



**SOCIAL MEDIA USE AND ITS IMPACT ON THE PRODUCTIVITY OF  
BIDI ROLLERS: A SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY OF DISTRICT  
MURSHIDABAD, WEST-BENGAL**

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**ABSTRACT**

The use of social media has become widespread across all segments of society, and bidi workers are no longer isolated from this trend. Existing studies suggest that social media usage can have a significant impact on workers' productivity. Based on this premise, a quantitative study was conducted among bidi rollers in Suti-I Block of rural Murshidabad, a region well known for its extensive engagement in the bidi industry. Over the past decade, the growing popularity of social media has led many bidi rollers particularly younger and adolescent workers to engage with social media platforms while working. This shift in behaviour and interaction patterns has elicited strong reactions from older workers. In this context, an empirical inquiry was undertaken to assess the actual impact of social media use on the productivity of bidi rollers. The study employed an interview schedule as the primary tool for data collection. Findings reveal a mixed response: while the 57.7 of respondents reported that social media use hampers their productivity 'sometimes', a smaller proportion 5.3 percent accepted that social media use cause missing their targets while bidi rolling. A small number of respondents (2.7 per cent) indicated that it enhances productivity by alleviating work-related stress and making the work process more engaging.

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## **Introduction**

This study employs a quantitative approach to investigate the impact of social media use on the productivity of bidi workers. In recent years, the proliferation of smartphones and affordable internet access has greatly increased the presence of social media platforms in both rural (Asif, 2024) and urban areas of India. As a result, even traditionally home-based and labor-intensive jobs like bidi rolling have witnessed significant changes in workers' behavior, particularly concerning social media use and digital interaction. The main goal of this study is to determine how social media use affects the working capacity and productivity of bidi rollers. In this context, productivity refers to the number of bidis rolled within a specific time frame, as well as the level of concentration, efficiency, and consistency maintained during working hours. The study operates on the scientific inquiry, supported by previous research, that excessive and non-professional use of social media can negatively impact users' performance, attention span, and overall productivity (Jong, Chen, A, & YH., 2021)

A growing body of research indicates that prolonged use of social media—especially for entertainment, chatting, or passive browsing—can lead to cognitive distraction, reduced engagement with tasks, and lower productivity levels. For example, studies show that spending more than two hours in a day on social networking sites negatively impacts academic performance due to divided attention and the inefficiencies of multitasking. This view can also apply to inefficiency among bidi rollers (Ladrón de Guevara Rodríguez, Lopez-Agudo, & Prieto-Latorre, 2022). Similarly, it is also found that, mere presence of mobile devices and social media notifications can disrupt workflow and decrease productivity in occupational settings (Brinz-Ponce, Pereira, Carvalho, Juanes-Mendez, & Garcia-Penalvo, 2017). Studies have also suggested that non-work-related social media use exceeding two hours per day is associated with reduced efficiency and increased mental fatigue (Kuss & Griffiths, 2012).

In the Indian context, especially in rural regions such as Murshidabad district of West Bengal, social media usage has witnessed a rapid rise over the last decade. Empirical studies have shown that rural populations, including informal sector workers, increasingly spend more than two hours daily on social media platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook, and YouTube (Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, 2018) This trend is particularly prominent among younger and adolescent users, who are more adept at digital technologies and more inclined towards frequent online interaction. Such patterns of usage raise important questions regarding their implications

for occupational productivity, especially in labour-intensive industries like bidi manufacturing.

Drawing on this broader context, the present study seeks to systematically investigate the relationship between social media use and the productivity of bidi rollers in the Suti-I Block of Murshidabad district. The research employs quantitative tools, specifically the interview-schedule and survey method, to collect primary data from respondents. The interview schedule was carefully designed to capture information on demographic characteristics, duration and purpose of social media use, work habits, and perceived changes in productivity. The survey method enabled the researcher to gather standardized data from a relatively large sample, thereby enhancing the reliability and generalizability of the findings.

The data collected through the interview schedule were analyzed quantitatively to identify patterns and correlations between the hours spent on social media, the types of usage, and productivity levels. Special attention was given to the duration of social media engagement each day, distinguishing between users who spend less than two hours and those who exceed this threshold. This distinction is supported by existing literature, which suggests that excessive use beyond two hours may result in negative outcomes. (Kelly, Zilanawala, Booker, & Sacker, 2019).

The study's findings reveal a complex and a subjective scenario. On one hand, a small number (22.7%) of bidi rollers agreed that, using social media hampering their working performance. A significant number of bidi workers may face the performance issue and missed their targets; as 58.7 per cent of the respondents agreed that sometimes they missed their daily targets. Only 36 percent of the respondents completely agreed that social using social media is not hampering their working performance. In general discussion respondents are agreed that frequent checking of messages, watching videos, or engaging in online conversations disrupts their focus and slows the pace of bidi rolling. Many workers recognized that these interruptions result in incomplete targets, decreased output, and, in some cases, financial losses due to lower piece-rate earnings. These results are consistent with prior research highlighting the detrimental impact of digital distractions on task performance. (Griffiths, 2015).

The study indicates that the impact of social media on bidi-rollers cannot be uniformly applied on all the respondents; rather, it varies significantly based on two key factors: age and gender, as well as their roles within the family, particularly concerning daily earnings. Excessive and non-work-related use of social media can have detrimental effects, leading to distractions and reduced

efficiency. Conversely, limited and regulated use may provide psychological benefits that can indirectly enhance work engagement.

## **Research Design**

Research design acts as the blueprint for a study, providing a comprehensive plan that guides the entire research process, from the formulation of research questions to the analysis and interpretation of data. It details crucial components such as the sampling framework, methodological tools, data collection techniques, and statistical procedures used to investigate relationships between variables. A well-crafted research design ensures clarity, coherence, and scientific rigor, thereby enhancing both the validity and reliability of the findings. (Blaikie, 2010).

In this study, the research design is primarily quantitative, emphasizing the establishment of empirical relationships between variables associated with social media usage and the productivity of bidi workers. The investigation explores associations among factors such as age, duration of social media use, and working capacity. Within this framework, the researcher observes and analyzes naturally occurring variations in social media usage among bidi workers, during working hours. Consequently, the design aligns more closely with a descriptive and correlational approach, commonly used in social science research to identify patterns and relationships among variables.

The study focuses on examining key relationships, including: (a) the association between age and the daily productivity of the Bidi rollers and (b) preferred type of social media use and the working capacity or productivity of bidi rollers. These variables are crucial in understanding how demographic factors and behavioural patterns interact to influence occupational outcomes.

The research design also incorporates a clearly defined sampling strategy, namely judgemental sampling method. This sampling method is primarily useful when the researcher is aware about the research universe. In the context of present research, the first author is the native of the research universe and although the study is limited to bidi workers in a specific geographical area, namely Suti-I Block of Murshidabad district, efforts are made to ensure that the sample represents different age groups and levels of social media usage. This enhances the generalizability of the findings within the context of the study area.

## Data Collection

The data for the present research were collected through a closed ended e-interview schedule, which served as the primary tool of data collection. The interview schedule was carefully designed to capture quantitative information on various aspects, including demographic characteristics, social media use hours, and indicators of bidi rolling capacity. In order to facilitate efficient data collection and management, the interview schedule was prepared using Google Forms, a widely used digital platform for survey administration.

Despite the use of an e-interview schedule form, the qualitative observation were also helpful in framing the research arguments relating to real time behaviour of the respondents. The local researcher (first author) enumerated the data in the field and the second author observed the real time behaviour of the respondents and after the enumeration of the data both discussed and analyzed the data. The combination of digital tools and personal interaction represents a hybrid approach to data collection, balancing the efficiency of technology with the reliability of traditional fieldwork methods (Bernard, 2008).

In addition to primary data, the study also relies on secondary data, which were incorporated through a comprehensive review of existing literature. Secondary sources include academic journal articles, government reports, and previous research studies related to social media usage, labour productivity, and the bidi industry. The review of literature provides a theoretical and empirical foundation for the study, helping to contextualize the research problem and to identify gaps that the present study seeks to address (Moher D, 2017).

The integration of primary and secondary data enhances the overall robustness of the research. While primary data provide direct insights into the experiences and perceptions of bidi workers, secondary data offer broader perspectives and comparative frameworks that strengthen the interpretation of findings.

## Literature Review:

A literature review provides the logical justification to the research design. It provides the backbone as it discussed the research conducted relating to the field. In the context of present research, the authors came across the six studies, these studies are relevant and helpful in

emancipating the research direction. The literature review is also helpful to find out the research gaps. In the context of present research, it is found that, there are the many researches talking about the impact of social media and professional productivity, but I did not come across any researches that is talking about the social media use and the productivity of the bidi rollers in the field. Therefore, the research is relevant fill the research gap in this direction and also fulfil the purpose of advancement of research knowledge. The literature review is as follows:

1.The study revealed that work-oriented social media platforms, exemplified by DingTalk, and socialization-focused platforms, such as WeChat, function as complementary resources that enhance organizational effectiveness. When these two types of social media are used together, they generate synergies that significantly boost team collaboration and overall employee performance. The practical benefits of work-oriented platforms, which facilitate communication and task management, are further enriched by the social interactions and community-building opportunities offered by social-oriented platforms. This powerful combination not only fosters stronger connections among employees but also enables companies to maximize the return on their investments in information technology, ultimately driving greater business value. (Qi, Yi, Yang, Jose, & Jiang, 2019).

Commentary: The paper aims to address basically two research questions: (1) Does the combined use of work-oriented and socialization-oriented social media create synergies in the workplace? (2) Do these synergies impact team and employee performance? The central idea of this study is that work-oriented social media and socialization-oriented social media can coexist in the workplace and positively influence team and employee performance. Work-oriented social media serve as a professional tool, while socialization-oriented social media add expressive value by providing social and emotional support. (Qi, Yi, Yang, Jose, & Jiang, 2019).

2.Research has shown that employees often seek recognition, wish to stay updated on relevant information, and desire to foster connections with their community when they contribute to corporate blogs. These blogging platforms have emerged as valuable resources for organizations, offering innovative pathways for enhancing communication, sharing knowledge, and promoting collaboration among team members. (Nianlong, Xunhua, Benjiang, & Chen, 2018). In the last decade, social media platforms such as Twitter and Facebook have witnessed an extraordinary surge in user engagement, resulting in a staggering influx of data that encompasses diverse information, varying opinions, and extensive interpersonal relationships. Organizations have

leveraged social media analytics to gain insights from this wealth of data, applying it to a wide array of uses such as predicting electoral outcomes, analyzing stock market trends, shaping product design, and refining brand messaging. Businesses are increasingly adopting social media, especially in the form of microblogging, to achieve multiple strategic goals, including conducting market research, recruiting top talent, managing public relations, and safeguarding their reputations in a rapidly evolving digital landscape. (Nianlong, Xunhua, Benjiang, & Chen, 2018). The study is useful to find out the increasing use of social media in offices and IT companies and helpful to identify the relationship between these two variables.

3.As the commercial significance of social media continues to expand in today's digital landscape, researchers are delving into the intricate ways in which social media management practices and corporate Twitter accounts influence relational outcomes. Evidence from various studies suggests that effective social media strategies can significantly enhance relational outcomes, including improvements in online reputation and the overall strength of relationships with users. By leveraging these tools, organizations can cultivate a more robust presence in the online community and build lasting connections with their audience. (Marten & Beck, 2015).

This study talks about the positive impact of social media use for professional use but did not study the impact of non-professional use on productivity hours.

4.The study highlighted that individuals consider different factors when selecting social media for work-related purposes versus social interactions. Managers and companies can guide employees to utilize social media effectively to enhance their work capabilities and improve overall efficiency. Furthermore, creating groups for employees can facilitate efficient sharing of work-related information (Jong, Chen, A, & YH., 2021). This study emphasizes the need to evaluate and explain how different characteristics of social media impact work efficiency through work-oriented and social-oriented usage intentions. (Jong, Chen, A, & YH., 2021).

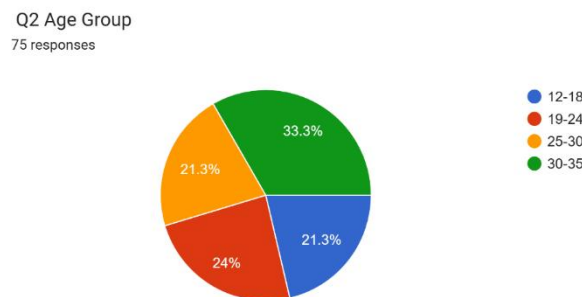
5.This empirical study analyzed the relationship between social media use at work and project success. It contributes to the growing body of literature on the impact of social media on organizational outcomes. The findings indicate that among the four popular social media platforms studied, only one adds value to the workplace. Specifically, the use of Facebook at work, regardless of whether age, gender, and education were controlled for, is negatively associated with project success. In contrast, the use of LinkedIn (with controls in place) and the

use of other social media platforms (without controls) were both positively associated with project success. "Other social media" refers to all platforms not specifically categorized, including firm-specific or work-specific social media. The study utilized social network analysis (SNA), along with the theories of the strength of weak ties and information diffusion, to explain its results. These findings have important implications for practice, policy, and future research. (Vithayathil, Dadgar, & Osiri, 2020).

6. In this study, based on the theories of media synchronicity and social capital, the authors suggest that social media can enhance employees' social capital, which in turn aids knowledge transfer. Both social capital and knowledge transfer contribute to improved work performance. Empirical findings show that social media can promote the development of employees' social capital, as indicated by the formation of network ties, a shared vision, and increased trust among colleagues. These factors, in turn, facilitate knowledge transfer. While a shared vision and knowledge transfer have a positive impact on work performance, network ties and trust do not directly affect performance; instead, their influence is partially mediated by knowledge transfer. (Wang, et al., 2016).

**Data Analyses and Interpretation:**

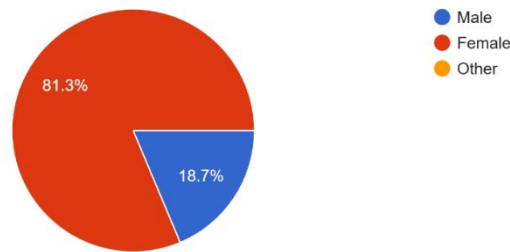
In the data visualization titled “Demographic Data Interpretation: 1”, the findings highlight the relationship between age groups and social media usage. The data clearly indicates that age is a significant factor influencing social media use. While designing the research, we decided to target specific age groups based on existing studies and field experiences, which show that youth and adolescents are the most active social media users. In contrast, individuals over the age of forty generally show less interest in social media (Asif, 2024), often preferring face-to-face interactions.



**Demographic Data Interpretation: 1**

In the analysis of the demographic data, it was observed that female respondents outnumbered male members. During the data collection in the research universe, it was found that women were primarily engaged in bidi rolling, while male members were usually away from home. In rural Murshidabad, males tend to be outside their homes for extended periods, returning only every three to six months. This situation has led to increased autonomy for women within the household. Bidi rolling not only serves as a supplementary source of income for these women but has also become a regular source of earnings. On average, women collect between 30 to 50 rupees per day from this work, which they use for family emergencies or save for future needs. Ultimately, this system provides women with a form of economic independence.

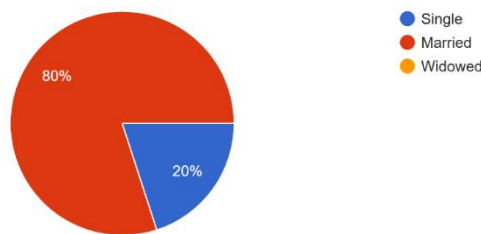
Q3 Gender  
75 responses



**Demographic Data interpretation: 2**

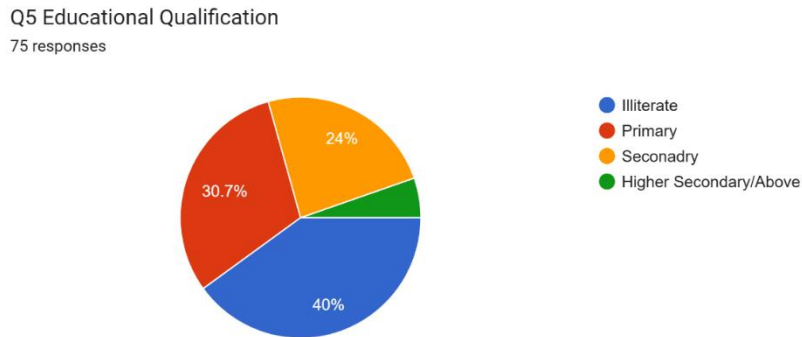
Demographic Data Interpretation 3: The data visuals indicate that the majority of respondents (80%) are married, while only 20% are single. During the interviews, it was observed that the age of marriage within the research population is generally below 18. Additionally, many of the single bidi rollers are between the ages of 12 and 15. Many of these young individuals attend school while also contributing to their households by working as bidi rollers.

Q4 Marital Status  
75 responses



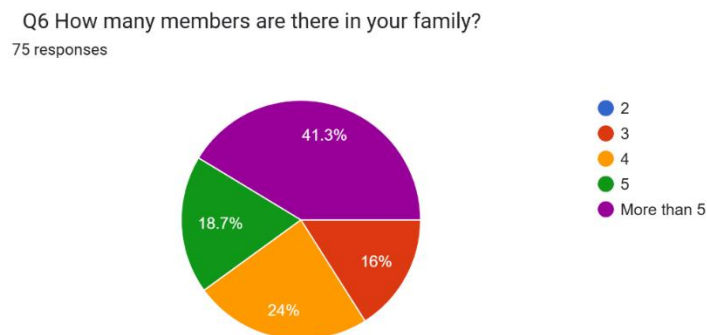
**Demographic Data Interpretation: 3**

Demographic Data Interpretation 4: The visuals below indicate that the majority of respondents are illiterate, while over 30 percent have completed only primary education. Only 24 percent of respondents have finished their secondary education. Additionally, more than 5 percent of respondents have qualifications above higher secondary education. The education data presented may be related to the types of social media usage and the level of interaction on these platforms.



**Demographic Data Interpretation: 4**

Demographic Data Interpretation 5: In the visuals below, we present data regarding the family structures of bidi rollers. The findings indicate that over 40 percent of the respondents have families with more than five members, while only 16 percent have families consisting of three members. This tendency towards larger family sizes is particularly prevalent among lower-income individuals. In contrast, those who are more affluent tend to prefer smaller families. In the below visuals, the nature of family of the bidi rollers are presented. The data reveals that more than 40 per cent of the respondents are having more than 5 members in their family and only 16 per cent respondents are having three members. The large family size is the specific nature among the lower-class people. While the people who are affluent in the class economy prefer to have small families.



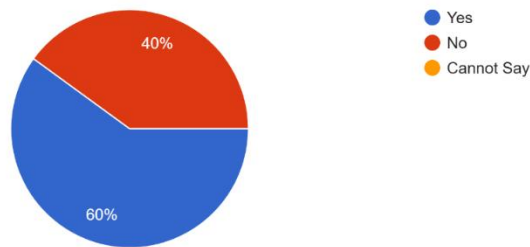
**Demographic Data Interpretation 5**

**Data Interpretation Section 2: Digital Interactions**

In the "Digital Interaction Data Interpretation 1," it was found that 60 percent of respondents have social media accounts, while 40 percent do not. During field visits, it was observed that the majority of adolescent girls who work as bidi rollers access social media using their parents' or relatives' mobile devices. Within these families, smartphones are primarily owned by the breadwinners and older siblings. However, when the breadwinners are away for work and return after three to six months, both mothers and daughters also engage with the smartphones.

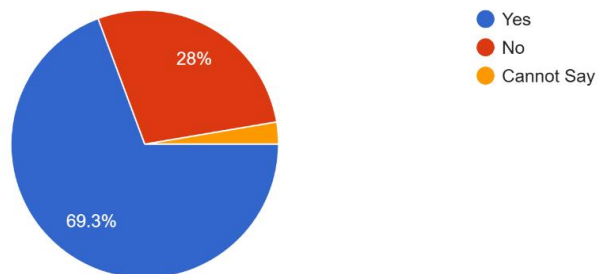
It is important not to be misled by the data visuals, which may suggest that a significant number of respondents do not use social media. In reality, they are using social media accounts on their parents' or relatives' devices. This point is further illustrated in the visuals provided in "Digital Data Interpretation 2" and "Digital Data Interpretation 3."

Q7 Do you have a social media account?  
75 responses



**Digital Interaction Data Interpretation 1**

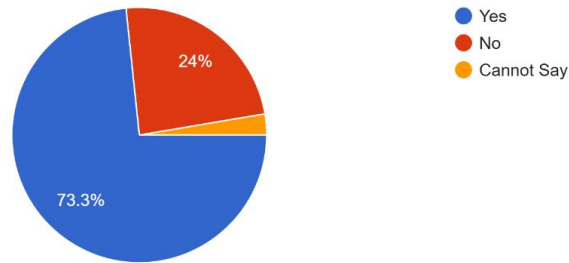
Q8 Do you own your own mobile phone?  
75 responses



**Digital Interaction Data Interpretation 2**

Q9 Do you use social media through your parents'/relative's mobile?

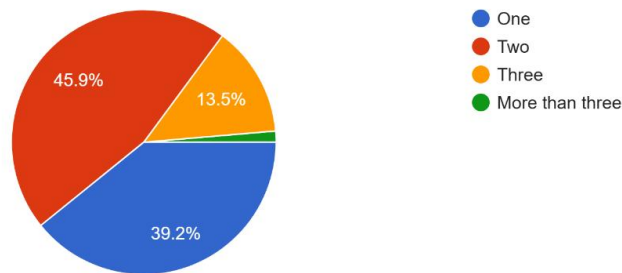
75 responses



### Digital Interaction Data Interpretation 3

Q11 How many social media platforms do you use?

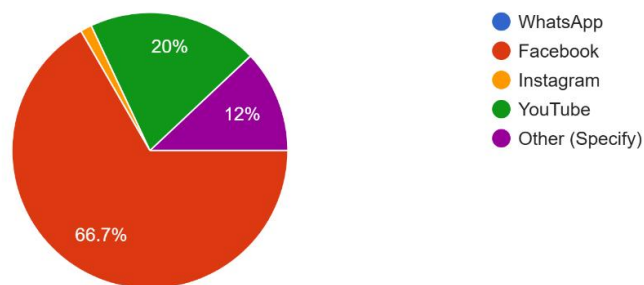
74 responses



### Digital Interaction Data Interpretation 4

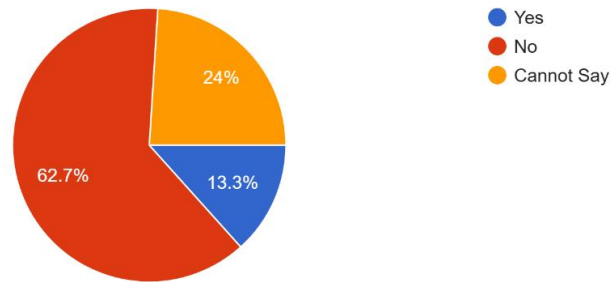
Q12 Which Social Media Platform you prefer to use?

75 responses



### Digital Interaction Data Interpretation 5

Q13 Do you use social media only for playing songs while working?  
75 responses



**Digital Interaction Data Interpretation 6:**

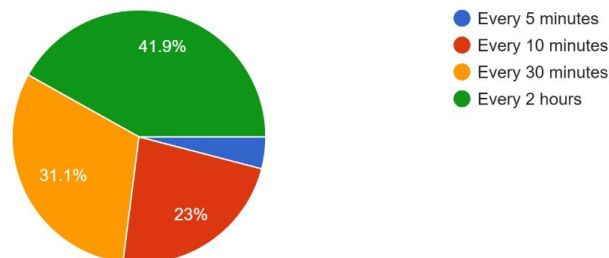
The three data visuals, Digital Interaction Data Interpretation 4, 5, and 6, reveal that many respondents use social media via their parents' or relatives' mobile phones. Additionally, they often have multiple accounts across various social media platforms.

**Section 3 Social Media Use and Productivity**

In the data visual titled “Social Media Use and Productivity Data Interpretation 1,” it is revealed that respondents actively use social media during their bidi rolling duration. Approximately 4 percent of the respondents check their social media every 5 minutes, while 23 percent check their accounts every 10 minutes. Additionally, 31.1 percent of the respondents use social media every 30 minutes, and 41.9 percent do so every 2 hours.

The first two groups of respondents may exhibit problematic behavior due to their frequent checking of social media accounts. The latter two groups, although not indicative of addictive behavior, may still experience significant impacts on their productivity due to their social media usage.

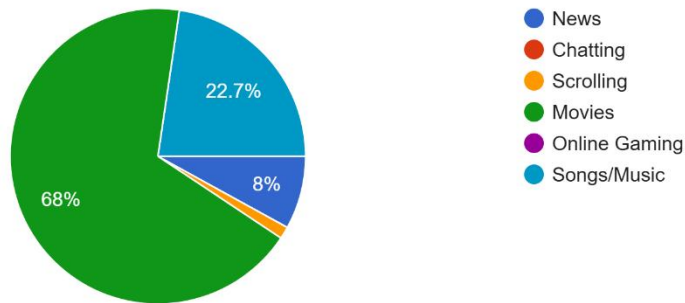
Q14 How often do you check social media during bidi rolling?  
74 responses



Social Media Use and Productivity Data Interpretation 1: The data visuals in this section highlight the purpose of social media, the actual capacity of bidi rollers, their targets, and instances of missed targets. Analyzing these visuals reveals that the perception of meeting or missing targets is subjective and varies among individual respondents. However, comparisons of the data indicate that individuals who check their social media accounts every 5 to 10 minutes generally agree that they are likely missing their bidi rolling targets.

Q15 What is your main reason for using social media during bidi rolling?

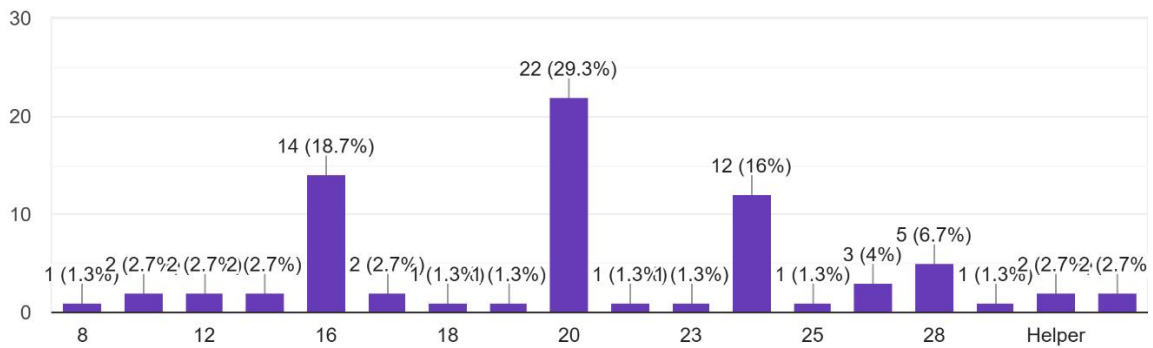
75 responses



### Social Media Use and Productivity Data Interpretation 2

Q16 How many bundles of bidi do you roll in a day?

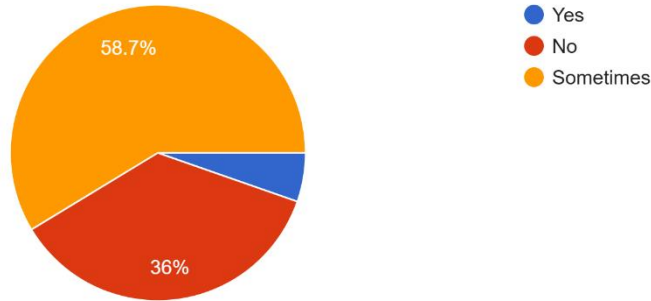
75 responses



### Social Media Use and Productivity Data Interpretation 3

Q17 Has social media caused you to miss your daily work targets?

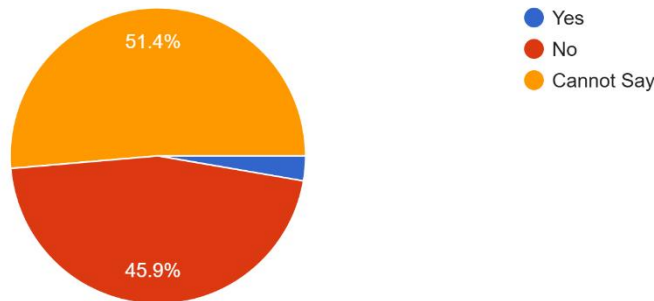
75 responses



### Social Media Use and Productivity Data Interpretation 4

Q18 Has your productivity increased after using social media?

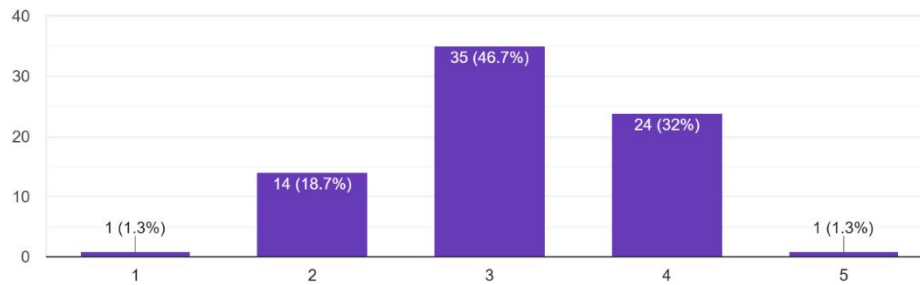
74 responses



### Social Media Use and Productivity Data Interpretation 5

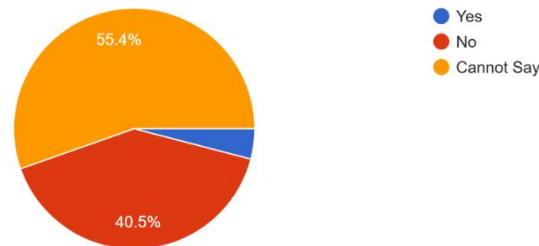
Q19 Do notifications or scrolling interrupt your focus during bidi rolling?

75 responses



### Social Media Use and Productivity Data Interpretation 6

Q20 Have you tried limiting social media use during work hours to improve your work quality?  
74 responses



### Social Media Use and Productivity Data Interpretation 7

#### Discussion and Conclusion:

The data analyses and interpretation reveals that, social media use is growing exponentially among all segments of populations. The use of social is also gradually become among the bidi rollers. The difference over the use of social media reflects the age and gender variations. The present study is conducted on the Bidi rollers, this segment of population is generally illiterate and poor. Therefore, their patterns of social media use are different from the other segment of the population or those who are IT professionals. In the Q15, 68 per cent of the respondents are agreed that they use social media for watching movies during bidi rolling duration. Which is differ from the use of IT professional and other organized industries and highly qualified population. Thew findings revealed that, the growing social media use has become the concern among age old workers, while the young population holistically incorporated in their workplace. The study also find out that around 6 per cent of population considering the use of social media as detrimental to their work performance. In conclusion, the study underscores the need for a balanced understanding of social media use in informal work settings. While it is important to recognize the potential risks associated with excessive usage, it is equally necessary to acknowledge its role as a coping mechanism in monotonous and labour-intensive occupations. Future research may explore this relationship in greater depth by incorporating longitudinal data, experimental designs, or comparative studies across different occupational groups. Policymakers and stakeholders may also consider awareness programs to promote responsible and mindful use of social media among workers, thereby minimizing its negative impact while maximizing its potential benefits.

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