



University of  
**Southern  
Queensland**

# **SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE PATTERNS: A COMPARATIVE QUALITATIVE STUDY OF THREE ETHNIC GROUPS**

A Thesis submitted by  
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## **ABSTRACT**

The existing literature on social media usage has often overlooked the nuanced differences in how various ethnic groups engage with digital platforms. Previous studies primarily focused on broad usage trends without addressing the specific cultural factors that shape social media behaviours among distinct communities.

The primary aim of this study is to investigate the impact of cultural factors on social media usage patterns within diverse ethnic communities. The objectives include: (1) to examine the differences in social media usage frequency, preferred platforms, and purposes of use among three ethnic groups, and (2) to analyse how cultural characteristics influence digital interactions. The study is guided by Functionalism theory, which posits that social media serves to meet cultural needs. This theoretical framework helps to elucidate how cultural characteristics, such as gender roles, privacy attitudes, and digital literacy, shape social media usage patterns among different ethnic groups. Regarding methodology, the research employed two research stages. The first stage involved in-depth interviews to gather context-specific insights from participants. The second stage utilised the multiple case study methodology, allowing for comparative analysis of social media usage patterns across the three ethnic groups. The study highlights that cultural identity plays a crucial role in shaping digital behaviours, with distinct preferences emerging for content consumption and engagement across the ethnic groups studied. The research offers two key theoretical contributions: enhancing social media studies and enriching cultural and ethnic studies. It highlights the critical influence of cultural factors on social media behavior by examining White Australians, Arab Australians, and Indian Australians. This focus reveals distinct usage patterns and the cultural nuances behind them, creating a theoretical framework for understanding the relationship between culture and digital behaviour. The research suggests that marketers and social media developers should consider cultural factors when designing platforms and content strategies. By tailoring features to accommodate the diverse needs of ethnic communities, practitioners can enhance user engagement and foster a more inclusive online environment.

## **Key Words**

Social Media, Ethnic Groups, Cultural Factors, Usage Patterns, Functionalism Theory

### **CERTIFICATION OF THESIS**

I, Ahmed Amr Abdelsamia Abdalla, hereby confirm that the thesis I uploaded in fulfilment of the criteria for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy entitled *Social media usage patterns: a comparative study of three ethnic groups* is no longer than 100,000 words, involving quotes, and exclusive of tables, figures, appendices, bibliography, references, and footnotes. I also certify that no content from the thesis has ever before been submitted, in whole or in part, for the granting of any other academic degree or certificate. Unless stated otherwise, this thesis is all my own work.

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Ahmed Amr Abdelsamia Abdalla

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## POTENTIAL PUBLICATIONS

The following research outputs were prepared based on the research work contained in this thesis:

- Abdalla, A., Chimhundu, R., & Zhou, J. (2024). Exploring Cultural Dynamics in Digital Behaviour: Insights from Ethnic Group Studies. [Target journal: *Consumption, Markets and Culture*]
- Abdalla, A., Chimhundu, R., & Zhou, J. (2024). An Analysis of Social Media Usage Across Ethnic Groups: A Functionalist Perspective. [Target journal: *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*]

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

### **1.1 Introduction**

This chapter provides a crucial background to cultural influence and the use of social media among the various ethnic groups in Australia. Given the importance of the social media in the contemporary society, it is essential to understand how ethnicity affects it and the ways in which people of different ethnicities engage in it. This study is intended to examine the trends in social media usage of three groups of people; White Australians, Arab Australians and Indian Australians as well as the cultural factors that define their interactions with social media. Thus, analyzing these dynamics, the study intends to complement and extend the existing knowledge, providing insights for marketers, advertisers and social media developers regarding the best practices that could be successfully applied, depending on cultural differences between countries. This chapter defines the research purpose and scope, and explains why understanding such interactions is important while giving a brief description of the approach used in the current study.

### **1.2 Background**

This research investigates the patterns of social media usage among different ethnic groups, and how these patterns vary across the ethnic groups. Modern communication and engagement have grown significantly, influenced by social media which offers people many channels for connection, information sharing, and social contact. However, due to cultural considerations, personal preferences, and social conventions, social media consumption patterns and dynamics may vary greatly between ethnic groups. Understanding these variations is essential for appreciating the nuanced interactions between ethnicity and social media as well as for creating tactics that are successful in engaging and reaching a varied audience (Ziyadin et al. 2019). Australian society is distinguished by its multicultural makeup, which includes people of many racial and ethnic backgrounds. These ethnic groups each bring their distinct cultural ideas, practises, and values that might influence how they use social media and what they like. Understanding the patterns of social media use among various ethnic groups will help us better understand how ethnicity and online behaviour

interact. The research also highlights relevant theoretical underpinnings associated with the study.

The research was conducted regarding social media usage patterns. In the first place, it will add to the existing literature on social media use trends by offering detailed insights into the dynamics among ethnic groups (Lafferty & Manca, 2018). The literature has often neglected the subtle differences in social media use across various ethnic groups using different dimensions (Cai and Qian, 2023). Second, marketers, advertisers, and developers of social media platforms would benefit from several factors. This information can help in the customization of marketing tactics, content production, and user interfaces to successfully reach and engage consumers of various ethnic backgrounds. In addition, this study's investigation of cultural impacts on social media use will advance our knowledge of how cultural norms, values, and practices translate to the digital sphere.

It will offer insights into how social media platforms inside ethnic groups reflect and affect cultural identities and behaviours. Additionally, studying how ethnic groups use social media platforms to purchase and sell goods can shed light on the purchasing and selling habits and thought processes that are unique to each ethnic group. With the use of this information, firms may create marketing campaigns and plans that are specifically targeted at certain customer segments. Finally, this study will provide insight into how cultural variations affect how people use social media and help create a more inclusive online space. It is possible to create platforms and regulations that are more sensitive to cultural differences and more inclusive by taking into account the differences in social media preferences and behaviours across various ethnic groups through multiple dimensions.

The study investigates social media usage patterns among three distinct ethnic groups in Australia: White Australians, Arab Australians and Indians Australians. This study is premised on the Australian social setting where people of racially and ethnically distinctive origins live and interact with each other. Every group has different cultural beliefs, assumptions and expectations that are applicable to their use of the Internet and their interactivity. Thus, applying the qualitative approach, this study seeks to examine how cultural factors that shape the patterns of choice of platform, the time spent on social media and the type of content to be consumed. This research underscores the importance of these variations as it helps marketers, advertisers and social media developers achieve their goal of reaching out to a diverse clientele. With

social networks being a vital part of people's communication, self-identity, and commerce, it is imperative to understand how ethnic minorities interact with the digital world. It is with this background that this investigation aims at further filling gaps that are evident in this literature; mainly in the relationship between cultural identity and the use of social media. The study positioned here poses a comparative design with the view to cast light on the differential patterns and process of social media consumption in these communities, and their implications for culturally targeted marketing communication campaigns. In doing so, the study adds to knowledge on consumer ethnicity and digital participation, offering a foundation for further relevant research and enhanced culturally diverse online participation.

### ***1.3 Impact of Social Media on Global Communication***

The advent of social media has profoundly impacted the global communication landscape, significantly influencing the way individuals communicate, disseminate information, and shape cultural dynamics. In light of the growing interconnectedness of society facilitated by digital platforms, there is a pressing need to comprehend the impact of cultural backgrounds on social media usage and the reciprocal effect of such usage on cultural practices (Campbell & Evolve, 2020). The primary objective of this study is to examine the complex dynamics at play by specifically examining three distinct ethnic groups: White Australians, Arab Australians, and Indian Australians. The primary focus of this study is to investigate the intricate dynamics of social media usage among specific ethnic groups, taking into account their distinct habits, preferences, and cultural influences. Social media platforms have expanded beyond geographical limitations, but, they do not possess cultural neutrality (Blank & Lutz, 2017). The proposition posits that the social media conduct of individuals is impacted by their cultural identities, which encompass a range of values, conventions, and practises that are shaped by their ethnicity. Despite the increasing volume of scholarly literature on social media behaviour, a significant knowledge gap persists about the influence of culture on these activities, particularly across distinct ethnic contexts (Binsahl et al., 2015). The issue at hand can be deconstructed into multiple dimensions.

To have a comprehensive picture of the digital behaviours shown by different ethnic groups, it is crucial to first examine the usage patterns of social media within these

groups (Simpson, 2020). Furthermore, the identification of the social media applications most frequently utilised by different ethnic groups reveals the platforms that possess cultural importance and resonate with specific cultural practices or preferences.

Aside from that, the motivations for using various social media apps among these ethnicities should be investigated, as these motivations are likely to be influenced by cultural variables. Furthermore, the cultural implications of social media consumption necessitate thorough research. Furthermore, investigating how various ethnic groups use social media apps for buying and selling things might provide insights into how digital spaces are used for economic activities influenced by cultural considerations. Social media usage dynamics extend beyond simple usage data. Understanding patterns of content consumption, interaction, and engagement with various platforms provides a comprehensive picture of how culture impacts these online behaviours. Finally, cultural differences have a multidimensional impact on social media consumption (Stockdale & Coyne, 2020). Individual social media habits and preferences are defined by cultural characteristics such as age, gender, line of work, frequency of use, time spent, purpose, platform choice, content consumption, and interaction patterns. As a result, the problem statement centres on the necessity to thoroughly investigate the complicated interaction between social media usage and cultural influences in the contexts of White Australians, Arabic Australians, and Indian Australians.

Social media networks have become the centre of social interaction, information sharing, and communication in the modern world due to an unprecedented rise in digital connectivity (Freeman et al., 2020). Social networks are now an absolute necessity for people's interaction in today's society since they allow people to communicate with one another and make connections across the world in real time. They enable the dissemination of information at a very fast pace, changing the dynamics of people's activism. It is the surge of the digital industry thanks to these platforms which plays an essential role in economic revival and innovation and provides crucial information concerning customer's behaviors. The ethnic groups rely on social media as a means of getting support and even fighting for their culture. It enables these groups to impart traditions, to campaign for rights and to support global networks that strengthens the spirit of togetherness. The importance of these platforms is not only limited to the theories that describe people's online behaviors like



Social Identity Theory, which is an attempt to understand how individuals and groups create and perform their online selves. Moreover, the diffusion of innovations shows that concepts move very quickly within the social networks. In general, these platforms are innovative and change the ways of communication, community relations, and the structure of society in the digital society (Kolhar et al., 2021).

It is impossible to overstate how much of an impact these platforms have on daily life given that billions of people around the world spend time in a virtual world that is free from physical borders. The complex interaction between ethnicity and digital involvement is important as the globe becomes more linked (Barassi, 2019). With an emphasis on White Australians, Arab Australians, and Indian Australians, this study intends to clarify the complex dynamics of social media usage within various ethnic groups.

Diversity is far greater than a recent concept in the clear patterns of Australian society; it is an essential component that enhances the social fabric of the country (Ruggeri et al., 2020). The combination of cultural landscapes is formed by the customs, languages, and beliefs that make up the multicultural landscape. This cultural mix enters the digital sphere and affects how people of all racial and ethnic backgrounds use social media (Alam et al., 2022). This complex interplay has, however, mostly gone unstudied, leaving an academic gap that requires in-depth investigation. It is essential to comprehend the differences in social media usage trends. Culture contains a wealth of traditions, values, and practises that have the power to influence people's online activity (Gibson, 2022). These activities then impact patterns, connections, and content consumption in the online world. This study has the potential to fill a gap in the literature and pave the way for a more comprehensive understanding of the digital age by examining the distinctive preferences and behaviours of White Australians, Arabic Australians, and Indian Australians. (Mazidi et al., 2023).

The research explores what the patterns of social media usage among different ethnic groups are, and how these patterns vary across ethnic groups. Furthermore, the research explores how cultural influences impact social media usage within these ethnic groups. The goal of the study is to understand how people use their ethnicity as a filter and a driving force as they explore the vast world of social media (Chancellor et al., 2019). The study aims to capture the core of how different cultural contexts moderate online activity, from the crowded avenues of urban Sydney to the diverse

neighbourhoods of Melbourne (Elnabawi et al., 2019). This research intends to shed light on the intricate relationship between individual tastes, norms in society, and digital environments by carefully analysing the reasons why people choose specific social media sites. Marketers stand to acquire essential information from this study in their ongoing drive to capture and engage audiences (Kundu, 2021). Understanding which social media sites appeal most to particular ethnic groups is similar to analysing a work of art since the digital world is not a homogeneous entity but rather an image covered with shades of culture. With these insights, companies may adjust their tactics to capitalise on variations that appeal to diverse audiences, creating interaction that crosses across cultural boundaries (Mahmuda et al., 2023).

The investigation of cultural impacts on the use of social media usage in the study has consequences that go far beyond marketing (Kizgin et al., 2020). It provides a starting point for understanding how cultural identities, beliefs, and practices are reflected in and shaped by digital platforms. Social media is changed by this dynamic interaction from a simple means of communication to a living thing that changes along with societal standards. The study bridges the gap between culture and commerce by examining how ethnic groups use social media as online markets. It also reveals the complexities of consumer behaviour (Nekmahmud et al., 2022).

The significance of this study is analysing the impact of social media along with cultural differences, and cultural understanding, providing a multidimensional patchwork of findings that blend to broaden our awareness of the age of technology and its deep connection to ethnicity (Limansah, 2023). This study is a fundamental step forward in bridging a significant gap in the field of research. Social media is everywhere, but the complex connections among cultures and their online activity are still largely unexplored (Conway, 2017; Greenhow & Lewin, 2019; Lovari & Valentini, 2020). The study navigates this unexplored landscape with passion, ending in a critical contribution that enhances our comprehension of the intricate interactions between culture and digital behaviour by concentrating on the diverse generations of White Australians, Arabic Australians, and Indian Australians (Deng et al., 2022).

An appropriate setting for such an investigation is provided by the ethnic diversity of Australian culture and its variety of rituals and traditions (Koepping, 2022). The in-depth examination of different ethnic groups' social media usage in this study has the potential to reveal significant insights into the various ways that culture

influences online interactions. This study provides a lens through which we can understand how cultural backgrounds affect the virtual steps people take, fostering a deeper understanding of the connected reports of ethnicity and digital engagement in a world that struggles with problems with identity, belonging, and representation (Hilliker, 2020). The consequences go beyond academia's intellectual structures, striking an emotional connection with advertisers and marketers attempting to make their way through the complex digital environment.

The study's discovery of which social networking sites connect most deeply with particular ethnic groups is similar to opening a safe of consumer interaction methods in an age where personalised marketing is a foundation of success (Susanto et al., 2021). With the use of these data, marketers can adjust their strategies and create content and advertising efforts that not only connect with but also resonate with these various groups. The creation of cross-cultural links and the promotion of a more comprehensive commercial discourse fill the gap between cultural diversity and successful marketing (Cho, 2023).

Additionally, the research uncovers a variety of factors that blend to form a more comprehensive picture of cultural awareness. The study offers a distinctive opportunity to see the digital expressions of traditional norms, values, and practises by deconstructing the cultural impacts on social media usage (Mellado & Hermida, 2022). It serves as a conduit for the intangible strands of culture to manifest in the digital age, shedding light on the symbiotic relationship between cultural heritage and technological advancement. Promoting empathy, admiration, and appreciation for the varied human experience, this in turn provides an opportunity for fostering a more inclusive and peaceful community (Lowy et al., 2023). The study goes beyond purely business objectives in its examination of social media's function as a virtual marketplace. It demonstrates the complex web of consumer behaviour found among many racial and ethnic groups, offering insight into the variables that influence their purchasing decisions. This research enables businesses to create strategies that perfectly match the preferences of particular ethnic groups, developing relationships that are mutually beneficial between buyers and sellers, by exposing the thinking processes and motives that underpin these interactions (Mithas et al., 2022).

It is therefore important to compare the White Australians, the Arab Australians and the Indian Australians social media usage in order to get insight on how cultural differentiation influences the use of the media. They consider cultural differences,

which themselves are influenced by their ethnic background with regard to their perception of values, beliefs, and even their communication manners that applies to their conduct in cyberspace. For readers such as; marketers and developers of social media platforms who seek to capture the attention of the various groups of users, this comparison is important because it enables them to come up with useful strategies that will help in achieving this goal when targeting certain communities. This comparison has implications on different stakeholders in a number of aspects. Sophisticated knowledge of these segments is valuable to marketers and advertisers since it assists in creating better targeted and meaningful campaigns to consumers of the various segments. It also offers benefits to social media platforms since it enhances the usability of features and content that suits the culture of the ethnicity. Perhaps the knowledge of these dynamics is important as people become active in different cultures represented in society.

Thus, the failure to gauge and appreciate differences in integration of social media can engender misunderstandings and are rudimentary for social integration hence the need to embrace the efforts. Further, cultural differences play the biggest role in consumer behavior; those brands that account for such differences are bound to be trusted and considered loyal by their target audience. The implications which arise from this research are significant. By embracing different cultural practices the society is made richer and therefore the overall cohesiveness is enhanced. In another regard, marketing appeals formulated with respect to cultural values would contribute to this objective of marketing reinforcing economic development as well. In the long run, dissecting these ethnic groups helps boost the consumer experience while setting a better-polished strategy for organizations' digital presence for the benefit of the target groups. This understanding is crucial in a multicultural world and that is why is important for creating inclusiveness in digital contexts.

#### **1.4 Problem Statement**

Currently, social media has emerged as a principal means of conveying messages, ideas, and even sharing cultures within society. However, the connections between culture and social media usage remain complex and have not been fully explored, especially within ethnically diverse populations. This study focuses on three distinct

communities in Australia: White Australians, Arab Australians, and Indian Australians. Each of these groups harbors unique cultural beliefs, assumptions, and expectations, which likely influence their social media use patterns. Although existing studies have identified certain effects of culture on social media activity, there remains a significant gap in the research that delves deeply into the correlation between culture, social media interactions, content consumption, and engagement among users with different ethnic backgrounds (Cleveland et al., 2023).

This oversight has a tangible impact on marketing strategies and the development of social media platforms, as businesses often neglect the importance of addressing the nuanced needs of such communities. For instance, despite Australia's multicultural landscape, a 2023 report by Digital Australia revealed that only 12% of Australian companies consider ethnicity in their digital marketing strategies (Gambini, 2023). Moreover, studies show that 65% of culturally diverse users feel that their social media experiences do not reflect their cultural identities (Virgona and Kashima, 2024), underscoring the urgency of addressing this gap. The dynamics of using social media in multicultural environments are becoming increasingly significant due to digital globalization (Ozer & Kamran, 2023). This is critical as cultural identities play a key role in regulating behaviors on social media platforms.

The gaps in understanding how different ethnic groups use social media are essential, and this study aims to fill them by examining the trends in social media usage among White Australians, Arab Australians, and Indian Australians. Through a comparative analysis of these groups' motivation, content consumption, and interaction patterns, supported by relevant data, graphs, and user statistics, this work will shed light on the intricate relationship between culture and digital engagement. Finally, this research seeks to benefit marketers, advertisers, and social media platform designers by enabling them to develop culturally relevant and appropriate appeal strategies, marketing messages, and engagement techniques. By understanding these patterns, businesses will be better equipped to gain the attention of diverse audiences, which is crucial in today's globalized digital economy.

The selection of White Australians, Arab Australians, and Indian Australians is significant due to the cultural diversity they represent in Australia's multicultural

society. By comparing these groups, the research not only enhances our understanding of how ethnicity affects digital interactions but also contributes to a broader discourse on the role of culture in shaping social media behaviors. The results will inform evidence-based marketing strategies and help create a more inclusive digital environment that acknowledges and addresses the diversity of its users.

## **1.5 Research Aim and Objectives**

### *1.5.1 Aim of the Study*

This study aims to investigate the patterns of social media usage amongst different ethnic groups and how these patterns differ across the ethnic groups. The research question is: *What are the patterns of social media usage among different ethnic groups, and how do these patterns differ across the ethnic groups?*

### *1.5.2 Objectives of the Study*

The objectives of the research are:

- To examine the usage patterns of social media within ethnic groups, including White Australians, Arab Australians, and Indian Australians.
- To identify the most commonly used social media applications among different ethnicities, specifically focusing on White Australians, Arab Australians, and Indian Australians.
- To explore the reasons for using specific social media applications among different ethnicities, and to analyse the differences in motivations and preferences.
- To investigate the cultural influences on social media usage among different ethnic groups, and to understand how social media platforms reflect and shape cultural values, norms, and practices.
- To examine the usage of social media applications for buying and selling products within ethnic groups, and to identify the factors influencing consumer behaviour and decision-making.
- To analyse the dynamics of social media usage within ethnic groups, including patterns of content consumption, interaction, and engagement with different platforms.

- To assess the impact of cultural differences on social media usage, exploring how demographic factors such as age, gender, line of work, frequency of use, time spent, purpose, platform, content consumption, and interaction influence social media behaviour and preferences among White Australians, Arab Australians, and Indian Australians.

## **1.6 Research Questions**

*What are the patterns of social media usage among different ethnic groups, and how do these patterns differ across ethnic groups?*

- What are the most commonly used social media applications among different ethnicities, specifically focusing on White Australians, Arab Australians, and Indian Australians?
- What are the reasons for using specific social media applications among different ethnicities, and what are the differences in motivations and preferences?
- What are the cultural influences on social media usage among different ethnic groups, and how do social media platforms reflect and shape cultural values, norms, and practices?
- What is the usage of social media applications for buying and selling products within ethnic groups, and what are the factors influencing consumer behaviour and decision-making?
- What are the dynamics of social media usage within ethnic groups, including patterns of content consumption, interaction, and engagement with different platforms?
- What is the impact of cultural differences on social media usage, exploring how demographic factors such as age, gender, line of work, frequency of use, time spent, purpose, platform, content consumption, and interaction influence social media behaviour and preferences among White Australians, Arab Australians, and Indian Australians?

### ***1.7 Significance of the Research***

The significance of this research study lies in its exploration of the complex interplay between ethnicity and social media usage within the diverse context of Australian society, focusing on White Australians, Arab Australians, and Indian Australians. In an era where digital social media platforms have become not only the epicenter of communication, but also key players in information dissemination, cultural production, and identity formation, this study provides vital insights into the nuances of how different ethnic communities engage with these digital spaces. Understanding these patterns is paramount for revealing the ways social media both shapes and reflects ethnic identities in Australia's multicultural context (Bagot et al., 2022; Cingel et al., 2022). This research addresses the critical need to unravel the intricate relationship between cultural backgrounds and online behaviour, shedding light on the profound impact of ethnicity on social media usage. Australia's multicultural fabric is rich and diverse, comprising individuals from various racial and ethnic backgrounds, each contributing their unique cultural values, practices, and preferences (Darko et al., 2022; Falkenberg et al., 2022). This study addresses a significant gap that is largely associated with the impact of the relationship between diverse ethnicities and social media usage in the current study of existing literature by delving into the specific nuances of social media use within these distinct ethnic groups, offering detailed insights that can inform marketing strategies, content creation, and user interface design. By identifying the most popular social media platforms among these ethnic groups, this research empowers marketers to personalise their approaches to engage a more diverse audience effectively. The study's investigation of cultural influences on social media usage extends beyond mere statistics, providing a deeper understanding of how cultural norms, values, and practices manifest in the digital domain (Intharacks et al., 2023; Marciano et al., 2022). It uncovers how these online spaces reflect and shape cultural identities and behaviours, making it a valuable resource for both marketers and researchers interested in the intersection of culture and digital behaviour.

Furthermore, this research delves into the role of social media in buying and selling products within ethnic groups, shedding light on the unique factors influencing consumer behaviour and decision-making processes. This knowledge empowers businesses to create more targeted marketing campaigns and strategies that resonate



with specific customer segments, ultimately enhancing their market reach and success (Thapliyal et al., 2023). The study also examines the intricate dynamics of social media usage, including patterns of content consumption, interaction, and engagement across different platforms. By understanding how culture influences these online behaviours, businesses and platform developers can create a more inclusive online environment that respects and accommodates cultural differences. Cultural differences, as the study highlights, have a multidimensional impact on social media consumption, encompassing factors such as age, gender, occupation, frequency of use, time spent, purpose, platform choice, content consumption, and interaction patterns.

This holistic approach provides a comprehensive understanding of how culture shapes social media behaviour and preferences within the specific context of White Australians, Arab Australians, and Indian Australians (Vaingankar et al., 2022). It fills a crucial gap in research. The significance of this research extends across various domains, including academia, society at large, advertising, and cultural comprehensive exploration of the relationship between culture and digital engagement. In a world where social media has become an integral part of daily life, this study navigates uncharted territory to uncover the complex interactions between culture and online behaviour (Valkenburg et al., 2022). It enhances the comprehension of the digital age by analysing the distinctive preferences and behaviours of diverse ethnic groups, contributing to the broader discourse on identity, belonging, and representation in the digital landscape. This research study is certainly important as it captures the complex dynamics of video use across the three Australian ethnic groups; White Australians, Arab Australians, and Indian Australians. In doing so, the study answers how these various groups may navigate the digital world and what that says about the cultural mentality and ethic of social media use. Of these factors, marketers and business establishments must target a diverse consumer base. The research points out the trend of which ethnicity is more involved in which social platform, thus better marketing to that certain ethnicity. Also, factors related to the effect of social media on consumer behaviour are examined; specific factors that may affect purchase intentions are explored. This information helps organizations in the formulation of proper strategies for marketing that can increase the number of target market engagements. Also, the findings support the ethic of cultural diversity in the online environment, realizing content producers and services providers in the value of the cultural diversity among users. Analyzing patterns of social media presence, this study

covers a gap in the literature and provides the overall view of the nature and formation of cultural impacts on the formation of online persona. Eventually, it serves as the continuation of the debate around representation, identity, and belonging in an increasingly digital society, instilling more respect for diversity.

The context of the study is to determine the relationship between ethnicity and social media usage with White Australians, Arab Australians, and Indian Australians being the subjects of interest. It seeks to know how these different ethnic groups interact with different social media and the different behavioral patterns that are a result of their culture. The paper looks into the cultural assimilation of social media behaviours to establish how culture determines the figures users portray, and what they prefer online. In this regard, the research focuses on content consumption and engagement analysis where the ethnicity factor has been given much consideration to understand how people of diverse ethnicities behave on social media. Furthermore, this study explores consumer behavior dynamics, especially how social media influences the purchasing behavior in ethnic groups. This aspect deals with the factors that influence purchase decisions and ways that can be used by firms to appeal to customers. Furthermore, the study focuses on cultural sensitivity concerning online environments while insisting upon the need for culturally sensitive designs. The findings have the intention to contribute to the existing body of knowledge and extend understanding of representation, identity, and belonging within digital contexts and thus enhance the appreciation of multiculturalism in social media interaction.

## ***1.8 Contribution of the Research***

### ***1.8.1 Theoretical Contribution***

This research makes two theoretical contributions: it contributes to the discipline of social media studies and the larger subject of cultural and ethnic studies. First and foremost, by highlighting the important influence of cultural elements, this study contributes to the knowledge of social media behaviour. This research not only reveals usage patterns but also the cultural subtleties that underlie them, because it focuses on White Australians, Arab Australians, and Indian Australians. It advances the area of social media studies by offering a theoretical framework for understanding the complex interactions between culture and digital behaviour. Furthermore, by exploring how digital platforms reflect, shape, and engage with cultural identities and

practises, this research adds to the larger body of work on the subject of cultural and ethnic studies which makes a significant addition to the interdisciplinary debate on culture, ethnicity, and technology by examining cultural influences on social media.

### *1.8.2 Practical Contribution*

The practical contribution of this research is substantial and multifaceted, with direct implications for marketers, social media platforms, businesses, policymakers, and the general public. This study provides marketers and advertisers with actionable insights on how to engage with and reach diverse ethnic groups via social media. By identifying the most popular social media platforms and comprehending the motivations behind their use by White Australians, Arab Australians, and Indian Australians, marketers can personalise their strategies and content to resonate more effectively with these distinct audiences. In turn, this improves the efficacy and effectiveness of marketing campaigns, ultimately resulting in increased consumer engagement and possibly higher sales. As a result of this research, social media platforms can acquire a deeper understanding of how their users from various ethnic backgrounds interact with their platforms. This information can be used to inform platform development, user interface design, and content recommendation algorithms to better accommodate the cultural preferences and values of their diverse user base. On a larger scale, policymakers and regulators can use the findings to establish online spaces that respect and accommodate cultural differences and are more inclusive. This research contributes to a more harmonious and tolerant digital environment by promoting cross-cultural understanding and inclusivity.

### *1.8.3 Scenario of the Research*

The study investigates the relationship between cultural factors and social media usage among three distinct ethnic groups in Australia: Such people as white Australians, Arabs Australians, and Indian Australians are famous in the country. Especially in today's world where social media and ethnicity are subject to other forms of communication, culture, and economy. To this end, this research seeks to identify how these groups utilise the social media platforms and analyse variations in platform choice, content consumption, and engagement. Thus, filling the gap of the existing studies that fail to make differences between ethnicities and their approaches to SNSs

usage, the study reveals the following cultural nuances: Importantly, the relevance of this research is in its ability to enhance awareness of the community's cultural difference and reduce ethnic conflict in an ethnically diverse society. Further, findings from this study can benefit marketers and developers of social media platforms through providing them with the right engagement plan that will help them address goals tailored to the various audiences in order to increase their coverage to a wider audience and improve the overall efficiency of the media. Moreover, it could assist businesses to understand the sort of cultural values that exist in different ethnic groups and hence position their services and products in a way that would enhance customer relevancy and reliance. In sum, this study advances knowledge of the relationship between culture and digital conduct to enhance the idea of online communities' cultural relevance.

### **1.9 Research Scope**

The scope of this research focuses on the patterns of social media usage among three distinct ethnic groups in Australia: Thus, we have White Australians, Arab Australians, and Indian Australians among other significant classification categories. The research is primarily located in Australia with more focus on the extropolation cities or areas such as Brisbane, Gold Coast, and Townsville. Thus, focusing on these areas of Australia, the research intends to encompass a broad spectrum of cultural imprints and social relations determining the multicultural context of the country. The study focuses in particular on modern selected social networks like Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube that are actively used by the millennial and working generation. Specifically, the study intends to examine the impact of age and gender on choice and utilization of social media platforms in these ethnic communities. Therefore, the study aims to examine the choice of platforms, content viewing tendencies, and ways of interacting within them to present benefits that marketers and developers of social media may find helpful in targeting the desired demographics.

### **1.10 Outline of the Thesis**

**Table 1: Outline of the study**

<b>Chapter 1: Introduction</b>	This chapter introduces the research, providing background information on the influence of cultural factors on social media usage. It outlines the
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	research aims and objectives, highlighting the significance of the study in understanding the interplay between ethnicity and digital behaviour. The methodology is summarised, and the theoretical and practical contributions of the research are discussed.
<b>Chapter 2: Literature Review</b>	This chapter reviews the evolution of marketing and social media, examining their impact on consumer behaviour in the digital age. It explores cultural differences that affect social media usage patterns and how various ethnic groups engage with social media platforms. The chapter identifies the research gap and introduces the conceptual framework. The research is theoretically contextualised using the functionalist theory.
<b>Chapter 3: Research Methodology</b>	This chapter details the research paradigm and emphasises the credibility of the qualitative research methods employed. It discusses the research subjects, data collection techniques, and data analysis procedures, and outlines the ethical considerations that guided the research.
<b>Chapter 4: Research Stage 1- Qualitative study</b>	This chapter delves into the first qualitative research stage, presenting the methodology employed and the results obtained through thematic analysis. It offers insights into how cultural influences shape social media behaviour among the selected ethnic groups.
<b>Chapter 5: Research Study 2- Multiple Case Study Methodology.</b>	This chapter describes the methodological differences between Research Stage I and Research Stage II, explaining the rationale for conducting a multiple case study. It also presents the results of the second qualitative study using thematic analysis.
<b>Chapter 6: Research Stage- Qualitative Study</b>	This chapter critically analyses and discusses the findings of both qualitative research stages. It explores the implications of cultural influences on social media behaviour and how these insights contribute to our understanding of ethnicity and digital engagement.
<b>Chapter 7: Conclusion and Implications</b>	In the final chapter, the theoretical and practical contributions of the research are summarised. The chapter also acknowledges research limitations and suggests directions for further research, providing a comprehensive conclusion to the thesis.

### **1.11 Conclusion**

In conclusion, this chapter provided an introduction to the thesis, offering insights into the relationship between cultural factors and social media engagement. By going into the background of this subject matter, the chapter lays a foundation for understanding the influences that ethnicity exerts on digital behaviour. Through elucidating the research aims and objectives, the significance of this study becomes apparent,

underscoring the imperative need to explore and comprehend the complexities inherent in the interplay between ethnicity and digital platforms. Moreover, the summary of the methodology discusses the approach undertaken to investigate this phenomenon, ensuring rigour and reliability in the ensuing exploration. As the theoretical and practical contributions are contemplated, it becomes evident that this research holds promise not only in advancing academic discourse but also in informing practical strategies aimed at fostering inclusivity and understanding in the digital sphere. Thus, this chapter stands as a pivotal starting point, setting the stage for a thorough examination of cultural dynamics within the realm of social media usage patterns to assist marketers in developing a more sophisticated understanding of consumer behaviour.

## **CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### ***2.1 Introduction***

This chapter focuses on reviewing the literature on digital marketing. Social media marketing is seen as an important component of digital marketing, with extensive influence on consumer purchasing behaviour. Additionally, attention has been directed toward usage trends among diverse ethnicities and their effects on buying patterns. Toward the conclusion, the chapter introduces a conceptual framework clarifying the dynamics relating to social media usage patterns and buying behaviour.

### ***2.2 Evolution of Marketing***

Marketing has undergone substantial evolution in recent years, prompting businesses to recognise the necessity of executing influential marketing strategies to secure a strong foothold in their respective industries. The relevance, significance, and utility of marketing have surged in importance for firms, as it stands out as a primary approach for gaining a competitive advantage. While different organisations have been involved in conducting marketing activities, their efficiency and use of resources also make a significant difference as to how well the results are reaped (Kumar 2015). Despite marketing's recognised importance in today's world, not every institution can fully utilise it for maximum benefits. Various factors, including human capital, infrastructure, budget, and more, contribute to marketing effectiveness. Taking all these elements into account is vital for achieving desired outcomes and results. As the function of marketing has evolved, it has also become necessary for companies to change in accordance and make sure that the available opportunities can be attained most effectively (Watson et al. 2015).

In assessing the evolution of marketing, it becomes apparent that businesses have shifted from traditional methods towards a greater reliance on digital marketing. In the past, companies typically employed traditional marketing tactics, utilising tools such as newspapers, radio, television, magazines, billboards, and brochures to promote their offerings. Utilising these mediums, the approach of firms became limited and they were not able to reach out to a large market area. Such marketing campaigns were only visible to those customers who could gain physical access to them, and the firms' campaigns were limited to certain geographical boundaries (Bulunmaz 2016).

Also, the costs of traditional marketing were considerably high, requiring firms to allocate huge amounts of money to carry out advertisements or other promotional techniques. Small-sized businesses were the ones affected the most, as they had limited budgets in which they had to conduct the required activities. The element of cost has remained a huge hindrance for such firms to conduct adequate marketing activities, and so the overall efficiency has been restricted to a certain extent (Shams 2018).

Social media marketing is considered to be an extensive channel and a significant way for organisations to devise unique content to achieve more customers (Olotewo, 2016). In addition, when social media is used for marketing it permits the business to invent and introduce a brand image across the divergent platform of social media. It also allows the central identity of the company's brand to be consistent (Rafiee & Sarabdeen, 2013). Hence it can be said that it has raised the dimensions of business on distinct social media presence. Social media networks are speculating the marketing goals for organisations (Momany & Alshboul, 2016). More importantly, social media regarding marketing is not only giving access to the people who are interested in the company's products but also making unknown people aware of the newly established products of the company. This tool in marketing is unfolding the diversification which can be utilised to serve the perfectly fit needs and following the business.

Social media marketing is recognised as a highly effective and valuable technique in today's marketing world. Many businesses employ this strategy to promote their offerings and establish a strong position in the industry. Social media marketing has strengthened business operations but there are challenges associated with it (Rana & Kumar, 2016). One challenge for businesses in social media marketing is the short attention span of customers towards brands or products. With a lot of information online and on social platforms, retaining customer attention becomes harder. Customers acquire information but lack focus on one brand, quickly moving on. They seek maximum information during social media time, making stopping them challenging. The trend in social media usage presents a challenge as customers constantly switch information sources. companies must design strategies and methods to augment the attention span of customers comprehensively (Kaur, 2016).



The marketing function today has completely evolved and businesses have switched their approach completely towards marketing. Now, firms mostly use digital marketing platforms to market their products, and conventional means are mostly avoided due to the limited constraints and limitations attached to them. In digital marketing, businesses have been using the Internet to promote their offerings and make use of various platforms and mediums to reach out to customers. In digital marketing, firms are now able to reduce their costs of marketing, increase their customer approach, enhance marketing impact, and much more (Sharma & Verma, 2018). The prevalence of digital marketing has completely changed the dynamics for organisations and firms are now keen on making use of the available opportunities and maximising the outcomes. Through digital marketing, companies can make use of creative activities and significantly attract customers to the brands. The extent to which the use of marketing is taken by businesses depends on the firms and their abilities, but the opportunities that could be optimised are immense (Brock, 2019).

Marketing today is completely different from how it used to be a few years ago. With digital marketing methods prevailing in the industry, businesses have been able to enhance their sales and profits, along with their overall presence and image in the industry. Earlier, firms were not able to cater to the specific requirements of customers, and nor were the customers able to contact the brands directly. With the use of digital marketing today, firms are now able to directly interact with customers through digital platforms and consider the concerns and requests of each customer. While this has increased complexities for businesses, they can better respond to the queries of customers and keep them satisfied (Bulunmaz, 2016). Also, working on the areas and aspects identified by the customers makes it possible for the businesses to make necessary changes in accordance and evolve to become a more efficient organisation in the market. Further, with digital marketing, customers can communicate with brands and interact with them about their experiences, complaints, issues, problems, and positive feedback as well. The relationship between the two has been improved and this has allowed both parties to remain content. Digital marketing has mitigated the barriers that exist between customers and companies, making them closer than ever (Kumar, 2015).

There are various digital marketing techniques and mediums that are being used by businesses on a large scale. Some of these could be considered social media marketing, website marketing, mobile marketing, SEO, e-mail marketing, and more. All of these digital marketing methods have gained significance and their implications vary from each other to a certain extent. Businesses may lead ahead to use these methods and techniques as per their specific nature and type, and various benefits could be achieved in accordance. Concerning digital marketing methods, social media marketing has gained immense significance and most companies are using this method to promote their offerings (Sharma & Verma, 2018). The prevalence of social media has opened new dynamics for businesses and firms have been utilising this opportunity to enter new markets and attract ample customers towards it. With the increasing significance and use of social media marketing, companies have been inclined towards attaining information and identifying ways through which efficiency could be enhanced and outcomes could be augmented. Social media marketing has enabled businesses to market their products and services from a single platform and provide firms with an opportunity to maximise their reach to customers on a global level (Festa et al., 2016).

Considering the evolution of marketing, companies today have been able to expand their operations to international markets and overcome the geographic boundaries that were present earlier in traditional marketing. With the use of digital media, businesses can first identify the areas where they have potential customers. Previously, it was daunting for companies to assess the customers who have a high demand for the products and services being offered. The range of companies was only limited to domestic customers, and reaching out on an international scale was very challenging (Watson et al., 2015). With digital media marketing, not only are the firms able to identify areas where they can find potential customers but also present their offerings to such customers to enhance their sales. Once international markets are exposed to brands, the opportunity to increase sales and revenues significantly rises and this also provides the opportunity to grow in size in the long run. With marketing evolution, businesses are now able to serve a comparatively much wider set of customers and increase the generation of revenue and sales on the whole. Even though digital marketing has turned out to be a huge opportunity for most businesses, there are several challenges related to its implications as well (Shams 2018).

In addition, digital marketing has evolved the concept and implications of marketing in a significant manner. Businesses today have become reliant on marketing for their growth and progress. Most companies today have been inclined towards digital marketing methods to promote their businesses and offerings. Social media marketing has gained ample prevalence in the digital world, and firms have identified the benefits of using social media as a platform to promote goods and services (Tiago & Verissimo, 2014). To utilise social media marketing most effectively, it is first vital that companies gather adequate information and knowledge about marketing techniques (Tiago & Verissimo, 2014).

Digital marketing has gone through a significant evolution over the past few decades, as the Internet has become increasingly accessible and important to businesses of all sizes. For instance, a study conducted by Cinelli et al. (2021) revealed that the early days of digital marketing from the 1900s to 2000s periods were focused on email marketing, banner ads, and simple website design. Marketers would use these tools to reach a broad audience, but targeting and personalisation were limited. Afterward, in the mid of 2000s, Busca and Bertrandias (2020) explained that Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) became one of the major sources of marketing as it became the keen focus of the early days of digital marketing that were focused on email marketing, banner ads, and simple website design. Marketers would use these tools to reach a broad audience, but targeting and personalisation were limited. Since 2010, social media platforms like Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), and LinkedIn began to gain popularity in the late 2000s and early 2010s, and marketers quickly saw the potential for reaching highly targeted audiences through these platforms (Krishen et al., 2021). According to Kim et al. (2021), the focus of marketers was on building communities and engaging with followers, rather than just broadcasting messages. Such a social media revolution enables companies and marketers to reach a global audience without any border restrictions.

Furthermore, the literature review also evidences that mobile marketing can be considered the most significant revolution in the digital marketing revolution, as Kircaburun et al. (2020) explained that smartphones became more prevalent, and marketers began to focus on mobile optimisation and creating mobile-first experiences for users. This included mobile-friendly websites, mobile apps, and mobile advertising.

Subsequently, mobile marketing is also the source of content marketing which came to attention in the 2010s as Vannucci and McCauley (2019) articulated that consumers became more savvy and skeptical of traditional advertising, marketers began to shift their focus to creating high-quality content that would provide value to their audiences. This included blog posts, videos, infographics, and other types of content that would educate and inform, rather than just promote products or services. However, this is not the end of digital marketing evolution as it is an ongoing process and marketers are still working to grasp new opportunities in the field of digital marketing.

Additionally, personalisation and automation are other aspects of digital marketing that started from the period of 2010 and continue in the 2020s. According to Sheldon et al. (2020), with the rise of big data and marketing automation tools, marketers were able to target and personalise their messages to specific individuals and groups, based on their interests, behaviours, and preferences. This led to more effective marketing campaigns and higher conversion rates. In addition to this, Kircaburun et al. (2020) explain that the latest trend in digital marketing is the use of AI and machine learning to automate and optimise marketing processes. This includes predictive analytics, chatbots, and other tools that can help businesses deliver more personalised and targeted marketing messages to their audiences. With such innovative tools and techniques, it has now become easier for marketers to connect with the global audience with the ongoing evolution and growth of digital marketing.

As has been discussed, marketing methods have evolved lately along with the advancement of technology. Furthermore, the use of social media has been quite popular and the marketing strategies on social media show that marketing is a fundamental limb for any organisation as it plays a significant part in unleashing disparate factors to heighten customer satisfaction (Chang et al., 2015). It has a major contribution in furthering the reputation of the organisations as it is evidence of managing the bad press, selling a variety of products, and enhancing the loyalty of the customers. Because if the customer's needs and preferences are neglected, this will ultimately lead the organisation toward a failure bound to its product's profitability (Terkan, 2013).

More importantly, in the present time, the different techniques that have been used by organisations for promoting their products have acquired a substantial standard of

living for the poor community by increasing the potential of products, commodities, and services for them. Correspondingly, digital marketing is often used by every small to large organisation to obtain a large range of actual and potential audiences. Therefore, it can be said that it has eventually enhanced the previous advertising standards as per the younger generations' requirements and preferences. The evolution of marketing has led to a shift from traditional marketing methods to digital marketing, enabling businesses to reach a wider audience, enhance customer engagement, and leverage technological advancements for improved effectiveness and efficiency. Digital marketing heavily relies on social media platforms; hence, the next section discusses social media and its significance in digital marketing.

The present status of SSM presents a picture of the spread of the platform, where billions of people around the world keep communicating and sharing their cultural values. Nevertheless, multiculturalism is important because, with the use of algorithms, children receive knowledge from the perspective of majority instead of receiving the ability to express their cultural identity. Social media cannot be underestimated as it has been seen as being very useful to the cultural business and minorities who get to tell their stories to a lot of people. In a broader context the perception on social media is positive as it offers people power and comes with some difficulties. It gives people an opportunity to express themselves using culture and engage in civic activities with various challenges of cultural appropriation as opposed to appreciation. Through social media, communication of various minority groups is encouraged; thus, their voices are heard. However, the problem of digital divide still persists in the society and thus some of the VUCSWS are locked out. This marks an increasing need for more sites to integrate culture into their design since they are of paramount importance to the users. It can also aid in establishing environments that make all users genuinely represented and appreciated hence contributing to the positive advancement of cultural diversity as observed in the social media use.

## ***2.3 The Role of Digital Media in Marketing: Reach, Connection with Customers, Challenges, and Benefits***

### ***2.3.1 Role of Digital Media in Marketing***

Social media marketing is one of the significant parts of digital marketing. In digital marketing, social media marketing has turned out to be one of the most effective and

useful marketing techniques. It has been identified that the usage of social media has significantly augmented over the years. Customers tend to spend ample time using social media, and this increases the opportunity for businesses to market their offerings more effectively and efficiently. Social media utilisation by firms has increased over the past years, and a greater number of companies today are using the medium to conduct their marketing activities (Tiago & Verissimo 2014). With the use of social media, firms today have the opportunity to not only provide ample information about their products but also visually attract a greater number of customers to their offerings (Ananda et al., 2016). Social media has made it easier for businesses to present their offerings more appealingly, and gain the attention of a huge set of potential customers in the market. There are a set of different tools and techniques that must be utilised by companies concerning social media marketing. The efficiency and adequacy of such tools impact the outcomes of marketing campaigns being conducted, and so it relies on the use of such tools to show how imperative the marketing has been (Ziyadin et al., 2019).

Social media in the contemporary environment is a huge opportunity for businesses to conduct their marketing activities and campaigns. While the efficiency and use of the media also affect the results of such marketing, there is a huge opportunity for companies to optimise their promotional activities. It has been assessed that customers today are highly inclined towards social media to seek information and look for products or services that they require. The usage of customers and an increasing trend towards social media have made it a huge platform for businesses to market their services and products (Charlesworth, 2014). Through the use of social media, businesses are in an attempt to engage with customers and develop a strong relationship with them, which eventually could be sustained over the long run. Using social media for this purpose, customers often do not identify the business tactics and tend to get attracted to the marketing strategies. With various techniques and methods being used on social media, firms have mostly been able to remain successful and achieve their performance targets on the whole. It is also vital to understand that even though social media marketing has ample potential for firms, various considerations need to be made so that the required outcomes can be attained. (Bala & Verma, 2018).

Digital marketing has surpassed other traditional marketing methods, prompting a shift in business marketing dynamics. The integration of technology is now apparent among companies, with most embracing it across various functions. Through digital marketing, companies have not only expanded their reach and engagement with customers but also prominently boosted their sales and revenues. While digital marketing has provided numerous benefits to businesses in terms of convenience, approach, feasibility, and much more, it has also increased the concerns for companies regarding its effective usage and utilisation (Saura et al., 2017). While companies focus on leveraging technology for enhanced profitability, they must also invest significant effort into comprehending and integrating it within their organisation. Although digital marketing presents many opportunities, it also introduces challenges and challenges that firms must address to function efficiently. While some businesses navigate this landscape, others struggle to integrate technological advancements into their organisational culture. With such differences existing, there is ample potential to use digital marketing methods for firms. (Hanlon, 2019).

Today, people mainly prioritise convenience in their activities, deeply influencing the shopping and the whole purchasing process. Moreover, escalating uncertainties in the environment have led individuals to favour conducting most activities online, rather than venturing outside the digital space. The lives of individuals in most societies have become so busy and complex that they often do not have ample time in they visit stores and make purchases (Dimitrova & Sin, 2018). Various factors have led to the widespread adoption of digital marketing. Recognising new trends in customer preferences and trends, businesses have placed added emphasis on digital marketing. In addition to evolving customer priorities, firms have found it more practical to conduct marketing activities online rather than through traditional methods. A set of different reasons have contributed to the prevalence of digital media marketing, and now other marketing techniques have become obsolete (Cutrona et al., 2019).

### *2.3.2 Reach of Digital Marketing through Social Media and its Connection*

Social media usage is exemplary as it has the potential to reach a large swathe within a few minutes when an ad is posted, it facilitates advertising companies by reducing their ad costs, and making it reach the targeted audience in terms of the robust

advertisement of social media (Iqbal, 2021). Additionally, in terms of the great number of online users that are instinctive of about 59% of the entire world's population, marketers would not prefer to miss any opportunity to advertise the ads on these potent digital platforms that are playing a significant role in maximising the number of buyers that have not been reached and targeted by using the previous print and media marketing features entailed by the television (Ravi, 2016). In a similar vein, in the present time, social media is being used in a variety of ways for instance, to assess the people's response related to a particular brand a business would effectively use social media platforms. Perhaps these platforms will further maximise the capacities of a business to examine the performance related to the company's products on different social media platforms.

Social media marketing has gained ample significance over the years, and a great number of companies have been using this marketing technique to promote their products and services. Marketing is a critical business function, and companies have been keen on the usage and strategy implementation of marketing to develop a sustainable position in the industry (Chou et al., 2009). Firms that do not attach importance to marketing often fail to retain their position in the market or grow in the competitive industry. With the use of social media marketing, businesses have been able to reach out to a larger set of audiences all around the world and conduct effective marketing practices at comparatively much lesser costs (Prasath & Yoganathen 2018). Investing and utilising resources in marketing has become critical for organisations, as this allows businesses to not only sustain their position for a longer period but also establish a competitive edge as well. Focusing on marketing is essential, as marketers indulge in efforts to promote their brands and augment revenues in the long run. Various approaches to marketing could be used by brands, and each of them has its significance and usage (Salem, 2019).

As social media marketing has gained value over the past years, companies have become keen on understanding the marketing method most effectively and gaining maximum knowledge regarding the strategy to augment its usage and utilisation. Trends and patterns of social media usage are being observed by businesses, and the concept of big data is being utilised by companies to understand customers better (Thoene et al., 2012). Knowing consumers is essential and critical for firms by all



means, as only this could allow the firms to develop more effective marketing strategies, and put attention to areas that are of greater significance, businesses are deeply invested in understanding customer behaviour towards social media usage to tailor their marketing strategies effectively and optimise promotional efforts. Acquiring such crucial customer insights enables brands to come up with strategies that end up with impactful outcomes. Despite the recognised value of social media marketing for companies, rising competition has posed challenges in establishing a competitive advantage. Almost every firm today has its presence on social media, and this has augmented the difficulty of remaining effective in the marketing process (Connelly et al. 2016; Thoene et al., 2012).

Through social media, brands now can engage directly with customers, addressing their concerns and queries in real time. Establishing this connection has become essential for brands as they endeavour to create long-term relationships with customers. Through communicating, brands can better understand what the customers need them and this eventually allows firms to respond well to their needs and requirements (Calixte et al., 2020; Gilchrist & Kyprianou, 2011). Previously, customers lacked the means to communicate directly with brands, leading to lowering satisfaction levels. In traditional marketing, the delay in relaying consumer concerns to brands hindered timely responses, constraining companies. However, with the prominence of social media marketing, brands can promptly address and resolve consumer issues, creating an environment of immediate engagement and resolution. Such inculcation of consumer feedback has augmented the value of social media marketing, and organisations have been influenced to inculcate this form of marketing strategy well into the system (Gilchrist & Kyprianou, 2011).

Brands worldwide have embraced social media marketing to promote their products and services. Across various industries, nearly every business has integrated social media marketing into their promotional strategies. Companies in varied industries have been interested in understanding the marketing technique more, to optimise the opportunity and eventually lead to increased sales and revenue generation (Kelly et al., 2018). Brands have utilised various marketing strategies via social media to engage their customers. Celebrity endorsements, for instance, have been employed by companies to attract and sustain customer interest. Social media platforms have

provided firms with the means to not just advertise their products but also forge relationships with customers. The feedback, views, opinions, and ideas of customers are attained by brands through the use of social media marketing and are then inculcated in the brand strategy (Bognar et al., 2019).

Social media marketing has emerged as a highly effective and useful marketing technique in the modern world. Organisations all around the world have become keen on making use of the opportunity and optimising their marketing activities in the long run. Social media marketing has allowed companies to remain flexible and effectively conduct the desired marketing activities, inculcating all the necessary changes and amends (Li et al., 2016). The behaviour of consumers is constantly evolving, and this has presented the need for changing organisations as well. In social media marketing, firms have been able to make use of these opportunities and make the necessary changes through which they can keep the customers satisfied and content. The aspect of flexibility has turned out to be highly useful and imperative for firms, as businesses can even make changes in the ongoing marketing campaign when needed. In traditional marketing methods, companies do not have the opportunity to change their approach between campaigns, and this has created ample difficulties for firms. With the use of social media, companies are now able to amend the necessary information to better meet the needs and requirements of customers, keeping the activities more effective (Ananda et al., 2016).

With social media marketing taking place, businesses can establish complete control over the marketing activities and have a full grip on the related activities being carried out. In conventional marketing methods, businesses tend to have a loose grip on the marketing activities being conducted, as there are third parties often involved in the process. The traditional marketing methods have varied stakeholders involved in the process, and this takes away the control from brands in marketing processes and procedures (Siamagka et al., 2015). In social media marketing, businesses are often conducting all marketing activities themselves, and this provides the opportunity to retain complete authority and control over the marketing campaigns and activities. Further, social media marketing not only makes it easier for companies to remain aware of the activities that are being conducted but also allows businesses to make the necessary changes when required. Social media has evolved the marketing

techniques evidently for firms, and companies are keen on identifying the ways through which the outcomes of marketing could be augmented even further. (Ananda et al., 2016; Siamagka et al., 2015).

### *2.3.3 Connecting with Customers through Digital Media*

Social media marketing has turned out to be a huge opportunity for firms to connect with customers on an individual level and assess the requirements and concerns of each individual. Once the requirements of these individuals are identified critically, it becomes feasible for businesses to better meet their needs and wants, along with working towards the fulfillment of their concerns (Funk, 2014). With the use of social media, organisations today can better respond to the queries and problems of customers on the whole. Having the opportunity to interact with the brand, customers often connect with the companies through social media platforms. Individuals tend to present their issues and problems along with other feedback to the brands, and this information becomes critical for companies to evolve and improve their offerings. Remaining closely connected to the customers has provided brands with the opportunity to better understand the changing trends and preferences of individuals and respond in accordance to meet the requirements on the whole. It is further essential to note that even though many businesses are making use of social media to better understand customers, only a few can rightly conduct the activity and deduce effective outcomes (Felix et al., 2017).

Organisations all around the world are using social media marketing for various reasons. The objectives of marketing have been unique for companies, and social media has provided the opportunity for all such businesses to meet the desired goals. With the use of social media marketing, small-scale businesses have been provided with the opportunity to expand their approach to international markets, and this has been a huge opportunity for all such organisations today (Kamboj et al. 2017). Small-scale companies often do not have ample capital to conduct extensive marketing activities or campaigns, but the prevalence of social media has provided numerous opportunities to not only reach out to international markets but also cater to the requirements of those customers. With the increase in e-commerce, firms are enhancing and widening their presence all over the globe. Having said this, social

media marketing has become highly relevant for such businesses, providing them with the opportunity to assess the demands of those customers and keep them satisfied as well (Ganjeh et al., 2019).

With the use of social media marketing, a huge number of organisations have been able to positively influence customers in terms of purchasing behaviours. Firms have identified the involvement of customers towards social media, and this has placed them in an improved position to influence customers and their behaviours. Customers today spend most of their free time using social media networks, and this allows firms to conduct their marketing activities to have an evident impact on people. The availability and use of customers are so high that businesses can instantly connect with the individuals and affect their choices and preferences as well (Bowen et al., 2021). It is also vital to note that a huge number of businesses today are using social media as the right marketing method to promote their offerings, and with such high competition, it has become daunting for firms to remain unique or offer something of greater value. Social media marketing has significantly prevailed and most brands have become keen on utilising the opportunity, considering it to be the most accurate choice (Funk, 2014).

There has been an evident increase in the usage of social media by individuals in recent years. While there have been various reasons for this, one of them could be identified as the external uncertainties taking place in the environment. The global pandemic recently has been one of the major instances that have impacted the behaviour of customers in the contemporary environment. Customers today are vulnerable to stepping out of their houses and visiting local stores to buy products and services (Mohammed & Ferraris, 2021). The major concerns in this are related to health and safety, and individuals today are very protective about their health impacts and associated risks. A drastic change has been observed during the pandemic where almost every business has inclined towards the use of social media to market and sell its products and services. Companies have identified the changing preferences and attitudes of customers and that is why the shift in marketing has been identified. As customers are more inclined to seek information through the use of the Internet and use the same medium to purchase products, firms have been influenced to use

particular mediums and methods to ensure adequate sales and revenue generation (Mason et al., 2021).

Most businesses that have inclined towards the use of social media as a means of marketing have been successful in the process. Firms today are keen on identifying the markets, and then developing promotional strategies in accordance that could make a significant impact. Customers on the other hand are more interested in making use of the Internet and digital mediums to purchase the required products. They prefer choosing products online as they get ample variety and time to choose between the products they require (Sohail & Al-Jabri, 2017). Other than the health and safety factors, various other elements have augmented the inclination of customers towards the use of social media. Some of the elements could be identified as convenience, time-saving, greater variety of products, more information on the Internet, adequate comparison between brands, and more. Different factors have all contributed to the rise in the use of social media by customers. Convenience is one of these aspects, and individuals today consider this to be a significant reason why social media is preferred. Most individuals today prefer convenience, and that is why they avoid the hassle of visiting retail stores and choosing the products they require. Through the use of social media, customers are provided with the opportunity to stay at their premises and conduct purchase activities (Sohail & Al-Jabri, 2017).

#### *2.3.4 Challenges and Benefits*

A challenge in social media marketing is selecting the most suitable platform. Companies utilise various platforms like Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, X (formerly Twitter), among others for their marketing efforts. Each platform holds its importance, requiring companies to pinpoint the one most beneficial for their specific target audience. It's noted that different demographic groups exhibit distinct preferences for social media platforms. Based on the age factor, for instance, the customers could be divided, and firms could identify which customers have a greater inclination and usage towards a certain platform (Yadav, 2017). Upon determining which platforms are predominantly used by their target audience, businesses can enhance the effectiveness and utility of their marketing activities. Despite the critical nature of platform identification, businesses often struggle to accurately segment their audience

and perceive which social media platforms their customers frequent the most. Attaining this sort of information could be intricate as the customers also keep switching their inclination and attention towards a certain trend (Felix et al., 2017).

Businesses today allocate significant resources to ascertain the social media strategies and platforms that best suit their needs. While each platform holds its own importance, the selection must align with factors such as customer demographics, product/service nature, and brand category. The choice of social media platforms and channels can profoundly impact the long-term growth of sales and revenue for the business. By using the right platforms, businesses are allowed to focus on the right set of audiences that they need to target, and this ultimately allows the company to enhance its sales (Dahl, 2021). Presenting the products and services to the right set of audiences is critical for all types of businesses, and this could become possible by selecting the right medium and platform that reaches out to such customers. While identifying the right platforms is highly essential, businesses often find it daunting to assess and rightly identify which social media platform would reach out to the desired customer base directly. The evolving trends of people and their preferences have established the issue, and this needs to be rightly identified to make improved decisions (Khanna & Mishra, 2018).

One major challenge related to social media marketing is its security. An increasing number of hackers have entered the industry and developed their presence. The hackers engage in malicious activities for their material prospects, and regardless of their motive, the security concerns have increased significantly. As companies are not fully secure from hacking, customers also feel the problem and often avoid providing personal information for purchase transactions (Tsou, 2015). Companies need to ensure their customers that they are completely safe in transacting with the firm and that no form of issues or risks could take place. The number of hackers intervening in business activities is constantly increasing, and this poses a huge threat to companies that rely on social media marketing. Even though the issues related to hacking have been increasing over the years, there is less that businesses have been able to do about it. It is daunting to track malicious attacks, and this remains an evident issue for firms to deal with in the modern world. While many consumers are skeptical about this

issue, they still tend to rely on social media to a certain extent and sustain their relationship with them (Zhu & Chen 2015).

With advancements being made in technology, the probability of hacking and malicious attacks on the privacy of customers has also increased significantly. Where customers have been inclined and interested to make use of social media to purchase the required products and services with ease and convenience, the adversities associated with security limited the use of and scope of this digital media platform to a certain extent (Drummond et al., 2020). Organisations have identified the impact of security issues on customers, and many recognisable firms have invested huge resources and investments to take control of such issues. While ample efforts have been made, complete control over it has not been established by any of them. It has been deduced that a certain percentage of risk and security issues would remain attached to online buying, and social media platforms will take a hit of this to some extent. With social media marketing, organisations are keen to ensure that the behaviour of customers can be influenced in this regard, and they could be motivated to conduct online transactions on the Internet. Even though the concern of security is still there, many customers still use the platforms and trust the brands with their security (Beig & Khan, 2018).

One of the challenges related to social media marketing is changing consumer trends and preferences. The behaviour of consumers constantly evolves and this puts up a challenge for businesses to meet the needs of consumers. There are several different social media tools and platforms that are used by individuals to seek information and conduct purchase activities. The inclination of consumers keeps changing towards such platforms and these trends need to be rightly assessed by companies to match their marketing activities. With the constant change in the approach of consumers, brands have to adjust their policies and strategic approaches in accordance (Icha, 2015). The constant manoeuvre in strategies and adequate evaluation of changing trends of consumers often turn out to be challenging. To be able to understand these changing trends, companies also have to incur a certain amount of costs and utilise their resources through which the necessary information could be gained. As customers have ample choices and opportunities about brands, the switching keeps

taking place and this makes it intricate for firms to rightly evolve in accordance and identify the current needs and requirements (Bhor et al., 2018).

The changing behaviour and trends of customers are one of the most evident and major concerns for businesses in the modern world. The choices of consumers are changing every short while, and many firms around the world are finding it hard to keep up with the pace. One of the reasons why customers' preferences and choices are evolving so fast is globalisation. New products and services are being introduced in global markets, and this attracts customers from all around the world. Gathering information about products and services has become relatively easier, and the use of digital marketing is being taken by individuals to become aware of what the companies are offering (Cole et al., 2017). With new inventions taking place, brands can keep offering new products and services, and this has impacted the choices of customers. Whenever new products get launched in the market, they are promoted aggressively by the brands, and the customers are targeted to ensure that adequate sales can take place. It could therefore be deduced that ample information in the market, frequent products and services being presented, and increasing competition are a few of the major reasons that lead to changing the behaviour of customers on a broader level (Stieglitz et al., 2018).

One of the challenges related to social media marketing is the limited skills and knowledge of employees and managers regarding advanced marketing techniques. Businesses today are still finding effective ways and strategies through which they could optimise digital marketing efforts and results. While certain businesses have been able to do so, many companies are striving to identify the marketing techniques that could be the most beneficial for them (Alalwan et al., 2017). Also, advancements in technology are constantly taking place and this puts up a challenge to train the employees in accordance and augment their learning for better usage and implementation. The challenge is mainly related to the need for continuous training of employees to keep them adequately skilled for marketing activities (Ananda et al., 2016). A related issue with this could be considered as the reluctance of employees to change and adapt to the evolving trends. Employees often are not willing to inculcate change in their work activities, and this makes it complex for firms to ensure that the human capital attains enough training and utilises it in their work activities.



Leadership plays a vital role in this regard, and it depends on the efficiency and effectiveness of managers to ensure that the employees are not hesitant towards change, and have a positive overall behaviour to such requirements (Khanna & Mishra, 2018).

Social media marketing is considered to have ample benefits and opportunities for businesses that can make use of it most optimally. Using social media marketing methods alone is not enough to ensure positive results and effective and proper use of the platform and method must be taken to attain the results. The skills and qualifications of employees who implement social media marketing and operate the function become essential for organisations (Grubor & Jaksa, 2018). As digital marketing is a relatively newer concept for some firms, many companies are still striving to train their employees adequately and enhance their skills to the extent that they can effectively implement marketing strategies. While various businesses have been focused on augmenting the skills of employees, others have become keen on hiring trained, qualified, and experienced employees overall. The marketing function has gained ample significance over the past years, and firms today do not wish to take any sort of risk in developing and implementing strategies related to it. The objective of the organisation is to make sure that it has adequate human capital that could optimally use digital marketing mediums and reap the related benefits for companies using them (Kaplan, 2015). Even though social media marketing is an effective marketing method, customers have also been assessed to show privacy concerns. To involved and transact on the Internet, customers have to provide certain personal information with the brand or medium through which they are conducting the transaction. Certain customers are not willing to share such information with the companies, and this turns out to be a reason for their hesitance or reluctance (Zuhdi et al., 2019). Online activities have often been associated with risks of privacy, and those individuals who are not willing to compromise their privacy do not transact on the Internet. This issue reduces the overall number of potential customers for brands conducting online activities, leading to restricting their sales and revenue generation as well.

Keeping the customer engaged is a daunting task through social media marketing. The retention and engagement span of customers has reduced significantly in the modern world. Customers today tend to move from one brand to the other and one

product to the next. The shifting from one product to the other has made it daunting for firms, and ensuring that brand loyalty is sustained has been challenging in the contemporary environment. In social media marketing, the brand must keep its followers engaged at all times on networking sites (Rashidi et al., 2017). Access to other products and services is highly convenient to customers, and it is practically difficult for organisations to keep customers away from other offerings and businesses. The focus now has become to add value to the offerings and attract the customers in this way, rather than preventing them from seeking information about other brands. Businesses are adding value in terms of price, social responsibility, added benefits of warranty or after-sale, and much more. The challenge is evident for firms so utilising resources to achieve the objective has become vital as well (Kasemsap, 2018). Social media marketing has been one of the major evolutions that have taken place in the field of marketing. Businesses have been making use of this opportunity to maximise related benefits and augment their returns (Ananda et al., 2016). Even though social media marketing has prevailed over traditional forms in the past years, one of the challenges that have been associated with is the lack of trust in customers. With too many brands available over the Internet, customers now tend to rely less on the promotional activities that take place. Many companies carry out inadequate or fake advertisements on social media, and this harms the behaviour of customers (Leeflang et al., 2014). Winning the trust of customers and making them believe in what they are being offered has come out to be a major challenge. Brands today are striving to ensure that they can gain the trust of customers, and influence them positively to get engaged in their marketing activities and promotions. Due to a lack of trust, customers also often remain hesitant in terms of getting involved in any sort of purchase activity on the Internet. With too many companies indulging in marketing activities on social media, its essence and value have been reduced to a certain extent and this has developed concerns for customers on the whole. The element of reliability has been mitigated and a negative impact has been developed (Iankova et al., 2019).

Customer retention is another challenge related to social media marketing. Even though social media marketing allows businesses to attract customers towards them, retaining them for a long period becomes a challenge for businesses. Customers now tend to switch and change their preferences immediately, and this poses a concern for firms in the modern environment. Organisations have been

involved in creating techniques through which the issue of retention could be resolved and customers could be retained with the brand for a longer period (Habibi et al., 2015). While certain companies have been able to do so, others are putting in immense effort to attain the objective of increased customer retention on the whole. There is ample information available on the Internet, and the increased level of competition between firms has provided a huge amount of range for customers to choose from. Every firm develops attractive marketing strategies, and this impacts the behaviour and preferences of individuals. Switching between brands and social media platforms to seek information makes it intricate for customers to choose the right products and services they require (Kern et al., 2016).

The diverse set of customers is another challenge that is faced by businesses concerning social media marketing. The audience has become considerably broad for firms when marketing on the Internet, and this poses an issue for the brands in terms of catering to their unique needs and requirements. Companies today are keen on serving a huge set of customers as this allows them to enhance their sales and revenues considerably. While this benefit exists, fulfilling the needs of all such customers and creating marketing activities that are suitable for every segment becomes daunting. In such digital marketing efforts, a certain audience group is adequately catered and the remaining may not be equally kept satisfied (Arrigo, 2016). Also, considering that the behaviour of customers is constantly evolving, the issues augment even more and create difficulties for brands to establish activities that are effective and inclusive. Organisations are finding it difficult to sustain their position in competitive markets, and even though targeting a wider set of audiences is vital, the associated concerns adversely affect the businesses as well. In this regard, firms have to ensure that a more holistic marketing approach is conducted that caters to the needs and requirements of ample customers (Barger et al. 2016).

Social media marketing could be regarded as an overall complex marketing strategy and technique. To conduct marketing activities, firms have to use various marketing tools and techniques to carry out the processes and procedures. For these marketing procedures, employees have to undergo training through which they can enhance their related skills. Social media marketing could become intricate in terms of implementation as the techniques of every platform could be slightly varied from each other (Sihi & Lawson, 2018). Businesses employ various social media marketing strategies to promote their products, each platform demanding specific training for

efficiency. Additionally, social media marketing tactics evolve continuously for improved outcomes. Employees must undergo frequent professional development and currency to align their skills with evolving marketing requirements. Failure to execute marketing activities proficiently can adversely impact the firm's revenue and reputation in certain instances. Also, employees could feel hesitant in too much learning and implementation, eventually leading to an adverse impact (Ibrahim et al., 2020).

This portends difficult prospects ahead that the importance of maintaining a positive image of the company's brand on social media is necessary. (Curley & Noormohamed, 2014). Gaining insight into customer expectations is highly challenging. These expectations are perceived through excellent customer treatment and the delivery of effective product quality. Therefore, every company is supposed to create a good image regarding its brand image and maintain it on social media (Atwong, 2015). Furthermore, another challenge lies in the necessity for companies to increase their usage of two platforms, LinkedIn and YouTube. These platforms present a broad array of opportunities for brand promotion that are scarcely matched by other social networks. Because these platforms are very effective in delivering the messages and tend to ensure the videos a high-quality (Kim & Ko, 2010). Alternatively, LinkedIn offers new perspectives and, from a technical standpoint, advertising through these two platforms presents a distinct approach to promoting the company's brand image. Moreover, devising a successful media campaign poses a formidable challenge that requires careful management. To address this challenge, enhancing prospects for consumer engagement is imperative, and achievable through more interactive advertising. Given the intensifying competition, it's crucial to develop new strategies. This emphasises the critical role of social media, particularly in marketing strategies, making it essential for businesses to effectively navigate the challenges posed by social media marketing.

While social media marketing undeniably acts as a platform to enhance an organisation's marketing efforts, it is also deeply interconnected with numerous significant challenges that arise when utilising social media tools for advertising. Enhancing brand promotion is a primary goal in this venture. Many challenges are presented to different organisations some of them are, firstly, lack of sufficient time to create more effective content. Time management is one of the crucial challenges which has been faced by marketers (Arrigo 2016). Perhaps because social media fails

to provide enough time for marketers to devise the right content at the right time. Secondly, the other challenge is targeting the right platforms to further increase the organisation's engagement. All the platforms for example X (formerly Twitter), Facebook, and LinkedIn are evidence of serving the audience differently, but they undeniably fail to be in adherence to the purpose of knowing what the audience wants to see. Thirdly, originality and lack of design resources are other major challenges as it is difficult to devise new ideas and to shed light on different perceptions that should be different in terms of the existing ideas for marketing. Because it is easy to repeat the repetitive cycle of ideas without showing any innovation in terms of a certain type of content such as a new blog post announcement, or upcoming promotion of a webinar to keep the social presence in terms of multiple channels it is a real challenge to invent and devise new ideas which are out of the box (Iankova et al., 2019). Fourthly, ensuring the right size in terms of social media graphics is also another vital challenge as it is a difficult task to create visual content that can perfectly fit the terms of all social networks because to create visual content it is necessary to make sure that the size for the graphic is similar to the expected and recommended size.

Social media marketing has become an essential part of digital marketing for businesses of all. Social media platforms are great for building brand awareness, as they offer an opportunity to reach a large audience and engage with them regularly. By consistently posting engaging content and interacting with followers, businesses can increase their visibility and establish themselves as credible and trustworthy brands (Greene et al., 2022). With digital marketing taking place in the modern world, most businesses have been inclined to share their financial performance with the stakeholders, as this allows the company to be transparent, and also attract customers towards it with impressive results. Even though some firms have been manipulating the results to create an evident impact on customers, others adequately share their performance-related details for the stakeholders to assess and evaluate. With all such details present and available to access organisations, critically assessing the level of competition and position of firms becomes possible. Also, the available information on social media platforms about the other brands makes it possible for companies to develop effective strategies and create useful approaches to enhance overall sales in the long run and develop a competitive edge in the market by being unique to their customers (Chitharanjan, 2016).

Social media marketing provides the opportunity to cater to a wider set of audiences as compared to any other marketing type or method. With the implementation of social media marketing, brands can engage with customers in real time. Businesses can use social media to answer customer questions, provide support, and respond to feedback, thereby helping them to build customer loyalty and trust (Jenneboer et al., 2022).

The geographic boundary has been mitigated through the use of social media marketing, and almost every type of customer has become accessible to brands. With a greater reach of businesses toward the audience, the probability of increased sales augments as well (Cruz, 2020). Additionally, social media marketing has been considered the cost-effective way to promote products and services, as it doesn't require a large budget for advertisement spend (Suleiman et al., 2020). Previously, firms were able to capture only a limited number of individuals, and passing information about the brand was very difficult and slow. With the use of social media marketing, companies can pass down information about the brand of its promotional activities within no time, and to a huge audience (Alves et al., 2016). Thus, social media marketing helps businesses improve their search rankings which eventually improves their online visibility and potentially ranks higher in search engine results. Therefore, it is evident that social media marketing has been playing a significant role in the success of businesses.

Another evident benefit of social media marketing is flexibility. In such marketing, businesses have the opportunity to carry out their campaigns when needed and stop them whenever required as well. In traditional marketing, the campaigns often have to complete the whole period of the contract, and issues have been faced in such situations. Brands could develop a technically wrong advertisement that requires immediate changes, and this was too difficult to attain in traditional marketing (Elawadi, 2016). In social media marketing, there are fewer restrictions or limitations about marketing activities being carried out and the changes that are required to be made if needed. The flexibility makes it easier for brands to keep developing new strategies for marketing and enhancing them with time to augment the associated benefits. In social media marketing, organisations can manoeuvre their approach to marketing by the strategies of competitors as well, and this plays a critical role in the success of

campaigns. With immense competition in the industries, the element of flexibility becomes highly useful and imperative by all means (Khan et al., 2019).

The element of communication is one of the most useful benefits related to social media marketing. In social media marketing, companies can interact with customers directly and understand their needs and concerns in a much better way. Two-way communication between brands and customers has played a vital role in relationship building, allowing businesses to better understand the needs and requirements of individuals. Also, through better communication, companies can attain feedback from customers regarding their experiences, and this information is further utilised to make improvements (Shawky et al., 2019). Further, communication through social media platforms provides the opportunity for brands to improve customer loyalty. Firms are keen to retain their customers for a long period, and communication significantly contributes to attaining this objective. Also, effective communication adds immense importance in terms of value creation and improvements in the overall offerings of the firm. The preferences of customers are evolving continuously, and this augments the need for communication even more. Firms have to remain keen and aware of the changing requirements of customers so that they may evolve in accordance and make the necessary amends to grow and succeed in the market (Cruz, 2020). Social media marketing has resulted in a highly effective and useful marketing strategy for businesses. Through social media marketing, businesses can ensure round-the-clock availability for customers, optimising the aspect of accessibility. Brands now offer services to customers 24/7, enabling them to reach out at any hour of the day. The availability of brands through social media marketing has played a significant role in customers and their inclination towards it. (Ashley & Tuten, 2015) Unlike other marketing mediums, customers can interact and present their concerns to firms as soon as they face them. No customer has to wait for hours to contact the firm or make any interaction. Also, as businesses are marketing on the Internet and dealing with customers all around the globe, the brand must be available at all times and days of the week. With such availability, firms can cater to a much wider set of audiences internationally, and keep them satisfied through the offerings (Coleman et al. 2016). Brand awareness is another vital aspect of social media marketing. Social media marketing significantly increases brand awareness, whereby potential customers can be approached and attracted. With augmenting market complexities and intricacies,

increasing brand awareness has become critical for companies as this eventually contributes to the overall survival of the business (Poddar & Agarwal., 2019). A greater number of customers' need to know about the brand, so that they may consider it while making their choices. Also, it is vital to understand that there are different sorts and types of customers with unique preferences. Through social media marketing, firms can reach out to that specific segment of customers and associate with them for long-term relationships. Finding the right audience is critical for companies as this could directly be linked to the success of the firms. With brand awareness, organisations are provided with the opportunity to find that audience and incline toward growth (Ashley & Tuten., 2015). The benefits of social media marketing are extensive and businesses have been able to take varied advantages of this marketing type. While awareness and brand position are imperative benefits, increased website traffic is a major advantage that could result in being highly valuable for any brand. With social media platforms, businesses can direct the traffic from such networks toward the company's website, and this allows the customers to engage in purchase activities with the firm (Godey et al., 2016). Online purchasing has increased over the past years, and most customers today prefer to use digital media platforms to be involved in purchase activities.

Through promoting the brand on social media, the customers become more aware of the promotional offers and related information, eventually leading the customers towards the website of the company to make the actual purchases. Directing customers from social media websites has been identified to be relatively easier, and businesses have been making use of this opportunity in a significant manner. The main goal of businesses is to enhance the purchase ratio of customers who are present on the Internet and use social media networks. For this purpose, companies are indulged in creating effective strategies through which the goal could be attained (Appel et al., 2020).

Increased customer and audience engagement is one of the other benefits associated with social media marketing. Through social media, businesses can keep audiences highly engaged with content and marketing techniques (Ananda et al., 2016). Social media allows businesses to present their offerings attractively, and make use of varied tools to augment the interest of customers. While this could be challenging for businesses as well, many companies have been able to make use of the opportunity and increase their overall sales and revenues (Keegan & Rowley, 2017). One of the



ways through which firms keep customers engaged is by directly communicating with them. Brands have now developed a very close position with the customers by interacting with them easily. Social media platforms provide the opportunity for businesses and consumers to communicate with each other. In comparison to traditional marketing, this particular technique has resulted in being highly beneficial. Customers are now able to share their feedback, provide opinions, and discuss the offerings of the company in a detailed manner. This not only makes the consumers feel more valuable but also keeps them more engaged with the firm and its offerings in the long run (Kasemsap, 2018). Social media has led to changes in the dynamics of marketing on the whole. With the use of social media, companies have been able to develop a close connection with customers and enhance relationships significantly. The aspect of customer service and support has improved and strengthened significantly, as businesses are now able to remain closely connected to the concerns of customers and satisfy their demands and needs in an effective manner (Dahnil et al., 2014). Through social media, customers can promptly engage with the brand and communicate their issues effectively. In turn, the company can promptly address these concerns and focus on enhancing service delivery. As numerous customers voice their concerns on social platforms, it's essential for the firm to employ tools for effective management of this flow. While initially challenging for businesses to address customer queries at such a scale, overall customer service has significantly improved. The online presence has brought customers and businesses closer, creating better relationships. Furthermore, inbound traffic is a benefit of social media marketing because without using effective measures of marketing people will opt the brand options that are similar to the other company's brand hence the marketing tends to inbound the traffic which will limit access to the limits the advertisement of company's brand to its loyal customers (Aluoch, 2017).

Furthermore, social media marketing is paving the way for expanding and spreading business capabilities globally. In numerous aspects, social media marketing also proves effective in boosting search engine rankings. It's been projected that businesses and marketers utilising social media marketing have gained significant opportunities to elevate their positions in search rankings. In a technical sense of the term by doing this the company can inculcate positive outcomes for the business enhancement of their business (Killian & McManus, 2015). Overall, it can be affirmed that by expanding the overall visibility, the company will

increase its conversion opportunities to some extent, as social media marketing is evident to enlarge a positive hollow by bringing about a factor of humanisation (Pham & Gammoh, 2015). When a visitor is impressed, it increases the likelihood of more customers purchasing more products, as the products contain precise details. Furthermore, people are being connected through social media which shows that they will surely discuss each other product details with other family friends, and communities and therefore it is effective in creating conversion (Godey et al., 2016). Social media marketing plays a vital role in advancing brand recognition for products. This is critical, as modern customers prefer purchasing well-known and familiar products. Furthermore, it offers numerous advantages over traditional marketing methods, facilitating faster access to preferred brands. It is also significant in seeking people's attention in terms of the company's particular brands. Moreover, it has been speculated that with the help of social media, the company can maximise the capacities for its brand advertisement and generate more revenues by reaching a larger targeted audience (Auf et al. 2018). It is also helpful for the company in molding the upcoming opportunities that would further incline the customers towards its products. Additionally, it also assists the company in tracking the data without which it would be difficult for the company to evaluate the performance that is bound to the marketing prospects. It also ensures a measurable effect in assessing the performance of social media posts and tracking the content that is performing successfully and appealing to the audience. Social media is also potent for the company to examine the conversation related to different topics by utilising social listening. It will permit a greater understanding of the company to identify the problems that will ultimately lead the company toward addressing the issues more effectively and completely (Xenos et al., 2014). More importantly, social media is evidence of showing potential in terms of being cost-effective which is a significant component for advertising a company's strategy. All this means that every platform allows people to create an account free of cost, as well as the advertisement that has been promoted using the social media platform, is comparatively very inexpensive when compared to the other marketing tactics. Social Media in Digital Marketing is a powerful tool that influences consumer behaviour in the digital world which is discussed in the next section.

## ***2.4 Consumer Behaviour in the Digital World***

As consumers navigate the digital landscape, they exhibit increasingly complex and multifaceted behaviours characterised by heightened expectations for personalised experiences, seamless omnichannel interactions, and instant gratification (Verhoef et al. 2015). The proliferation of smartphones and connected devices has ushered in an era of hyper-connectivity, blurring the boundaries between online and offline channels and creating new opportunities for brands to engage with consumers in real time across multiple touchpoints (Rangaswamy & Van Bruggen, 2005). Moreover, the integration of data analytics, artificial intelligence, and machine learning algorithms has enabled companies to harness vast amounts of consumer data to gain actionable insights into preferences, behaviours, and trends, facilitating targeted marketing campaigns and personalised product recommendations (Chaffey et al. 2019). Thus, the evolution of consumer behaviour in the digital world is characterised by multiple technological innovations, shifting consumer expectations, and the ongoing recalibration of traditional marketing paradigms.

### ***2.4.1 Significance of Understanding Consumer Buying Behaviour***

Consumer buying behaviour (CBB) is important to brands in the contemporary environment. Firms today are highly interested in understanding how consumers behave and respond to the marketing campaigns of companies, and this information is then utilised by businesses to be inculcated in the marketing strategy. Every consumer is different from the other, and their buying patterns differ from each other as well. To understand every customer, each customer experience is critically analysed and assessed by the brand and then used in the future to develop a certain marketing approach (Campos-Castillo & Laestadius, 2020). Businesses segment their target customers and then cater to each segment uniquely based on their particular demands and requirements. The firm identifies each customer segment effectively, and then such groups are focused keenly on developing marketing campaigns. Through assessing consumer buying behaviour, it becomes evident for the firm to identify the inclination of certain customer groups over others, their preferences in choosing social media platforms, the time spent on searching and purchasing, and much more. All such information is critical for brands, as this information is eventually used in establishing marketing plans and procedures (Murthy et al. 2016). Consumer

buying behaviour allows businesses to understand the expectations of customers. Expectations of customers make it possible for businesses to identify what customers require from the brands and what are the exact requirements. Once the requirements of the customers are understood, the developments of brands are inclined towards the same direction to keep them more satisfied and content. The requirements and behaviours of customers are constantly evolving, and this has presented a huge challenge for businesses in the contemporary environment (Jisana, 2014). The issue of evolving preferences has been identified by most brands today and for this reason, they have been indulged in gathering information of customers to know them better. With the use of technology, organisations have been involved in gathering data and identifying their patterns of buying. Big data analytics is considered to be the process of uncovering patterns and trends, which is used to make better decisions by businesses. Firms have been collecting huge amounts of data related to customers and their patterns, so they can identify and assess how they behave and what they require from the brands. Knowing and understanding customers better through the use of big data businesses assists in developing more effective strategies and approaches to marketing and manufacturing (Phusalux et al., 2020).

It is essential for businesses to rightly assess consumer buying behaviour. The preferences and requirements of customers are constantly evolving in the contemporary environment, and firms have been finding it difficult to rightly assess the behaviour of customers. With increased competition, loyalty and sincerity towards brands have mitigated significantly in customers and this has created another major issue for the brands. To rightly understand the changing behaviour of customers, companies must develop a close relationship and link with customers. To develop such relationships, businesses are inclined towards effectively communicating with their audience and interacting with them on an individual level (Murthy et al. 2016). Through the use of social media platforms, companies have been provided with the opportunity to personally interact and communicate with customers to better identify and understand their changing needs and requirements. Through the existence and utilisation of social media platforms, customers can directly reach out to the organisation to express their inquiries and issues. The companies, on the other hand, can understand these issues and concerns to act accordingly and keep the individuals satisfied. Assessing consumer buying behaviour

has become critical for firms today, and social media provides the opportunity to do so. Businesses on a large scale have successfully been able to identify the changing trends of customers and respond in accordance to keep their content (Ramya & Ali, 2016). Consumer buying behaviour has become highly essential for businesses also because of the differences and disparities among varied customers. Businesses today are dealing with the dynamics of different groups of customers, and each group is different from the other. Through social media marketing, firms have now been provided with the opportunity for companies to cater to a much wider set of audiences, and while this has been a major opportunity for the firm, it has also brought in the concern related to managing and meeting the unique demands of each consumer. Consumers today are more demanding than ever, and one of the reasons for this is augmented customer knowledge (Palalic et al., 2020). Due to the presence of the Internet, every customer today has become increasingly aware of the market, and this has eventually contributed to difficulties for businesses to manage such individuals.

To identify the changing trends, preferences, and requirements of customers, firms must develop a close relationship with the customers and remain connected with them to better understand the changes taking place in their behaviour. The increasing competition has augmented the need to assess consumer behaviour also because individuals tend to incline more towards brands that offer them more value and attract them better. The decreasing loyalty in customers has enhanced the need to remain aware of their behaviour (Palalic et al., 2020; Zhang et al., 2018). Through rightly assessing consumer behaviour, businesses today can amend their marketing activities in accordance with their assessments. Complexities in the environment are increasing, and firms mostly remain conscious of the probable issues that could take place due to this. Consumer behaviour not only allows firms to better understand what approach they need to develop but also provides them with the opportunity to lead ahead of their competitors. Every brand in the industry is focused on establishing an approach through which they could lead the market, and rightly evaluating consumer behaviour provides such an opportunity (Wang, 2019).

With the use of social media platforms, firms have developed teams that are only focused on maintaining good relationships with customers and retaining their interest in the brand. Even though this approach has been costly for organisations, it has become a need for firms to survive in such intricacies. To assess the buying behaviour

of customers, firms today are also making use of technology to gather the required data. While communicating and developing a close relationship with customers is one way of identifying their behaviour, data analysis is another effective technique that provides the results (Kavitha, 2017).

#### *2.4.2 CBB in Varied Industries*

Businesses all around the world are functioning in varied industries, and this changes the dynamics and use of big data. For a manufacturing company, for instance, the firm may use big data to make changes in the products they produce and then present it to customers for increased demand. Consequently, a service organisation could use big data to understand the patterns of customer purchases and make changes in marketing approaches to enhance revenues. Every company could use big data differently, and identifying consumer buying behaviour through its usage may be beneficial. While the uses and utilisation of big data vary among firms, its importance has been considered to be high and a huge inclination of organisations has been identified towards it (Chandel et al. 2016). Consumer buying behaviour has become even more critical for firms today due to the increasing amount of competition between companies. Due to the competition, firms are keen on understanding customers better and developing better relationships with them to augment their revenues and overall customer attraction. The process of understanding consumers better has become daunting in the contemporary environment, and while difficulties exist it is vital to utilise resources in the process (Stankevich, 2017). In essence, studying consumer behaviour helps to understand the current preferences and makes a better relationship with the consumers, which makes a positive impact on sales revenue.

#### *2.4.3 CBB and 'Big Data'*

Many firms today are making use of big data to make imperative decisions. Firms gather data through the use of digital platforms, and this data is assessed to specify trends and internet usage patterns of customers. While there have been various questions, concerns, and arguments on the ethical value of such activities, organisations are still using the collected data to make imperative decisions. The data provides adequate information to businesses about how customers are using social media platforms, and this information is utilised to make accurate marketing decisions.

Once the preferences of customers are recognised, offering them products and services of more relevance becomes easier for brands, and this eventually contributes to greater success for companies (Palalic et al., 2020). Consumer buying behaviour for businesses is highly relevant and imperative in various regards. In comparison to previous years, companies today are in a greater need to assess the buying behaviour of customers. One of the most evident reasons for this has been associated with the growing competition on a global level. Through the use of social media marketing and other digital platforms, businesses have been provided with the opportunity to expand their operations and give competition to firms that are outside their local market (Ringim & Reni, 2019). Small and medium-sized businesses have also expanded and increased their work activities and this has made the whole work environment increasingly complex and competitive. Earlier, businesses with huge capitals had the opportunity to physically grow in size and expand their physical presence in other countries. With the use of electronic commerce, firms today do not have to establish their physical presence in other countries and they can just augment and reach out to other countries through the use of the Internet. With more competition, more products and services have been introduced in the market and this has developed a difficult condition for the brand (Pham, 2021).

#### *2.4.4 CBB and Market Void*

Competing with each other has made it daunting for businesses to survive and sustain their presence in the industry. In such complex situations. Identifying and understanding the buying behaviour of customers has become critical. By understanding customers and their behaviour, the businesses can develop a closer connection and relationship with them and this eventually provides them with the opportunity to retain the customers and attract them to the offerings (Chauhan et al., 2021). Consumer buying behaviour is essential for companies in varied regards, and one of them could also be identified to be filling the gap in the market. With better information and insights about the consumers, businesses can identify the products that are lacking in the market, along with assessing the areas that could be intruded on and worked upon. There is always a gap in the market that has to be found by organisations, and this allows them to have a significant rise in revenues and sales. The gap in the market is that area of consumer needs that has not been catered fully,

and this has a big opportunity for organisations to optimise upon. Firms today are constantly looking for such areas so they can intervene and establish a unique position in the market (Rungsrisawat et al., 2019). Consumer buying behaviour is highly critical also because the firm is provided with the opportunity to look for markets where there are potential customers. With globalisation taking place, firms are concerned about finding areas that could be tapped into to find potential customers. Businesses today are on a hunt to identify markets where there is adequate demand for their products, so their offerings can be made available in those areas as well. Consumer buying behaviour becomes even more vital to assess, as this allows for locating potential market areas to augment sales and profits (Thakker, 2021).

As competition is increasing on a global level, companies are interested in finding markets where there is less competition and where the offerings of the brand are more acceptable. Many international brands have found Asian markets to be highly potential markets in recent years, and this has opened up new opportunities and dynamics for many multinational brands that did not earlier consider entering such market areas. With changing consumer preferences and trends, along with globalisation, individuals have had changed approaches and behaviour towards the products and services of brands. This change in trend has made it feasible for organisations to tap into new markets and find adequate new opportunities (Testa et al., 2020). Consumer purchasing behaviour enables businesses to perceive individual preferences and available opportunities, while also allowing companies to evaluate outdated offerings that should not be provided to consumers. Many global organisations operate with limited capital, which necessitates careful management of stocks and inventories. Small and medium-sized enterprises often need to sell existing stock to generate revenue for acquiring new products. If small businesses retain obsolete products, they risk tying up their capital. To ensure continuous sales and avoid stockpiling unwanted products, organisations prioritise thorough market research to understand valuable customer behaviours. Companies employ various techniques, including widespread adoption of social media, to meet these objectives. While different methods could be used by businesses to attain the information, evaluating obsolete products and services is critical for firms to sustain in the industry, and further experience growth (Ringim & Reni, 2019).



#### *2.4.5 Marketing Models that Cater for CBB*

Understanding consumer buying behaviour is crucial for businesses, as it provides insights into individuals' decision-making processes. This information gathering and analysis are invaluable for organisations, as it enables tailored marketing strategies and the presentation of offerings likely to resonate in the market. Furthermore, comprehending the decision-making process helps firms determine the most effective social media marketing methods, tools, and techniques for specific customers. It could be assessed by businesses that a certain customer segment gets more attracted to and engaged with the offerings through a specific platform and technique, and the other gets more engaged through another platform or method (Qazzafi, 2019). Each customer demonstrates unique characteristics, approaching the brand in their own distinct way. Brands must recognise these individual approaches and adjust accordingly to maximise customer satisfaction. To properly analyse the decision-making process, businesses may prioritise establishing effective communication with customers, gaining a better understanding of their needs to making more informed decisions. The better a brand can develop a relationship with its customers, the better it may understand the individuals, allowing it to make effective decisions with fewer errors and risks (Hosseini et al., 2020). There are different types of customers that a brand is dealing with at one single time. Each customer that comes from a unique ethnic group or background could have a varied behaviour and approach towards purchasing and interaction with the companies. The preferences of individuals from such ethnic groups may also be unique, and this puts up a huge challenge for businesses in the contemporary environment (Nazida, 2019). Individuals coming from various ethnic groups could have requirements that may become daunting for the brands to meet, and this could cause dissatisfaction among individuals.

To better understand and serve these customers, businesses need to establish a good relationship with them and identify their buying behaviour as well. Even though assessing buying behaviour in such a case may be more daunting, the significance of carrying out the critical evaluation is considerably high. To serve dynamic customers with unique needs, organisations have to understand their buying behaviours. Not only this, understanding buying behaviour is equally essential for the companies as well, as they may not be able to ensure adequate sales if they do not rightly understand such requirements. Also, developing a competitive edge through this becomes easier,

as a better understanding of the consumers could provide improved growth opportunities for companies (Wansi, 2020). Many organisations today have developed a business and marketing model in which they first understand and evaluate the requirements and demands of customers, and then indulge in the production of such products to ensure maximum customer satisfaction. The approach of surveying the market before the production of products has been identified to be highly effective in certain cases, as this also protects the resources of the organisation and allows it to incline towards lean manufacturing. Through lean manufacturing, the wastage of resources is the least, and the company can produce goods with the least costs involved in the process (Figueiredo & Eiriz, 2020). Another major importance of understanding consumer behaviour is that it allows organisations to identify the future demands and needs of customers.

Through identifying future requirements and needs, firms are also provided with the opportunity to remain prepared for the time to come and develop more relevant products and services that could be highly acceptable in the market. With effective trend analysis, firms can rightly analyse what sort of products and services will be required by the customers in the future, and how the business could remain prepared to optimise the opportunity in the long run. This may involve evaluating the resources, abilities, capacity, skills, and more of such aspects of the firm, and identifying the areas to improve and enhance through which the needs of customers would be better met (Priya, 2019). The importance of consumer behaviour in business proposes ample benefits that by evaluating the behaviour of consumers a company can save resources from wasting as it allocates the products before producing that would not have been sold in the market otherwise. For example, if a company inspects the products beforehand that have the minimum chance of being sold in the summer the product will not be produced hence it would be ultimately saved from being wasted (Raut and Patil, 2016). Furthermore, the behaviour of the consumer provides the company with the possibility to mould the impending production strategy that will save a massive amount of its marketing costs from being wasted (Lam et al., 2016).

Additionally, it is also throwing light on the abilities of the company to stay relevant as the world is changing hastily it has become a challenge for the companies to ensure relevancy to attain the target of the present market. Today's consumers are showing diverse choices and greater opportunities that is indicting that their choices and reviews can be easily influenced when they have been provided with the best products

and services. Identifying and assessing consumer behaviour has become critical for businesses today. The perception, requirements, and demands of customers have been evolving so rapidly in the contemporary environment, that businesses often find it difficult to keep up with the changes and inculcate them in accordance. To sustain in the complex working environment, it is imperative that firms rightly identify and evaluate the changing behaviour of customers and develop strategies in accordance that could provide positive results (Sharmila & Kavitha, 2018). Consumer buying behaviour has also been impacted due to the development of social media networking sites. With too much information available to customers, it becomes daunting for individuals to make a decision and choose what they desire. With limited options and choices available earlier, it was easier for customers to select and retain their choices for a longer period, but now the process has become too intricate. With social media marketing and its increasing usage, customers have been provided access to the firm and its related information with all the records and performance. Also, reviews and feedback regarding the performance of companies and their overall rating by customers make a significant impact on how customers perceive a particular brand. (Cheung et al., 2020).

#### *2.4.6 Social Media Marketing and CBB*

Social media marketing is one of the most effective means of marketing for businesses today. Digital platforms are utilised by companies today to reach out to a larger set of customers and develop good relationships with them in the long run. There have been numerous speculations about social media marketing in the past, but its prevalence has proved to businesses how the approach could be utilised to augment overall revenues and profits. Through the use of social media marketing, businesses today have been focused on effective communication with all customers. Businesses have the opportunity to interact with customers on an individual level and listen to their concerns critically (Aragoncillo & Orus, 2018). Better communication has made it more feasible for firms to make customers feel valued, and this enhances their approach towards improved relationship building. If customers feel that their concerns are being heard, and companies are acting upon them for a better experience, they tend to remain loyal towards the brands. In traditional marketing, firms did not have the opportunity to connect with customers on an individual level and this worked against

the brand in terms of attracting them towards the offerings. Today, with the use of social media, the dynamics have completely changed and businesses have been using their resources to improve relationship building (Ionas, 2020).

Furthermore, social media marketing has been impacting the buying behaviour of customers. Through the use of such digital platforms, firms have been able to make customers more involved in the process of marketing, and this has augmented their overall interest level towards firms. With the use of social media marketing, firms have been able to mitigate geographical boundaries and reach out to diverse customers all around the world. The overall customer base for brands has been augmented through the use of social media marketing, and firms today target a much larger set of customer segments in comparison to traditional marketing (Hajli, 2014). Social media marketing is also different from the other types of digital marketing methods, as numerous brands show their existence over the same platforms, and simultaneously allow customers to communicate with them regarding every matter. The aspect of transparency has also worked in social media marketing for brands, as companies today are pretty open towards their customers, and individuals mostly have ample insights regarding what the brand is doing and how they plan to conduct activities in the future. Customers have not only been able to interact with organisations, but they also have had the opportunity to raise their voices regarding any inefficiencies or lack of commitment taking place (Balakrishnan et al., 2014).

#### *2.4.6.1 Establishing Consumer Relationships Through Social Media Marketing*

Through the use of social media marketing, companies have been interested in ensuring that the customers get closely connected, associated, and linked with the brands. Once the customers are attached to the brands their behaviour towards the marketing of companies and their products changes (Aragoncillo & Orus, 2018). The attachment theory effectively explains this concept and idea. Attachment theory could be regarded as a psychological and evolutionary theory related to relationships between humans. The theory defines that the attachment of customers to the brand makes them a part of the company, and their emotions get connected to the organisation (Fonagy, 2018). With such emotions linked with the brand, customers consider it their responsibility to remain loyal to the brand and ensure the stability of the brand through ample purchases and spending. Organisations have been

optimising this approach to keep customers associated with the brand and its offerings, to survive and grow in the market. The more customers remain connected to the brand, the higher the chances that the firm will be able to ensure stable sales. Companies that are unable to utilise and work upon the aspect of attachment often fail to sustain ample sales, and this eventually becomes a negative element for them in terms of survival (Dahl, 2021). Customer awareness has significantly augmented through the use of social media marketing. Brands have been providing ample information about their products and services, and with numerous brands available on such platforms, customers gain significant information about companies and their offerings.

Other than visual advertising over social media platforms, brands also develop their pages on social media sites to interact with customers and allow them to present their queries and concerns. Word of mouth over digital platforms (eWOM) plays an imperative role in social media marketing for companies (Aragoncillo & Orus, 2018). Electronic word of mouth is a kind of marketing that is carried out by customers when they talk about the products and services offered by a brand over the Internet. Through eWOM, other potential customers get to know about the brand and its offerings, along with gaining insights regarding how well the products and services have been performing. On social media platforms, eWOM plays a vital role, as this is the method through which brands earn value or are even disregarded. Customers have formed varied communities over social networking sites, and these communities talk about different experiences with brands, about benefits and drawbacks of brands, and much other related information (Alalwan et al., 2017). If customers have had a good experience with a brand, they would talk about it, and this creates a positive impact on other potential customers. Similarly, if the experience has been poor, they would talk about it in the same way. Whatever the experience of the products and services are, customers talk about it on social media sites and this eventually adds to the image and position of the brand in the market. Through eWOM marketing, the behaviour and perception of customers are significantly impacted, as they tend to believe more in what the customers are saying about a product or service (Stephen, 2016). On social media, eWOM is a common practice, and businesses are affected by it in a significant manner. While companies have attempted to induce artificial eWOM marketing as well, it generally takes place naturally through customers and their experiences, having a major impact on the reputation and image of the brand. Today,

it has become imperative and critical for companies to develop a good brand position in the market due to increased competition and complexity. In this regard, eWOM marketing assists businesses in attaining this objective and eventually contributes to improved sales and revenue generation in the long run (Hajli, 2014).

#### *2.4.6.2 Brand Loyalty and Social Media Marketing*

Brand loyalty is one of the ways through which social media marketing could create an impact on customers. Through easy access of customers to the brand, effective communication, improved services, ample available information, and more such factors, social media marketing influences customers to remain more loyal to the brand. With too many options available to customers in the competitive markets, it has become daunting for brands to retain customers for a long period (Alalwan et al., 2017). Through social media marketing, the relationship development between the brand and customers is improved and this allows firms to keep customers more loyal. Social media further provides huge information daily to customers, and there is almost an overload of information for individuals when they are using social media websites. With too many brands and their presence on social media, customers are constantly getting information and all of such information affects the customers in some way or the other. Every brand is in an attempt to draw the attention of customers, and for this reason, they keep indulging in promotional activities. As there are numerous sellers on the same platform, the information given out to customers is significantly high as well (Kumar et al., 2016).

Social media marketing could have varied impacts on consumer behaviour. Through social media channels, marketers try to attract all such potential individuals who are already consuming products and services of other brands. To grow in the market, companies need to attract as many customers as possible, as this eventually contributes to increased profitability and sales for the company. Every organisation is in an attempt to develop a competitive edge over others, and this augments work intricacies even more. Once businesses attain the attention of customers on social media platforms, they are then led toward the website of the company where they may purchase the required products and services (Saboo et al., 2016). Attracting customers is one thing, and then converting the leads into actual purchases could be

different. The marketers aim to make sure that all the targeted customers are eventually involved in purchases and could benefit the organisation through improved sales. Marketers today have been making full use of social media marketing and this has allowed them to positively impact customers on a broad scale. With a change in marketing dynamics, brands are further keen to understand how the usage of social media marketing could be optimised (Ionas, 2020). In essence, social media has improved communication with customers, reduced the gaps between companies and customers, allowed companies to target a large group of audience, and has affected buyer purchasing behaviour through eWOM.

#### *2.4.6.3 Influence of Social Media Marketing on CBB*

Social media marketing greatly influences consumer purchasing behaviour. Through its utilisation, businesses have enhanced their relationships with consumers and constructed closer connections with individuals. The more businesses understand their customers, the greater the likelihood of developing relevant marketing strategies that fulfill consumer satisfaction. Social media marketing has also enabled companies to better understand the needs and requirements of customers that are constantly evolving and changing (Voramontri & Klieb, 2019). In today's landscape, individuals present diverse demands and needs, posing a significant challenge for companies to comprehend these evolving behaviours. Utilising this marketing approach facilitates the understanding and identification of consumer trends. Acquiring such customer insights adds substantial value to the brand and its strategic growth. With precise and abundant offerings, organisations can efficiently allocate resources and provide products with high demand and value in the market. Additionally, social media marketing enables businesses to access international markets and cater to a vast customer base. Brand awareness experiences a significant boost through social media marketing, reaching customers from various categories through an integrated platform. With more people becoming aware of the brand, a greater inclination towards the offerings of the business also becomes possible (Putter, 2017). Today, social media serves as a platform where companies promote their products while concurrently developing relationships with customers. This platform not only enables the promotion of offerings but also adopts deeper connections with customers, encouraging long-term brand loyalty. Retaining customers is now a greater challenge

than attracting them in the first place. Even though businesses can attract customers through promotional activities, keeping them loyal to the brand is the real challenge (Shareef et al., 2019). In today's saturated market, customers frequently switch between brands, posing a growing challenge for firms. Businesses are investing in training their employees to improve public relations and embrace long-term customer loyalty. The significance of social media has surged in recent years, with customers increasingly favouring its platforms. A large number of customers spend their free time on social media, and this increases the value and importance of this marketing medium significantly (Soloman et al., 2017).

Firms need to assess and influence consumer buying behaviour to some extent. The need to influence their behaviour is due to the outcomes associated with the activity, as a positive influence could contribute to increased sales and revenue generation for the brand. Organisations are keen on using social media platforms as this could enable them to build a stronger presence of the company in the international market, and this eventually makes it easier for firms to make an impact on the consumers as well. With the use of social media marketing, the behaviour of consumers is influenced in the sense that they consider the brand more connected and associated with them (Voramontri & Klieb, 2019). The recognition of the brand is the most essential element that is positively impacted through the use of social media. A greater number of customers can identify and associate with the brand and this puts the organisations in a better overall position to compete with other companies and develop an overall stronger position. While there is an immense opportunity for firms in this regard, adequate promotional tools and techniques must be used to conduct the activities (Kumar et al., 2016). One of the ways businesses can impact the buying behaviour of customers through social media is by providing exceptional service. Social media allows companies to communicate effectively with customers and understand their concerns and queries. With a better relationship established and effective communication taking place, improved services are provided to the customers in terms of responding to their feedback, inculcating the suggested changes, and meeting their evolving requirements (Erkan & Evans, 2016). Communication has played a vital role in impacting consumer behaviour, and brands globally are making use of it to gain the interest and attention of individuals on a broader level. When such improved services are provided to the customers, they not only remain satisfied but also tend to remain more loyal to the brands. Loyalty is considered an essential element in the modern



environment, as this makes certain companies lead ahead of others and earn reasonable profits in comparison as well. Companies today are inclined towards utilising their resources in the most optimum manner and using their abilities to attain their performance objectives. Retaining customers is also one of these objectives, and influencing the behaviour of customers is a critical part of it (Dessart et al., 2015). With social media marketing, firms can influence the purchasing ratio of customers by generating leads and converting customers towards real purchases. In other types of marketing, while customers get engaged with the brand, they do not necessarily make purchases and this adversely affects the sales and revenue generation of the brand. For marketing to be successful, the campaigns must result in eventually convince the customers to buy products and come back to the brand for repurchase as well (Erkan & Evans, 2016).

Numerous factors contribute towards this, and relationship building is one of such critical elements that results in being crucial for repurchase activities. Repurchasing is when consumers come back to the same brand to buy the required products, and through improving the relationship, firms are able to make sure that these individuals are persuaded to remain intact with the offerings and services. A huge number of brands are keen on making use of social media platforms to keep customers engaged and achieve high retention periods. In influencing consumer behaviour, human capital also plays a vital role and this affects the overall efficiency attained by the company (Kumar et al., 2016). Social media is facilitating the company to permit a greater understanding to know the likes and dislikes of the customers. It also aware different companies to understand the key activities that are required to be attained by the company in order to increase the market's objectives. There are several negative aspects of social media concerning the consumer's behaviour that are, many social websites have not yet been protected and therefore anyone can misuse the information which has been provided on these platforms example in this realm is Facebook where a picture is easily saved and hence create more problems for the consumers. Moreover, when a wrong advertisement has been created on social media compels the company to deal with many problems. Another major impact that is produced by social media is that consumers do not share their ideas and give feedback to the companies timely which impedes the company's progress to know about their performance and the desired preferences of the customers. As per the studies of Shavitt and Barnes, (2020) an individual's purchase decision also depends upon their

cultural values and beliefs. Thus, it can be stated that culture has a huge influence which is significantly affecting an individual's social media consumption and buying power. Though, the next section is presented to develop detailed insights into how cultural differences affect social media usage patterns. Consumer Behaviour in the Digital World is influenced by cultural differences, which in turn impact social media usage patterns as discussed in the next section.

The scenario of media consumption contemporary to the Australia especially Queensland is slightly different from what is seen globally but the cultural influences are very much present. Australians widely interact with a variety of media with social, traditional and new digital media and apps and smartphone is a key in this process. The status of social networks like Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok corresponds to the global trends, but the specific Australian cultural imprint play a crucial role in content consumption. For example, while the Sydney-born consumers have a wide to international media, they largely prefer media that reflects their cultural realities, practices, and challenges as compared to the other global kingdoms. Thus, Australia's media consumption may be specifically oriented on community activities, outdoor activities, and more locally-oriented themes of news, possibly contributing to the strengthening of the people's local identity. It is this localized usage that the social media networks, which involves the creation of localized community focused social media groups and pages through which disseminates community and local news hence boosting social support. Furthermore, other demographic characteristics affect the media usage, whereby the young people prefer the digital and social media than the socio-economic class, where the older generation prefers the traditional media. It is possible, and crucial, to further understand and develop these dynamics to benefit marketers and producers of media restricting their targeting to Australians. In understanding Australian's engagement with media in relation to the rest of Australia and the world, it is thereby possible to explain the principles that underpin cultural impact on media consumption. First of all, this understanding diversifies the theoretical knowledge of the field improving the academic discussion, and secondly, it helps media practitioners in marketing and strategy creation focusing on the local context within the new digital environment.

## ***2.5 Cultural differences that impact social media usage patterns***

### ***2.5.1 Cultural Influence on Individual Preferences***

Cultural differences play a significant role in shaping the specific ways different groups utilise social media platforms. Cultural differences may affect the social media usage patterns of individuals. Usability, ease of use, and utilisation are certain imperative factors that could be taken into consideration when assessing cultural differences among individuals (Sharma & Verma, 2018; KUMAR, 2024). People from different cultures could have varied inclinations toward social media platforms in terms of their user interface and overall usage. People may tend to prefer one social media platform over the other due to its simple usage and reduced complications. Language has played a vital role in changing the preferences of social media platforms. Some applications cannot be translated into many languages thus popular only in specific areas. Social media channels like Instagram and Pinterest only come in English thus they are more common in areas where most people speak and understand English. While this could be one case, individuals from a certain culture may prefer using more complex social media networks, and their choices may be completely different (Goodyear et al., 2019). People from a variety of cultures have had some privacy concerns regarding the usage of social media, and this may be taken as a major issue by many. Safety and privacy have become evident areas of concern regarding social media usage and this could eventually impact how people use the medium for various purposes (Lim et al., 2017). Cultural differences have a substantial impact on the choice of social media usage platforms, shaping how individuals engage with these platforms based on their cultural norms and values. It has been understood that every society and culture is different from the other, and people have their preferences, requirements, and characteristics. Cultural differences lead to developing varied changes between people of different societies, and these exist in terms of language, priorities, preferences, likes and dislikes, access to technology, trends, and much more.

People from different cultures could have varied preferences in terms of using technology, selecting products, preferring a particular social media platform, and much more. Individuals from a particular culture may have a greater inclination towards the use of a specific social media network (such as Facebook). This particular inclination could make a significant difference for the brands in terms of developing and

implementing their social media marketing strategies (Ngai et al., 2015). While targeting customers from a specific culture, the brand may prefer using the specific social media platform that has the most customer usage and preferences to promote its offerings. Businesses need to understand the cultural difference, as this would allow them to develop better strategies and techniques for marketing on the whole. Once it has been understood by the brand how individuals from different cultures behave and prefer, establishing marketing techniques may become a lot easier and more effective (Dahnili et al., 2014). Cultural differences may have an impact on the way individuals use social media platforms. Culture may have an impact on the way individuals prefer certain social media platforms over others. One of the reasons for this could be the background and association of the owner of the social media platform. Also, certain acceptable and non-acceptable aspects may eventually lead to having an impact on the choice and selection of individuals. The elements of trust and perceived risk may also be associated with the cultures and their decisions regarding the use of social media networks (Lim et al. 2017). Individuals and groups belonging to a certain culture may have beliefs and set thoughts regarding trust in certain social media platform owners. Due to the aspect of trust, the decision of customers may significantly be affected in terms of deciding and choosing the media for seeking information about products and making purchases. The pre-set beliefs in cultures are difficult to change and these have a long-lasting impact on people and how they make decisions in their life. In the same manner, these beliefs could majorly affect the choices of individuals regarding the selection of social media networks (Miller et al. 2016).

### *2.5.2 Social media usage led by cultural variation and power distribution*

Culture is an imperative factor and aspect for individuals, leading to significant outcomes and impacts. Certain cultures are high masculinity, and others are high femininity, both of which are completely different from each other. These two different cultures could drive the usage of individuals towards social media in a unique manner. In certain cultures, men have more authority and power, and their usage of social media is much higher as compared to women. On the other hand, women have more power and authority in certain cultures and this affects the way they use social media and make necessary decisions regarding the purchase of information gathering (Kapoor et al., 2018). Cultures significantly affect the power distribution in societies,

and this changes the patterns and behaviour of people in society. The usage of social media could also be equally impacted by this, along with the purchase decisions and priorities of men and women. Also, individuals from certain cultures may use social media to seek information regarding a specific aspect, and others may use it for a completely different aspect. For instance, individuals from one culture may be inclined to use social media platforms to seek health information, and others may use it to gather entertainment information (Fuchs, 2015; Kapoor et al., 2018).

Cultural differences affect the social media usage patterns of individuals. Usability, ease of use, and utilisation are certain imperative factors that could be taken into consideration when assessing cultural differences among individuals. People from different cultures could have a varied inclination towards social media platforms in terms of their user interface and overall usage. People may tend to prefer one social media platform over the other due to its easy usage and fewer complications. While this could be one case, individuals from a certain culture may prefer using more complex social media networks, and their choice may completely be different (Goodyear et al. 2019). Individuals from diverse cultures possess varying perspectives and methods regarding social media usage, which can greatly influence their overall preferences. Despite businesses implementing highly effective social media marketing strategies on a specific platform, it may prove useless for customers who are not inclined to use that platform. Although customer choices evolve with increased awareness and exposure, convincing individuals and influencing their inclination toward social media usage remains challenging for companies. While some individuals demonstrate a gradual pattern in their choices, many may not confine their selections solely to rational reasons.

### *2.5.3 Social Media Usage led by Diversity and Consumer Choices*

Additionally, a significant diversity in cultural perspectives leads to considerable variation in consumer choices, imposing significant constraints on the adoption of different patterns. The widespread availability of social media networks has drastically altered the landscape, allowing for the utilisation of multiple platforms. However, platform preferences vary among customers from different cultural backgrounds. Some of them are showing concern for their privacy whereas others do not mind sharing their personal information on social media to shop from a particular

place (Abdelsalam et al., 2013). Furthermore, ethical culture plays a substantial role in encouraging activities related to social media users. Therefore, culture is considered one of the efficacious preconditions for the sharing of substantial information on social media (Juris, 2016). Culture operates on dual fronts: it serves as an essential factor in both promoting the spreading of information and applying moderate influence on other significant factors. Different cultures are being created on social media platforms when two persons belonging to different cultures interact with each other on a single platform (Chi, 2011). On the whole, this analysis demonstrates that people from diverse backgrounds are using social media, but they have different perceptions and beliefs. Social media is a platform where personal information can be disclosed without involving any restrictions (Kuhn et al., 2014). Hence it can be said that the privacy concerns shown by the people who belong to different cultures are different from one another (Fuchs, 2015).

#### *2.5.4 Social Media Usage and Consumer Privacy Concerns*

People from varied cultures have had privacy concerns regarding the usage of social media, and this results in being a major issue for many. Safety and privacy have become evident areas of concern regarding social media usage and this eventually impacts people on how they use the medium for various purposes (Lim et al. 2016). Individuals belonging to different cultures and backgrounds have varied perceptions and views about privacy concerns, and this restricts them from using social media for certain purposes. For instance, people from a specific background may not be willing to give their personal or financial details on social media platforms to purchase due to security concerns. Having said this, some people only tend to use social media to seek information and gather data about the brands. They avoid making purchases on such mediums, and this eventually has an evident impact on usage patterns. On the other hand, people from a certain background or culture may have a greater inclination towards the use of social media, and they could be highly inclined towards giving away their information on the websites to make purchases and shop. The difference in the approach of such people could significantly affect how social media is used by people, and to what extent (Kapoor et al. 2018).

Certain people could use social media to only gather information, others may use it to make purchases, and the rest may even use the platforms to pass their time without any such intentions. It has been identified that a huge number of individuals use social media platforms for entertainment purposes only and attracting and engaging such an audience could be a challenge for businesses. While this could be a daunting task to attract such customers, it also presents a huge opportunity for the brands to engage such people as they do not have pre-set objectives or inclination toward specific products or companies (Kelly et al., 2018). It is essential to ensure brands that the target audience is adequately engaged with the offerings of the company, so they may indulge in what is being offered by the brand. Individuals from different cultures could have beliefs, priorities, biases, and inclinations towards specific brands, and this remains a big issue for organisations in the contemporary environment. Even though there is less that a company can do to influence such choices, firms are keen on developing strategies and approaches through which adequate results could be attained (Zafrani et al., 2014).

#### *2.5.5 Cultural Difference in Light of Cultural Theories*

Cultural differences arise due to changes in language, vocabulary, human behaviour, perspectives, and human emotions. Social media is mostly used for chatting and socialising and thus it is most common in countries in which people like to make connections with others. In Western countries people like to engage more in online events and purchases as they have busy working schedules, thus, they are using many social media platforms for shopping and attending events. (Sawyer & Chen, 2012). The idea that people learn similar values and standards through the consumption of identical things, which was once widely held, has been out of date at least since the 1990s since culture is a complex system. As a result, to be effective, marketing for the same products must adapt to the assessment and communication methods in each region. The anthropologist Edward T. Hall's cultural theory, which distinguishes between so-called high- and low-context cultures, is useful in putting these myriad distinctions in a comprehensible framework.

This distinction has special significance when Western and Asian hegemonical forces are contrasted. Marketing communication is typically more implicit, indirect, and

abstract in high-context societies like China, Japan, and Korea. Information is handled more explicitly and immediately in low-context countries like the US and Ireland. The music is made by the context, as the idea goes (Bianchi, 2021). Other facets of the Hall model can be used to develop ideal-typical, culturally specific communication quirks that affect social media in particular and specifically. These unique traits thus enable recommendations for the social media advertising of foreign businesses in their specific marketplaces. For instance, because material as such is prioritised in low-context countries, it is fair to use more unique content kinds there. (Goodrich & De Mooij, 2014). On the contrary, a wide range of websites with multiple animations and comparable components are popular in Asian nations. Furthermore, compared to Western nations, communication is viewed more as an artistic medium here. Therefore, content in high-context countries should be more enjoyable and less educational than in low-context countries. The same goes for photo captions, which in China or Japan should be longer than in the US or Germany. Videos can also be culturally specific in terms of entertainment, as the creation of compelling, impressive, and in-depth communication is a goal in high-context nations. Hence, it has been reviewed that users from different ethnic backgrounds show different preferences in terms of social media usage patterns. Therefore, the following section tends to develop a comprehensive review of the literature on how ethnic groups create variances in social media usage patterns.

Culture has a central role in determining the utilization of social media in the interconnecting world we live in today. While interaction of different cultures through globalization provide peoples, social networks have become important communicational places that allow people to reveal their ethnical selves. Every culture has its strengths in the form of language, norms, and so on, which defines how users of these platforms are likely to be. For instance, some of the cultures may rely more on the use of graphics longer copy tends to be preferred on the Instagram, TikTok, whereas the short copy is often longer preferred on the Twitter and Facebook platforms. Also, culture plays a major role in privacy, communication, and information technologies to confront users' behavior. He also pointed out that in many cultures values connected with the communal sharing and the collective identity can be activate and thus stimulate user to produce the content in cooperation. On the other hand, collectivistic cultures might lead to more homogenized and generic profiles, while the individualistic cultures could lead to unique, unique and tailor-made profiles. This



Diversity underlines that marketers as well as the developers of social media have to design culturally sensitive appealing strategies. When the cultural differences are accepted and valued, the social media can become a valuable platform for promoting the representation of the individuals, helping to increase the users' satisfaction with the services offered by such communities. While helping to build pertinent marketing strategies for SNS, comprehending the complex relationships between cultural differences and the usages of social media contributes to enhancing the general online experience. All in all, it can be mentioned that the relationship of culture with social media is quite useful in the development of different platforms for different ethnic groups, as well as more understanding and acceptance of other cultures in a diverse society.

## ***2.6 Usage Patterns of Social Media among Ethnic Groups***

Understanding how people use social media involves considering various aspects of their online habits. This includes how often they use it, how much time they spend on it, and why they use it (Kuss & Griffiths, 2011). For instance, some individuals might use social media for entertainment, while others might use it primarily to stay connected with friends and family (Ryan & Xenos, 2011). Additionally, certain platforms cater to specific purposes, such as LinkedIn for professional networking or X (formerly Twitter) for keeping up with news and current events. The choice of platform also plays a significant role in shaping social media usage patterns. Different platforms offer distinct features and cater to diverse user preferences (Hinton & Hjorth, 2013). For example, platforms like Instagram focus on visual content, making them popular among users who enjoy sharing and viewing photos and videos. On the other hand, platforms like Facebook offer a wide range of features, including messaging, groups, and event planning, catering to various social needs and interests. Furthermore, how individuals interact with content on social media provides insight into their social habits and interests (Hinton & Hjorth, 2013). Some users may passively scroll through their feeds, while others actively engage by commenting, liking, or sharing content. Understanding these dimensions of social media usage frequency, platform choice, content consumption, and interaction is essential for gaining a comprehensive understanding of how people behave online. These aspects

will be explored further in the next section, shedding light on the complexities of digital behaviour in the modern age.

### *2.6.1 Frequency of use*

Usage patterns of social media among ethnic groups are influenced by their cultural backgrounds and social contexts. Social media usage patterns refer to the various ways in which individuals use social media platforms to communicate, interact, and engage with others. According to Dargin et al. (2021), social media usage patterns may vary among different ethnic groups based on cultural background, age, socioeconomic status, and education etc. Stockdale and Coyne (2020) revealed that age patterns like frequency of use of social media, usage of social media platforms, consumption of content on social sites and social interaction have significantly depending upon the ethnicity of an individual. People belonging to a certain ethnic group could spend more time gaining information about products and services, while the other group may directly proceed towards trying the offerings. Some individuals may get into the details of the products and services, and interact with a marketing agency to get awareness of the brand, but not indulge in purchase (McGowan et al., 2012). Consequently, other individuals may not be interested in knowing too much about the brand and ordering the product to be delivered. Moreover, the payment methods could differ, and so could their choice of products and services available for sale. There are various ways in which customers may differ from each other. Companies have to take into consideration all such factors and make sure that every group of individuals is identified with certain characteristics and behaviours so that offerings can be improved and made in accordance. There are various ways through which firms may be able to attain information regarding customers and their patterns, and such technology may be utilised to reap the required information (Miller et al., 2016).

It has been assessed that usage patterns of social media are unique and constantly evolving. Individuals have depicted a considerable inclination towards social media platforms, and this eventually has led to influence companies to conduct their marketing activities using such mediums (Berger & Thomas, 2016). The dynamics of social media marketing are wide, and it is imperative to understand the benefits related to such a marketing method. There are various benefits related to social media

marketing, and companies are focused on utilising these opportunities and establishing an adequate position in the market. Digital marketing has evolved how companies used to carry out their marketing function and meet the needs of their customers. One of the major benefits of social media marketing is related to its costs. The cost of conducting marketing activities on social media is comparatively much less than the traditional marketing approaches. This has been one of the biggest reasons why companies have depicted such a considerable inclination towards social marketing. In traditional marketing, companies had to incur a huge amount of costs in the marketing campaigns, and this was one of the biggest issues faced by businesses (Jarad, 2014). With social media marketing taking its place, brands are provided with the opportunity to conduct their promotional activities at much lesser costs and even greater effectiveness. The campaigns can be initiated and halted whenever required, and this allows better management of budgets overall.

Lower costs are regarded as an added advantage for firms while conducting marketing, as they can distribute and manage their budgets more feasibly. With low costs being incurred, different marketing campaigns are carried out for varied customer segments, providing a better opportunity to cater to a wider set of audiences (Faulds & Mangold, 2014). With the use of social media marketing, companies have now become more focused and keener towards their offerings to customers, and effectiveness in the activity has become a must to sustain in the industry. One of the major benefits of social media marketing is that it has become possible for businesses to measure success with analytics. In traditional marketing, firms were not able to evaluate how well a particular marketing campaign has turned out to be, and what exact impact it has had on the sales and revenue generation of the company (Ismail et al., 2018). Businesses must identify how well a marketing activity has been for the company, and what return the firm has generated from the capital invested in a particular campaign. Through digital marketing, firms are now able to overcome this limitation and analyse how well a marketing activity has resulted. The tools and equipment on social media allow the business to assess the overall inflow of traffic, the total leads generated, and the percentage involved in purchasing activities. It is now feasible to assess which of the marketing campaigns produced positive outcomes, and which ones failed to make an impact, so they eventually could be avoided in the future (Arango-Botero et al., 2021).

The impact of social media channels on social media usage patterns varies across ethnic groups, highlighting the role of platform preferences and cultural nuances. Social media channels are playing a significantly important part in changing the usage patterns of ethnic groups for example Arab Australians, Indian Australians, and White Australians. This research is significant in showing the data and temporally comparable surveys that primarily focus on the adult population of these ethnic groups and also showing how social media channels are producing a greater impact on the previous usage patterns (Constantinides et al., 2011). Social media channels have ultimately become the most significant interactional tools for these ethnic groups. There are several social media channels such as Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram. These various platforms have eventually enhanced and heightened the prospects of these ethnic groups in terms of communicating and showing their particular preferences and choices concerning different brands and products (Aluri et al., 2015). Additionally, social media interactions are carried out in terms of these personal technological devices that continue to increase users' convenience in regard to the different usage patterns. The disparate social media platforms are robust in facilitating these ethnic groups by increasing the potential of social media usage patterns.

Perhaps because these ethnic groups are now able to find the products and services that have been marketed on these platforms. Moreover, the presence of businesses and brands in terms of these platforms has also become crucial in terms of enhanced visibility. These ethnic groups are consuming their time in order to search for different products following their particular choices that are easily available on these social media platforms (Balakrishnan and Griffiths, 2017). Also, these platforms have the potential of showing numerous brands to the customers, and therefore through these channels, these groups are getting access to many brands on a single platform which is effective in helping them to buy the products instantly (Floreddu et al., 2014). The Indian Australian ethnic group is evidence of using LinkedIn, it is a platform where an individual can enhance the prospects related to his/her career, whereas firms can recruit and market their commodities (McGowan et al., 2012). More importantly, the platform Facebook reflects that 57 per cent of these ethnic groups are using Facebook to get news and other information at least once a day, and another 8 per cent of the population say that they get information related to their particular brands less than once a week (Moghavvemi et al., 2018).

More importantly, these platforms are effective and touch every aspect of the lives bound to these ethnic groups. These platforms are not only essential for marketing, but they are imperative in terms of the company's overall strategy (Go et al., 2016). It is allowing these ethnic groups to entail numerous offers and promotions related to different organisations as millions of people are using these platforms daily. Furthermore, Facebook is still the dominating social media channel for Arab Australians with over 901 million monthly active users worldwide (Gao & Feng, 2016). In addition, many populations of this particular ethnic group are accessing the Facebook platform through their mobile phones for five hours a day to connect with other people and share their personal information. However, it is worth mentioning that an individual's daily routine creates variances in social media usage patterns; for instance, the age factor is one of the dominant factors which develop variance in social media usage patterns such as a teenage or young adult used to spend a lot of time using social media; however, an older adult prefers to maintain a balance in using social media. Correspondingly, employed individuals usually do not get much time to use social media; on the other hand, high school-going children are addicted to social media.

Similarly, differences in social media usage patterns can be observed due to variances in individuals' levels of education. According to Siddiqui & Singh (2016), individuals with a high level of education tend to use social media less frequently as compared to those who have a lower level of education. These changes in the patterns of social media use can be observed because adults who have a higher education have other responsibilities including employment which is more time consuming and therefore they demonstrate less social media consumption. As per the reports, adults who are between the age group of 18-29 years old and do not have sufficient education show a higher consumption of social media. Kircaburun et al. (2020) state that some individuals use social media for professional networking while adults with lower education or knowledge use it for entertainment and socialising purposes. However, Lipschultz (2020) highlights that adults with a higher level of education use more professional sites like LinkedIn and other sites to remain in touch with content relevant to professional skills and news while other younger individuals use TikTok, Instagram, or Facebook for entertainment. The variance in the pattern of social media usage occurs because of the varying needs of each socio-demographic group. However, another ethnic group includes people who have a background of migration impacts

our usage of social media channels (Bryceson & Vuorela, 2020). Migrants who moved from another country used such sites in their native language to remain in contact with their relatives or circle. The variance can be easily observed because they tend to use the social sites which have been common in their native country. Additionally, it is also observed that migrants use social media to gain interaction strength and enhance professional networking to have more opportunities in the future (Hanley et al., 2018). Therefore, the variance in the patterns is observed because of the needs and requirements of each ethnic group. In addition to this, dimensions of social media usage patterns also vary in different age groups. For instance, the frequency of using social media tools can be used as a tool to analyse the frequency of different people from different age groups visiting social media platforms. As has been observed by Voramontri and Klieb (2019), young people between the ages of 18 to 30 are very active on social media platforms and they check their accounts almost 50 times a day, according to survey results. However, this shows that digital marketing on social media for the products that are used by the young generations which include different clothing brands, electronic gadgets etc. can generate huge traffic. Furthermore, strong social marketing on different social media platforms can generate the attention of millennials to buy these exciting and unique products. Furthermore, consumer behaviour is also dependent on social media usage which also concludes that if the usage of social media is increasing then consumer behaviour will also be inclined toward buying the new products that are marketed on social media platforms. On the other hand, it is observed that people who are above 40 years old do not explore different products on social media excessively as compared to the younger generation. Moreover, middle-aged people use social media to learn about different kinds of new, and current affairs (Chandel et al. 2016). Hence, through analysing the frequency of social media usage concerning different age groups it can be stated that the most amount of traffic can be generated from the younger age group as they are the most active group of people on social media platforms.

### *2.6.2 Time Spent*

The time spent dimension refers to the amount of time an individual spends on social media (Vannucci & McCauley, 2019). For instance, some people may spend hours

each day scrolling through their feeds, while others may only spend a few minutes. According to Cao and Yu (2019), this dimension is important because it can impact an individual's overall well-being and may be linked to issues such as social comparison, addiction, and decreased productivity. Understanding how much time people spend on social media and why can provide valuable insights for individuals, researchers, and organisations interested in improving social media use and its effects (Sheldon et al., 2020).

### *2.6.3 Purpose*

The purpose is another dimension of social media usage patterns which can vary widely between individuals (Cao & Yu, 2019). Some may use it to stay in touch with friends and family, while others may use it to follow news and current events, or for entertainment. According to Cinelli et al. (2021), some common purposes for social media use include staying in touch with friends and family, following news and current events, sharing personal updates and experiences, finding and consuming entertainment content, networking and professional development, and seeking social validation and approval. Understanding the purposes of social media use can help individuals and organisations tailor their social media strategies and content to better meet the needs and interests of their target audience (Camacho et al., 2020). Additionally, research has shown that different purposes for social media use may be associated with varying outcomes such as well-being, loneliness, and self-esteem, highlighting the importance of understanding this dimension of social media usage patterns.

### *2.6.4 Platform*

Different social media platforms may have unique usage patterns. For example, Instagram may be used primarily for sharing photos, while X (formerly Twitter) may be used for following news and engaging in public discussions. Concerning this, Cinelli et al. (2021) explain that different platforms offer different features, content types, and user experiences, which may influence how and why individuals use them. For example, Instagram is primarily used for sharing photos and videos, while X (formerly Twitter) is often used for sharing news and engaging in public conversations. Understanding the platform dimension of social media usage patterns can help

individuals and organisation tailor their content and strategies to the specific platform and audience they are targeting, and can also provide insights into the potential effects of different platforms on individuals' attitudes, behaviours, and well-being. (Auxier & Andreson, 2021).

#### *2.6.5 Content Consumption*

This dimension refers to the type of content an individual consumes on social media, such as news articles, memes, videos, or user-generated content (Camacho et al., 2020). Concerning this, Cao & Yu (2019) explain that there are various social media platforms and users may prioritise different types of content, and individuals may also have personal preferences for the types of content they consume. Li et al., (2018) state that it is essential to understand the content consumption dimension of social media usage patterns can help individuals and organisations create more engaging and relevant content, as well as identify potential risks or benefits associated with different content types. For example, some studies have suggested that exposure to certain types of social media content, such as negative news or idealised self-presentations, may be associated with negative outcomes such as anxiety or body image concerns.

#### *2.6.6 Interaction*

Social media also provides opportunities for interaction and engagement with other users. Some people may use social media primarily for communication with friends and family, while others may use it for networking and professional purposes (Camacho et al., 2020). This dimension refers to how individuals use social media to interact and engage with other users, such as commenting on posts, liking or sharing content, sending messages, or participating in groups or forums. Social media platforms offer various opportunities for interaction, and how individuals use them can vary widely based on their personal goals and preferences. Understanding the interaction dimension of social media usage patterns can help individuals and organisations create more meaningful and engaging interactions, as well as identify potential risks or benefits associated with different types of interactions. For example, some studies have suggested that excessive social media use or passive scrolling can be associated with feelings of loneliness or social isolation, while active participation



and positive interactions can enhance social support and well-being. Hence, the following section highlights different channels of social media and their impact on social media usage patterns observed by ethnic groups.

## ***2.7 Social Media Channels and their Impact on Social Media usage patterns by ethnic groups***

Having an idea of how people use social media also involves looking at different things like their age, gender, and job. Younger people usually use social media more and like trying new platforms, while older people might have different preferences based on what they're used to (O'Reilly & Milner, 2014). Gender also affects how people use social media - for example, men and women might like different kinds of content or interact with it in different ways (Duggan et al., 2015). What someone does for work also changes how they use social media. People in jobs like marketing or media might use it a lot for work-related issues, while those in other jobs might not use it as much or in the same way (Aguinis & Lawal, 2013). Understanding how age, gender, and job all play a part in how people use social media helps us see the different ways people interact online and can help with things like marketing and communication strategies. The next sections will investigate these factors - age, gender, and job - to understand better how they affect how people use social media. This will help us understand more about how people from different backgrounds use social media.

### ***2.7.1 Social Media Usage Patterns Variance among Genders***

In Australia, socially disadvantaged Indigenous groups are increasingly using social media and other digital technology. These various platforms have eventually enhanced and heightened the prospects among different genders, in terms of communicating and showing their particular preferences and choices concerning different brands and products (Xenos et al., 2014). Although several studies have suggested that gender differences can have an impact on how people use social media, it is unclear how men and women of these mentioned groups use social media differently (Zimmer-Gembeck et al., 2021). By addressing the research area of how gender differs in the usage of social media in Australian ethnic groups, this study seeks to close this knowledge gap. According to Laor (2022), women frequently use social sites like Instagram and Facebook while men show lesser rates of consumption. A

study reveals that women like more visual platforms as the purpose of using such social media sites is to socialise and connect along with having an idea of new trends in the market. The main purpose of men using social sites like LinkedIn and YouTube is to know more about the latest news and enhance their professional networking. From a report, it is evident that men spend an average of 21 hours per week on social media while women use 25 hours per week (Henderson, 2023). Additionally, students actively use a variety of social media sites for both academic and non-academic objectives. Through increased social media usage potential, the various social media platforms are effective in assisting these ethnic communities. However, gender is considered a variable in the research because many different patterns of usage have been considered among males and females which is essential to analyse to evaluate social media usage among different ethnic groups.

### *2.7.2 Social Media Usage Patterns: Variance by Age*

Personal technical devices, which continue to boost users' comfort in terms of various usage patterns, are used for social media interactions. Through increased social media usage potential, the various social media platforms are effective in assisting these ethnic communities. O'Mara (2013) found that younger White Australians, or so-called "digital natives," increased their online participation, including social media, significantly more than their older counterparts. That's the reason for selecting a sample size of individuals from 18 to 24 years of age in this research. Moreover, the ethnic groups (Arab Australian and Indian Australian) are consuming their time to search for different products following their particular choices that are easily available on these social media platforms (Statista, 2022). According to (Simpson, 2020), younger Australians use Instagram and Snapchat more frequently to remain in touch with family and friends. Another study reveals that adults who are in their late 20s and onwards do not show frequent usage of social media (Stockdale and Coyne, 2020). The purpose of social media usage is to keep in touch with family while remaining up to date regarding the ongoing issues or crises of the world. Furthermore, age was also considered as a variable of the study because it is observed that the use of social media is categorised into different age groups. Moreover, around 85 percent of people between the ages of 18 and 30 report using at least 1 social networking site in the past

6 months, making social networking services accessible to a vast majority of these ethnic communities.

### *2.7.3 Social Media Usage Patterns: Variance by line of Work*

In Australia, social media has had a big impact on how individuals connect at home and work. Additionally, social media sites provide a lot of potential for organisations in terms of recruitment, organisation development, media affairs, and internal and external connections. According to Xenos et al. (2014), Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), and LinkedIn are popular social media sites, but social media also includes other channels like internet forums and profiles. The majority of Indian Australian employees, 60%, consider that social media may aid in better decision-making and that it can enhance professional relationships, at 82% (Lee et al., 2016). While at least half of Australian companies restrict access to social media sites at work, some White Australian businesses consider social media to be a hindrance to efficient performance. In addition to this, Arab Australians show frequent use of WhatsApp and Facebook to connect with overseas family and friends (Binsahl et al., 2015). Similarly, Arab Australians have been using social media in the fields of healthcare, hospitals, and education to stay in touch with other professionals in the field. However, Indian Australians prefer the frequent usage of Instagram and WhatsApp to continue and strengthen their bond with friends and family. Additionally, in fields like IT, Finance and entrepreneurship individual consume social media to promote their product and services among all (Razak and Latip, 2016). However, the line of work is also chosen in the research study because the use of social media changes based on work, for instance, people in the marketing profession have a high use of social media as compared to other professionals. The upcoming section will highlight the analysis of the literature review table through a critical appraisal.

Research conducted on various ethnicities and their trends in using the social media in Australia shows trends of cultural behaviour and demographic differences especially in Australia's region. Findings show that Arab Australians, Indian Australians and White Australians have different trends of engagement, frequency of usage, purposes and platforms. For instance; the Arab Australians may use platforms such as WhatsApp and Facebook to keep in touch, while Indian Australians may use Instagram for sharing, storytelling and connecting.

Even these interactions are culturally motivated; the Arab Australians are in search of cultural identity and ways of engaging with the community while, the Indian Australians are in search of professional networking and personal image building. Besides, traditional gender roles play a crucial role in the analysis of usage patterns, and there are communities of women who are restricted by cultural norms when it comes to usage of the internet. Recent developments in Australia have therefore depicted new trends that involve social media groups that are uniquely focused on community interaction and cultural interchanging. This shift shows that there is likelihood, every culture, and diversely different community will want to be part of the larger Australian story being told online. However, issues like digital literacy and privacy remain a concern as it affects a number of people, the minorities inclusive. Strategies that are directed towards the enhancement of the digital literacy of people belonging to these demographics will prove to be beneficial in increasing representation and maintaining positive online experiences. That is why, as Australia is gradually becoming a multicultural society, it is necessary to understand these nuances for marketers who seek to capture people's attention and receive consumer approval, policymakers who want to ensure equal opportunities for problem-solving for people with different origins, and community leaders who must respect the views and concerns of all the residents regardless of their nationality. It will develop and increase the targeted strategies that will take into consideration cultural differences as well as the needs of the respective communities with an aim of increasing their participation in the new media technologies. Thus, culture and the manner in which the population use the sites of social media interact with each other not only on the individual level but also on the macro level, affecting the overall tendencies of the communication and respective advertisements, thus requiring the incorporation of these factors into the formation of adequate strategies.

## ***2.8 Critical Appraisal of Literature Table***

Appendix A shows the literature review table that contains the different papers used in the section of the literature review. The analysis of the table found that cultural dynamics play a significant role in shaping social media usage patterns and preferences among different ethnic groups. A review of the literature highlights several themes around the influence of cultural variances on digital behaviours. Studies have

found that cultural characteristics can impact which social media platforms are preferred for communication. Platforms like Facebook that effectively support close interactions tend to be favoured in collectivist societies that prioritise relationships (Goodrich & De Mooij, 2014). In contrast, individualistic cultures drawn to independence may gravitate towards platforms allowing autonomy in content choice and consumption (Bryceson & Vuorela, 2020). Cultural differences also determine how platforms are engaged with. Those from masculine cultures that value accomplishments and assertiveness tend to participate actively by posting and commenting frequently. Feminine cultures focused on nurturing relationships show preferences for passive engagement like viewing content (Ngai et al., 2015). These interaction styles reflect cultural variances in risk-taking and authority-challenging behaviours. Information consumption from social media further differs across societies. Those from collectivist backgrounds show tendencies to depend more on socially driven word-of-mouth recommendations over individual data searches (Kapoor et al., 2018). Culture also impacts product attributes that stand out during online purchasing, based on meaningful qualities distinct from cultural traditions (Figueiredo & Eiriz, 2020). In summary, cultural theory offers frameworks for understanding these variations. Concepts around individualism-collectivism, power distance, and masculinity-femininity help make sense of cross-cultural divergences in social media habits, preferences, and inherent motivations. By reviewing these cultural dynamics and differences unpacked in prior literature, this study aims to outline linkages between tradition and technology-mediated interaction patterns.

## **2.9 Research Gap**

There are several gaps in the existing literature around social media usage patterns among different ethnic groups that this study aims to address. One key gap is the lack of research directly comparing usage patterns across multiple ethnic groups. Much of the previous research has focused on exploring intra-group patterns without juxtaposing findings. However, direct inter-group analysis is needed to better discern cultural variances. Another research gap is the scarcity of the use of multiple case study methodologies within these ethnicities. Most prior studies have used either qualitative or quantitative approaches in isolation without methodological triangulation (Tarpey-Brown & Kasem, 2019). This study employs both semi-structured interviews

and thematic analysis of transcripts. This study primarily employs qualitative methods, specifically semi-structured interviews and thematic analysis of transcripts. The use of descriptive statistics in this context may not be justifiable as a component of the mixed methods approach. The qualitative nature of the study includes both research stage 1 (qualitative study) and research stage 2 (multiple case study). A further research gap is the limited application of established cultural theories to ground examinations conceptually (Tayibnapis, 2020). This study aims to contextualise findings through relevant cultural theories to foster deeper understanding. However, many studies lack strong theoretical anchoring. Additionally, there is a narrow sociodemographic focus in existing research concentrating on a certain age or gender viewpoint. In contrast, this study incorporates diverse perspectives across demographics like age, gender, and occupation to capture heterogeneous standpoints (Taylor, 2012). Lastly, most investigations have relied on cross-sectional snapshots without delving into evolving dynamics longitudinally. By incorporating time-based elements, future research stages of this study can elucidate nuanced trends through qualitative case investigations. In summary, by employing a qualitative study methodology, theoretically grounding the design, facilitating direct cross-cultural analyses, and widening the sociodemographic net cast; this research aims to address these gaps through a more rigorous, contextually embedded exploration of the under-researched issue of cultural influence on digital patterns among ethnic communities. The enriched insights gathered are expected to offer a richer appreciation of the dynamics at play.

## ***2.10 Research Questions and Research Objectives***

What are the patterns of social media usage among different ethnic groups, and how do these patterns differ across ethnic groups?

- To examine the usage patterns of social media within ethnic groups, including White Australians, Arab Australians, and Indian Australians.
- To identify the most commonly used social media applications among different ethnicities, specifically focusing on White Australians, Arab Australians, and Indian Australians.
- To explore the reasons for using specific social media applications among different ethnicities, and to analyse the differences in motivations and preferences.

- To investigate the cultural influences on social media usage among different ethnic groups, and to understand how social media platforms reflect and shape cultural values, norms, and practices.
- To examine the usage of social media applications for buying and selling products within ethnic groups, and to identify the factors influencing consumer behaviour and decision-making.
- To analyse the dynamics of social media usage within ethnic groups, including patterns of content consumption, interaction, and engagement with different platforms.
- To assess the impact of cultural differences on social media usage, exploring how demographic factors such as age, gender, line of work, frequency of use, time spent, purpose, platform, content consumption, and interaction influence social media behaviour and preferences among White Australians, Arab Australians, and Indian Australians.

In Chapter 1, the research questions provide the framework for analysing the use of social media by White Australians, Arab Australians and Indian Australians. This section is focused on the ways cultural factors influence the experience in the online environment and interactions, which corresponds to the aims of this study. The chapter also seeks to establish the roles of cultural antecedents in the decisions users make when selecting platforms and the ways in which they engage with them as well as the influence age, gender and occupation may have on their social media behaviour. In this regard, the present research aims at fulfilling several important gaps in the published literature regarding ethnicity and social media. Such an understanding can help in creating appropriate cultural marketing messages and/or designing the right marketing platforms and interfaces. In general, the presented structure of the two sections allows for the coherent elaboration of the research interests: the given approach is logically consistent and gives a clear outline of how the relationship between the culture and digital engagement can be analyzed.

### 2.11 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of this study, which is based on Fisher and Buglear's (2010) guidance, explores the dynamics of social media usage among various ethnic groups with a particular focus on White Australians, Arab Australians, and Indian Australians. This study focuses on the interaction between cultural factors and people's digital behaviours to illuminate the intricate relationships that influence social media usage patterns. This includes several elements, including usage patterns, platform preferences, content consumption, interactions, and engagement levels (*Fig 1; Page 97*). The study's main focus is on these elements as a whole since they shed light on how people of various ethnic origins interact on social media. This category includes, cultural characteristics, values, norms, practises, beliefs, and identifying markers, which together influence how people behave online according to their ethnicity. The context for this study of social media usage habits is these cultural factors.

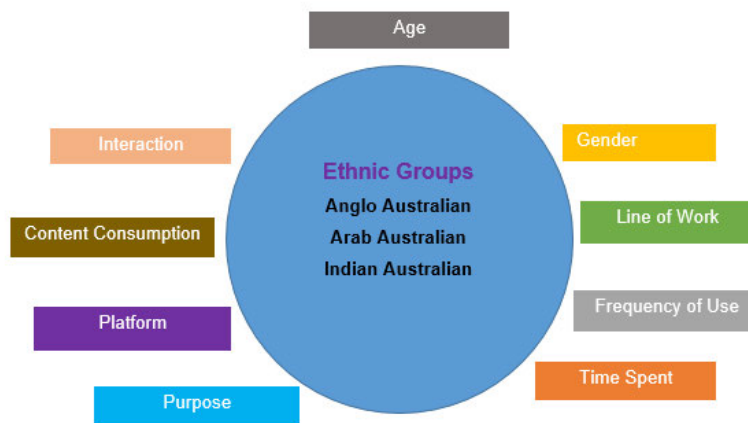


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework for the Study of the Social Media Usage Patterns

### 2.12 Conclusion

This chapter has covered the evolution of marketing, and how it has changed over the years. The main focus has been on digital marketing (specifically social media marketing), and the significance of consumer buying behaviour. The buying patterns among varied ethnic groups have been identified and assessed in terms of disparity, and how businesses adapt. The following section discusses the different theories



related to the subject and which one has been chosen to be applied in the study and why.

### ***2.13 Theoretical underpinning***

Theoretical underpinning in this research refers to the underlying concepts and theories that inform the research question and study design, as well as a lens for the interpretation of research findings (Halkias & Neubert, 2020). The literature review serves to identify the current state of knowledge and theories that have been used to study the topic and the key concepts that have been defined and explored in previous research. In this section, various theories relevant to the study's objectives will be explored and discussed. These theories provide a lens through which to interpret and analyse the phenomena under investigation, offering valuable insights into the complex interplay of factors shaping social media usage patterns.

#### ***2.13.1 Social Identity Theory***

The concept of social identity theory was created to clarify how people define and establish their place in society. According to the theory, three psychological processes are crucial which include social categorisation, social comparison, and social identity (Scheepers and Ellemers, 2019). As per the studies of Charness & Chen (2020) Social Identity Theory is a theoretical perspective that suggests that people's social identity, including their ethnicity, affects their behaviour and attitudes. This theory can be applied to the study of social media usage patterns among three ethnic groups which include Arab Australians, White Australians, and Indian Australians. According to Social Identity Theory, consumers tend to categorise themselves and others into different groups based on shared characteristics such as ethnicity, religion, or nationality (Hudders & De Jans, 2022). In the context of social media usage patterns among three ethnic groups, Social Identity Theory suggests that people's ethnic identity is likely to influence how they use social media. For example, individuals from different ethnic groups may have different preferences for which social media platforms they use or for what purposes they use them.

Davis et al. (2019) reveal that social identity theory highlights that individuals may perceive social media use as a way to express and reinforce their ethnic identity. For example, individuals from one ethnic group may use social media to connect with others from their ethnic group. Thus, it provides a useful theoretical framework for

understanding the role of ethnic identity in shaping social media usage patterns among different ethnic groups. Therefore, considering the influence of social identity, researchers can gain a better understanding of the complex factors that shape social media behaviour among different ethnic groups. Social Identity Theory is highly applicable to the topic of research on social media usage patterns among three ethnic groups (Arab Australians, White Australians, and Indian Australians). This theory highlights that individuals' social identity, including their ethnicity, influences their behaviour and attitudes. Considering the context of social media, individuals tend to categorise themselves and others into diverse groups that are determined by shared characteristics, in particular ethnicity. The theory suggests that people's ethnic identity is likely to impact their social media usage patterns, including their platform preferences and purposes for using social media. Social media use can serve as a means for individuals to express and reinforce their ethnic identity, connecting with others from their own ethnic group. By considering the influence of social identity, researchers can gain a deeper understanding of the complex factors shaping social media behaviour among different ethnic groups.

### *2.13.2 Cultural Dimensions theory*

Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory provides a significant conceptual framework for understanding the influence of cultural variables within society on individuals, notably in the realm of cross-cultural communication. According to Peña-García et al. (2020), this theory suggests that cultural differences have a substantial role in shaping individuals' perceptions, comprehension, and utilisation of technology. To enhance comprehension of the theory's practicality, it is imperative to examine the impact of cultural values and beliefs on the utilisation patterns of social media across many ethnic groups. The given theory is applicable in the context of the research topic as it offers a relevant framework for comprehending the influence of cultural variables on the patterns of usage of social media usage within diverse ethnic groups. With the examination of these dimensions of individualism vs. collectivism, power distance, and masculinity vs. femininity, researchers can acquire insights into how cultural values and beliefs and social media transform behaviours. In the context of a study comparing Arab Australians, White Australians, and Indian Australians, this theory can provide a comprehensive understanding of how culture impacts preferences, content creation,

and interactions on social media platforms. By applying this analytical paradigm and conducting empirical research, researchers can uncover meaningful insights into the complex landscape of social media usage patterns among diverse ethnic groups.

#### *2.13.2.1 Individualism vs Collectivism*

This dimension refers to the extent to which society promotes individual self-reliance and personal aspirations over social cohesion and common aims. Individuals in individualistic settings, such as many Western nations, use social media as a platform for self-expression, personal branding, and independent communication (Guftométros & Guerreiro, 2021). In contrast, collectivist cultures, such as many Asian civilisations, may use social media more for group cohesion, family networking, and maintaining social harmony (Na et al., 2015). Posts and interactions, for example, may focus on family accomplishments rather than individual accomplishments.

#### *2.8.13.2 Power Distance*

The level of inequality and hierarchical structure in a society is reflected in this dimension. Social media usage may reflect the power dynamics that are in place in civilisations with significant power distance, such as in some Middle Eastern cultures, where authoritative people or prominent figures have a dominant presence (Lin et al., 2017). It's possible that users will follow and interact with prominent people more often than they will with critical conversations or opposing viewpoints. On the other hand, social media use may be more equitable in communities with minimal power distance, such as some Scandinavian nations, where there are open dialogues, a variety of viewpoints, and the ability to question authority when needed.

#### *2.13.2.3 Masculinity vs Femininity*

This dimension investigates how much a society emphasises characteristics that are often associated with men—like aggressiveness and competition—as opposed to those associated with women—like collaboration and nurturing. Social media may be used for competition, self-actualisation, and success demonstration in societies that place a strong emphasis on masculinity (Bedard & Tolmie, 2018). Posts may highlight boldness and personal achievements. On the other hand, social media use may place a higher value on community development, empathy, and social connection in

societies with a more feminine orientation (Bedard and Tolmie, 2018). The themes of the content might be support, cooperation, and shared emotional experiences. The use of Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory can provide valuable insights into the social media usage patterns of various ethnic groups, such as Arab Australians, White Australians, and Indian Australians, within the framework of this research study. Each of these groups exhibits distinct cultural values and beliefs, which therefore influence their activities on social media platforms. By conducting an assessment of how these dimensions are manifested within each group, this research would acquire valuable insights into the precise manners in which culture exerts its impact on their preferences, content creation, and interactions on social media platforms. This analytical paradigm facilitates a comprehensive comprehension of the influence of culture on the complex landscape of social media usage patterns among various ethnic groups.

### *2.13.3 Functionalist Theory*

The Functionalist theory will be adopted in this research due to its suitable relevance and applicability in the analysis of the relationship between digital marketing and consumer buying behaviour within the context of social media usage patterns among different ethnic groups. The Functionalist theory, as a sociological perception, views social systems, in particular social media, as serving specific functions in society, such as connecting individuals, reinforcing social hierarchies, and promoting social change (Hatamleh et al., 2023). With the adaptation of Functionalist theory, this research is subjected to evaluate how digital marketing functions as a tool for organisations to achieve their marketing goals and how it influences consumer behaviour, particularly among the Arab Australian, White Australian, and Indian Australian ethnic groups. The Functionalist perception enables the provision of a comprehensive framework for understanding how digital marketing practices contribute to achieving desired outcomes, such as consumer engagement, brand awareness, and sales. Furthermore, the Functionalist theory's emphasis on manifest and latent functions aligns with the objectives of this research (Hatamleh et al., 2023). Manifest functions are considered to be the intended, serving as represented of a system, while latent functions are the unintended, less obvious functions. Through this implication, research can acquire necessary insights regarding how social media usage patterns

are shaped by ethnic identity and social context within the framework of the functionalist theory.

#### *2.13.4 The Application of Functionalist Theory*

Upon exploring the Social Identity Theory (SIT), Culture Dimensions Theory (CDT), and the Functionalist Theory, the rationale for adopting the Functionalist Theory for this research becomes evident. While both Social Identity Theory and Culture Dimensions Theory offer valuable insights into how social identity and cultural dimensions influence individuals' behaviours and interactions within social media contexts (Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Hofstede, 1980), the Functionalist Theory aligns more closely with the research objectives of this study. Functionalist Theory stresses that social institutions, including media, serve specific functions in society and contribute to social stability and cohesion (Merton, 1949). By focusing on the functions of social media within the broader societal context, this research aims to explore the different social media usage patterns and the roles and purposes served by social media platforms in fulfilling individuals' needs and gratifications (Merton, 1949). Therefore, the Functionalist Theory provides a robust theoretical framework for understanding the functional aspects of social media usage patterns and their implications for individuals and society. As an elaboration for the above, the researcher adopted the functionalist theory for this research instead of Social Identity and Cultural Dimensions as it enables the provision of a relevant framework for understanding social media patterns of usage among different ethnic groups. With its application in the social media domain theory of functionalism evaluates how these platforms fulfill specific functions within society and how individuals perceive and utilise these functions. By focusing on the contribution of social media in meeting societal needs, and maintaining social order, followed by the promotion of cohesion, and functionalism it highlights the complex dynamics of social media usage (Sivoronova et al., 2024).

One important aspect of social media usage is its role in facilitating social integration and cohesion among diverse ethnic groups. Social media platforms serve as virtual spaces that allow individuals to connect with others, share experiences, and build social relationships. For consideration, White Australians potentially leverage social media for the cultivation and maintenance of relationships and social connections within their communities, serving to extend social integration. Similarly, Arab

Australians may utilise social media to strengthen communal ties and preserve cultural traditions, thereby cultivating social cohesion within their ethnic group. By engaging in religious and cultural discussions on social media, Indian Australians can promote a sense of belonging and unity among their members of the community, further enhancing social integration.

Furthermore, functionalism highlights the role of social media in cultural transmission and identity expression. Individuals from different ethnic groups use social media platforms as a means to express and reinforce their cultural identities (Rauf, 2021). For example, White Australians may utilise social media to highlight their achievements and self-expression, reflecting their cultural values of individualism. On the other hand, Arab Australians may engage in social media interactions that emphasise group identity and communal relationships, thus reinforcing their cultural values of collectivism. Indian Australians potentially implicate social media as a platform to share cultural customs and religious beliefs, contributing to the preservation and transmission of their cultural heritage. Through these processes, social media becomes a tool for cultural exchange and preservation, fostering a sense of identity among ethnic communities (Liaqat et al., 2021). Moreover, due to its comprehensive nature, the functionalist theory is the theory that will be used regarding the comparative study of social media use patterns concerning three ethnic groups. By adopting a functionalist position, researchers will be armed with a wholesome comprehension of the role that social media plays in these groups and its overall consequences (Ball et al., 2024). The functionalist theory corresponds to the thesis statement – namely does the exploration of the relationship between digital marketing, consumer behaviour, and social media usage, ensure a thorough examination of various usage patterns among different ethnic groups? It gives a glimpse into digital marketing as a mechanism employers can use to build their marketing goals and advertise their products to Arab Australian, White Australian, and Indian Australian ethnic groups.

Functionalism is an extensive approach to studying how social media activities shape positive outcomes like consumer interaction, brand awareness, and sales. When researchers explore both manifest and latent functions they reveal what is intended and what is unintended for the social consequences of social media usage. This approach assists researchers in developing the idea of social media usage connectivity to ethnic identity and social context based on the functionalist perception

framework (Huang et al., 2021). Moreover, functionalism theory makes it possible to consider the impact of social media on social structures and the individual psychosocial state of national minorities. The scientists can investigate the effect media has on social integration, cultural transmission, as well as security of the social circles. The particular realisation of the multi-faceted role of social media in influencing the behaviour and attitudes among different social groups can be obtained by considering the social functions.

In summary, the Functionalist theory gives the complete view of social media usage patterns study for the majority of the ethnic groups, thus enabling the researchers to explore the different functions, effects, and broader implications of social media within the studied context (Nesi et al., 2021). Additionally, Functionalism recognises the role of social media in information dissemination and social influence. Social media platforms serve as sources of information, shaping individuals' attitudes, behaviours, and decision-making processes. White Australians, for instance, potentially leverage social media to stay updated with changing trends along with the accessibility of a wide range of information, thereby broadening their cultural exposure. Arab Australians, on the other hand, may engage with authoritative sources on social media, demonstrating respect for authority figures and institutions within their culture. Indian Australians, with a higher long-term orientation, may prioritise sharing content that supports future objectives and upholds traditions, reflecting their cultural values. (Štreimikienė et al., 2023). These processes of information dissemination followed by social influence thoroughly serve in the formation of collective knowledge and shared understandings among ethnic groups. The functionalist theory contributes to the provision of a comprehensive framework for understanding social media usage patterns among ethnic groups. With the evaluation regarding how social media fulfills specific functions within society and how individuals perceive and utilise these functions, functionalism sheds light on the complex dynamics of social media usage.

From facilitating social integration and cohesion to promoting cultural transmission and identity expression, and from information dissemination to social influence, social media platforms play a crucial role in shaping the behaviours, motivations, and interactions of individuals from different ethnic backgrounds (Bhagat & Kim, 2023). With the adoption of a functionalist perspective, this dissertation facilitates deepening the comprehension associated with the interplay between culture and social media usage patterns among White Australians, Arab Australians, and Indian Australians.

The functionalist theory enables the provision of a relevant framework for the analysis of usage patterns of social media among different ethnic groups. With the emphasis on how social media fulfils specific functions within society and how individuals perceive and utilise these functions, functionalism sheds light on the complex dynamics of social media usage. It stresses the role of social media in facilitating social integration and cohesion, cultural transmission and identity expression, as well as information dissemination and social influence (Sivoronova et al., 2024). With the adaptation of a functionalist perspective, this dissertation aims to deepen our understanding of the interplay between cultural and social media usage patterns among White Australians, Arab Australians, and Indian Australians, serving the broader knowledge in this area.

### ***2.14 Discussion on Social Media Theories***

The theoretical foundation of this research draws on cultural theories and frameworks and further utilizes social media theories to interpret the social media usage of Arab Australians, White Australians and Indian Australians. Integral to this study is Social Identity Theory which postulates that people develop and tend to classify themselves and others using certain dimensions such as ethnicity, and this highly directs their behaviour on the new media. This theory will enable the assessment of the manner in which microblog users from different ethnic backgrounds self-identify culturally besides recognizing community affiliations online. For example, Arab Australians may use such networks to report the important cultural truths and find people from their culture, but White Australians might share more personal statuses and personal achievements. By using the concepts of Social Identity Theory this research underlines social identity as a key factor influencing identity management in a multicultural context. Accompanying it is Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory which helps to identify how the cultural values influence the use of social media. This theory has aspects like individualism and collectivism, power distance, masculinity and femininity which define how various ethnic groups approach social media. For example, the members of individualistic cultures have learned to advance own benefits and increase personal significance on the particular platforms such as Instagram, whereas the members of the collectivistic cultures use the social media to keep relatives connected and maintain balance of interpersonal relationships. Knowledge



of these cultural dimensions enhances the dependency of the analysis of results predicated on the appreciation of subdivisions of certain platforms and the kinds of posts shared. However, new theories related to social media usage, such as Networked Publics Theory which captures people's interactions in the online environment, should also be task considered. This framework explores how new types of publics have emerged and how such spaces relate to building communities on platforms as TikTok or Twitter, as oppositional cultural arenas.

Due to this ability to express their stand on various matters, and thereby counter culture top-down imposition and hegemonic forces, social media is an invaluable platform of cultural resistance. Furthermore, the play of power relations can be understood in terms of Critical Cultural Studies, since the latter discusses the ways in which the power relations may be reinforced or challenged by the use of social media. For instance, the Arab Australians might use the social media not only for the social networking and community engagement but also for the social resistance and the re clitization of their own cultures against the hegemonic representations of society, therefore, the construction of identity. Thus, the social media highlights its importance in today's postmodern culture as a tool both of affirmation and possible opposition. Thus, the objective of this dissertation is to apply Social Identity Theory, Cultural Dimensions Theory, Networked Publics Theory, and Critical Cultural Studies together to identify the systematic effects of culture and power on the use of social media. Altogether, these theories help to explain interplay between social media, culture and individuals or decision-makers, thus, enabling a comprehensive understanding of the reason and consequences of social media activity among people with different ethnicity. Thus, this broad strategy enhances understanding of the patterns of multicultural interactions within social media, thus framing the importance of the way those platforms are constructed, sustained and negotiated by ethnic minorities in a complex process of identity construction and emancipatory networking.

## **2.15 Summary**

Chapter 2 provides a comprehensive review of the literature on digital marketing, emphasizing the pivotal role of social media marketing in shaping consumer behavior. It begins by tracing the evolution of marketing from traditional methods to digital strategies, highlighting the necessity for businesses to adapt to remain competitive.

The chapter discusses the high costs associated with traditional marketing, which often hinders small businesses, and illustrates how digital marketing has democratized access to a broader audience. Social media marketing is presented as a key tool, enabling companies to engage directly with consumers, enhance brand identity, and improve customer satisfaction through real-time interactions. Despite its advantages, challenges such as short attention spans and security concerns are acknowledged. The chapter concludes with a conceptual framework linking social media usage patterns to buying behavior, underscoring the importance of understanding customer preferences in the digital age. Ultimately, it argues that while digital marketing offers vast opportunities, businesses must navigate its complexities to optimize effectiveness and maintain a competitive edge.

## **CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Introduction**

The methodology section examines what actions need to be taken to further look into a research problem. The development of the appropriate research method could be described as a strategy of inquiry, which moves from assuming to data collection and design. A good methodology section will enable readers to know how the data was collected because the results will always be affected by the method chosen. Usually, research audiences are intrigued by how data was collected, and analysed and how it affected the researcher's results. An effectively written methodology will introduce the methodological processes, and the methodology section needs to state whether the methodology approach is a qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods approach.

### **3.2 Research Paradigm**

The concept of a research paradigm is essential for academic research. The word 'paradigm' has a Greek origin meaning 'pattern' (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). The three key categories include positivism, interpretivism, and critical postmodernism (Gephart, 2016). Each of the categories has been presented in the following sections, as to understand their basic concept and to decide on the most appropriate paradigm for this research.

#### **3.2.1 Positivist Paradigm**

Under the objectivism epistemology, the positivism paradigm has been presented as a methodological philosophy of quantitative research, where the researcher focuses on the application of numerous methods of natural science (Saunders et al., 2015). The purpose of doing so is the discovery of social science, which can help in empirically understanding and measuring the phenomenon in reality. Just for the purpose of illustration, the positivist paradigm is commonly adopted by researchers as a process to study the phenomenon by investigating the relationship between numerous independent and dependent variables through causal inferences. These causal inferences are the results of the experimental design, and Cohen, Manion and Marison (2011) acknowledged the maximisation of the influence of the independent variable on the dependent variable throughout the process. Alternatively, the application of the paradigm has been suggested to have helped researchers in

clearly understanding the objects through the application of empirical methods and tests like measurement, focus group and questionnaire. In this context, Cohen (2007) elaborated on the insights offered by the researchers because of its higher quality of reliability and validity standards; meanwhile, Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) argued about the generalisation resulting from the larger scale of the population employed in the research. The positivist paradigm continues to add to the world of research, offering a variety of solutions, through its focus on quantitative and experimental methods (Cook & Campbell 1979; Gephart 2016). From this perspective, it can be argued that researchers can consider the application of positivism when identifying the causal relationship (i.e. cause and effect) between variables (Ittner, 2014). Through this branch, researchers can offer more credible and empirical knowledge because of the lack of human integration, which remains among the prominent flaws of the interpretivism branch. Apart from this particular advantage, it has also been argued that the methods adopted in the positivism paradigm for the collection and analysis of the data based on statistics and evidence, the results related to the phenomenon can be replicated by different groups of the population in the social context. It has been elaborated that the researchers' ability to save time and resources is based on the use of the same findings for future predictions based on quantitative design (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). On the other hand, Johnson (2014) elaborated that the data in the positivist paradigm is collected in line with the objectivist epistemology, which means that the researchers can remain confident about the findings' reliability based on which the scientific assumptions can be made. Reliability was recognised to be critical in causal inferences, as the reliability estimates the internal consistency among the variables (Dornyei, 2007), which is generally achieved through the application of Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient. Furthermore, scholars and experts have recognised it worthy to conclude about the results' reliability and validity, while citing it to be among the core strengths of the positivist paradigm.

Employing the key methodologies in positivist paradigm like survey research or experimental research, followed by the application of numerous methods and techniques like sampling, instrumentation, and statistical treatment of data, the researcher can eventually be in the position to offer intensive and empirically supported answers for the research questions (Cohen et al., 2011). In line with this aspect, the positivist paradigm can constantly and continuously help the researcher in the development of understanding through areas of social research. However, the

studies conducted in the past have acknowledged the limitations of this paradigm. For instance, Hammersley (2013) identified concerns about the application of this paradigm and its failure to measure phenomena like the attitudes, and intentions of the people. In particular, this research paradigm has no particular way of measuring these concepts in a profound manner, since these concepts require sense experience to measure them. This is the reason that this paradigm has led the researchers to experience constraints in exploring abstract conceptualisation that is generally the result of human relationships. The second limitation associated with the positivist paradigm is based on the fundamental theoretical perspective, which can be further elaborated in reference to the objectives of the research. The research conducted with a positivist paradigm is generally required to generalise the research results at a larger degree, but this also exposes the research and its results to a series of risks associated with the individuals, as they might have different interpretations and understanding of the events and issues (Hammersley, 2013). As a result of it, the research may not unveil the truth about the reality because of the experiences and knowledge of the participants being neglected. Similarly, Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) identified points about the positivist paradigm and generalisation of the results and the research outcomes, which can also prove to be a challenge as the researchers may find it extremely difficult to apply the phenomenon and the understanding related to it in reference to the local context. Lastly, the scientific data's inaccuracy resulting from the data collection process can create numerous difficulties for the researcher, which is the reason that researchers are commonly recommended to carefully review the data, especially when the subjects have been selected randomly to address the phenomenon, instead of selecting the participants to gain authentic responses. Since the participants have no flexibility in offering their responses, the participants may not have sufficient room to share personal cases.

### *3.2.1.1. Interpretivist Paradigm*

The Interpretivist paradigm is rooted in the methods used for the process of understanding the knowledge about the human and social sciences, which cannot be similar to the use of physical science (Hammersley, 2013). This can be attributed to the difference in the ways in which the human has interpreted their worlds, which has further helped them in acting as per their interaction. As a result of this, the relativist

ontology has been adopted by the interpretivist, under which a phenomenon may have multiple interpretations resulting from different understandings and knowledge of the people, rather than the truth that can be more effectively determined by undertaking the measurement process (Tuli, 2010). Creswell (2007), in this context, argued about the Interpretivist researchers' interest in gaining a deeper understanding related to the phenomenon, and the complexity in its unique context, instead of focusing on the generalisation of the understanding given the case of the whole population. In line with this information, Hammersley (2013) emphasises the development of multiple realities because of the numerous relationships that humans have, and the ways in which interpretive researchers try to understand how people see and experience the world in given different cultures and contexts. In this context, it is important to avoid biases during the study of people and events, given their personal interpretations (Hammersley, 2013). From this context, it becomes evident that there are some prominent strengths and weaknesses of the interpretivist paradigm.

The first strength of the interpretive paradigm is embedded in the diversifying views looking into the phenomena, which the researchers cannot describe based on categories such as humans, objects, or events, but they are more interested in understanding the social context (Saunders et al. 2009). Furthermore, it has been identified that when researchers adopt the Interpretivist paradigm, they are conducting the research in a natural setting, and they do this through the use of numerous methodologies like ethnography, grounded theory, life history, or case study that helps the researchers in gaining valuable insights into the objects of the research (Tuli, 2010). This provides the researchers with authentic information about the topic or the phenomenon being researched. One of the key strengths in the form of interactive interviews, which serves the purpose of investigating and prompting the things that may not be observed, but this use of instrument allows them to probe the thoughts, perceptions, feelings, prejudices, and perspectives of the interviewees (Wellington & Szczerbinski, 2007). This helps in confirming that the researchers are able to gain valuable data offering them insights that can further support them in the later stages of their research.

Despite the numerous benefits that the Interpretivist paradigm has to offer, there are some prominent limitations as well. For instance, it was elaborated on the limitation in the form of gaining deeper insights and knowledge related to the phenomenon within its context complexity, rather than the generalisation of the results to other contexts

and people (Cohen et al. 2011). This eventually results in the gap in reference to the verification of the validity as well as the usefulness of the research outcomes, which is generally achieved through the use of scientific procedures. Mack (2010) has also criticised the interpretivist paradigm because of its ontological views, which inclines the research and its findings through subjectivity, instead of objectivity. This is the reason that the outcomes of the researcher are unquestionably affected because of the interpretation of the research, in addition to his/her way of thinking and the beliefs as a result of their cultural preference; thereby causing numerous forms of biases. The last limitation identified about interpretivism is embedded in a lack of addressing the ideological and political impact of social reality and the knowledge (Mack, 2010). This paradigm has only targeted how the current phenomenon can be understood, instead of how the problems related to the empowerment of societies and individuals can be addressed. Furthermore, it was acknowledged that the theoretical perspective can lead to the neglect of the issues of agency and power, which remain critical, features of the society. The Interpretivist paradigm focuses on qualitative methods that allow access to reality, and is characterised by observation and interpretation (Myers, 2009). In reference to interpretivism, there are numerous studies reflecting on its importance in terms of offering in-depth and rich insights related to the constructs being explored (Bryman & Burgess, 1999). This can be argued to be the result of the integration of the human element, which remains absent in the positivism branch. Though some have considered human integration as a flaw, it has also been reflected that this is the only effective way of gaining a holistic understanding of the phenomenon being explored (Thanh & Thanh, 2015). The rich and valuable insights can allow the researchers to offer meaningful and comprehensive insights, which is the reason that this branch is commonly adopted and employed, where the purpose remains on exploring the phenomenon, instead of focusing on the causal relationships (Black, 2006).

### *3.2.1.2. Critical Postmodernist*

The Critical Postmodernist view is a mix between qualitative and quantitative methodologies (Gephart 1999). Qualitative methods allow researchers the opportunity to study and understand social and cultural phenomena whereas quantitative research methods were created to study a natural phenomenon. Both methods are important

and neither one has more significance than the other (Saunders et al., 2015; Creswell & Clark, 2017). Each one of them is used in appropriate topics of research (Bryman & Burgess, 1999). When the postmodernist view is evaluated, it indicates the combination of the subjective and objective viewpoints; thereby removing the limitations and weaknesses associated with each viewpoint. For Postmodernist researchers, the focus remains on relevant concepts, and ensuring that they can support action (Creswell & Clark, 2017). This is the reason that the researchers strive to reconcile subjectivism and objectivism, as well as values and facts, the rigour and accuracy of the knowledge, in addition to the different contextualised experiences (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). The researchers do this by taking account of numerous theories and concepts, as well as ideas and research findings that are not presented in abstract form, but in reference to the role played as instruments of thoughts and actions, as well as in terms of their practical consequences in specific contexts.

### *3.2.1.3 Suitable Paradigm for this Research*

Since the purpose of this research is to investigate the ways through which social media usage patterns can affect consumer behaviour, the application of interpretivism would be more suitable (Carcary, 2009). Its application may not just support the research in identifying the factors that make an individual addicted to social media, but may also increase the possibilities of finding relevant strategies through which the patterns can affect consumer behaviour. The application of this paradigm can help the study develop a holistic understanding that may not be obtained via the positivist and postmodernist view since positivism relies greatly on the application of scientific and statistical tests, which may not be supported in this research (Arghode, 2012); thereby interpretivism the most suitable research paradigm in this research.

### *3.2.2 Research Approach*

In a research study, it is imperative to involve the use of theory, which may or may not be the result of the research design (Saunders et al., 2012), but it can generally be made explicitly about the findings and conclusions. This means that when researchers are clear about the theory at the beginning of their research raises important questions regarding their research design. This is generally portrayed about contrasting reasoning approaches in the form of deductive or inductive. Ketokivi and Mantere



(2010) elaborated on the occurrence of the deductive approach when the conclusion has been logically derived based on the set of premises, and the conclusion being true given the premises being true. In contrast, the authors further elaborated on inductive reasoning application given the gap in the logical arguments between the premises observed by the researcher and the conclusion derived based on the judgment to be supported based on the observations made in the research. Both of these approaches have been independently elaborated in the following sections.

The study adopted a purposeful sampling technique; the participants were restricted to White Australians, Arab Australians, and Indian Australians to ensure that they had the right perception and experience of the use of social media in their community. On the same note, the method of stratified sampling will be applied to each of the ethnic groups ensuring that the units of analysis are representative by gender, age, and income. By using this approach, one can be able to explain how subgroups approach social media. The number of participants is estimated to be two hundred to three hundred, a hundred people each from every ethnic group, sufficient to make statistical calculations significant and data analysis comprehensive. This sample size is acceptable since studies conducted in such context in the past used relatively lower numbers to ensure diversity in the samples and to make the data collection procedures manageable. Primary data will be collected through questionnaires since this will enable the researcher to acquire detailed information on participants' use of social media and culture. In the same regard, focus groups shall be conducted to assess collective qualitative attitudes and experiences about the perceived usage of social media for the ethnic groups. This general approach to data collection means that there is always a multifaceted look into how the ethnicity affects social media engagement and is a valuable guide for marketers and academicians.

### *3.2.2.1 Deductive Approach*

The Deductive approach, or deduction, according to Saunders et al. (2015) is closely associated with scientific research, since it involves theory development that is subjected to numerous rigorous testing regimes based on a series of propositions. This is what makes deduction a dominant research approach in the natural sciences since the focus remains on presenting laws on the basis of explanation while allowing the researchers to anticipate the phenomenon, as well as enabling them to predict the

occurrence; thereby permitting the researchers to control such predictions (Creswell & Clark 2017). The reason that deduction remains a central premise in the Positivist paradigm can be attributed to its characteristics. The first characteristic of deduction remains the explanation of the causal relationship between the variables and the concepts. For instance, a researcher may be interested in establishing the impact of social marketing factors and the ways in which they lead to certain social media usage patterns. Once the researcher dedicates the research to such aspect, the focus shifts to reading about the social marketing factors in the academic literature, while developing a theory about the ways in which the relationship between the factors and the social media usage patterns can be established. Consequently, the researcher may even develop a series of hypotheses, including the one stating that social marketing is significantly more likely to help understand social media usage patterns amongst different ethnicities.

This proposition can be tested through the collection of quantitative data, but this does not imply deduction inconsistent with qualitative data. It can be attributed to the important differences in the nature of the data, which is the reason that the researcher becomes responsible for precisely specifying the conditions under which the theory is likely to hold, and the collection of the data within the predefined conditions (Saunders et al., 2012). By doing so, the researcher is eventually ensuring that any change in the social media addition was the function of the factors of social marketing, rather than any other aspects. This makes the research based on a highly structured methodology that can facilitate replication, an important issue in ensuring the reliability of the data and the findings of the research. The additional characteristic of deduction is embedded in the concept of operationalisation, which is related to how the facts can be measured, and the only possible way of doing so is through quantitative design (Creswell & Clark, 2017). In the previously established example, the key variable that required measurement was social media usage patterns. Therefore, the researcher would have to strictly define both the constructs and the underlying reason constituting the social media usage patterns among the young generation. In this context, the principle of reductionism has been followed (Ketokivi & Mantere, 2010), which entails that whenever there is a problem, it must be understood as a whole, but should also be understood in the simplest possible element. The final characteristic of deduction is generalisation (McMillan and Schumacher 1993), which can only be achieved

through the selection of the sample size in a careful and consistent manner while ensuring that sufficient size is taken into account.

### *3.2.2.2 Inductive Approach*

Induction is an alternative approach in the theory development (Ketokivi & Mantere, 2010), which would be initiated by interviewing a number of people about the reasons for being addicted to social media, and their experiences of the recent rise of social marketing. The purpose here remains to get a better feeling of the concept and the experience so that the researcher can more effectively develop a better understanding of the patterns and their nature. The task of the researcher would be to make sense of the information collected from the participants, which would help in the formulation of the theory, generally expressed as a conceptual framework in a research study. This can help in identifying the relationship between the concepts, while alternatively allowing the researcher to discover the competing reasons for using social media and how it affects consumer behaviour. There is a greater likelihood that the researcher may reach the same theory, but the reasoning in the production of the theory would be based on an inductive approach, which implies the theory following the data instead of vice versa – a component in the deduction.

It has been earlier noted that deductions originated from natural sciences, but the emergence of social sciences resulted in social science researchers remaining wary of deduction (Macit et al., 2019). In particular, it has been identified that the researchers of that time were critical of the reasoning approach that resulted in establishing cause-effect links being made between numerous variables, but without understanding how humans have interpreted the social world. Of course, the development of social understanding is among the key strengths of the inductive approach. In the aforementioned example, the application of the inductive approach can result in establishing an argument based on a more realistic manner of understanding social media usage patterns and their effect on consumer behaviour. On the other hand, the induction approach has severely criticised deduction because of the rigid methodology that it constructs (Aksoy, 2018), which fails to permit any alternative explanation of the phenomenon. In this sense, it can be presented that there is always an air of finality about the theoretical choice and the definition of the hypothesis for the researcher, and even the

researcher can consider alternative theories based on deduction. However, this is only possible within the limits established by the highly structured research design. However, it has been recognised that the use of a less structured approach may help in effectively and efficiently explaining the constructs being investigated, while denying the stricter definition of the constructs, as in the deductive approach.

### *3.2.2.3. Suitable Approach for this Research*

It has been clarified that researchers must select the approach in accordance with the philosophical paradigm (Saunders et al., 2015; Creswell & Clark, 2017), which in this current research is interpretivism. This makes the application of induction most appropriate in the research, and may even help the researcher in establishing methodological fit that can help the researcher in better explaining and elaborating the ways in which the understanding of social media usage patterns can enable marketers to understand consumer behaviour a bit better. In this context, it has been suggested that the use of this approach can work well with a small number of subjects, instead of considering a larger number as done in the deductive approach, since they are more likely to work with qualitative data. Doing so can help the researcher establish different views on the phenomenon, instead of limiting the researcher to a handful of concepts to establish a causal relationship. Instead, the use of induction can support and facilitate the researcher in establishing a holistic understanding of the phenomenon, which remains a limitation of the deductive approach, but is critical in this research to determine numerous explanations regarding social media usage patterns of three different ethnicities and their effect on consumer behaviour.

## **3.3 Credibility of Qualitative Research Conducted**

The credibility of qualitative research conducted for this study is underpinned by several key factors. Firstly, methodological thoroughness was ensured throughout the research process. This involved employing established qualitative research methods, such as interviews and multiple case study methodology, which are widely recognised for their effectiveness in generating rich, context-specific data (Creswell & Poth, 2018). By adhering to rigorous data collection and analysis procedures, researchers were able to maintain the integrity and trustworthiness of the research findings. Secondly, efforts were made to enhance the credibility of the research through strategies such

as prolonged engagement, member checking, and peer debriefing (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Prolonged engagement refers to the sustained interaction between researchers and participants, allowing for the development of rapport and trust over time. Member checking involves verifying the accuracy and interpretation of findings with participants, ensuring that their perspectives are accurately represented in the research outcomes. Additionally, peer debriefing involves seeking feedback and critical input from fellow researchers or experts in the field, enhancing the validity and credibility of the research process and findings. Lastly, transparency and reflexivity were prioritised throughout the research endeavour. Transparency involves clearly documenting the research process, including data collection methods, analysis procedures, and decision-making processes, to enable others to evaluate the trustworthiness of the research (Tracy, 2010). Reflexivity entails acknowledging and critically examining the researchers' own biases, assumptions, and preconceptions, which may influence the interpretation of data and findings (Finlay, 2002). By adopting a reflexive stance and being transparent about the research process, the researcher was able to enhance the credibility of the qualitative research conducted for this study.

### *3.3.1 Qualitative Research*

Qualitative research design can be elaborated as a market research method, where the purpose remains in obtaining data for the purpose of learning about what people think, as well as the underlying reasons that make people think in such a manner (Taylor, 2012). For instance, convenience store managers can consider this design to identify the ways through which it can improve its patronage. This can be achieved through systematic observations that can help the manager in concluding the number of people visiting the store, and their reasons. This can even help the manager in determining the reasons for the preference of one gender to visit the store and the underlying reasons for which the other gender may avoid visiting it. This can be achieved through conducting an in-depth interview, which can offer sufficient insights into the phenomenon being investigated. The ability of the manager to successfully conduct interviews with male and female customers, not only the ones visiting the store, but also others visiting the nearby malls and stores in a random manner. This may allow the manager to determine whether or not the person of the specific gender

is visiting the store more because of the variety of product offerings from them, and fewer for the other gender.

This is only possible through personal interactions to understand their reasons for visiting other stores, but not the particular store being represented by the manager. From this perspective, it can be identified that qualitative research is particularly considered by researchers when the interest remains in gaining in-depth and rich insights by probing and questioning the subjects/respondents (Sparkes, 2005). The application of qualitative design can offer the researchers an opportunity to understand the feelings and motivations of the participants, which generally acts as a limitation in quantitative design. The process of understanding the audience can help the researchers in deriving conclusions. On the other hand, studies conducted over the years have acknowledged qualitative design to be among the systematic scientific inquiry designs, where the purpose remains to build holistic and largely narrative descriptions that can allow the researchers to understand cultural and social phenomena. In particular, McMillan and Schumacher (1993) defined qualitative design or qualitative research as, “primarily an inductive process of organising data into categories and identifying patterns (relationships) among categories” (p. 479). If the definition is more critically evaluated, it can be identified that the definition has offered an indication about the data and meaning emerging organically, rather than through any other means or method. Under the qualitative design, the researcher works by considering either one or a combination of interviews, observations, and document reviews. This shows the importance of examining the variables in their respective and natural settings, which is the reason that priority is given to the interaction between the variables. Valuable insights and detailed data are gathered by the researcher by engaging with the participants through the use of open-ended questions, which presents the researchers with an opportunity to gain direct quotations.

### *3.3.2 Justification for Qualitative Research*

In this research, given that analysing social media usage patterns is a societal issue, a qualitative approach would be considered to be the most appropriate research method. Qualitative research tends to enter people’s lives, studying their behaviours in the most natural setting. As mentioned earlier, qualitative research falls under the interpretive paradigm (Gephart 1999). A qualitative approach usually relates to a

societal phenomenon that needs to be interpreted; its purpose is to discover issues about a problem because the problem is under-researched (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003; Myers, 2009). There are a variety of different qualitative sources, including fieldwork that includes observation, questionnaires, interviews, and case studies (Myers, 2009). Initially, with my research and sub-research questions relating to gaining a deeper understanding of social media usage patterns, a qualitative method will be used. The research will make use of two research stages. The research will be divided into two stages, where the first stage is a preliminary qualitative study and the second stage is a multiple case study methodology.

### *3.3.3 Qualitative Research Methods*

Qualitative research studies are generally designed so the perception and behaviour of the target audience regarding a particular topic can be better understood (Ross et al., 2010). This is the reason that researchers relying on the use of qualitative research have consistently relied on a range of methods like focus groups, in-depth interviews, ethnographic research, case study research and content analysis (Saunders et al., 2015). Each of these methods has been independently evaluated and investigated in the following sections.

#### *3.3.3.1 In-depth Interviews*

In qualitative research methods, interviews remain one of the most commonly adopted methods by researchers because they offer in-depth insights and rich content resulting from the knowledge of the participants (Phellas et al., 2011). Since this is a personal way of gaining insight, it is generally collected with one respondent at a particular time, and researchers have suggested it as a conversational method under which the participants are invited to share details and their knowledge. This is the reason that this method has been suggested to have numerous benefits, where the first benefit is embedded in the gathering of precise and relevant data about the beliefs and perceptions of the people, and their underlying motivations. However, this method requires greater knowledge, experience, and expertise since the participants are in-depth with the interviewee (Szolnoki & Hoffmann, 2013). In addition, it is also important under this method to ask the right questions of the participants at the right time and place, so that the interviewer can collect meaningful insights and data. Another key

benefit associated with this method is the ability of the researcher to collect additional information (Rowley, 2012), which they can do so by asking additional questions or follow-up questions that can help them reduce the uncertainties that may have affected the quality of the findings. Similarly, studies have reflected that researchers can consider a range of methods through which the interviews can be conducted. For instance, they can consider telephone for the interviews, or they can collect the information directly i.e. in-depth interviews, and can even consider Skype and other ways to collect the information promptly. However, the key limitation of the interviews is embedded in the time, since conducting a single interview can take between 30 to 45 minutes, which means that only a handful number of interviews can be conducted in a single day (Sullivan, 2012). Additionally, the researcher is required to limit the number of participants in the research because the data collected from the participants can ultimately become challenging because of the diverse opinions that people may have regarding the phenomenon being investigated (Saunders et al., 2009).

### 3.3.3.2 *Focus Groups*

Focus groups have also remained among the commonly used methods in qualitative research, under which the researcher has the opportunity to engage in discussion with a limited number of participants (Krueger, 2014). These participants can be directly related to the organisation or the phenomenon being investigated. The purpose of using this method has always been to find the answers to the unaddressed questions. Since the participants are available at a given time and location, all the participants can share their opinions on the question, and even they can critique the responses of others, which generally remains a limitation of interviews (Wilson, 2012). From this perspective, it can be argued that participants can interact with others in person, which means that the information collected and obtained from them will be authentic and reliable, instead of manipulated information, since any manipulation can be evidently highlighted and critiqued by others in real-time. With the technology available to the participants and the researchers, focus groups can be conducted online through various devices, and this fundamentally helps ensure that the researchers can collect responses by clicking a button (Daley et al., 2010). However, the key limitation of this research method is embedded in the cost associated in comparison to other available methods, in addition to the complexity associated with managing and controlling the



responses. This makes it a more suitable method for the introduction of new products as well as for testing new concepts (Edley & Litosseliti, 2010).

#### *3.3.3.3 Ethnographic Research*

This is among the observational methods that offer the most in-depth insight related to the naturally occurring environment (Hammersley, 2016). In this context, it has been identified that the research method requires the researchers into the adaptation to the environments of the target audience, which can be anywhere from the organisation. This makes geography a prominent constraint in the process of data collection (LeCompte & Schensul, 2010). However, studies have helped in understanding the challenges, cultures, motivations as well as settings in which the research can occur. Instead, the focus of this method relies on discussions and interviews, where the experience of the researcher within the natural setting can be quite beneficial. If this method is critically evaluated, it can become evident that the use of this method can range from a few days to a few years, which can be attributed to the involvement of in-depth observations and the collection of the data (Sangasubana, 2011). This makes this method time-consuming in comparison to other methods, which means that the researchers using this method should rely greatly on their experience in terms of analysing, observing and inferring the data (Lewis & Russell, 2011).

#### *3.3.3.4 Case Study Research*

During the past few years, the case study method has significantly evolved from being a constantly ignored method into being the most developed and valuable qualitative research method (Yin, 2011). If this aspect is taken into account, it can be argued that this research method is commonly adopted to explain an entity or an organisation. This is the reason that this method is commonly embraced by researchers in several areas like social sciences, education, and similar (Houghton et al., 2013). Even though, studies have suggested this qualitative method looks difficult in terms of operating; however, recent evidence indicates it as being one of the simplest methods to research because it involves a deeper dive and thorough understanding of the data collection method (Woodside, 2010), which the researchers can easily and conveniently infer following the purpose for which the research is being conducted (Swanborn, 2010).

### *3.3.3.5 In Light of Yin's Study*

Considering the core concepts of Yin's study, a layout of Research Stages 1 and 2 according to Yin's study procedure, focusing on the relevant research questions:

#### **Research Stage 1**

Objective: To explore the cultural influences on social media usage among different ethnic groups.

#### **Research Questions**

What are the usage patterns of social media within ethnic groups?

How do cultural factors influence motivations for using specific social media applications?

#### **Methodology**

Data Collection: Conduct in-depth interviews with participants from White Australian, Arab Australian, and Indian Australian communities to gather qualitative insights about their social media usage.

Analysis: Employ thematic analysis to identify recurring themes related to cultural influences and usage patterns.

#### **Research Stage 2**

Objective: To conduct a multiple case study providing a comparative analysis of social media usage across the identified ethnic groups.

#### **Research Questions**

How do social media usage patterns differ across the ethnic groups studied?

What are the factors influencing consumer behavior and decision-making in social media contexts among these groups?

#### **Methodology**

Data Collection

Expand the research by analyzing case studies that include broader demographic surveys and additional interviews.

Analysis: Use comparative analysis to examine differences in social media engagement, focusing on dimensions such as frequency, time spent, platform choice, and content consumption.

### 3.3.3.6 Observation

Qualitative observation is the last method presented, and it has been argued to be among the methods through which the researchers engage in subjective methodologies to ensure that they can gather systematic information. (Angrosino, 2012). This can be presented as the key strength of this method since it allows the researchers to focus on qualitative observations that may allow the researcher to equate quality differences (Daniel et al., 2011). The qualitative observations, as per the qualitative studies, require the researchers to rely greatly on their major sensory organs since this is the only possible manner to record observations (Sandt, 2012). This can be further elaborated about the fact that this method does not involve any number or measurement, but only focuses on characteristics. In the next section, the qualitative method used in both research stages will be explored. This will shed light on how data was gathered with detailed insights and understanding throughout the whole study.

### 3.3.4 Method used in Both Research Stages

In both stages of this research, in-depth interviews will be the method used. This choice is because these interviews offer a unique opportunity to deeply understand how Anglo Australians, Arab Australians, and Indian Australians use social media. Face-to-face interviews allow participants to share their experiences and perspectives openly, helping us gain a thorough insight into their behaviours and preferences. Unlike case studies, which might not be broadly applicable, or focus groups, where some voices may dominate, face-to-face interviews create a personal connection that encourages honesty and openness. Especially in a study like this one which focuses on ethnic social media usage, direct engagement allows exploration of the cultural differences and specific influences. This approach allows us to ask tailored questions, ensuring we capture diverse perspectives from within each community. By using face-to-face interviews, we aim to uncover not just basic trends, but also the underlying cultural, social, and psychological factors that shape social media use across different ethnic groups.

### 3.3.5 *Research Subjects and Sampling*

#### 3.3.5.1 *Overview Stage of Research Stage I*

In this study, the first research stage will use nonprobability sampling. The application of this sampling method can help the researcher ensure that those subjects, whom the researcher is familiar with, can also be included in the research (Etikan et al., 2016). This can be in the form of family members or the social circle, and their inclusion would help the researcher in quickly collecting the information relevant to this research. In this context, the convenience sampling technique is beneficial, since it would allow the researcher to select the participants based on personal convenience, which in turn can increase the number of subjects being included in this research (Omair, 2014). In this study, a total of 20 respondents are chosen with 8 of them being Arab Australians (AA), 6 being White Australians (WA) and the remaining 6 being Indian Australians (IA). Participants from the three ethnic groups are chosen to study their experience on social media in detail. Data is collected through interviews.

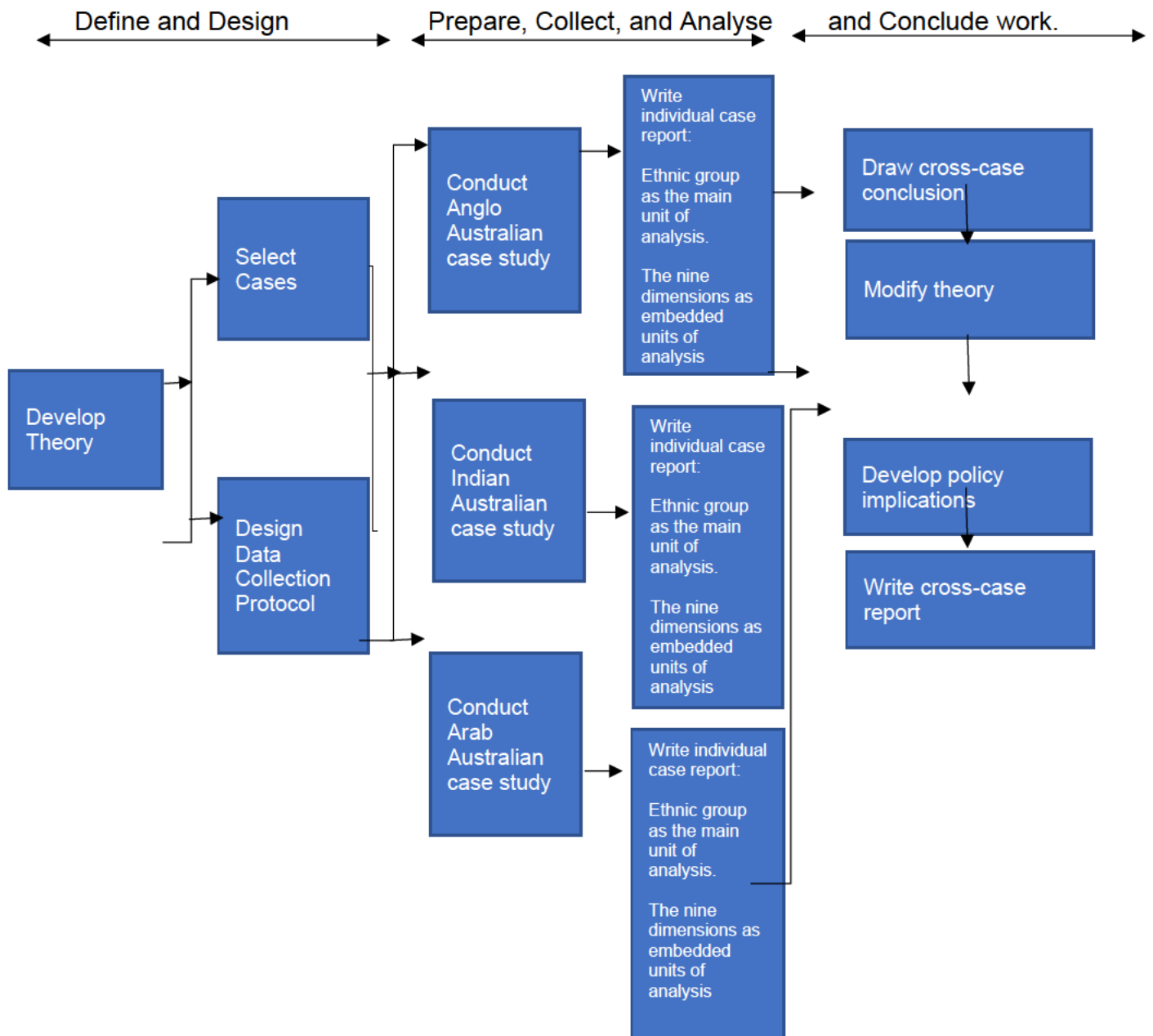
#### 3.3.5.2 *Overview Stage of Research Stage II*

The method used for the second research stage is a multiple case study methodology, which was qualitative in nature. Multiple cases should be viewed as multiple experiments and not just numerous respondents in a survey (Perry 1998; Gustafsson 2017). In the case of this particular research, the researcher will intensively investigate three cases to analyse the behaviour of the interviewees towards social media, and to understand their social media usage patterns (if any). The three cases will be comprised of three different ethnic backgrounds; Arab Australian, Asian Australian, and White Australian. The research will do an individual analysis of the case and then a comparative study of the three cases. My sub-cases for the three ethnic groups are age, gender, and line of work. These sub-cases as per Table 2 below, will help compare the outcomes to analyse the differences, similarities, conflicts, challenges, and experiences. The sub-cases are formed so that it will become easy to present the information from different perspectives and analysis can be presented critically to provide efficient results. Each of the three cases will require approximately 15 research interviews at different levels within the case. A total of approximately 45 qualitative research interviews for the second research stage.

**Table 2 Multiple Case Design**

<b>Multiple Case Design</b>			
<b>Ethnic Groups</b>	<b>Anglo Australian</b>	<b>Arab Australian</b>	<b>Indian Australian</b>
<b>Embedded units of analysis</b>	Age	Age	Age
	Gender	Gender	Gender
	Line of Work	Line of Work	Line of Work
	Frequency of Use	Frequency of Use	Frequency of Use
	Time Spent	Time Spent	Time Spent
	Purpose	Purpose	Purpose
	Platform	Platform	Platform
	Content Consumption	Content Consumption	Content Consumption
	Interaction	Interaction	Interaction

The research is designed based on the above matrix i.e. multiple case designs (Figure 2). In essence, there are three cases, White Australian, Indian Australian and Arabic Australian. Based on that there are three sub-cases for each of the three cases i.e. Gender, Age, and Line of work (Yin, 2011). The figure below gives details about the case study design that was employed. The multiple case studies scenario that is given in the figure below (Figure 2). Based on that the current research will follow the same protocol in terms of defining and designing the cases, and then prepare collect, and analyse the given data, and then finally conclude as per the research objective (Yin, 2011).



*Figure 2: Multiple-Case Study Procedure*

*Source: Adapted from Yin (2011)*

### **3.4 Research process**

#### ***3.4.1. Probability Sampling***

To conduct the first stage of this research comparing the social media usage patterns of three different ethnic groups namely White Australians, Arabic Australians and Indian Australians, it is essential to outline the research subjects and sampling techniques that will be employed. The overarching aim of this research is to explore how cultural dynamics influence individuals' engagement with social media platforms. Given this context, the first stage involves collecting primary data through interviews with a sample of individuals belonging to the three ethnic groups. The initial phase has emphasised gaining relevant insights through interview questions for suitable guidance towards necessary in-depth investigation, both probability and non-probability sampling methods will be adopted (Mohajan, 2018). Probability sampling offers the advantage of each subject having an equal chance of selection, thereby reducing selection bias. However, non-probability sampling is also useful at this stage for its convenience and ability to include subjects familiar to the researcher (Etikan et al., 2016). With the employment of an appropriate approach, a diverse range of perspectives can be captured to understand the phenomenon of interest from different cultural standpoints. Specifically, simple random sampling will be conducted to select some participants randomly from each ethnic group ensuring representation. In addition, convenience sampling will be used to interview acquaintances of the researcher belonging to the three groups (Creswell & Clark, 2017).

Both these techniques aim to obtain a heterogeneous mix of subjects in terms of demographics like age, gender, occupation and so forth, enhancing the validity of the initial themes uncovered. A sample size of 20 individuals will be interviewed in total, with approximately 6-8 from each ethnic group to facilitate comparison. The most appropriate primary data collection tool for these semi-structured interviews is an interview guide consisting of open-ended questions (Mohajan, 2018). This flexible approach allows new ideas to emerge through two-way dialogue while addressing key topics of interest through pre-defined questions. The use of open discussion also minimises demand characteristics to elicit genuine perspectives. Grounded theory which fosters theory development based directly on data, will guide qualitative analysis of interview transcripts. Emergent themes will then be organised to provide a foundational understanding of the phenomenon prior to the next stage.

Overall, employing probability sampling alongside non-probability methods and undertaking semi-structured interviews of a diverse sample aims to capture a broad range of insights to address the overarching research aim initially. While selection bias cannot be eliminated at this stage, triangulating techniques help overcome some limitations to fulfil the objective of the first exploratory phase.

The themes identified will then guide the planning of future studies to investigate underlying relationships between culture and digital practices more deeply. Probability sampling is well suited for the initial stage of this research for several key reasons. To begin with, the research aims to gain a broad understanding of social media usage patterns across different ethnic groups. Probability sampling techniques allow for perspectives to be captured from a diverse range of cultural contexts in an unbiased manner. Creating thorough sampling frames through exhaustive population listings helps ensure representation from varied demographic backgrounds within each ethnic population (Acharya et al., 2013). Random selection methods like simple random sampling and systematic random sampling provide every listed individual with an equal chance of inclusion, reducing the potential for selection biases. For larger groups, systematic random sampling in particular helps practical implementation by calculating regular intervals to select participants. These randomised techniques foster objective findings that can be cautiously generalised to a certain extent back to each ethnic cluster overall. The semi-structured interviews themselves incorporate open-ended questioning routes to allow new concepts to emerge naturally through two-way dialogue (Clarke & Braun, 2021).

By randomly choosing subjects proportionately from comprehensive frames, initial interviews offer a broad mapping of cultural standpoints on the research topic across different social settings. This scoping serves to identify preliminary themes for further investigation in later research stages. Overall, by undertaking three key phases: developing robust frames, applying random selection procedures, and conducting open interviews the probability approach fosters objectively garnering a wide array of cultural outlooks through approximately 20 initial subjects. The 6-8 participants per group provide enough representation for outlining group-level considerations while maintaining a feasible sample size for the early exploratory stage. Moreover, with its emphasis on randomisation, probability sampling reduces various element selection biases like only considering easily accessible volunteers. This strengthens findings to be cautiously generalised back to ethnic clusters during initial analysis for identifying



potential differences or commonalities. At the same time, randomised groups ensure balanced views are incorporated relative to population sizes (Setia, 2016). In all, through establishing unbiased cultural voices and outlining richly diverse standpoints, probability techniques directly serve scoping research aims of guiding more targeted subsequent methodologies with their comprehensive mapping of perspectives on online cultural dynamics.

### *3.4.2 Non-probability Sampling*

Non-probability sampling methods will complement the incorporation of probability techniques at the initial exploratory stage of this research. Specifically, convenience sampling will be utilised to interview approximately 4-6 acquaintances from each ethnic group to gain quick insights from these readily available subsets of populations. Convenience sampling falls under non-probability sampling techniques, as it does not involve a random selection process but rather choosing subjects based on ease of access and proximity to the researcher (Etikan et al., 2016). By interviewing familiar individuals like relatives, friends or colleagues who identify with the target ethnic cultures, initial viewpoints can emerge efficiently from motivated discussants without the need for extensive recruitment processes. While this approach has inherent limitations such as lacking true representation, it serves practical purposes at the formative research stage. Gathering perspectives through intimate discussions provides comfort for interviewees to openly share experiences and opinions (Sharma, 2017). It also allows emerging topics to organically develop into insightful themes through familiar dialogues. Along with acquaintances, snowball sampling may also be used to obtain referrals to new subjects through initial participants, expanding available sample pools. Both convenience and snowball methods offer feasibility for the researcher to quickly obtain around 12-18 interview responses in total to complement randomness. Importantly, integrating non-probability techniques alongside probability sampling aims to achieve a holistic sample comprised of diverse voices. It helps compensate for limitations like lack of generalisability that arise from non-random selection alone (Etikan et al., 2016). The mixed approach fosters obtaining rich cultural narratives through random groups as well as familiar perspectives. Overall, triangulating probability and non-probability methods serve to comprehensively explore potential cultural influences indicated by early open

discussions. Initial themes can then guide crafting focussed methodologies for subsequent research stages delving deeper into relationships between traditions and online behaviours. The complementary sampling strategies strengthen preliminary insights into key factors warranting further investigation.

### *3.4.3 Most Suitable Sampling for this Research*

To conduct the initial exploratory stage of this research, it is necessary to outline the research subjects that will be involved along with the sampling techniques that will guide their selection. This study aims to explore and compare the social media usage patterns among three key ethnic groups: White Australians, Arabic Australians and Indian Australians. To gather a wide breadth of perspectives to inform further in-depth investigation, a mixed sampling approach combining both probability and non-probability methods will be applied. This will facilitate the collection of primary qualitative interview data from individuals belonging to the three ethnic populations of interest (Etikan & Bala, 2017). Probability sampling techniques such as simple random sampling and systematic random sampling will be leveraged to select participants through a randomised process, reducing selection bias. Specifically, simple random sampling will be used to choose 6-8 subjects randomly from pre-defined lists of each ethnic group. Systematic random sampling will also involve developing sampling intervals to systematically select every *k*th individual. Additionally, non-probability convenience sampling will be drawn upon to interview around 4-6 acquaintances from each ethnic cluster that are easily accessible to the researcher (Etikan et al., 2016). This incorporates informants who are willing contributors through familiar relationships. In total, approximately 20 subjects representing the three cultural groups will take part in semi-structured interviews, with 6-8 members from each category (Creswell & Clark, 2017). This sample size and composition facilitate balanced comparisons while generating fruitful initial discussions. Adopting both probability and non-probability methods in an integrated manner aims to capture a diversity of cultural outlooks through a range of random and convenient perspectives. Random selection fosters objectivity and generalisability, while convenience interviews add practical feasibility. Overall, triangulating these sampling strategies serves to comprehensively explore potential cultural influences on digital practices through open-ended dialogue (Mohajan, 2018). The themes that emerge will guide further qualitative and

quantitative inquiry into this phenomenon. Ultimately, insights uncovered at this scoping stage will inform tailored methodological approaches and targeted sample definitions for subsequent research stages delving deeper into the subject area.

### ***3.5 Data Collection Methods***

The principal technique for gathering data in this qualitative research study for both research stages is the use of in-depth interviews. Interviews are considered the most effective method of obtaining rich, context-specific data because of the exploratory nature of the research (Smith, 2008). Moreover, they enable emphasis on comprehending the complex relationship between social media usage and cultural influences within the context of White Australians, Arabic Australians, and Indian Australians (Ramadani & Almaarif, 2022). Participants can share their experiences, insights, and perspectives regarding their social media usage in the context of their cultural backgrounds through in-depth interviews. These interviews are semi-structured, allowing participants to freely express their opinions through open-ended questions and probes. This methodology ensures that the collected data is both specific and nuanced, allowing for a comprehensive comprehension of the factors influencing social media usage among the selected ethnic groups. The thematic analysis of the qualitative data gathered from the interviews will allow for the discovery of recurrent themes and patterns as well as the investigation of distinctive and varied points of view. This method contributes to a comprehensive knowledge of the research objectives by ensuring that the study captures the richness and depth of social media behaviour within the ethnic groups under investigation.

### ***3.6 Data Analysis***

Thematic analysis has been utilised in this research in both stages in the research. Qualitative content analysis is a type of analysis that analyses large amounts of data that have been gathered over various types of data collection (Schreier, 2013). This form of analysis will be used in both the grounded theory interviews and the multiple case study methodology interviews. Content analysis in the first stage and thematic analysis in the second stage are among the available analytical approaches in qualitative studies. However, the research by Sandelowski and Leeman (2012) identified that since both of these approaches are very similar, the division between

the two has been infrequently and inconsistently specified; thereby resulting in the use of these approaches interchangeably. Similarly, Braun and Clark (2006) identified the confusion between the differences and similarities between thematic and content analyses, and the ways in which the researchers must choose between them. For instance, Sparker (2005) and Sandelowski and Barroso (2003) elaborated on the use of narrative analysis, especially when qualitative content analysis is taken into account; whereas, Holloway and Todres (2005) elaborated on the application of thematic analysis that remains ignored in the qualitative methods' textbook. Yet, researchers have relied upon both analyses, when working on qualitative methodology. By taking account of the purpose of this research, it has been decided that both content analysis and thematic analysis will be employed in this research. Content analysis, according to Powers and Knapp (2006), is a general term used for the purpose of analysing texts through systematic coding.

This makes it a categorising approach under which the researchers working on qualitative data can explore a large number of textual information for the determination of the patterns and trends of the words being used, as well as their relationship, structure and communication discourses (Gbrich 2012; Nicholls 2009; Mayring 2000). In this research, the purpose of using the content analysis is to describe the characteristics of the information, which would be done by examining the information about what has been said about social marketing and the ways in which it can help in understanding their usage patterns. This may even provide the researcher with an opportunity to compare and contrast the primary findings of this research with the secondary information regarding the phenomenon (Taylor 2012), which can be leveraged to offer solutions and strategies that can be implemented by professionals to help individuals in overcoming their addition to social media. On the other hand, the primary data obtained from the subjects will be analysed through the use of thematic analysis, which remains among the poorly branded methods. According to Braun and Clarke (2006), thematic analysis has been elaborated as an independent quality descriptive approach that is commonly applied by researchers with the purpose of identifying, analysing and reporting the themes or patterns within the data. Furthermore, thematic analysis has also been introduced as a descriptive method for qualitative analysis because of its provision of care skills to the researchers through which they can conduct a series of qualitative analyses, irrespective of the form. This is the reason that it has commonly been recommended that researchers should

develop familiarity with this particular analytical process and method, but as an independent and reliable qualitative approach to analysis (Clarke et al., 2015). Since thematic analysis will remain the primary qualitative data analytical process, it is important to elaborate on the phases of analysis, as described by Braun & Clarke (2006), which is presented in the following steps:

- The first step in conducting thematic analysis is to become familiar with the data, which means that attention should be given to the reading of the transcripts, but this can only be possible when the data has been transcribed. This familiarisation step can help the researcher in identifying the initial ideas presented by the subjects related to social marketing, and the ways in which this can be useful in understanding social media usage patterns.
- Once the researcher is able to become familiar with the data, the stage of generating initial codes will be performed. In this stage, the researcher will identify the interesting features of the data, which would be later coded systematically across the data set. This can eventually allow the researcher to collate the data in accordance with their relevancy with each code, and the ways in which these codes can be of value to the research study.
- Upon the systematic coding, the researcher will then use the collated codes for the development of potential themes. The purpose of this stage would remain on the gathering of the data while determining whether or not the data gathered can be used and linked with each potential theme.
- The fourth stage in the thematic analysis would remain on the checking of the themes and their coded extracts. This can allow the researcher to determine and generate a thematic map, which would prove to be valuable in ensuring that the themes being worked upon are relevant to the research, and may help the researcher in meeting the research objectives and the purpose.
- The next stage is related to defining and naming the themes, under which the researcher will ensure that the themes reviewed in the previous stage are refined so that the analysis can be performed. This stage is critically important in the generation of clear definitions and names, and may even benefit the researcher in ensuring that meanings are extracted from

the responses obtained from the subjects. To facilitate reader comprehension, the following table (3), presents a comprehensive overview of the research process, detailing elements like research objectives, information needed to address research objectives, how the information will be collected and how the data will be analysed.

**3.7 Table 3: Summary of the Research Process**

<b>Research objectives</b>	<b>Information needed to address research objective (and source of the info)</b>	<b>How the information will be collected</b>	<b>How the data will be analysed</b>
To examine the usage patterns of social media within ethnic groups, including White Australians, Arab Australians, and Indian Australians.	Data on social media usage patterns sourced from the different ethnic groups.	In-depth interviews	Thematic Analysis
To identify the most commonly used social media applications among different ethnicities, specifically focusing on White Australians, Arab Australians, and Indian Australians.	Information acquired from respondents.	In-depth interviews	Thematic Analysis
To explore the reasons for using specific social media applications among different ethnicities, and to analyse the differences in motivations and preference	Responses from Participants	In-depth interviews	Thematic Analysis
To investigate the cultural influences on social media usage among different ethnic groups, and to understand how social media platforms reflect and shape cultural values, norms, and practices.	The responses have been gathered from the different respondents will fill the gaps.	In-depth interviews	Thematic Analysis
To examine the usage of social media applications for buying and selling products within the ethnic groups, and to identify the factors influencing consumer behaviour and decision-making.	The semi structured interviews have been designed in a way that it has illustrated the filling of the gaps.	In-depth interviews	Thematic Analysis
To analyse the dynamics of social media usage within the ethnic groups, including patterns of content consumption, interaction, and engagement with different platforms.	The semi structured interviews has been designed in a way that it will illustrates the filling of the gaps.	In-depth interviews	Thematic Analysis
To assess the impact of cultural differences on social media usage, exploring how demographic factors	The semi structured interviews have been designed in a way that	In-depth interviews	Thematic Analysis

such as age, gender, line of work, frequency of use, time spent, purpose, platform, content consumption, and interaction influence social media behaviour and preferences among White Australians, Arabic Australians, and Indian Australians.	it will illustrates the filling of the gaps.		
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The following table shows the research objectives that will be useful in gaining knowledge on White Australians, Arab Australians and Indian Australians and their usage of the social media. Every objective can be associated with some information requirements, data sources and forms of analyses. The first objective thus aims at exploring the usage pattern across these ethnic groups and thus must have data gotten through interviews. The essence of this method is to examine the participants' experiences, and, through thematic analysis, find out more about them. The following goals continue the review of the most used, if not popular, social media apps and their purposes, with the help of participants' answers during the interviews conducted, therefore, providing real qualitative data. This is also done in relation to culture in relation to social media with information being obtained from the same semi structured interviews to maintain interview consistency. This approach seeks to find out how the culture works in social media and how social media influences cultural values. Furthermore, the objectives that focus on the buying and selling behaviors and the role of social media stress the need for consumers' decision-making processes awareness. Last of all, the influence of age and gender is explored with the view of determining their effectiveness towards the examination of behavior at social media hence underlining the importance of the multifaceted analysis of how different factors affect interactions at the social media. All in all, the table calls for a systematic approach for collecting and analyzing qualitative data to respond to the research objectives.

### **3.8 Framework Development**

Based on this model we have Social Identity Theory, which asserts that people define part of themselves in terms of the groups they belong to and hence their behaviours in cyberspace especially in the context of online communities. Also, Cultural Dimensions Theory by Geert Hofstede demonstrates how basic dimensions of culture, for instance, individualism collectivism and power distance, influence people's behaviors in societies. It will help to understand how people of various ethnic

backgrounds use Social Media Sites while drawing from their culture. Moreover, by adopting the Functionalism approach, it would be possible to analyse how social media meets the different cultural needs including community formation and self-identity presentation. There will be a conceptual model that will show the relationships between these theories indicating how they affect the use of social media. This framework will not only help in advancing the methodological framework for the study that would include interviews and case study but also will have implications for carrying out the thematic analysis of multiple variables that will determine the interaction between culture and net ecologies in multi ethnic Australia. Thus, this section will improve the intelligence and density of the study in its database and outcomes.

### **3.9 Research Ethics**

Since the research will be based on primary data, it is imperative for the researcher to ensure that appropriate ethical measures are taken into consideration. The first ethical consideration to be undertaken in this research is related to the identification of the research purpose and objectives, and the reasons for conducting this research. This would give the subjects an understanding of the importance of this research while encouraging them to share their experiences and knowledge with the researcher (Oliver, 2010). The second ethical measure would be related to voluntary participation, which means that the researcher will not pressure anyone to share their knowledge, but will ensure that the subjects sharing their knowledge are doing at their own accord (Fujii, 2012). This can help in obtaining valuable insights without harming anyone. The third ethical measure to be undertaken in this research would be related to confidentiality and anonymity (Lancaster, 2017). The researcher is well aware that sharing anyone's name or any other confidential information can bring emotional, physical or psychological harm to them, which is the reason that the researcher would ensure that the subjects' names would not be disclosed, or any other information that could make it possible for the others to track the individuals (Loue 2007). In this context, the researcher will be using pseudonyms, which means that artificial names would be given to the subjects in the research; for instance, the subjects would be referred to as Interviewee A or Participant A in this research, which would make it impossible to track them (Ross et al., 2010). The fourth ethical measure to be undertaken in this research will be related to the assurance that the data being



collected from the subjects will only be used for academic purposes, which means that the insights shared by them are to be only used for this research, and that the information would not be shared with others. In fact, the researcher will ensure that the subjects are informed about the data being destroyed once it has served its purpose in the research.

### ***3.10 Summary of Methodology***

The methodology of this study is the qualitative research approach. It encompasses two research stages. Research stage one is a preliminary qualitative study, and research stage two is a multiple case study that is also qualitative in nature. The first research stage involves in-depth interviews with 15 subjects of three ethnic groups – White Australians, Arab Australians and Indian Australians. These interviews enabled the researcher to know the subjects' patterns of social media use, preferences and motivations as well as the role of culture. Following that, the multiple case study methodology was employed to examine patterns within cases and across cases. The data was collected through in-depth interviews with 45 subjects and analysed using thematic analysis. The objectives of this research are aimed at establishing a deep understanding of the meanings, experiences and perceptions of the patterns of usage of social media. The researcher judged the qualitative method to be the most appropriate for this approach, as It provides an in-depth understanding of the complex interactions between social media habits and cultural aspects.

### ***3.11 Conclusion***

In conclusion, the research methodological section has clarified the scope of the information to be presented within the study. In particular, the research will adopt interpretivism as its paradigm, supported by qualitative design. Interpretivism is deemed the most suitable approach for this study, as it facilitates a holistic understanding not achievable through positivism or postmodernist views, which heavily rely on scientific and statistical tests, methods not wholly supported in this research context, given its qualitative nature. Furthermore, the research advocates for the use of a small subject pool, contrasting with deductive approaches that typically require larger samples. This allows for a more nuanced exploration of diverse perspectives, essential for establishing holistic understandings crucial for addressing

the research objectives. Additionally, the inclusion of non-probability sampling methods, such as convenience sampling, ensures the participation of familiar subjects, enriching data collection and promoting inclusivity within the research. By employing diverse sampling techniques, the research aims to obtain unbiased results reflective of the social media usage patterns within the target ethnic communities.

## CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH STAGE I FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

### ***4.1 Introduction***

The following chapter is based on the comprehension and analysis of the findings that have been gathered from the conduct of the above methodological process. The methodology used in the study is important. The methodology, as discussed above enables the provision of a systematic framework for addressing the research problem subjected to discussion. This chapter also outlines the specific actions and strategies that are generally undertaken to gather for the analysis of relevant data. By clearly stating the chosen research paradigm, whether qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods, the methodology section formulates the entire approach and perceptions associated with this study. This, in turn, thoroughly influences the techniques of data collection, analysis methods, and interpretation of the findings presented in the research section. Therefore, the seamless connection between the methodology and the research section ensures that the findings and analysis are grounded in a well-defined and appropriate research approach, enhancing the credibility and reliability of the research stage one outcomes. The chapters of this research study outline the initial research stage as well as the proposed research studies that will build upon these foundational findings. The first stage involved a thematic analysis of interviews conducted with 20 participants from three key ethnic groups - White Australians, Arabic Australians, and Indian Australians. This formative phase aimed to gain preliminary insights into social media usage patterns across different cultural mindsets. Through applying both probability and non-probability sampling techniques, the research was able to capture a wide array of perspectives from varied demographic backgrounds within each ethnic population.

Probability methods such as simple random sampling and systematic random sampling helped select participants objectively, while non-probability convenience sampling incorporated familiar acquaintances to supplement these random voices. In total, approximately 6-8 subjects from each ethnic cluster took part in semi-structured interviews. The flexible nature of open-discussion interviews allowed concepts to naturally emerge through two-way dialogue. By randomly choosing proportionate representations from each community, initial discussions offered a broad mapping of cultural outlooks regarding the research topic. Grounded theory then guided qualitative

analysis of transcripts to uncover and organise meaningful themes. Several key findings resulted, such as the influence of values, identity expression, and content consumption patterns being culturally shaped. Initial themes also underscored gaps requiring deeper investigation, like actual impact levels of cultural factors on perceived differences in practices. This scoping phase served to identify promising areas for targeted methodology refinement. To further build on these formative stage outcomes, subsequent research studies are proposed leveraging tailored qualitative approaches. Specifically, the multiple case study methodology will qualitatively explore cultural embeddedness through in-depth longitudinal participation. Comparative case analyses aim to produce nuanced cultural profiles, refining early models presented here regarding the cultural shaping of digital behaviours. Overall, the research design systematically progresses from broad scoping to focused investigation, incrementally refining the understanding of the cultural dynamics surrounding social media engagement.

## **4.2 Thematic Analysis**

### *4.2.1 Introduction*

This chapter aims to represent the analysis and findings of research stage one. This study aims to explore social media usage patterns by comparing three ethnic groups. The main purpose of this research is to determine various aspects of social media and its usage. The functionalist theory has been selected for the theoretical contextualisation of the aforementioned research question. Therefore, this chapter will analyse the open-ended question taken from 20 participants. The detailed explanation and insights of these interviews were established by which detailed insights could be developed regarding the social media usage patterns among different ethnic groups.

### *4.2.2 Qualitative Results*

In the current research, research stage one, qualitative data analysis was performed by giving different codes established in Clarke, Braun and Hayfield (2015) and the six steps were adopted to establish themes to conduct thematic analysis. Following the open-ended questions, the themes and codes were developed (as mentioned in Appendix A). As supported by Terry et al. (2017), thematic analysis is designed to analyse the qualitative data. It can be done by applying the set of interview transcripts.

Therefore, the current research has closely determined the data to highlight common themes and theoretical frameworks.

### 4.2.3 *Thematic Analysis*

#### 4.2.3.1 *Usage of Social Media Patterns within Ethnic Groups*

According to Tulkens et al. (2016), social media is defined as an internet-based form of communication which is used globally in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The usage of social media has increased as billions of users adopted it to share knowledge or any information. Social media is also utilised on a personal level because it allows communication between family and loved ones. It varies by race and ethnicity as explained in Ahmed, Vidgen & Hale's (2022) research. In this research, three ethnic groups were taken to explore the usage of social media. Therefore, the first question asked was "Do you use social media?" to determine whether all the participants were using social media. Based on the first question, all three ethnic groups were found to use social media. The result of the first question is addressed in Table 4.

**Table 4: Respondents For Research Stage I**

Source	Code	Response	First Order Theme
Arab Australian	AA (1)	Yes	Social Media User
Arab Australian	AA (2)	Yes	
Arab Australian	AA (3)	Yes	
Arab Australian	AA (4)	Yes	
Arab Australian	AA (5)	Yes	
Arab Australian	AA (6)	Yes	
Arab Australian	AA (7)	Yes	
Arab Australian	AA (8)	Yes	
White Australian	WA (1)	Yes	
White Australian	WA (2)	Yes	
White Australian	WA (3)	Yes	
White Australian	WA (4)	Yes	
White Australian	WA (5)	Yes	
White Australian	WA (6)	Yes	
Indian Australian	IA (1)	Yes	

Indian Australian	IA (2)	Yes	
Indian Australian	IA (3)	Yes	
Indian Australian	IA (4)	Yes	
Indian Australian	IA (5)	Yes	
Indian Australian	IA (6)	Yes	

This demonstrated that social media has significantly made communication easier for personal and professional purposes. This is also backed by the functionalist theory which states that social media apps can be bi-directional in terms of interaction with others. Social media is cohesive and supports the functionalist vision. As supported by Jacobson (2020), William James has established a thought which is based on premises which enforce all aspects of society's institutions, norms, roles etc, to serve for purpose of long-term survival. In the current study, the usage of social media has been derived from ethnic groups. The result of the first question determines the high preference for social media but there are variances with social media sites such as Instagram, WhatsApp and Facebook etc. The second question was based on social apps which stated what type of social media app they used. There were different answers from all three ethnic communities as mentioned in Table 5.

**Table 5: Social Media Usage**

Source	Response	First Order Theme	Emerging Theme
Respondent WA (4)	<i>Just Facebook and Instagram really, the only time I use Snapchat it's to snoop on my children but not very effective, unfortunately, because they cover up everything so I don't see it.</i>	Variation of social media apps within ethnic groups	Usage of social media pattern within
Respondent AA (4)	<i>I use like Facebook, WhatsApp, I'm not on it much, that's all, I don't have an Instagram, I don't have that one.</i>		
Respondent AA (5)	<i>Yeah, I use Facebook, Instagram, I also use WhatsApp</i>		

Respondent AA (3)	<i>Mostly I use Facebook these days, because it's a very well- known application or social media platform that connects me with friends and family as well.</i>	Social media ease communication with family and friends	ethnic groups
Respondent IA (1)	<i>Yes, I do, I'm quite active on Facebook and LinkedIn and do you consider YouTube social media for your study?</i>	Social media usage for education	

The above results stated variation in social media usage as WA (4) stated two different apps, while AA (3) mostly use Facebook to communicate with family and friends. In contrast, the other ethnic group IA (3) preferred LinkedIn and Facebook for communication and education purposes. This demonstrated that Facebook was common among all three ethnic groups in this study. Marino et al. (2018) mentioned Facebook is the most popular social media app as they have two billion people registered and use it regularly. This is approximately 36.9% of the global population which showed huge figures as the largest social media site. Facebook is often used for communicating with friends and family. Other respondents are using it for entertainment. As WA (4) responded, Facebook and Instagram meet all their social media needs so it was not necessary for them to go for other social media such as Snapchat. There are other apps such as Snapchat, Instagram and LinkedIn were also highlighted in this question. IA (3) asked an interviewer: "Can YouTube be used for educational purposes?". In response to that, the interviewer indicates that social media usage also differs in terms of what users are getting from it. For example, Facebook and YouTube have different platforms which can create opportunities to study. Some teachers and professors signed up for these apps to ensure the best knowledge for their students. Similarly, IA (3) is taken as an example to conceptualise functionalist theory as social media is a platform to share common perspectives which can bind communities together. Therefore, the functionalist theory focuses on behaviour which can be governed by shared values that can be changed in different ethnicities. There are Arabic Australian respondents such as AA (4) and AA (5) who also preferred Facebook. While AA (4) also often use WhatsApp to communicate with people. This indicates the variability of social media apps in Arabic ethnicity. In this research, the

third question is based on time spent on social media per day. The respondent was asked “how much time do you spend on social media per day?”. In the reply to this question, the answer suggests variations in time and usage regarding spending time on social media. The results are addressed in Table 6. The responses show the frequencies of using social media in the different ethnic groups that were interviewed. As for cross usage, respondent WA (4) stated that he often used Facebook and Instagram and stated that he had limited use of Snapchat which he uses to check on his children only. On the other hand, Arab respondents AA (3), AA (4), AA (5) majorly use Facebook mainly for friends and family and the only respondent from AA (5) also uses Instagram and WhatsApp. It is interesting that Respondent IA (1) uses Facebook and LinkedIn; the educational benefits of web-sites, such as YouTube, are pointed out. These responses show how social media different ethnic groups enable communication and interactions to occur in different ways.



**Table 6: Differences In Culture Regarding Social Media Usage**

Source	Response	First Order Theme	Emerging Theme
Respondent WA (4)	<i>Unfortunately, I know because my phone gives me updates and probably all in all two hours because I work for myself, I and I just sort of you know pause, get sucked into some written news articles and it adds up you know, and it's pretty appalling really I like to class it like that's how I get my news but I'm sure it's actually rubbish.</i>	The perspective of the respondent in using social media	Usage of social media patterns within ethnic groups
Respondent AA (3)	<i>It's actually like on and off; every now and then I have the notifications that come for me, for each application, so maybe every day collectively would be 3 hours, 3-4 hours per day.</i>	Average time on Social media apps	
Respondent AA (4)	<i>Well, depending on how I'm doing with my work, sometimes I spend an hour, sometimes I spend on average like an a half hour but you could say like half and one hour per day.</i>		
Respondent AA (5)	<i>Probably around 1 to 2 hours. WhatsApp I use it for friends and business.</i>		
Respondent IA (1)	<i>It used to be a long time but now it's like 30 minutes at a stretch, I only check when I'm on breaks and usually take a break from my research and take a break, the break is I reward myself, so if I had done this, now it's time to go in and I get to check my Facebook and take my break and come back so about 3-4 hours a day.</i>	The perspective of respondents on using social media	

The result indicates differences in culture and thought regarding social media usage. The Indian ethnic IA (1) was found to be working and use fewer social media apps. IA (1) also reward herself with a break after a long hour of work. This demonstrated that Indian ethnic people in Australia are generally focused on their jobs or use less time on social media apps. Therefore, IA (1) indicated 30 minutes for using Facebook to just check important notifications. In contrast with White Australians, the WA (4) stated

social media is only utilised to check important news or read articles. The average social media use of this respondent was 3-4 hours which is normal. However, WA (4) notified that less time of using Facebook is due to work or business. While he also determines a unique perspective as “social media apps are appealing but they are rubbish”. On the other hand, the Arabic Australian respondents were also determining average time as “on and off”. It is due to an unknown reason because the respondent did not ask the specific reason for the aforementioned statement. While other respondents such as AA (4) and AA (5) also stated unclear perspectives on their average time. AA (4) stated that he uses social media apps for only two hours. It is due to family business and communication with family and friends. This statement was determined when the interviewer asked the respondent about what he usually does at the mentioned time. Therefore, this indicated lower usage of social media apps within the Arabic ethnic groups in Australia. The fourth question was based on the favourite social apps of all three ethnic groups. The interviewer asked, “*what is your favourite social media app?*”. This question indicated Facebook is the favourite social media among the majority of the respondent among all ethnic groups. The result was addressed in table 7. The responses depict a relative difference in the use of the social media among the respondents. WA(4) agrees that we spend approximately 2 hours daily and use it to browse news and may at times, get distracted by other news articles while also worrying about the quality of the information being consumed. AA (3) approximated a collective value of 3- 4 hours per day, with attributions to notifications from various applications. Regarding the time spent on it, there is variation, for example, AA (4) spends between 30 min to an hour depending with the workload while AA (5) spends about 1 to 2 hours and mainly use WhatsApp for both personal and business communication. IA (1) however shows a change in frequency waking up at about 30 minutes per instance, amounts to 3–4 hours in a day during break time for research.

**Table 7: Favourite social media app**

Source	Response	First Order Theme	Emerging Theme
Respondent WA (4)	<i>Facebook.</i>	Favourite Social media application	Usage of social media patterns within ethnic groups
Respondent AA (3)	<i>My favourite social media app would be Twitter as well, well I like Instagram to be honest and Twitter.</i>		
Respondent AA (4)	<i>I use Facebook more but I think WhatsApp is more straightforward.</i>		
Respondent AA (5)	<i>Well, I usually use WhatsApp that's the main communication app for all my friends and family. It allows me to text them, video calls and share some links and give me better access to the media. I also use Facebook but more for browsing rather than a messenger video calls, sometimes I use it for marketplace, maybe to shop around, to finds things like maybe a bargain and Instagram is not really much like the other platforms. But I'm mainly concerned with Facebook and WhatsApp.</i>		
Respondent IA (1)	<i>At the moment it's actually YouTube. I'm enjoying YouTube because sometimes, you know when I watch how I do this, you know when people have their YouTube live and then I can access that through my Facebook and then I interact with them live. That's what I do, I keep connected to people, some celebrities also, when they have their interview you know, it is nice when they mention your name, it's quite nice. I do tune in quite often, it's something new that I've learned now and I'm enjoying it.</i>		

The above results showed different answers among all ethnic groups. White Australian respondents more often preferred Facebook as a social media channel due to its feasibility and because it covers more middle-class populations. When the interviewer asked why Facebook would be a favourite, the respondent replied positively in terms of societal support (as mentioned in Table 6). When talking about other applications, WA (4) quoted Instagram due to his stepdaughter following Instagram. The statement of WA (4) as mentioned in Table 6 indicates disadvantages for children in Instagram usage. In this regard, he prefers Facebook to Instagram and he prefers Instagram as a secondary option due to having fewer friends registered on it. Furthermore, WA (3) quoted less interest in Snapchat due to the slightly different usage. In terms of other

ethnic groups such as Arab Australians, AA (4) and AA (5) outline WhatsApp and Facebook as their favourite social media application. It is AA (4) determines Facebook is not only an entertainment application but also provides business support. In contrast, the other respondent AA (3) emphasised Instagram as a favourite as mentioned in Table 6. AA (3) also mentioned the advantages of using Instagram as it is not complicated and easy to use in terms of connecting with friends. The answers of AA (3) were continuously referring to the functionalist concept of media as social media apps as Instagram focused on reinforcing values where they are needed. This indicates social media has been an advantage for Arab ethnic people in Australia to dictate their social actions and redraw their boundaries. The AA (3) also quoted X (formerly Twitter) as an application where he can find news regarding politicians or football players or CrossFit. These two favourite app selections by Arabic ethnic groups in this study highlight cultural differences impacting social media usage. Hence X (formerly Twitter) and Facebook are both utilised to construct the value or behaviour in society.

For example, it is observed that component of society varies in an unexpected and expected way to pay attention. While social media are similar these components work as a platform for presenting another part of society or values. Following the Indian ethnic group, the concept deliberating how social media apps can be used for benefiting and entertaining purposes. It is IA (1) mentioned YouTube as a purpose for entertainment. Indian perspective in terms of favourite social media applications was different from another ethnic group as it mostly focuses on the use of technology to ease communication. While IA (3) also finds it entertaining as they are celebrities who are registered on YouTube. A range of preferences of the respondents to different social media applications is evident in the response results. WA (4) shows a clear preference towards Facebook in an explicit I-society. However, AA (3) state that both Twitter and Insagram are convenient to use and, similarly, AA (4) state that, although general use Facebook is convenient, WhatsApp is easier in comparison. Related to communication, the most frequent use of AA (5) is through WhatsApp while Facebook is mostly used for browsing and at times even shopping. IA (1): Current favourite is YouTube because the platform has more interactivity and live streams; so, one can interact with celebrities. Thus, these responses demonstrate the ethnic groups' preferences in choice options that represent the fusion of functionality as well as personal attributes.

**Table 8: Average of Favourite Social Media Apps**

Source	Response	First Order Theme	Emerging Theme
Respondent WA (4)	<i>"I think it caters more for the middle of the road, middle-aged market more".</i>	Facebook is more preferable	Usage of social media pattern within ethnic groups.
Respondent WA (4)	<i>"I was worried about her and the excessive need for validation that comes with Instagram, I worry as a parent and liking to keep an eye on her".</i>	Why not Instagram	
Respondent AA (3)	<i>"First of all, Instagram is one of the good platforms for me to you know, discover and see basically see what's happening around the world. All of the people are on there, the artists, the politicians; the singers will connect with their fans"</i>	Favourite Social media application	
	<i>"If I'm talking about twitter, I'm a person who likes to know what's going around the world in terms of politics. So, I find twitter to be a place where your voice can be heard and quickly that's where people like politicians or football players or CrossFit on there, so I use it for that reason"</i>		
Respondent AA (4)	<i>I use Facebook more but I think WhatsApp is more straightforward.</i>		
Respondent AA (5)	<i>"It's because I think it's easier for videos and checking sales, and when your friends post something there, you can see it, you get to comment those kind of things".</i>		
Respondent IA (1)	<i>At the moment it's actually YouTube. I'm enjoying YouTube because sometimes, you know when I watch how I do this, you know when people have their YouTube live and then I can access that through my Facebook and then I interact with them live. That's what I do, I keep connected to people, some celebrities also, when they have their interview you know, it is nice when they mention your name, it's quite nice. I do tune in quite often, it's something new that I've learned now and I'm enjoying it.</i>	Favourite Social media application	
Respondent IA (1)	<i>"I'm enjoying YouTube because sometimes, you know when I watch how I do this, you know when people have their YouTube live and then I can access that through my Facebook and then I interact with them live".</i>	YouTube as Entertainment	

The fifth question was asked to determine the usage of an aforementioned favourite application. The interviewer asked the respondent “How often do you use (Favourite Application) every day?” The result is presented in Table 7.

#### 4.2.3.2 *Most used social media applications in different ethnicities*

Auxier and Anderson (2021) in their research have defined that people use social media applications based on their native norms and culture along with their interests. The use of social media applications has been found to be different in various ethnicities because people have different perceptions and preferences and they utilise the social media accordingly. Furthermore, Mitchell et al. (2019) have also highlighted that people of every ethnicity use at least one social media application for different purposes and different patterns are adopted in the desired manner. However, this research has been conducted with the use of a primary research approach in which people of different ethnicities were interviewed and the social media applications examined were highly used in different ethnicities. Based on this, the respondents have been asked different questions and they were also asked about the applications that are mostly used by them.

The responses reveal differences of respondents depending on the social media network they use most often. The WA (4) not only feels that Facebook targets middle aged but also has concern with regards to validation that she associates with Instagram especially to the youths. On the other hand, as AA (3) pointed out, the availability of Instagram provide a global connection with artists and personalities. Being an AA (4), the participant prefers Facebook but considers WhatsApp as easier to use. From the table 1, it can be seen that out of five attributes, AA has perceived the ease of using Facebook to access videos and sales as being highly valuable. IA (1) likes YouTube due to such functions as the ability to participate during a live stream, and the fact that it connects them to celebrities. All in all, these findings represent self-interest and apprehensions of using social media.

**Table 9: Most Used Social Media Applications in Different Ethnicities**

Source	Response	First Order Theme	Emerging Theme
Respondent AA (1)	<i>“I tend to use Facebook, Instagram,</i>		

	<i>Tumblr, WhatsApp, and Pinterest"</i>	Different social media applications are used.	Most social media applications are used by different ethnicities.
Respondent WA (1)	<i>"I use in order of popularity, there's Instagram, Facebook and LinkedIn, if we're calling that social media"</i>	Instagram, Facebook and LinkedIn are mostly used.	
Respondent WA (2)	<i>"Yeah, probably Facebook"</i>	Facebook is highly used.	
Respondent AA (3)	<i>"Out of the three, I'd have to say Instagram"</i>	Instagram is highly used.	
Respondent IA (2)	<i>"I mainly use Facebook and sometimes LinkedIn, I do have an Instagram account but I always feel like I'm always doubling up using Facebook, I haven't really ventured into Instagram as much. I'm with Facebook since 2008."</i>	Facebook is used mostly as compared to Instagram.	

It has been analysed from the aforementioned table (9) that among the Arab Australians different social media applications are used with which Instagram is the most highlighted. On the other hand, Arab Australians also use different social media applications like WhatsApp, Tumblr and Facebook but Instagram has been found mostly used among the Arab Australians. Furthermore, White Australians tend to use Facebook more as compared to other social media applications. It has been determined that White Australians use the famous social media applications like Instagram and LinkedIn but Facebook is the most highlighted. Likewise, the Indian Australians also use Facebook more compared to the other social media applications. It has been analysed that the Indian Australians have their accounts on different social media applications like Instagram but Facebook is the most highlighted. However, it has been identified from the aforementioned patterns that Facebook is used more among Indian Australian and White Australian but the Arabic Australians utilise different social media applications but they are more towards the use of Instagram by

which they are connected with different people with the use of this social media applications.

#### 4.2.3.3 Reasons for using specific social media applications among different ethnicities

Twenge et al. (2019) have emphasised that people use different social media applications as per their societal structure along with their personal preferences by which different applications are used in different ethnicities. To examine this factor, the respondents were further asked about the reasons by which they are using these specific social media applications. The below table (Table 10) addresses the information regarding this in which different factors are evaluated, which defines the use of specific social media applications among different ethnicities. It is clearly evident that the responses that were obtained reveal a variation of preferences when it comes to social media platforms by ethnicity. Respondent AA (1) mentions, they use a number of applications which are Facebook, Instagram and Tumblr for Microblogging, WhatsApp and Pinterest. In the WA (1) section, three social networking sites are identified as the platform that Tarik most frequently uses: Instagram, Facebook, and LinkedIn, though Instagram is used the most. As WA [2], respondents report they post on Facebook very often They do like and like Instagram and do not like any other [As AA [3]] IA (2) mentioned that primarily IAO utilizes 'Facebook' which it has been registered since 2008 and he/she does not find it necessary to join 'Instagram'. Altogether, it can be observed that there is a leaning towards the two platforms, at different frequencies, across the ethnic groups.

**Table 10: Different Factors in Choosing Social Media Applications**

Source	Response	First Order Theme	Emerging Theme
Respondent AA (1)	<i>"I would say like the majority of my time spent on social media is on Pinterest so maybe like one to two hours a day. Again, cause like it revolves basically around anything I want to do with my life like workouts, recipes. Like even, I'm a kindergarten teacher and I get lots of</i>	Information regarding personal activities can be obtained.	



	<i>activities and ideas for crafts, all from Pinterest."</i>		Time utilised on social media applications.
Respondent WA (1)	<i>"Yeah, A lot of the time to be honest, first thing I do when I wake up and last thing I do before going to bed and pretty consistently checking in throughout the day"</i>	To have a timely update regarding different activities.	
Respondent WA (2)	<i>"Because of the groups that I am involved in, I don't really use it for friends, I use it for different art groups also my community groups so I know what is going on in my suburb that's what I really want to know, the information that's going home and groups in the home decorating groups and because I am back in to doing my art on the weekend, I do spend a lot of time looking at a different post from about a dozen different artists that I'm following."</i>	To keep engaged with the community groups.	
Respondent AA (3)	<i>"I feel like it's for the younger generations and it's really easy to use easy to navigate and mainly because all my friends use it as well."</i>	To keep connected with friends.	
Respondent IA (2)	<i>"I would say maybe half an hour. It could be more on some days just depending on what my schedule is like."</i>	Associated with the daily schedule.	

It has been analysed from the responses that different preferences are present among different ethnicities by which different social media applications are utilised. The Arabic Australians surveyed reported that they use social media applications primarily because they (the platforms) have information regarding their interests and they can have updated information based on their interests and preferences. Moreover, the Arabic Australians in the study reported that they also use social media applications to keep themselves connected with their friends so they can have information regarding their friends and they have the information about what is going on in their social culture. Furthermore, Indian Australians use social media applications based on their schedule. It has been observed that there is no such preference present by which the social media application is used and the application is being utilised to spend the free time and information regarding daily life activities could be observed. On the other hand, the White Australians utilise social media applications to keep themselves connected with the different communities with which they are engaged. This allows them to have sufficient information regarding different activities that are being performed within their communities. It has been observed from the findings that people with different ethnicities use social media applications by which they can keep themselves connected with their friends along with different communities to have updated information. On the other hand, it has been observed that people also use the social media application to spend their free time and they can have the information regarding their interests to keep themselves updated regarding the activities in which they are interested.

#### *4.2.3.4 Social media applications and cultural influence*

Swart (2021) has highlighted that people use social media applications based on their interests and preferences and they spend time accordingly on different applications. However, it has been determined that these factors are derived from cultural influences because culture produces a direct impact on the use of social media. Based on this, the respondents were asked different questions in which they were asked regarding their favourite social media applications along with the reasons why these applications are their favourite. The responses are defined in the below table (11). These responses show the difference of frequency of use of social media among the respondent. With regards to the frequency of usage, AA (1) personally uses Pinterest

for about one to two hours a day although it used for workouts and teaching activities. WA (1) points out frequent usage during the day, which maybe at dawn and just before going to bed. Community and art groups are a target for WA (2) — it is necessary to be aware of all events and follow other artists on social networks. On the other hand, AA (3) considers the SM as suitable for the young people only and as easy to use to keep in touch with friends. In I A (2) respondents report more flexible schedule, which they spend about half-an-hour daily.

**Table 11: Social Media Applications and Cultural Influence**

Source	Response	First Order Theme	Emerging Theme
Respondent AA (1)	<i>"Well, for instance, I'm gonna talk here particularly about Instagram right now cause like, you get to see a lot of influencers nowadays and influencers tend to influence through their culture. So, you have your travel blogs, you have your cooking blogs and so on and each is influenced by their own culture."</i>	Culture is reflected in different social media activities.	Influence of culture on social media activities.
Respondent WA (1)	<i>"Yeah. I used to work in *inaudible* in international education, so I'd find myself surrounded by people from lots of different places and even the social media they would you would be completely different. There was we chat, that was very strictly, that was the main one for the students from China. I guess, a lot of the Aussie students here where I am, use Snapchat. I thought no one uses Snapchat anymore but the younger kids, the high school kids and stuff are still using it. I find that to be something that might influence it. What was the other one? Tiktok. That one seems to be popular among lots of different people."</i>	The influence of culture allows understanding of other people's perspectives.	
Respondent WA (2)	<i>"Yeah I get what you mean but most of. yeah, yeah, I get what you mean now, okay so dominantly most of the artists can be from different countries so what I'm saying there is if there are any 2 or 3 artists that I was following, one is from India, there is another one from Japan there's two from India and one from Japan. One is and *inaudible* to their country. I don't think I'm following any of the original artists which you know is a terrible thing because their art can be beautiful."</i>	Cultural influences allow understanding other people's choices	
Respondent AA (3)	<i>"No, I don't think so."</i>	No influence on culture.	
Respondent IA (2)	<i>"Oh absolutely. I definitely think that has a big part to do with it, with social media in terms of you know, take China for example, we know they don't have Instagram, or Facebook, they have Wechat or something like that, I can't remember that. Depending on which culture and</i>		

	<i>what kind of you know parameters their government has set for their use of social media, I think it has a big effect. Depending on where you come from or what kind of marketing or advertising might have been, that they do for people in that region, I think it will have a big effect yes perhaps we can go all the way back to the sensibility of the Internet as well for different cultures. But yeah, I definitely think there is an effect. Yeah."</i>	Culture produces a noticeable impact on the marketing and advertisement in a country	
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It has been evaluated from the responses that the Arabic Australians surveyed define that the activities performed on social media applications reflect the culture because people perform different activities that are accepted within their native culture. On the other hand, the White Australians defined that culture produces a noticeable influence because it reflects people's perspectives and understanding regarding different people's perceptions can be developed because of the cultural influences through social media. Moreover, one Arab Australian has described that there is no such influence is observed on social media channels. Furthermore, the Indian Australians surveyed have responded that culture has a direct impact on social media activities and the information obtained regarding different cultures allows one to understand different people's perspectives based on their cultural activities.

#### *4.2.3.5 Social media applications for buying and selling products*

According to the research of Rana et al. (2020), social media is a highly used online medium by which people buy and sell different products. On the other hand, social media is also used by individuals by which they obtain information regarding different products which they buy or sell the products through these channels. Based on this, the respondents have asked different questions by which the use of social media could be examined for buying and selling different products. The responses reveal the fact that culture plays a key role in the social media activities. AA (1) explains how the influencers combine cultural experiences via different types of blogs including travel and cooking blogs. International education (WA 1) reveals these platforms where Chinese students make use of WeChat platforms, while Australian youth relies on Snapchat and Tik Tok, courtesy of cultural differences. WA (2) shows following artists of different countries, meaning that for the appreciation of art, different cultures are involved. However, AA (3) negates cultural contribution in this regard. IA (2) supports

this contention by arguing that the use of social media and their marketing change with cultural context, especially where restrictions are tight like in China.

**Table 12: Use of Social Media for Online Purchasing**

Source	Response	First Order Theme	Emerging Theme
Respondent AA (1)	<i>"I would have to say, I would say maybe sometimes, Instagram"</i>	Instagram is used sometimes for buying and selling.	Use of social media for buying and selling.
Respondent WA (1)	<i>"Not to sell, except for the work when I suppose they sell the wine tours or might lead them to the website. But for myself, I do buy things from the targeted ads get used so very cleverly I was just doing that for the past 4 hours waiting for that meeting they pop up and remind you there's a sale on, so I do more buying than selling. Actually marketplace, I use it for selling."</i>	For buying purposes only.	
Respondent WA (2)	<i>"I've used Facebook community page a number of times when I'm passing on things to be up cycled so they're free and I've done that with the marketplace which is also on Facebook and I've used the marketplace to sell a few things. And I've only used one or two apps to buy a few things for Christmas and that was basically because I couldn't go out because of Covid. If I am going to be buying something online, I'd rather buy it from a well-known website or retailer."</i>	Facebook community pages are used.	
Respondent AA (3)	<i>"Yes, that's true"</i>	Social media is used for buying and selling.	
Respondent AA (4)	<i>It does of course it does because people like so many people, these days, so many people are using these apps and they're sitting so many hours on it, they spend a lot of time on it, so of course if someone like if we have a restaurant, if they come they like the food, someone will post, all their friends will see it and ask where is this restaurant and come to their restaurant, they try the food, they like it that's how you get bigger. It helps a lot.</i>	Social for Hospitality Business	
Respondent IA (2)	<i>"I have used, you know I have actually purchased some things from advertisement campaigns on social media, on specifically Facebook. I have previously, I kind of stepped away from that because unfortunately there have been so many scams and a lot of organisation advertising ads that are false, I'm actually seeing some of my friends purchasing things, and I've seen the ads for that company pop up on Facebook with a friend commenting that a this is a scam, don't buy from this organisation. But when it comes to selling, I have put items on the marketplace."</i>	Social media was used for buying and selling during Covid-19.	

The above result demonstrated the use of social media for online purchasing. All ethnic groups were asked: "Do you use any of the social media apps to buy or sell products"? The responses in terms of explaining this factor of social media usage have provided enough information to answer the research question. In this case, respondent AA (1) highlighted Instagram as an application for buying and selling, while Instagram only requires optimisation of business profile by adjusting an internal setting. It is used for establishing partnerships with Instagram influencers to enhance the selling and buying of the products. In contrast, the White Australian respondent (1) only uses social media to buy products. WA (1) pointed this out as an effective marketing technique to sell products. It targets ads to get buyers for the products. Pop-up marketing is very effective in terms of targeting organic buyers. However, WA (1) utilised the social media platform for buying only. Similarly, the Facebook community page was found to be more effective in terms of buying and selling products for the White Australian ethnic group. The White Australian respondent (2) showed usage of Facebook pages to market products for selling. Facebook gives the option to highlight any product for sale. WA (2) identified the usage of social media platforms such as Facebook to arrange the Christmas sale. This has been boosted due to COVID-19. However, WA (2) suggested the use of a website as a platform for selling and buying products. An Indian respondent also backed the views of White Australian ethnic by determining the advertisement and marketing on social media platforms. Hence, IA (2) identified the advertisement campaigns which is specifically running on social media platforms. However, IA (2) has stepped away from buying from Facebook due to the number of scams reported. She added Facebook has been used for fake advertisements due to a lot of organisations working with the same name. It has become a challenge for buyers to buy original products from social media platforms. In terms of answering another question related to buying and selling products with the use of social media apps. The interviewer asked all three ethnic groups questions related to their views about social media usage in terms of selling and purchasing. The results are addressed in Table 13. The responses captures the different uses of social media strategies especially in the sale and purchase business ventures. AA (1) from time to time conducts transactions through Instagram whereas, WA (1) mainly buys products from targeted ads but sells through Facebook Marketplace. WA (2) Uses facebook community market for sales and raffles as well as using the 'Marketplace' for buying online, but for this, they prefer well-known stores. The third source, AA (3)

also supports the use of social media for commerce. AA (4) shows how effective social site is in advertising businesses particularly restaurants. IA (2) explained about a number of scams which have been met when buying through this Website, however, they also buy via the Facebook's Marketplace.

**Table 13: Different Factors that are Involved in the Usage of Social Media in Terms of Selling and Buying Products**

Source	Response	First Order Theme	Emerging Theme
Respondent WA (3)	<i>"It was good. I went through a bit of a phase during the first Covid lockdown where I bought and sold things that would normally take so much time to do it."</i>	Buying and Selling increase due to COVID-19.	Use of social media for buying and selling.
Respondent WA (5)	<i>"I usually use Instagram because it seems to be the convenient way for online purchasing."</i>	Instagram is more convenient	
Respondent AA (7)	<i>I did online purchasing, but I am more interested to do traditional purchasing.</i>	More interest to Traditional purchasing	
Respondent AA (2)	<i>It can be anything, between hair products, clothing, make up, retail and also if you're a food blogger like me, you get a lot of for example like other good restaurants and it becomes like a competition also a status thing, like whoever goes to that place or posts in that place then the more followers you get that engage with your page.</i>	Products or service do they influence buyers	
Respondent IA (2)	<i>"Only on Instagram. Instagram and Facebook I have a business page so people are able to purchase what I put on those. They can email me or put an order in, sure".</i>	For own businesses	
Respondent IA (2)	<i>No, it is not mandatory, I usually buy what I found good so I do not think that there is any role of culture in buying and selling. Although, I can say that I would prefer a cultural page to buy any cultural product.</i>	Role of culture in buying and selling.	
Respondent WA (4)	<i>Yeah, Actually, yes, I have, for selling yeah. More like selling or giving away. I actually had to do that for my youngest devil bed, she's birthing this week, I'm going to give away her single bed on market place. I've bought a lot of things, I've got plants, what else have I got plant pots, garden ornaments, this and that, a desk or two for the kids. I've got things like that yeah.</i>	The use of social media for give aways	



The above results demonstrate different factors involved in the usage of social media in terms of selling and buying products. The White Australian ethnic group is more into an increase in buying and selling from social media due to COVID-19. WA (3) demonstrated the usage of this platform for selling and buying products. Similarly, WA (5) found that Instagram was the more convenient application for online purchasing. In contrast, the Arab respondent (7) was found to be more focused on traditional purchasing due to his culture. This demonstrated the association of social media with culture. It is due to Arab culture does not allow to be more involved in online businesses but they are more often interested in traditional purchasing. However, there were Arab respondents such as AA (2) who pointed out products and services which are increasingly used in influencer marketing. The respondent highlighted a few products such as clothing and cosmetic products which are highly rated on social media with the help of influencers to promote buying and selling. While AA (2) also determined food blogging as his work in terms of presenting services. There are many restaurants working on social media to highlight their menu and different food items to get a competitive edge in the market. Therefore, the more followers they have, they increase their chances of getting their product to be sold. Following the Indian respondent, this ethnic group was found to have their own business. In this context, IA (2) mentioned the business page that she uses to sell her products. The entire process of selling and purchasing is done with email communication or private messages on social media. Therefore, this demonstrates there is a potential role of social media in buying and purchasing products.

#### *4.2.3.6 The dynamics of social media within ethnic groups*

Social media application adaptation is considered a dynamic process by Savci et al. (2018) study as it relocates people to an unfamiliar cultural atmosphere. It established the functional and reciprocal relationship within the environment. Therefore, the interviewer asked respondents "Would you prefer to use apps that are relevant to your culture? Why?". The answers of all ethnic groups represented in the current study highlight different social media handles which were found to be relevant to their culture. The results are addressed in the Table 14. The responses also showed the effects of COVID-19 on buying and selling behavior. WA (3) observes that there is higher activity when there are lock downs and WA (5) has realized that Instagram is

the most convenient method to make purchases online. AA (7) said he does not like using the internet when shopping, he rather do it physically. From the literature review in AA (2), it is evident that the location and competition Affect buying decision, which applies to food bloggers as they aim at boosting their status and their followers. Such resources as Instagram mentioned in IA (2) and such companies allow the customers make orders for their businesses. WA (4) explains how Marketplace can be used in buying and gifting items within the community to support the function of the platform.

**Table 14: How Apps Are Relevant To The Culture**

Source	Response	First Order Theme	Emerging Theme
Respondent AA (7)	<i>Honestly, I don't think so. I feel like I'd like to be more exposed to other people's cultures as well.</i>	Relevant social media handles to culture	The dynamics of social media handles within ethnic groups
Respondent IA (3)	<i>Not necessarily, I think I kind of got to. Yes and no because I see culture is always comfort, you know, so when running a business and when you sometimes you need to step out of your box and you know.</i>	Relevant social media handles to culture	
Respondent WA (5)	<i>Yes, Well, I'm a New Zealander originally, so I have a lot of New Zealand apps on my phone. I like to know what's going on in my country. Yeah, and I like to learn and keep up with everything going on over there. I mean, I do read about different things in the world but basically a lot more of Australia or New Zealand.</i>	Apps vary in terms of regions.	
Respondent WA (4)	<i>I want to say, the thing is you don't know which ones are relevant to your culture, I think the thing is you don't know which ones are relevant to your culture using WhatsApp a lot more because of my interactions with the sales manager and his team, they're all Indian. They're actually based here, and very westernised in lots of ways, and the other year I worked at an entirely Indian firm, everything is on WhatsApp, whereas none of my Aussie, white Aussie colleagues, message me on WhatsApp, they just text me. My Filipino staff use WhatsApp or email, so I'm pretty adaptable and I've lived in like four different countries.</i>	User-friendly and language barriers	
Respondent AA (6)	<i>I'm not sure because I didn't have any I didn't experience anything like that, so I'm not sure. If you're talking about business, I would use the apps</i>	Business relevant apps preferences	

	<i>for the most optimum results. I don't have something like that so I can't tell you exactly.</i>		
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The aforementioned question describes how apps are relevant to the culture. All included ethnic groups answered different answers which were relevant to the research question. An Arab ethnic respondent highlighted no connection between any social media app with culture. AA (7) explained their interest as he likes to be more exposed to other cultures. Similarly, the Indian respondent had the same perspective but chose to be neutral in both perspectives due to personal and professional needs. The Indian respondent believed that culture is always a comfort to live a quality life with family and friends. While in professional life, people need to step out of their culture to understand the world better. Therefore, this indicates that social media apps can be relevant to culture but on conditions. While there are aspects such as a business that contradict the above statement. On the other hand, the White Australia perspective has differently answered this question by mentioning regional factors that are relevant to social app usage. The WA (5) identified himself as a New Zealander in terms of using a lot of applications. Regional New Zealanders have been found to be curious to know what happens in the world. The WA (5) pointed to himself as his likeness to learning and understanding the world.

Social media is regarded as being a significant source of learning and knowledge about different things in the world. By contrast, another White Australian respondent WA (4) was found to be curious about how apps are relevant to the culture. He added that his use of WhatsApp was more due to his employment. He used to be collaborating with his team using WhatsApp. However, WA (4) also highlighted that all his team members were Indian and Filipino. On the other hand, he further pointed out his Australian friends do not message him on WhatsApp. Therefore, this detail answered the gist of the question asked that the use of social media apps is linked with regional as well as business terms to develop effective communication. The Arab Respondent AA (6) in this study answered this question as they are not confirmed about the question. This is because they did not experience anything related to cultural association with social media. However, AA (6) highlighted the business aspect to show how apps are relevant and how they vary with business activities. However, the respondent did not respond accurately to address this question. The respondent was another related to the same theme. The question was for all respondents in all ethnic

groups who mentioned how apps were relevant to culture. That is why their responses suggest the following views and understanding of social media regarding culture. IA (3) asserts a cultural comfort that should require occasional excursion from it for business purposes as presented in AA (7). WA (5) talks of the need for regional apps with focus on New Zealand since he has had some past experience developing them, and to maintain relevance with what is happening back home. WA (4) explains the applicability of the WhatsApp in his interaction with the Indian colleagues as compared to his Australian counterparts who stick more to the conventional texting. AA (6) cautiously avoid the question of culture and further stress how one can get the most of an app in business.

**Table 15: Different aspects of how social media apps are relevant to culture**

Source	Response	First Order Theme	Emerging Theme
Respondent WA (3)	<i>I suppose it's hard to say, I think that' for example if you were religious person, I would probably like an app that catered to help me connect with people in that community. I guess the only relevant community for me would be the professional community especially because I work in the public service, professional public service. Community from the young people, are taking their first professional steps need apps that has different platforms and uses, like LinkedIn. So yeah, I would say if I could define my culture socially, by saying for us public service professionals, I would want to be able to connect with that group on a social media app or service.</i>	The use of social media app for religious basis	Impact of cultural differences on the social media usage
Respondent IA (2)	<i>I'm interested in what else is out there in the world as well so I suppose I can be more intrigued, I've got you know a lot for things within the education field, I would like to broaden my horizons and see what other cultures are sprucing up the time. Seeing different marketing projects and within my own role as well, so yeah.</i>	The use of social media app for Education	
Respondent AA (5)	<i>I would say that Facebook here is pretty Arab oriented. That being said, no I wouldn't want to use Facebook daily for social media, like I said.</i>	Facebook is relevant to different cultures .	
Respondent AA (4)	<i>Oh. Social media apps, I might use some social media apps for religion, for religious purpose and that's it. Like something to help me find the nearest mosque to pray to, or the nearest Arab or middle eastern food around me or nearby, that would help me out. But otherwise, not really</i>	The use of social media app for religious basis	

The above results highlight different aspects of how social media apps are relevant to culture. Arabic respondents such as AA (4) use social apps for their religious basis. The Arab respondent AA (4) highlighted that social media apps can be used for religious purposes. It is used for finding the nearest mosques and relevant news to the community. While in Australia, the Arabic respondent also uses religious apps to find cultural food in their area. This demonstrated the significant relevance of cultural norms towards the use of social media applications. On the other hand, a similar answer was quoted by White Australian respondent WA (3) who pointed out social apps are relaxant to religious activities.

#### *4.1.3.7 Impact of cultural differences on social media usage*

According to Jackson & Wang (2013), there are differences among generations and cultures which differentiate the use of social media. It is due to different societal traditions and norms that exist among people who decide the choice, perspective and values of choosing social media. Some aspects are different in the development of innovation and technology. Therefore, there are few studies which consider the usage of social media concerning culture. In the current study, the respondents were asked about how culture impacts the use of social media. In this regard, the respondents were affirmatively answered about how culture impacts social media. The results are addressed in Table 16. The responses show that culture and use of social media are interrelated issues. WA (3) listed applicability for linking the public service professionals and indicating a preference for the community-based apps. IA (2) demonstrates interest in learning different cultures of the world and is in search of educational materials to help improve his/her working position. As pointed out by AA (5) Facebook is mainly Arab focused but personally he/she does not like to access it on daily basis. She uses social media for prayers, seeking local mosque, Middle Eastern food etc., thus, it has a pragmatic view towards the cultural aspects. (AA 4) In general, these findings demonstrate that cultural values influence the choice of social networks and their application.

**Table 16: Impact of Cultural Differences on Social Media Usage**

Source	Response	First Order Theme	Emerging Theme
Respondent IA (2)	<i>Oh absolutely. I definitely think that has a big part to do with it, with social media in terms of you know, take</i>	What government	

	<i>China for example, we know they don't have Instagram, or Facebook, they have Wechat or something like that, I can't remember that. Depending on which culture and what kind of you know parameters their government has set for their use of social media, I think it has a big effect. Depending on where you come from or what kind of marketing or advertising might have been, that they do for people in that region, I think it will have a big effect yes perhaps we can go all the way back to the sensibility of the Internet as well for different cultures. But yeah, I definitely think there is an effect. Yeah.</i>	has allowed is concerned with social media usage	Impact of cultural differences on social media usage
Respondent IA (3)	<i>For example, my mom being a street Asian single mother has a lot, I find that the power of like respect for authority and the parents has changed over the years I guess over social media. I think before you would just kind of you know your parent would tell you and you'd take that on board where as of now, there is so much out there, so much you can see, so much bad and good that people can see on social media, which can change a way how someone's parents might raise them, traditionally I mean.</i>	Norms are significantly impacting culture	
Respondent AA (6)	<i>Kind of yes, yes. Maybe here we think in our culture Instagram is for models maybe or like people with a lot of adventures and advantages in life, that's why I don't use Instagram 'cause I feel like posting stuff like that makes me, I don't know, it kind of puts pressure on me to post the best pictures out there or whatever, or to show the adventurous side of me only, it puts so much social pressure through the simple posts, the likes, and the cars, its stressful, it's not fun, so culture definitely impacts the usage of social media. Twitter is also taken as a teenage app, its designed for teenagers, I don't find a lot of older people, for example, my parents they don't use twitter, they don't know how it works, but they have a better idea on Facebook and Instagram and other social media platforms, but twitter is probably is considered more for youngsters maybe.</i>	Apps vary in terms of liking or age.	
Respondent WA (5)	<i>I would say so, for me personally it doesn't, because its user friendly for myself, but I can imagine different cultures that can find it pretty frustrating, even though they use it in their own language, with the different nationalities</i>	User-friendly and language barriers	
Respondent IA (4)	<i>That's an interesting question. Well, I feel that culture must have a direct impact on social media usage because the culture actually defines who we are, a person who is more of let's say if we are thinking about different types of cultural backgrounds, I obviously see a difference between western culture and eastern culture and where I've been is that obviously, this has got some kind of impact on how the social media is being used because every individual has an influence of their culture.</i>	Differences in culture such as Western and Eastern	

Because of varied points of view, the results presented in the table have been expanded to include all racial and ethnic groups. As a result, the White Australian ethnic group has a distinct viewpoint in terms of the ways culture influences the use of social media. One of the respondents mentioned that one cannot consider social

media in the context of culture. It ought to be evaluated according to how user-friendly it is and how easy it is to communicate with friends. Despite this, culture affects how social media is used because of differences in norms and language barriers. The Arab respondent, on the other hand, has the same answer, which demonstrates how culture can influence social media due to norms. He went on to say that the popularity of Instagram among Arab families was due to the fact that they liked to post pictures and show off their adventurous sides. The social pressure to post one's best picture in order to show one's peers off has become ingrained in the culture. The respondent mentioned that there are times when it is stressful and not fun at all. Therefore, the impact that culture has on the use of social media can be determined by the reasons given above. In keeping with the Indian point of view, the respondent stated that Asian culture has traditionally been revered for its power of authority and respect. Their point of view has evolved over the years as a direct result of their participation in various social media activities.

This response exemplified the power that can be wielded by the use of social media to influence culture. Another Indian respondent, on the other hand, emphasised the significance of culture in terms of identity. Because of this, it has a direct effect on people's use of social media. IA (4) has determined the fundamental distinctions between Eastern and Western ways of life. Values, decisions, and points of view can all contribute to the disparity. In a similar vein, Western Australian culture highlighted the frustration of different cultures, even after language barriers and differences in nationality had been taken into account. This demonstrates that different people have different opinions regarding the use of social media. People frequently go above and beyond to form relationships with one another on social media while simultaneously sharing their concerns, political views and likes. The respondents who identify as belonging to the White Australian culture have a similar perspective regarding the use of social media to connect with other people. The Arab perspective, on the other hand, sheds light on whether or not differences in cross-national cultural norms and sociocultural characteristics can affect the environment of social media.

#### *4.2.3.7.1 Language barriers impacting social media usage*

When the respondent was asked about the cultural impact of social media usage, there was a respondent who highlighted language as a significant barrier to social media usage. All three ethnic groups have shown positivity toward the above

statement. The result is addressed in Table 17. The responses show the importance of culture in what people post on their social media platforms. IA (2) shows how governmental policies of various countries affect the platforms that exist in the countries, including China's WeChat. IA (3) to the effects of social media on parent child relations talks about how parents lose authority to their children because of exposure to different views online. Sameer (6) complains of excessive influence on the part of Instagram to present a perfect life, while Sameer says that Twitter is considered a youngsters' site. WA (5) further recognizes that it is easy for him to manoeuvre the social media handles but shows understanding that it may be a bit challenging for the people from other cultural backgrounds. IA (4) uses previous cultural works in order to assert that culture defines social media interactions, particularly, Western and East cultures.

**Table 17: Language Barrier impacting social media usage**

Source	Response	First Order Theme	Emerging Theme
Respondent WA (5)	<i>I would say so, for me personally it doesn't, because it user friendly for me, but I can imagine different cultures that can find it pretty frustrating, even though they use it in their own language, with the different nationalities</i>	Language Barriers impacting social media usage	Impact of cultural differences on the social media usage
Respondent WA (1)	<i>Obviously, the same language, the information.</i>		
Respondent WA (5)	<i>Hmm! Interesting one., I think culture is your identity like wherever we go. We will be recognised by our culture as who are we, and from where we belong. I would say culture is a very important aspect of our life. While, it impacts depends on the language. It can be impacted with different languages.</i>		
Respondent AA (8)	<i>Ummm! I would say yes. May be due to language issues. Like my mother use to struggle in reading English.</i>		
Respondent IA (5)	<i>Yes, exactly but it is due to language issues sometimes</i>		

The language was identified as a barrier to social usage in the previous result. The reason for this is that people of different cultures speak different languages. The respondents, such as White Australians, do not consider themselves to be language barriers when it comes to their use of social media. On the other hand,



researchers discovered that the Arab ethnic group was the one that was most affected by language change. Due to a lack of language comprehension, members of the Arab ethnic group do not make extensive use of social media. However, one of the Arab respondents pointed out that different people use different social media apps at different ages. As he emphasised, X (formerly Twitter) is an application that is geared toward younger users and is not intended for older users. An Indian respondent's perspective on age and language barriers in social media usage was also very similar to that of the other respondents. On the other hand, evidence from the Indian perspective demonstrated that language is a barrier to the use of social media. This suggested that linguistic barriers can inhibit effective communication within social media platforms. Effective communication is important in digital media because it has the potential to cause conflict and can promote incoherent points. A language barrier is just one of the reasons why effective communication is important. Despite this, individuals need to make use of the various language options provided by applications.

#### *4.2.3.7.2 Cultural ethics as a barrier*

It is essential for there to be a culture of ethics on social media platforms for there to be continuous information sharing among users of social media platforms. People have a desire to make appropriate use of the information that is shared. On the other hand, there is frequent abuse of the information that is shared on social media, which can take the form of unethically modified information or false information that is used to propagate people and can ultimately cause harm to the users. In this context, the interviewer questioned the respondent on a variety of topics concerning the influence that culture has on the way people use social media. Table 18 explains the result. The responses paint a picture of how use of language has a great impact on the interaction facilitated by social media across different cultures. WA(5) It confirms that social media is easy to use for himself but for others IT is frustrating which shows the difficulties that people from different cultural background face. WA (1) highlights that a common ground is another key factor as far as information transfer is concerned. WA (5) also affirms that cultural aspect plays a significant role in defining the identity of people and therefore, the engagement in social media, interactively and based on the language. Employer (8) and Information Avoidance (5) are in similar line, where for example, a parent experiencing difficulty with language will hinder them from going through the

social media platforms. In sum, these observations highlight the part played by language in structuring relevant culture socially media.

**Table 18: Cultural Ethics as a Barrier**

Source	Response	First Order Theme	Emerging Theme
Respondent AA (3)	<i>So like I said just now that when your family members have parties and events and things like this and when you see them on Facebook, your culture seems to me like it's a family-oriented culture, which is why you connect with these things?</i>	Impacts of social usage on family oriented culture.	Impact of cultural differences on the social media usage
Respondent IA (2)	<i>Yeah. Well I use Facebook for friends only, I actually try not to be friends with work colleagues on Facebook, and when we don't work together any longer, we become friends on Facebook. It's mainly for friends and leisure, Facebook. And LinkedIn is for business.</i>		
Respondent WA (3)	<i>Facebook than Instagram, Instagram seems to be just more little snippets of your life kind of thing. But Facebook, I think can be more politicised. Like I've got a Zimbabwean couple who are my friends I tend to find a lot of their stuff is like personal stuff they post is about black pride as well there is a lot of that, where I will post a lot of stuff about disability rights and a necessity to get vaccinated because I focus on disabilities for much of my mind-set, we all empathise with the stuff we relate to, if it's in our culture, we're going to relate to that more.</i>	Unethical use of Social Media Apps	
Respondent WA (2)	<i>Yeah, definitely. I used to work in *inaudible* in international education, so I'd find myself surrounded by people from lots of different places and even the social media they would you would be completely different. There was we chat, that was very strictly, that was the main one for the students from China. I guess, a lot of the Aussie students here where I am, they use Snapchat. I thought no one uses Snapchat anymore but the younger kids, the high school kids and stuff are still using it. I definitely find that to be something that might influence it. What was the other one Tiktok. That one seems to be popular among lots of different people.</i>	Unethical use of Social Media Apps	
Respondent IA (1)	<i>In my culture for example, you see my friends in Malaysia, they're used to being very active but now I think because probably there is so many social media apps available, since I'm only using Facebook, LinkedIn and all that so I don't see much of them on Facebook, but they used to be really active and something stopped them. But here in Australia, when I see this sort of lot of them, they're using them. I don't know if it's because the culture, from where I'm looking at it it's not the culture, more of regional interest.</i>	Diversified cultural values.	

The above results stated what factors influence culture. When an interviewer asked about the opinion of the respondents in a study by asking open-handed questions. The respondent A question was posed to AA regarding how culture can impact the usage of social media. He stressed the importance of taking into account the family dynamic. Family plays an important role in culture, but the importance of family can vary from one family to another. In a similar vein, the Indian Ethnic respondent IA (2) mentioned using Facebook as an application for friends, one in which friends can remotely feature themselves. IA (2) sees Facebook as a leisure and friendship-based application where they can socially interact with family and friends. By contrast, White Australian respondents have identified several other factors. One of these is the unethical use of social media. Instagram, according to one of the White respondents WA (3), is more focused on family and friends, while Facebook, according to the same respondent, is becoming more political. As a result, this demonstrated that social media apps are geared toward families and are susceptible to being influenced by culture. Furthermore, the other respondents from the White Australian ethnic group outlined the social media usage variabilities among international students due to people coming from different and socially interacting with each other. He compared the usage of social media with that of an international student studying abroad to demonstrate how culture impacts social media usage. He deliberately added that there are differences in using social media apps due to cultural differences. The White Australian ethnic group preferred LinkedIn as an application for their career growth and business. While Facebook and Instagram are made for communication with family and friends. In the case of culture, the usage of these applications varies in order to adjust to their cultural lifestyles. This demonstrates every culture and ethnic group has its own popular social media application. On the other hand, Indian respondents were asked about what factor indicated culture impacting social media usage. The answers were evident to indicate social media usage varies with the country's applications. As IA (1) mentioned, Malaysians seem to be active in terms of using social media applications as compared to the Indian perspective. The results of IA (2) were similar to White Australians in terms of choosing social media applications. The most used applications in India were found to be Facebook and LinkedIn due to their ability to facilitate effective communication between friends, family and

businesses. Therefore, this demonstrated that it is not about culture impacting the usage of social media but the regional interest.

#### 4.2.3.7.3 Race and Regional Barrier

There were respondents of all three ethnic groups who are deliberately supporting the impacts of the culture of social media usage. When the interviewee asked about culture, some respondents also mentioned the inclusion of race in regional contribution to social media usage. The results are addressed in Table 19 (overleaf). The responses show how it is possible to use social media analysis in order to explain the culture of the people involved. Relying on the data obtained from the response to the survey (AA (3)), it can be mentioned that family-oriented events in the face of Facebook bring cultural closeness. IA (2) uses Facebook in primarily personal relationships because of professional relationships he or she maintains in linked In with no focus on leisure. WA (3) adds that by contrast to Facebook which is politically associated and increasingly involved, Instagram reverts to the surface, but nevertheless provides links to personal posts in matters such as cultural identity, disability, and many more. In WA (2), the author highlights the differences of preferences in the use of social media amongst the international students focused on Chinese students who used WeChat and Australian students who used Snapchat. IA (1) sees a change of traffic in friends' profile in social media, which makes the author tend to use regional interest to influence the using frequency.

**Table 19: Race and Regional Barrier**

Source	Response	First Order Theme	Emerging Theme
Respondent WA (3)	<i>But I yeah, may need to add to the question of like the intersection of race and culture, I think I don't have anything necessarily that I could add to that because I'm a majority, so I believe social media is catered to me anyway, I can imagine people from other racial groups, especially for people who are in a country for the first time, trying to navigate their way around through that, I think a tailored social media would be invaluable for those groups.</i>	Impacts of social media usage	Impact of cultural differences on the social media usage
Respondent AA (6)	<i>Yes, definitely for example in Egypt I feel like people are more on Facebook, they use Facebook more often cause of the mentality there. People in Egypt are kind of similar, they have similar mentalities so they kind of identify more on Facebook, I don't know how to explain it.</i>		

Respondent AA (7)	<i>Because I am too away from my heritage and culture; though it would be a pleasure to keep my cultural norms with me through social media.</i>	Unethical use of Social Media Apps	
Respondent WA (1)	<i>Seems very tight fold, so of course yeah, absolutely, the issues we have whether due to our own personal setting or geographical and cultural setting been more connected to, of course we're going to use whatever media we can you know years ago we'd have been posting a flyer up somewhere or having a protest, we can still do that, but I'm noticing an awful lot of anti vaxxer using social media massively and having to use it very effectively to get there. Point?</i>	Unethical use of Social Media Apps	
Respondent WA (6)	<i>From the perspective of social media usage, I could say culture highly impact the usage of social media. For example, Instagram is totally banned and censored in China. Similarly, Sri Lanka is one of the Asian countries that has banned certain social media applications including Facebook and Twitter. So this is how the culture impacts the usage of social media.</i>	Impacts of culture on social media usage	
Respondent IA(5)	<i>I would say yes! In my opinion; however, I am too away from my culture, and it is very pleasant for me to keep my cultural norms. Because culture gives me the identification. Even though, my daily routine is a reflection of my culture, so yes, culture has an impact on the use of social media.</i>	Impacts of culture on social media usage	
Respondent IA(3)	<i>I think social media would have an impact on that because there are kids that might be doing things their parents wouldn't approve of because they've got that social media that they can't always know what they're doing, what they're following, and there would be that change in there, I think honestly think that's what's happening. I think a lot of the kids are losing the respect for elders, and the traditions we usually have are being lost.</i>	Impacts of culture on social media usage	

This result in the above table demonstrates that culture and race are significant factors which can influence the use of social media. The Arabic ethnic group were found to be more involved in race and culture. In the same context, the White Australian respondent (3) believed that the majority of social media runs in the inclusion of social media. It is due to differences in racial groups in the same country or different countries. In contrast, the Arab respondent (6) were found to be more defining their culture. He stated that Egyptian culture is mostly influenced by the usage of Facebook as also mentioned in the above themes. AA (6) also pointed out a similar mentality in Egyptian people. On the other hand, another Arab respondent (7) included heritage and culture as significant factors in the contribution of social media usage. The respondent pointed out that it is easy to keep cultural norms upfront via social media

usage. This demonstrated that culture is very important in pleasuring people. With this, social media usage can target different cultures in order to market their products. In contrast, the Indian respondent found it too similar in order to keep people pleasant with culture. It is due to identification which is provided by culture. The Indian respondent reflects on the use of culture in the rise of social media. However, the Indian respondent (1) pointed out the disadvantages of social media usage as it affects kids in terms of their respect for their parents and other relatives. Therefore, their attitudes and behaviour can change through exposure to content presented on social media. This indicates that Indian respondent IA (1) has differentiated the cultural impacts as a positive effect on society overall, while recognising that it played a negative role in preventing people from their cultural norms. The responses emphasize the complex interplay between culture and social media usage. WA (3) notes that social media often caters to majority groups, suggesting tailored platforms would benefit minorities. AA (6) observes that in Egypt, Facebook dominates due to shared cultural mentalities. AA (7) expresses a desire to maintain cultural connections through social media. WA (1) highlights the role of social media in activism, while WA (6) points out censorship in countries like China and Sri Lanka, illustrating cultural impacts on platform accessibility. IA (5) and IA (3) both discuss how social media influences cultural norms and relationships, particularly among younger generations.

### **4.3 Conclusion**

This chapter presented the findings of the first research stage, which aimed to comprehend the social media utilisation patterns of White Australians, Arabic Australians, and Indian Australians. Several key themes emerged from the thematic analysis, such as the impact of cultural values and norms on platform preferences, the role of social media in cultural preservation and identity expression, and the effect of cultural factors on content consumption and interaction. In addition, the findings emphasised the significance of cultural diversity in influencing individuals' online behaviours and their motivations for using particular social media applications. These findings provide a foundational comprehension of the intricate relationship between culture and digital behaviour among the ethnic groups studied. Additionally, based on the findings of the first research stage, there are several key themes and insights that can help guide the next stage of investigation using multiple case studies. The

thematic analysis showed that there were significant inequalities in the way social media was being used by different ethnic groups in terms of preferred platforms, reasons for use habits of interaction and content consumption. However, further investigation is required regarding the actual impact of these cultural elements on these perceived differences. Initial themes highlighted the importance of demographic markers such as gender, age and occupation with regard to defining online behaviour patterns. However, the depth of the relationships between these variables and cultural dimensions should be investigated in much greater detail and the methodology that can be employed in this regard is the multiple case study methodology. Case studies can produce a richer appreciation of the embeddedness of traditions and communal bonds in shaping technology choices through outline Comparisons revealed instructively obvious differences that demanded further investigation such as different responses to potential intrusions on privacy or different economic uses of social media observed across ethnicities. One-time interviews limited the initial stage, which offered direction. Multiple cases that include longitudinal and participatory aspects can produce more refined cultural profiles. As these emerging patterns are consolidated and questions start rising, the next qualitative phase aiming at a select few cases will offer valuable empirical insights and necessary theoretical elaboration that provides for further development of our understanding of social media cultural shapes.

## **CHAPTER 5: RESEARCH STAGE II – MULTIPLE CASE STUDY METHODOLOGY FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS**

### **5.1 Introduction**

The second stage of research expands upon the first stage's findings by examining social media utilisation patterns among White Australians, Arabic Australians, and Indian Australians in greater depth. The first stage of research's knowledge and thematic findings serve as the basis for the subsequent investigation. While Research Stage 1 focused on social media utilisation in general and its cultural foundations, Research Stage 2 took a more in-depth approach using the multiple case study methodology. This stage analyses specific cases within each ethnic group, dissecting cultural influences on social media usage in greater depth. This chapter aims to analyse the usage of social media patterns among the three ethnic groups which include White Australians, Arabic Australians and Indian Australians. To address the key aim of this chapter, several answers in terms of open-ended questions were collected from three ethnic groups which consisted of White Australians, Arab Australians and Indian Australians. In addition to this, 8 interview questions in total were asked from different people of the three ethnic groups based on nine dimensions which included age, gender, line of work, frequency of use, time spent, purpose, platform, content consumption and interaction. According to Clarke et al. (2015), there are several types of data analysis methods that can be implemented to interpret the data collected including graphical, thematic and statistical methods. However, in this chapter, to better analyse the responses collected from the people of three ethnic groups about social media usage thematic analysis was adopted in which interview transcripts were analysed based on the recurring themes.

#### *5.1.1 Methodological Difference of Research Stage I and Research Stage II*

The multiple case study approach has been utilised for the conduction of qualitative analysis in Research Stage II. This research approach is used in qualitative research to investigate complex phenomena through the examination of multiple individual cases or instances (Gustafsson, 2017). In the context of this study, the multiple case study method involves an in-depth analysis of several cases to gain a comprehensive understanding of the social media usage pattern in the three distinct ethnicities. Each ethnicity serves as a unique unit of analysis, and the researcher has employed



interviews (Appendix A) as the qualitative data collection technique to gather rich and context-specific information. By comparing and contrasting findings across multiple cases, the researcher has identified commonalities, differences, and emergent themes, which contribute to theory development and deeper insights into the studied subject. There is a significant methodological difference between Research Stage I and Research Stage II. The research approach utilised in Research Stage I is based on a traditional qualitative study, according to Gustafsson (2017). While Research Stage I offers valuable insights into the intricacies of the social media usage pattern, it lacks the ability to draw broader conclusions and establish generalisability due to the limited scope. To bridge that gap, in Research Stage II, multiple case studies involve the simultaneous analysis of distinct ethnicity and their multiple dimensions. Research Stage II allows the researcher to detect patterns, variations, and trends that enhance the robustness and validity of the findings.

### *5.1.2 Thematic Analysis*

The purpose of the qualitative research technique known as thematic analysis is to glean insights into the participants' underlying meanings and experiences by recognising and analysing patterns or themes within textual material (Braun & Clarke, 2019). Similarly, in this study to better analyse the effect of social media on ethnic groups thematic analysis was adopted. Moreover, in this study, nine dimensions of ethnic groups were analysed and those included the Platform, content consumption, and interaction. Moreover, to better understand the nine dimensions in a more specific manner they have been divided into three sub-parts which are given below:

**What are the patterns of social media usage among different ethnic groups, and how do these patterns differ across ethnic groups?**

#### *5.1.2.1 White Australians*

In this section of the report, the nine dimensions of the ethnic group of white Australians have been discussed. Moreover, there were 8 interview questions for each of the 14 respondents and to better understand the responses the given coding has been done:

**Table 20: Respondents For Research Stage 2**

Source	Code	Response	First Order Theme
White Australian	WA (1)	Yes	Social Media Usage
White Australian	WA (2)	Yes	
White Australian	WA (3)	Yes	
White Australian	WA (4)	Yes	
White Australian	WA (5)	Yes	
White Australian	WA (6)	Yes	
White Australian	WA (7)	Yes	
White Australian	WA (8)	Yes	
White Australian	WA (9)	Yes	
White Australian	WA (10)	Yes	
White Australian	WA (11)	Yes	
White Australian	WA (12)	Yes	
White Australian	WA (13)	Yes	
White Australian	WA (14)	Yes	
Arab Australian	AA (1)	Yes	
Arab Australian	AA (2)	Yes	
Arab Australian	AA (3)	Yes	
Arab Australian	AA (4)	Yes	
Arab Australian	AA (5)	Yes	
Arab Australian	AA (6)	Yes	
Arab Australian	AA (7)	Yes	
Arab Australian	AA (8)	Yes	
Arab Australian	AA (9)	Yes	
Arab Australian	AA (10)	Yes	
Arab Australian	AA (11)	Yes	
Arab Australian	AA (12)	Yes	
Arab Australian	AA (13)	Yes	
Indian Australian	IA (1)	Yes	
Indian Australian	IA (2)	Yes	
Indian Australian	IA (3)	Yes	
Indian Australian	IA (4)	Yes	
Indian Australian	IA (5)	Yes	
Indian Australian	IA (6)	Yes	
Indian Australian	IA (7)	Yes	
Indian Australian	IA (8)	Yes	
Indian Australian	IA (9)	Yes	
Indian Australian	IA (10)	Yes	
Indian Australian	IA (11)	Yes	
Indian Australian	IA (12)	Yes	
Indian Australian	IA (13)	Yes	

The above table shows that with the help of social media communication has become very easy among people. This can be backed up by the social presence theory which explains how social media improves communication by allowing users to feel more connected despite physical distance by simulating in-person encounters. In terms of social media usage, the following responses have been collected from the relevant ethnic groups. Additionally, there has been a transcript of the 13 Arab Australians who

have responded to 8 questions. The analysis includes the coding of the responses thus the below table provides a brief insight into the designated coding of each respondent of the Arab Australian.

#### 5.1.2.2.1 Age, Gender and Line of Work

The use of social media has a different effect on the people using it and sometimes it has a positive effect and sometimes it has a negative effect. Similarly, the effect of social media usage on the three dimensions that are age, gender and work offline of different white Australians are given in Table 21 (overleaf).

**Table 21: Interview Responses for Dimension 1 Age, Ethnic Group 1**

Source	Selected Evidence	First Order Category	Emerging Themes
<b>Respondent WA (9)</b>	<i>"I am an extremely social person and I loved to socialise with people. Henceforth, I remain active the whole day on social media, specifically in my spare time, and during my work as well, I managed to create time for my social media activities."</i>	Socialising, Social media activities.	Age
<b>Respondent WA (1)</b>	<i>"I use social media most of my day so it's around 6-8 hours a day on average and sometimes it even goes beyond that, based on my schedule and plans."</i>	Usage beyond schedule and plans.	Age
<b>Respondent WA (10)</b>	<i>"Social media is not my thing I like to spend my time more in productive activities like gym, social activities and professional growth etc."</i>	Gym and professional growth.	Age

The effects of social media on individuals of White Australians have been illuminated by research on the utilisation of social media by individuals of various ages. Following the responses of the first individual, studies indicate that younger age groups have

higher levels of social media engagement. According to Gatwiri and Moran (2022), young adults are more likely to spend excessive quantities of time on social media platforms. This could have both positive and negative consequences. Positive effects include increased social connection and self-expression, in addition to the establishment of online communities. On the downside, as stated by Carangio et al. (2021), research indicates that excessive social media use among young people is associated with elevated levels of anxiety, depression, and social comparison.

Concerning the second respondent, research has also examined the factors that influence the social media usage of older adults.

The findings suggest that elderly white Australians may spend less time on social media and more time on offline activities. However, Moran and Gatwiri (2022) add that older adults' use of social media has a positive effect on their social connectedness, combats feelings of isolation, and promotes sustained learning and engagement. These studies emphasise the potential advantages of social media use for seniors, such as maintaining social relationships and gaining access to information. In support of this, Bliuc et al. (2019) added that individual differences play an important role in determining the effects of social media usage across age categories. Individual outcomes can be influenced by variables such as digital literacy, content preferences, and reasons for using social media. Thus, future research could investigate the nuanced effects of social media on various age groups to better comprehend the complexities of social media usage and its implications for individuals' health.

**Table 22: Interview Responses for Dimension 2, Gender Ethnic Group 1**

Source	Selected Evidence	First Order Category	Emerging Themes
<b>Respondent WA (2)</b>	<i>"As a girl, I am not a big fan of social media, as I believe it is considered a root cause of depression in anxiety in society. however, to remain informed and connected I do use social media before my bedtime."</i>	Not much interest seems to cause anxiety and depression.	Gender
<b>Respondent WA (3)</b>	<i>"Being a female I love to watch movies and short videos so content like short videos is more engaging for me. I like old scenes from movies or random scenes that help me</i>	Watches movies, and feels relaxed.	

	<i>cope with stress and make me feel relaxed most of the time."</i>		
<b>Respondent WA (6)</b>	<i>"As a male, social media means everything to me, I am a white living here in Australia, so all my friends and family live back there so I use it to chit-chat and share my life with them which makes them close to me."</i>	Chit-chat, share my life.	

**Table 23: Interview Responses for Dimension 3, Line of Work, Ethnic Group 1**

<b>Source</b>	<b>Selected Evidence</b>	<b>First Order Category</b>	<b>Emerging Themes</b>
<b>Respondent WA (4)</b>	<i>"I use Market and Amazon to buy different things such as clothes, home-use appliances and groceries and I use the Facebook marketplace to sell the things if I want to sell them."</i>	Amazon to buy things, Facebook to sell things.	Line of Work
<b>Respondent WA (8)</b>	<i>"My work and interests revolve around social media so I actively use it to see new trends so that I can cash those trends. Other than that I use it to enjoy and see the preferences of the people."</i>	To cash trends, people preferences.	
<b>Respondent WA (7)</b>	<i>"I use social media to share all about myself, where I am going and what I am doing and to see what my friends and family are doing."</i>	Share life with people.	

In the given responses, the first two respondents are female, whereas the last one is male. The first woman links social media to depression and anxiety. Studies by Sun (2019) have linked excessive social media use to depression and anxiety and women feel more depressed. The respondent's limited social media use before night may show an understanding of the potential mental health risks. The second woman says she relaxes with short videos and movie sequences. According to Sengul (2022), media intake, particularly films and videos, might reduce stress and improve mood, according to research. Stressed or anxious people can relax with such stuff. On the other hand, the male respondent stresses the importance of social media in staying in touch with distant friends and relatives. As stated by Dreher (2020), for long-

distance communicators, social media platforms are vital. Social presence makes the experience of being present and linked with people through mediated communication fit the respondent's use of social media to converse and exchange life updates. Inclusively, for some white Australians social media is a useful tool, the other thinks that it creates anxiety and depression.

Social media affects many people's personal and professional lives and the given responses show varied social media motivations and tendencies. One response from White Australians shows that using Facebook marketplace to sell things and Market and Amazon to buy clothes, household appliances, and groceries. Rodrigues et al. (2021) shows that social media shopping is rising. Due to their ease, extensive product selection, and competitive pricing, online marketplaces have transformed business. Another remark says the person works and plays on social media and that they follow new trends on social media and use them professionally. Nonetheless, Yilmaz and Bashirov (2022) added that marketers use social media analytics and trend research to adapt their products and communications to changing consumer demands. Social media engagement indicates a career in digital marketing, social media management, or trend prediction. One white Australian uses social media to update friends and relatives. According to Hutchinson et al. (2021), social media platforms facilitate interpersonal contact and relationship maintenance. Personal sharing and social connection represent social media's significance in fostering social interactions and preserving relationships. Overall, it can be said that social media can be used for different work of lines.

#### 5.1.2.2.2 Frequency of use, time spent, purpose

The other three dimensions which are frequency of use, time spent and purpose of using social media and its impact on White Australians are given below.

**Table 24: Interview Responses for Dimension 4, Frequency of Use Ethnic Group 1**

Source	Selected Evidence	First Order Category	Emerging Themes
<b>Respondent WA (7)</b>	<i>"I was just thinking about this question in the morning and you asked it. Well, I use social media a lot and was thinking to limit</i>	High use of social media.	Frequency of use of social media among white Australians

	<i>it. I love to stay connected with my community and people and share interesting things that can help in increasing awareness and education."</i>		
<b>Respondent WA (3)</b>	<i>"I use social media occasionally so I just go active 4-5 times a week so that I can see the updates and share different things about my life. I am more into meeting people in person rather than staying connected the whole day."</i>	Moderate use of social media	
<b>Respondent WA (5)</b>	<i>"To be honest I do not use social media actively I just use them on weekends and holidays because I have a reserved personality. So just use it to see updates on weekends because I have very limited and personal people there."</i>	Rare use of social media	

The responses of White Australians offer multiple perspectives on the frequency of social media usage. One respondent noted that they frequently use social media but are considering limiting their usage because they appreciate staying connected with their community and sharing content that promotes awareness and education. Another respondent utilises social media occasionally, roughly four to five times per week, to remain informed and share aspects of their life, but they prioritise face-to-face interactions. Due to their reserved personality and small network of connections, the final respondent confesses to not actively using social media and only accessing it on weekends and holidays. These responses demonstrate the diversity of perspectives on social media usage. As stated by Hutchinson (2022) some people may rely heavily on it for keeping connected and sharing information, whereas others may use it less frequently due to personal preferences or other obligations. Nevertheless, Bliuc et al. (2019) added that it is crucial to recognise that personal preferences, social needs,

and time constraints can influence the frequency of social media use. Thus, it can be said that White Australians have a specific frequency of using social media.

**What are most commonly used social media applications among different ethnicities, specifically focusing on White Australians, Arab Australians, and Indian Australians?**

**Table 25: Interview Responses for Dimension 5, Time Spent; Ethnic Group 1**

Source	Selected Evidence	First Order Category	Emerging Themes
<b>Respondent WA (7)</b>	<i>My screen time is approximately 7-8 hours per day out of which 6 hours must be for social media I guess.</i>	7-8 hours per day spent	Time spent on social media by white Australians
<b>Respondent WA (8)</b>	<i>Social media is like a daily part of my life so I just stay connected the whole day. On average my active time on social media would be more than 12 hours a day.</i>	Whole day usage	
<b>Respondent WA (4)</b>	<i>On average I cannot say how much time but it's like around 4 hours a day maybe.</i>	Very less usage	

The responses of White Australians show that individuals spend time on social media in a variety of ways. One response indicates spending approximately 6 hours out of 7-8 hours of daily screen time on social media. Another response indicates that social media is an integral part of daily existence, with average daily usage exceeding 12 hours. The third response estimates daily social media usage to be approximately four hours. These disparate viewpoints illustrate the varying levels of engagement and time commitment to social media usage. As stated by Ballantyne and Podkalicka (2020) social media overuse can have both positive and negative consequences.

Positively, it enables individuals to communicate with others, keep well-informed of current events, and gain access to a vast array of information and entertainment. Platforms for social media facilitate social interaction, networking, and community involvement. In addition, they can be a source of inspiration, education, and self-expression. However, Dreher (2020) added that excessive time spent on social media may have negative effects on mental health and well-being in general. High levels of social media use have been associated with increased feelings of anxiety, melancholy, loneliness, and low self-esteem, according to studies. Excessive exposure to curated, idealised online content may encourage social comparison, leading to negative self-



perceptions and discontentment. In conclusion, the selected evidence demonstrates that individuals spend varying amounts of time on social media. Social media offers numerous advantages, but excessive use can have negative effects on mental health. Individuals must be conscious of their social media usage and strike a balance between meaningful offline experiences and a healthy digital lifestyle.

**Table 26: Interview Responses for Dimension 6, Purpose; Ethnic Group 1**

Source	Selected Evidence	First Order Category	Emerging Themes
<b>Respondent WA (9)</b>	<i>I mentioned that I make funny posts and memes so for me social media is just a mind refresher and just to take attention and stay in the limelight always.</i>	To post funny memes	Purpose of using social media among White Australians.
<b>Respondent WA (1)</b>	<i>Being a White Australian, I believe that social media is the easiest and most comfortable tool to access for connection and relation with other parts of the world.</i>	To access connection	
<b>Respondent WA (3)</b>	<i>I use social media to make new friends interact with new people and see what is the thinking of general society and people.</i>	To make new friends	

The responses collected from White Australians shows a variety of opinions on the objectives of utilising social media. In the first response, the topic of using social media as a form of entertainment and attracting attention through the use of humorous postings and memes is discussed. This person utilises social media as a means of keeping their intellect sharp and as a platform to keep themselves in the public eye. The second response highlights the ease and comfort of utilising social media as a tool for connecting with others and creating relationships, particularly for someone who belongs to the demographic of White Australians. The use of social media platforms offers a practical approach to establishing connections with people hailing from a variety of locations throughout the globe and cultivating new relationships. The third approach recommends interacting with new people through social media platforms to better comprehend the ideas and viewpoints held by members of society as a whole. It underlines the desire to get insights into the thinking patterns of the general population as well as broaden one's social circle. In addition to this, Khorana (2020) added that there are a variety of reasons people use social media, which includes the pursuit of enjoyment, the establishment of connections, and the attainment of a greater grasp of social trends and perspectives. Thus, platforms of social media provide

chances for users to express themselves, make connections with others, and investigate a variety of social processes.

#### 5.1.2.2.3 Platform, Content Consumption, Interaction

The below table contains responses from White Australians. These responses are based on three dimensions which include the platform, content consumption and interaction.

**Table 27: Interview Responses for Dimension 7, Platform;  
Ethnic Group 1**

Source	Selected Evidence	First Order Category	Emerging Themes
<b>Respondent WA (11)</b>	<i>"I love Instagram more because it is a calmer platform and I feel more relaxed there. I also love YouTube because I can get content related to my preferences. "</i>	Instagram and YouTube	Content relevant to preferences.
<b>Respondent WA (13)</b>	<i>"In my opinion, Facebook is more suitable and conformable for me because it has more content. I randomly go through videos. I can share my pictures easily there are many options such as reacting differently on different posts based on expressions."</i>	Facebook	Abundance of Content
<b>Respondent WA (14)</b>	<i>"Instagram as I mentioned, has a good audience and I am connected to more people on Instagram and there is more engagement on Instagram so I would prefer it only."</i>	Instagram	Platform

The transcripts have been subjected to a thematic analysis, which uncovered multiple themes about the "Platform" dimension. As per the responses of the White Australians, they find Instagram and Facebook as the most appealing social sites due to the nature of the content. Whereas, Chen and Dermawan. (2020) also indicated that individuals are keen to be attracted towards a platform which provides them with a unique variety of content. Due to their distinctive content offers, the analysis shows that Facebook and Instagram have been considered the most favoured platforms among the White Australian participants. This is consistent with the sub-case discussed by the respondent where an individual favoured Instagram as the most attractive platform. Thus, it has been evident that White Australians tend to consume multiple platforms like YouTube, Instagram and Facebook based on their preferences.

**What are most commonly used social media applications among different ethnicities, specifically focusing on White Australians, Arab Australians, and Indian Australians?**

**Table 28: Interview Responses for Dimension 8, Content Consumption; Ethnic Group 1**

Source	Selected Evidence	First Order Category	Emerging Themes
<b>Respondent WA (11)</b>	<i>"I love watching content that is fun, informative and gives lessons because it helps in giving lessons and also gives enjoyment. I love nature and animals so videos of horses and animals give me more enjoyment and it helps me feel more relaxed."</i>	Animals related content	Content Consumption
<b>Respondent WA (12)</b>	<i>"I love the content such as exploring new places and adventures. I like watching vlogs and videos related to travelling and fun-loving that help me in refreshing my mind. Other than that I love to see the content that revolves around the family and friendships because I miss my family and friends while I am living in Australia."</i>	Travelling and exciting experiences.	
<b>Respondent WA (13)</b>	<i>"I love to watch gym videos and content that is more health-related because I am health conscious and I love sports also so I enjoy the things regarding this and find them more entertaining."</i>	Painting and aesthetic content	

The White Australians have provided several responses which became apparent from analysing the "Content Consumption" dimension. As stated by respondents, the desire for entertaining, useful, and instructive media has one of the major centres of attraction. According to studies on social media use, people want content that can fulfil both their entertainment and information needs (Qin, 2020). Users' emotional and intellectual requirements can be met by this type of information. Some of the respondents show how exposure to nature-related content, even in digital forms, can have positive effects on mood, stress levels, and general well-being. The interest in animals is consistent with the human propensity to form emotional bonds with nature and other forms of life (Lawrence et al., 2019). Similar to the rising interest in health and wellness on social media, fitness and health-related information has been crucial for an individual. This is further evident from the study of Zheng (2021) that individuals

can engage in self-improvement and embrace healthier lifestyles with the help of platforms that provide fitness recommendations, workout regimens, and health-related information. Thus, the above responses provide a brief insight into the content White Australians tend to consume.

**Table 29: Interview Responses for Dimension 9, Interaction;  
Ethnic Group 1**

Source	Selected Evidence	First Order Category	Emerging Themes
<b>Respondent WA (11)</b>	<i>"I post stories of different things and share the content on the timeline."</i>	Social media stories	Interaction through these platforms
<b>Respondent WA (12)</b>	<i>"I see recommendations for new places and spots so I just go there to have experience and try new places and then post stories, pictures and reviews so others can also enjoy these places."</i>	Recommendations and reviews	
<b>Respondent WA (13)</b>	<i>"I implement different things such as experiments that I see on social media, health-related recipes and exercises in my life so that I can test them and learn new things."</i>	Interaction	
<b>Respondent WA (14)</b>	<i>"I share the artwork on the stories, post them on posts and ask for people's opinions on them so that I can improve the quality of my work and accept the criticism."</i>	Work-related interaction	

The respondents indicate the use of social media stories as a form of contact by mentioning posting stories and sharing information on their timeline which emphasises the importance of storytelling in connecting with people and imparting one's life lessons. According to Chen and Lin (2019), social media allows users to share their experiences and ideas. The responses highlight a wide range of activities taking place across various social media sites, from story sharing and recommendation seeking to content implementation and artistic exchanges. The significant benefit of considering these various forms of interaction provides a brief insight into the difficulties encountered and the experiences gained by those participating in online conversations (Rahman et al., 2021). However, the respondents also state that social media has been useful for interacting by seeking feedback and advice from other experiences. Thus, the above table has been responding to the White Australian about they use these sites for interaction purposes.

### 5.1.2.2 Arabic Australians

This section includes a thematic analysis of the responses of the ethnic group of Arab Australians. Following are the dimensions of the population of the ethnic group Arabic Australians. The coding of the responses of the Arabic Australian has been provided above. Further study and interpretation of the responses have been required to acquire a deeper knowledge of the specific themes and patterns within this ethnic group, however, the table provides a brief sight into the coding. Additionally, nine dimensions which are age, gender, line of work, frequency of use, time spent, purpose along with a platform, content consumption and interaction have been considered to respond to the ethnic group of Arabic Australians. Therefore, in this part, participants' responses have been highlighted based on the following dimensions.

**What are the reasons for using specific social media applications among different ethnicities, and to analyse the differences in motivations and preferences?**

#### 5.1.2.2.1 Age, gender and line of work

**Table 30: Interview Responses for Dimension 1: Age; Ethnic Group 2**

Source	Selected Evidence	First Order Category	Emerging Themes
<b>Respondent AA (10)</b>	<i>"I'm in my early 20s and I use Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram to keep up with friends and family"</i>	Early 20s	Age
<b>Respondent AA (13)</b>	<i>"I love using social media to get in touch with my grandchildren and learn about what they've been up to."</i>	Adult	
<b>Respondent AA (11)</b>	<i>"I am in my late 20s and tend to consume social media for news along with strengthening my connections."</i>	Middle age	

The chosen data emphasises the age range and highlight the different ways that users of various ages interact on social media. A respondent who is in their early 20s revealed that they use Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), and Instagram to remain in touch with friends and family. This shows that younger people like sustaining ties and interacting with others on numerous social media sites. Younger people have been more likely to use social media to meet new people and keep in touch with those they

already know (Craig et al., 2020). However, Marston et al. (2020) point out that older individuals use social media to stay connected with loved ones who live far away. Additionally, this has been further evident from the response as participants state that they use social media to interact with grandchildren. Moreover, people in their middle years frequently use social media to conduct research and make connections in their respective fields (Naslund et al., 2020). This indicates that middle-aged people prioritise using the Internet and social media to grow further in their careers and strengthen their connections. Therefore, Arabic Australians of varying ages use social media in distinct ways.

**Table 31: Interview Responses for Dimension 2, Gender; Ethnic Group 2**

Source	Selected Evidence	First Order Category	Emerging Themes
<b>Respondent AA (10)</b>	<i>"I'm a girl who likes to post pictures and chat with my friends on social media"</i>	Girls, who use social media to interact with friends.	Gender
<b>Respondent AA (11)</b>	<i>"I am male and I use social media as a means of self-expression, community building, and advocacy for issues I care about."</i>	Male, Self-expression	
<b>Respondent AA (13)</b>	<i>"Hey, I am male, and I like to keep up with my favourite sports teams and chat it up with other fans on social media"</i>	Male, favourite sports	

As per the respondents who used social media for sharing images and interacting with friends, emphasising social contact. However, as per the majority of responses of male, they utilise social media to remain updated on sports teams and engage in chats with fellow fans, demonstrating an interest-based involvement. Additionally, these findings correspond with recent research on gender differences in social media usage, which implies that females often prioritise social relationships, while males tend to focus on specialised hobbies and self-expression (Charmaraman et al., 2021). Consequently, these sub-cases offer insights into how gender influences the motivations and behaviours of Arab Australians on social media sites.

**Table 32: Interview Responses for Dimension 3, Line of Work;  
Ethnic Group 2**

Source	Selected Evidence	First Order Category	Emerging Themes
<b>Respondent AA (10)</b>	<i>"I am a graphic designer, and I utilise social media to communicate with potential clients and display my portfolio."</i>	Utilise social media to communicate.	Line of work
<b>Respondent AA (13)</b>	<i>"I use social media as a teacher to work with other teachers, exchange educational resources, and interact with my students and parents."</i>	Exchange resources	
<b>Respondent AA (12)</b>	<i>"I am a nurse who works in the healthcare sector, and I use social media to connect with other healthcare professionals, stay informed about new medical research, and inform the public about health-related issues."</i>	Connect with other professionals	

The above table considers the "line of work" for which 4 responses have been outlined. The participants provided the responses that they use social media to network and promote themselves to potential clients. This highlights the significance of social media for those working in creative fields, where the direct, visual connection with clients has been significant (Al-Marroof, et al., 2021). The majority of the respondents conclude that use social media to network with colleagues, keep up with the latest medical research, and enlighten and educate the public on important health topics. Additionally, social media has been described as being crucial in the healthcare sector, where professionals can connect, share the most recent findings in their fields, and interact with the general public to raise awareness about important health issues (Torous et al., 2021). The common conflict has been the utilisation of social media for interdisciplinary collaboration, information dissemination, and promotion of public health. Moreover, the results make clear that social media has become an essential element of professional activities, allowing people to network, disseminate information, and reach new audiences. Although individual use cases and obstacles may vary across industries, commonalities in overall experiences demonstrate the transformative power of social media.

#### 5.1.2.2.2 Frequency of use, time spent, purpose

The below table shows the responses from Arabic Australians. These responses are based on three dimensions which include the Frequency of Use, Time Spent, and Purpose.

**Table 33: Interview Responses for Dimension 4, Frequency of Use; Ethnic Group 2**

Source	Selected Evidence	First Order Category	Emerging Themes
<b>Respondent AA (1)</b>	<i>"I'm constantly on social media. In my everyday routine, I use multiple platforms to interact with friends and engage with content"</i>	Social media, Interaction, content engagement.	Frequency of use
<b>Respondent AA (2)</b>	<i>"I'm an average user, I don't use social media regularly. I occasionally check my different social media accounts to see what people are up to. It's an amazing way for me to stay connected without being obsessed with social media."</i>	Average user Occasionally checks on social media.	
<b>Respondent AA (3)</b>	<i>"I use social media very often to keep up with the latest trends and communicate with my loved ones on different social platforms."</i>	Latest Trends	

Following is the thematic analysis of the transcripts, numerous themes relating to the "Frequency of Use" dimension were identified. According to the Arabic Australian respondents, some respondents think that social media platforms are a great way to communicate with friends and family and keep up with the latest trends. It has also been suggested that people frequently use social platforms because it provides them with so much content to engage (Curiskis et al., 2020). Thus, it has become clear that Arabic Australians frequently use social platforms to constantly check on their friends and family and also to stay updated with the latest trends. Other people respond that they use social media in limit. They use it from time to time to keep track of what people are doing on their social networks. They just use social media to stay connected and informed while avoiding getting obsessed with or becoming focused on it. So they try to keep a balanced approach; they maintain a good balance between staying connected and avoiding becoming overly dependent on social media.



**Table 34: Interview Responses for Dimension 5, Time Spent;  
Ethnic Group 2**

Source	Selected Evidence	First Order Category	Emerging Themes
<b>Respondent AA (4)</b>	<i>"All day, I love to update you about my day every second."</i>	Update, Day, every second.	Time Spent
<b>Respondent AA (5)</b>	<i>"Not much. I only use it for work so maybe 3 to 4 hours daily."</i>	Work	
<b>Respondent AA (6)</b>	<i>"I spend mostly 4-5 hours a day staying updated on everything such as work emails, university modules etc."</i>	Staying updated on emails, work, university, modules	

When evaluating the "Time Spent" dimension, the Arabic Australian offered some responses. According to respondents, one of the main centres of attraction is a desire for entertaining, practical, and educational media. People desire content that can satisfy both their enjoyment and informative needs, whereas some of the respondents confirmed that they only use social media when they have to work or check on different work notifications. According to studies by Brunborg and Andreas (2019), on social media, so many people spend their time all day on social media to engage with content or simply maintain relationships. The kind of content on social platforms can distract people from real problems but at the same time, it also causes anxiety and depression. The obsession with social media is real people stay on all the time on their phones especially Gen-z which creates them sense of insecurity and they start comparing themselves with others (Vultaggio, 2021). The fake beauty of social media influences the mind of the younger generation to try harmful things which can affect their lives.

**Table 35: Interview Responses for Dimension 6, Purpose; Ethnic Group 2**

Source	Selected Evidence	First Order Category	Emerging Themes
<b>Respondent AA (7)</b>	<i>"The main reason for using social media for me would be to stay updated with the latest trends and watch my favourite influencers, sharing funny and relatable memes and reels with my friends. I also like to post on different social media platforms."</i>	Influencers, Memes, Reels, Posting on social platforms, Trends, Friends.	Purpose
<b>Respondent AA (8)</b>	<i>"Just to stay connected with my friends and check out what is trending on social media so I can just connect with people in person."</i>	Connecting with people, Friends	
<b>Respondent AA (9)</b>	<i>"For me, using social media is like an approach to staying connected to my ancestral roots while also enjoying the inclusivity and diversity of an Arab Australian."</i>	Ancestral roots, Inclusivity, diversity, Approaching	

While responding to the purpose of social media usage, the Arabic Australians provided several responses. Some of the respondents said that they can embrace the inclusivity and variety of being an Arabic Australian while also staying in touch with their ancestors due to social media. It provides the opportunity for people to interact with cultural heritage, discover customs, and make connections with people from a like-minded background. Social media also helped people to explore many cultures, opinions, and experiences, which encourages an attitude of tolerance and understanding (Lomicka & Ducate 2021). It is a place where they can be proud of their dual identity and discover a group of people that appreciate and foster cultural interchange. While others respond that using social media mostly is a way to keep in touch with friends and stay up to date on trends. They value being able to

communicate with their friends online, but their main goal is to meet them in person. Even when you are not available in person, you can still communicate and interact with your friends through social media. By doing this, they can stay updated on what going on in their life, exchange information, and perhaps plan meets or social activities. However other respondents respond that their main purpose for using social media is to stay updated with the most recent trends, as well as to follow and interact with their favourite influencers. They enjoy watching and sharing memes and relatable content with their social media friend. Moreover, they also like to post on platforms to show their activity to their friends. Auxier and Anderson (2021), stated that people also use social platforms to make connections on social media which helps them stay connected with recent content and information on social media.

#### 5.1.2.2.3 Platform, content consumption, interaction

The below-attached table has been providing three dimensions which are a platform, content consumption and interaction of the ethnic group of Arab Australians.

To assess the impact of cultural differences on social media usage, exploring how demographic factors such as age, gender, line of work, frequency of use, time spent, purpose, platform, content consumption, and interaction influence social media behaviour and preferences among White Australians, Arab Australians, and Indian Australians.

**Table 36: Interview Responses for Dimension 7, Platform; Ethnic Group 2**

Source	Selected Evidence	First Order Category	Emerging Themes
<b>Respondent AA (10)</b>	<i>"My favourite social media platform is YouTube and Google because when I feel stuck in my studies YouTube is like a rescue it has different lectures from professional teachers and Google also helps me with research"</i>	YouTube and Google	Platform
<b>Respondent AA (11)</b>	<i>"Facebook is my favourite platform. I am everywhere on social media like Instagram, Snapchat,</i>	Text and Video content	

	<i>Twitter, Reddit etc etc. I love Facebook because it has every kind of content like text, video, and image so I can just share anything I want to</i>		
<b>Respondent AA (12)</b>	<i>"I love Instagram the most because I have good photography skills so I like to share my pictures there. The platform is all about sharing life through pictures and reels so I love it when people share their moments. Also, there are funny things as well so it is fun."</i>	Sharing moments	
<b>Respondent AA (13)</b>	<i>"My favourite platform is Snapchat and Facebook because Facebook lets me share different things will all of my friends and people that are connected and on Snapchat I can have fun chat with my close friends and do fun."</i>	Connected with people	

Many different trends in platform utilisation emerge from the respondents' various preferences. Some of the participants responded that YouTube and Google as their go-to social media sites. When they hit a scholastic wall, they turn to YouTube, where they can find countless lectures given by qualified instructors. This highlights the need for more instructional material on social networking. Google helps individuals by highlighting the importance of these mediums in promoting academic goals. Whereas, some of the participants preferred Facebook because of its adaptability. Conversely, Snapchat offers entertaining conversations among friends (Carlquist et al., 2019). The findings have been consistent with consumption of the social media. According to Wadsley et al. (2022), previous research on Facebook's functions helps an individual to achieve self-expression through the platform's adaptability in content sharing. Instagram serves as a medium for visual self-presentation which is why the service

places a quality on visual content and the sharing of personal situations (Li et al., 2021). Thus, social media connections on sites like Facebook and Snapchat have been significant for many reasons, including keeping in touch with friends and family and making new ones.

**Table 37: Interview Responses for Dimension 8, Content Consumption; Ethnic Group 2**

Source	Selected Evidence	First Order Category	Emerging Themes
<b>Respondent AA (7)</b>	<i>Content related to lifestyle, diversified cultures, inclusivity, and international marriages is the particular type of content that attracts me the most because these aspects have been and are still a part of my life.</i>	Lifestyle, inclusivity, marriage-type content.	Content Consumption
<b>Respondent AA (2)</b>	<i>The content that attracts me most on social media is educational posts, job vacancies and travelling videos and posts in Australia. I love to explore Australia and the content provides me with all the necessary information that I should know before visiting.</i>	Educational posts, job vacancies, travelling videos.	
<b>Respondent AA (3)</b>	<i>The content that attracts me on social media is mostly related to food and culture, I love food and I love the content of people who try different and creative recipes.</i>	Food-related content and culture.	

The above responses of Arabic Australians show that the person is interested in reading English and Arabic literature online, with a focus on exploring different genres and points of view. As stated by Kankanamge et al. (2020) reading literature has many benefits, such as making people more empathetic, helping them understand other

cultures, and boosting their brain power. Also, the responses show that many Arabic people connect with things that show Arabic and Australian culture, like TV shows, books, and movies that focus on Arab-Australian experiences. This fits with studies on the importance of media showing a variety of cultures and people (Sciberras et al., 2022). Thus, this can help people be more open-minded and understand other cultures.

**Table 38: Interview Responses for Dimension 9, Interaction;  
Ethnic Group 2**

Source	Selected Evidence	First Order Category	Emerging Themes
<b>Respondent AA (7)</b>	<i>I like to read the literature available online both in English and Arabic it helps me to explore different genres and perspectives. The stories are really interesting and it highlights the Arab-Australian experiences and diversity in Australia.</i>	The available literature, different genres, and Arab-Australian experiences.	Interaction
<b>Respondent AA (2)</b>	<i>I interact with the content that reflects Arab and Australian culture such as series, books and movies which highlight the Arab Australian experiences.</i>	Interaction with Arab Australian culture content.	
<b>Respondent AA (6)</b>	<i>I try to reach out to different designers to show them my work, I also engage with their content.</i>	Interaction with different designers.	

The above responses show that Arabic people residing in Australia are interested in reading literature online in both English and Arabic, which gives them the chance to learn about different types of writing and points of view. According to Geirdal et al. (2021), the person who watches shows, reads books, and watches movies that reflect both Arabic and Australian culture and focus on Arab-Australian experiences. Also, one of the responses shows the person's interactions with designers and interest in their work show that they are interested in the creative business. According to

Yigitcanlar et al. (2020) social media sites like Instagram give artists and designers a chance to show off their work and start working together. Thus, it can be said that the interaction of Arab Australians on social media is different from one another.

### 5.1.2.3 Indian Australians

In this section of the case study, the nine dimensions of the ethnic group of Indian Australians have been discussed. Moreover, there were 8 interview questions for each of the 14 respondents and to better understand the responses the given coding has been done.

#### 5.1.2.3.1 Age, gender and line of work

**Table 39: Interview Responses for Dimension 1, Age; Ethnic Group 3**

Source	Selected Evidence	First Order Category	Emerging Themes
<b>Respondent IA (2)</b>	<i>Approximately, two to three hours.</i>	Two- three hours	Age
<b>Respondent IA (6)</b>	<i>I am not much using social media as I don't get enough time and I feel like it reduces the connection between family and friends.</i>	Not an active user	
<b>Respondent IA (7)</b>	<i>I frequently, but not excessively, utilise social media. To keep up with the latest news and stay connected, I normally check my social media accounts once or twice a day.</i>	Frequent user	

The given responses show how age and social ties affect social media usage frequency and duration of Indian Australians. One responder spends two to three hours on social media daily. The study by Gerdes et al. (2022) found that 18-29-year-olds spent three hours every day on digital media. However, the respondent says they rarely use social media due to time constraints and concerns about its impact on personal relationships. Graff and Czarnomska (2019) observed that social media use increased perceived social isolation and loneliness, which could impair family and friend relationships. The responder uses social media moderately as keeps them connected and informed. Farivar and Richardson (2021) in a study proposing that social media can improve relationships and communication. It can be concluded that

younger Indian Australian people spend more time on social media, but concerns about detrimental impacts on personal relationships and limited time may push other age groups to use it less.

**Table 40: Interview Responses for Dimension 2, Gender; Ethnic Group 3**

Source	Selected Evidence	First Order Category	Emerging Themes
<b>Respondent IA (2)</b>	<i>Being a man, I like reading descriptions of travel, art, and technological developments. I also value information that fosters social causes, mental health, and individual development. I find it enlightening and inspiring.</i>	A man is interested in reading descriptions.	Gender
<b>Respondent IA (7)</b>	<i>Being a housewife I use social media every day for about an hour to two hours on average. I make an effort to set a time limit on screen usage and give other daily tasks priority.</i>	Housewives use less social media.	
<b>Respondent IA (3)</b>	<i>Being a boy I'm drawn to stuff that focuses on my interests such as pop culture, sports, and technology. I enjoy keeping up with the most recent developments, cheering for my favourite sports teams, and participating in pop culture discussions.</i>	Boy interested in entertainment programmes.	

Responses include gender and social media interests in Indian Australians. According to Rheault et al. (2019), gender affects online behaviour and preferences and the researcher discovered that males are more likely to discuss news, politics, and technology on social media. This can be proven by the Indian Australian man who loves social concerns and technology agrees. Wilding et al. (2020) discovered that women use social media more for socialising, sustaining relationships, and sharing personal experiences. The response of an Indian Australian home maker who uses social media daily for an hour or two may be maintaining social relationships and seeking assistance from online communities. Pop culture, athletics, and technology are typical masculine interests and this can be confirmed by the response of the young Indian Australian male. However, interests and inclinations vary widely among gender groups, and people should not be bound by cultural expectations (Wu, 2021). Thus, it can be said that both genders of Indian Australians differently spend their time on social media.



**What are the most commonly used social media applications among different ethnicities, specifically focusing on White Australians, Arab Australians, and Indian Australians?**

**Table 41: Interview Responses for Dimension 3, Line of work;  
Ethnic Group 3**

<b>Source</b>	<b>Selected Evidence</b>	<b>First Order Category</b>	<b>Emerging Themes</b>
<b>Respondent IA (1)</b>	<i>I use a variety of apps to buy products online. I'm more frequently using Amazon and Gumtree. The app which I choose at the moment will be determined by the specific product or service I require.</i>	Amazon and Gumtree.	Line of work
<b>Respondent IA (2)</b>	<i>I use many applications when I want to buy or sell goods or services online. Amazon, eBay, and regional marketplace applications like Gumtree are a few of the well-known ones I use. I find useful products which include electronics, clothing, and household goods.</i>	eBay, Gumtree	
<b>Respondent IA (5)</b>	<i>I preferred Amazon and Shopify to buy and sell my products. I feel like it has a very affordable variety of options.</i>	Amazon and Shopify	

According to the responses, Indian Australians buy and sell on Amazon, Gumtree, eBay, and Shopify. As stated by Pais (2022), Amazon sells a variety of products at cheap prices in India and Australia. Gumtree, a regional Australian marketplace for second-hand items, is popular. eBay connects buyers and sellers worldwide and Shopify is a popular e-commerce platform for creating and selling online stores. Small enterprises and entrepreneurs may customise and afford it. Moreover, the responses collected from the other two respondents also showed that Indian Australians favour establishing e-commerce platforms and are increasingly shopping online as well as selling their products online.

### 5.1.2.3.2 Frequency of use, time spent, purpose

**Table 42: Interview responses for dimension 4: Frequency of use;  
Ethnic Group 3**

Source	Selected Evidence	First Order Category	Emerging Themes
Respondent IA (1)	<i>Nearly about 5 to 6 hours a day. But it is changing as per my routine. Whenever I got free time I tend to visit social sites more often however if my schedule is a bit busy then I won't be able to use them.</i>	Free time user	Frequency of use of social media among Indian Australians
Respondent IA (6)	<i>I am not much using social media as I don't get enough time and I feel like it reduces the connection between family and friends.</i>	Frequent user	
Respondent IA (4)	<i>I regularly utilise social media. It has integrated into my life to the point where I use it frequently throughout the day.</i>	Regular user	

Diverse viewpoints on how frequently Indian Australians use social media are presented in the above responses. One responder claims to spend 5 to 6 hours a day on social media, but they note that their usage varies depending on their daily schedule. This result is consistent with earlier studies showing that people's schedules and availability of free time can affect their social media usage habits (Kankanamge et al., 2020). It implies that social media can be a useful tool for communication and amusement during downtime. Another respondent notes that they don't use social media because of time constraints and because they think it weakens relationships with friends and family. This viewpoint as stated by Munasinghe et al. (2020) emphasises a worry expressed by certain people who believe that engaging in social media too much prevents them from having meaningful offline relationships. The third respondent, on the other hand, mentions social media use on a regular and frequent basis, demonstrating that it has integrated into their daily lives. As stated by Karim et al. (2020) this is consistent with research showing how social media is integrated into

people's daily lives on a widespread basis, with platforms acting as the main channels for communication, information sharing, and entertainment. Conclusively, the time spent by Indian Australians on social media varies as many of them find it interesting whereas, some think it's a waste of time.

**Table 43: Interview responses for Dimension 5, Time spent;  
Ethnic Group 3**

Source	Selected Evidence	First Order Category	Emerging Themes
<b>Respondent IA (3)</b>	<i>I use social media for two to three hours per day on average. The length of time can change, though, depending on my schedule and how interested I am in the material.</i>	2-3 hours	Time spent on social media by Indian Australians
<b>Respondent IA (7)</b>	<i>I use social media every day for about an hour to two hours on average. I make an effort to set a time limit on screen usage and give other daily tasks priority.</i>	1-2 hours	
<b>Respondent IA (5)</b>	<i>7-8 hours a day.</i>	7-8 hours	

The given responses shed light on the patterns and behaviours that Australians of Indian heritage exhibit when using social media often. Depending on their schedule and level of interest, one responder claims to spend two to three hours every day on social media. In terms of Munasinghe et al. (2020), this result is consistent with Australian studies that show how flexible social media activity is, impacted by availability and personal preferences. Another respondent reports regularly spending one to two hours on social media while making a point to prioritise other chores and set time restrictions. This answer is in line with the research of Hayes (2022) which emphasises the significance of self-regulation and time management techniques in regulating social media consumption. Setting boundaries and giving daily obligations top priority are well-known strategies for preserving a harmonious balance between online and offline activity. On the other hand, one respondent claims to spend seven to eight hours per day or more on social media. This finding as stated by Keles et al. (2020) raises questions regarding overuse because Australian research has linked prolonged social media use to detrimental effects such as higher stress, sleep disruptions, and decreased productivity. Thus, it can be said that the excess of social media can affect the mental health of all ethnic groups including Indian Australians living in Australia.

**What is the usage of social media applications for buying and selling products within ethnic groups, and to identify the factors influencing consumer behaviour and decision-making?**

**Table 44: Interview Responses for Dimension 6, Purpose; Ethnic Group 3**

Source	Selected Evidence	First Category Order	Emerging Themes
<b>Respondent IA (10)</b>	<i>"I use social media for various reasons ranging from staying connected with the world to staying updated on recent trends."</i>	Stay connected to the world.	Purpose
<b>Respondent IA (8)</b>	<i>"I use social media to make my connection strong and to follow the latest global trends."</i>	Follow trends, Strong connection	
<b>Respondent IA (13)</b>	<i>"Well, memes mostly and of course to keep in touch with my friends here and family back home. Oh, I also use it to find fun and easy-to-make yet delicious food and desserts. Nurse life, you know how it is."</i>	Memes, stay in touch	
<b>Respondent IA (9)</b>	<i>"I believe that social media is one the excellent sources of entertainment as well as communication and I could get insights into the "latest happenings" around the globe with it."</i>	entertainment	
<b>Respondent IA (11)</b>	<i>"Well, one of the reasons, is to stay connected with my friends and extended family members. Other reasons are to look at memes, travelling vlogs, and find interesting books to read based on other people's reviews. And to follow the world news occasionally, just to know what's happening worldwide."</i>	Stay connected, Interesting vlogs	
<b>Respondent IA (12)</b>	<i>"I'm a geek. I use it to view all the superheroes and other movie updates. And I'm an introvert so it's easier for me to talk to people about my interests from behind a screen or a keyboard. I have a lot of online friends."</i>	Talk to people	

The above table includes the responses of the Indian Australians which highlight the purpose of their social platform consumption. As per the responses, the participants includes that they mostly use social media platforms to maintain relationships with friends and family and discover new forms of entertainment. These results have been similar to the research on social media use, which has found related reasons and habits among users. According to Torres (2019), social media is significant in keeping

relationships alive, even when people are separated by great distances. Shu et al. (2020) highlighted that social media has been a source of news and information which has been similar to the responses of Indian Australians who indicated that the purpose of social media platforms is to provide news or information.

Additionally, some of the participants of the study reveal that it has been used as the major source to maintain contact with loved ones which eventually helps them to improve interpersonal relationships. However, studies have found that the use of social media can help people meet new people and form new communities which has been a major benefit of it (Aichner et al., 2021). Respondents also provide the information that the purpose of the consumption of social media is to share each other interests as well as hobbies. The responses from Indian Australian participants show ways in which members of this community use social media. Consistent with earlier research, this study confirms the usefulness of social media for maintaining relationships, keeping up with news and culture, discovering new interests and sharing experiences with people who share common values. Thus, for Indian Australians with a more satisfying and interesting social media experience, platforms need to recognise the wide range of reasons people use the services. Therefore, the majority of the responses of the Indian Australians have been relevant or similar to the findings of another researcher.

#### *5.1.2.3.3 Platform, content consumption, interaction*

The below table has responses from Indian Australians. To respond to the participants three dimensions have been considered which include platform, content consumption as well as interaction.

**What are the dynamics of social media usage within ethnic groups, including patterns of content consumption, interaction, and engagement with different platforms?**

**Table 45: Interview responses for dimension 7, Platform; Ethnic Group 3**

Source	Selected Evidence	First Category Order	Emerging Themes
<b>Respondent IA (10)</b>	<i>"My favourite social media platform is TikTok due to its engaging short-form"</i>	TikTok	Platform

	<i>videos, innovative features, and viral trends."</i>		
<b>Respondent IA (13)</b>	<i>"Mostly Instagram and WhatsApp. WhatsApp so I can talk to family back home, you know video call and texting with my friends. And Instagram for memes, reels, and food hack videos."</i>	Instagram and WhatsApp	
<b>Respondent IA (11)</b>	<i>"I'd say Instagram. I watch reels and stories on them and the ones I like share them with my friends and family."</i>	Instagram	
<b>Respondent IA (12)</b>	<i>"I use mostly Twitter and Instagram."</i>	Twitter and Instagram	

The replies of Indian Australians provide the social media platforms which have been important for an ethnic group of Indian Australians. TikTok, Instagram, WhatsApp, and X (formerly Twitter) are among the most popular social media sites as per the responses of the participants. According to the participants, TikTok is well-liked because of its entertaining short films, innovative tools, and popular trends. Young people love TikTok because of all the fun and interesting videos they may watch on there (Vaterlaus et al., 2021). The study adds that Instagram's visuals and the variety of content types have been considered significant factors for the success of the app. Instagram is well-liked since it features a wide range of user-generated material. The Indian Australian participants reveal that they consume WhatsApp as its main objective is to improve communication by keeping in touch with each other via video calls or text messages. These results have been consistent with previous research on social media use among Indian Australians. As Barta & Andalibi (2021) suggest, Tiktok is popular among young people because of the site's amusing and visually interesting content. According to Castillo-Abdul et al. (2022), Instagram's success can be traced back to the platform's visual character and the variety of content types it offers to meet the needs of its users.

However, another study strengthens the fact that WhatsApp has helped preserve the social relationship of an individual (Tulgar, 2019). The selection of a wide range of platforms reflects the variety of user requirements and preferences within this community. However, multiple researchers highlight platform-specific concerns which include privacy, content moderation, and user experience. Privacy issues, content control regulations, and the role of the user experience in contributing to user satisfaction can be major areas which have to be discussed in future. Therefore, Indian Australians indicate that they have been using multiple platforms due to their unique

preferences but participants have not been able to highlight the problems of these platforms which has been discussed by the past research.

**What is the impact of cultural differences on social media usage, exploring how demographic factors such as age, gender, line of work, frequency of use, time spent, purpose, platform, content consumption, and interaction influence social media behaviour and preferences among White Australians, Arab Australians, and Indian Australians?**

**Table 46: Interview Responses for Dimension 8, Content Consumption; Ethnic Group 3**

Source	Selected Evidence	First Category Order	Emerging Themes
<b>Respondent IA (8)</b>	<i>"I love to see content based on lifestyle, cuisine and travel. In my opinion, such content allows me to virtually travel to new places, find scrumptious recipes, and get inspired by current fashion and design trends"</i>	Lifestyle, cuisine and travel	Content Consumption
<b>Respondent IA (11)</b>	<i>"Informative, funny. I like cute animal reels, a little bit of sarcasm, and reels that have songs in them."</i>	Informative and funny	
<b>Respondent IA (13)</b>	<i>"I love easy food hack videos. I have them saved in my list on Insta so I don't forget any recipes. Some I have memorised so whatever food or dessert I crave, I open that reel on my saved list and cook or make that to eat."</i>	Food Recipes	

The respondents reveal that they value lifestyle, culinary, and travel material because it helps them to explore the world which provides a brief insight that some of the participants tend to consume travel-related content. Additionally, respondents said that they enjoy comedic and educational content, especially those featuring cute animals, snarky commentary, or catchy tunes. These results highlight provide an idea about what sort of content Indian Australians tend to consume. Various sources provide conflicting evidence that cultural factors, individual interests, and individual incentives all play a major role in shaping how people choose to consume media. Research has demonstrated that people of varying cultures prefer content that speaks to their history, beliefs, and passions (Smutradontri & Gadavanij, 2020).

Accordingly, it stands to reason that Indian Australians have a preference for lifestyle, food, and travel information that speaks to their cultural identity and helps them to feel

more connected to their roots. Social media user has always been in search of ways to improve their experience and have their needs met, therefore content like funny videos, animal stories, and helpful hacks has been frequently considered (Shutsko, 2020). Thus, it can be stated that social media platforms are considered as useful as the majority of individuals tend to consume content which can be able to improve their knowledge.

**Table 47: Interview Responses for Dimension 9, Interaction;  
Ethnic Group 3**

Source	Selected Evidence	First Category Order	Emerging Themes
<b>Respondent IA (8)</b>	<i>"I use to like and post the content which is of interest to, even sometimes, I tend to share it with my followers as well."</i>	Like and post content	Interaction
<b>Respondent IA (10)</b>	<i>"I connect with content on TikTok by scrolling through the For You Page, liking videos, commenting, sharing, and following producers."</i>	Interact through Tiktok	
<b>Respondent IA (9)</b>	<i>"I engage with various content on Twitter by liking, retweeting, replying, and using hashtags to participate in discussions and share intriguing posts."</i>	Liking, retweeting and replying	
<b>Respondent IA (12)</b>	<i>"I comment a lot under movie trailers and fandom pages' posts discussing with online strangers what happened in the latest episode and give my views on how the trailer looks and if I'm excited about the movie or not."</i>	Comment on fan pages	

The responses of the Indian Australians revealed that they are highly involved with these platforms and interact through this content. The participants of the study highlight that they like to publish and like posts which are relevant to their interests and that they sometimes share with their followers. Some Indian Australians state that they use TikTok and interact by liking and commenting on the content of the influencers. Thus, the literature affirms the significance of users' active participation and interaction with content on social media sites. Likes, comments, and shares from users are all important ways to increase content exposure, build a feeling of community, and strengthen social connections (Kujur & Singh, 2020). The findings of Karl et al. (2022) were that users can interact with individuals who have been sharing their interests or ideas through commenting and debate. However, users gain a sense of social validation and belonging through such actions as liking, retweeting, and



commenting. Thus, consistent with multiple studies Indian Australian participants liked, commented, shared, and participated in discussions as means of making connections to information and interacting with other users. The prevalence and implication of functionalist theory can be extensively applied in the context of the research that has been subjected to analysis and evaluation. According to the functionalist theory, social systems, including social media, serve specific functions in society. In the case of social media usage patterns among different ethnic groups, the functionalist theory can help analyse how social media functions as a tool for organisations to achieve their marketing goals and how it influences consumer behaviour. With the adaptation of functionalist theory, the research is predominantly subjected to an understanding of the practices executed by a stream of digital marketing for the achievement of desired outcomes, in particular consumer engagement, brand awareness, and sales (Bartoloni & Ancilla, 2023).

The theory's focus on manifest functions (intended functions of a system) and latent functions (unintended, less obvious functions) is well aligned with the objective of research. Through this, the research facilitates the exploration of usage patterns of social media and their ability to transform the ethnic identity and social context within the framework of the functionalist theory (Fry et al., 2023). The research stages highlight the social media applications that are predominantly used by different ethnic groups, such as Facebook, WhatsApp, and Instagram. The findings suggest that the choice of social media platforms varies among ethnic groups, and this information is derived from the study conducted as part of the research stages. In addition to this, the research stages also stress the immense significance of the reasons behind the usage of specific social media applications among different ethnicities, such as age demographics, time spent on platforms, and the impact of the pandemic (Chhatwani et al., 2023).

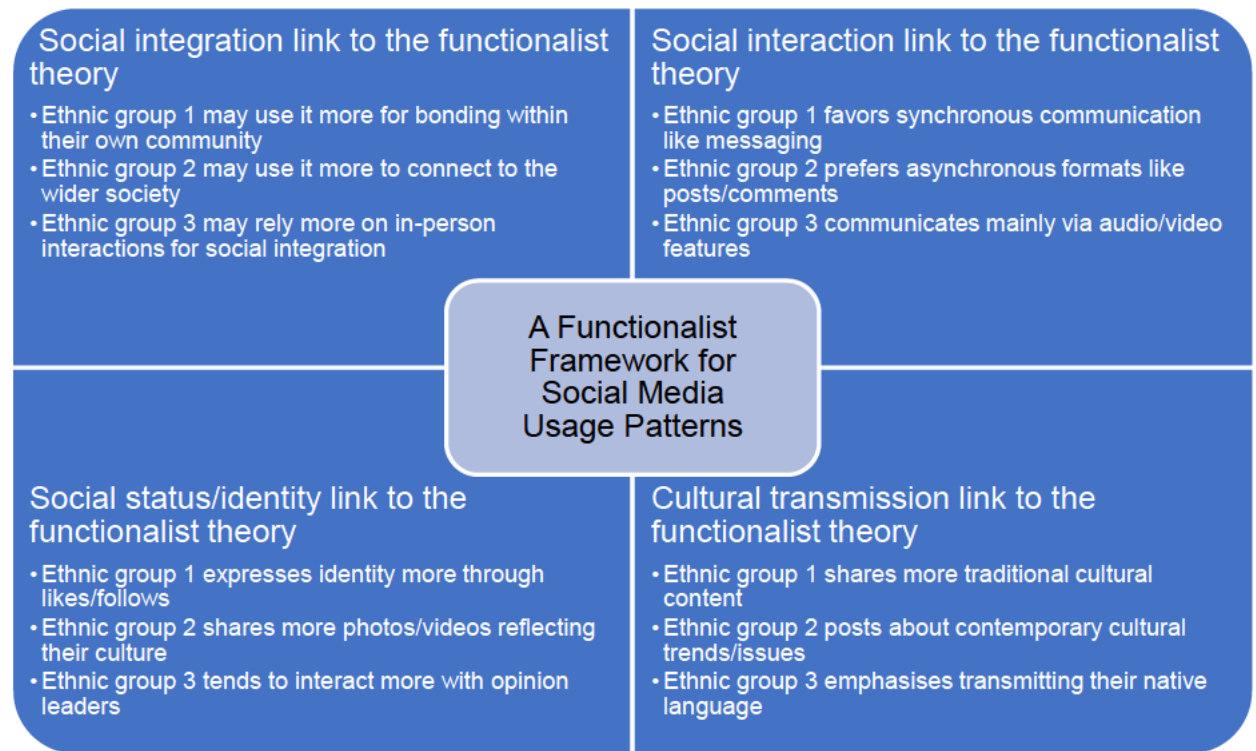
### *5.1.3 Theory*

Functionalism is a sociological perspective that views society as a complex system whose parts work together to promote solidarity and stability. From a functionalist perspective, social institutions and cultural practices arise and are maintained because they fulfil important functions that benefit society. If certain social patterns or cultural norms did not serve practical functions, they would not have evolved or persisted.

When studying a phenomenon like social media usage, functionalism provides a theoretical lens for understanding how and why these technologies are adopted by examining what social needs they fulfil. This functionalist framework applies a functionalist perspective to analyse potential differences in how three distinct ethnic groups utilise social media. It is based on the fundamental functionalist premise that social practices exist because they fulfil necessary functions for individuals and society. The framework positions social integration, social interaction, social identity/status, and cultural transmission as key social functions that social media usage helps address. From an empirical standpoint, examining usage across these functional dimensions allows hypotheses to be generated about whether and how social media serves functional roles for each ethnic community based on their unique cultural and social experiences. The framework systematically organises analysis into a 4x4 matrix with the social functions along one axis and ethnic groups along the other as per Figure 3.

This structure permits comparisons of how the needs of social integration, interaction, identity, and cultural learning may be met differently for each group. Differences could emerge from variations in things like community ties, relationship to mainstream culture, and goals for cultural sharing or representation online. By populating the cells with hypotheses about ethnicity-specific usage linked to fulfilling certain functions, the framework provides a model for understanding why adoption and practices have taken the forms they have for each group. It can help validate the functional role of social media while generating explanations for observed inter-group variations. Overall, the matrix allows functional dimensions and ethnic indicators to be integrated into a coherent theoretical structure for guiding empirical study. Adopting the below functionalist framework (Figure 3) will offer the methodology for examining survey and usage data through a systematic, sociologically informed analytical lens. Interpreting findings within the model can elucidate whether and how social needs may drive technological involvement uniquely for diverse communities. This moves beyond description to theoretically grounded understandings of social processes and their relationships to changes in communications environments.

Figure 3: A Functionalist Framework for Social Media Usage Patterns



#### 5.1.4 Insights from Research Stage 1 to Research Stage 2

Stage 1 provided insights into the social media utilisation patterns and cultural foundations among White Australians, Arabic Australians, and Indian Australians. Building upon these initial findings, Research Stage 2 aimed to further explore and analyse the usage of social media among these ethnic groups using a multiple case study methodology. The focus in Research Stage 2 was on conducting in-depth analyses of specific cases within each ethnic group to gain a comprehensive understanding of their social media usage patterns. This approach allowed for a more thorough evaluation of cultural influences on social media usage and provided with comprehensive and deeper insights into the studied subject. The analysis in Research Stage 2 involved collecting responses to open-ended questions from participants representing the three ethnic groups. A total of 8 interview questions were asked, covering dimensions such as age, gender, line of work, frequency of use, time spent, purpose, platform, content consumption, and interaction. These dimensions were chosen to capture a holistic view of social media usage among the participants. For the analysis of the responses and enhanced comprehension of associated themes, a thematic analysis approach has been adopted.

Transcripts of the interviews have been carefully examined, and recurring themes have been identified for the interpretation of relevant the data collected. This allowed for a nuanced exploration of the participants' experiences, perceptions, and behaviours related to social media usage. During the ensuing session, the participants examined the patterns of social media use among the three ethnic groups, undertaken without an emphasis on their comparison with the Research Phase 1 results. The objective is to undress and explore more deeply and sufficiently the unique elements and factors that influence each ethnic group when it comes to social media engagement. According to the analysis, people of all ages and genders of White Australians are involved in the use of popular social networks, to a greater extent than other groups. Of interest was the participants views concerning the social media use; as it relates to staying in touch with friends and family members and for obtaining news and entertainment.

People had different favourites in the platforms like Facebook that they felt most familiar with and Instagram with its visual options. Linked to the Arabic community in the Australian context, social media evidently became an important tool for keeping ethnic bonds alive and connect like-minded persons in the diaspora. The partners mentioned the importance of using social media platforms such as WhatsApp Group or Facebook Association in the promotion of a common trust and transmission of social traditions. The Arabic Australian participants discussed that social media platforms for business promotion as well as one of the networking opportunities also caught their attention. The Indian community highlighted a variety of social media usage tendencies that mirrored the cultural diversity within the planned community. Interviewees stressed that social media forms a part of conducting religious and cultural events, language preservation, and communication among the community. YouTube and WhatsApp became prominent notably for watching videos and exchanging messages and documents. Some of the recommendations necessary to improve social media effectiveness across the ethnic groups include the following. First, there is the need to point out failures with the existing social media usage. In many cases, the various media platforms may not give the required respect to the cultural differences of different groups. In response to this, specific advertisement surveys and focus group discussion in every ethnic population will go a long way in generating the Much needed data on the type of content as well as ethnic cultural Taboos. In which ideal context the collected information can be used to develop the

materials that will be more meaningful in regard of each group's self-identification. Further it is important to acknowledge the platform porosity as some of the ethnic groups may prefer certain platforms, hence creating an engagement imbalance. Thus, it is possible to determine which social networks are more frequently used within the target groups, and, therefore, to allocate efforts in an efficient manner. Language issues are also another challenge; to provide content in multiple languages and to take regional language variations into account would also make contents more accessible to non-English speakers. It is equally important to leverage on the strengths in the use of social media. Successful engagement strategies can be used universally or for particular ethnic communities and these help in developing other engagement strategies. For instance, encouraging posting of user creative material that relates to cultural events or issues may enhance engagement and build a better sense of community. It is also possible to get cultural ambassadors or influencers to be involved in the creation of this content as this will guarantee that the content is suitable for different cultures. In addition, improving the utilization of data to support the strategies as a means of improving the strategies is crucial. Using analytics to track various engagement patterns makes it easy to incorporate the use of A/B testing to avail content type tuning to match with the groups with the most engagement. By setting up good feedback processes such as polling or surveying can be useful to capture consumers preferences in fashion to enhance strategies. Altogether, this thesis presents a substantial addition to the cultural impacts on the use of the SM in the context of Australians and provides valuable recommendations, which could be useful for the marketing practitioners in the future.

The value of this research is therefore the composite, far-reaching impacts that the findings and discussion offer to several fields such as the tech sector, social media platforms, theorists and concepts, government, ethnicity, and more broadly, the public. First, where the technology industry is concerned, the research offers important information about ethnic groups' social media use. Based on such understanding, technical firms can consider individual differences of learners while developing their products and services. Specific preference and behavior can help the study to guide product development and its market position thus helping companies to address diverse demographic groups. On the side of social media platforms, the research provides an avenue for the improvement of the overall users' interactivity through the discovery of the various ethnicities' behavior with regard to their services. The insights

can give way to content and advertising strategies in the cultural environment that creates a sense of belonging for the users. Also, the study directs the attention of the platforms to create the features of representative diversity and inclusion where all users feel welcomed. It is also theoretical as well, because the study incorporates functionalist theory into the consideration of the use of social media. This contribution advances the existing theoretical perspectives by presenting potentials that are either confirm or refute theory and present evidence regarding cultural impacts in technologies. Further, it may serve to help determine the antecedent and subsequent themes and the resultant gaps that exist between culture and technology to encourage scholars to expound more on the subject. This should interest governments because the researchers' findings can be very helpful in policy formation and public participation. Due to these insights into the ethnic groups' social media activity, agencies can increase the awareness of cultural differences and work on the strategies of presenting content, which would be more appealing to people from different ethnic groups. Furthermore, the implications may be used in developing digital literacy programs which will meet the unique needs of these groups, thus enabling them to gain access to the technologies. Last but not the least; the common populace will benefit from the study mainly in giving the ethnic communities a voice. By illuminating the social media habits of various groups, the study encourages individuals to leverage these platforms for cultural expression and connection. It can also stimulate important conversations about cultural diversity in digital spaces, fostering greater understanding and appreciation of different perspectives within society.

#### *5.1.5 Conclusion*

In conclusion, a wide range of topics, including lifestyle, food, travel, memes, reels, and food hack videos were mentioned by participants through which they interact with others. They share certain common tastes in media, but they also have distinct areas of interest that they bring up, each of which reflects the participants' unique perspectives and experiences. Additionally, by observing the above responses it has been evident that individuals' interaction styles vary as they interact with social media information.

The responses from the participants revealed that individuals who actively participate on the social media platform have been interacting through liking, commenting and sharing with others. Findings from the complementary literature emphasise the importance of user interaction on social media for the development of social relationships, the promotion of a sense of community, and the improvement of the user experience as a whole (Wibowo et al., 2020). Moreover, the Indian Australian participants stated that their purpose in using social media platforms ranged from keeping up with the news and current events to keeping in touch with friends and family. Inclusion to this, they also interact by discovering new entertainment options and even discovering new hobbies. However, in contrast to this Kee et al. (2022) highlight that where social sites ease the interaction among individuals, they also enhance the chances of harassment through these online channels. Therefore, responses from the Indian Australian provide an understanding of the dimension which is interaction by highlighting the various ways and reasons for this should be within the discussion of Research Stage 2.

## **CHAPTER 6: Data Interpretation**

### **6.1 Introduction**

This chapter draws on the thematic insights obtained from Research Stage 1 and extends the investigation into Research Stage 2 using a multiple case study approach. The purpose of this study is to search deeper into the subtleties of cultural influences on social media usage patterns among White Australians, Arab Australians, and Indian Australians. Through rigorous analysis and critical discussion, this chapter aims to provide a comprehensive and multifaceted understanding of the complex interaction between culture and digital engagement, shedding light on the complexities of individual experiences and cultural influences that shape social media behaviours among these ethnic groups.

### **6.2 Discussion: Research Stage II – Multiple Case Study Methodology**

This chapter is comprised of different sections. The first section will discuss the behaviour of consumers belonging to three distinct ethnic groups within Australia. The following section will discuss the behaviours of consumers in the online world, Along with it the following section will critically discuss the effect of cultural differences on the usage patterns of social media, the following section will discuss the social media usage pattern of ethnic groups and influence of social media channels on the usage patterns of social media by the ethnic groups and how it impact the cultural differences on the usage pattern of different social media platforms. The last section is based on the chapter summary.

#### ***6.2.1 Behaviour of Consumers within the Digital Space***

This discussion examines the behaviour of consumers belonging to three distinct ethnic groups in Australia, namely White Australians, Arabic Australians, and Indian Australians, in the digital age. Moreover, the primary emphasis on their usage patterns of social media is also discussed in this part of the report. Through the analysis of their responses and behaviours, significant insights into the varied consumer behaviours and preferences demonstrated by these groups can be obtained. The responses collected show that White Australians are highly involved in the digital world and actively utilise various social media platforms.



As stated by Twenge et al. (2019) White Australians engage in online discourse by actively participating in discussions, sharing various forms of content, and monitoring the activities of brands and influencers. This demographic highly esteems genuine and tailored material, frequently resorting to their virtual communities for endorsements and evaluations before finalising their buying choices. Lupton (2020) investigated the elevated levels of involvement exhibited by White Australians in social media platforms which included the group preferences about new things. Moreover, the responses of Arabic Australians exhibit discernible disparities in their utilisation of social media in contrast to their White Australian counterparts. According to Waite (2021), individuals with similar cultural backgrounds often exhibit a robust sense of community and belonging, actively seeking out connections with others who share their cultural heritage. Arabic Australians employ social media platforms as a means of sustaining social connections, disseminating cultural material, and engaging in discourse about their cultural legacy.

According to recent studies conducted by Han et al. (2019), it has been found that Arab Australians exhibit a higher propensity to interact with social media content that aligns with their cultural identity. Hence, it can be that white and Arab Australians use social media according to their purposes. Indian Australians in their responses demonstrated distinctive patterns of behaviour in the digital world, marked by a robust engagement on various social media channels. They engage in active participation within online communities by sharing their opinions and participating in discussions on a variety of topics. Indian Australians exhibit as stated by Winoto (2020) possess a strong inclination towards entertainment and cultural material, frequently tracking prominent figures and influencers from India. In the age of electronic commerce, consumers belonging to the White Australian, Arab Australian, and Indian Australian communities exhibit visible behavioural trends. The study of Yilmaz & Bashirov (2022) shows that White Australians tend to prioritise personalised content and recommendations, while Arabic Australians place a higher value on cultural connections and engagement. Additionally, Indian Australians exhibit a notable interest in cultural content and demonstrate a strong presence in this area. However, Al-Natour (2022) added that comprehending the divergences in consumer conduct across ethnic groups is of paramount importance for enterprises and marketing professionals to customise their approaches and proficiently interact with heterogeneous demographics. In conclusion, the comparative analysis of social media

usage patterns among White Australians, Arabic Australians, and Indian Australians underscores the significance of taking into account cultural factors and preferences while targeting particular ethnic groups in the digital realm. Through the identification of distinct behaviours and preferences exhibited by various consumer groups, enterprises can devise more precise and efficacious marketing tactics, thereby facilitating substantial interaction and cultivating robust associations with their varied custom.

### *6.2.2 Effect of Cultural Differences on the Usage Patterns of Social Media*

According to the responses that were gathered, White Australians have a preference for tailored content and place a high level of trust in the recommendations that come from their online networks. According to Wang and Liu (2019), western countries generally uphold the cultural principles of individualism and self-expression and this is consistent with these values. They participate in social media platforms regularly, making contributions to discussions, sharing content, and following brands as well as influencers. Similarly, the responses of White Australians are a reflection of the individual's desire for genuine connections and individualised experiences within the digital world. In contrast, the response from Arabic Australians underlines the significance of maintaining social relationships as well as their robust sense of community. They are interested in making relationships with people who come from cultural backgrounds similar to their own, and their use of social media is centred on the dissemination of cultural content and participation in conversations relating to their history. Moreover, in terms of Seok et al. (2021), this is consistent with the cultural norms of collectivism, which hold that maintaining group identity and unity is of the utmost importance. Henceforward, Arab Australians can strengthen their cultural identity and develop a stronger sense of belonging and kinship within their group by actively participating on social media platforms. According to Twenge et al. (2019), white Australians actively participate in online discourse by monitoring the activity of companies and influencers, sharing various forms of content, and participating in online discussions. Inclusively, this particular generation places great value on authentic and individualised content, and they typically consult their respective online communities for recommendations and opinions just before making their final purchasing decisions. According to the results of the survey, Indian Australians have

a sizable online presence and a keen interest in the cultural material that is shared on various social media platforms.

They are very active members of numerous online communities, contributing their thoughts and taking part in in-depth debates on a wide range of subjects (Su et al., 2020). The comments also reflect their significant interest in following celebrities and influential people from India, as well as India's entertainment industry. This demonstrates the cultural connection and affinity that Indian Australians have with the culture of their home country, and it shows how they use social media as a bridge to keep connected and active (Kizgin et al., 2020). The following examples of replies gathered from people of various ethnic groups highlight how cultural differences shape the patterns of usage of social media. The larger cultural values and norms that are linked with each ethnic background are reflected in the preferences for personalised content, group relationships, and cultural involvement that have been observed among White Australians, Arabic Australians, and Indian Australians. As stated by Schivinski et al. (2020) businesses and marketers can effectively communicate with a wide variety of consumers if they make use of cultural insights. Understanding the priority that White Australians place on personalised content, for instance, can help marketers better adjust their messaging to deliver experiences that are genuine and tailored to the individual. Businesses can be guided in the creation of content that resonates with Arab Australians' sense of belonging and cultural identity if they recognise the relevance of community and cultural connections for Arab Australians and acknowledge their significance (Rounsefell et al., 2020). Similarly, understanding the interest in cultural content that is held by Indian Australians enables marketers to design content that is both relevant and engaging, helping to bridge the gap between their experience as a diaspora and their cultural background. In conclusion, the responses collected from White Australians, Arabic Australians, and Indian Australians provide insightful information regarding how cultural differences influence the patterns of usage patterns of social media. By tying these replies to the broader topic of cultural impacts, we may gain a better understanding of the unique social media habits demonstrated by different ethnic groups as well as the consequences for businesses and marketers that want to engage with these audiences effectively.

### 6.2.3 Social media usage patterns of ethnic groups

Based on the responses that were collected, it was discovered that white Australians engage in a wide variety of activities when using social media. They do so for a variety of reasons, and their active participation can be seen on multiple platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and X (formerly Twitter). According to the results of the survey, White Australians are most likely to use social media for social networking, maintaining connections with friends and family, and keeping up with current events. They also indicate a preference for content that is tailored to them as well as recommendations gleaned from their online networks. According to Sengul's (2019) research, the cultural values of individuality and self-expression are prevalent in Western nations. These usage patterns mirror those principles. Arabic Australians, on the other hand, exhibit distinctive patterns of social media usage that are impacted by their cultural background in unique ways. According to the responses, Arabic Australians place a significant amount of importance on preserving their social connections and actively participating in their community. As stated by Saroj & Pal (2020) they make an effort to form connections with people who come from cultural backgrounds comparable to their own, take part in online conversations concerning issues about their history, and distribute content of a cultural nature. The Arabic Australian community can benefit from the use of social media platforms as a tool for strengthening cultural identity and promoting a sense of belonging within the group. According to Hutchinson (2021), these patterns are consistent with the cultural norms of collectivism, which emphasise the importance of maintaining group identity and harmony. Inclusively, it can be said that white Australians use social media for connecting with people whereas, Arab Australians use it for making connections who belong to similar backgrounds like them. According to the results of the survey, people of Indian descent in Australia demonstrate distinctive patterns of social media usage that are reflective of their cultural connections. Their comments show their active participation in online communities, including giving their ideas and partaking in debates spanning a wide range of issues. Indian Australians as stated by Carlson (2020) also have a strong interest in entertainment, as evidenced by their devotion to Indian celebrities and other figures of influence. Indian Australians can keep their connections with their cultural history and with their home countries because of the bridge that is provided by social media platforms. According to Nash & Moore (2022), this usage trend is impacted by the strong cultural affinity that Indian Australians maintain with their Indian ancestors. These instances of social media usage trends among White Australians, Arabic

Australians, and Indian Australians demonstrate the influence of cultural variations on people's behaviours online. The preferences for personalised material, community participation, and cultural connection that were observed among each group are consistent with the norms and values that are ingrained in their different cultures. The importance of gaining an understanding of these usage patterns cannot be overstated for businesses and marketers who want to engage with the ethnic communities in question. Businesses in terms of Yilmaz & Bashirov (2022), can effectively interact with their target audiences on social media if they customise their strategies to coincide with the cultural preferences and behaviours of each group they are trying to reach. For example, identifying that White Australians have a penchant for individualised content can help marketers create personalised messaging that connects with their individualistic beliefs. This can help brands connect with White Australians. However, Nickl (2021) added that businesses can use an understanding of the significance of community and cultural connections for Arabic Australians as a guide when developing material to foster a sense of belonging and facilitate cultural exchange if they acknowledge the value of these factors. In the same way, marketers have the opportunity to create engaging ads by catering to the desire for cultural material among Indian Australians.

Conclusively, these initiatives can help bridge the gap between the Indian Australians' experience of diaspora and their cultural background. In conclusion, the cultural origins of White Australians, Arab Australians, and Indian Australians all play a role in determining the patterns of social media usage that each group engages in. These patterns reflect the different groups' respective cultural values, tastes, and norms. Businesses and marketers can effectively engage with varied ethnic groups, thereby making meaningful connections and building long-term relationships with their target audiences, if they understand and take advantage of the cultural influences that are at play in these situations. Out of the White Australians one said he preferred the social site Facebook. This is in line with the findings of Auxier & Anderson (2021) where they realized that Facebook continues to be used by ethnic minorities in the United States. There is not enough information on White Australians, however, due to the universality of the platform and the extensive use of the vehicle, one can safely assume that it plays a great role in influencing this ethnicity. One participant named the two platforms of Facebook and WhatsApp as the most used social media platforms by the Arabic Australians. Yilmaz & Anderson (2022) discovered that the Arabic communities

worldwide utilize WhatsApp as a principal means of messaging and information sharing, identity maintenance, and solidarity. Similarly, in a study by Brijnath et al. (2021) also pointed to the functional importance of Facebook for Arab expatriates in the Australia in order to keep friends and stay connected with their home country. In addition, one respondent particularly named Facebook and Instagram to be more popular among the Indian Australians. According to Ali et al. (2022) research, Facebook holds the status of being widely used in India and owing to the platform's usage of fonts and opportunities to be creative, Instagram has also gained the popularity among Indians especially among youth. Therefore, the survey results depict the presence of ethnic groups such as White Australians, Arab Australians, and Indian Australians in face book. It is, therefore, postulated that WhatsApp may also be the leading tool through which the Arab Australians transact, share culture, etc. Further, similar to the global trend, Indians living in Australia prefer both Facebook and Instagram among which Instagram is more attractive to the young population Yilmaz & Anderson (2022). These responses are parallel with previous studies on the use of social media by people belonging to different ethnic backgrounds. Despite the fact that it might be hard to find studies that focus on these ethnic groups in Australia, but in order to understand their pattern and usage of social media there is material available to get an idea of how it is done in other countries.

According to Brijnath et al. (2022), WhatsApp's popularity among Arab communities can be attributed to its ability to facilitate close-knit communication and maintain ties with the native country. Similarly, Indian users, particularly the younger generation, find Instagram's visual nature and creative expression appealing. Overall, the responses of White Australians, Arab Australians, and Indian Australians, along with the extant literature, demonstrate the impact of social media channels on the usage patterns of these ethnic groups. Considering the responses of the three ethnic groups White Australians, Arabic Australians, and Indian Australians, one can observe the impact of cultural differences on the utilisation patterns of various social media platforms. The diverse cultural contexts of these groups are likely to influence their social media preferences and usage patterns. By reviewing pertinent literature, it was seen how cultural differences influence the usage patterns of various social media platforms. White Australians indicated a preference for social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and X (formerly Twitter), consistent with research on Western cultures. According to research conducted by Wang & Liu (2019), western societies,

such as Australia, tend to prioritise individualistic values and self-expression, which is reflected in their social media preferences. The use of these platforms enables White Australians to share personal accomplishments, exhibit individuality, and maintain relationships with friends. Arabic Australians, on the other hand, expressed a significant preference for platforms such as WhatsApp, Snapchat, and Facebook. Cultural practices and social conventions are prevalent in Arabic communities explains these decisions. According to Rounsefell et al. (2020), Arabic users tend to value privacy, familial ties, and the maintenance of social hierarchies. Following these cultural values, platforms such as WhatsApp and Snapchat provide secure messaging and facilitate close interactions among family and friends. Thus, it can be said that all three ethnic groups have their preferences based on their cultural differences. According to their responses, Indian Australians favour platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook, and YouTube. This can be comprehended by examining the cultural history of Indian communities. According to research conducted by Su et al. (2020), Indians have a collectivist orientation that emphasises group identity, social relationships, and communal activities.

Facebook and YouTube provide platforms for sharing cultural events, music, and entertainment content that cultivate a sense of community among Indian Australians. The literature also supports the idea that cultural differences impact language usage on social media platforms. Arab and Indian Australians may favour platforms that support their native languages, such as Arabic and Hindi. Language plays an important role in reinforcing cultural identity and facilitating communication within particular ethnic communities (Sheldon et al., 2020). In general, the responses of the three ethnic groups are consistent with existing research on cultural differences and social media usage patterns. Cultural values, practices, and social norms influence the preferences and behaviours of individuals on various platforms. Thus, the findings emphasise the significance of understanding cultural diversity when designing inclusive social media platforms and tailoring content to suit the needs of diverse ethnic groups. The focus shifts to the influence of social media on digital marketing and the behaviour of consumers in the digital world. The section also stresses the development of marketing, highlighting the constant evolution and improvements in practice, strategies, and procedures of marketing. It emphasises the contribution of technology, in particular the Internet, social media, mobile technology, and data analytics, in changing how companies connect and interact with their customers. The

section also explores the usage patterns of social media by different ethnic groups and the influence of social media channels on their behaviour. It discusses how marketers need to understand and analyse the usage habits of social media considering various ethnic groups to effectively reach and engage with them (Shrivastava, 2023). The section also emphasises the importance of cultural differences in the usage patterns of social media platforms and the need for marketers to adopt content that aligns with the cultural beliefs, interests, and preferences of different communities (Sutrisno, 2023). In addition, the impact of social media on digital marketing has been thoroughly evaluated, while simultaneously stressing that social media has transformed and modified the way companies engage with consumers and develop marketing strategies. It also emphasises the targeting possibilities and user-generated content offered by social media platforms. Overall, the Research Stage is based upon the literature review by exploring specific aspects of the impact of social media on digital marketing and consumer behaviour.

#### **6.4 Conclusion**

It can be concluded that cultural background, societal standards, and personal preferences affect online consumer behaviour. White, Arabic, and Indian Australian social media usage habits mirror these aspects. Moreover, it was also seen that White Australians favour platforms that promote self-expression and relationship preservation. Arabic Australians respect privacy, family, and social hierarchies, hence they prefer secure texting and close family and friend contacts. Indian Australians are collectivist and value group identification, social relationships, and communal activities, making platforms for cultural expression, social engagement, and information exchange appealing. Cultural differences influence social media usage and it was also seen that each ethnic group's cultural values, traditions, and social norms affect their platform preferences and behaviours. Ethnic groups use social media differently due to cultural and personal preferences. Lastly, it was also seen that based on their cultural values and communication needs, White, Arabic, and Indian Australians choose Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, and YouTube. It is important to acknowledge that the first research stage successfully accounted for all key dimensions in the study. These dimensions comprise of several aspects in particular age, gender, line of work, frequency of usage of social media, and preferences for a specific platform, among others. With the incorporation of these



dimensions, the researchers have been able to guarantee a thorough and inclusive evaluation of social media usage patterns among the three ethnic groups under consideration (White Australians, Arab Australians, and Indian Australians).

That is why in order to increase engagement of White Australians, Arab Australians, and Indian Australians social media platforms must meet particular cultural requirements. When it comes to the social platforms White Australians prefer Facebook and Instagram since the content shared is usually personalized and focuses on the self. Improvements may involve the use of more suitable algorithms to source locally targeted content, or features that foster real connections to one's community. Many Arab Australians engage in the use of social applications that include WhatsApp and Facebook in order to keep in touch as well as share contents that are culturally relevant. The emphasis has to be made on the Arabic language support and privacy, as this group values family and cultural heritage. Indian Australians predominantly access and use Facebook, Instagram and YouTube and are especially interested with entertainment and cultural related contents. Prominently, platforms should improve the relevance of content recommendation to the cultural taste of the users, for instance, Indian festivals and music and also encourage the representation of promoters from the Indian culture. Thus, based on the above concern, it will be useful if social media platforms consider addressing the following areas so as to meet the needs of every ethnic group in a proper and comprehensive manner as follows: It becomes important that one has to get a handle on these cultural differences to build sensitive and appropriate social media campaigns.

## **CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS**

### ***7.1 Introduction***

This research project aimed to develop a comprehensive understanding of the social media usage patterns prevalent among three major ethnic groups in Australia: White, Arabic, and Indian. Besides this, the main goal was to find particular data which answered for the possible influence of the cultural traditions on the users' interaction with social media tools. Individual interviews were conducted among the representatives of the groups in question to pull in the real qualitative stories from the eyes and life stories of the people on whom the research had been anchored. The thesis presents novel and transforming conclusions that are multifaceted. Initially, it lends unity to conclusions which may have been revealed from the research undertaken about cultural groups in terms of social behaviour, motives and channel preferences which ought to be compared. Secondly, it scrutinises the key evidence in the light of known literature on relevant topics, thus, amplifying the coinciding elements and as well as offering novel contributions to the research database. Later, the major sociological theories are used to analyse and interpret the outcome of the aforementioned explanation and to draw theoretically grounded conclusions from a sociologist's point of view. Finally, several vital implications for marketers who are looking for successful approaches of targeting diverse segments of the population through culturally affecting social media campaigns are discussed. This final comprehensive chapter has been crafted to provide readers with a deep understanding that goes beyond the surface level, by drawing from both the evidence from the field and the industry-applicable concepts to build theory. The general idea is to make the training meaningful so that the participants learn the practical skills and concepts that are useful for a sincere, all-embracing and purposeful engagement with Australia's multicultural population in their virtual lives.

### ***7.2 Summary of Findings***

The conducted research stage 1 and 2 have revealed a few remarkable discoveries about the social media usage of White, Arabic, and Indian people in Australia. It undermined both the distinguishing features as well as the shared commonalities which these ethnic groups held. When the platforms of preference for White Australians are considered, Facebook, Instagram and X \*(formerly Twitter) appeared

as their favourite tools. These platforms reinforce the values of Westerners that are individualism and self-expression because the users can post their status updates and connect with friends. Among Arabic peoples of Australia Facebook, WhatsApp, and Snapchat were probably the top social media options for maintaining close-knit online communication within their communities. The Indian community expressed themselves openly through Facebook, Instagram and YouTube by partaking in events, music and entertainment while remaining updated on events, music and entertainment. In connection with the platform usage motives, the motivations differed by ethnicity. The desire from White Australians to obtain customised interactive content and recommendations from their online networks has not been a simple task. For Arabic Australians, loyalty to family ties and engagement in cultural identity-related discussions were considered as the main priorities. Indian Australians paid specific attention to the content in both Indian media and the famous people in their home country. Unlike other variations, Facebook has of wider reach soaked across ethnic groups. WhatsApp also was a central presence among Arabic Australians thanks to the fact that this platform supports private messaging and community building. YouTube was a favourite place for people of Indian origin as they could access the content of their culture quite easily. Instagram attracted younger Indian Australians with opportunities for visual self-representation and limitation-less creativities. Consumer habits among White Australians had their basis in the online world and a thorough search of reviews before purchases.

Arabic cyberspaces were being formed as everyone used social media to remain in touch, sharing their interest in and knowledge of culture and culture. The Indian Australians engage with online platforms and more importantly were very active in favourable discussions on entertainment and culture. Thus, it is clear that the cultural phenomena accounted for the results. Values like individualism led White Australian families to appreciate individual items but collectivism played an important role in Arabic and Indian Australian families who preferred buying a lot of items at once. In addition to this, cultural affinity contributed to the development of interest and behaviour of social pages that relate to homeland among diaspora groups who are seeking the same.

Also, several crucial implications of the research from this study will be discussed for industries that aim to reach multicultural targeted audiences through social media. For example, platforms that are more popular among one particular ethnicity should be

chosen not based on an all-purpose approach, but this should be done to be in line with the expressions of preferences demonstrated by each of the ethnicities. Such as using Facebook to target all groups but implementing WhatsApp just for Arab communities and letting YouTube tug further on Indian people. Moreover, a key tenet is the provision of appropriate and culturally relevant material that highlights the core values, beliefs, and preferences of each ethnic group. They will do this by stating things like community, culture and homeland similarities for Arabic and Indian viewers on one side. Companies must create a community where ethnic groups can retain their cultural features, find useful information and have much entertainment that will encourage their engagement. Additionally, joining local influencers who naturally connect with each ethnic group by standing on the cultural background, goals, and language, will be a building block for higher trust and credibility. On the other hand, it could be worthwhile advertising endorsements and reviews of the product from within a person's potential ethnic social circles including those which prefer more collectivistic cultures. Lastly, comprehending the in-depth ways that some social issues and online participation have played an integral role in each ethnic culture is important for the understanding of the most effective ways of participation.

A strategy that captures the essence of social context and involved communities will help brands to get a more profound and authentic connection with diverse audiences mediated by the Internet in the sense that they already used it to a large extent. The findings of this research align well with established sociological theories that aim to explain the link between culture and social behaviors. Functionalism as a macro sociological perspective views social structures and cultures as serving important functions for groups. The preferences observed across ethnicities can be seen as fulfilling different functional needs associated with their cultures. For individualistic White Australians, platforms enabling self-expression and connectivity serve the function of supporting independence, identity exploration and relationships valued in Western societies. Meanwhile, choices centred around community, belonging and cultural preservation among collectivistic Arabic and Indian Australians fulfil the vital function of reinforcing tight social bonds, communal spirit and shared identity integral to their cultural frameworks. Uses and gratifications theory explains that people make conscious decisions about the media they pick to fulfil their own needs. The demands indicate that White Australians and that Arab-Indian people possess these attractive needs of expression, discovery, and validation are likely to exhibit kinship, heritage,

and membership. Furthermore, the social identity theory purports that people classify themselves through social categories such as race, religion, and gender for a certain sense of belonging. The younger generation of Indian and Arabic Australians who are away from their homelands can establish and preserve their identity as well as their solid bond with their culture of origin, through social media interaction that entails involvement in conversations about their culture and getting to know cultural content of their hometown. The augmentation of analytical tools with these filters offers a more in-depth study of past surface observations. This allows them to show, the assumed connections among cultural world-views, the internal psychological actions and the observation of different online behaviours among the ethnicities. For example, individuality is a dominant factor behind White Australian styles of digital reliance when it is underpinned by a certain independence from others and social looseness. Collectivist preference is the primary force behind Arabic and Indian digital usage with its sense of close-knit community and communal orientation. Altogether this finding reinforces the value of these theoretical models.

Regarding the effect, designated platforms by ethnicity may enhance the penetration of this engagement. For example, this research proposes a Facebook strategy, as well as WhatsApp for Arab audiences and then YouTube, is a suitable cultural channel for Indian users. Yet, this situation requires applying a sensitive cultural awareness about the needs of each group and its existential symbolic world. Similarly, a culturally contextualised language is a key to fostering belonging rather than the strictly impersonal approaches. For Arab and Indian people, emphasis on shared culture and practice and links with the region are favoured, not just the superficial cultural recognition. In-language (language) content also creates a breach and strengthens the ethnic identity. The establishment of forums that bind diaspora cohorts together in terms of cultural participation is also capable of driving a long-lasting membership. Joint operations with local influencers who have comprehensive local cultural knowledge create genuine rapport among the population. Skilfully developed by those who authentically know and practise cultures, influencers can carefully curate and share culturally aligned and meaningful messages rather than simply imposing from the outside. Topically selecting peer endorsements realises the validated preferences in collectivistic societies that deal with peer-group independence rather than individual autonomy. As a result, the strategies of these brands become more effective in reaching an audience that is thronging online spaces

already populated with cultural patterns. They avoid mono-style gestures, leading to a sharing of ideas to achieve a systematic marketing strategy and a continuous loyalty of Australia's ethnically diverse population. However, complex, thoughtful thinking is a must for the social networks that attempt to develop cross-cultural relationships among the markets.

### ***7.3 Answering of Research Questions***

The qualitative methodology, including interviews and thematic analysis, suggests a thorough exploration of these questions. The findings and discussion sections should explicitly address each objective, including usage patterns, motivations, and cultural influences. If these sections provide detailed insights aligned with the research objectives, it can be concluded that the dissertation comprehensively answers its research questions. A thorough review of those sections is necessary for a definitive assessment.

### ***7.4 Discussion of Findings Against the Literature***

The research conclusions are built on the academic literature on cultural dimensions and social media use. Research has revealed that oftentimes, the preferences of White Australians are in line with personalist Western cultures which regard an individual's limitations, independence and oftentimes, identity (Nereim et al., 2022). Through the stay-at-home cultural narrative, the interpersonal community with their relatives and their ethnic brethren emphasises the social life of Arabic and Indian people. On the other hand, there is community and belonging. The importance Arab Australians place on social connections and cultural participation mirrors tighter-knit collectivistic societies. This resonates with studies of Arabic expatriate communities' social media behaviours. However, Indian Australians' inclination towards home country entertainment content coincides with research showing diaspora populations utilise social platforms to mitigate displacement and preserve cultural affinity (Du, 2019). In addition, WhatsApp and Snapchat attracted Arabic users due to their emphasis on privacy and close social circles aligned with societal emphasis on such relationships. YouTube and Instagram likewise drew Indian audiences through culturally rich experiences aligning with interests. White Australians' preference for individualised recommendations parallels individualistic

prioritisation of independent judgement. Comparatively, recommendations held more sway among collectivist Arab and Indian Australians. The findings offered additional support for theoretical frameworks linking cultures to social behaviours (Yan, 2018). They demonstrated key sociological perspectives including functionalism apply to digital cultures and consumption in multi-ethnic societies. Overall, the research adds to the knowledge of cultural influences on online usage globally and among Australian communities. The comparisons between the research findings and existing literature highlight several other important themes, for instance, the role of cultural maintenance and affinity between diaspora groups and their homelands (Dumford et al., 2023). The strong preference Indian Australians showed for entertainment content from India coincides with other work exploring how displaced populations utilise social media to mitigate feelings of disconnect from their culture of origin. Platforms provide a sense of continuity with cultural heritage amid the change of relocating abroad. Relatedly, privacy and close social networks emerged as priorities for Arabic communities both in the current study's results as well as in past research (Asimovi et al., 2021). Preferences for Snapchat and WhatsApp correlated with literature emphasising Arab communities' focus on secure interpersonal communication and adherence to social hierarchies that privilege family bonds. Digital tools are thus employed to reinforce valued cultural relationships despite geographic dispersion. Platform functionality is also aligned between findings here and previous investigations. Features accommodating interests like entertainment, creativity and linguistic practices attracted certain audiences in a culturally congruent manner.

For instance, visual and self-expressive qualities lured younger Indian users to Instagram as it allowed cultural skills and identities to be demonstrated. Likewise, YouTube filled the need for accessible multimedia content reflective of diverse heritages. Those groups who are more collectivistic tend to prefer recommendations by leaders rather than autonomous decisions as several past theorists have theorised. Individualism consisting of isolationism can lead to white Australians being involved in wrong judgements due to it typically focusing on the independence of individuals. However, Arabs and Indians place importance on gaining respect from others from their respective culture due to individualism with functional interdependence as the foundation (Hong & Davison, 2010). In addition to the similarity of behaviours, such results display evidence for the existence of the famous postulates of sociology. Findings explained from a perspective of functionalism, uses and gratifications theory

and social identity theory demonstrate why various groups applied alternative habits about the use of the Internet. Every theory allows different three-dimensional views of the seen layout beyond the one-dimensional surface. The current study was an augmentation that improved the dark work addressing the cultural-based variations in social media consumption that existed before. Worldwide, it meaning could depend on consistency that adds more insight into the Australian multicultural population. Enlarged research using combinational qualitative and quantitative techniques will lead to a better understanding to improve organisational cultural connections in a digital setting. This aspect is largely based on the provision of connection of crucial research findings associated with the current and existing theoretical frameworks, that have been highlighted and discussed above. This particularly includes the Functionalism and Social Identity Theory, that places a crucial role in understanding the profound impact of cultural factors associated with social media usage among White Australians, Arab Australians, and Indian Australians. The findings also plays a crucial role in comprehending the challenge concerned with traditional views that cultural influences are static, revealing a dynamic interplay where digital interactions are shaped by context and cultural nuances. To advance this understanding, the research proposes several new variables. The Cultural Adaptation Index measures how individuals adjust their social media behaviors to align with dominant cultural norms, while Digital Identity Construction explores how users present their identities online, reflecting their cultural backgrounds. The Intercultural Engagement Score assesses the interactions between different ethnic groups on social media, providing insight into cross-cultural dialogue. Finally, the Cultural Resonance Factor evaluates how well social media content aligns with the values of various cultures, informing marketers and content creators. By integrating these new constructs into established theories, this research not only enriches the theoretical landscape but also underscores the contributions of qualitative research in capturing the complexities of social media behaviors, paving the way for future studies to explore the nuanced relationship between culture and technology.

### ***7.5 Connection of Research Findings with Functionalism Theory***

Several sociological theories can provide a deeper understanding of the relationship between culture and social media usage patterns observed in this research.



Functionalism views social structures and cultures as serving important functions for groups. The research findings demonstrated how platform preferences across ethnicities fulfilled different functional needs associated with their respective cultures. For individualistic White Australians, social media that enable self-promotion and connectivity serve the function of supporting independence and self-actualisation. Meanwhile, choices centred around community, belonging and cultural preservation among collectivist Arabic and Indian Australians fulfil the important function of reinforcing tight social bonds and shared group identity. Uses and gratifications theory posits that individuals actively select specific media and content to satisfy individual needs. The preferences reported aligned with satisfying needs of self-expression, recommendations and discovery for White Australians, as well as socialising, culture and belonging for Arabic Australians. Indian Australians' choices corresponded with gratifying entertainment and cultural affinity needs. Additionally, social identity theory holds that individuals classify themselves into social groups to establish a sense of belonging. The research showed how Arabic and Indian Australians drew communal membership and pride through participating in cultural conversations and maintaining connections to their homeland entertainment on social media.

Together, applying these theoretical lenses provides a deeper analysis of the findings by demonstrating the theorised links between ethnicity, culture and the manifestation of varying digital behaviours and tendencies across groups. Thus, this research has provided important findings into the cultural influences that shape the social media usage patterns of White Australians, Arabic Australians and Indian Australians. It has highlighted both the variances as well as the commonalities that emerge from the intersection of ethnicity, culture and digital consumption behaviours within these landscapes. Discussing and comparing the findings alongside the well-established literature in the field has served to further enhance the understanding of the topic. In addition, applying relevant sociological theoretical lenses such as functionalism, uses and gratifications theory and social identity theory has allowed the results to be analysed and interpreted through a deeper analytical perspective. Several crucial implications for marketers and businesses were also outlined, equipping them with strategies to more authentically reach and positively impact the diverse cultural communities that comprise Australia's multicultural society online. If these implications are adopted, it will allow for more inclusive and meaningful forms of social media engagement. Overall, this research study has underscored just how

important it is for marketers and online brands to possess a nuanced awareness and sensitivity towards culture if they hope to develop strategies that can address Australia's varied ethnic audiences effectively.

The findings presented here add valuable new insights and understanding to the existing knowledge surrounding social media use among ethnic minority groups both within Australia and beyond. Lastly, this research sheds more light and thus is a significant contribution to efforts to understand the relationship between culture and social media behaviour. Research on members of communities of the different ethnic groups and gathering data directly from them provides understanding of cultural dynamics in the Australian context. The research outcomes accord with the past studies although these indicate that there are some aspects that, until now, were not fully understood. By anchoring hypotheses on solid sociological theories, a researcher can gain a deeper understanding and clarify the bigger issues that go beyond a surface-level explanation. Gratification theory and social identity offer social identity theory as external and illuminating theories for the reason of reinforcing observed patterns. They show such a link between cultural worldviews, psychosocial processes and the manifestation of digital routine.

At this stage of illustration, profound explanatory insight will be very vital to cultural insiders looking for superior comprehension. This communication with cultural inclusiveness can act appreciatively and apply in reality. These advised strategies are firmly backed by practical studies and solid research and include choosing desired platforms, creating content for contextual purposes, creating of online communities and utilisation of local influencers. The advantages of digital existence are that it allows the organisation to connect in a genuine way that is congruent with a cultural context doing so via digitally aligned interpersonal experiences. However, some limitations must also be acknowledged. The qualitative interview approach, while insightful, involved a small sample size not broadly generalisable. Larger mixed methods studies combining surveys with interviews could validate trends across wider populations. Additional research extending to other ethnic minorities would also enrich the picture of Australia's multicultural digital landscapes. Furthermore, the rapidly changing nature of social media warrants periodic repetition. Platform functions and user behaviours evolve regularly requiring ongoing re-examination. Shifting demographics too may influence emerging preferences warranting new investigations over time.

Longitudinal designs could trace evolutions enhancing strategic foresight. Understanding cultural influences on online habits also varies within ethnicities by factors like religion, language, generation and geographic location. Intersectionality analyses incorporating these intra-group differences would offer finer-grained perspectives.

Overall, this work makes an important initial step toward culturally aware digital engagement. Continuous research strengthening quantitative rigour and expanding scope will further benefit organisational cultural competence. Regular re-assessments tracking evolution additionally ensure relevance amid fluid technological transformation. With sensitivity to limitations, this study offers valuable starting considerations. Continued mixed methods investigations probing deeper intra-cultural layers promise even richer guidance. An ongoing research commitment to applying learnings seems vital for authentically navigating today's interconnectivity realm of heterogeneous cultures. Nevertheless, one needs to place evident limitations. The focus group used qualitative research which has made it insightful but the sample size was too small to allow generalisable findings. Greater mixed methods use, encompassing both surveys and interviews, might help aggregate the information for broader populations. Further studies that try to dive into other minorities in Australia as well, would certainly help out in creating the complete digital portrayal of Australian multi-cultural background. Besides, the media is social has an aspect of changing very fast, thus the reason for reiterating them from time to time. Service metrics and user behaviour parameters undergo changes quite often leading to a constant process of re-evaluation. Moreover, changing demographics as well may reflect a significance leading to new studies in each timeline. An approach based on the longitudinal designs of those enhancing strategic foresight could be followed. Factors that determine the way cultural influences confront online behaviour also differ across ethnic groups within religions, languages, generations, and locations. Intersectionality analysis, of interest to the researchers, will offer rich intra-group varying perspectives. The point is that in this case, significant progress has been made towards cultural awareness in digital engagement. Deepening studies that enhance quantitative precision and approach more areas will eventually translate into a more advanced culture within organisations. Incorporating more assessments and reviewing progress to pick up changes during updates maintains relevance during rapid technological changes. Such research realising the limitations is of great importance as a first thought for

further research. Furthermore, a cross-culture mixed methods study will shed light and identify more intricate cultural layers that will provide further insight.

Using the concepts like Social Identity Theory, Cultural Dimensions Theory, and Functionalist Theory as the theoretical foundation for this work, the onus is on the work to identify new variables that can explain the use of social media among the ethnic population. Cultural Sensitivity can be defined as the extent to which cultural norms affect a user's decision of the media site to join. This variable points to the fact that people of different ethnic background are likely to seek the company of other people of their kind and this will often be achieved through the use of such platforms that suit their ethnicity. For instance, those participants who belong to Arab Australian may have a tendency to select the sites that provide privacy and collective sharing because of cultural values formulated in the context of the family and community. The new variable which emerging in the list is Digital Literacy Across Cultures. The study shows that differences in the digital literacy cause essential differences in the use of social media. For instance, smaller groups of participants at a younger age, who normally are more familiar with the internet than the other respondents, had a more complex usage pattern. This is a clear indication once ethnicity community members' digital literacy comes of age they define how they want to interface with the technology, including the platform, content and even the content consumption. In addition, the variable of Social Media Trust Levels has emerged as the key variable influencing the users' behaviour. In this regard participants had varied level of trust in the different platforms depending on the culture they came from and the experiences they have had with those platforms. For instance, participants of Indian Australian origin were highly cautious about platforms that were seen as intrusive and this the cultural norms of Indian Australian that highly regard privacy and data security. Thus, the identification of these new variables not only enhances the theoretical developments of this research but also to the corpus of social media and cultural analysis. Such ideas can help the marketers and the social media developers to gradually steer away from the stereotype approach which offends a number of viewers.

## **7.6 Theoretical Contribution**

The focus of the study is the exploration of the relationship between culture and social media usage patterns, specifically within the context of social media usage patterns among multi-ethnic Australians. This study makes significant theoretical contributions to both social media studies and cultural/ethnic studies. It sheds light on the crucial role cultural factors play in shaping social media usage patterns, uncovering not just usage trends but also the cultural nuances that underpin them. By focusing on the experiences of White Australians, Arab Australians, and Indian Australians, it deepens our understanding of how culture influences digital interactions. In essence, this research enriches the field of social media studies by providing a framework for comprehending the intricate interplay between culture and social media usage. Moreover, by exploring how digital platforms both mirror and influence cultural identities and practices, this study expands the scope of cultural and ethnic studies. It contributes significantly to culture, ethnicity, and technology by examining how cultural dynamics manifest on social media platforms. In essence, this research serves as a valuable addition to the ongoing dialogue surrounding the relationship between culture, ethnicity, and technology in the digital age.

## **7.7 Practical Contribution**

From a practical standpoint, the research offers valuable insights for practitioners seeking to optimise social media platforms and content to be more inclusive and culturally sensitive. The findings provide a fresh perspective on how platform features and content can be tailored to accommodate cultural differences and cater to the needs and preferences of diverse user segments. The knowledge of cultural factors influencing the ways in which people use social media helps to create aimed marketing strategies, campaigning strategies and adapted user experiences that will have people of different ethnicities at heart (Manning et al., 2024). Searching for the answers questions like, "gender", "age", "cultural values", as well as classic terms such as "traditions" and "socio-gender norms" is the key to successful social media communication between people from different backgrounds. Basically, the primary result of the research will help practitioners to govern social media platforms and content through the lens of the cultural inclusiveness and tolerant attitude. Corresponding to each target audience's

diverse cultural customs, the social media managers' engagement and resonance shall be bettered.

### ***7.8 Limitations of the Study***

A number of lessons are learnt from this study, but also some limitations arise which should be kept in mind. First of all, the transferability of the results may be affected due to the reports focusing just three particular ethnic groups within the limited context of Australia. The data may not necessarily reflect real people or they can be from a minority culture that does not match the general population of another country or region which means that the data cannot be extrapolated into a real-world context. Besides this, the data that this study draws from, which is volunteer-based, it opens a door for errors and biases. It is challenging to ensure that the respondents will provide real and actual answers concerning their social media usage such as choices and habits (Chan, 2022). As well, it seems that the researchers of the study utilise a cross-sectional design that allows them to portray social media patterns for the specified ethnic groups. A longitudinal view which stretches the usage patterns over time would give a welcome picture more for social media dynamics and influencers side. Another point mentioned is that the research acknowledges the impact of cultural traits on the why and how people use media but it does not necessarily describe every dimension of ethnic group's cultural background.

It could involve the introduction of other cultural worldviews or practices which were not captured in the study. Moreover, the theme revolves around dimensions like driven by mode of frequency, level of exposure, platforms of choice, objectives behind use, form and nature of content utilisation, and ways of communication. The remaining factors that might change the usage methods of social media like socioeconomic and political status, educational background, and technical infrastructure have not been conveniently described (Jürgens & Stark, 2022). In addition, the document is completely deficient in the absence of any detail as to research methods that involve data collection and doing calculations. The matter how good or not the data reflects reality and accuracy could sometimes remain undetermined. In conclusion, the study fails to substantiate how bias and assumption could have been avoided in the design and analysis of the research, which is essential

given the fact that these biases and also the research's perspective often immensely impact how the outcomes are interpreted (Ohme et al., 2023).

### ***7.9 Future Research Directions***

The study adopts a qualitative research approach, employing thematic analysis to examine cultural differences in dimensions of social media use, including frequency, time spent, preferred platforms, purposes, content interests, and interaction styles. The research is guided by the Functionalism theory, which posits that social media fulfils cultural needs. The findings reveal that ethnic differences in usage are influenced by several cultural norms. The research contributes fresh knowledge on how sociological paradigms can be utilised to analyse online behaviours in culturally diverse settings, providing insights for practitioners to maximise the inclusiveness of social media platforms and content based on cultural differences among user segments. The study's findings have significant implications for practitioners seeking to optimise social media platforms and content to be more culturally sensitive and inclusive (Li & Xie, 2020).

The research underscores the importance of considering demographic factors such as age, gender, and occupation, as well as cultural values, traditions, and socio-gender norms. These factors shape how individuals from different ethnic backgrounds engage with social media platforms, including their frequency of use, time spent, preferred platforms, purposes, content consumption habits, and interaction styles. Moving forward, future research directions are suggested. Among them are the analysis of social media consumption patterns between other ethnic groups, furthering the audience's knowledge, the longitudinal studies to catch differences between times and the comparison of countries and cultures in terms of social media. The involvement of quantitative research methods in building on the existing knowledge on issues of culture and economy, and researchers can re-address culture and economy perspectives and specific ethos to acquire more insights from a given culture. Finally, other significant research topics that are in great need of scientific investigation are the relative amounts of social media platforms use, ethical standards currently in circulation and interventions towards and policies to make social media more inclusive.

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**APPENDIX A - Literature Review Table**

<b>Themes</b>	<b>Keywords</b>	<b>Source (Author year)</b>	<b>Methodology</b>	<b>Findings</b>
1. Traditional Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective activities.</li> <li>• Environmental opportunities.</li> <li>• Mediums</li> <li>• Geographical boundaries</li> </ul>	(Shams 2018)	Qualitative	Competitive factors can reinforce the perception of the required advances.
		(Bulunmaz 2016)	Qualitative interview technique	The rise in the turnover rate of technology is creating major differences.
		(Kumar 2015)	Qualitative	Reserve strategic management with resources.
2. Digital Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purchasing</li> <li>• Shopping</li> <li>• Platforms &amp; networks</li> <li>• Product services</li> <li>• Contemporary environment</li> <li>• Divergent</li> <li>• Br&amp; product</li> </ul>	(Mason et al. 2021)	Exploratory research. Survey	Social media for a longer period update their profiles frequently.
		(Duffett 2017)	Questionnaire	A study revealed that teenagers who used social media for a longer period update their profiles frequently.
		(Olotewo 2016)	A quantitative research design	The findings revealed the cultural differences to be considered while designing effective strategies for social media.
		(Kaur, 2016)	Content Analysis	Facebook is considered as a prominent social media platform that has been implicated in emerging economies. Opportunities created by social media marketing have proved to be beneficial for several businesses.

3. Implications of Marketing Evolution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business es</li> <li>• Digital marketing</li> <li>• Efficient organisation</li> <li>• Social media marketing</li> <li>• Website marketing</li> <li>• Mobile marketing</li> <li>• SEO</li> <li>• E-mail marketing</li> <li>• Simple website design</li> </ul>	Cinelli et al. (2021)	Qualitative methodology	The study has revealed that the cultural values which are concerned with power distance are also important in hashtagging intensity.
		(Sharma & Verma 2018)	Content analysis	This research paper addresses & acknowledges six underlying trends in the I&Scape & evolution of social media.
		(Watson et al. 2015)	Content analysis	It is necessary to present several associated perspectives for marketing strategies.
		Tiago & Verissimo (2014).	Secondary Qualitative	The web can be considered an extensively powerful & influential tool for marketers.
4. Digital Media: Role of Digital Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marketing activities</li> <li>• Potential customers</li> <li>• Promotional activities</li> <li>• Marketing strategies</li> <li>• Sales &amp; revenues</li> <li>• Profitability</li> <li>• Marketing techniques</li> </ul>	(Iqbal, 2021)	Qualitative research method	Customers generally prefer discount stores for price along with quality. They opt for organised retailers followed by delightful experiences, & conveniences.
		(Cutrona et al. 2019).	Qualitative research	Search engines & social media enrich data highlighted the positive impact of advertising agencies on regular marketing.
		(Saura et al. 2017)	Systematic Literature review	Companies must analyse whether the money spent on campaigns & promotional offers can generate enough revenue or not.
		(An&a et al. 2016)	Systematic Literature Review	The research paper supports, acknowledges & accepts transactional & & relationship marketing.
		(Ravi, 2016)	Primary & secondary qualitative methodologies are implicated in this study	The findings show the majority of the marketing executives from the sampled organisations held senior positions.

5. Connecting with Customers through Digital Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feasible, companies</li> <li>• Customers</li> <li>• Small-scale businesses</li> <li>• Opportunity</li> <li>• Preferences</li> <li>• Global pandemic</li> <li>• Shift in marketing</li> <li>• Promotional strategies</li> <li>• Convenience</li> </ul>	(Bowen et al. 2021).	The methodology of the online survey has been executed.	It is essential to give B2B salespeople an opportunity for enhancement in communication.
		Ganjeh et al. 2019).	Quantitative survey methodology	Social media tools & platforms provide an instrument that assists firms in enhancing relationships with partners along with perpetuating communication.
		(Kamboj et al. 2017).	The secondary qualitative design has been implicated	The findings have revealed that the emergence & adoption of several technologies have offered & cultivated the prevalence of dual benefits to the employees in terms of work culture along with socialisation followed by entertainment.
6. Challenges & Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Challenges</li> <li>• Platform</li> <li>• Age factor</li> <li>• Information</li> <li>• Certain trend</li> <li>• Customer base</li> <li>• Transactions</li> <li>• Security</li> <li>• Adequate evaluation</li> </ul>	(Jenneboer et al., 2022)	Systematic literature review	Companies to alter language style
		(Greene et al., 2022)	Quantified by media articles	Food & beverage br&s have distinct personalities
		(Iankova et al. 2019)	Mixed Method Analysis	Social media enhances customer management
		(Shawky et al. 2019).	Systematic Literature review	Content is attempted to connect with the audience
		(Kasemsap, 2018)	Qualitative design	A higher value indicates that the company should focus more on customers.
		(Xenos et al., 2014).	Qualitative design methodology	Welcoming young citizens by traditional views

7. Consumer Behaviour in the Digital World	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business segment</li> <li>• searching &amp; purchasing,</li> <li>• Big data analytics</li> <li>• Factors, significance</li> <li>• Consumer behaviour</li> </ul>	(Kavitha., 2017)	Study based on an analytical approach & involves a survey	Findings revealed the attitude of consumers is largely associated with the changes in demographics.
		(Ramya & Ali., 2016)	Qualitative methodology	The findings revealed that a proper understanding of factors allows a significant influence to be exerted on customer perception.
8. Significance of Understanding Consumer Buying Behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Significance,</li> <li>• Understanding,</li> <li>• Behaviour,</li> <li>• Consumer,</li> <li>• Insights,</li> <li>• Marketing, factors,</li> <li>• Relationships,</li> <li>• Businesses,</li> <li>• Digital platforms.</li> </ul>	(Pham 2021).	A highly regarded survey methodology has been executed.	The generated findings concluded that independent variables have generally low impact sizes. On contrary to that, the variable "PE" has the most extensive influence on the endogenous variable.
		(Chauhan et al. 2021)	A questionnaire base sample survey was executed for the collection of data.	Packaging significantly impacts decisions on consumer purchasing, as a source of valuable information. Consumers use packaging info for suitable resonance with their preferences.
		(Pelagic et al. 2020).	Self-administered Questionnaire	Social media has a partially significant influence on the purchasing behaviour of Pakistani consumers, influenced by word of mouth & credibility.
		(Teste et al. 2020).	A quantitative research method has been employed.	Majority of customers lack appropriate knowledge of green management & sustainability.
		(Ringgit & Reni 2019).	A survey research design has been implicated.	Findings indicated consumer intention to purchase a cosmetic product on social media platforms in Brunei Darussalam is strongly influenced by perceived behavioural control.

9. CBB In Varied Industries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Big data,</li> <li>• Manufacturing Company,</li> <li>• Products,</li> <li>• Customers,</li> <li>• Demographics,</li> <li>• Service organisation,</li> <li>• Patterns,</li> <li>• Customer purchases,</li> <li>• Marketing approaches.</li> </ul>	(Stankevich, 2017).	Extensive literature review of academic publications in the area of buying decision-making process in marketing. The researchers collected & evaluated 24 journal articles, reports, & marketing books to identify the core models & theories in the field.	The findings of the research paper suggest that understanding consumer behaviour & their buying strategies is crucial for marketers to design effective marketing campaigns & achieve success in the market. The paper provides recommendations for marketers to deepen their understanding of consumer behaviour & leverage it to influence consumer decisions in favour of the company's offerings.
10. CBB & Big Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Big data,</li> <li>• Firms,</li> <li>• Data,</li> <li>• Digital platforms,</li> <li>• Trends,</li> <li>• Internet usage patterns,</li> <li>• Ethical value,</li> <li>• Imperative decisions,</li> <li>• Social media platforms,</li> <li>• Marketing decisions.</li> <li>• Consumer Behaviour, Intention to purchase,</li> <li>• Theory of Planned Behaviour, Social Media, Cosmetic Products, Brunei Darussalam</li> </ul>	Palalic et al. (2020)	Self-administered questionnaires from 396 respondents.	Social media partially influences Pakistani consumers' complex buying behaviour
		Ringim & Reni (2019)	Descriptive cross-sectional survey using structured questionnaires & SEM-PLS analysis.	Social media mediates consumer behaviour & intention to purchase cosmetics.

11. CBB & Market Void	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Competing,</li> <li>• Business</li> <li>• Survival,</li> <li>• Sustain,</li> <li>• Identifying,</li> <li>• Understanding</li> <li>• Buying behaviour,</li> <li>• Customers,</li> <li>• Connection,</li> <li>• Relationship.</li> </ul>	Thakker, (2021)	Questionnaire	Influencer marketing has different impacts on Millennials & Baby Boomers.
		Chauhan et.al (2021).	The study used a conceptual model based on stimulus organism response (S-O-R) theory & collected data from 569 respondents in the central Indian region. PLS-SEM 3 software was used for data analysis.	Hedonic shopping value & positive emotions influence impulse buying.
		Hosseini et al. (2020)	Quantitative survey.	Advertisements, impulsiveness & promotions positively influence impulse buying in Saudi Arabia, while income & comments do not.
		Rungsrisawat et al. (2019)	Primary research with 310 respondents, online survey, T-test, One-way ANOVA. Questionnaire survey.	Perceived benefits & psychological factors positively influence online buying behaviour. Perceived risks also have a negative impact.
		Figueiredo & Eiriz (2020)	Longitudinal secondary data	Emotions, occasions, aromas, & luxury attributes like comfort influenced fragrance purchases over functionality.

12. Marketing Models that Cater for CBB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consumer Behaviour,</li> <li>• Consumer buying behaviour,</li> <li>• Decision-making process,</li> <li>• Marketing activities,</li> <li>• Social media marketing,</li> <li>• Consumer segments,</li> <li>• Customer satisfaction,</li> <li>• Customer relationship.</li> </ul>	Wansi (2020)	Primary qualitative research.	Authentic influencers & personalised, creative video content that promotes brands to socially conscious Gen Z.
		Qazzafi (2019)	Secondary data	The study examined consumer buying patterns through secondary data to understand high vs low involvement purchase stages, finding people follow stages more for high-cost items.
		Nazida (2019).	Quantitative survey.	Lack of communication on green products & consumers' lack of green knowledge hindered green marketing & buying behaviour changes.
		Priya (2019).	Primary Quantitative data	Both positive & negative impacts on education through increased access but also unhealthy addiction & lack of in-person interaction.

13. Social Media Marketing & CBB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social media marketing,</li> <li>• Communication</li> <li>• Relationship building,</li> <li>• Reach,</li> <li>• Involvement,</li> <li>• Transparency,</li> <li>• Geographical boundaries,</li> <li>• Customer segments,</li> <li>• Buying behaviour,</li> <li>• Revenue</li> <li>• Profits,</li> <li>• Individual level</li> <li>• Concerns</li> <li>,</li> <li>• Loyalty,</li> <li>• Offerings</li> <li>,</li> <li>• Resources,</li> <li>• Digital platforms,</li> <li>• Customer base,</li> <li>• Marketing methods,</li> <li>• Opportunities</li> <li>• Inefficiencies,</li> <li>• Commitment.</li> </ul>	Alalwan et al., (2017).	Systematic Literature Review.	Common themes covered role of social media in advertising, word of mouth, customer relationship management, & impacts on br&s & firm performance.
		(Kumar 2015)	Editorial for journal outlining future research priorities	Qualitative & quantitative approaches were used.
		Balakrishnan et al. (2014).	Primary Quantitative Research.	Content creation on YouTube is more closely linked to addiction than viewing. Social gratification most influences activities while technology matters less.



14. Cultural Differences That Impact Social Media Usage Patterns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cultural, influence, differences, social media, significance, power, distributions, societies,</li> <li>Paly form, technology, individuals.</li> </ul>	(Goodyear et al., 2019).	A mixed methodology as the conducted approach has been implicated.	Young individuals have diverse responses to health-related content on social media as a source of information
		(Kelly et al., 2018).	The use of population base data from UK court has been employed.	This study allows the provision of value via a systematic review of relevant articles, to dimensions, variables, conceptual models, along with frameworks explored & emphasised by previous researchers.
		Lim et al., 2017).	In the name of methodology, a questionnaire has been implicated & executed.	Contrary to common belief, many young people are discerning users & creators re: health-related concerns & its associated content on social media, as shown through the representation of critical awareness.
		(Ngai et al., 2015).	Qualitative methodology in particular content analysis has been implicated for this research.	For SMEs, significant factors include managerial & organisational aspects, plus externals i.e. the business l&scape & global economy, needing further exploration to gain an in-depth insight into SME dynamics.
		(Daniil et al., 2014).	Qualitative methodology has been employed.	The results of this study indicated the confirmation that the mediating role of the attitude of consumer in a specific relationship between the effectiveness of social media influencers.
		(Abdel Salam et al., 2013).	The list of data & domains provided by Egyptian universities – a qualitative method is implicated.	Further exploration needed to gain a thorough & in-depth understanding of SME dynamics.

<p>15. Cultural Influence on Individual Preferences</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Culture,</li> <li>• Society,</li> <li>• Preferences,</li> <li>• Requirements,</li> <li>• Characteristics,</li> <li>• Cultural</li> <li>• Differences,</li> <li>• Language,</li> <li>• Priorities,</li> <li>• Likes &amp; dislikes,</li> <li>• Technology access,</li> <li>• Trends,</li> <li>• Social media,</li> <li>• Product, selection,</li> <li>• Br&amp;</li> </ul>	<p>(Ngai et al., 2015).</p>	<p>Systematic literature review of 46 social media research articles from 2002-2011.</p>	<p>Developed causal chain framework summarising theories, &amp; constructs used based on an input-process-output model for a comprehensive understanding of social media adoption &amp; usage.</p>
<p>16. Social Media Usage Led by Cultural Variation &amp; Power Distribution</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Culture,</li> <li>• Social media,</li> <li>• Usage, patterns</li> <li>• Masculine,</li> <li>• Cultures,</li> <li>• Feminine , cultures</li> <li>• Power distribution,</li> <li>• Authority,</li> <li>• Decision making,</li> <li>• Purchase decisions,</li> <li>• Information gathering,</li> <li>• Health information,</li> <li>• Entertainment information,</li> <li>• Cultural differences,</li> <li>• Usability.</li> </ul>	<p>(Kapoor et al., 2018).</p>	<p>Literature review of 132 social media papers from IS journals 1997-2017.</p>	<p>Identified themes on social media behaviours, recommendations, organisational use, &amp; contexts like marketing, risks, &amp; critical events, &amp; compared traditional vs social media.</p>

<p>17. Cultural Difference in Light of Cultural Theories</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultural differences,</li> <li>• Social media,</li> <li>• Human behaviour,</li> <li>• Perspectives,</li> <li>• Human, emotions</li> <li>• Chatting,</li> <li>• Socialising,</li> <li>• Connections,</li> <li>• Western Countries,</li> <li>• Busy working schedule,</li> <li>• Shopping</li> <li>• Events.</li> </ul>	<p>(Goodrich &amp; De Mooij, 2014).</p>	<p>Survey across 50 countries to compare use of social media &amp; information sources for consumer decision-making using cultural dimensions.</p>	<p>Use of information sources that influence online purchases strongly varies by culture. Collectivists rely more on social media as an alternative for interpersonal WOM than individualists. Culture affects social media vs traditional WOM influence differently. Major differences in online complaint behaviour by country due to cultural variations.</p>
<p>18. Usage Patterns of Social Media among Ethnic Groups</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social media usage patterns</li> <li>• Ethnic groups</li> <li>• Cultural backgrounds,</li> <li>• Social contexts,</li> <li>• Communication,</li> <li>• Interaction,</li> <li>• Engagement,</li> <li>• Age,</li> <li>• Socioeconomic status,</li> <li>• Education,</li> <li>• Product, information</li> <li>• Services,</li> <li>• Brands</li> <li>• Awareness,</li> <li>• Marketing,</li> <li>• Promotions,</li> <li>• Platform, preferences,</li> </ul>	<p>Bryceson &amp; Vuorela, 2020)</p>	<p>Exploration of concepts through the literature on transnational families with members in Europe currently or recently.</p>	<p>Transnational families constitute multilocal identifications &amp; links to nations, communities &amp; global networks. Concepts of 'frontiering' &amp; 'relativising' help understand intra-familial &amp; social relations challenged by transnational living across borders. Identification is complex rather than fixed to a locality or state.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Cultural nuances</li></ul>			
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## **APPENDIX B - Interview Guide for Research Stage 1**

### Greeting & Introduction

#### **Demographic Information:**

Please provide a response for each of the following questions:

**1. Please indicate your age group**

- 18-25 ☐
- 26-35 ☐
- 36-45 ☐
- 46-55 ☐
- 56-65 ☐
- 66 & above ☐

**2. Please indicate your gender**

- Female ☐
- Male ☐
- Other ☐
- Prefer not to say ☐

**3. What is your marital status?**

- Single ☐
- Married ☐
- Separated ☐
- Divorced ☐
- Widowed ☐

#### 4. Please indicate your annual income

- Less than \$60,000 ☐
- \$60,001 to \$70,000 ☐
- \$70,001 to \$80,000 ☐
- \$80,001 to \$90,000 ☐
- \$90,001 to \$100,000 ☐
- Greater than \$100,000 ☐

#### 5. Which racial or ethnic background do you identify with?

- Aboriginal ☐ Torres Isl&er ☐
- Caucasian ☐ Asian ☐
- African ☐ Middle Eastern ☐
- Latino ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

#### 6. With what faith tradition do you most closely identify?

- Christian ☐
- Muslim ☐
- Jewish ☐
- Buddhist ☐
- Hindu ☐
- Atheist/Agnostic ☐
- Other ☐

#### 7. Which of the following best describes your employment status?

- Full-time ☐ Part-time ☐
- Casual ☐ Temporary ☐
- Unemployed ☐ Retired ☐
- Other ☐

**8. Which of the following best describes your current occupation?**

- Managers ☐
- Professionals ☐
- Technicians & associate professionals ☐
- Clerical support workers ☐
- Service & sales workers ☐
- Skilled agricultural, forestry & fishery workers ☐
- Craft & related trades workers ☐
- Plant & machine operators, & assemblers ☐
- Elementary occupations ☐
- Armed forces occupations ☐
- Other ☐

**9. What is the highest level of education you have completed?**

- Some High School ☐
- High School ☐
- Bachelor's Degree ☐
- Master's Degree ☐
- PhD ☐
- Trade School ☐
- Prefer not to say ☐

**Interview Questions:**

1. Do you use social media? If yes, what applications do you use?
2. How much time on average do you spend on social media per day?
3. What is your favourite social media app? Why?
4. How often do you use your favourite social media app per day? Why?
5. Would you think culture impacts the use of social media? How?
6. Which apps do you use to buy or sell products/services online?
7. Would you prefer to use apps that are relevant to your culture? Why?

These are the initial interview questions, however through probing, the interviews may not take a standard direction.

***Interview Guide for Research Stage 2***

## Greeting &amp; Introduction

**Demographic Information:**

Please provide a response for each of the following questions:

**1. Please indicate your age group**

- 18-25 ☐
- 26-35 ☐
- 36-45 ☐
- 46-55 ☐
- 56-65 ☐
- 66 & above ☐

**2. Please indicate your gender**

- Female ☐
- Male ☐
- Other ☐
- Prefer not to say ☐

**3. What is your marital status?**

- Single ☐
- Married ☐
- Separated ☐
- Divorced ☐
- Widowed ☐



#### 4. Please indicate your annual income

- Less than \$60,000 ☐
- \$60,001 to \$70,000 ☐
- \$70,001 to \$80,000 ☐
- \$80,001 to \$90,000 ☐
- \$90,001 to \$100,000 ☐
- Greater than \$100,000 ☐

#### 5. Which racial or ethnic background do you identify with?

- |                                       |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| • Aboriginal <input type="checkbox"/> | Torres Isl&er <input type="checkbox"/>  |
| • Caucasian <input type="checkbox"/>  | Asian <input type="checkbox"/>          |
| • African <input type="checkbox"/>    | Middle Eastern <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Latino <input type="checkbox"/>     | Other: _____                            |

#### 6. With what faith tradition do you most closely identify?

- Christian ☐
- Muslim ☐
- Jewish ☐
- Buddhist ☐
- Hindu ☐
- Atheist/Agnostic ☐
- Other ☐

#### 7. Which of the following best describes your employment status?

- |                                       |                                    |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| • Full-time <input type="checkbox"/>  | Part-time <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Casual <input type="checkbox"/>     | Temporary <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Unemployed <input type="checkbox"/> | Retired <input type="checkbox"/>   |
| • Other <input type="checkbox"/>      |                                    |

**8. Which of the following best describes your current occupation?**

- Managers ☐
- Professionals ☐
- Technicians & associate professionals ☐
- Clerical support workers ☐
- Service & sales workers ☐
- Skilled agricultural, forestry & fishery workers ☐
- Craft & related trades workers ☐
- Plant & machine operators, & assemblers ☐
- Elementary occupations ☐
- Armed forces occupations ☐
- Other ☐

**9. What is the highest level of education you have completed?**

- Some High School ☐
- High School ☐
- Bachelor's Degree ☐
- Master's Degree ☐
- PhD ☐
- Trade School ☐
- Prefer not to say ☐

**Interview Questions:**

1. How often do you use social media?
2. How much time do you spend on average using social media per day?
3. What's the main reason you use social media?
4. Which social media platform is your favourite & why?
5. What is the content that attracts you in social media & why?
6. How do you interact with different content?
7. Would you think culture impacts the use of social media? How?
8. Which apps do you use to buy or sell products/services online?
9. These are the initial interview questions, however through probing, the interviews may not take a standard direction.

## APPENDIX C - Email Invitation

Dear Participant,

We are conducting interviews as part of a research study to find ways to analyse social media usage patterns. As a social media user, you are in an ideal position to give us valuable first-hand information from your own perspective.

The interview takes around 30 minutes & is very informal. We are simply trying to capture your thoughts & perspectives on social media usage patterns. Your responses to the questions will be kept confidential. Your participation will be a valuable addition to our research & findings, which could lead to greater public understanding of how different social media patterns affect consumer behaviour.

If you are willing to participate in the interview, please suggest a day & time that suits you & I will do my best to be available. I have attached the necessary documents such as consent form & information sheet.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask.

Your sincerely,

**Ahmed Abdalla**

**PhD Student (Marketing)**

School of Management & Enterprise | Faculty of Business, Education, Law & Arts  
| University of Southern Queensland | Toowoomba | Queensland | 4350 | Australia

Mobile: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]





## Participant Information for USQ Research Project Interview (Research Stage 1)

### Information Sheet For Participants Research Stage 1

#### Project Details

Title of Project: **Social Media Usage Patterns: A Comparative Study of Three Ethnic Groups**

Human Research

Ethics Approval

Number: HXXREAXXX

#### Research Team Contact Details

##### Principal Investigator Details

Mr Ahmed Abdalla

Email: [REDACTED]

Mobile: [REDACTED]

##### Supervisor Details

##### (Other Investigators' Details]

Dr Ranga Chimhundu (Principal Supervisor)

Email: [REDACTED]

Telephone: [REDACTED]

Dr Joe Zhou (Associate Supervisor)

Email: [REDACTED]

Telephone: [REDACTED]

#### Description

The purpose of this study is to investigate social media usage patterns through a comparative study of three different ethnicities.

Social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram & Twitter are very popular. The number of social media users worldwide is over 3.6 billion, a figure that grows nine per cent cumulatively year-on-year. Social media content is highly engaging for the user, & the

content is carefully targeted through monitoring of user preferences & demographics to elicit maximum engagement. The increasing prevalence of image & video content makes the content even more engaging & secures 'eyes on screens' for longer periods of times. Accessing & sharing content is as easy as the click of a button, & the social component drives further interaction & engagement through 'likes' & 'shares' & the tagging of contacts. This study will create a theoretical framework, in the context of social media usage patterns, through a comparative study of three different ethnicities. This research will be conducted using qualitative methods; research stage 1 as grounded theory, & research stage 2 as a multiple-case study methodology.

This project is being undertaken as part of Doctor of Philosophy.

### **Participation**

Your participation will involve participation in a research interview that will take approximately 30 minutes of your time.

The interview will be held via Zoom or other means of communication such as telephone. The interview will take place at a time & venue that is convenient to you.

Questions will seek to analyse social media usage patterns & their effects on consumer behaviour in buying certain products or services.

The interview will be audio recorded. If you do not wish for recording to occur, please advise the researcher.

Your participation in this project is entirely voluntary. If you do not wish to take part, you are not obliged to. If you decide to take part & later change your mind, you are free to withdraw from the project at any stage. If you feel that you are uncomfortable during the interview, you can opt to use services like Beyond Blue & Lifeline. You may also request that any data collected about you be withdrawn & confidentially destroyed OR You will be unable to withdraw data collected about yourself after you have participated in this interview OR You will be unable to withdraw data collected about yourself after the data has been analysed. If you do wish to withdraw from this project or withdraw data collected about you, please contact the Research Team (contact details at the top of this form).

Your decision whether you take part, do not take part, or to take part & then withdraw, will in no way impact your current or future relationship with the University of Southern Queensland

### **Expected Benefits**

It is expected that this project will not directly benefit you, however, it may benefit society in general, to understand different social media usage patterns in how this affects consumers in taking decisions when buying certain products/services. This may also enable marketers to correctly address the requirements of different consumers in their promotional efforts.

### **Risks**

In participating in the interview, there are no anticipated risks beyond normal day-to-day living.

### **Privacy & Confidentiality**

All comments & responses will be treated confidentially unless required by law.

- The interviews will be audio recorded for the purposes of transcription.
- Transcripts of the interview can be handed out to you on request.
- Two weeks will be given for you to review & request any changes to the transcript before the data is included in the project for analysis.
- The recording will not be used for any other purpose other than the research.
- The Principal Investigator, research supervisor(s) & USQ will have access to the recording.
- You may choose whether you want to be recorded or not.

The data will not be used in future research projects for confidentiality reasons.

Any data collected as a part of this project will be stored securely as per University of Southern Queensland's [Research Data Management policy](#).

### **Consent to Participate**



## **Consent Form for USQ Research Project Interview (Research Stage 1)**

We would like to ask you to sign a written consent form (enclosed) to confirm your agreement to participate in this project. Please return your signed consent form to the Principal Investigator prior to participating in your interview.

### **Questions or Further Information about the Project**

Please refer to the Research Team Contact Details at the top of the form to have any questions answered or to request further information about this project.

### **Concerns or Complaints Regarding the Conduct of the Project**

If you have any concerns or complaints about the ethical conduct of the project, you may contact the University of Southern Queensland Manager of Research Integrity & Ethics on +61 7 4631 1839 or email [researchintegrity@usq.edu.au](mailto:researchintegrity@usq.edu.au). The Manager of Research Integrity & Ethics is not connected with the research project & can facilitate a resolution to your concern in an unbiased manner.

**Thank you for taking the time to help with this research project.**

**Please keep this sheet for your information.**



**Consent Form Research Stage 1**

**Project Details**

Title of Project:           **Social Media Usage Patterns: A Comparative Study of  
Three Ethnic Groups**

Human Research

Ethics Approval           HXXREAXXX

Number:

**Research Team Contact Details**

<b>Principal Investigator Details</b>	<b>Supervisor Details (Other Investigators' Details)</b>
Mr Ahmed Abdalla	
Email: [REDACTED]	Dr Ranga Chimhundu (Principal Supervisor)
Mobile: [REDACTED]	Email: [REDACTED]
	Telephone: [REDACTED]
	Dr Joe Zhou (Associate Supervisor)
	Email: [REDACTED]
	Telephone: [REDACTED]

<b>Statement of Consent</b>
-----------------------------

**By signing below, you are indicating that you:**

- Have read & understood the information document regarding this project.
- Have had any questions answered to your satisfaction.
- Understand that if you have any additional questions you can contact the research team.
- Understand that the interview will be audio recorded.
- Are over 18 years of age.
- Understand that any data collected may be used in future research activities
- Agree to participate in the project.

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes / <input type="checkbox"/> No
--

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes / <input type="checkbox"/> No
--

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes / <input type="checkbox"/> No
--

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes / <input type="checkbox"/> No
--

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes / <input type="checkbox"/> No
--

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes / <input type="checkbox"/> No
--

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes / <input type="checkbox"/> No
--

Participant Name

--

Participant Signature

--

Date

--

**Please return this sheet to the Principal Investigator prior to undertaking the interview.**



## Consent Form for USQ Research Project Interview (Research Stage 2)

### Project Details

Title of Project: Social Media Usage Patterns: A Comparative Study of  
Three Ethnic Groups

Human Research  
Ethics Approval Number: HXXREAXXX

### Research Team Contact Details

#### Principal Investigator Details

Mr Ahmed Abdalla

Email: [REDACTED]

Mobile: [REDACTED]

#### Supervisor Details (Other Investigators' Details]

Dr Ranga Chimhundu (Principal  
Supervisor)

Email: [REDACTED]

Telephone: [REDACTED]

Dr Joe Zhou (Associate Supervisor)

Email: [REDACTED]

Telephone: [REDACTED]

### Statement of Consent

**By signing below, you are indicating that you:**

- Have read & understood the information document regarding this project. ☐Yes / ☐No
- Have had any questions answered to your satisfaction. ☐Yes / ☐No
- Understand that if you have any additional questions you can contact the research team. ☐Yes / ☐No
- Understand that the interview will be audio recorded. ☐Yes / ☐No
- Are over 18 years of age. ☐Yes / ☐No

- Underst& that any data collected may be used in future research activities ☐Yes / ☐No
- Agree to participate in the project. ☐Yes / ☐No

Participant Name	<div></div>
Participant Signature	<div></div>
Date	<div></div>

**Please return this sheet to the Principal Investigator prior to undertaking the interview**



## Participant Information for USQ Research Project Interview (Research Stage 2)

### Information Sheet for Participants Research Stage 2

#### Project Details

Title of Project: **Social Media Usage Patterns: A Comparative Study of Three Ethnic Groups**

Human Research Ethics Approval Number: HXXREAXXX

#### Research Team Contact Details

##### Principal Investigator Details

Mr Ahmed Abdalla

Email: [REDACTED]

Mobile: [REDACTED]

##### Supervisor Details (Other Investigators' Details]

Dr Ranga Chimhundu (Principal Supervisor)

Email: [REDACTED]

Telephone: [REDACTED]

Dr Joe Zhou (Associate Supervisor)

Email: [REDACTED]

Telephone: [REDACTED]

#### Description

The purpose of this study is to investigate social media usage patterns through a comparative study of three different ethnicities. Social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram & Twitter are very popular. The number of social media users worldwide is over 3.6 billion, a figure that grows nine per cent cumulatively year-on-year. Social media content is highly engaging for the user, & the content is carefully targeted through monitoring of user preferences & demographics to elicit maximum engagement. The increasing prevalence of image & video content makes the content even more engaging & secures 'eyes on screens' for longer periods of times. Accessing & sharing content is as easy as the click of a button, & the social component drives further interaction & engagement through 'likes' & 'shares' & the tagging of contacts. This study will create a theoretical framework, in the context of social media usage patterns, through a comparative study of three different ethnicities. This research will be conducted using qualitative methods; research stage 1 as grounded theory, & research stage 2 as a

multiple-case study methodology. This project is being undertaken as part of Doctor of Philosophy.

### **Participation**

Your participation will involve participation in a research interview that will take approximately 30 minutes of your time.

The interview will be held via Zoom or other means of communication such as telephone. The interview will take place at a time & venue that is convenient to you.

Questions will seek to analyse social media usage patterns & their effects on consumer behaviour in buying certain products or services.

The interview will be audio recorded. If you do not wish for recording to occur, please advise the researcher.

Your participation in this project is entirely voluntary. If you do not wish to take part, you are not obliged to. If you decide to take part & later change your mind, you are free to withdraw from the project at any stage. If you feel that you are uncomfortable during the interview, you can opt to use services like Beyond Blue & Lifeline.

You may also request that any data collected about you be withdrawn & confidentially destroyed, OR

You will be unable to withdraw data collected about yourself after you have participated in this interview, OR

You will be unable to withdraw data collected about yourself after the data has been analysed. If you do wish to withdraw from this project or withdraw data collected about you, please contact the Research Team (contact details at the top of this form).

Your decision whether you take part, do not take part, or to take part & then withdraw, will in no way impact your current or future relationship with the University of Southern Queensland

### **Expected Benefits**

It is expected that this project will not directly benefit you, however, it may benefit society in general, to understand different social media usage patterns in how this affects consumers in taking decisions when buying certain products/services. This may also enable marketers to correctly address the requirements of different consumers in their promotional efforts.

### **Risks**

In participating in the interview, there are no anticipated risks beyond normal day-to-day living.

### **Privacy & Confidentiality**

All comments & responses will be treated confidentially unless required by law.

- The interviews will be audio recorded for the purposes of transcription.
- Transcripts of the interview can be handed out to you on request.
- Two weeks will be given for you to review & request any changes to the transcript before the data is included in the project for analysis.
- The recording will not be used for any other purpose other than the research.
- The Principal Investigator, research supervisor(s) & USQ will have access to the recording.
- You may choose whether you want to be recorded or not.

The data will not be used in future research projects for confidentiality reasons.

Any data collected as a part of this project will be stored securely as per University of Southern Queensland's [Research Data Management policy](#).

### **Consent to Participate**

We would like to ask you to sign a written consent form (enclosed) to confirm your agreement to participate in this project. Please return your signed consent form to the Principal Investigator prior to participating in your interview.

### **Questions or Further Information about the Project**

Please refer to the Research Team Contact Details at the top of the form to have any questions answered or to request further information about this project.

### **Concerns or Complaints Regarding the Conduct of the Project**

If you have any concerns or complaints about the ethical conduct of the project, you may contact the University of Southern Queensland Manager of Research Integrity & Ethics on +61 7 4631 1839 or email [researchintegrity@usq.edu.au](mailto:researchintegrity@usq.edu.au). The Manager of Research Integrity & Ethics is not connected with the research project & can facilitate a resolution to your concern in an unbiased manner.

**Thank you for taking the time to help with this research project.**

**Please keep this sheet for your information.**



## Consent Form for USQ Research Project Interview (Research Stage 2)

### Consent Form Research Stage 2

#### Project Details

Title of Project:

**Social Media Usage Patterns:**

**A Comparative Study of Three Ethnic Groups**

Human Research Ethics Approval Number:

HXXREAXXX

#### Research Team Contact Details

##### Principal Investigator Details

Mr Ahmed Abdalla

Email: [REDACTED]

Mobile: [REDACTED]

##### Supervisor Details (Other Investigators' Details)

Dr Ranga Chimhundu (Principal Supervisor)

Email: [REDACTED]

Telephone: [REDACTED]

Dr Joe Zhou (Associate Supervisor)

Email: [REDACTED]

Telephone: [REDACTED]

#### Statement of Consent

**By signing below, you are indicating that you:**

- Have read & understood the information document regarding this project. ☐ Yes/ ☐ No
- Have had any questions answered to your satisfaction. ☐ Yes / ☐ No
- Understand that if you have any additional questions you can contact the research team. ☐ Yes / ☐ No
- Understand that the interview will be audio recorded. ☐ Yes / ☐ No
- Are over 18 years of age. ☐ Yes / ☐ No
- Understand that any data collected may be used in future research activities ☐ Yes / ☐ No
- Agree to participate in the project. ☐ Yes / ☐ No

Participant Name

Participant Signature



Date

**Please return this sheet to the Principal Investigator prior to undertaking the interview.**