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Research on the Influence of Instagram Usage on Academic Performance and Study Patterns of Students Preparing for Competitive Exams

Disha Balani, Dr. Reshma Jaisinghani

Abstract: *In the modern digital age, social media platforms, particularly Instagram, have become an integral part of a student's daily routines. Instagram is a social media platform which offers entertainment, motivation, and educational content and its effect on students varies. This study examines how Instagram usage impacts the academic performance and study habits of students preparing for such exams. Using a structured survey, the research explores its influence on focus, time management, and productivity. The results reveal that while Instagram can be a valuable tool for accessing educational content and connecting with peers similarly, excessive use can often lead to distractions. The study highlights the need for self-discipline, digital awareness, and effective time management to ensure a balance between social media and academics. Based on the findings, this research offers recommendations as well as suggestions for students, institutional educators, parents and Instagram developers to promote a more productive and structured approach to using the platform.*

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Social Media

Social media refers to websites and applications that emphasize communication, community-based input, engagement, content sharing, and collaboration. People make use of social media to remain connected with friends, family, and members of various communities. Similarly, businesses utilize social media to sell and promote their products, as well as to track their client issues. In today's world, Social Media platforms like YouTube, Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter have become a huge part of our daily lives, especially for students. Among all the platforms available as on today, Instagram is one of the most popular due to its attractive visuals and interactive features. While Instagram helps students stay connected and access information easily, it also raises questions about various ways in which it affects their studies and academic performance.

B. Competitive Exam

Competitive examination is a common examination that helps in testing and ranking a student on the basis of its knowledge, skills and abilities. These examinations are usually used to select candidates for admission, scholarships, jobs, or any other purpose.

These examinations are conducted by various boards, organizations, firms, colleges or universities at state, national as well as international level. Some of the common competitive examinations consist of CAT, CMAT, XAT, NEET, JEE, UPSC, CLAT, GMAT, and many more.

Such examinations require a student's complete dedication for their exam preparation since it does not consist of a standardized syllabus but it focuses of various sections which tests a student's ability like Quantitative Ability, Logical Reasoning, Verbal Ability, Analytical Reasoning, General Awareness, Innovation and Entrepreneurship, Decision Making and many more that varies as per different entrance exams.

Every aspirant preparing for a competitive exam often require intensive study schedules, strategic time management, and focused attention to ensure success in their selection process and thus, this research paper focuses on providing insights about it.

C. Social Media for Students Preparing for Competitive Exams

For students preparing for competitive exams, social media becomes even more important since it requires long hours of dedicated studies, and Instagram can play both a positive and negative role in their preparation of competitive examinations. On the positive side, it offers educational content, motivation, and peer support. However, spending too much time on Instagram can lead to distractions, waste of time, and stress given by their peers or any other content, which can affect their academic performance and eventually lead to distracted studies.

Further to understand this, my research paper also explores areas about the various ways in which Instagram affects a student's study patterns and academic performance. We understand a student's Instagram usage, their way of managing time, and the overall impact it has on their studies. The goal is to understand both the benefits and the challenges of Instagram usage and find ways to use it more effectively.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

- 1) 2015: Peter examined social media impact on students' academic success, highlighting both its advantages and drawbacks. While social media enhances collaboration, communication, and access to educational content, its frequent use can lead to distractions and decreased study time. Osharive Peter found that many students prioritize social life and entertainment over academics, which results in poor time management and lower grades. The research advocated intentional and disciplined usage of social media to support academic and professional growth, alongside raising awareness among students, educators, and parents about its potential risks.
- 2) 2015: Arslan Habib studied how social media use affects the university students overall academic performance. Through the surveys and data analysis, he found that the students who spend more time on the social media tend to have lower GPAs. However interesting fact is that the connection is not very strong, suggesting that while the social media can impact academic performance, there are various other factors that also play a big role in student's academic success.
- 3) 2016: Mrs. Raut examines how social media affects education, looking at both its advantages and the associated challenges. Her research points out major downsides, like addiction, lower academic performance and health problems from its excessive use. She emphasizes the need for balance—limiting screen time and promoting in-person interactions to reduce the negative effects while making the most of social media's benefits in learning
- 4) 2018: Alshayeb explored via his research paper the positive impact of integrating social media tools in education, specifically in a Software Project Management course. The study utilized Facebook, WhatsApp, and Slack to enhance communication, engagement, and satisfaction among students. Initial use of Facebook demonstrated positive results but declined in effectiveness over time, leading to the adoption of WhatsApp and eventually Slack, which allowed for personalized communication and project management. Alshayeb also conducted various surveys which indicated that the students found these tools effective for announcements, discussion questions, and instructor interaction, significantly improving their learning experience. As a conclusion, it was found that the social media technologies can effectively enhance student engagement, communication, critical thinking, Turning them into essential resources for contemporary learning.
- 5) 2018: The book IGI Global explores how social media is being used in education, highlighting its role in engagement, collaboration, and knowledge-sharing. It addresses academic achievement, student conduct, professional growth, and ethical issues. Through research and case studies, it looks at concerns like distractions and false information as well as advantages like participatory learning. In order to successfully incorporate social media into education, the book also provides educators and legislators with tactics and recommendations.
- 6) 2019: Asem examines the association with social media activity, usage patterns and university students' academic performance. It was found that students primarily use social media for socialization and entertainment rather than academic purposes. An important link was observed between the amount of time spent on social media, entertainment purposes, and academic performance, while no significant link was found while results highlighted that the duration of social media usage serves as the primary factor influencing its potential effect on academic performance.
- 7) 2019: Afshan Abbas, Rehana Gulzar, Zahoor Hussain unitedly examined the ways in which social media platforms enhance vocabulary learning among students via social media. While they concentrated on social platforms like Facebook and YouTube which provide an engaging environment supporting learning through interaction, exposure to authentic language usage, and access to diverse multimedia resources, they also express concern regarding usage of informal language and spelling issues amidst students. The research findings emphasise the importance of integrating the social media into educational strategies to foster effective learning experiences.
- 8) 2020: The study explores how Instagram usage influences university students' academic performance. Ahmed et al. conducted this research by collecting data of 71 students who are undergraduate and also tracked their Instagram activity over a week to analyze each one's usage patterns. The findings reveal that students primarily use Instagram during the evening and least in the morning. Nevertheless, statistical analysis showed no meaningful connection between Instagram usage and students' CGPA, suggesting that when used in moderation, Instagram has no adverse impact on academic performance.

- 9) 2020: Joyce's study explores Indian students' increasing inclination towards online platforms like Unacademy and BYJU's over traditional coaching for competitive exams. Surveys at Kristu Jayanti College show that 65% use online resources for updated information, though 72% find classroom coaching better for comprehension. Although online learning provides flexibility and affordability, challenges include limited social interaction and unreliable content. The study concludes that both online and offline education have unique benefits, and the choice depends on individual needs.
- 10) 2020: Ms. Jalali explored the dual role regarding social media use among the university students during exams, identifying it as both a source of academic support and distraction. The study was conducted through a survey of 179 students, aiding in knowledge sharing and reducing exam stress. Through this research, Alireza found out that YouTube was particularly favoured for studying, while platforms like Spotify were being used to gain relief from stress through music. The study determined that although social media can enhance learning and stress management, students must use it mindfully to avoid distractions.
- 11) 2020: Anwar emphasizes Instagram's influence as a widely used social media platform that impacts student's lifestyles by providing access to trendy fashion ideas as well as enables online shopping. Through a qualitative descriptive approach, he discovered that female students utilise Instagram not just for inspiration, but also to purchase fashionable items, often influenced by celebrity endorsements and trending styles. This ease of access and the platform's engaging features have increased the consumer behaviour, shifting purchasing habits from necessity-driven to image-driven due to all the promotions done on Instagram. Additionally, the study notes that campus-provided internet facilities further facilitate this consumption trend. The findings of Anwar mention about dual role of Instagram as both a cultural influence and a commerce facilitator, raising concerns about growing consumerism among young students.
- 12) 2020: P. Sindhu examines how social media technologies influence higher education as well as discusses the challenges faced by the Indian higher education system, such as faculty shortages and outdated curricula, and explores the role of digital interventions, including social media, in addressing these issues. The review highlights the transition from traditional media to online platforms in educational initiatives and underscores the advantages of incorporating Web 2.0 technologies into the educational sphere. Ultimately, this research seeks to shed light on the ways social media can improve learning experiences and academic achievements within India.
- 13) 2020: Raman Deep has focused on ways which affects university students due to social media. Raman has highlighted that the students utilise their significant amount of time on social platforms like Facebook, often for non-academic activities that adversely affect their academic performance, particularly their grades and time management. The study concludes with recommendations for parents, educators, and institutions to monitor and guide students toward usage of social media for educational purposes.
- 14) 2020: Navneet Sharma explores about how social media influences adolescents' social interactions, study routines, and academic outcomes. It explores different viewpoints, showcasing both the positive impact and negative impact of the social media which is used among the students. By analysing past research, it seeks to uncover key patterns, gaps and valuable insights, that inform the current understanding of social media's role in adolescent development and education.
- 15) 2021: Adedamola Adenubi's research explored how social media habits affect students' academic performance. The study was carried out with the college students, found that many spend a significant amount of time on social media daily, often getting distracted during study hours. The research additionally reveals that although certain students engage with social media for academic discussions, most engage with it for purpose not related to academics, especially at night. Using Pearson's Correlation test, the research showed a detrimental connection between the amount of time spent on social media and academic performance, suggesting that excessive use can lead to lower grades. The study recommends incorporating social media into learning strategies to make it a more effective educational tool.
- 16) 2021: Farruk focusing on dual effects of social media on university students found out that platforms like Facebook and YouTube are often misused for non-educational purposes, causing distractions and lower academic achievements. Farruk in this research paper emphasized that social media also offers opportunities for learning, collaboration, and access to educational resources when utilized correctly and thus there should be a balanced usage with the help of proper guidance of their parents, educators, and institutions, enabling students to benefit academically while minimizing negative impacts such as time wastage and lack of focus.
- 17) 2021: Abdul Ghafoor Awan studied how social media use affects university students' academic performance. He surveyed 200 students using a 5-point scale and found that urban male students spent much more time on social media than rural female students, leading to lower GPAs. While some students used social media for studying, its overall impact was negative as it distracted them from their academic responsibilities. The study emphasized the importance of using social media in moderation

and recommended future research with a larger and more diverse group of students to better understand its psychological effects.

- 18) 2021: Manjur Kolhar studied how social media affects university students' focus on studies, social life, and sleep. She surveyed 300 female students and found that 97% used social media, but only 1% used it for studying. Her research showed that excessive social media use led to poor concentration, less face-to-face communication, and disrupted sleep. Many students stayed up late scrolling on social media, which resulted in not getting enough sleep. These habits not only hurt their academic performance but also contributed to mental health issues, a less active lifestyle, and a higher risk of health problems. The study emphasized the need to use social media in moderation to maintain both academic success and overall well-being.
- 19) 2022: Karthick examined Instagram in his research paper as a study aid for students preparing for competitive exams. Many aspirants follow educational pages featuring informative memes, short videos, and visual content that simplify complex topics. While researching, Karthick came across that Instagram pages which reveal that they attract a vast audience, with thousands of interactions per post, highlighting their impact on learning. Instagram's engaging format, especially through creative teaching techniques, enhances content retention among students. While the platform proves effective in educational engagement, the study suggested further exploration of other social media sites to provide a more comprehensive understanding of digital learning.
- 20) 2022: Md. Kamal, Md. Nazmul, Md. Jafor, and Abul Bhashar investigated the connection between social media use and academic results. Research shows that the majority of students use social media sites like Facebook for non-academic purposes for more than three hours per day, which causes distractions and poor time management. Social media has a detrimental overall effect on grades and academic engagement, even when some students utilise it for educational purposes. In order to promote balanced usage, the study emphasises the necessity of parental supervision and institutional monitoring. It also urges more investigation into the psychological impacts of social media on kids' capacity for learning.
- 21) 2022: Laura Moreton through this research analysed about effects of Instagram on mental wellbeing of UK University students wherein she highlighted its negative aspects, including unrealistic beauty standards, pressure to seek validation, and exposure to cyberbullying. The findings by her also suggested Instagram's portrayal of idealized lives and appearances can harm users' self-esteem and well-being. Lastly, the study recommended integrating discussions about social media use in university counselling services and calls for further research on the platform's psychological effects.
- 22) 2022: Miao Chen investigated how social media impacts the emotional and psychological health of students. Via this research he pointed out that although social media provides connectivity and learning chances, excessive use can result in negative feelings like stress, anxiety, and depression, mainly because of unhealthy comparisons and unrealistic self-standards. It was suggested by Miao that there is a balanced usage is crucial for positive outcomes, such as enhanced communication and learning. It also highlights the need for collaborative efforts from educators, mental health professionals, and policymakers to ensure students reap the benefits of social media while safeguarding their mental health.
- 23) 2022: M. Karthick investigates about Instagram that can be utilized as a learning tool for individuals preparing for competitive exams. It emphasizes the utilization of Instagram accounts for sharing educational material, such as study notes and quick learning tricks in meme format. The research shows that competitive exam-related Instagram pages play a significant role in helping aspirants prepare by examining likes, followers, and comments. The research concludes that the results are confined to certain terms and a brief period of observation. Future studies may broaden their investigation to include additional social media platforms and hashtags.
- 24) 2023: Renuka K conducted this study to understand how social media affects college students in Madurai, Tamil Nadu. She analyzed past research to examine its impact on students' mental health, academics, and social lives. The study looked at both the positive and negative effects of social media, highlighting how it influences students' well-being, study habits, and relationships. It also provided insights into the growing use of social media and suggested ways for parents to guide students in using it in a positive and productive way.
- 25) 2023: Supreetha focused on postgraduate nursing students in Mangalore, India, for this research wherein she examines the correlation between Instagram usage and academic performance. Supreetha considered a sample size of 200 students, to determine the detrimental effects of Instagram use and how it connects to students' academic performance to those who are more addicted to the app performed worse academically. Factors such as loss of control over time, disengagement from studies, interpersonal conflicts, and addiction to social media were identified as key reasons for underperformance. The study underlined the importance of regulating social media habits to prevent procrastination and ensure a positive impact on academic and personal growth.

- 26) 2023: In this study, Amelia examined how social media use affects academic procrastination among university students. She surveyed around 350 students and found that frequent social media use often led to delays in completing academic tasks. The study linked procrastination to issues like poor time management, distractions, and a preference for entertainment over studying. Amelia emphasized the importance of self-control and better time management, encouraging students to use social media for learning instead of just entertainment. She also recommended raising awareness about healthy social media habits to reduce its negative impact on academics.
- 27) 2023: The study explores how platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram are reshaping educational landscapes. Social media fosters instant communication, global collaboration, and access to diverse resources, enhancing student engagement and personalized learning. However, challenges such as distractions, misinformation, cyberbullying, and privacy concerns are a major cause of effectiveness. While it democratizes education by geographical barriers, it also risks eroding critical thinking and in-person communication skills. The research emphasizes balancing these digital tools' benefits and drawbacks to optimize their potential for enriching education while safeguarding students' well-being and academic performance.
- 28) 2024: This study by Mohd Gufran Barkati, used a randomised controlled trial to analyse the direct impact of social media on students' academic performance and overall well-being. Over three academic quarters, digital activity was monitored using Rescue Time software, tracking students' engagement on Facebook, Instagram, and Snapchat. A controlled experiment limited social media usage to ten minutes daily for one group, while the other group continued regular usage. Surprisingly, the findings showed no significant change in academic performance or well-being due to social media restrictions. Instead, students in the limited-use group shifted towards instant messaging apps. This study emphasized the necessity of policy-driven approaches and a broader assessment of digital consumption patterns to understand the real academic influence of social media.
- 29) 2024: Mangacop investigates how AI can identify and assess dialectical variations between spoken and written language. The authors classify audio recordings and text data from different regional languages using convolutional neural networks (CNNs) and RNNs. The study shows how AI might be able to pick up on subtle phonetic and syntactic differences that traditional linguistic methods would overlook. Hafisha highlighted the challenges, including the lack of sufficient data for endangered dialects and the potential risk of linguistic homogenization. Crowdsourcing is suggested as a solution for developing more robust training datasets.
- 30) 2024: Deeksha Dixit investigated how social media sites like Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and Telegram might be useful tools for UPSC candidates. These websites provide free access to study guides, news, and professional advice. Exam preparation is made more interesting by the high-quality information offered by educational centres like PW Only IAS, which includes practice exams and video lectures. Distractions and the possibility of information overload, which can impede concentrated study, are also cautioned about in the essay. Students are encouraged to limit screen time, interact with positive online groups, follow reliable sources, and keep a structured study schedule in order to get the most out of social media.
- 31) 2024: Shiksha Sharma through this research, explored how social media affects NEET preparation. The study highlighted platforms like YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, and Telegram, which offer free, high-quality study materials and lectures from educators and coaching institutes. However, it also pointed out challenges like information overload and distractions. In conclusion, while social media has made NEET preparation more accessible, students should use it wisely and not depend on it entirely, balancing it with traditional study methods.
- 32) 2024: This research paper explores how social media affects undergraduate students pursuing higher education. It highlights how social media helps students collaborate, access a wide range of resources, and connect globally, enhancing their learning experience. However, it also points out challenges like distractions, privacy concerns, and unreliable information. The study emphasizes that social media can be both beneficial and distracting. It suggests using social media wisely in education, addressing its drawbacks, and making the most of its advantages to improve learning in today's tech-driven world.
- 33) 2024: Dr. Swathi and Dr. Kumar studied how social media affects students' academic performance in Bangalore. They surveyed 128 students aged 18 to 23, finding that most spend 2–4 hours daily on platforms like WhatsApp, mainly for entertainment, though some use it for studies. The research suggests that academic performance is influenced by a student's degree, field of study, and social media habits. To enhance learning while minimizing drawbacks, the study recommends integrating social media with traditional teaching methods.
- 34) 2024: Telma Pereira studied how young Portuguese university students use Instagram and its impact. They spend 3–4 hours daily on the platform, using it to explore information and stay connected. While likes and comments boost confidence, some experience stress and negative self-comparisons. Despite these risks, students also use Instagram for networking and

showcasing creativity. The study stresses mindful usage to avoid issues like stress and body image concerns and suggests future research on healthier engagement strategies.

- 35) 2024: The research explores the impact of social media on young people, highlighting its dual nature of benefits and drawbacks. Ravi Rajan has highlighted in this study that excessive usage leads to addiction, health issues, and the erosion of societal norms. He has also mentioned about rising concerns which include cyberbullying, misinformation, and negative effects on relationships and self-esteem. Ranjan emphasizes on constructive use, government regulation to curb unethical practices, and parental and teacher supervision of teenagers' online activities. Lastly, the study advocates leveraging social media for educational and professional growth while addressing its challenges responsibly.
- 36) 2024: Dusita Sirisakpanich through her research discusses about how social media and educational transformation help in learning processes and student progress. She has highlighted the shift from traditional, teacher-centered models to flexible, student-centered approaches driven by technology and digital platforms. As per her findings, social media helps in enhancing collaboration, digital literacy, and global connectivity, enabling students to learn actively and interact with diverse resources. However, challenges like distractions, misinformation, privacy concerns, and overreliance on digital tools can hinder academic performance. However, the study has emphasized the need for strategic integration of social media into education, balancing its benefits with mitigating its risks to maximize its potential for improving student engagement and achievement.
- 37) 2024: Dawood Mamoon mentions about the significance of promoting critical thinking in education. Dawood suggests that by incorporating these approaches at every educational stage, along with hands-on learning and cultural understanding, students can become equipped to tackle intricate worldwide issues.

III. RESEARCH DESIGN

A. Objective

By studying this topic, we aim:

- 1) To explore positive and negative effects of Instagram on Aspirants
- 2) To impact of Instagram usage on students preparing for such examinations
- 3) To understand every aspirant aim or perception towards Instagram and how it helps them during their preparation
- 4) To provide ways in which students can balance their Instagram use and stay focused on their academic goals
- 5) To recommend students about how to well manage time and know the boundaries beyond which their social media usage will be considered as a distraction

B. Scope

The scope of a research is the most important part of it since it helps in identifying who is our target group and the particular research paper is focused on which geographical area. In this research, the scope is:

- 1) Target Group – The research will focus on students who are or were preparing for any competitive examination (like, management, medical, engineering, law, civil services, etc..) in the past one year. This paper focuses on candidates who are in undergraduate, postgraduate or working professionals who have appeared for the examination or are keen on appearing in this year.
- 2) Geographical Location – This study is conducted within a specific region of Mumbai City (consists of Thane, Navi Mumbai, Kalyan district). The research is focused on students who are from Mumbai City or have temporarily shifted for their educational or work to the City and are preparing for the entrance examination from this city.

C. Tools

Tools refer to instruments, techniques, or software used to collect, analyse, and present data which helps researchers gather data, process data, and draw conclusions based on the findings. As per the process, the tools or techniques that is in conducting this research includes:

- 1) Tools like Google Forms is used for surveys and questionnaires to collect responses from students. These questions are provided after systematically recording observations in the field.
- 2) To analyse the primary data, tools like Microsoft Excel is used which helped in analysing the survey responses received.
- 3) Table and Google Charts are a part of the research paper which helped in creating the visual presentation of data which eventually was used to present the findings effectively.
- 4) The entire research paper was written with the help of Microsoft Word as well as Google Docs which helped in drafting and formatting the research.

D. Time Span

The entire research was conducted immediately after the competitive exams had ended since it helped in better analysis of the data wherein each student could effectively mention all types of issues they faced or the advantages they could take from Social Media Apps; i.e. Instagram for this paper during their preparation.

Thus, the data collection took 1 academic year, including the data collection and analysis of the same.

E. Hypothesis

- 1) Null Hypothesis (H_0): Instagram usage does not have a significant impact on the academic performance or study habits of students preparing for competitive exams.
- 2) Alternative Hypothesis (H_1): There is a significant relationship between Instagram usage and the academic performance or study patterns of students preparing for competitive exams. This hypothesis focuses on Instagram usage that most of the time has a negative impact on study time, focus, and academic performance of a student.

F. Limitations

- 1) This research is limited to a small sample size of students i.e. only those students who are preparing for a competitive examination in Mumbai City and thus the results might not apply to all students everywhere.
- 2) Students who will provide information will not always be accurate since they might not recollect how much time they devoted to studies and how exactly did they effectively use Instagram
- 3) Since Instagram and Social Media trends keep changing often, so what happens in the near future might be different from the data that is collected during the research. This can happen if there are new updates, features or rectifications of any feature as well as new trends on the platform.
- 4) Since our time span is limited, this research might not be valid for showcasing long-term effects of Instagram usage on academic habits or performance.

IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research is focusing on the aspirants who are preparing for competitive examinations and ways in which Instagram is impacting their academic performance. This study is being limited to only aspirants of Mumbai City which includes Thane, Kalyan and Navi Mumbai district as well.

The analysis is based upon the aspirant's pattern for Instagram usage and its effects during their preparation for competitive examinations.

A. Sample Size

The sample size denotes the number of elements selected for the study. For the present study, Questionnaire was distributed to 150 students out of which 108 have responded.

B. Data Collection

1) Primary Method

It is the information received directly from a data source without consulting any other sources. It is often collected for specific study subject, although it may also be released publicly and used in other studies. For this research, primary data is collected via a survey of students preparing for competitive examinations in Mumbai City and this survey (via Google Form) includes questions about a student's dedication, the frequency of Instagram usage, the content which they prefer, and many more that will provide insights about students and their Instagram usage.

2) Secondary Data

Secondary data is the information which was gathered in the past by someone else but is now available for use by others. They were most likely formerly primary data, but when reused by a third party, they become secondary. It is basically when researchers refer earlier publications on the topic and incorporate their findings into the literature review which producing a research thesis.

Other secondary information including definitions and theorems, are added to the thesis so that it can be referred to and cited appropriately. Trade magazines, journals, government statistics, and other sources are examples of secondary data. For this research study particularly, previously made research papers, journals, articles, magazines and online available data is referred.

V. DATA ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION

By making use of the survey method, respondents in Mumbai about their study habits and the effect of Instagram on their academics, the goal is to understand how Instagram usage influences students' academic performance. The purpose of the survey is to learn how and what ways can Instagram impact a student's examination preparation and what is their view point regarding the same. It also aims to identify the solutions or precautions every aspirant must consider for better academic performance.

A. Name

The very first question asked were the names of the respondents.

B. Age

Most of the respondents preparing for competitive exams fall within the age group of 17-30. However, there are also two individuals, aged 36 and 39, who are preparing for competitive exams as well..

C. Which Competitive exam you are Appearing for?

- 1) CAT/XAT/CMAT/NMAT/SNAP/CET/ (any MBA Entrances)
- 2) NEET
- 3) JEE
- 4) UPSC
- 5) GMAT
- 6) CLAT
- 7) Other (Please specify)

Which Competitive exam you are appearing for?

108 responses

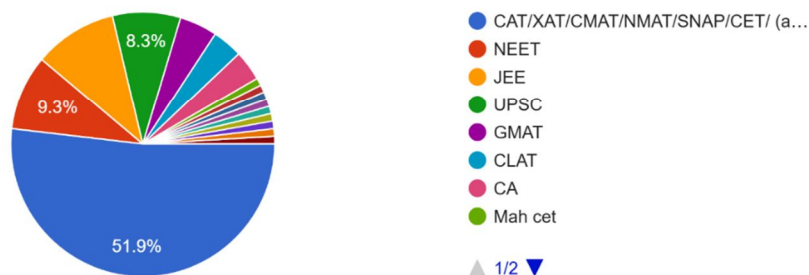


Fig 6.1

This graph (in Fig 6.1) shows the diversification of various competitive examinations that students might be preparing. It is observed that around 51.9% of the respondents which is 56 of the respondents are those preparing for an MBA Entrance Examination; 9.3% or 10 for NEET examination; 10.2% or 11 for JEE; 8.3% or 9 for UPSC; 4.6% or 5 students for GMAT; 3.7% or 4 respondents for CLAT; rest 12% are preparing for other competitive examinations like CA, CFA, UCEED, GATE, CMA, IBDP, NID/NIFT.

D. How are you Studying?

- 1) On our own with the help of books
- 2) On our own via social media apps
- 3) Coaching
- 4) Peer Learning
- 5) Online coaching

How are you studying?

108 responses

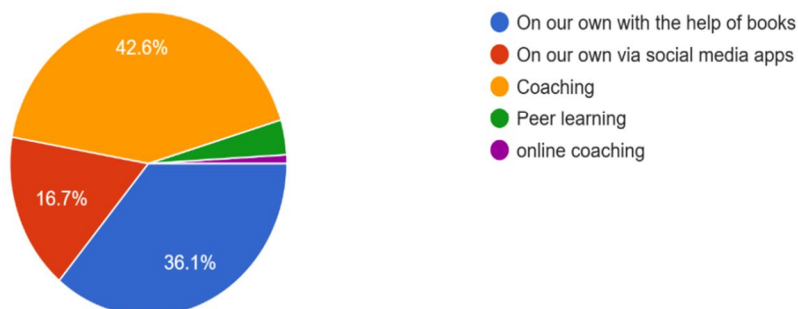


Fig 6.2

It is observed as per Fig 6.2 that 42.6% (i.e. 46 students) who responded are studying with the help of coaching institutes whereas 36.1% (i.e. 39 students) study on their own with the help of reference books, 16.7% (i.e. 8 students) do it on their own with the help of social media apps and rest 5 students do it either with their peer or via online coaching.

E. How many hours per day do you dedicate to your exam preparations?

- 1) 0-2 hours
- 2) 2-5 hours
- 3) 5-8 hours
- 4) 8-12 hours
- 5) 12+ hours

How many hours per day do you dedicate to your exam preparations?

108 responses

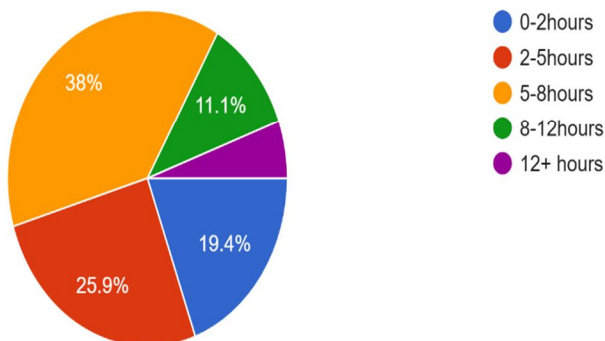


Fig 6.3

It is seen in Fig 6.3 that out of 108 responses, 41 students schedule 5-8 hours for their preparation; following them is 28 students who schedule 2-5 hours holding 25.9%; 19.4% (21 students) allocate 0-2 hours; 11.1% (12 students) schedule around 8-12 hours and rest 6 students do it for 12+ hours.

F. How much time per day do you spend on Instagram (Screen time)?

- 1) 0-1 hour
- 2) 1-3 hours
- 3) 3-6 hours
- 4) 6+ hours

How much time per day do you spend on Instagram (Screen time)?

108 responses

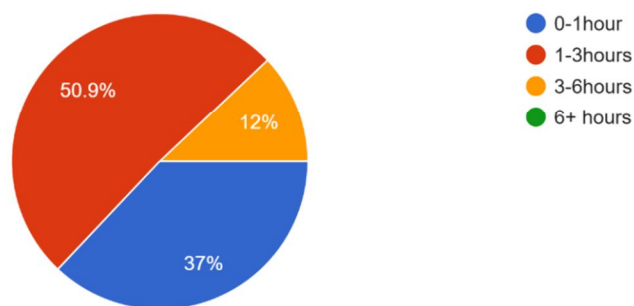


Fig 6.4

On being questioned about every student's screen time, it is observed as shown in Fig 6.4 that 50.9% of the students spend approximately 1-3hours daily on Instagram; whereas, 40 students holding 37% spend 0-1hour on Instagram and 13 students i.e. 12% spend 3-6 hours of their time on Instagram.

G. What type of content do you usually engage with on Instagram?

- 1) Educational
- 2) Motivational
- 3) Entertainment

What type of content do you usually engage with on Instagram?

108 responses

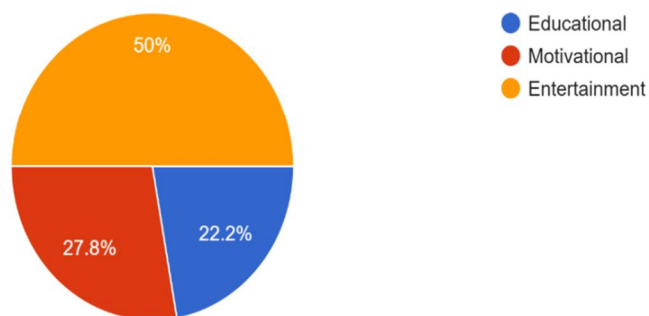


Fig 6.5

Out of 108 responses, 54 students use Instagram for entertainment, 30 students for motivational content and 24 students for educational content as shown in Fig 6.5.

H. How frequently do you check Instagram while studying?

- 1) Never
- 2) Rarely (1-2 times per study session)
- 3) Occasionally (3-5 times per study session)
- 4) Frequently (more than 5 times per study session)

How frequently do you check Instagram while studying?

108 responses

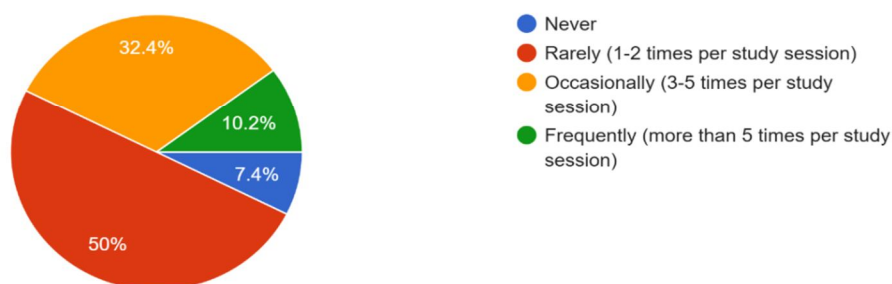


Fig 6.6

The results of this question asked indicate that Instagram is a common distraction during study sessions, with (comparison shown in Fig 6.6) 82.4% of the 108 respondents checking it at least once. 54 students (50%) reported using Instagram rarely (1-2 times per session), while 35 students (32.4%) admitted to checking it occasionally (3-5 times). Additionally, 10.2% access the app frequently, which is more than 5 times per session, which significantly impacts a student's concentration. However, only 7.4% of respondents claimed they never use Instagram while studying.

I. Do you think Instagram distracts you from studying?

- 1) Not at all
- 2) Rarely
- 3) Sometimes
- 4) Often

Do you think Instagram distracts you from studying?

108 responses

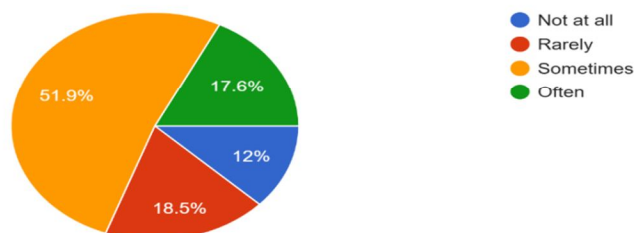


Fig 6.7

As per Fig 6.7, 56 students (51.9%) admit via this question that Instagram is a source of distraction during their studies sometimes; 20 students (18.5%) get distracted rarely; 19 of them (17.6%) often get distracted and rest 13 students (12%) feel that Instagram does not distract them at all.

J. Does Instagram provide any educational content that you find helpful for your preparation?

- 1) Yes, a lot of useful content
- 2) Yes, but only occasionally
- 3) Rarely
- 4) Not at all

Does Instagram provide any educational content that you find helpful for your preparation?

108 responses

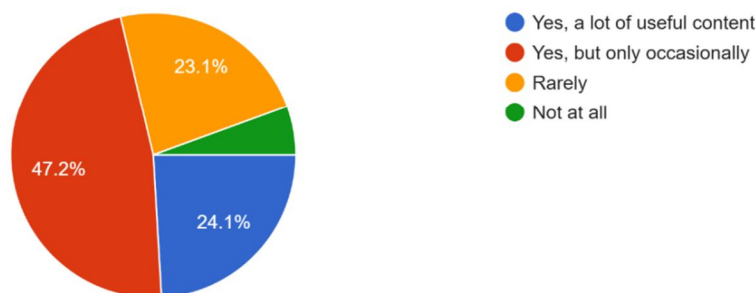


Fig 6.8

While analysing about the content suggested by Instagram to their users, it is observed (shown in Fig 6.8) that 47.2% students find genuine educational content occasionally and 24.1% find it often which helps them in their preparation. Rest 23.1% students noticed that such content is rarely suggested on Instagram and 5.6% are unable to see at all.

K. Have you ever used Instagram as a break or reward system during study sessions?

- 1) Yes, regularly
- 2) Yes, sometimes
- 3) Rarely
- 4) Never

Have you ever used Instagram as a break or reward system during study sessions?

108 responses

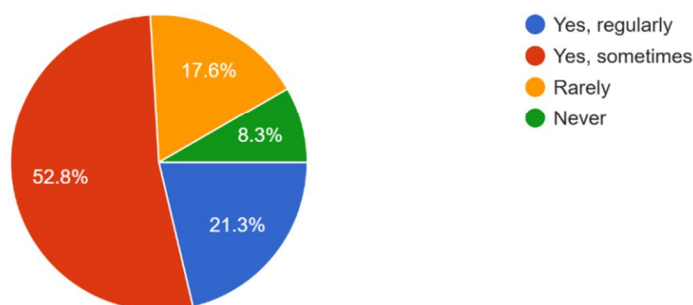


Fig 6.9

Now-a-days when Instagram is observed to be an addiction, it is seen (refer to Fig 6.9) that 52.8% students reward themselves usage of Instagram occasionally whereas 21.3% do it regularly in order to motivate themselves and rest 25.9% students either reward themselves rarely or never.

L. Do you feel that Instagram affects your ability to stick to a study schedule?

- 1) Not at all
- 2) Rarely
- 3) Sometimes
- 4) Often

Do you feel that Instagram affects your ability to stick to a study schedule?

108 responses

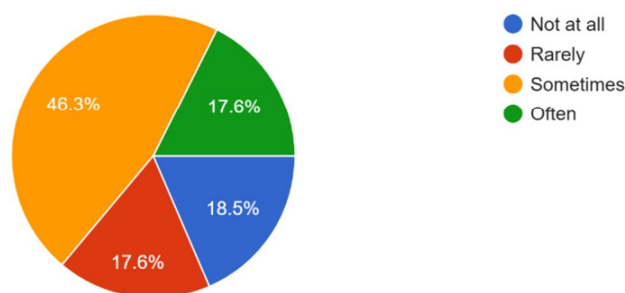


Fig 6.10

When asked whether Instagram affects their ability to stick to a study schedule, (refer Fig 6.10); 50 students (46.3%) admitted to checking Instagram sometimes, while 19 students each (17.6% each) reported using it often or rarely. Additionally, 18.5% of students (20 of them) do not use the app at all.

M. Does Instagram usage make you feel more connected with peers preparing for the same exam?

- 1) Yes, very connected
- 2) Somewhat connected
- 3) Rarely connected
- 4) Not at all connected

Does Instagram usage make you feel more connected with peers preparing for the same exam?

108 responses

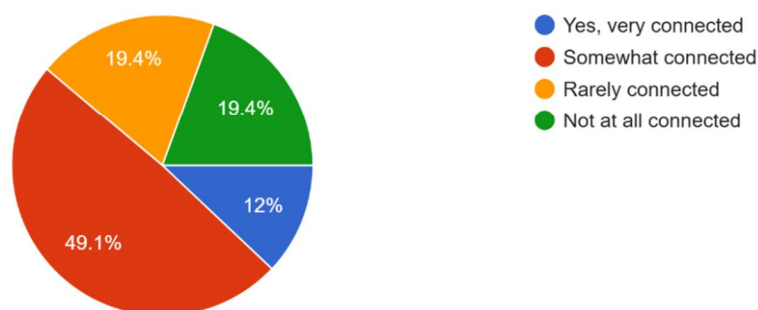


Fig 6.11

As shown in Fig 6.11, 49.1% students feel Instagram helps them being somewhat connected to their peers, 12% students are very connected and 19.4% each are either rarely or not at all connected to their peers.

N. Do you feel any pressure or stress related to Instagram (e.g., fear of missing out or comparing progress with others)?

- 1) Not at all
- 2) Rarely
- 3) Sometimes
- 4) Often

Do you feel any pressure or stress related to Instagram (e.g., fear of missing out or comparing progress with others)?

108 responses

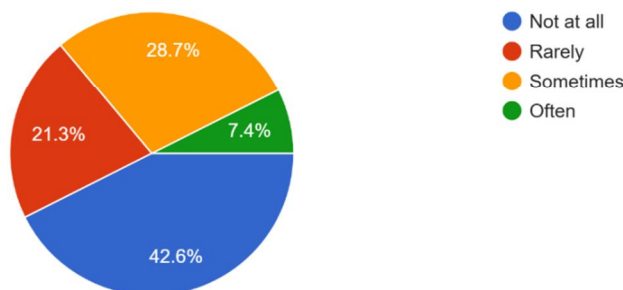


Fig 6.12

As per the above graph (Fig 6.12), 42.6%, reported feeling no stress at all, indicating that Instagram does not impact their well-being. However, 21.3% of respondents rarely feel stress, while 28.7% sometimes experience pressure, such as FOMO which is fear of missing out or comparing progress with others. Notably, 7.4% often feel such stress, suggesting that a small but notable group faces significant emotional effects due to Instagram use.

O. Have you participated in any Instagram study groups or used hashtags like #StudyWithMe?

- 1) Yes, regularly
- 2) Yes, sometimes
- 3) Rarely
- 4) Never

Have you participated in any Instagram study groups or used hashtags like #StudyWithMe?

108 responses

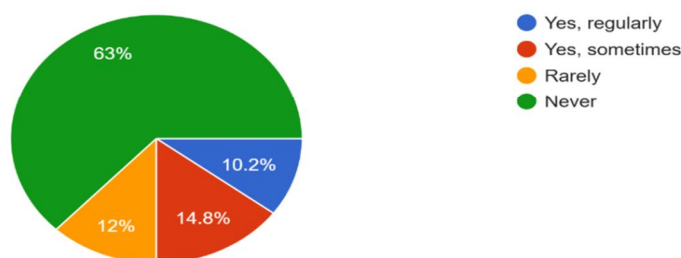


Fig 6.13

Majority of students (63%) have never engaged in Instagram study groups or used hashtags like #StudyWithMe, suggesting that the platform is not a primary tool for academic collaboration among them. However, a small percentage 10.2% reported participating in such hashtags regularly, while 14.8% joined sometimes, and 12% did so rarely. (Refer to Fig 6.13 for comparison)

P. *Has Instagram usage ever caused you to postpone or miss study sessions?*

- 1) Not at all
- 2) Rarely
- 3) Sometimes
- 4) Often

Has Instagram usage ever caused you to postpone or miss study sessions?

108 responses

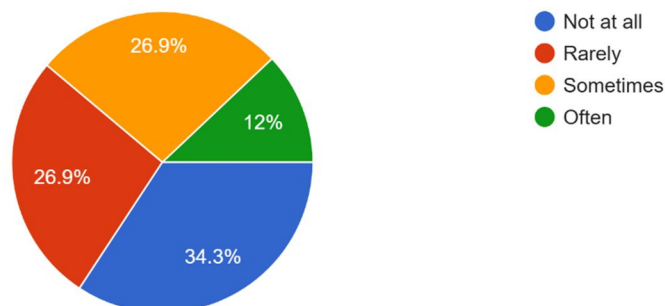


Fig 6.14

On asking about if Instagram use had ever led them to postpone or miss study sessions, responses (refer to Fig 6.14) were fairly divided. About 34.3% of students said it had no effect on their study routine, while 12% admitted it happened often. Additionally, 26.9% of respondents each reported that Instagram sometimes or rarely caused them to delay or miss studying.

Q. *Do you feel Instagram usage positively or negatively influences your focus during studies?*

- 1) Positively
- 2) Negatively
- 3) No impact

Do you feel Instagram usage positively or negatively influences your focus during studies?

108 responses

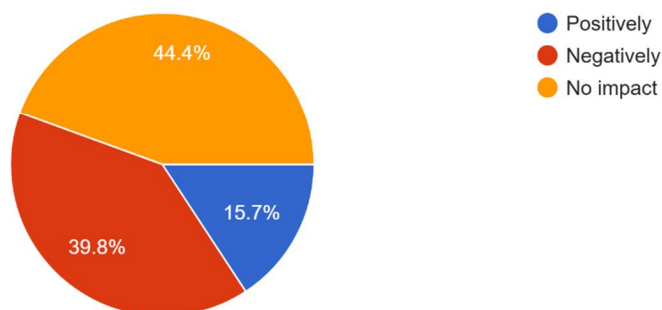


Fig 6.15

Via this question (Fig 6.15), it indicates that Instagram's influence on focus during studies varies among students. While 15.7% believe it positively impacts their concentration, 39.8% feel it negatively affects their ability to focus. However, the highest percentage, i.e. 44.4%, found no impact on their concentration.

R. Do you think your academic performance has been impacted by Instagram? If yes, in what way?

- 1) Yes, as a distraction
- 2) Yes, as a motivation to upgrade my skills
- 3) Maybe, as a distraction
- 4) Maybe, as a motivation to upgrade my
- 5) skills
- 6) No

Do you think your academic performance has been impacted by Instagram? If yes, in what way?

108 responses

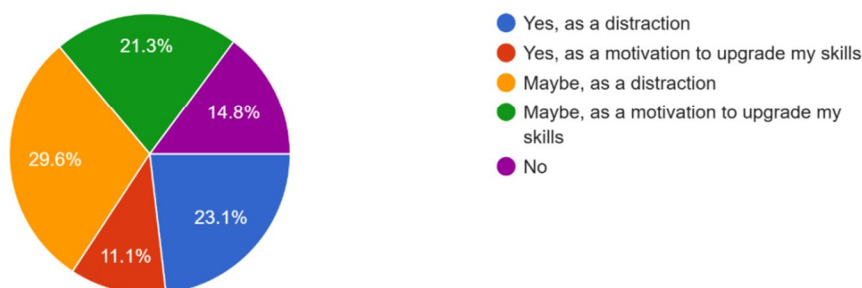


Fig 6.16

As per the findings in Fig 6.16, 23.1% of students believe Instagram distracts them from their studies; 11.1% see it as a tool for skill development; 29.6% are unsure but suspect it may be a distraction; 21.3% feel it might be a source of motivation for improving skills and 14.8% believe Instagram has had no impact on their academic performance.

S. Would you consider reducing Instagram usage to improve your study patterns

- 1) Yes
- 2) No

Would you consider reducing Instagram usage to improve your study patterns?

108 responses

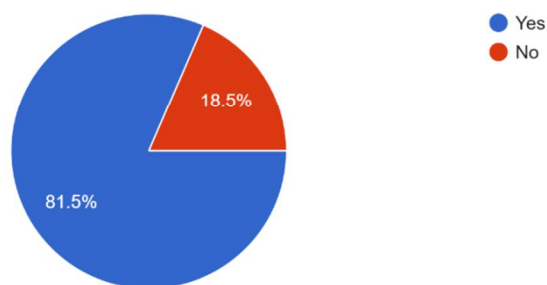


Fig 6.17

When students were asked about reducing their Instagram usage to improve their study habits, 81.5% said they were open to the idea. However, 18.5% felt that their current routine was effective and saw no need to make any changes.

T. What changes, if any, would you suggest to make Instagram usage more beneficial for students preparing for competitive exams?

- 1) Allow to select what type of content do
- 2) we like to see
- 3) Reduce distracting features like reels
- 4) Encourage time management features
- 5) No changes needed

What changes, if any, would you suggest to make Instagram usage more beneficial for students preparing for competitive exams?

108 responses

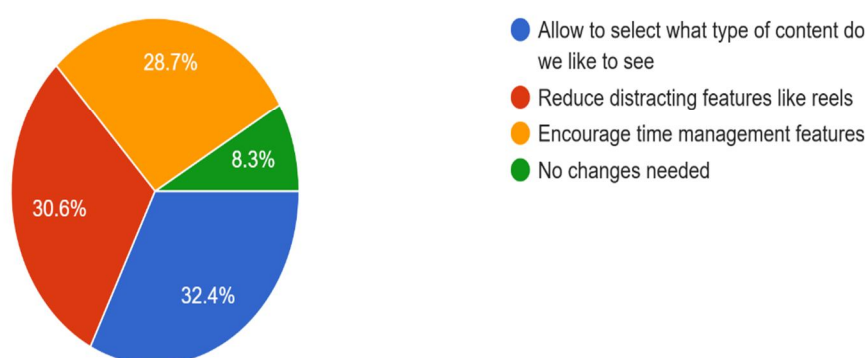


Fig 6.18

When students were asked how Instagram could better support their academic goals, 32.4% said they would like the option to customize the content they see. Meanwhile, 30.6% suggested minimizing distractions like reels, and 28.7% recommended adding time management features. Only 8.3% felt that no changes were necessary.

VI. FINDINGS & CONCLUSION

A. Findings

While analysing about the Influence of Instagram on a student preparing for competitive examination, we have come across that:

- 1) Social media is potentially affecting student's focus and productivity
- 2) Students experience varying levels of social media-induced pressure
- 3) Instagram can be a significant distraction from academics for student's preparing for competitive examinations
- 4) Many students delay or miss study sessions due to over Instagram usage leading to lack of time management
- 5) Some students experience FOMO as they compare their progress with others via Instagram, which eventually leads to anxiety

B. Conclusion

The study concludes that Instagram usage has both positive and negative impact on students preparing for competitive exams. On one hand, Instagram can be used for educational purposes, such as following academic content creators or joining study-related communities, which can positively influence study patterns by providing motivational content and innovative learning strategies. On the other hand, excessive and unstructured usage might lead to distractions, procrastination, and reduced study efficiency, adversely affecting academic performance.

Thus, this research paper focus on the findings which emphasizes the need for better time management and self-discipline to balance social media use with academic responsibilities for improved outcomes in competitive exam preparation.

VII. SUGGESTIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Suggestions

As per the research, to help students manage their Instagram usage effectively getting ready for competitive exams requires focus and dedication, the following are the suggestions that can be adapted to minimize distractions, as well as improve time management for better academic performance.

The suggestions are:

- 1) Plan the day in a better way
- 2) Instagram should allow content filtering features which will help everyone filter or choose the content they would like to watch.
- 3) Raise awareness on social media impact
- 4) Develop study-friendly Instagram features like “study mode” to reduce distractions like reels

B. Recommendations

Based on the findings, here are some recommendations to help students, teachers, and platform developers create a more organized and effective approach. These suggestions aim to support every student as they prepare for competitive exams or any other tests.

These recommendations are as follows:

1) For Students

- a. Plan your day and allocate specific breaks to avoid random distractions
- b. Set time limits using features like focus mode
- c. Track your screen time and try to improve your schedule incase of over use of any platform
- d. Prioritize academic content over entertainment on any platform which will help you remain focused

2) For Educational Institutions

- a. Conduct workshops on digital well-being and social media balance
- b. Encourage the use of social media for more of academic purposes
- c. Conduct guidance sessions to help students balance the use of social media with academics
- d. Make use of Instagram for interactive learning like conducting small quiz, live sessions, posting one vocabulary word or maths formulas that will not only support but also assist the institutions gain likes or comments but will also benefit the students by keeping them engaged during their screen time.

3) For Instagram Developers

- a. Introduce content filtering which will also help Instagram track the Rating Point of the content which is mostly seen or preferred which will further help the company in improving
- b. Introduce a Study Mode filter which will consist of only educational content and help in increasing overall knowledge not only of the students but also for adults

4) For Parents & Educators

- a. Guide students in setting boundaries for social media usage
- b. Set parenting control to track a student’s usage for social media as well as see what type of content do they usually engage in
- c. Promote them to watch informative content which will increase their overall knowledge rather than spending time watching reels which might not benefit them
- d. Guide them on preparing their schedules
- e. Understand what kind of content do they like to watch on Instagram and guide them towards effective learning

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