

# A STUDY OF STUDENTS' USING SOCIAL MEDIA BASED ON INFORMATION-SEEKING NEEDS AND ONLINE SOCIAL NETWORKING PREFERENCES

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**Abstract:** Social media has become an alternative source of information for Vietnamese people in recent years. Students reading Media and Communication (MC) at University use social media with a high frequency to partly fulfill requirements deriving from their courses' projects. Meanwhile, students reading in other majors may use social media less than MC students. Differences in needs to fulfill courses' requirements could be the reason for the high volume of use of social media by MC students. This raises the question of whether information-seeking needs could influence the use of social media networking sites as sources of preferences. However, there is a lack of studies on this phenomenon.

To explore this phenomenon, the study employs the social media use, individual variations in social media use for information seeking, and the theory of uses and gratifications. This is expected to demonstrate the difference between students of the same major selecting find out why students like that social network over other social platforms while choosing among Facebook and TikTok as platforms for information gathering. The process of teaching young people to use social media more deliberately will be aided by this study. The academic contribution is the behavior of young people using social networks in Vietnam.

**Keywords:** Multimedia Communication; use of social media in students; Facebook; TikTok; Information seeking

## Introduction

From a macro perspective, the rapid advancement of technology has greatly transformed various aspects of human life, including online interaction, information-seeking, and self-expression. This transformation has been primarily facilitated by the widespread use of popular social media platforms such as Facebook and TikTok. As of July 26, 2022, a report by S. Dixon titled "Global social networks ranked by number of users 2022" revealed that both Facebook and TikTok boast over a billion monthly active members. This staggering user base highlights the significant influence these platforms have on a global scale. Notably, younger generations

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are increasingly captivated by these platforms, as indicated by studies conducted by Duggan & Brenner (2013) and Lenhart et al. (2010).

Delving into the micro perspective, prior research has shed light on the diverse purposes for which individuals utilize social media. Several studies have pointed out the top three purposes among young people, namely information seeking, self-expression, and socialization, as identified by Chen & Sin (2013). Additionally, Whiting & Williams (2013) discovered that social media is employed for social interaction, information seeking, entertainment (64%), relaxation (60%), and expressing opinions (56%), among other purposes. However, while these research articles touch upon the general purposes of social media usage, they have not conducted an in-depth analysis of platform preferences among students from various universities and the underlying reasons driving their choices.

To address this gap, our research specifically targets students majoring in multimedia communications at a private University in Vietnam. In their pursuit of academic success, students in this major heavily rely on social networks to support their studies. Consequently, we sought to investigate whether there are variations in the preference for Facebook or TikTok as platforms for information seeking among these students. To accomplish this, we conducted a study utilizing the SPSS data collection method. The results of our research will elucidate the issue of whether multimedia communication students prefer to search for information on Facebook or TikTok, along with the reasons influencing their platform choice.

## **Theoretical framework and hypotheses**

### ***User Behavior and Information-seeking Needs on Social Networking Sites***

Social networking sites give users the opportunity to interact and show themselves to audiences that value user-generated content and a feeling of community, either in real-time or asynchronously (Carr & Hayes, 2015). Users desire to stay connected by gaining information and insights into certain issues that will help them make better decisions (Taprial & Kanwar, 2012). Nowadays, social networks such as Facebook, Instagram,... and, Tiktok have evolved into a social network with millions of users worldwide (Omar & Dequan, 2020). The importance of this business was highlighted during the pandemic, which resulted in record levels of media consumption, with internet material acquiring users among the younger generations (Jones, 2020), particularly among Gen Z youth, who grew up with the boom of social media digital technologies such as the Internet, social networks, and mobile devices. Previous research has demonstrated the purposes of utilizing social networks and explained why individuals use them (Whiting & Williams, 2013).

### ***Uses and Gratifications Theory in Social Media Usage***

Researchers utilize a theory of uses and gratifications to examine how people behave in social networks. Katz, Blumler, and Gurevitch (1974) stated that "the social and psychological origins of needs, which generate expectations of the mass media or other sources, which lead to different patterns of media exposure resulting in need gratifications and other consequences". Meanwhile, Whiting A & Williams D (2013) argued that the correlation of uses and gratifications theory and social media usage. Thereby, the researchers arrived at ten themes of uses and gratifications. They are: (1) social interaction, (2) information seeking, (3) passing time, (4) entertainment, (5) relaxation, (6) expressions of opinions, (7) communicatory utility, (8) convenience utility, (9) information sharing, (10) surveillance/knowledge about others (Whiting A & Williams D, 2013). Stafford and Gonier (2004) identified a number of gratifications from Internet use that encourage users' actions. These include web searching, information acquisition, interpersonal communication skills, and socialization (as cited in Urista M, Dong Q & Day K, 2009). Brandtzaeg & Heim, (2009) found that why people get involved in social networking sites. They are: 1) Information (Information, sharing and consuming content, debating), 2) Entertainment (Unspecified fun, time-killing, (profile surfing), 3) Social interaction (Socializing, friends, family, new relations, free SMS), 4) Personal identity (profile surfing). These studies show that information-seeking needs are one of the common factors explaining why people use the Internet. Information seeking is a fairly prevalent need, and it is worthwhile to research people's information demands as well as their level of satisfaction.

### ***Information-seeking Behavior and Models***

Wilson's information-seeking behavior model (1996) provided a framework to understand information search behavior, incorporating research from various disciplines (Wilson T, 1999). The risk/reward theory, which provides explanation of people's choices of their frequently-used information sources, and the concept of "self-efficacy" from social learning theory play important roles in explaining information source preferences and individuals' belief in their ability to obtain desired results (Wilson T, 1999). Also included in social learning theory is the concept of "self-efficacy," which is described as "the belief that one can effectively execute the behavior necessary to generate the [desired] results" (Wilson T, 1999). One of the motives for leveraging social networks to satisfy people's interests is the necessity to seek information on social networks nowadays. Identifying which information from social media sources will be more useful to a certain community's group of people and their self-efficacy will make an essential contribution to information usage and regulate the behavior of those utilizing social networks to meet human requirements.

### ***Students' Information-seeking Needs on Social Networking Sites***

In 2013, Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project conducted a poll in the United States and discovered that around 73% of adult Internet users utilized a social networking site (Madden et al., 2013). Since users of social networks (such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram) can engage directly in the generation, alteration, and sharing of content or information (Boyd & Ellison, 2007) that enriches and diversifies the information available on social networking sites. However, that information's trustworthiness may be called into doubt (Sutton, Palen, & Shklovski, 2008). Consumers, as information providers, must both make judgments regarding the reliability of the information they receive online (Westerman, Spence & Van Der Heide, 2012). Aside from that, not all information on social media is untrustworthy. Several studies have demonstrated that people are more likely to receive material from news outlets that are generally trusted by the crowd based on the "wisdom of crowds": utilizing crowdsourcing to assess the trustworthiness of networking sites (Pennycook & Rand, 2019).

With such a large number of young users using social networks, there has been much research conducted on students' information search requirements. One of them includes the study of Bal & Bicen (2017), which focuses on students' perceptions regarding the use of media for educational and learning purposes. It claims that social media increases cooperative learning abilities and allows students to communicate with their professors more easily; hence, it is unavoidable to employ social media platforms in student-centered education. However, this study does not specify which social media platforms are ideal for information seeking. Some researchers identify broad information demands and define international students' information needs as academic, financial, socio-cultural, health, and technology-related (Hamid et al., 2016). This issue is particularly important, as evidenced by the contentious arguments regarding information and the desire to obtain information on social networking sites. Furthermore, some research suggests that different information-seeking demands might result in different information-source preferences (Chow & Croxton, 2012 , Allen et al, 2018).

### ***Facebook and TikTok as Social Media Platforms for Information Seeking***

A research done by Kyung-Sun Kim (Kim et al., 2014) has shed light into individual differences in using media platforms to seek information. This study looked into which social media sites are used as sources of information and why. It also looked at the relationship between user traits and platform usage. The frequency of information searching via various platforms, as well as the purpose of use, were found to differ significantly by gender, class level, academic discipline, and Big Five personality traits.

Some research has been done to gain an insight into students' use of Facebook and TikTok. For instance, Bosch (2009) found that students used Facebook to share information or ideas about projects, lectures, or study notes, and to inform lecturers which areas or topics they would prefer an instructor to cover, assisting the lecturer to come to class prepared. The study, which involved 50 undergraduate students and five lecturers at a university in South Africa, involved students' use of Facebook to find answers to questions about course locations and assignment details through their Facebook friends. One instructor found that using Facebook to reach out to students or provide critical information was simpler and faster than looking for them in the classroom. Another lecturer believed that Facebook enabled students to ask questions outside of the classroom, where they might not have felt comfortable doing so. Another study by Herath indicates that TikTok use, and academic success are positively correlated (Herath, 2020). It was shown that the majority of college students use TikTok during their free time, and the key drivers for this include the self-fulfilling nature of imparting one's knowledge, ideas, and emotions to others. The effect on pupils' mental health and creativity is unquestionably favorable. However, little research has been carried out to compare the use of these two major social media platforms among students reading the same major but in different year classes.

With the base of all the literature mentioned earlier, in the current study, the authors test a following research questions (RQ):

RQ1: Do vietnamese young people, specifically students majoring in multimedia and communication, use social media as an alternative source of information and for what purposes?

RQ2: What kinds of information vietnamese young, especially students majoring in Multimedia and at are looking for through social media? ---- tí sễ trả lời là cho topic j?

RQ3: Is the information that the surveyed students search for affected by their different demands of information?

RQ4: What are the gratifications of the surveyed students towards the social media networking sites they use?

## **Methodology**

### ***Research Approach***

As for dominant social media platforms, Facebook and TikTok are the two platforms to be taken into consideration in the study of the correlation between social media and information-seeking needs of students. Facebook is long known as the most popular and commonly used social networking site. Facebook had 2.934 billion monthly active users in July 2022, equating

to 36.8% of all the people on Earth (Kepios analysis of data published in Meta Platforms, Inc.'s 2Q 2022 investor earnings announcement (July 2022), compared with the latest population data published by the United Nations and the U.S. Census Bureau). Since its debut in 2016, the video-sharing app TikTok has skyrocketed in popularity. As of 2021, it had over 2.6 billion downloads worldwide (with 315 millions of those downloads occurring in the first quarter of 2020), and had about one billion monthly active users. (TikTok Statistics, 2021).

The chosen research approach for this study is quantitative research. Quantitative research aims to provide objective data to validate or generate a hypothesis and involves measuring and analyzing numerical outcomes (Azpeitia, J., 2021). The questionnaire was developed using Google Forms and consisted of multiple-choice, yes-or-no, and Likert scale questions. It aimed to explore the purposes of using social networks among students majoring in Multimedia and communication subject at a private University in Vietnam and examine the differences between using Facebook and TikTok to seek information among students. The questionnaire comprised three main parts. The first part collected personal information and information about the social networking platforms used by the participants. The second and third parts focused on students' purpose of using Facebook and TikTok, respectively, to seek information. These sections also inquired about the types of information sought, reasons for choosing each platform, and evaluations of information quality. The questionnaire was distributed publicly through social media platforms, including FPT student groups on Facebook, email, and Messenger, to target the multimedia student audience (Azpeitia, J., 2021).

### ***Methodology***

The authors deployed the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (or SPSS) for the following reasons. Academics and scholars utilize SPSS, a program for statistical analysis created by IBM Corporation, on a regular basis all around the world. This statistical tool may be used to perform a number of statistical analyses and is very user-friendly. This statistical application provides comparison and correlational statistical tests utilizing both parametric and non-parametric statistical techniques in the context of univariate, bivariate, and multivariate analysis. Since it is so simple to perform both parametric and non-parametric comparison analysis, SPSS statistical software is typically preferred over other statistical tools when the study's goal is comparison analysis. Additionally, it enables the researcher to confirm the premises underlying tests like the normality and outliers tests. Moreover, significant variations between more than two comparison groups for more than one constantly targeted variable are measured using SPSS.(Ong, M. H. A., & Puteh, F., 2017)

What this study aims to do is explore the difference in the purpose of using two social networking platforms, Facebook and Tiktok, to search for information as well as the behaviors when using the two mentioned applications of Multimedia students at a private University, then compare the difference among students from different levels. For the stated reasons, SPSS statistical software is regarded as the best statistical instrument for achieving this goal.

## **Results and Discussion**

The next parts will go through the questionnaire and provide a full discussion of the results, as well as how they connect to the thesis. Within three days, we received data from 50 Multimedia undergraduates using a survey form. We mostly send questionnaires to general groups of courses and disciplines, as well as to friends and colleagues studying communication at the private University in Vietnam. In addition, we strive to provide survey questionnaires to students through email. However, because this poll is conducted online, many participants do not volunteer to participate and disregard the survey form.

The outcomes are provided below in the same order as the questionnaire. The questionnaire was divided into three sections. The first section will inquire about the participants' background information in order to appropriately identify the participants of this study. In the second part, we will specifically investigate the trend of students using Facebook to find information and we will focus specifically on two areas of entertainment and learning-research because these two areas are a major concern for undergraduate students, particularly those in the media industry, where it is necessary to learn both about current trends in research and the development of subject projects. In the third section, we performed a similar analysis of student use of the TikTok platform.

**Background information about participants**

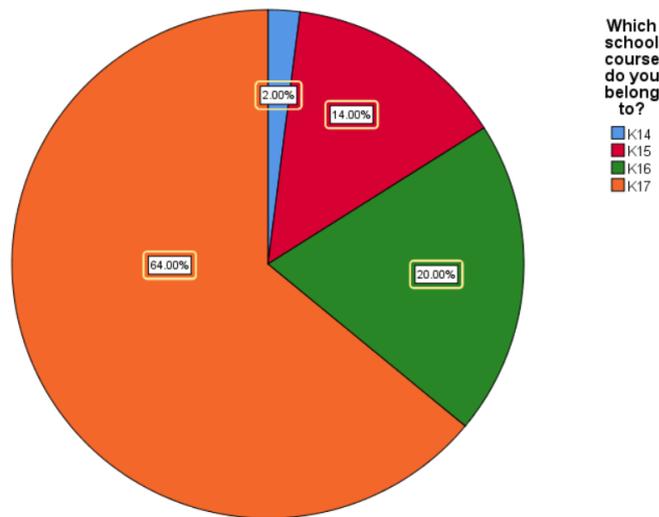


Figure 2. Which school course do you belong to?

Because the surveyed University students can major for three years, we have picked the three most recent and crowded academic years at the institution. Students from K17 accounted for 64% of the 50 participants, students from K16 accounted for 20%, K15 undergraduates accounted for 14%, and 2% of K14 undergraduates engaged in the survey.

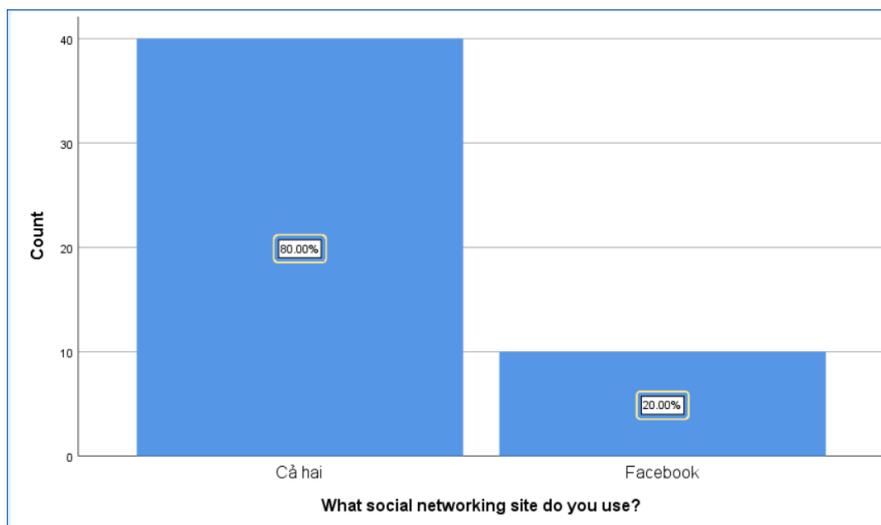


Figure 3. What social networking site do you use?

The next question will be a broad inquiry to determine if students will use Facebook, TikTok, or both. Parts 2 and 3 of the questionnaires will be based on their responses. It is worth mentioning that 80% of participants elected to utilize both sites, while 20% just used Facebook, with no cases of solely TikTok being recorded.

**About using Facebook to seek information**

**\$MUCDICHFB Frequencies**

		Responses		Percent of Cases
		N	Percent	
\$MUCDICHFB <sup>a</sup>	Entertainment	49	44.5%	98.0%
	Self-expression	17	15.5%	34.0%
	Information seeking	40	36.4%	80.0%
	Working	3	2.7%	6.0%
	News	1	0.9%	2.0%
Total		110	100.0%	220.0%

Figure 4. What do you normally do on Facebook?

The following question is intended to help students better comprehend the purpose and motivation for utilizing the social networking site Facebook. As can be seen, all the research participants utilize Facebook, and a greater knowledge of the motivation for using it will allow us to go deeper into the study of behavior and usage demands on social networks. The options we have listed are entertainment, self-expression, seeking information, and others. The vast majority of participants (98% of the total) decided to use Facebook for amusement purposes. Following that comes knowledge seeking (80%), followed by self-expression (34%). There are four individuals who chose the other option, three of them specified a working purpose, and one who labeled their purpose as news.

**\$LYDOISFB Frequencies**

		Responses		Percent of Cases
		N	Percent	
\$LYDOISFB <sup>a</sup>	Due to curiosity	17	16.5%	34.0%
	Due to the mandatory requirements of the study program	13	12.6%	26.0%
	Due to the quality of the information found	24	23.3%	48.0%
	Due to convenience, easy to use	45	43.7%	90.0%
	Due to habit	1	1.0%	2.0%
	Due to crowd effect	2	1.9%	4.0%
	Due to community groups	1	1.0%	2.0%
Total		103	100.0%	206.0%

Figure 5. Why did you choose Facebook as a means for gathering information?

In the next question, we will delve into the purpose of the participant's information search. To find out why students choose Facebook as a platform to search for information, options such as curiosity, mandatory requirements of the course, quality of search information, convenience, and ease of use are given.

According to the aforementioned figures, 26% of participants chose the choice owing to the course's mandated requirement. This may be deduced from the fact that in various Communication industry disciplines, students are required to seek material on social networks in order to complete subject-specific assignments. Due to curiosity, 34% of participants selected this option. Due to the high quality of the information found, 48% choose this option. Taking the majority of the above options is Due to convenience, ease of use, accounting for 90% of total participants. Furthermore, 8% of participants selected the other option. 2% of all participants said they search due to habit, 4% said they search because of the crowd effect, and 2% said they search because Facebook includes community groups.

Surprisingly, we received a response from a participant sharing his reason for using Facebook to find his information.

We will restate his statements below.

*“Facebook Although there is no "scientific foundation" to show its validity, I promise it is more genuine than the website reviews (laughing, I mean because Facebook is easy to use, many people have experienced it as easier to share than to construct their own website)”*

**\$MAJORISFB Frequencies**

		Responses		Percent of Cases
		N	Percent	
\$MAJORISFB <sup>a</sup>	Entertainment	47	40.9%	94.0%
	Study - Reseach	29	25.2%	58.0%
	News	39	33.9%	78.0%
Total		115	100.0%	230.0%

Figure 6. What topics do you often seek on the Facebook platform?

This question will clarify the regions that participants frequently search on Facebook. On Facebook, 94% of all users often seek information about entertainment, 78% search for news, and 58% search for information on learning-research.

**\$ENTERTAINMENTFB Frequencies**

		Responses		Percent of Cases
		N	Percent	
\$ENTERTAINMENTFB <sup>a</sup>	Fashion	25	18.0%	50.0%
	Music	40	28.8%	80.0%
	Food	36	25.9%	72.0%
	Gameshow	24	17.3%	48.0%
	Sport	10	7.2%	20.0%
	Film	2	1.4%	4.0%
	Special hobby	1	0.7%	2.0%
	Art, culture, science	1	0.7%	2.0%
Total		139	100.0%	278.0%

*Figure 7. What information do you often seek on Facebook in the Entertainment field?*

We prepared this question with categories such as Fashion, Music, Food, Gameshow, Sport, and Other to help you better comprehend the small themes in the entertainment area. As shown in the table above, the Music category received the greatest attention from participants in the entertainment industry, accounting for 80%. The Food category is followed by 72% of respondents, 50% of participants frequently seek information about the Fashion category, and 48% of participants frequently search for information about Gameshow. Option Other accounted for 8% of the total number of participants in this question, as did other categories such as Film, Special Hobby, Art, Culture, and Science.

**\$STUDYFB Frequencies**

		Responses		Percent of Cases
		N	Percent	
\$STUDYFB <sup>a</sup>	Video lectures	18	17.0%	36.0%
	Intensive courses	15	14.2%	30.0%
	Scholarship information	25	23.6%	50.0%
	Materials, study tips	48	45.3%	96.0%
Total		106	100.0%	212.0%

*Figure 8. What information do you often seek on Facebook in the Study - Research field?*

This question is intended to elicit information about what participants normally want for study-research purposes. Materials and study tips were the most popular responses in this question, accounting for 96% of all participants. 50% of participants look for scholarship information, 36% look for online lectures, and 30% look for intensive courses.

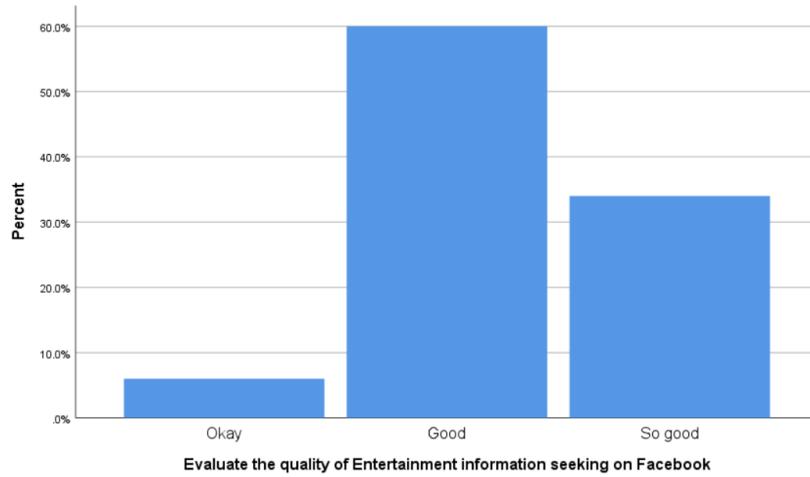


Figure 9. Participants evaluate the quality of information in the Entertainment field on Facebook.

In general, participants regarded the quality of information in the field of entertainment on Facebook as relatively excellent. As seen in Figure 9, the participants primarily evaluated the information quality as “Okay” to “So good”. On Facebook, there is no bad feedback for the entertainment field. 60% of participants thought the quality was good. Almost 32% of individuals rated it So good, and just under 10% rated it Okay.

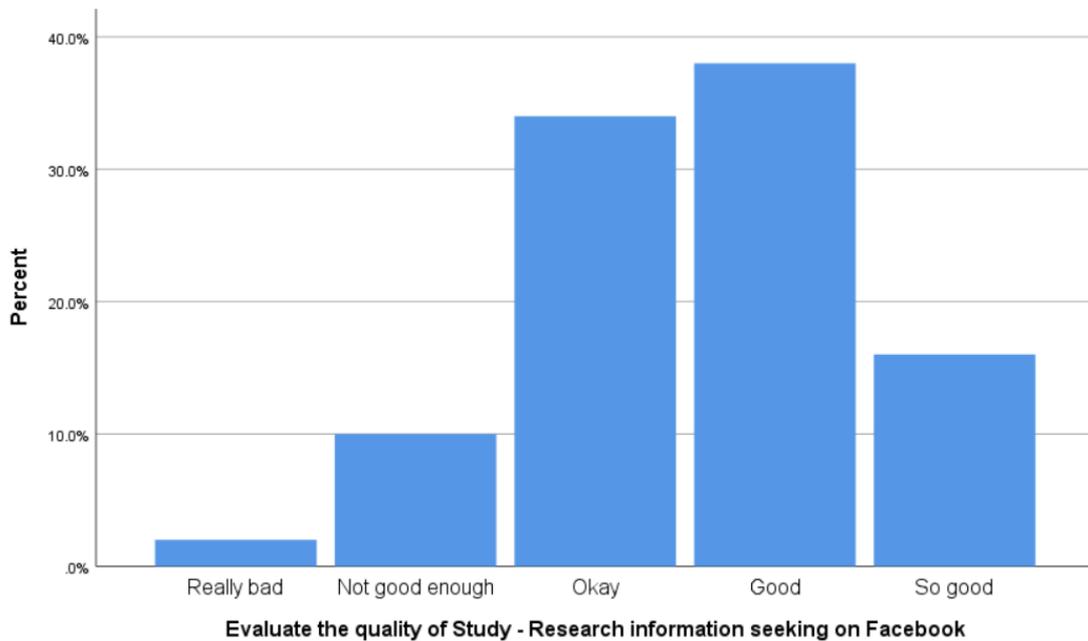


Figure 10. Participants evaluate the quality of information in Study - Research field on Facebook.

Figure 10 shows participants' responses to whether they felt the information they found on Facebook in the Learning-Research field was good or not. This question was included in the survey to determine if students majoring in Multimedia use Facebook as a tool to find information in their studies and how they rate the quality of the content they find on this platform. According to statistics, the majority of students feel okay and good about the quality of information found about Study - Research on Facebook, about 30% and 40% respectively. Besides, more than 15% of survey respondents feel that the quality of information on this platform is of high quality and meets their academic demands. Only 10% rated it inadequate and approximately 2% thought the academic knowledge found on Facebook was of poor quality.

***About using Tiktok to seek information***

**\$MUCDICTIKTOK Frequencies**

		Responses		Percent of Cases
		N	Percent	
\$MUCDICTIKTOK <sup>a</sup>	Entertainment	40	54.8%	97.6%
	Self-expression	10	13.7%	24.4%
	Information seeking	22	30.1%	53.7%
	Follow company's fanpage	1	1.4%	2.4%
Total		73	100.0%	178.0%

*Figure 11. Participants' purpose of using Tiktok*

The following questions were created to address one of the thesis's core questions: "The difference in the purpose of using Tiktok of FPT students". Table 11 shows that there are 40 participants using Tiktok for entertainment purposes, accounting for 97.6%. The second most chosen purpose was information seeking with 53.7%. The percentage of self-expression is only one-fourth of the figure of entertainment, which is 24.4%. On the other hand, only 1 surveyor provided a different opinion, that is, following the company's account, accounting for 2.4% - the lowest of the 4 purposes of using Tiktok that the participants chose.

**\$LYDOISTIKTOK Frequencies**

		Responses		Percent of Cases
		N	Percent	
\$LYDOISTIKTOK <sup>a</sup>	Due to curiosity	21	26.3%	51.2%
	Due to mandatory requirements of study program	6	7.5%	14.6%
	Due to the quality of information found	14	17.5%	34.1%
	Due to convenience, easy to use	35	43.8%	85.4%
	Catch the trend	3	3.8%	7.3%
	Interesting short videos	1	1.3%	2.4%
<b>Total</b>		<b>80</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>195.1%</b>

Figure 12. Participants' reasons of using Tiktok

The next question posed to the participants was why they used the Tiktok platform. These varied results can be expected when participants answer a question based on their personal reasons. There are 6 reasons why students use Tiktok: due to curiosity, due to the mandatory requirements of the study program, due to the quality of information found, due to the convenience and ease of use, due to the want to catch a trend or because they find short videos interesting. According to statistics, the most chosen reason why they use Tiktok is because of the convenience and ease of use, followed by curiosity and the quality of information, with a percentage of 85.4%, 51.2% and 34.1% respectively. Although the percentage of students using Tiktok to look for information is a bit lower than on Facebook, this shows that students still use Tiktok to seek information.

**\$MAJORISTIKTOK Frequencies**

		Responses		Percent of Cases
		N	Percent	
\$MAJORISTIKTOK <sup>a</sup>	Entertainment	38	51.4%	92.7%
	Study - Research	14	18.9%	34.1%
	News	22	29.7%	53.7%
<b>Total</b>		<b>74</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>180.5%</b>

Figure 13. The field that participants searched on Tiktok

This question will clarify the regions that participants frequently search on Tiktok. On Tiktok, 92.7% of all users often seek information about entertainment, 53.7% search for news, and 34.1% search for information on learning-research.

**\$ENTERTAINMENTTIKTOK Frequencies**

		Responses		Percent of Cases
		N	Percent	
\$ENTERTAINMENTTIKTOK <sup>a</sup>	Fashion	20	16.4%	48.8%
	Music	35	28.7%	85.4%
	Food	34	27.9%	82.9%
	Gameshow	24	19.7%	58.5%
	Sport	7	5.7%	17.1%
	Film	2	1.6%	4.9%
<b>Total</b>		<b>122</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>297.6%</b>

Figure 14. Types of information that participants often seek on Tiktok in the Entertainment field

This question has been developed with 6 categories: Fashion, Music, Food, Gameshow, Sport, and Other to better understand the different themes in the Entertainment field. As seen in the table above, the Music category attracted the most attention from participants, accounting for 85.4%, 82.9% of respondents are interested in the Food category, 58.5% are interested in Gameshow and 48.8% are interested in the Fashion category. The other category, specifically Sport and Film, accounted for 17.1% and 4.9% respectively in this poll.

**\$STUDYTIKTOK Frequencies**

		Responses		Percent of Cases
		N	Percent	
\$STUDYTIKTOK <sup>a</sup>	Video lectures	13	23.6%	31.7%
	Intensive courses	4	7.3%	9.8%
	Scholarship information	4	7.3%	9.8%
	Materials, study tips	31	56.4%	75.6%
	Never searched for information	2	3.6%	4.9%
	Skincare information	1	1.8%	2.4%
<b>Total</b>		<b>55</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>134.1%</b>

Figure 15. Types of information that participants often seek on Tiktok in the Study - Research field

To better comprehend the smaller themes in the Study - Research field, this question has been prepared with five categories: Video lectures, Intensive courses, Scholarship information, Materials and study tips, and Other. According to the statistics, the Materials and study tips category drew the most participants' interest, accounting for 75.6%. Followed by Video lectures with 31.7%. The percentage of students searching for Intensive courses and Scholarship information is equal, which is 9.8%. In this survey, Skincare information is also included, accounting for 2.4%.

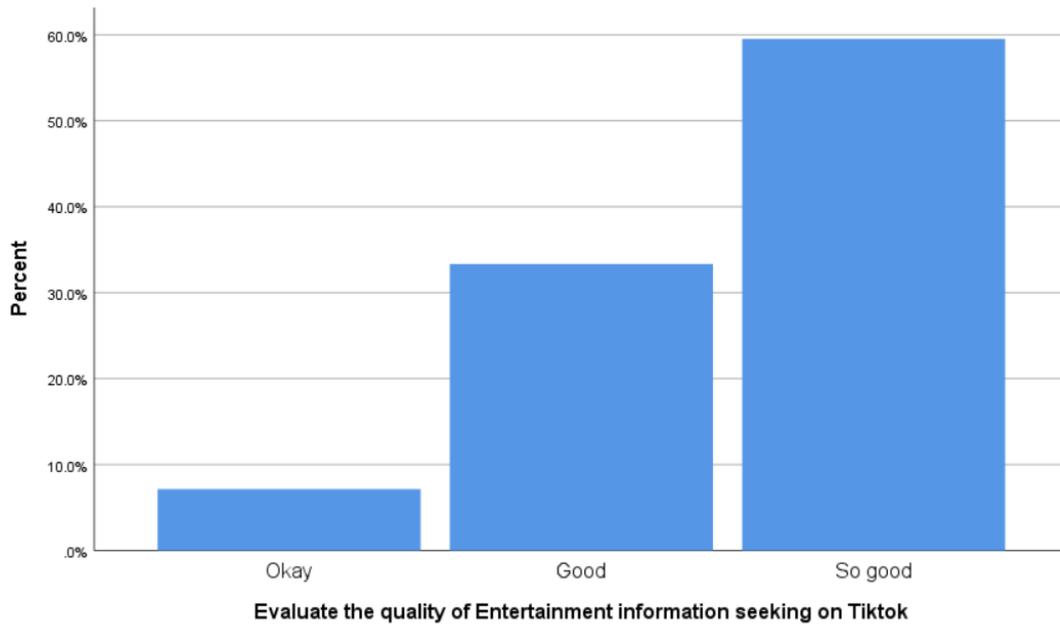


Figure 16. Participants evaluate the quality of information in Entertainment field on Tiktok

Figure 16 indicates participants' opinions on whether the material they found on Tiktok in the Entertainment field was useful or not. According to the data, all students were satisfied with the quality of entertainment information searched on Tiktok, which ranged from Okay to So good. The vast majority of students, approximately 60%, are satisfied with the quality of Entertainment content provided on Facebook. Furthermore, more than 30% of survey respondents had a good evaluation for the information found on this site and nearly 10% feel Okay.

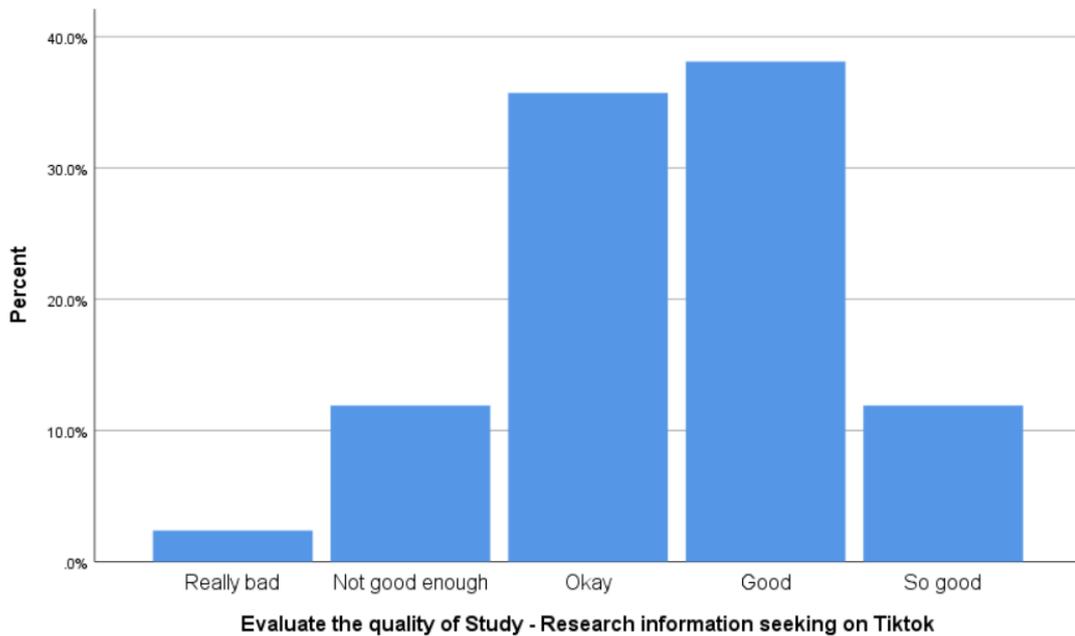


Figure 17. Participants evaluate the quality of information in Study - Research field on Tiktok

Figure 17 shows participants' feedback on whether they felt the information they found on TikTok in the Learning-Research field was good or not. This question was included in a survey to determine whether Multimedia majors use TikTok as a search engine in their research and how they rate the quality of the content they find on this platform. According to the statistics, the majority of students rate Okay and Good for the quality of information about Learning - Research on TikTok, ranging from 30 - 40%. Furthermore, over 12% of survey respondents choose So good for the knowledge they found on this platform, which is excellent quality and satisfies their learning needs. Also, 10% rated it Not good enough and about 2% said academic knowledge on TikTok has poor quality.

## Conclusion

The study found a correlation between information-seeking behaviors and online social media platforms as sources of preferences. According to the results, the research has shown that students majoring in multimedia communications at the private University in Vietnam use Facebook more to find information. They use Facebook and TikTok to seek information related to entertainment, in which the search for food and music accounts for the most. In the term of finding information related to learning, most students use TikTok and Facebook to search for materials and study tips. The reason students choose these two platforms to seek for information is because of its convenience and ease of use.

The difference between students batch 17th, 15th and 16th at the surveyed school in information - seeking behavior on social media is not so obvious. All courses use these two platforms to find information about entertainment mainly, followed by information search for learning. And we also did not see a transparent difference in choosing a facebook or tiktok platform to search for information, these two platforms are used by students, in which facebook accounts for more, but not significantly.

These results should be taken into account when considering what platforms do multimedia communication students use to find information? What are the motivations and what type of information is most searched for? The data contribute a clearer understanding of trends in the use of social media platforms and the types of information which are searched for the most by multimedia communication students.

The generalizability of the results is limited by the number of students who do the survey form. Further research is needed to establish a detailed conclusion about the use of social networks to find information not only with students of multimedia communication majors but also with other majors.

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