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Exploring the Facebook Behaviors and Attitudes of Pakistani Baby Boomers

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ABSTRACT

Aim of the Study: Baby boomers, individuals born between 1946 and 1964, represent an influential generational cohort in several nations. This study looked at the Facebook behaviors, motivations, and perceptions of baby boomers in Pakistan.

Methodology: For data collection, aged 58 and older respondents were selected. Rich insights into this generation's experiences with social media were gathered through in-depth interviews with a select sample.

Findings: According to the findings, users predominantly used Facebook for social networking, entertainment, and information searching. A strong cultural emphasis on relationships with family members seems to boost the social drivers of Facebook use in Pakistan. Privacy hazards, disinformation, and addiction were major concerns. Attitudes ranged from enthusiastic to skeptical, due to gaps in digital literacy and activity levels across the respondents. The pros and cons of staying in touch were evaluated against its drawbacks of wasting time.

Conclusion: The changing digital landscape involves engagement tactics that meet the needs of this cohort without assuming resistance or homogeneity. Further studies should be conducted to investigate cross-generational comparisons and how user experiences may change over time.

Keywords: Facebook, Behaviour, Attitude, Baby Boomers.

Introduction

The Baby Boomer generation (Mulroy, 2023), which was born between 1946 and 1964, is a very important factor in shaping social and cultural norms. It is necessary to determine the attitudes and views of these generations on emerging technologies, and in particular on social media. Baby Boomers are usually believed to be resistant to change, and reluctant to embrace new forms of communication, including social media (Boncales, 2013).

The increased usage of social media such as Facebook, the need to understand how baby boomers in Pakistan view and use these platforms have become critical. This paper seeks to examine their point of view and ascertain how they deploy these tools to satisfy individual requirements and preferences. The motivations for using social media, barriers, types of content and activities will be assessed.

Before proceeding, this study proposes to explore differences in baby boomer perspectives regarding social media, with particular attention to specific demographic variables. Consistent with previous scholarship underlining the necessity of avoiding such assumptions (Loos, 2012), it does not presume homogeneity regarding their Facebook behaviors and attitudes.

This research is therefore focused on gender and education as variables which can create a more specific and accurate understanding of the ways in which this generation interacts with and perceive social media in Pakistan. These considerations will provide sophisticated, sensitive perspectives sensitive to diversities in this population (Abellán García et al, 2019). It is expected that these results will guide strategic outreach and engagement efforts of platforms and brands towards connecting meaningfully with this heterogeneous audience. These efforts will help make progress in the area of studying digital behaviours among aged persons (Majón-Valpuesta et al., 2021).

The population of Pakistan is more than 212 million (Worldometers, n.d.). Among the Facebook users in the world, 43 million people represent the fourth largest number of countries. The total number of baby boomers in Pakistan who are aged 55 years and older Connecting to family and friends in Pakistan is possible via Facebook's personal profiling, groups, and messaging (Ali, 2016). Still, it is not clear if Baby Boomers' views on Facebook Social media is a powerful communication tool that enables a wide range of users across the globe. As a result of this popularity, the product has become very popular in Pakistan and has been integrated into everyday life (Kemp, 2022).

Facebook is the most prominent social network in the world (Statista, n.d). Connecting and sharing updates are done on Facebook in Pakistan using features such as individual profiles, groups, and messaging (Ali, 2016). Though the view of Baby Boomers about Facebook use is not so clear, However, Facebook is a family-oriented site that offers an avenue for people to communicate with their loved ones.

Specific features may improve Baby Boomers' experiences. Messaging enables private or public engagement. The Like button creates positive feedback loops. Commenting and sharing drive engagement by reaching friends' news feeds. While many Pakistanis use Facebook, how Baby Boomers perceive the platform is unknown. The study's findings will shed light on the digital divide between baby boomers and younger generations in the Pakistani context. They will also elucidate the needs and preferences of Pakistani baby boomers when interacting on social media.

This research greatly increases our knowledge of the ways in which older Pakistanis use and perceive social software by focusing on their behaviours and attitudes towards Facebook. It also examines the differences associated with demographic characteristics such as gender and education level.

Therefore, overall, this timely study adds something useful to the vacuum of knowledge regarding Pakistani baby boomers' social media attitudes and behaviours. Experts will use these findings to create more effective strategies and tools that can help in reaching out to this neglected but crucial audience that is part of fast-changing Pakistan's digital space. Additionally, they offer critical cultural perspectives regarding the ways in which the generation has been developing relationships with technology as it evolves.

Research Objectives

To identify the specific uses and gratifications that Social media platforms provides for Pakistani baby boomers

To examine the barriers and challenges faced by Pakistani baby boomers in adopting and using Social media platforms effectively

Research Questions

RQ 1: What specific features and activities on Social media platforms do Pakistani baby boomers find useful and engaging?

RQ 2: What concerns and challenges do Pakistani baby boomers face in using Social media platforms effectively?

Literature Review

There has been little research conducted on how Pakistani baby boomers use and perceive Facebook. Research findings have also discussed the broader social media attitudes among older adults, suggesting that Facebook supports communication, entertainment, and news (Nyemba et al., 2011). But Pakistani baby boomers are worried about privacy and safety issues (Sinthuwanichsaid, 2018).

In general, there is little comprehensive academic insight on social media activities among this cohort (Towner and Muñoz, 2016; Hutto et al., 2014). The majority of research has been directed towards youths, and these views create the impression that youngest people use social media. It has been observed that the satisfaction of elders on sites like Facebook and Instagram is not well researched (Nam, 2019).

Although a few studies have looked at how Social media affects loneliness, wellbeing and social needs for older adults, the Pakistani baby boomers' motivations to use platforms such as Facebook are not well studied (Aarts, 2018; Baecker et al., 2014) The majority of respondents in the study, among adults aged 55–75 (Leist, 2013), use the internet for recreation purposes like watching movies or reading news. The number of studies on why Baby Boomers use platforms such as Facebook and Instagram and do so actively are few. In the unique conditions of society in Pakistan, this information is scant. Nam (2019) highlights this as a research gap since Baby Boomers constitute a sizeable population and social technologies may help meet some of their needs for social interaction and engagement. However, there is little research that has been done exploring how these users use Facebook based on the uses and gratifications theory in Pakistani society. The issue of gender differences in social media use among Pakistani baby boomers is still under-explored.

It aims to fill these gaps in the literature by examining specifically Pakistani baby boomers' practises and views related to Facebook. These conclusions will offer specific information that can be used to design approaches and instruments for involving this disregarded segment of the Pakistani online space.

Baby Boomers' Social Media Behaviors and Attitudes

We know very little about the social media exposure habits and behaviours of Pakistani baby boomers. Some studies of baby boomers in other countries, however, can provide some valuable information. According to the study by the Coolhunting Group (2017), 91% of baby boomers use at least one social network, and their presence in this field is increasing. Baby boomers consume large portions of online content weekly and love videos; however, their demands differ from others (Lehr, 2015; Coolhunting Group, 2017).

The research of social media consumption among Spanish older people has identified WhatsApp, Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram as the most commonly used social media platforms, while with the exception of Facebook, the level of engagement of users on the other three platforms has tended to increase (IAB Spain, The case for older adults is that they utilised selectivity and rationality in platforms for keeping close to families and friends. Increasingly using Instagram, they continued preferring Facebook (IAB Spain, 2021). Social networking also differs on an intergenerational basis. On the flip side, younger users are actively engaged in content contributions and conversations, while older adults use less active features such as chatting and photo uploads (Hayes et al., 2015; Bento et al., 2018).

Because of such generational divergence in social media attitudes, the issue of how Pakistan's baby boomers interact with and regard leading sites, such as Facebook, should be investigated. It will offer insights specific to this demographic of Pakistan's digital environments. These results can help in coming up with strategies for engaging this group using appropriate site attributes and information.

With social media becoming increasingly popular across different age groups, it is imperative to comprehend how various cohorts of older groups, such as baby boomers, relate to it. While the majority

of the existing research has explored young people's behaviour and motivations, promoting the view that social media is the youth's territory (Khoo & Yang, 2020),

Hence, this study seeks to bridge this research gap by examining the perceptions, motivations, and usage behaviours of Pakistani Baby Boomers on social media platforms, particularly Facebook. It shall provide an overview of the attitudes, interests, barriers, and gratifications involved in the adoption and usage of social media by this generation. This can lead to a better understanding of how tech innovation and acceptance happen among elderly individuals in Pakistan, driven by unique cultural and historical factors. Moreover, the research findings will explain if demographic factors such as gender and education have an influence on social media perceptions and the trend in social media use among this generation.

Social Media and Uses and Gratifications Theory

The uses and gratifications theory posits that individuals actively choose media to fulfill specific needs and goals (Katz et al., 1973; Wu et al., 2010). This study applies this theory to understand Pakistani baby boomers' (born 1946-1964) Facebook behaviors and attitudes.

The key components of this theoretical framework are:

Media Material: The Facebook platform and its features (newsfeed, groups, messaging, etc.)

Audience: Pakistani baby boomers who use Facebook. Their demographic attributes, attitudes, and social contexts likely influence their media use (Jung et al., 2017).

Gratifications Sought: Needs Pakistani baby boomers aim to fulfill via Facebook, such as social connection, entertainment, self-expression, information seeking, passing time, etc. shaped by their life stage and cultural context (Chen & Kim, 2013).

Facebook Use: Ways baby boomers use Facebook to achieve gratifications - sharing family photos, joining groups, commenting, messaging, etc. (Sheldon & Bryant, 2016).

By mapping Facebook platform, the baby boomer audience, their sought gratifications, and actual Facebook use patterns (Apaolaza et al., 2014; Roy, 2009), this theoretical framework provides a model to understand this group's Facebook behaviors and attitudes through the uses and gratifications perspective.

Analyzing these components can reveal Pakistani baby boomers' motivations and needs underlying their Facebook engagement. Findings can be compared to U&G research on this demographic in other cultural contexts (Jung et al., 2017).

Methodology

This study had dependent and independent variables. The results were the particular uses as well as gratifications of social media among Pakistani baby boomers, who responded that they have motivated reasons to use platforms such as Facebook. The reported worries and challenges the population had when getting accustomed to and using social media were considered independent variables.

The demographic variables such as age, sex, educational status, and occupation of the participants were also included in the study. Other factors, such as device ownership and digital literacy, were used as variables that are likely to influence social media behaviours and views. As variables, the specific social media platforms used regularly by participants were mentioned, with an emphasis on top websites such as Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp.

Research Design

Qualitative research was adopted in this study as a means of capturing the subjective feelings, motivational factors, and attitude of the Pakistani baby boomers towards Facebook. For qualitative methods, it is only possible to understand individual perspectives and the sociocultural context underlying the behaviour associated with technology (Kirk Miller, 1986).

Participants

Ten purposively selected Pakistani baby boomers, who were 58 years old and living in Islamabad, also used Facebook actively. This sample size was considered sufficient for achieving data saturation in qualitative research. Participants were to be functional, computer literate, and have access to the internet and Facebook (Guest et al., 2006).

Data Collection

Primary data was collected through semi-structured, in-depth interviews following principles outlined by Myers and Newman (2007). Interviews lasting approximately one hour were conducted at participants' homes. With consent, interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim. For interviews not recorded, detailed notes were taken (Creswell, 2013).

Data Analysis

Data was analyzed thematically following an inductive approach outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006). Transcripts were manually coded to identify text segments related to themes and categories representing Facebook attitudes and behaviors. Themes were refined through an iterative process of connecting codes, developing theme descriptions, and resolving discrepancies through consensus (Campbell et al., 2013).

Trustworthiness

Multiple strategies enhanced the trustworthiness of findings as suggested by Lincoln and Guba (1985). Member checking was conducted by summarizing interpretations during the interviews to verify accuracy. Inter-coder reliability was established through collaborative coding and theme development. Data triangulation involved collecting perspectives from baby boomers with diverse demographics (Patton, 1999). Rich, thick descriptions allow readers to evaluate transferability.

Ethical Considerations

Informed written consent was obtained prior to interviews based on guidelines by Orb et al. (2001). Anonymity was maintained by de-identifying transcripts. Participants could voluntarily withdraw from the study at any time.

Results

Interview Analysis

Table 1: *Demographics of Interviewee*

Participants	Gender	Education	Age	Job title
Participant 1	Male	Master	59	Audit officer
Participant 2	Male	Bachelor	62	Retired
Participant 3	Male	Master	64	Retired
Participant 4	Male	MBBS	65	Doctor
Participant 5	Male	Bachelor	60	GovernmentEmployee
Participant 6	Female	Master	63	Teacher
Participant 7	Female	Matric	62	House Wife
Participant 8	Male	Bachelor	65	Retired
Participant 9	Female	Bachelor	60	Teacher
Participant 10	Male	Intermediate	61	Retired

Demographic profile of ten Pakistani baby boomers (see Appendix 4.1) It entails personal details such as gender, educational level, age, occupation, or job title.

The gender distribution was uneven, with seven males and three female participants in the sample. There were five graduate students and one person with an intermediate level of education. This demonstrates that the sample consisted of baby boomers with diverse levels of education.

The age range of the participants was 59–65 years old and included individuals from both the younger and older sides of the baby boom generation. They were all aged between 58 and

Regarding occupations, the majority of the participants were retired. Professional roles were comprised of such occupations as doctors, teachers, and government employees. In addition, a non-professional sample was also used in the study. The varying career lines added more to the views presented.

To summarized the demographic characteristics of the qualitative sample, the interviewee demographics are presented in a condensed table. Some of these variables include race, gender, education, age, and profession that may affect one's perspectives on technology and behaviours when using Facebook. The differences in these attributes for the 10 participants make sure there is a mixture of baby boomer opinions arising from their social profile as well as what they have experienced in their lives.

Figure 1: *Thematically Analysis*
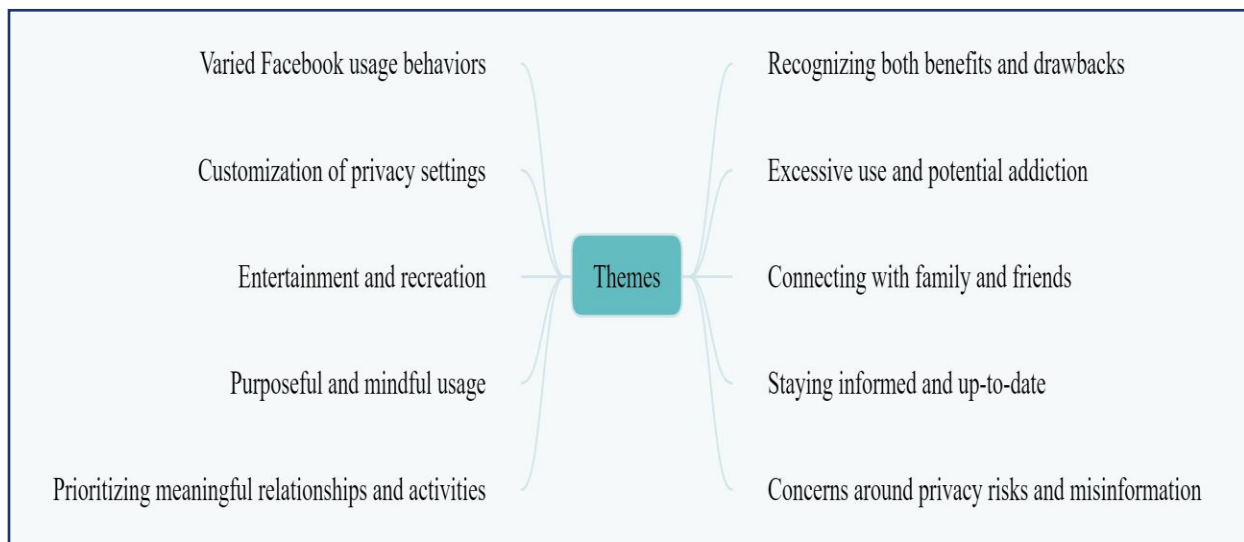
As seen in figure 1, motives, behaviors, and sentiments of baby boomer face-booking appear within the themes. However, within this category, they provide details beyond baby boomers enjoying it and warn them of abuses and risks. A pictorial depiction of such vital themes could, therefore, bring into focus the salient points from an interview report as well as quantitative findings in a concise manner.

By conducting in-depth interviews with 10 baby boomer Pakistanis, some central topics arose around the baby boomers' Facebook usage behaviours and attitudes.

Facebook was utilised to different extents, and the interviewees were either highly or less effective. In addition, some players had a low level of competence and minimal practise, having opened accounts at the request of family or friends, mainly in order to maintain contact. Some were more competent than others, making frequent postings of content, photos, videos, and opinions. They also resorted to other channels, such as Instagram and YouTube. Nightly, on average, less than an hour was the main time spent on Facebook by participants. Highly engaged users accessed Facebook primarily through their mobile phones, whereas less active users turned to computers for this.

Facebook was mainly used for keeping in touch with their families and friends. The participants mentioned how Facebook helped them stay in touch with their close friends and distant comrades. It was possible to share photos, news articles, updates, and others, and thus keep in touch with relatives and

friends. Others also used it as a way to network with colleagues of similar interests or those with similar professions. Company and activity were a means of satisfying the socialisation needs of those who lived on their own.

Furthermore, they indicated that Facebook is good for keeping informed and updated, among other things. They could get news, ideas, and hobby-related supplies related to their hobbies, interests, and current affairs in general. It was a way of sharing ideas and thoughts about certain issues with their peers on Facebook. Some of them perceived that having access to a lot of data at each moment boosted their intellectual activity.

Secondly, several participants noted that they used Facebook as an entertainment outlet. They delighted themselves by watching such funny things as jokes, memes, or funny videos. Others also went on Facebook for fun by joining groups of common interest. Another gratification fulfilled through Facebook use was entertainment.

This was observed as an advantage where the users were given control to customize their privacy settings with respect to the shared information. They also raised worries concerning privacy of data, threats from security issues, and possibility of deception from the fake information. Others, however, suggested that being hooked on the website could take up useful time. The attitudes varied from viewing it as a resource to regarding it as a waste of time, useless, or even dangerous.

Other stated interests included reading books, engaging in various physical activities, sports, playing games and face to face social interactions. Personal development and creation of substantial interpersonal relationship was emphasised instead of social networking. Generally, people saw both positive and negative sides to Facebook usage. Its positive impacts came hand in hand with the danger of using it excessively, without prior cautioning.

Discussion

This study set out to explore the Facebook behaviors, attitudes, and motivations of Pakistani baby boomers, an under-researched demographic cohort. The findings provide novel insights into this group's technology adoption decision shaped by their unique life stage and sociocultural context. The interviews highlighted varying Facebook usage behaviors and attitudes among Pakistani baby boomers. As Sheldon et al. (2021) found, some had very positive perspectives and were highly engaged, while others were skeptical or disinterested. The variance in competency and activity levels can be attributed to age-related differences in technology exposure, as younger boomers tend to be more tech-savvy than the oldest cohort. These disparities likely contribute to the divergence in behaviors noted among Pakistani boomers. The divergence likely stems from older boomers having less digital exposure than their younger counterparts. This confirms generational variations in social media fluency noted across studies (Hayes et al., 2015).

A key finding was participants using Facebook to fulfill social needs like maintaining family ties, similar to prior work (Sinclair & Grieve, 2017). However, this study contextualizes these motivations through the cultural lens of closer family bonds and interactions valued in Pakistani society. Facebook's interactive features facilitated meaningful social exchanges. However, this motivation may be heightened for Pakistani boomers due to strong cultural emphasis on family relationships. Facebook's interactive features enabled meaningful engagement aligned with their social values.

Accessing entertainment and information also emerged as drivers, consistent with the uses and gratifications paradigm (Sheldon et al., 2021). Uniquely, some participants expressed wariness of getting addicted to Facebook, prioritizing more meaningful pursuits. This aligns with literature on purposeful social media use in later life (Jung et al., 2017). News feeds and interest-based groups offered recreational stimulation and helped stay updated. However, as Turel & Qahri-Saremi (2016) caution, some felt Facebook bordered on addictive and ate into time for meaningful activities. This reveals their considered approach to platform integration in life.

Privacy risks and misinformation were major concerns, similar to findings that older adults have lower trust in online content (Hargittai et al., 2012). Guarding against scams and falsehoods was critical for interviewees. However, this study elucidates these concerns are heightened for Pakistani boomers due to the platform's relatively recent entry in their life stage. This generation's motivation and tendency toward the adoption of emerging platforms including Facebook comes through their life trajectory of growing up during radical technological times. Contextualizing technology use within lived experiences expands generalized assumptions (Hutto et al., 2014).

Finding of the study on the pros and cons of Facebook utilization on Pakistani baby boomers. However, on the brighter side, Facebook enhances keeping in touch with loved ones at home and abroad, mostly by sharing pictures, videos, and status updates (Lewis, 2021). This is consistent with the motivations of social connectivity which emerged in the interview. In addition, boomers in Pakistan can communicate with brands and firms related to their preferences via Facebook. (Lewis, 2021).

The same limitation may exist if one of the cohorts is not too familiar with using smartphones. Autonomy can be adversely affected by depending on others to get to Facebook (Costa, 2021). Also, some users can be overloaded with too much social interaction and data on the platform (Jezer-Morton, 2017). Some interviewees expressed an issue with the risk of overstimulation, implying that Facebook could possibly become addictive. However, an over-reliance on Facebook should be used with caution as too much of anything always has negative effects on health. Pakistani boomers may be able to adopt Facebook more adeptly if tailored training and features for older users are provided, thus avoiding the various risks involved. While participants recognized benefits like social connectivity and information access, excessive use without caution was seen as potentially detrimental. Adopting Facebook was driven by specific needs, but purposeful and mindful usage was emphasized.

Overall, the application of uses and gratifications theory to explore Pakistani boomers' Facebook behaviors provides tailored insights explaining adoption through the confluence of life stage needs and cultural forces. Relating findings to the unique sociopolitical history shaping this generation can inform more targeted, context-aware engagement strategies. Relating adoption to Pakistan's sociopolitical history can inform nuanced engagement strategies. A limitation is the small sample - future research should investigate rural users and sub-group differences. Further work could also compare platforms and quantitatively test relationships.

Conclusion

Baby boomers are a lesser studied demographic cohort in relation to their Facebook behaviours, motivations, and perspectives. These findings come with new perspectives that are specifically made for this generation in Pakistan's ever-changing digital space. In all, participants relied on Facebook for purposes of connectivity, looking up information, and entertainment. It was made possible with tools like photo and video sharing and messaging, in line with a culture that centres around connections. Other reasons for participation include staying abreast of the latest developments and fostering intellectual curiosity. Nevertheless, excess use without caution was perceived as dangerous. Perceived benefits versus drawbacks (e.g., addiction, misinformation), including attitudes ranging from positive to sceptical This was intentional and done because of anticipated pleasure and usefulness. These could likely have been generational differences that led to different levels of competency and activity. It is very significant since it encompasses an analysis of adoption factors in relation to Pakistan's sociopolitical history and baby boomers' experiences. This widens the generalised assumptions about platform use and older adults.

Limitations and Future Research

Therefore, some limitations of this exploratory study suggest potential areas for further research. The generalizability of findings is limited by the small, localised nature of the sample. Boomers in rural Pakistan may have more disparities in accessing technology as well as what motivates them. Insights can be enhanced by recruiting a larger, more representative sample. However, the focus on Facebook alone

ignores the views of other popular sites such as WhatsApp and YouTube. Such comparisons could show site-specific differences in adoption and usage among platforms. The qualitative approach aspired for in-depth perspectives as well. Nevertheless, using surveys would enable a quantitative examination of relationships between demographics, motivations, and behaviors. Finally, it was challenging to recruit baby boomers actively using Facebook due to limited uptake in this cohort. Future work should proactively seek boomers on social media to gain additional insights into their perceptions and usage patterns.

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