Dynamics of Social Media Engagement in Pakistan: A Comprehensive Analysis of User Trends Across Platforms

Amir Hamza*, Dr. Dai Yonghong**, Ihsan Ullah***

Abstract

The purpose of this research paper is to conducts a comprehensive examination of social media engagement in Pakistan, focusing on user trends across diverse platforms. [1] Longitudinal observational research design was adopted to capture temporal variations in user interactions on major social media platforms. The data collection process involved sourcing monthly engagement metrics from publicly available platform analytics, ensuring accuracy and reliability. The analysis begins with the Facebook, revealing distinctive fluctuations in engagement percentages over the observed months. Peaks in November 2022 and subsequent recoveries underscore the impact of seasonality, content dynamics, and platform updates on user behavior. Twitter, as a microblogging platform, maintains a consistent but comparatively lower level of engagement, resiliently serving audiences seeking real-time and concise content. Visual-centric platforms like YouTube and Instagram exhibit dynamic patterns, with YouTube's fluctuating percentages indicating a diverse content landscape and an uptick in Instagram engagement signaling evolving user preferences for visually-driven experiences. Beyond mainstream platforms, the study extends its focus to niche audiences on platforms such as Pinterest, LinkedIn, Reddit, and others, revealing the coexistence of platforms catering to specific interests. the findings contribute to a distinctive understanding of user behavior, uncovering the impact of various factors on engagement percentages across different social media platforms in Pakistan. Future research endeavors can build upon these insights, exploring additional dimensions of social media engagement and its evolving trends within the digital landscape of Pakistan.

Keywords: Social Media Engagement**,** Pakistan, User Trends, Platform Dynamics**,** Digital Landscape Content Consumption.

Introduction

*PhD Scholar, School of Media and Communication, Yuehai Campus, Shenzhen University, Shenzhen 518060, China; amir.hamza99@yahoo.com

** College of International Studies, Institute of Area and International Communication Studies and Centre for China's Overseas Interests, Yuehai Campus, Shenzhen University, Shenzhen 3688, People's Republic of China. daiyh199@126.com

***PhD Scholar, School of International Studies, Collaborative Innovation Center for Security and Development of Western Frontier China, Sichuan University, Chengdu 610065, China; ihsanullah946@yahoo.com

In the context of the evolving digital landscape, this research aims to explore the complex dynamics of social media engagement in Pakistan, a nation undergoing rapid digitalization. The digital era has brought transformative changes in the way individuals interact, communicate, and share information globally (Iivari et al., 2020). Social media platforms have emerged as crucial channels shaping communication patterns, cultural exchanges, and information dissemination, playing a central role in the ongoing digital transformation (Kapoor et al., 2018).As one of the most populous countries globally, Pakistan has experienced a substantial surge in internet penetration, propelling its citizens into the digital age (Jamil, 2021). Social media platforms are integral to this digital shift, providing a virtual space for diverse communities to converge, express themselves, and participate in the global dialogue. Understanding the distinctions of social media usage in Pakistan is not only a scholarly work but also a practical necessity for businesses, marketers, and content creators navigating this dynamic landscape (Dwivedi et al., 2021).The research extends beyond a singular examination of user engagement on mainstream platforms, encompassing a holistic exploration of the digital ecosystem. This approach considers variations in user behavior across platforms, demographic trends, and the influence of cultural dynamics. By focusing on key platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Instagram, the aim is to explore the essentials of user trends and shed light on the factors influencing engagement fluctuations. Microblogging platforms, illustrated by Twitter, present a unique dimension characterized by real-time interactions and succinct content sharing (Nummenpää, 2017). Visual-centric platforms like YouTube and Instagram leverage multimedia content to capture audience attention, creating a dynamic content landscape that reflects the evolving preferences of Pakistani users. Beyond mainstream platforms, the research extends its view to niche networks, including Pinterest, LinkedIn, Reddit, VKontakte, and others. Understanding the coexistence of these platforms and their varying degrees of user engagement is integral to comprehending the diversity of interests within the Pakistani digital community. Embarking on this exploratory journey, the research endeavors to contribute not only to academic but also to practical insights informing strategic decision-making in the fields of marketing, business, and political content creation (Ida et al., 2020). By exploring the complexities of social media engagement in Pakistan, the research aspires to offer a comprehensive understanding of the digital landscape, facilitating a more informed and effective approach for stakeholders navigating the ever-evolving realm of online interactions.

In the rapidly evolving landscape of social media engagement in Pakistan, a critical gap exists in understanding the complex dynamics, preferences, and user behaviors across diverse platforms (Ilyas & Anjum, 2021). Global studies provide valuable insights, but the unique socio-cultural context of Pakistan necessitates a dedicated investigation into how users in the country interact with major platforms. Additionally, a lack of comprehensive research on real-time engagement patterns on microblogging platforms like Twitter, the influence of multimedia content on user behavior, and the engagement dynamics of niche audiences on alternative platforms warrants exploration (Russell, 2009). This research aims to address these gaps, providing a thorough examination of social media engagement in Pakistan and contributing valuable insights for businesses, marketers, and content creators seeking to navigate and optimize their strategies within this dynamic digital landscape. This research holds significant implications for various stakeholders. For digital marketers and businesses operating in

Pakistan, the findings offer a data-driven foundation to shape targeted strategies, considering platform-specific trends, temporal dynamics, and preferences of niche audiences. The cultural insights contribute to a comprehensive understanding, aiding marketers in creating culturally relevant content. Academically, the study adds value by presenting a longitudinal analysis of social media engagement, laying the groundwork for future research exploring the interplay of cultural, societal, and technological factors. Policymakers can benefit from insights into digital behavior, guiding policies related to digital literacy and online safety. The focus on user experience metrics provides a pathway for platforms to enhance user interactions, while the predictive value allows businesses to anticipate future trends (Moro et al., 2016). The comparative analysis with global trends offers cross-cultural insights, fostering a global understanding of the unique characteristics of the Pakistani digital landscape. This study serves as a practical and academic framework, contributing to the informed management of the dynamic social media environment in Pakistan.

Literature Review

The exploration of social media engagement emerges as a dynamic and complicated field of study, offering profound insights into the shifting behaviors and preferences of users across a myriad of platforms on a global scale. As we investigate into the multifaceted dimensions of this digital landscape, the study conducted by Stoycheff (Stoycheff et al., 2017) stands out, shedding light on the dominance of Facebook as a major player in the social media arena. This dominance is against the backdrop of other platforms like Twitter and Instagram, each carving out unique spaces to cater to distinct audiences with their own patterns of engagement. The applicability of these global trends to the specific context of Pakistan becomes a focal point, marked by the nation's distinctive socio-cultural tapestry. The complexity of how users engage with and utilize social media platforms in Pakistan may present unique challenges and opportunities that diverge from global norms (Ramzan et al., 2023). Understanding these distinctions is not merely an academic pursuit; it is a key consideration for businesses, content creators, and marketers seeking to navigate the digital landscape effectively (Purnama & Asdlori, 2023).A crucial side of this exploration is the impact of social media in developing countries, a theme extensively examined by Abrahim (Abrahim et al., 2019). The findings underscore the transformative role of social media in communication and information dissemination, particularly relevant in the case of Pakistan. The nation is in the midst of rapid digitalization, a phenomenon that not only shapes online interactions but also provides a lens through which to examine the broader societal implications of increased online engagement. Cultural influences on social media usage patterns emerge as a significant aspect, as emphasized by (Olaniran, 2018) study. The cultural context in Pakistan plays a pivotal role in shaping online behaviors, influencing the kind of content users create, consume, and engage with. Recognizing and understanding these cultural distinctions is essential for a comprehensive analysis of social media engagement in the Pakistani context. Microblogging platforms, with Twitter at the forefront, have been subjects of extensive research due to their real-time nature. The studies conducted by Java et al. in 2019 and Chen et al. in 2018 investigate into the realms of information diffusion and user engagement on Twitter (Pokropek & IFiS, n.d.). These insights offer a valuable understanding of real-time conversations, trends, and content consumption patterns within the local digital community in Pakistan. The nature of

real-time engagement on platforms like Twitter is inherently dynamic, reflecting the rapid pace at which information is disseminated and consumed.

Visual-centric platforms, exemplified by YouTube and Instagram, introduce a multimedia dimension to social media engagement. Sundar research in 2017 explores the impact of visual content on user engagement and information processing (Sundar & Oh, 2019). Adapting these findings to the Pakistani context allows for an examination of how multimedia content influences user behavior on these platforms, taking into account the cultural context that shapes aesthetic preferences and visual storytelling. As we move beyond mainstream platforms, literature focusing on niche audiences and alternative social media networks provides insights into the coexistence of diverse platforms. Studies by Grandhi in 2019 and Ceh and Benedek in 2021 (Grandhi et al., 2019) (Ceh & Benedek, 2021). shed light on the motivations and engagement patterns of users on platforms like Pinterest, LinkedIn, and Reddit. These platforms, often categorized as niche or specialized, reveal the diverse interests and preferences of digital communities. Applying these perspectives to the Pakistani context allows for an exploration of the multifaceted nature of digital communities in the country, providing a richer understanding of how users with specific interests engage online. The ongoing evolution of research on social media engagement necessitates a dynamic approach that synthesizes insights from global studies and tailors them to the unique context of Pakistan. This imperative arises from the understanding that what works globally may not necessarily align with the intricacies of local behaviors, preferences, and cultural norms. This approach ensures a more comprehensive understanding of the digital landscape in Pakistan and facilitates informed decision-making for businesses, marketers, and content creators navigating the ever-evolving realm of online interactions.

The study of social media engagement in Pakistan is a journey through a complex interaction of global trends, cultural dynamics, and the unique evolution of digital landscapes in developing nations. It is a tapestry woven with insights from global researchers, each contributing a thread to the broader narrative. This exploration is not just an academic pursuit but a guide for those seeking to navigate the digital currents, leveraging the wisdom gained from both global and local perspectives to chart a course for effective engagement in the ever-expanding digital realm.

Conceptual Framework

The proposed model for understanding social media engagement in Pakistan introduces an integrated framework that systematically examines various influential factors shaping user interactions across major platforms. One crucial category within this model involves investigating into distinct variables specific to each major social media platform—Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Instagram. This is in line with studies that highlight the significance of platform-specific variables (Arora et al., 2019). These variables may encompass post frequency, content types (such as images, videos, or text-based posts), and demographic considerations. The overarching goal is to comprehend how these platform-specific elements contribute to user engagement.

Another side of the model takes into account the temporal dynamics of social media engagement, incorporating time-related variables. This includes an analysis of patterns across different times of the day (time of day) and varying days of the week. By considering these temporal dimensions, the model aims to identify peak engagement periods and fluctuations

over the course of a week. Research has shown that analyzing patterns across different times of the day is crucial for understanding temporal dynamic (Tagarelli & Interdonato, 2015). The influence of multimedia content on user engagement is another critical aspect examined by the model, with a focus on visual appeal and content variety. Platforms like YouTube and Instagram heavily rely on visual content, and understanding which types of visuals garner more engagement, along with the diversity of content categories, is deemed essential (Dobrian et al., 2011). Recognizing the existence of alternative platforms catering to specific niche audiences, such as Pinterest, LinkedIn, Reddit, and VKontakte, is a key consideration in the model. Investigating engagement dynamics on these platforms provides valuable insights into the preferences and behaviors of niche communities (Kozinets, 2019).

The flowchart representation summarizes the interconnectedness of these factors, illustrating how platform-specific variables, temporal aspects, multimedia content, and niche audience engagement collectively contribute to the overall understanding of social media engagement in the Pakistani context. This comprehensive model is designed to guide a structured analysis of the available data, allowing for a distinctive exploration of the intricacies influencing user engagement on social media in Pakistan.
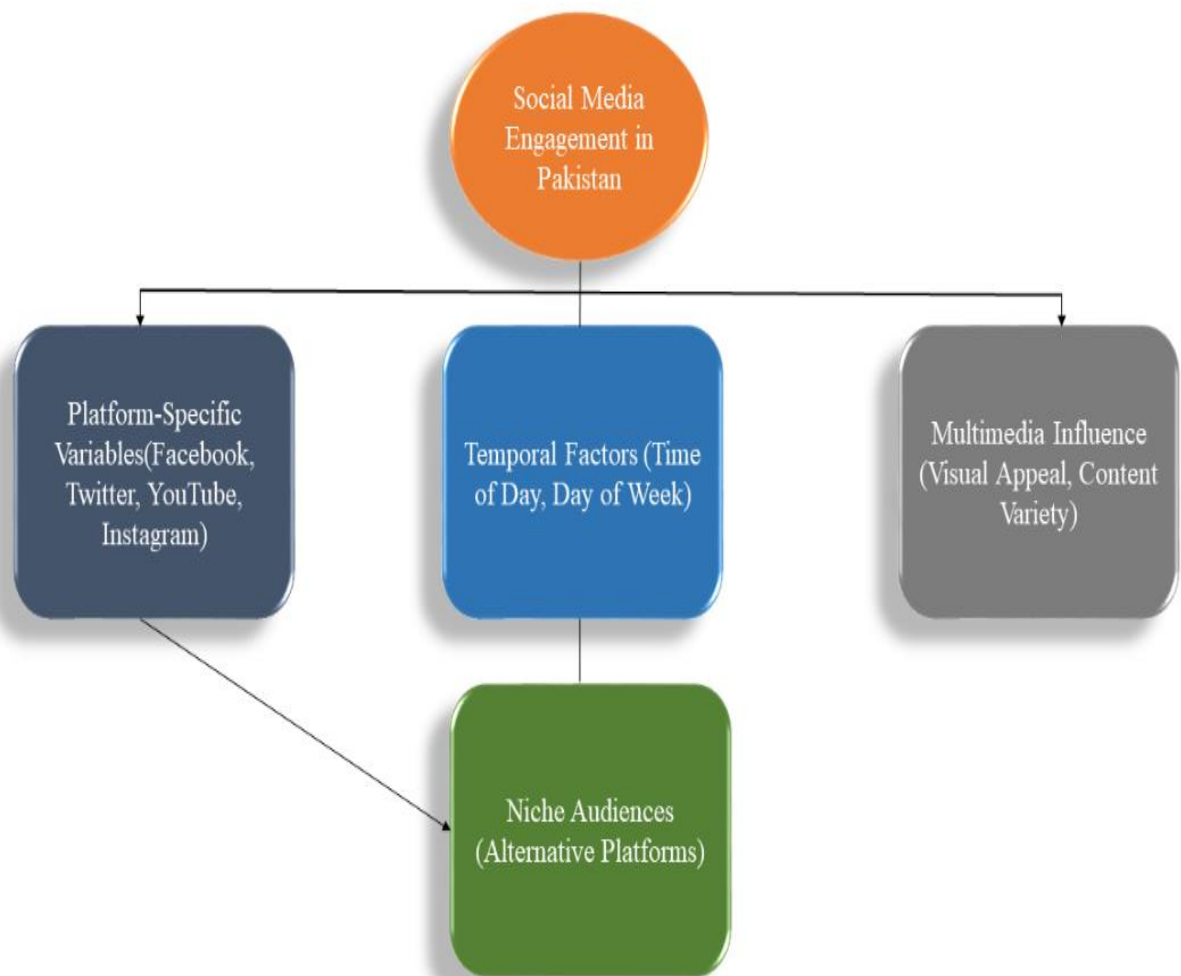

Figure 1: Conceptual framework

Methodology

The methodology employed in this study aimed to comprehensively analyze social media

engagement in Pakistan over a twelve-month period, spanning from November 2022 to November 2023 (see figure 2 and 3). A longitudinal observational research design was adopted to capture temporal variations in user interactions on major social media platforms. The data collection process involved sourcing monthly engagement metrics from publicly available platform analytics, ensuring accuracy and reliability. The platforms considered in the study include Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, Pinterest, LinkedIn, Reddit, and VKontakte.

The variables under investigation encompassed platform-specific metrics, temporal factors, multimedia content variables, and engagement metrics for alternative or niche platforms. Platform-specific variables included user engagement percentages for each platform, while temporal factors involved monthly data points, facilitating the analysis of engagement patterns over time. Multimedia content variables focused on platforms like YouTube and Instagram, evaluating visual appeal and content variety. Niche platforms, represented by Pinterest, LinkedIn, Reddit, and VKontakte, were included to understand engagement dynamics on platforms catering to specific audiences.

Data analysis comprised descriptive statistics, time series analysis, and comparative analysis to explore temporal patterns, platform-specific trends, and the influence of multimedia content. The data were visualized using line graphs and comparative charts to facilitate a comprehensive understanding of social media engagement dynamics.

Ethical considerations were prioritized, with the study relying solely on publicly available and anonymized data. No personal user information was accessed or disclosed, aligning with the data usage policies of the respective social media platforms. The study acknowledges potential limitations, including the reliance on publicly available data and the absence of qualitative insights, opening avenues for future research to delve deeper into user motivations and perceptions. In conclusion, this methodology provided a structured and comprehensive approach to analyzing social media engagement in Pakistan, offering valuable insights into the dynamic digital landscape.

Results Analysis

The results of the comprehensive analysis of social media engagement in Pakistan, conducted over the period from November 2022 to November 2023, reveal a dynamic and evolving landscape of user interactions across various platforms, as illustrated in Figure 2. The dominant player in this landscape is Facebook, which experiences a gradual decline in engagement from 85.97% to 83.05%. This decline suggests a potential diversification of user preferences, indicating that Pakistani users may be exploring alternative platforms or shifting their focus to different online spaces. Understanding the factors contributing to this decline is crucial for stakeholders seeking to tailor their strategies to the changing landscape of user preferences. Twitter, known for its real-time nature and brief content sharing, exhibits fluctuating engagement patterns. The engagement rate reaches a low of 7.69% in March 2023 and peaks at 17.88% in January 2023. This variability underscores Twitter's sensitivity to real-time events and trending topics. The platform's engagement dynamics align with specific occurrences, emphasizing the importance of considering temporal factors and current events when analyzing user interactions. Businesses and content creators can leverage this insight to align their Twitter strategies with timely discussions that resonate with the Pakistani audience. YouTube, a prominent platform for video content, experiences a notable surge in engagement, reaching 13.69% in March 2023. This surge suggests a heightened interest in video content during that

specific period. Exploring the factors driving this increased engagement can provide valuable insights into the types of multimedia content that capture the attention of Pakistani users. Content creators and marketers can capitalize on this trend by tailoring their video content to align with the preferences of the audience during peak engagement periods. Instagram, known for its visual-centric approach, demonstrates varying engagement levels, with a notable peak at 2.29% in August 2023. This fluctuation reflects changing appetites for visual content among Pakistani users. The rise in engagement during August suggests a specific trend or event that resonated with the audience, highlighting the importance of understanding the context behind these fluctuations. Businesses and content creators can use this information to craft visually appealing content that aligns with the evolving preferences of the Pakistani audience. Niche platforms such as Pinterest, LinkedIn, Reddit, and VKontakte maintain relatively lower levels of engagement throughout the observed period. This suggests the presence of specific user bases with dedicated interests on these platforms. While the engagement rates are lower compared to mainstream platforms, understanding the dynamics of engagement on niche platforms is crucial for tailoring content and engagement strategies to reach these targeted audiences effectively. The "Other" category consistently exhibits minimal activity, indicating a limited presence on unspecified platforms. Although lacking specificity, this category emphasizes the dominance of major social media platforms in the Pakistani digital landscape. Marketers, content creators, and businesses can leverage these insights to optimize their strategies, recognizing the importance of platform-specific approaches and staying attuned to evolving user preferences.

This complex analysis provides valuable insights into the evolving preferences and behaviors of social media users in Pakistan over the observed timeframe. From the gradual decline in Facebook engagement to the fluctuating patterns on Twitter, the surge in YouTube engagement, and the varied engagement on Instagram, each platform presents a unique landscape of user interactions. Niche platforms maintain specific user bases, and the "Other" category highlights the dominance of major platforms. This comprehensive understanding of social media engagement in Pakistan offers actionable insights for stakeholders aiming to navigate the diverse and dynamic digital landscape of the country.
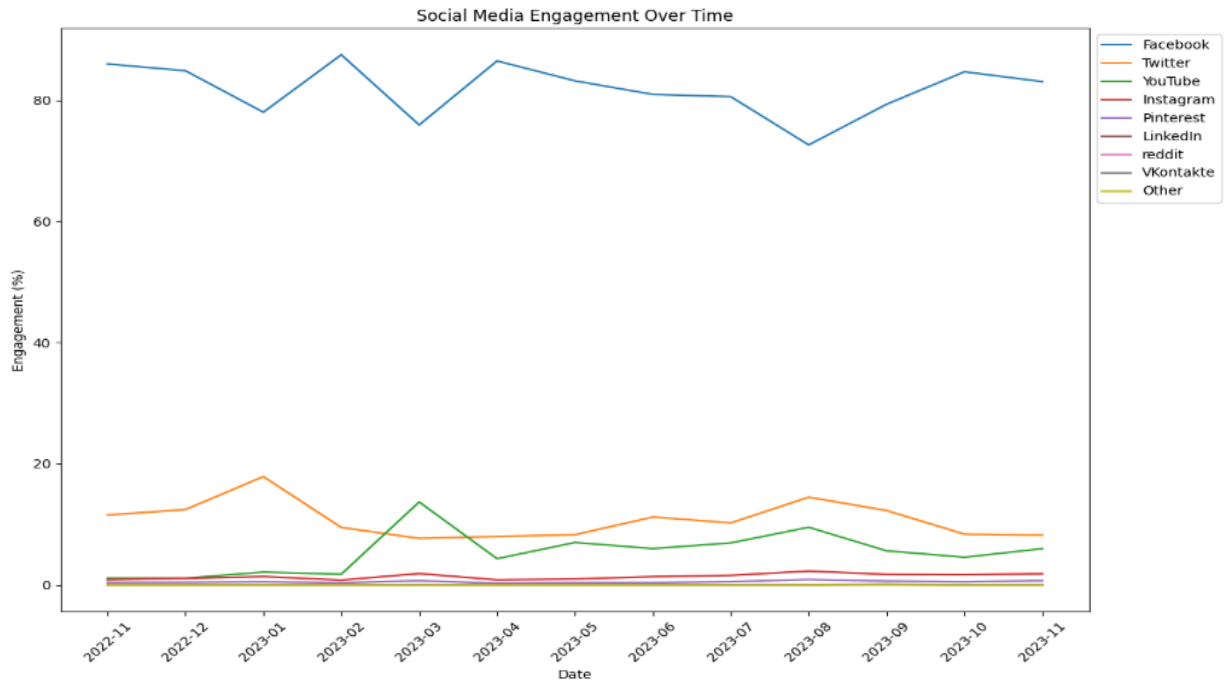
Figure 2: social media statistics and comparison analysis

Table 1: Social media statistics and comparison analysis

Date	Facebook	Twitter	YouTube	Instagram	Pinterest	LinkedIn	reddit	VKontakte	Other
2022-11	85.97	11.54	1.12	0.88	0.41	0.03	0.04	0	0
2022-12	84.85	12.44	1.11	1.08	0.43	0.04	0.04	0	0
2023-01	78.01	17.88	2.12	1.39	0.51	0.05	0.04	0	0
2023-02	87.49	9.49	1.77	0.8	0.36	0.05	0.03	0	0.01
2023-03	75.91	7.69	13.69	1.88	0.69	0.09	0.05	0	0
2023-04	86.47	8	4.33	0.84	0.28	0.04	0.03	0	0
2023-05	83.18	8.29	7.01	0.98	0.38	0.07	0.07	0.03	0
2023-06	80.95	11.21	6	1.37	0.38	0.04	0.03	0.01	0.01
2023-07	80.57	10.24	6.94	1.58	0.53	0.06	0.06	0.01	0.01
2023-08	72.61	14.48	9.52	2.29	0.9	0.09	0.07	0.01	0.03
2023-09	79.32	12.28	5.63	1.74	0.64	0.13	0.08	0.12	0.05

2023-10	84.68	8.38	4.57	1.69	0.51	0.1	0.07	0	0
2023-11	83.05	8.23	5.99	1.85	0.7	0.08	0.08	0	0.01

Sources: statcounter GlobalStats https://gs.statcounter.com/social-media-stats/all/pakistan

Comprehensive Visual Narrative of The Distribution of User Interactions Across Various Platforms

The stacked bar graph offers a distinctive portrayal of social media engagement in Pakistan across a twelve-month period, providing a comprehensive visual narrative of the distribution of user interactions across various platforms (see figure 3). Each bar on the graph represents a specific month, and the height of the bar corresponds to the total engagement percentage for that month, while distinct color-coded segments within each bar signify the contribution of individual platforms to the overall engagement landscape. The foundational layer, depicted in blue, represents Facebook's consistent engagement throughout the observed period, acting as the baseline for the social media landscape. The green layer, attributed to Twitter, adds to the cumulative engagement, showcasing the platform's relative contribution. The red layer, symbolizing YouTube, introduces fluctuations in engagement, reflecting the dynamic content landscape on the platform. Stacked on top, the purple segment denotes Instagram's contribution, highlighting evolving user preferences for visually-driven experiences. The orange segment, representing Pinterest, crowns the stack, illustrating niche audience engagement on platforms tailored to specific interests. The varying heights of the stacked bars facilitate a comparative analysis, enabling the identification of peaks and fluctuations in each platform's contribution, thereby offering insights into the evolving trends and preferences shaping the diverse social media ecosystem in Pakistan. This visual representation serves as a powerful tool for comprehending the intricate dynamics of user engagement, contributing to a holistic understanding of the country's digital landscape.
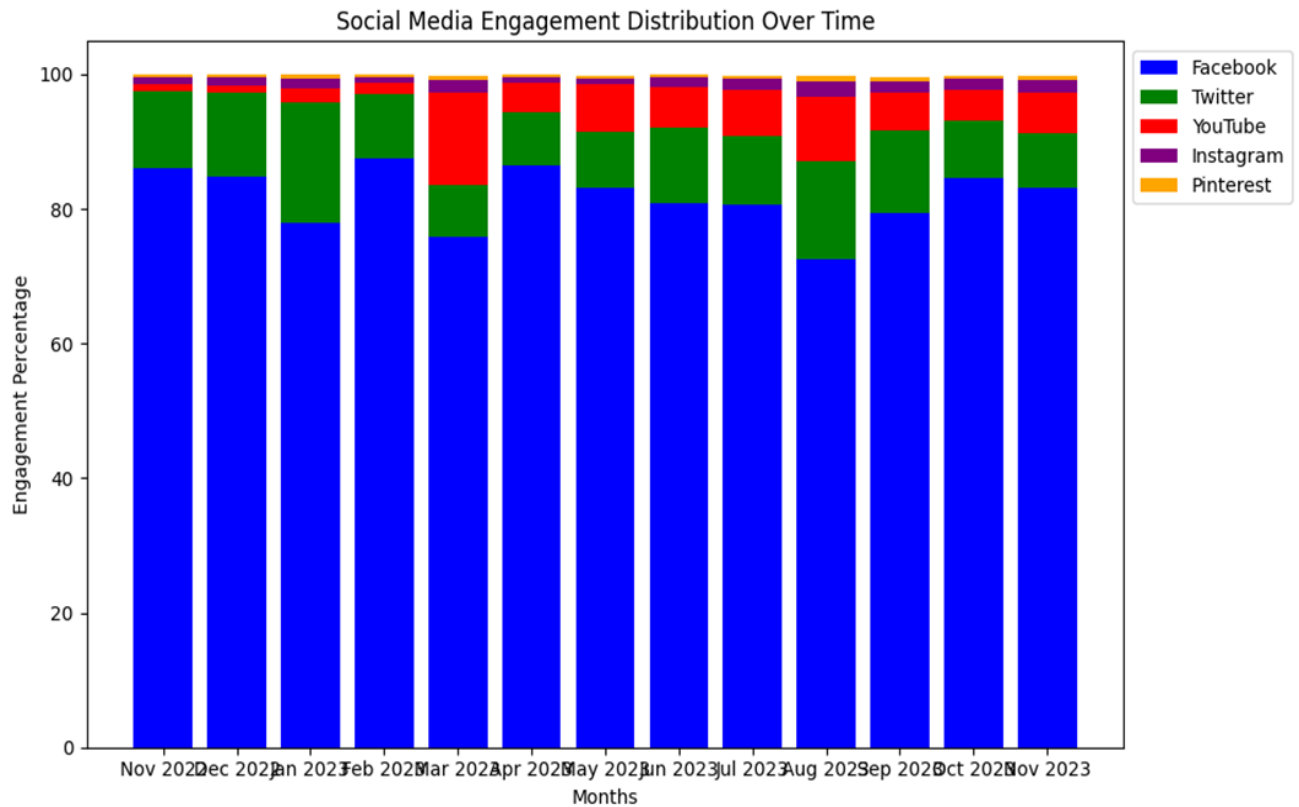
Figure 3: Social media engagement distribution over time

Discussion

The research findings offer a distinctive perspective on the complex dynamics of social media engagement in Pakistan, providing valuable insights that significantly contribute to our understanding of user behavior and emerging trends in the digital landscape. A notable observation from the study is the gradual decline in Facebook engagement over the observed period, suggesting a potential diversification of user preferences or a shift towards alternative platforms. This trend shows the dynamic nature of digital spaces, influenced by evolving user expectations, shifts in content consumption habits, and the emergence of new online environments (Deuze, 2006). Facebook, as one of the leading social media platforms globally, has been a focal point for user interaction and content dissemination. However, the observed decline in engagement raises intriguing questions about the factors influencing this trend. Is it a result of changing user demographics, evolving content preferences, or the allure of newer, more specialized platforms? Addressing these questions is crucial for marketers, content creators, and businesses aiming to optimize their strategies for the Pakistani audience.

Twitter, known for its real-time interactions and succinct content sharing, exhibited fluctuating patterns in engagement. The peaks in engagement were found to correlate with specific events or trending topics, emphasizing the platform's responsiveness to real-time discussions(Sui et al., 2023). This highlights the importance of considering temporal factors and current events in understanding user engagement patterns on Twitter. The platform's dynamic nature, characterized by its immediacy, makes it a unique space for users to engage with timely and relevant content.

A significant surge in YouTube engagement in March 2023 stands out in the findings, pointing to a heightened interest in video content during that specific period. This observation opens avenues for further exploration into the factors driving multimedia content consumption and underscores the impact of visual elements on user preferences. YouTube's prominence as a video-sharing platform is well-established, but understanding the specific drivers behind increased engagement at certain times can inform content creators and marketers about the types of videos that resonate most with the Pakistani audience. Instagram, a visually-centric platform, demonstrated varied engagement over the study period, with a notable peak in August 2023 (see table 1). This underscores the platform's significance in catering to users with a preference for visual content. Visual-centric communication and storytelling have become integral in the broader industry trend, and Instagram's role in shaping these trends in the Pakistani context becomes apparent (Henten et al., n.d.). Marketers and content creators can leverage these insights to craft visually appealing content that aligns with the preferences of the Pakistani audience. Conversely, sustained lower engagement on niche platforms such as Pinterest, LinkedIn, Reddit, and VKontakte suggests dedicated but specific user bases. These platforms cater to distinct interests and communities, and understanding the dynamics of engagement on niche platforms is crucial for tailoring content and engagement strategies to reach these targeted audiences with precision (Bartlett & Reynolds, 2015). Niche platforms, although not as widely used as mainstream ones, play a vital role in the diverse digital ecosystem, emphasizing the need for a comprehensive understanding of user behavior across platforms. The consistently minimal activity in the "Other" category signals a limited presence on unspecified platforms. While lacking specificity, this category emphasizes the dominance of major social media platforms in the Pakistani digital landscape. Marketers, content creators, and businesses can leverage these insights to optimize their strategies, recognizing the importance of platform-specific approaches and staying attuned to evolving user preferences. Moreover, this research lays the foundation for future investigations into the evolving social media landscape in Pakistan. Delving deeper into the factors influencing engagement trends, the impact of cultural and socio-economic dynamics, and user motivations can enhance our understanding of the intricate interplay between users and digital platforms in this specific context (Rathore, 2018). The digital landscape is continually evolving, and ongoing research remains critical for adapting strategies to meet the dynamic needs and preferences of the Pakistani audience in the realm of social media.

The research findings offer a comprehensive overview of social media engagement dynamics in Pakistan, unraveling trends and patterns that are crucial for various stakeholders in the digital landscape. The distinctive exploration takes into account the unique socio-cultural context of the country, ensuring that the findings resonate with the lived experiences of the Pakistani audience. From the decline in Facebook engagement to the real-time nature of Twitter and the visual-centric trends on platforms like YouTube and Instagram, each observation provides actionable insights for marketers, content creators, and businesses aiming to navigate the diverse and dynamic digital landscape of Pakistan. The research not only adds to the existing body of knowledge but also serves as a practical guide for informed decision-making in the ever-evolving realm of social media.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study has investigated into the multifaceted landscape of social media engagement in Pakistan, providing valuable insights into the ever-evolving dynamics of user behavior across major platforms. The observed trends reveal a distinctive pattern of user preferences, with Facebook experiencing a gradual decline, suggesting a potential diversification of digital interactions. Twitter's fluctuating engagement underscores its real-time sensitivity, responding dynamically to trending topics and events, reflecting the platform's unique role in fostering immediate and topical conversations. The surge in YouTube engagement during March 2023 indicates a heightened interest in video content, signifying the importance of multimedia elements in shaping user interactions. Instagram's varying engagement, coupled with a peak in August 2023, underscores the platform's significance in catering to users with a penchant for visual content. Niche platforms, such as Pinterest, LinkedIn, Reddit, and VKontakte, maintain dedicated but specific user bases, emphasizing the relevance of platform-specific content strategies. The minimal activity in the "Other" category signals the dominance of major platforms, with implications for marketers and businesses seeking to optimize their digital strategies. These findings collectively contribute to a comprehensive understanding of the diverse and dynamic social media landscape in Pakistan. As digital spaces continue to evolve, this research serves as a foundational exploration, paving the way for further investigations into the contextual factors influencing user engagement, cultural nuances, and the ever-changing preferences of the Pakistani digital audience. The insights gleaned from this study offer practical implications for stakeholders navigating the intricacies of digital communication, informing strategies that resonate effectively with the diverse and dynamic social media users in Pakistan.

Policy Implication

The research enriches our understanding of social media engagement in Pakistan by undertaking a distinctive exploration that takes into account the unique socio-cultural context of the country. This contextual understanding is pivotal in deciphering how individuals in Pakistan interact with and consume content on various social media platforms. By acknowledging the intricacies of the local context, the research goes beyond a one-size-fits-all approach, recognizing that user behaviors are shaped by cultural nuances, societal norms, and the evolving digital landscape specific to Pakistan. This contribution ensures that the findings resonate with the lived experiences of the Pakistani audience, providing a foundation for more insightful and applicable recommendations. As highlighted by (Lomborg & Kapsch, 2020) understanding the socio-cultural context is crucial for deciphering user interactions on social media platforms.

A pivotal facet of the research lies in its examination of major social media platforms, including Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Instagram (Unnava & Aravindakshan, 2021). Rather than a surface-level overview, the research investigates into platform-specific insights, offering a comprehensive understanding of user preferences, emerging trends, and the dynamics of interactions on each platform. This depth of analysis is invaluable for businesses

and content creators seeking to optimize their strategies in the Pakistani market. It serves as a strategic guide, empowering stakeholders to tailor their digital approaches according to the distinctive characteristics of each platform, recognizing that a one-size-fits-all strategy may not be effective in a diverse and dynamic digital landscape like Pakistan. Furthermore, the research extends its reach beyond mainstream platforms to shed light on the engagement patterns of niche audiences on alternative platforms such as Pinterest, LinkedIn, Reddit, and VKontakte. This holistic view of the digital landscape in Pakistan acknowledges the coexistence of platforms catering to specific interests and communities, offering a more complete understanding of the diverse digital ecosystem. In terms of practical implications, the research provides actionable insights for marketers, businesses, and content creators. It serves as a practical guide, translating theoretical understanding into strategies that align with the preferences and behaviors of the Pakistani audience. This pragmatic approach equips stakeholders with the tools needed to navigate the dynamic digital landscape, facilitating informed decision-making for impactful and culturally resonant engagement strategies.

Building on the insights derived from this study, future research endeavors can explore several avenues to deepen our understanding of social media engagement in Pakistan and contribute to the evolving field of digital communication. One avenue for exploration involves incorporating qualitative methods such as surveys, interviews, or focus group discussions to uncover the motivations, perceptions, and qualitative aspects of user engagement.

References

Abrahim, S., Mir, B. A., Suhara, H., Mohamed, F. A., & Sato, M. (2019). Structural equation modeling and confirmatory factor analysis of social media use and education. *International Journal of Educational Technology in Higher Education*, *16*(1), 32. https://doi.org/10.1186/s41239-019-0157-y

Arora, A., Bansal, S., Kandpal, C., Aswani, R., & Dwivedi, Y. (2019). Measuring social media influencer index-insights from Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, *49*, 86–101.

Bartlett, J., & Reynolds, L. (2015). *State of the art 2015: A literature review of social media intelligence capabilities for counter-terrorism*. https://apo.org.au/sites/default/files/resource-files/2015-09/apo-nid57373.pdf

Ceh, S. M., & Benedek, M. (2021). Where to Share? A Systematic Investigation of Creative Behavior on Online Platforms. *Creativity. Theories – Research - Applications*, *8*(1), 108–123. https://doi.org/10.2478/ctra-2021-0008

Deuze, M. (2006). Participation, Remediation, Bricolage: Considering Principal Components

of a Digital Culture. *The Information Society*, *22*(2), 63–75. https://doi.org/10.1080/01972240600567170

Dobrian, F., Sekar, V., Awan, A., Stoica, I., Joseph, D., Ganjam, A., Zhan, J., & Zhang, H. (2011). Understanding the impact of video quality on user engagement. *ACM SIGCOMM Computer Communication Review*, *41*(4), 362–373. https://doi.org/10.1145/2043164.2018478

Dwivedi, Y. K., Ismagilova, E., Hughes, D. L., Carlson, J., Filieri, R., Jacobson, J., Jain, V., Karjaluoto, H., Kefi, H., & Krishen, A. S. (2021). Setting the future of digital and social media marketing research: Perspectives and research propositions. *International Journal of Information Management*, *59*, 102168.

Grandhi, S. A., Plotnick, L., & Hiltz, S. R. (2019). Do I Stay or Do I Go?: Motivations and Decision Making in Social Media Non-use and Reversion. *Proceedings of the ACM on Human-Computer Interaction*, *3*(GROUP), 1–27. https://doi.org/10.1145/3361116

Henten, A., Sparviero, S., & Zhou, R. (n.d.). *Visual Digital Storytelling in Engaging the Audience and Enhancing the Brand Awareness*. Retrieved January 3, 2024, from https://projekter.aau.dk/projekter/files/287419386/Master_Thesis_AAU_Ruiqi_ZHOU.pdf

Ida, R., Saud, M., & Mashud, M. (2020). An empirical analysis of social media usage, political learning and participation among youth: A comparative study of Indonesia and Pakistan. *Quality & Quantity*, *54*(4), 1285–1297. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11135-020-00985-9

Iivari, N., Sharma, S., & Ventä-Olkkonen, L. (2020). Digital transformation of everyday life– How COVID-19 pandemic transformed the basic education of the young generation and why information management research should care? *International Journal of Information Management*, *55*, 102183.

Ilyas, A. S., & Anjum, Z. (2021). Social media interactivity in Pakistan: A study from metropolitan city. *International Journal of Media and Information Literacy*, *6*(2), 249–258. Jamil, S. (2021). From digital divide to digital inclusion: Challenges for wide-ranging digitalization in Pakistan. *Telecommunications Policy*, *45*(8), 102206.

Kapoor, K. K., Tamilmani, K., Rana, N. P., Patil, P., Dwivedi, Y. K., & Nerur, S. (2018). Advances in Social Media Research: Past, Present and Future. *Information Systems Frontiers*, *20*(3), 531–558. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10796-017-9810-y

Kozinets, R. (2019). Netnography: The essential guide to qualitative social media research. *Netnography*, 1–472.

Lomborg, S., & Kapsch, P. H. (2020). Decoding algorithms. *Media, Culture & Society*, *42*(5), 745–761. https://doi.org/10.1177/0163443719855301

Moro, S., Rita, P., & Vala, B. (2016). Predicting social media performance metrics and evaluation of the impact on brand building: A data mining approach. *Journal of Business Research*, *69*(9), 3341–3351.

Nummenpää, S. (2017). *Trigger warning: The development and popularization of new forms of censorship in social media and microblogging platforms* [Master's Thesis, S. Nummenpää]. https://oulurepo.oulu.fi/handle/10024/9425

Olaniran, B. A. (2018). Social media as communication channel in emerging economies: A closer look at cultural implications. *Journal of Advances in Management Research*, *15*(2), 130–145.

Pokropek, A., & IFiS, P. A. N. (n.d.). *Project Description Research Lab for the Digital Social Sciences*. Retrieved January 3, 2024, from https://rstyles.ifispan.edu.pl/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/SSDRL_opis_MARpdf-1.pdf

Purnama, Y., & Asdlori, A. (2023). The Role of Social Media in Students' Social Perception and Interaction: Implications for Learning and Education. *Technology and Society Perspectives (TACIT)*, *1*(2), 45–55.

Ramzan, M., Bibi, R., & Khunsa, N. (2023). Unraveling the Link between Social Media Usage and Academic Achievement among ESL Learners: A Quantitative Analysis. *Global. Educational Studies Review, VIII*, 407–421.

Rathore, B. (2018). Allure of Style: The Impact of Contemporary Fashion Marketing on Consumer Behaviour. *International Journal of New Media Studies: International Peer Reviewed Scholarly Indexed Journal*, *5*(2), 10–21.

Russell, M. G. (2009). A Call for Creativity in New Metrics for Liquid Media. *Journal of Interactive Advertising*, *9*(2), 44–61. https://doi.org/10.1080/15252019.2009.10722155

Stoycheff, E., Liu, J., Wibowo, K. A., & Nanni, D. P. (2017). What have we learned about social media by studying Facebook? A decade in review. *New Media & Society*, *19*(6), 968–980. https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444817695745

Sui, Y., Luqman, A., Unhale, M., Schiavone, F., & Cuomo, M. T. (2023). Unraveling real-time mobile connectivity paradox and emotional ambivalence: A quasi-experimental design from a multi-source perspective. *Information Technology & People*. https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/ITP-02-2023-0150/full/html

Sundar, S. S., & Oh, J. (2019). Psychological Effects of Interactive Media Technologies. *Media Effects: Advances in Theory and Research*.

Tagarelli, A., & Interdonato, R. (2015). Time-aware analysis and ranking of lurkers in social

networks. *Social Network Analysis and Mining*, *5*(1), 46. https://doi.org/10.1007/s13278-015-0276-y

Unnava, V., & Aravindakshan, A. (2021). How does consumer engagement evolve when brands post across multiple social media? *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, *49*(5), 864–881. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11747-021-00785-z