

Evaluation on Social Media Usage Among College Students with Special Reference to Jalpaiguri District, West Bengal

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Abstract:

The rapid growth of digital technology has significantly transformed the communication patterns, learning practices, and social interactions of college students. Social media platforms have become an essential part of students' daily lives, providing opportunities for academic support, knowledge sharing, networking, entertainment, and self-expression. Among college students, social media served as a tool for academic collaboration, access to educational resources, online discussions, and professional networking. It enables students to exchange knowledge, participate in virtual communities, and remain updated with current events. However, excessive or uncontrolled usage may also lead to challenges such as reduced academic concentration, time management issues, privacy concerns, misinformation and psychological effects. In this article, evaluation on social media usage among college students with special reference to Jalpaiguri district, West Bengal were discussed.

Keywords: Social, Media, College, Students, Jalpaiguri.

I. INTRODUCTION:

In the contemporary digital era, social media has emerged as one of the most influential platforms shaping communication, learning, social interaction, and information exchange among young people (Dumford, A.D. et al., 2023). The rapid growth of internet accessibility and smartphone usage has significantly transformed the lifestyle and behavioural patterns of college students (K. Ebiraj & R. Subramani, 2018). Social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, YouTube, and other online networking sites provide opportunities for students to connect, collaborate, share knowledge, and participate in academic and social activities (Munnaji, V. M., 2019). College students represent one of the most active user groups of social media due to their strong engagement with digital technologies. These platforms have become important tools for educational support, online discussions, accessing academic resources, developing professional networks, and expressing personal opinions (Swathi, P. & Kumar, G.B.S., 2023). However, excessive or unregulated use of social media may also create challenges such as reduced academic concentration, time management issues, misinformation, privacy concerns, and psychological impacts (Thompson, K. & Kim, J., 2022). The use of social media among college students varies according to socio-economic background, educational environment, technological access, and geographical location (Giri, A., Biswas, W. & Biswas, D., 2018). In Jalpaiguri district of West Bengal, where higher education institutions are experiencing increasing digital integration, understanding students' patterns of social media usage is essential. The district has a diverse student population influenced by changing educational practices and technological advancement. The objective of the study is to evaluation on social media usage among college students with special reference to Jalpaiguri district, West Bengal.

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

Research is a systematic approach to inquiry. Research methodology denotes the systematic and theoretical analysis of the methods utilized within a specific domain.

Study Area: Jalpaiguri District, West Bengal.

Variables:

Dependent Variables: Gender, Educational Status.

Independent Variables: Social Media.

Research Design:

The research design serves as a method for answering the research questions. The comprehensive strategy or framework that guides the trajectory of research is referred to as research design. The objective of qualitative research is to understand how individuals see the world. The objective of quantitative research design is to ascertain the quantity of individuals who believe, act, or feel in a particular manner. In this research, qualitative and quantitative research design were used.

Primary Data and Secondary Data:

Primary data denotes information derived from first-hand accounts or empirical facts, especially within the framework of research. It may also be termed as primary knowledge or unprocessed data. An external entity or agency conducts the analysis, necessitating investment and human resources, hence rendering the information compilation process costly. Researchers refer to secondary data as previously collected and documented material that does not directly relate to the current research problem. It is accessible as data collected from diverse sources, including governmental publications, censuses, internal organizational records, books, journal articles, websites, reports, and electronic resources. In this research, primary and secondary data were used.

Sampling Plan:

Sampling methodology referred to examining the population through data analysis and information gathering. The vast sample space lies at the foundation of the data. Every item in the population has an equal and likely probability of being chosen for the sample when using the simple random sampling technique. In this research, simple random sampling plan was used.

Sample Size: 600

Methodology:

The respondents were collected from the selected colleges through simple random sampling from the study area. The respondents were collected from the graduation level (1st year, 2nd year & 3rd year). The questionnaire sheet was provided in favor of the respondent after clearing the research objectives. Sufficient time was given in favor of each respondent. After completion of the sheet, the sheet was collected for data analysis and interpretation.

Research Tools:

Structured Questionnaires & 5 Point Likert Scale Sheet:

A questionnaire is a series of questions or extra prompts that are meant to get information from a group of people. The options were Strongly Agree (SA): 5 points, Agree (A): 4 points, Neutral (N): 3 points, Disagree (D): 2 points, Strongly Disagree (SD): 1 point. In this research, structured questionnaires (5 Point Likert Scale sheet) were used.

Tools Used:

- Scale for the patterns and socio-economic effects of social media usage among college students.
- Scale for the attitudes, students' awareness regarding privacy, cyber security and ethical use of social media.

Data Analysis and Interpretation:

Data analysis entails examining raw data to discern patterns, formulate conclusions, and inform decision-making. Data interpretation entails understanding, organizing, and extracting meaningful insights from data. In this research, pie charts were used.

III. DATA ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION, RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:

a) Personal Profile:

Table 1. Gender:

Options	Respondents	%
Male	300	50
Female	300	50
Total	600	100

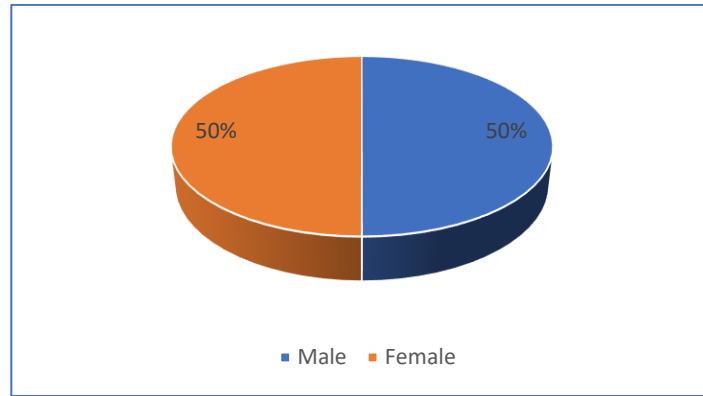


Figure 1. Gender (%)

From the above table & figure, it was found that the gender percentage- Male: 50% & Female: 50%.

Table 2. Educational Status (Bachelor degree):

Options	Respondents	%
1 st Year	283	47.17
2 nd Year	206	34.33
3 rd Year	111	18.5
Total	600	100

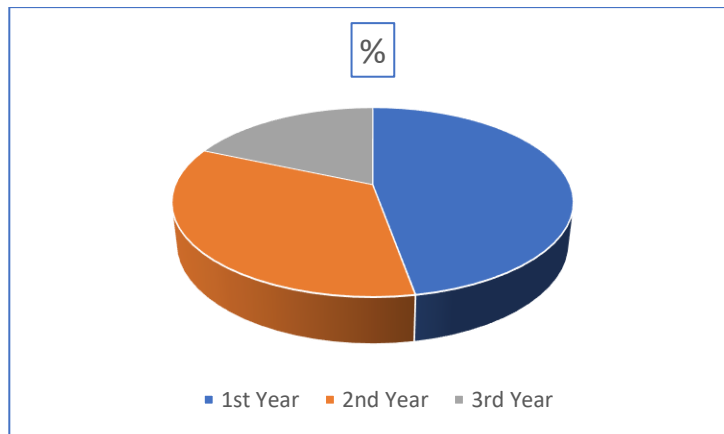


Figure 2. Educational Status (Bachelor degree) (%)

From the above table & figure, it was found that the Educational Status (Bachelor degree) percentage- 1st year: 47.17%, 2nd year: 34.33% & 3rd year: 18.5%.

b) Patterns And Socio-Economic Effects of Social Media Usage among College Students:

Table 3. Every day, I spend many hours on social media:

Options	Respondents	%
SA	138	23
A	206	34.33
N	35	5.84
D	114	19
SD	107	17.83
Total	600	100

(Source: Primary Data, Survey)

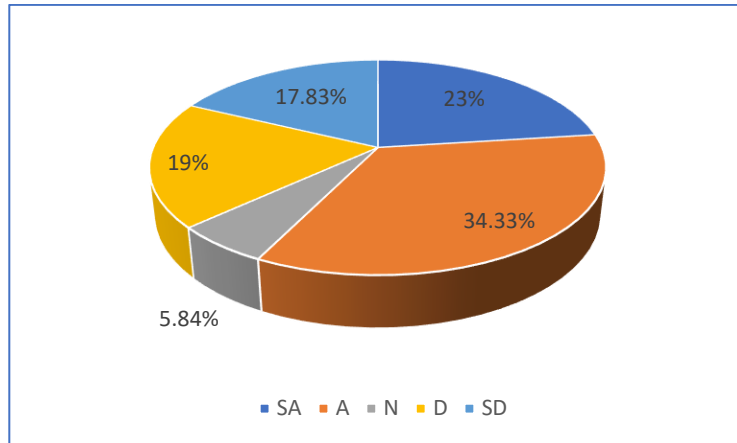


Figure 3. Every day, I spend many hours on social media (%)

From the above table & figure, it was found that the percentage of SA: 23%, A: 34.33%, N: 5.84%, D: 19% & SD: 17.83%.

Table 4. Social media plays a significant role in my everyday activities:

Options	Respondents	%
SA	102	17
A	243	40.5
N	27	4.5
D	129	21.5
SD	99	16.5
Total	600	100

(Source: Primary Data, Survey)

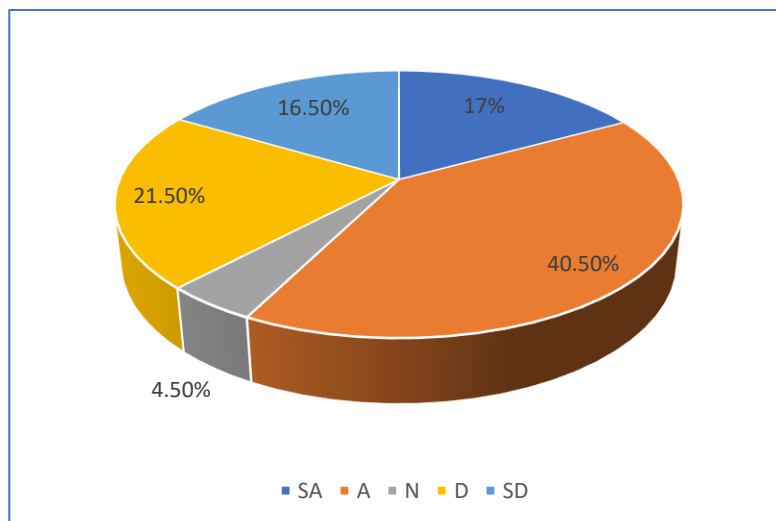


Figure 4. Social media plays a significant role in my everyday activities (%)

From the above table & figure, it was found that the percentage of SA: 17%, A: 40.5%, N: 4.5%, D: 21.5% & SD: 16.5%.

Table 5. I utilize social media for academic purposes quite a bit:

Options	Respondents	%
SA	89	14.83
A	96	16
N	30	5
D	268	44.67

SD	117	19.5
Total	600	100

(Source: Primary Data, Survey)

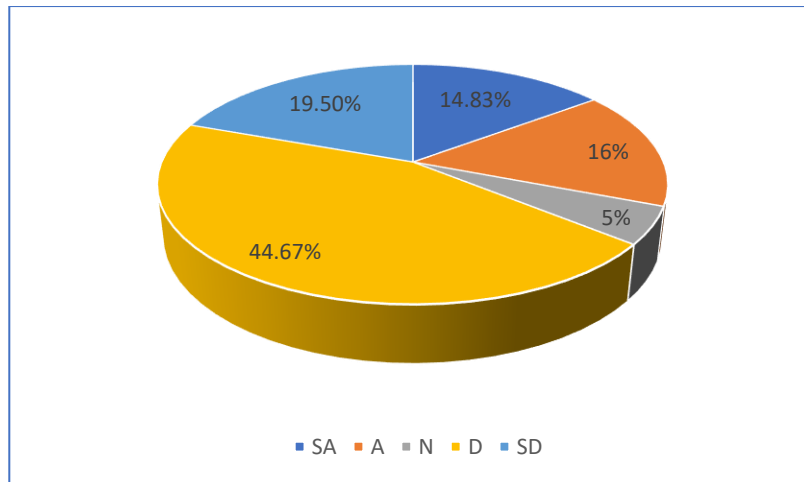


Figure 5. I utilize social media for academic purposes quite a bit (%)

From the above table & figure, it was found that the percentage of SA:14.83%, A:16%, N: 5%, D: 44.67% & SD: 19.5%.

Table 6. My primary purposes for using social media are leisure and amusement:

Options	Respondents	%
SA	96	16
A	119	19.83
N	33	5.5
D	190	31.67
SD	162	27
Total	600	100

(Source: Primary Data, Survey)

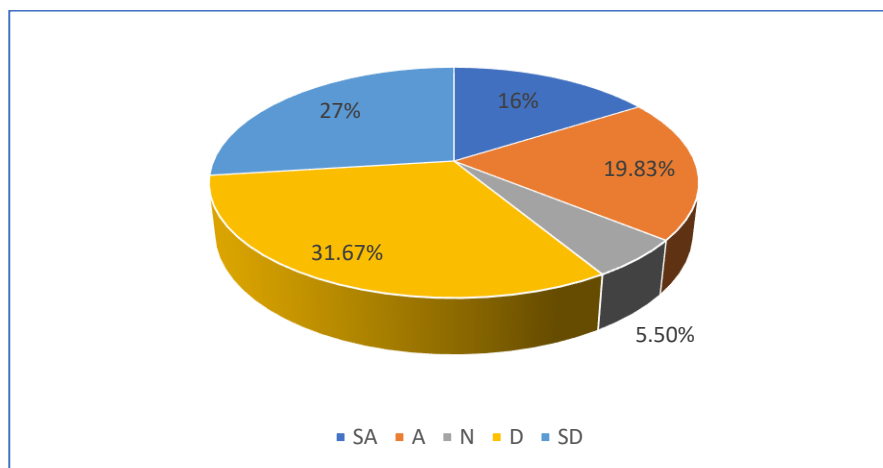


Figure 6. My primary purposes for using social media are leisure and amusement (%)

From the above table & figure, it was found that the percentage of SA: 16%, A: 19.83%, N: 5.5%, D: 31.67% & SD: 27%.

Table 7. I frequently use social media to stay in touch with friends and classmates:

Options	Respondents	%
SA	141	23.5
A	204	34
N	48	8
D	108	18
SD	99	16.5
Total	600	100

(Source: Primary Data, Survey)

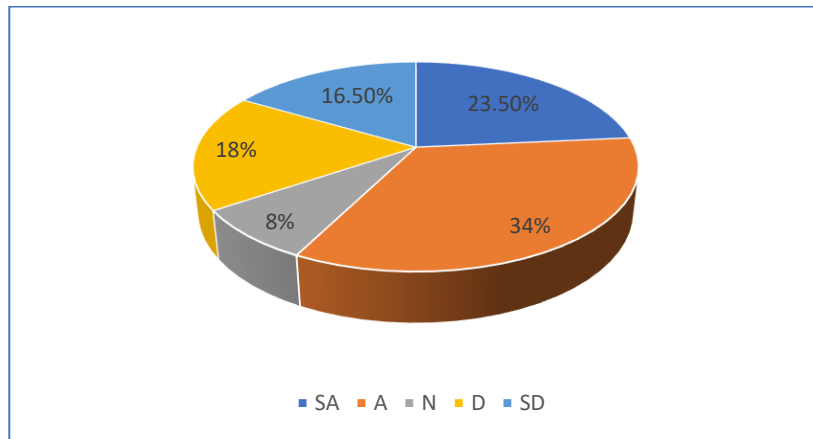


Figure 7. I frequently use social media to stay in touch with friends and classmates (%)

From the above table & figure, it was found that the percentage of SA: 23.5%, A: 34%, N: 8%, D: 18% & SD: 16.5%.

Table 8. I can readily access instructional knowledge towards social media:

Options	Respondents	%
SA	119	19.83
A	211	35.17
N	24	4
D	173	28.83
SD	73	12.17
Total	600	100

(Source: Primary Data, Survey)

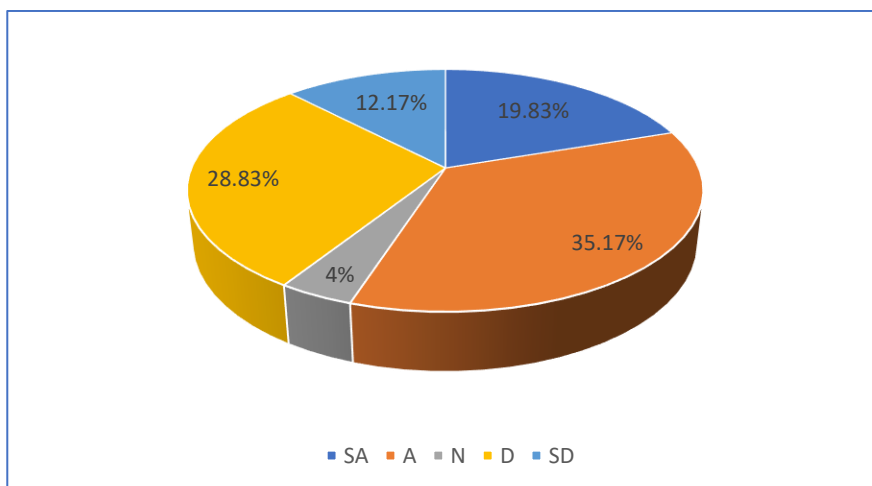


Figure 8. I can readily access instructional knowledge towards social media (%)

From the above table & figure, it was found that the percentage of SA: 19.83%, A: 35.17%, N: 4%, D: 28.83% & SD: 12.17%.

c) Attitudes, Students' Awareness regarding Privacy, Cyber Security and Ethical Use of Social Media:

Table 9. I recognize the need to safeguard my personal information on social media:

Options	Respondents	%
SA	183	30.5
A	204	34
N	25	4.17
D	102	17
SD	86	14.33
Total	600	100

(Source: Primary Data, Survey)

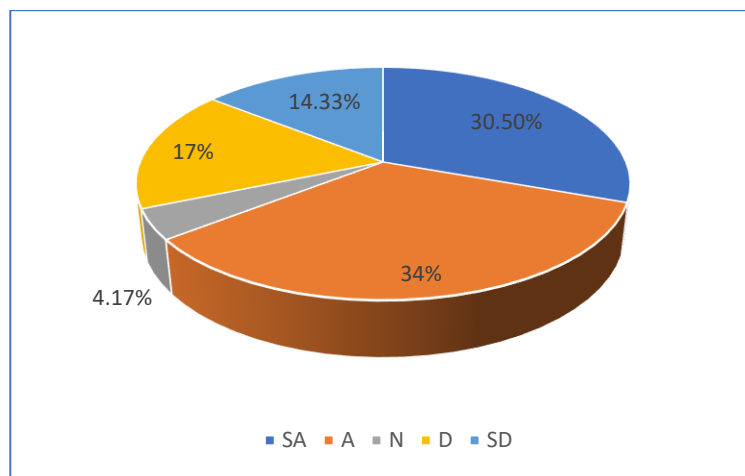


Figure 9. I recognize the need to safeguard my personal information on social media (%)

From the above table & figure, it was found that the percentage of SA: 30.5%, A: 34%, N: 4.17%, D: 17% & SD: 14.33%.

Table 10. I consistently review the privacy configurations of my social media profiles:

Options	Respondents	%
SA	173	28.83
A	199	33.17
N	29	4.83
D	108	18
SD	91	15.17
Total	600	100

(Source: Primary Data, Survey)

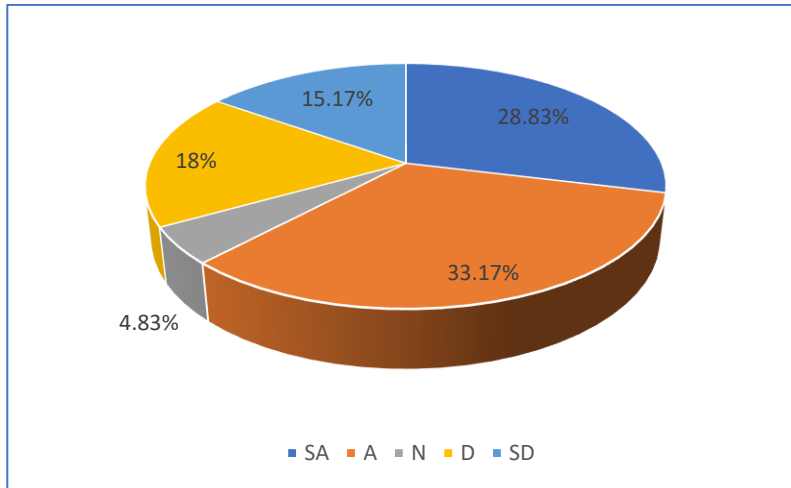


Figure 10. I consistently review the privacy configurations of my social media profiles (%)

From the above table & figure, it was found that the percentage of SA: 28.83%, A: 33.16%, N: 4.83%, D: 18% & SD: 15.17%.

Table 11. I refrain from disclosing personal information, like passwords or financial details, online:

Options	Respondents	%
SA	103	17.17
A	406	67.67
N	20	3.33
D	59	9.83
SD	12	2
Total	600	100

(Source: Primary Data, Survey)

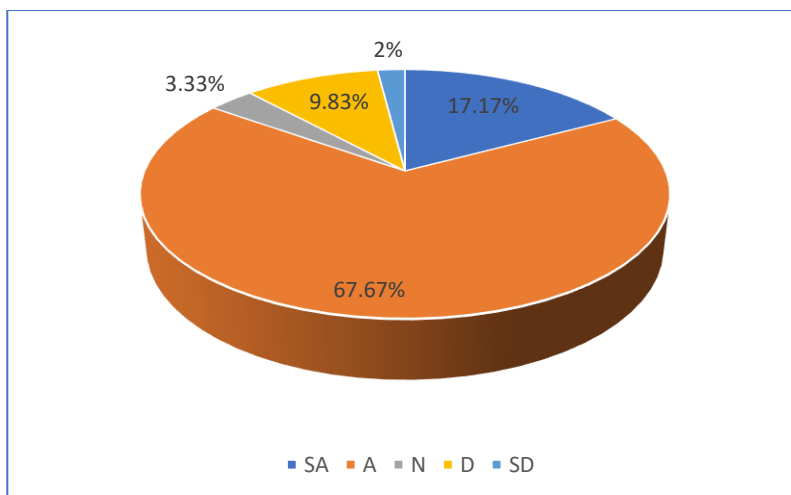


Figure 11. I refrain from disclosing personal information, like passwords or financial details, online (%)

From the above table & figure, it was found that the percentage of SA: %, A: %, N: %, D: % & SD: %.

Table 12. I assert that cybersecurity awareness is crucial for all students:

Options	Respondents	%
SA	102	17
A	327	54.5
N	16	2.67
D	103	17.17

SD	52	8.65
Total	600	100

(Source: Primary Data, Survey)

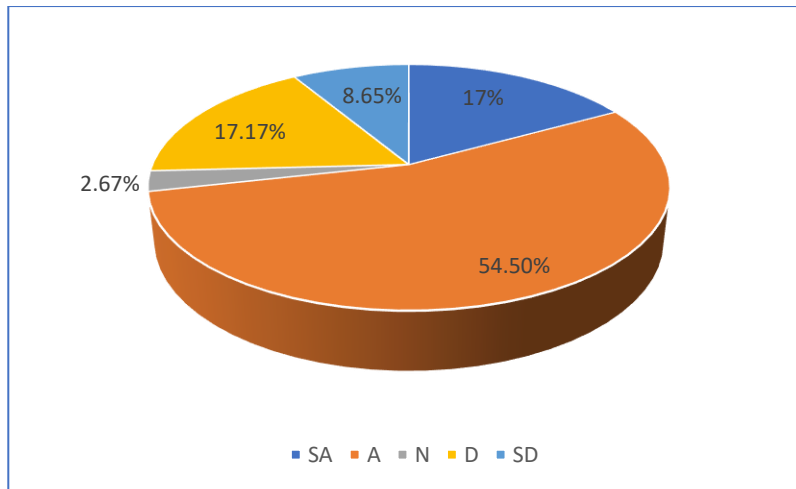


Figure 12. I assert that cybersecurity awareness is crucial for all students (%)

From the above table & figure, it was found that the percentage of SA: %, A: %, N: %, D: % & SD: %.

Table 13. I can recognize dubious links or fraudulent communications on social media platforms:

Options	Respondents	%
SA	99	16.5
A	125	20.83
N	28	4.67
D	226	37.67
SD	122	20.33
Total	600	100

(Source: Primary Data, Survey)

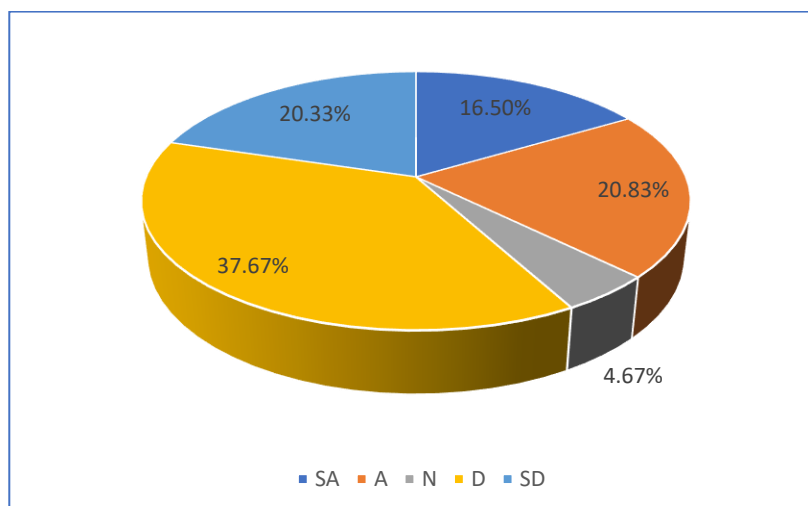


Figure 13. I can recognize dubious links or fraudulent communications on social media platforms (%)

From the above table & figure, it was found that the percentage of SA: 16.5%, A: 20.83%, N: 4.67%, D: 37.67% & SD: 20.33%.

Table 14. I employ robust passwords to safeguard my social media accounts:

Options	Respondents	%
SA	118	19.67
A	203	33.83
N	24	4
D	143	23.83
SD	112	18.67
Total	600	100

(Source: Primary Data, Survey)

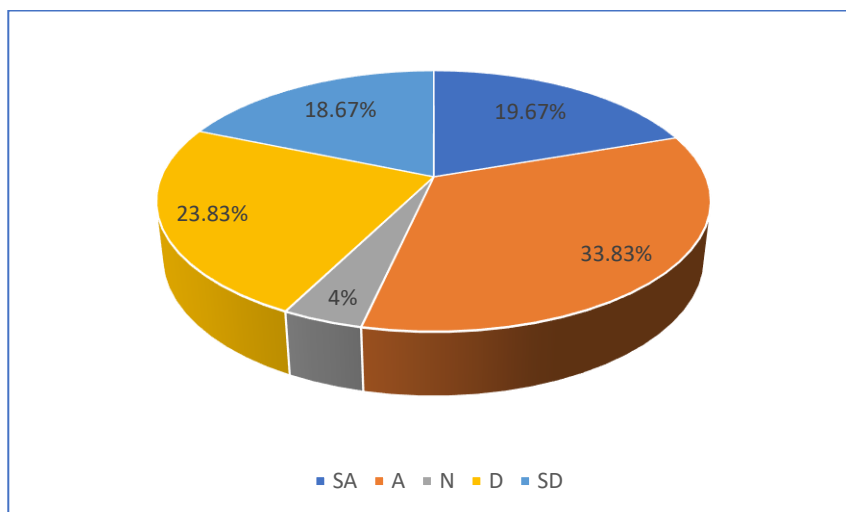


Figure 14. I employ robust passwords to safeguard my social media accounts (%)

From the above table & figure, it was found that the percentage of SA: 19.67%, A: 33.83%, N: 4%, D: 23.83% & SD: 18.67%.

IV. CONCLUSION:

The study on the patterns and socio-economic effects of social media usage among college students in Jalpaiguri district reveals that social media has become an important part of students' academic, social, and personal lives. Social media provides several positive socio-economic benefits, including improved access to educational resources, awareness of career opportunities, skill development, networking, and participation in social activities. It has created new opportunities for students to connect beyond geographical boundaries and enhance their knowledge and digital competencies. Socio-economic differences among students, including variations in internet accessibility, digital literacy, and family background, also influence the patterns of social media usage. The study concluded that social media acts as both a valuable resource and a potential challenge for college students. Proper digital awareness, responsible usage practices, and guidance from educational institutions can help students maximize the benefits of social media while minimizing its negative impacts. Therefore, balanced and informed social media usage is essential for the overall academic, social, and economic development of college students in Jalpaiguri district. Social media provides several positive socio-economic benefits, including improved access to educational resources, awareness of career opportunities, skill development, networking, and participation in social activities. It has created new opportunities for students to connect beyond geographical boundaries and enhance their knowledge and digital competencies. The study concluded that social media acts as both a valuable resource and a potential challenge for college students. Proper digital awareness, responsible usage practices, and guidance from educational institutions can help students maximize the benefits of social media while minimizing its negative impacts. Therefore, balanced and informed social media usage is essential for the overall academic, social, and economic development of college students in Jalpaiguri district.

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