiety, comparison, distraction, etc.).

Conclusion: Findings from the present study indicate that social media can control undergraduate youths' life today. While social media can enhance academic/educational purpose (41.99%), socializing with friends and family (11.18%), news and current affairs (7.55%), and networking and career opportunities (4.84%). The salience of its negative effects on users' mental health and well-being are increases anxiety, comparison, distraction, etc. The primary purposes of using social media included sharing information, gathering information, connecting with others, maintaining relationships, and entertainment which occurred on various platforms including Instagram, Facebook, WhatsApp, Telegram, Twitter (now X), and YouTube.

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