SOCIAL MEDIA

Community Social Media Awareness Campaign

Ayushi, Navya, Mira, Bhojraj Y. Shewale

Amity Business School, Amity University, Mumbai, India

Published November 2026

Abstract

Social media has become an important channel for communication, learning, business promotion and community participation. However, everyday use does not necessarily mean that users can evaluate online information, protect personal data or respond safely to suspicious messages. This paper examines a community social media awareness campaign described in a field-based project undertaken with a local non-governmental organisation (NGO). The campaign focused on digital literacy, responsible online behaviour, misinformation, privacy, account security and constructive uses of digital platforms.

The paper uses a descriptive qualitative approach based on the project document's account of field interaction, informal questions, awareness discussions, demonstrations and content preparation. The source describes participants with differing levels of digital confidence and notes the value of plain language, practical examples and audience-sensitive explanations. These observations are not treated as statistically representative findings. The source does not provide a verified participant count, completed survey dataset, formal pre-test/post-test scores or validated platform analytics; therefore, no numerical impact claims are made. The paper concludes that community digital-awareness work should combine risk reduction with positive uses of social media and should be evaluated through transparent attendance records, feedback, learning checks and follow-up measures.

Keywords: social media awareness; digital literacy; digital citizenship; misinformation; online safety; community engagement; NGO outreach

1 Introduction

Social media platforms such as WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook and YouTube are used to exchange messages, watch educational content, follow public issues, promote products and organise community activities. These platforms offer opportunities for learning and participation, but they can also expose users to misinformation, impersonation, privacy risks, harassment and online fraud. The benefits of social media depend partly on how people assess information, manage their accounts and interact with others.

The Community Social Media Awareness Campaign was designed to encourage more informed, safe and purposeful use of digital platforms. Conducted in collaboration with a local NGO, the project connected student learning with community interaction. It addressed both the risks of social media and its potential value for education, skills development, small businesses and community initiatives.

This research paper reorganises the project into an academic format. It preserves the project's qualitative character and distinguishes documented observations from proposed methods for future evaluation. It does not claim that the campaign represents all social media users or proves long-term behavioural change.

2 Background and rationale

Digital connectivity creates opportunities for communication and access to information, but connectivity alone does not guarantee digital confidence or sound judgement. The source project cites the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI), which reported 1,002.85 million internet subscribers at the end of June 2025. This is a subscription figure, not a count of unique people, and it does not indicate that every user has equal access, skills or confidence.

The campaign's rationale was that a person may know how to forward a message or upload a photograph without knowing how to verify a claim or review privacy settings. Misinformation can spread through trusted personal networks, while fraudulent messages may use urgency, unrealistic rewards or impersonation to encourage unsafe actions. At the same time, social media can help people discover educational resources, communicate with customers and learn about local programmes.

A local NGO can help make digital-awareness messages relevant by drawing on its understanding of community needs. Students can contribute accessible content and communication support, while the NGO can review accuracy and appropriateness. Digital outreach should complement face-to-face communication and should respect the privacy and consent of community members.

3 Problem statement

The central problem addressed by the campaign is the gap between using social media and using it effectively, safely and responsibly. Users may be familiar with applications yet remain uncertain about source verification, privacy controls, suspicious links or account security. A further challenge is that one communication style may not suit people with different ages, experiences, languages and levels of digital confidence.

The project also identified a need to make constructive uses of social media more visible. Education, skill development, small-business communication and NGO outreach can be overlooked when platforms are used mainly for entertainment. The campaign responded through discussion, practical examples and awareness content. Its scope was educational and descriptive rather than experimental.

4 Aim and objectives

Aim: To promote informed, safe, responsible and constructive use of social media among community members through a locally relevant awareness campaign supported by a community NGO.

- To create awareness about effective uses of social media for education, communication, skill development, small-business promotion and community initiatives.
- To explain digital literacy and responsible online behaviour, including information verification, personal-data protection, account security, caution around suspicious links and respectful communication.
- To encourage positive social media use for learning, community development, public awareness and participation.
- To strengthen students' communication, teamwork, planning and content-preparation skills through practical community engagement.
- To identify ways to improve future campaigns through feedback and systematic evaluation.

5 Brief review of concepts

5.1 Digital literacy

Digital literacy includes the skills and judgement required to use digital devices, applications and online information safely and effectively. It involves searching for information, assessing credibility, protecting accounts and communicating clearly. The project's central message is that operating an application is not the same as understanding its risks or evaluating what appears on it.

5.2 Digital citizenship

Digital citizenship concerns responsible participation in digital spaces. It includes respecting privacy, avoiding harassment, considering the consequences of posts and forwards, and communicating disagreement without personal attacks. Online actions can affect people beyond the immediate platform.

5.3 Misinformation and verification

Misinformation is inaccurate or misleading information shared without necessarily intending to deceive; disinformation generally refers to misleading information deliberately created or shared to deceive. Sensational wording, unsupported claims, urgent instructions and suspicious links are reasons to pause and investigate, although they do not by themselves prove that a claim is false. A responsible process checks the original source, date and context and compares important claims with credible independent or official sources.

5.4 Privacy and online safety

Practical safety habits include reviewing account visibility, using strong and unique passwords, enabling additional account protection where available, checking application permissions and never sharing passwords or one-time passwords with unexpected contacts. Users should be cautious about sharing addresses, identity documents, financial details, private photographs and live location information.

5.5 Positive uses of social media

Social platforms can support informal learning, professional discovery, small-business communication and NGO outreach. Their effectiveness depends on content quality, audience access, trust and consistency; a social media account does not guarantee employment, business growth or campaign success.

6 Research methodology

6.1 Research design

The paper follows a descriptive qualitative case-study approach. It analyses the campaign as described in the supplied project report, focusing on its objectives, activities, field observations, challenges and learning.

6.2 Sources and methods described

The source report describes a field visit, informal interaction with community members, questions about platform use and online experiences, awareness discussions, practical demonstrations, and the

preparation or sharing of digital awareness content. The paper uses these descriptions as the basis for its analysis. It also uses the official resources cited in the source report for contextual and safety information.

6.3 Target audience

The described audience included community members with different ages and levels of digital confidence. The source notes interaction with younger participants and with some participants approximately 50–55 years old and above. It describes some younger participants as familiar with short-form content and some older participants as preferring step-by-step guidance. These are local impressions, not universal statements about age groups.

6.4 Data analysis

The project material was organised thematically around digital confidence, information verification, privacy and safety, positive uses, audience-sensitive communication, NGO collaboration and evaluation needs. The findings are presented descriptively.

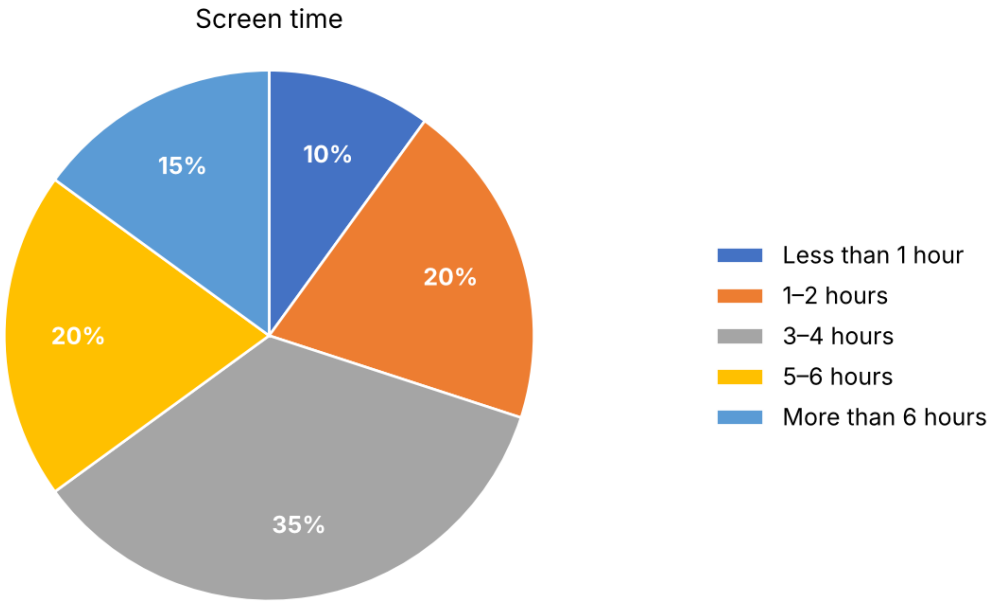


Figure 1. Daily screen time of participants (%)

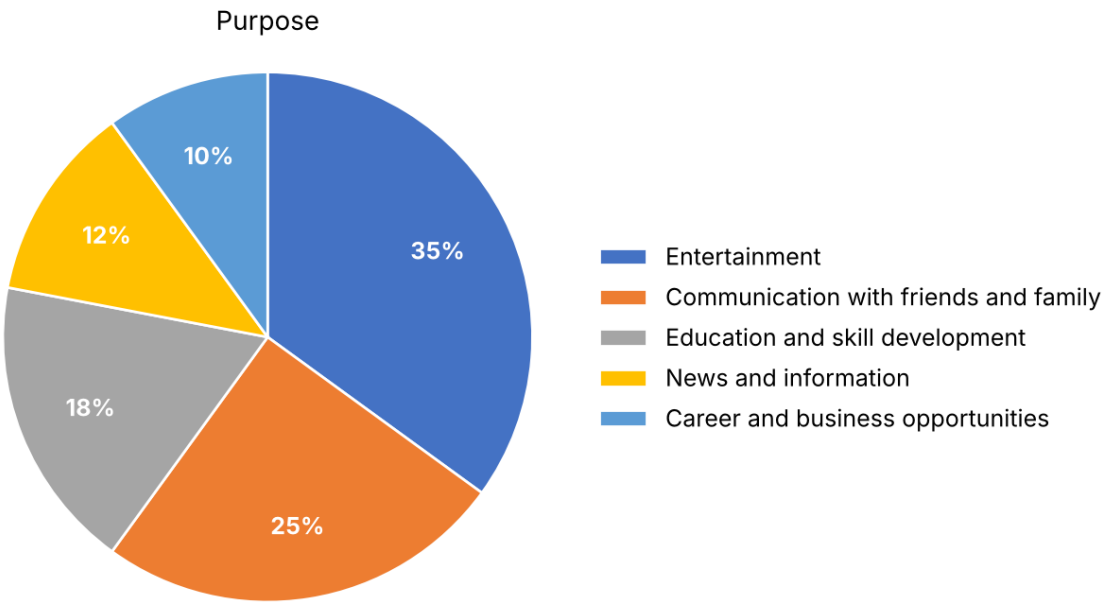


Figure 2. Main purpose of social media use (%)

6.5 Ethical considerations

The source emphasises consent for photographs and stories, privacy protection, anonymised observations and avoiding the collection or display of passwords, one-time passwords, private messages or other sensitive information. These safeguards are important in both field delivery and reporting.

7 Campaign activities and implementation

7.1 Initial interaction and needs exploration

The team introduced the purpose of the campaign and explored participants' experiences before delivering awareness messages. Questions described in the source concerned applications used, typical content viewed, forwarding habits and experiences with suspicious messages or online problems. This approach helped connect the discussion with everyday digital behaviour.

7.2 Responsible use and respectful communication

The campaign encouraged participants to pause before posting or forwarding information. A simple prompt used in the project asked: Is the information true? Is it useful? Is it appropriate to share? These questions offer a quick reflection point, although important claims require fuller verification. The session also addressed respectful disagreement and the possible effects of online comments on other people.

7.3 Misinformation awareness

Participants were encouraged not to treat a familiar sender or a high number of shares as proof of accuracy. The discussion covered sensational wording, unsupported claims, urgent forwarding requests and suspicious links. A future version of the activity could use safe examples and ask participants to compare source, date, evidence and official corrections.

7.4 Privacy and security

The activity discussed personal information, account visibility, strong passwords, additional account protection, suspicious links and fake profiles. Demonstrations should use fictional examples or training accounts, and participants should never be asked to reveal credentials or private messages.

7.5 Demonstrations and content creation

The source describes practical explanations and awareness content such as short messages, posters, photographs, videos and simple visual elements. Short, readable content can be adapted for different platforms, but factual claims, dates, links and permissions should be checked before publication.

7.6 Platform strategy and teamwork

The project considered Instagram for visual posts and short videos, Facebook for community networks, YouTube for longer explanations and WhatsApp for direct sharing. These were planning assumptions rather than measured reach results. Team members shared tasks related to participant interaction, content preparation, communication and documentation.

8 Findings and discussion

The project report records several qualitative observations. First, social media was already part of everyday communication for many participants, but users differed in their confidence with privacy and safety features. This supports the distinction between platform familiarity and digital literacy.

Second, plain language, familiar examples and demonstrations were considered useful for discussing digital concepts. This suggests that community sessions should begin by understanding what participants already know and should allow time for questions and practice. A single lecture may not meet the needs of all participants.

Third, the campaign presented social media as both a source of risk and a source of opportunity. Verification, privacy and account security were discussed alongside education, skills, business communication and community participation. A balanced approach is more useful than presenting social media as entirely harmful or entirely beneficial.

Fourth, the partnership between students and the NGO offered a way to combine community context with communication and content-preparation skills. The NGO can help ensure that messages are relevant and accurate, while students can support accessible presentation and documentation.

Finally, the report's evidence does not support numerical claims about changes in awareness. The source does not provide a verified participant count, completed questionnaire dataset, pre/post scores or complete platform analytics. The findings should therefore be read as descriptive field observations, not as proof of causal or long-term impact.

9 Outcomes and significance

The documented immediate outcome was an opportunity for participants to discuss responsible social media use, digital literacy, misinformation, privacy, suspicious links and positive digital participation. The activity also gave students practical experience in listening, explaining information clearly, coordinating tasks and reflecting on community needs.

The project illustrates how social media can complement NGO outreach by sharing verified programme information, announcing events and inviting volunteers. However, views, likes and shares indicate attention rather than learning by themselves. A stronger evaluation would combine engagement data with short knowledge checks, participant feedback and follow-up questions about safety practices.

10 Challenges and limitations

- Different levels of digital confidence required facilitators to adjust the pace and repeat explanations when needed.
- Maintaining attention can be difficult when explanations are long or technical; short activities and demonstrations may help.
- Some participants may hesitate to ask questions if they feel they should already know a feature, making a non-judgemental environment important.
- Awareness does not automatically become behaviour change. Follow-up reminders and practice may be needed to develop habits.
- The source does not provide a verified participant count, formal sampling method, completed survey dataset, baseline and final scores, or validated platform analytics.
- The community partner is identified only as a local NGO; its official name and profile need confirmation before final academic submission.

These limitations mean that the paper cannot estimate the prevalence of digital-literacy gaps in the wider population or establish that the campaign caused lasting behavioural change. They also indicate practical improvements for future project design.

11 Recommendations

- Repeat awareness sessions periodically and provide concise take-home safety checklists.
- Adapt examples, language, text size and demonstrations to participants' needs and access conditions.
- Use scenario-based exercises on suspicious links, OTP requests, fake offers, rumours and sharing photographs without consent.
- Ask the NGO to review awareness content for accuracy, clarity and privacy before publication.
- Record basic activity information consistently: date, venue, duration, materials, attendance where appropriate, and permissions for photographs.
- Use a short pre-session and post-session knowledge check with the same questions, reporting the number of completed responses and aggregate results.
- Conduct a voluntary follow-up after several weeks to ask whether participants reviewed privacy settings, changed verification habits or used official reporting channels.
- Treat reach, views and likes as engagement indicators, not as proof of learning or behaviour change.
- Keep digital outreach complementary to face-to-face communication so that people with limited devices, connectivity or platform access are not excluded.

- Provide current official guidance for reporting suspected cybercrime and financial fraud; the source report lists India's National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal and helpline 1930, and advises checking current instructions.

12 Conclusion

The Community Social Media Awareness Campaign addressed the practical need to use digital platforms with greater judgement, care and purpose. Its focus on information verification, privacy, account security, respectful communication and positive community uses reflects the idea that digital literacy is more than knowing how to operate an application. It also depends on evaluating information and understanding the consequences of online actions.

The project's qualitative account highlights the importance of accessible explanations, demonstrations, active listening and collaboration between students and a local NGO. It presents a balanced view of social media by acknowledging risks while recognising opportunities for education, business communication and community participation. Because the available material does not contain a verified sample size or formal outcome measurements, its findings should not be overstated. Future campaigns can build stronger evidence through transparent documentation, consistent pre/post checks and follow-up evaluation.

References

[1] Government of India. *National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal*. https://cybercrime.gov.in/

[2] Government of India. National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal: information on reporting online financial fraud through helpline 1930 and the official portal. https://cybercrime.gov.in/

[3] Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) (2025). Indian telecom services performance indicators, April–June 2025. https://www.trai.gov.in/