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## MOTIVES BEHIND USING ONLINE CHATTING PLATFORMS DURING COVID-19

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### Abstract

COVID-19 hit the life of adolescents hard. They got stuck at home. Even the school shifted to online mode. They could not meet friends physically, were not able to go for outings and parties. In such a situation, they turned to online communication through the internet. As a result use of chatting platforms such as Omegle, Discord and Instagram increased during the pandemic. Most of the adolescents used online chatting platforms for various purposes. The present study highlighted the motives behind the use of online chatting platforms by the adolescents during COVID-19. Social compensation, entertainment, social inclusion and self-presentation motives behind using online chatting were taken in the study. A sample of 100 adolescents was taken for the study. Scale of motives behind the use of online chatting platforms by adolescents was constructed and validated by the investigators. The objectives of the study were, to study the motives behind use of online chatting platforms by adolescents during COVID-19, to study the differences among various motives behind use of chatting platforms during COVID-19 and to study the difference between adolescent girls and boys in relation to use of online chatting platforms during COVID-19 for the motives- social compensation, entertainment, social inclusion and self-presentation. The results highlighted that around 29% adolescents agreed that they used chatting platforms for social compensation, around 60% adolescents agreed that they use chatting platforms to entertain themselves, around 37% adolescents used online chatting platforms to include themselves in a social group, and only 34% used these platforms to boost their self-presentation. Entertainment has been found to be the strongest motive behind online chatting during COVID-19 and self-presentation is the weakest one. Finally, boys are found to use chatting platforms for entertainment and social-inclusion more than that for girls. Girls and boys did not show any significant difference for social compensation and self-presentation as motives behind the use of chatting platforms.

**Keywords:** Motives Behind Online Chatting Platforms, Social Compensation, Entertainment, Social Inclusion and Self-Presentation.

### Introduction

During the recent COVID-19 pandemic adolescents were deprived of their usual social life and had ample time to spare, in which they wanted to try new things to get wild and exciting experiences. As a result, online streaming on platforms like Omegle and discord increased rapidly. The motives of entertainment, meeting new people, and social compensation increased adolescent's online communication with strangers (Peter, Valkenburg & Schouten, 2006). Teenagers around the globe streamed on these platforms out of boredom and curiosity. A survey conducted in the U.S found that 39% of the adolescents interviewed, communicated online with strangers (Peter, Valkenburg & Schouten, 2006). Online chatting platforms are not only used for the purpose of interacting with strangers but also for the purpose of playing multiplayer games, sharing photos and videos, and connecting with one's existing friends. Online platforms like Instagram and discord gave them a chance to express themselves freely and showcase their talents. Research related to social anxiety showed that socially anxious adolescents communicate online more often with strangers. Because of the anonymity offered online, reduced auditory and visual cues enable introverted people to overcome social inhibitions more easily than in face-to-face communication. Introverted adolescents talk more often with strangers on the internet than extraverted adolescents (Peter, Valkenburg & Schouten, 2006). With the emergence of these platforms' teenagers were able to develop prospective connections around the world. Researchers have found that more troubled adolescents are more likely to have formed close online relationships. Troubled adolescents have similarly been found to be more likely to visit chat rooms, where users usually encounter strangers rather than friends or family (Subrahmanyam & Greenfield, 2008).

In a study of 600 Dutch adolescents, both extroverts and introverts reported that they formed online friend-ships, but they did so for different reasons. Extroverts formed online friendships so that they could self-disclose more and engage in more frequent online communication. Introverts formed online friendships to compensate for their poorer social skills; the social compensation motive also led to greater self-disclosure and frequency of communication and consequently facilitated online friendship formation (Subrahmanyam & Greenfield, 2008). Interacting on social media platforms not only gives adolescents a platform to express themselves but it also gives them a chance to act on their own free will. For example, they can choose to talk to anyone they want and opt out of a conversation as and when they please. All of these benefits of internet interaction make it feasible for adolescents to chat more often. However, these platforms also posed some adverse effects. While using online chatting platforms proved beneficial for some teenagers, it also exhibited negative results. At this age they are more prone to peer pressure and have limited capacity of self-regulation. As a result



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They may not fully understand the underlying risks of chatting with strangers or experimenting with social media. Concerns have been expressed by the psychologists and researchers about the amount of time teens spend online, lack of parental control over teenage internet use, privacy, and risky behaviour such as sexting, cyber bullying, and exposure to inappropriate content. Due to these contradicting effects of online chatting platforms and their connection with adolescents, Researchers all around are studying the motives behind the use of such platforms.

### Review of related literature

Peter, Valkenburg & Schouten (2006) studied the characteristics and motives of adolescents talking with strangers on the internet. They surveyed 412 Dutch adolescents and found that adolescents (12-14 years age group) were most prone to talking to strangers on the internet. Even introversion is not related to adolescents' tendency to talk with strangers. Moreover, entertainment, meeting new people and social compensation are the motives behind talking to strangers on the internet.

Subrahmanyam & Greenfield (2008) noted that online interactions with strangers may have benefits such as relieving social anxiety. They surveyed a total of 600 Dutch adolescents and found out that introverts indulged in online communication to compensate for their poorer social skills which consequently facilitated online friendship formation. They also discovered that adolescents were more likely to talk to strangers to assuage boredom.

Van Zalik, Branje, Deniseen, Van Aken & Meeus (2011) studied the role of online chatting in young adults' emotional adjustment, The study was conducted on young 197 adults of average age 18.9 years in Netherlands. The results showed that for less extroverted individuals chatting with peers' increases self-esteem and decreases depressive symptoms. The results supported the model of social compensation where effects of online chatting with on-line exclusive peers improved young adults' emotional adjustment.

Damasceno (2013) studied the various reasons that enabled adolescents to engage on omegle. He found that the guarantee of secrecy while chatting to a stranger on the platform makes Omegle more approachable and sociable.

Guadix, M.G., Borrajo, E., and Almendros, C. (2016) studied the various risky online behaviours among adolescent's lifestyle. They studied 888 adolescents and discovered a cross-sectional relation between cyber bullying perpetration and meeting strangers online. Increased use of internet led to increase in cyber bullying and meeting strangers. Meeting strangers online increased the likelihood of cyber bullying.

Zilka (2017) studied the dual potential of Internet use within the context of E-safety. The study was conducted on a total of 345 participants from Israel including 90 children and teenagers. The results examined the level of awareness among children and teenagers pertaining to various aspects of internet use. The study also highlighted the issues of cyberbullying, negative exposure to violent content, and contacts with strangers.

Nguyen, Gruber, Fuchs, Marler, Hunsaker, & Hargittai (2020) assessed the changes in digital communication during the Covid-19 global pandemic. He collected data from 1374 adults living in America and reported that the digital media use has experienced drastic changes. The results showed that the desire to check with friends and family, availability of ample time and the lockdown guidelines were the main reasons for the tremendous increase in digital communication.

Jain, Gupta, Satam and Panda (2020) found in their study that the Covid-19 pandemic has increased the susceptibility to cyber bullying in India. They surveyed a total of 256 students before the lockdown and 118 students during lockdown and found out that the lockdown caused a dramatic increase in the online activity of most individuals. A study conducted in China during the pandemic revealed that more than 80% of the respondents noticed an increase in their Social Media Exposure (SME).

### Objectives

The objectives of the present study are:

1. To study the motives behind use of online chatting platforms by adolescents during COVID-19.
2. To study the differences among various motives behind use of chatting platforms, that is, social compensation, entertainment, social inclusion and self-presentation by adolescents during COVID-19.
3. To study the difference between adolescent girls and boys in relation to use of online chatting platforms during COVID-19 for the motives- social compensation, entertainment, social inclusion and self-presentation.

### Hypotheses

The hypotheses of the present study are:

1. There is no significant difference between social compensation and entertainment as the motives behind use of online chatting platforms by adolescents during COVID-19.
2. There is no significant difference between social compensation and social inclusion as the motives behind use of online chatting platforms by adolescents during COVID-19.



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3. There is no significant difference between social compensation and self-presentation as the motives behind use of online chatting platforms by adolescents during COVID-19.
4. There is no significant difference between entertainment and social inclusion as the motives behind use of online chatting platforms by adolescents during COVID-19.
5. There is no significant difference between entertainment and self-presentation as the motives behind use of online chatting platforms by adolescents during COVID-19.
6. There is no significant difference between social inclusion and self-presentation as the motives behind use of online chatting platforms by adolescents during COVID-19.
7. There is no significant difference between adolescent girls and boys in relation to social compensation, entertainment, social-inclusion and self-presentation motives behind using online chatting platforms during COVID-19.

### Delimitations

The study was delimited to adolescents of tricity of Chandigarh and Panjab.

### Present study

The lockdown during COVID-19 has forced the adolescents to spend major part of their days in front of the screen. Also, minimum or no social interaction has made them look for alternative modes of interacting with the outside world. Online modes of communication have become the first choice for interacting with friends or even strangers for entertainment and avoiding boredom. So, during the COVID-19, the use of online chatting platforms, such as Omegal, Discord and Instagram have increased many folds. Adolescents are using these platforms to interact with friends, acquaintances and strangers. They play games with their friends, chat with strangers, share information or simply engage in conversations. Extent of anonymity offered by such platforms has increased the probability of communicating with strangers. It gives the freedom and flexibility of controlling the communication to the adolescents. In the present study the researchers tried to investigate the motives behind the use of chatting platforms during COVID-19 pandemic. Social compensation, social inclusion, entertainment and self-presentation were the four motives chosen for study.

Social compensation and social inclusion included six statements each and entertainment and self-presentation included 5 statements each.

Social compensation means to compensate alternatively for lacking social skills. Many adolescents feel motivated to compensate in online communication on the chatting platforms for lacking communication skills in real life. They feel that they have control over the conversations in online mode. They express themselves better online rather than face to face and feel less judged.

Social inclusion motives refer to the need of an individual to belong to a social group. Online chatting platforms provide them the opportunity to communicate with others beyond the geographical border also. It is thought to be the new normal during COVID-19. Some even hope to develop romantic relationships during these chats.

The entertainment motive referred to enjoy, avoid boredom and have fun. Playing games on chatting platforms is the way to entertain them since they cannot physically meet with friends. They even look for thrill and excitement of chatting with the strangers.

Self-presentation refers to present them to control or shape how others view them. It involves expressing oneself and behaving in ways that create a desired impression, (Encyclopaedia of social psychology). Self-presentation motives include statements relating to expressing one's talents freely, way of releasing one's feelings, seeking appreciation from strangers and presenting better version of self especially while talking to strangers.

### Sample of the study

The population of the study was adolescents of the Tricity of Chandigarh and Punjab. The sample of 100 adolescents was taken using snowball sampling technique.

### Tools used

The investigators prepared the following scale:

- Scale of motives behind the use of online chatting platforms by adolescents.



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### Design of the study

The descriptive survey method was used to undertake the study. The responses of 100 adolescents regarding the motives regarding the use of online chatting platforms were recorded online through Google forms.

### Procedure/method

The purpose of the study was to investigate the motives regarding the use of online chatting platforms by adolescents. Investigators constructed and validated the said scale and employed it on the sample taken. The raw data was tabulated and scores were calculated. The obtained scores were subjected to analysis by calculating t-values through SPSS. Then the results were obtained and discussed.

### Statistical tools

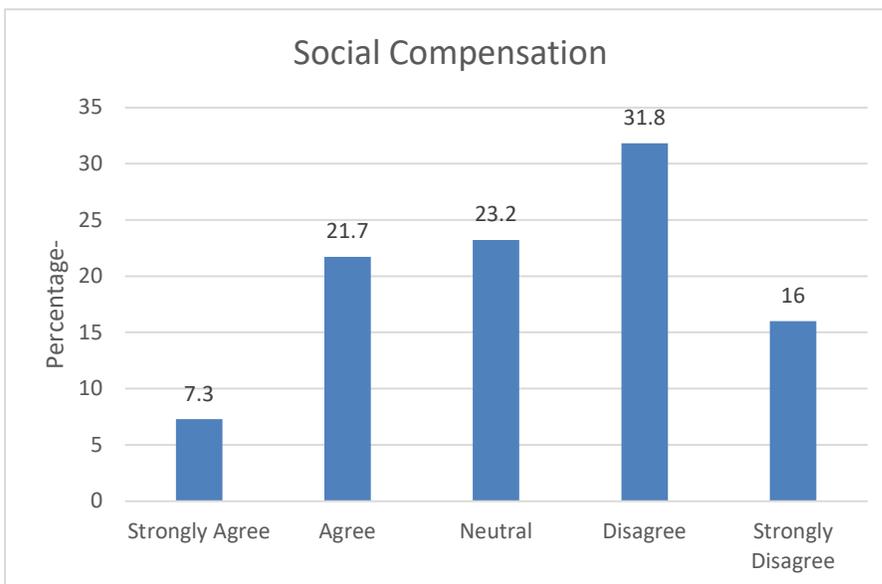
Descriptive statistics such as mean, median, standard deviation and inferential statistics such as t-test and paired t-test were used to analyse the data.

### Analysis of the study

Objective 1: To study the motives behind use of online chatting platforms by adolescents during COVID-19.

**Table 1: Social compensation as a motive behind use of online chatting platforms by adolescents during COVID-19**

Social Compensation						
S.No.	Statements	Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Neutral (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly Disagree (%)
1	I use these platforms because I'm not obliged to communicate	6	18	33	34	9
2	I can chat about everything on these platforms	9	28	26	28	9
3	I use these platforms in hopes of interacting with celebrities/influencers	4	11	17	43	25
4	I communicate better on the online chatting platform than face to face	7	26	25	27	15
5	I feel I can express myself more easily with strangers than friends, siblings, and parents	8	17	18	34	23
6	I feel less judged on online chatting platforms	10	30	20	25	15
	<b>Average percentage –</b>	<b>7.3</b>	<b>21.7</b>	<b>23.2</b>	<b>31.8</b>	<b>16</b>



**Figure 1: Bar diagram for social compensation as a motive behind use of online chatting platforms by adolescents during COVID-19**

In this table, on an average, 29% (7.3 + 21.7) of the adolescents agreed that they used these platforms to compensate for their weakness to interact socially in a group. 47.8% (16 + 31.8) did not agree with this, 23.2% were undecided.

24% (6 + 18) agreed that they used these platforms because they were not obliged to communicate, whereas 43% (9+ 34) believed that they used these platforms as they want to communicate. 37% (9 + 28) agreed that they could chat about everything on these platforms. Equal number of adolescents did not agree with this statement.

Majority of the adolescents 68% (25 + 43) did not agree that they used these platforms in hope of interacting with celebrities/influencers. Only 15% (4 + 11) agreed with this statement. 17 % were neutral towards this.

42% (15 + 27) did not agree that they communicate better on the online chatting platform than face to face, whereas 33% (7 + 26) agreed that they communicated better on on-line platform.

Majority adolescents 57% (23 +34) agreed that they felt they could express themselves more easily with strangers than friends, siblings, and parents, whereas, 25% (8+17) did not have such a feeling and still 18% were neutral.40% (10+30) adolescents agreed that they felt less judged on online chatting platforms. Equal number felt in a different way.

**Table 2: Entertainment as a motive behind use of online chatting platforms by adolescents during COVID-19**

Entertainment						
S.No.	Statements	Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Neutral (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly Disagree (%)
1	I engage in chatting platforms since they are more fun than mainstream chatting platform such as Whatsapp or Facebook	9	36	40	8	7
2	I chat with strangers as it gives me thrill and excitement	6	38	32	17	7
3	I chat to not get bored	28	53	10	5	4

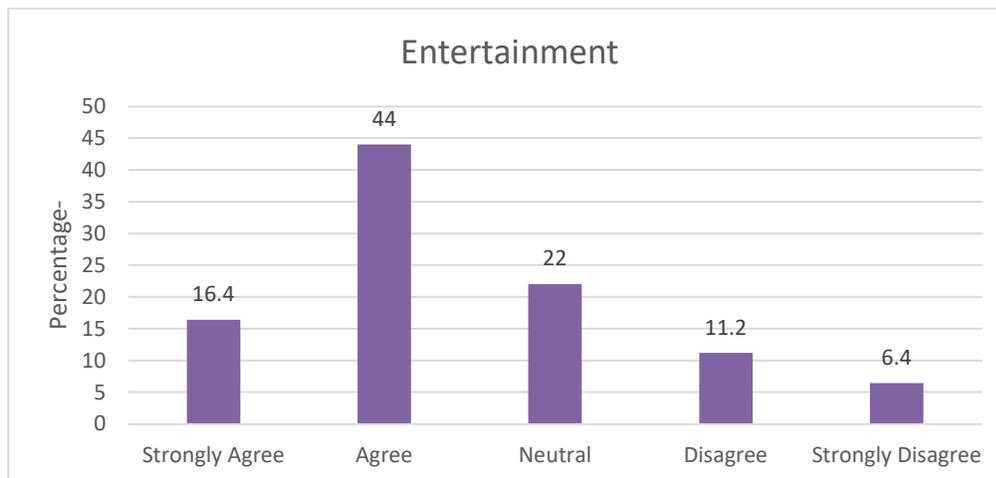


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	during the pandemic					
4	I chat to stay connected with existing friends	31	56	8	4	1
5	I use chatting platforms to play games and group activities online	8	37	20	22	13
	<b>Average percentage</b>	<b>16.4</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>11.2</b>	<b>6.4</b>



**Figure 2: Bar diagram for Entertainment as a motive behind use of online chatting platforms by adolescents during COVID-19**

The table 2 shows that a majority of adolescents, that is, 60.4% (16.4 + 44), agreed that they used these platforms to entertain themselves, 17.6% (11.2 + 6.4) did not agree while 22% were neutral about it. 45% (9 + 36) of responses conveyed that these platforms are more fun than mainstream chatting platforms. Only 15% (8 + 7) disagreed with the statement and the rest 40% were neutral about it.

44% (6 + 38) agreed that chatting on these platforms gives them thrill and excitement whereas 24% (17 + 7) disagreed. The remaining 32% felt undecided.

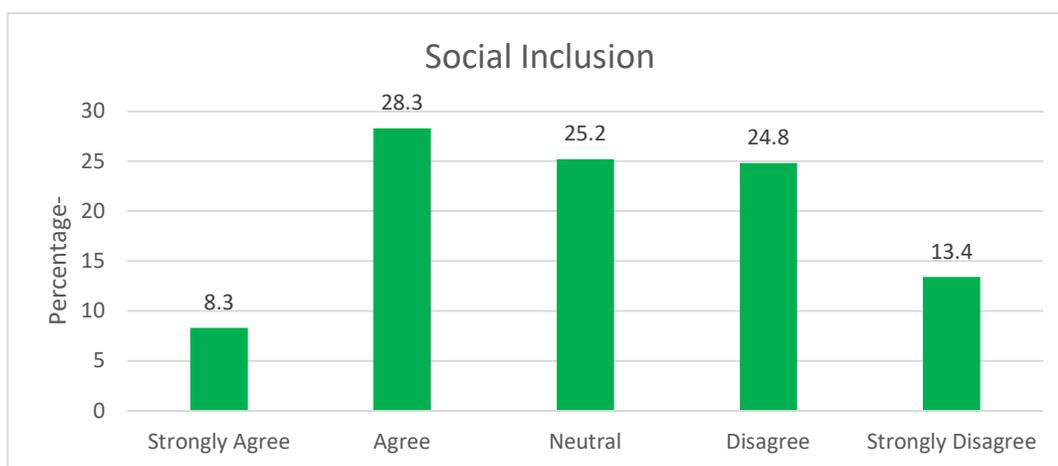
A large majority of adolescents, 81% (28 + 53), agreed that they used these platforms not to get bored during the pandemic. 9% (5 + 4) disagreed while 10% felt neutral about the statement.

A very high percentage, 87% (31 + 56), agreed that they used these platforms to stay connected with existing friend. A mere 5% (4 + 1) disagreed with this stance and the rest 8% felt neutral. 45% (8 + 37) used these platforms to play games and do group activities online whereas 35% (22 + 13) did not use them for these purposes. 20% responses were neutral about it.

**Table 3: Social Inclusion as a motive behind use of online chatting platforms by adolescents during COVID-19**

Social Inclusion						
S.No.	Statements	Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Neutral (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly Disagree (%)
1	I like the flexibility to opt-out of a chat when I feel uncomfortable	16	43	29	8	4
2	I use online chatting platforms because it makes me look cool	3	5	23	47	22

3	I use chatting platforms because all my friends do so	8	30	26	24	12
4	I use chatting platforms since it has become the 'New normal' during Covid	6	36	31	22	5
5	I can break geographical borders and meet new people on chat platforms	13	43	25	13	6
6	I chat in the hope to develop romantic relationships	4	13	17	35	31
	<b>Average percentage -</b>	<b>8.3</b>	<b>28.3</b>	<b>25.2</b>	<b>24.8</b>	<b>13.4</b>



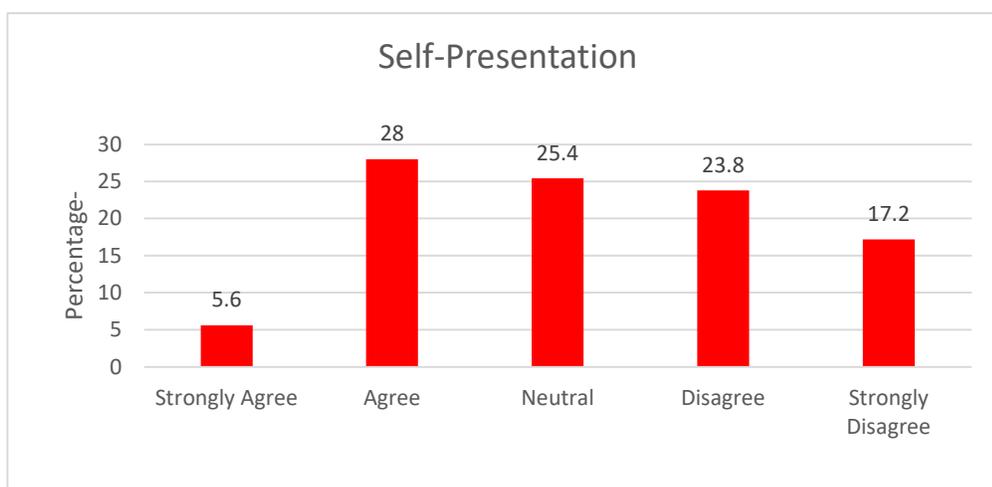
**Figure 3: Bar diagram for Social Inclusion as a motive behind use of online chatting platforms by adolescents during COVID-19**

The table 3 shows that 36.6% (8.3 + 28.3) of adolescents used online chatting platforms to include themselves in a social group. A slightly higher percentage, 38.2% (24.8 + 13.4) disagreed with the given stance and almost a quarter (25.2%) of responses felt neutral about it. Majority of adolescents, 59% (16 + 43), agreed that they liked the flexibility to opt out of a chat when they feel uncomfortable. Only 12% (8 + 4) disagreed and 29% felt neutral about it. A large 69% (47 + 22) disagreed that these platforms make them look cool. Just 8% (3 + 5) agreed with the statement and 23% felt neutral about it. 38% (8 + 30) agreed that they chat on these platforms because all their friends do so. A slightly lower 36% (24 + 12) disagreed with the claim and 26% felt neutral about it. 42% (6 + 36) agreed that online chatting platforms have become the 'New Normal' due to COVID-19 whereas 27% (25 + 2) disagreed to this. A majority of adolescents, 56% (13 + 43), agreed that these platforms allowed them to break geographical barriers and meet new people. 19% (13 + 6) disagreed while the remaining quarter felt neutral about it. Majority, 66% (35 + 31), disagreed that they used online chatting platforms in hopes of developing romantic relationship. 17% (4 + 13) agreed with the claim and an equal percentage felt neutral.

**Table 4: Self-Presentation as a motive behind use of online chatting platforms by adolescents during COVID-19**

Self-Presentation						
S.No.	Statements	Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Neutral (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly Disagree (%)
1	I feel I get more appreciation from strangers than my friends on these platforms	3	11	21	37	28
2	I feel less shy while sharing	3	18	14	33	32

	personal life with a stranger on chatting platforms					
3	I use it because it's a way of releasing my feelings	5	29	36	18	12
4	I use online chatting platforms as it gives me an opportunity to present a better version of myself	3	35	28	24	10
5	I can use it to express my talents freely	14	47	28	7	4
	<b>Average percentage -</b>	<b>5.6</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>25.4</b>	<b>23.8</b>	<b>17.2</b>



**Figure 4: Bar diagram for Self-Presentation as a motive behind use of online chatting platforms by adolescents during COVID-19**

The table 4 shows that 41% (23.8 + 17.2) of adolescents did not use online chatting platforms to boost their self-presentation. A smaller percentage of 33.6% (5.6 + 28) used these platforms to boost their self-presentation and remaining 25.4% were undecided.

A large proportion of responses, 65% (37 + 28), disagreed that they get more appreciation from strangers than friends on these platforms. Only 14% (3 + 11) agreed while 21% felt neutral. Majority of adolescents, 65% (33 + 32), disagreed that they feel less shy sharing personal life with a stranger on these platforms. 21% (3 + 18) agreed and 14% gave neutral as an option.

34% (5 + 29) agree while 30% (18 + 12) disagree that chatting is a way to release one's feelings. 36% gave neutral responses. 38% (3 + 35) of the adolescents agreed that chatting platforms allow them to display a better version of themselves. 34% (24 + 10) disagreed while the remaining 28% were undecided. Most of the responses, 61% (14 + 47), agreed that these platforms allow them to express their talents freely. A mere 11% (7 + 4) disagreed and 28% felt neutral about it.

### Inferential Statistics- t-test

Objective 2: To study the difference among various motives behind use of chatting platforms, that is, social compensation, entertainment, social inclusion and self-presentation by adolescents.

To analyse this objective t-test was conducted for testing the null hypothesis.



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Table 5 Mean values and t-value between social compensation and entertainment as the motives behind online chatting by adolescents

Gender	N	M	SD	SEm	df	t-value	Levels of significance
Social Compensation	100	16.35	4.37	.44	99	-3.67	.01
Entertainment	100	17.64	3.44	.34			

Table 5 shows the mean value of social compensation and entertainment as motives behind online chatting by adolescents, that is, 16.35 and 17.64 respectively. t-value is found to be -3.67 for 99 degrees of freedom which is significant at 0.01 levels of significance. Hence the null hypothesis, “there is no significant difference between social compensation and entertainment as the motives behind use of online chatting platforms by adolescents”, may not be accepted. The mean value of entertainment is greater than the mean value of social compensation. The alternative hypothesis states that “entertainment is a stronger motive than social compensation behind online chatting by adolescents”.

Table 6 Mean values and t-values between social compensation and social inclusion as the motives behind online chatting by adolescents

Gender	N	M	SD	SEm	df	t-value	Levels of significance
Social Compensation	100	16.35	4.37	.44	99	-3.69	.01
Social Inclusion	100	17.61	4.21	.42			

Table 6 shows the mean value of social compensation and social inclusion as motives behind online chatting by adolescents, that is, 16.35 and 17.61 respectively. t-value is found to be -3.69 for 99 degrees of freedom which is significant at 0.01 levels of significance. Hence the null hypothesis, “there is no significant difference between social compensation and social inclusion as the motives behind use of online chatting platforms by adolescents”, may not be accepted. The mean value of social inclusion is greater than the mean value of social compensation. The alternative hypothesis states that “social inclusion is a stronger motive than social compensation behind online chatting by adolescents”.

Table 7 Mean values and t-values between social compensation and self-presentation as the motives behind online chatting by adolescents

Gender	N	M	SD	SEm	df	t-value	Levels of significance
Social Compensation	100	16.35	4.37	.44	99	6.47	.01
Self-Presentation	100	14.05	3.94	.39			

Table 7 shows the mean value of social compensation and self-presentation as motives behind online chatting by adolescents, that is, 16.35 and 14.05 respectively. t-value is found to be 6.47 for 99 degrees of freedom which is significant at 0.01 levels of significance. Hence the null hypothesis, “there is no significant difference between social compensation and self-presentation as the motives behind use of online chatting platforms by adolescents”, may not be accepted. The mean value of social compensation is greater than the mean value of self-presentation. The alternative hypothesis states that “social compensation is a stronger motive than self-presentation behind online chatting by adolescents”.

Table 8 Mean values and t-values between entertainment and social inclusion as the motives behind online chatting by adolescents

Gender	N	M	SD	SEm	df	t-value	Levels of significance
Entertainment	100	17.64	3.44	.34	99	.093	NS
Social Inclusion	100	17.61	4.21	.42			



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Table 8 shows the mean value of entertainment and social inclusion as motives behind online chatting by adolescents, that is, 17.64 and 17.61 respectively. t-value is found to be .093 for 99 degrees of freedom which is not significant at 0.05 levels of significance. Hence the null hypothesis, “there is no significant difference between entertainment and social inclusion as the motives behind use of online chatting platforms by adolescents”, may be accepted.

Table 9 Mean values and t-values between entertainment and self-presentation as the motives behind online chatting by adolescents

Gender	N	M	SD	SEm	df	t-value	Levels of significance
Entertainment	100	17.64	3.44	.34	99	9.55	.01
Self-presentation	100	14.05	3.94	.39			

Table 9 shows the mean value of entertainment and self-presentation as motives behind online chatting by adolescents, that is, 17.64 and 14.05 respectively. t-value is found to be 9.55 for 99 degrees of freedom which is significant at 0.01 levels of significance. Hence the null hypothesis, “there is no significant difference between entertainment and self-presentation as the motives behind use of online chatting platforms by adolescents”, may not be accepted. The mean value of entertainment is greater than the mean value of self-presentation. The alternative hypothesis states that “entertainment is a stronger motive than self-presentation behind online chatting by adolescents”.

Table 10 Mean values and t-values between social inclusion and self-presentation as the motives behind online chatting by adolescents

Gender	N	M	SD	SEm	df	t-value	Levels of significance
Social Inclusion	100	17.61	4.21	.42	99	10.11	.01
Self-presentation	100	14.05	3.94	.39			

Table 10 shows the mean value of self-inclusion and self-presentation as motives behind online chatting by adolescents, that is, 17.61 and 14.05 respectively. t-value is found to be 10.11 for 99 degrees of freedom which is significant at 0.01 levels of significance. Hence the null hypothesis, “there is no significant difference between self-inclusion and self-presentation as the motives behind use of online chatting platforms by adolescents”, may not be accepted. The mean value of self-inclusion is greater than the mean value of self-presentation. The alternative hypothesis states that “self-inclusion is a stronger motive than self-presentation behind online chatting by adolescents”.

**Objective 3:** To study the difference between adolescent girls and boys in relation to use of online chatting platforms during COVID-19 for the motives- social compensation, entertainment, social inclusion and self-presentation.

**Social Compensation**

Table 11 Mean values and t-values between girls and boys adolescents in terms of Social Compensation as motive behind online chatting

Gender	N	M	SD	SEm	df	t-value	Levels of significance
Girls	65	16.05	4.54	.563	98	-0.946	NS
Boys	35	16.91	4.05	.684			

Table 11 shows the mean value of social compensation as motive behind online chatting by adolescent girls and boys, that is, 16.05 and 16.91 respectively. t-value is found to be -0.946 for 98 degrees of freedom which is not significant at 0.05 levels of significance. Hence the null hypothesis, “there is no significant difference between adolescent girls and boys in relation to social compensation motive behind using online chatting platforms during COVID-19”, may be accepted.



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Entertainment

Table 12 Mean values and t-values between adolescent girls and boys in terms of Entertainment as motive behind online chatting

Gender	N	M	SD	SEm	df	t-value	Levels of significance
Girls	65	16.98	3.41	0.42	98	-2.67	.01
Boys	35	18.86	3.22	0.54			

Table 12 shows the mean value of Entertainment as motive behind online chatting by adolescent girls and boys, that is, 16.98 and 18.86 respectively. t-value is found to be -2.67 for 98 degrees of freedom which is significant at 0.01 levels of significance. Hence the null hypothesis, “there is no significant difference between adolescent girls and boys in relation to entertainment motive behind using online chatting platforms during COVID-19”, may not be accepted. The mean value for entertainment as the motive behind online chatting platforms for boys is greater than that for girls.

Self-Presentation

Table 13 Mean values and t-values between adolescent girls and boys in terms of self-presentation as motive behind online chatting

Gender	N	M	SD	SEm	df	t-value	Levels of significance
Girls	65	13.94	3.97	0.49	98	-0.38	NS
Boys	35	14.26	3.96	0.67			

Table 13 shows the mean value of self-presentation as motive behind online chatting by adolescent girls and boys, that is, 13.94 and 14.26 respectively. t-value is found to be -0.38 for 98 degrees of freedom which is not significant at 0.05 levels of significance. Hence the null hypothesis, “there is no significant difference between adolescent girls and boys in relation to self-presentation motive behind using online chatting platforms during COVID-19”, may be accepted.

Social-Inclusion

Table 14 Mean values and t-values between adolescent girls and boys in terms of Social- Inclusion as motive behind online chatting

Gender	N	M	SD	SEm	Df	t-value	Levels of significance
Girls	65	16.66	4.09	0.51	98	-3.21	0.01
Boys	35	19.37	3.90	0.66			

Table 14 shows the mean value of social- inclusion as motive behind online chatting by adolescent girls and boys, that is, 16.66 and 19.37 respectively. t-value is found to be -3.21 for 98 degrees of freedom which is significant at 0.01 levels of significance. Hence the null hypothesis, “there is no significant difference between adolescent girls and boys in relation to social-inclusion motive behind using online chatting platforms during COVID-19”, may not be accepted. The mean value for social- inclusion as the motive behind online chatting platforms for boys is greater than that for girls.

Discussion

The results from the analysis above regarding the social compensation, entertainment, social inclusion and self-presentation motives behind use of chatting platforms are supported by the earlier studies. Peter, Valkenburg & Schouten (2006) showed that entertainment, meeting new people and social compensation are the motives behind talking to strangers on the internet. Subrahmanyam & Greenfield (2008) found that introverts indulge in online communication to compensate for their poorer social skills which consequently facilitated online friendship formation. They also discovered that adolescents were more likely to talk to strangers to assuage boredom.



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Looking at the mean values for entertainment, social compensation, social inclusion and self-presentation, which are, 17.64, 16.35, 17.61 and 14.05 respectively it has been found that entertainment is the strongest motive to use online chatting platforms by the adolescents. This result reflected the mental state of adolescents during COVID-19. They could not meet their friends and acquaintances in person. Even parties and outings were not possible. So, they were trying things like chatting platforms even if it meant talking to strangers. Self-presentation has come out as the weakest among four motives. As everyone was sitting home, so they might not had felt the need of presenting themselves differently. The results of social inclusion suggested that the adolescents were trying to connect with the outside world through these chatting platforms.

### Results & conclusion

The present study highlighted the motives behind online chatting by the adolescents on platforms like Omegle, Discord and Instagram during COVID-19. Social compensation, entertainment, social inclusion and self-presentation were the motives behind online chatting taken in this study. On an average 29% adolescents agreed that they used chatting platforms for social compensation, whereas around 48% did not agree with this. Around 60% adolescents agreed that they use chatting platforms to entertain themselves. Around 37% adolescents used online chatting platforms to include themselves in a social group, whereas 38% disagreed with the given stance. 41% adolescents did not use online chatting platforms to boost their self-presentation. Only 34% used these platforms to boost their self-presentation. Entertainment has been found to be the strongest motive behind online chatting during COVID-19 and self-presentation is the weakest one. Finally, boys are found to use chatting platforms for entertainment and social-inclusion more than that for girls. Whereas girls and boys did not show any significant difference in using social compensation and self-presentation as motives behind the use of chatting platforms.

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