CASE STUDY

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DESTINATION SUCCESS

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Introduction

Title : A Case Study on the Role of Algorithms in Driving User Addiction on Short-Form Content Platforms
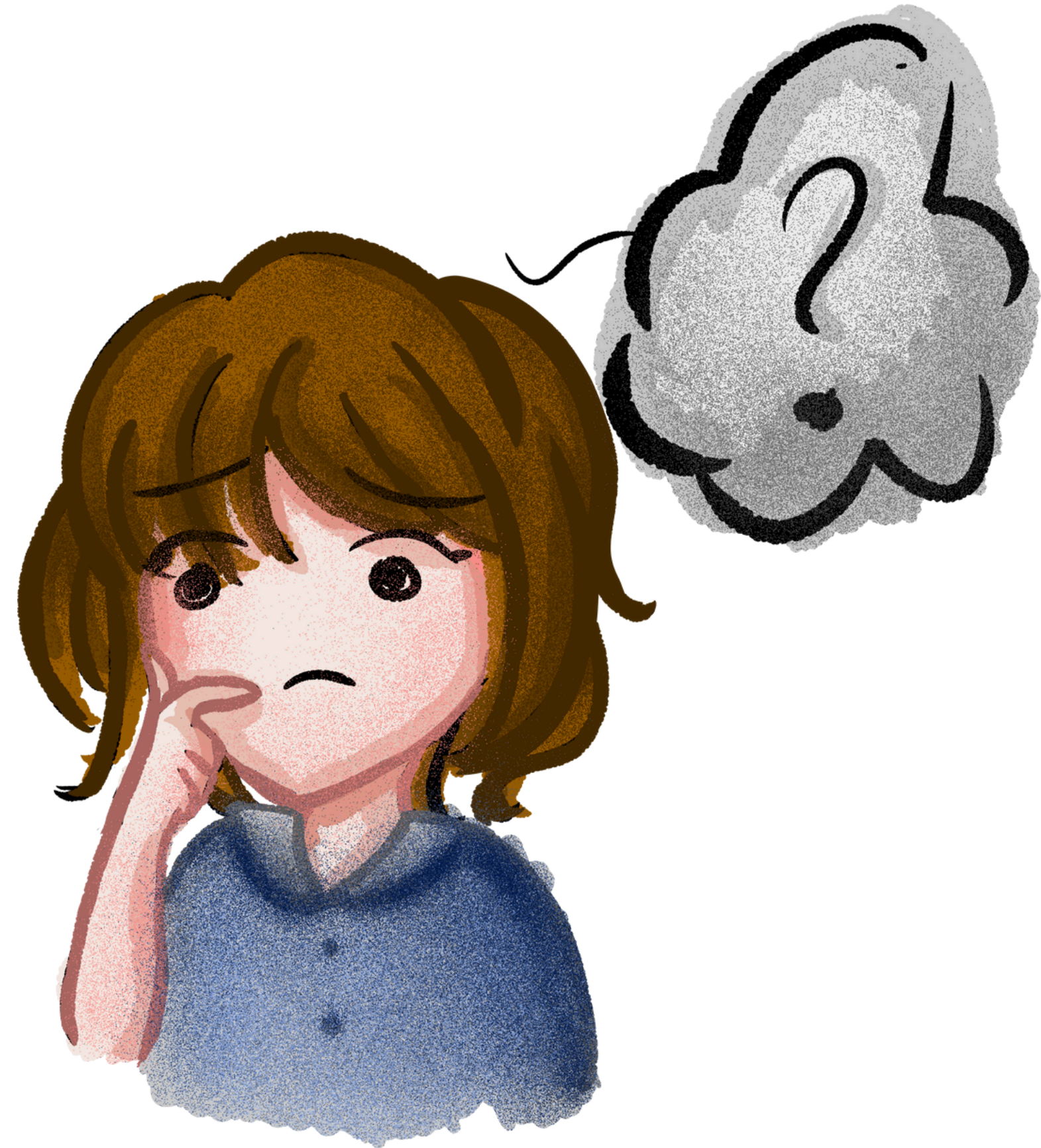
Purpose:

This case study will help us to uncover the mechanisms and growing popularity behind the success of short form content and its impact on user behavior

PROBLEM STATEMENT

How do short form content like Instagram reels and YouTube shorts makes them so addictive ?

OBJECTIVE

1. To identify and Analyze Algorithmic Mechanisms of short-form content platform

2. To understand behavioral effects of Algorithm-driven content consumption on users

3. To suggest potential strategies for responsible algorithmic design

METHODOLOGY

Secondary research(extracting data from internet)

Primary research(through survey, interviews)

SECONDARY RESEARCH

The algorithms behind reels , shorts and other platform are designed to be highly addictive for several reasons :

Personalized Content Feeds

1.Both platforms analyze every action you take—watch time, likes, scrolls, replays, shares, even pauses.

2.The more you use the app, the better it understands your preferences.

Reinforcement Learning (Feedback)

1. The algorithm learns in real-time: if you watch 3 food Reels in a row, you'll start seeing more.

2. Your engagement feeds the algorithm, which tailors your experience further—a dopamine-driven loop.

Variable Reward System

1. You never know what's coming next—funny video, emotional story, viral trend.

2. This mimics slot machine psychology: unpredictable rewards keep your brain craving "just one more."

Short Duration = Low Commitment

1.Videos are 15–60 seconds. Watching "just one" feels harmless.

2.But each clip is a tiny dopamine hit, and soon you've watched 50 in a row.

Auto-Play & Infinite Scroll

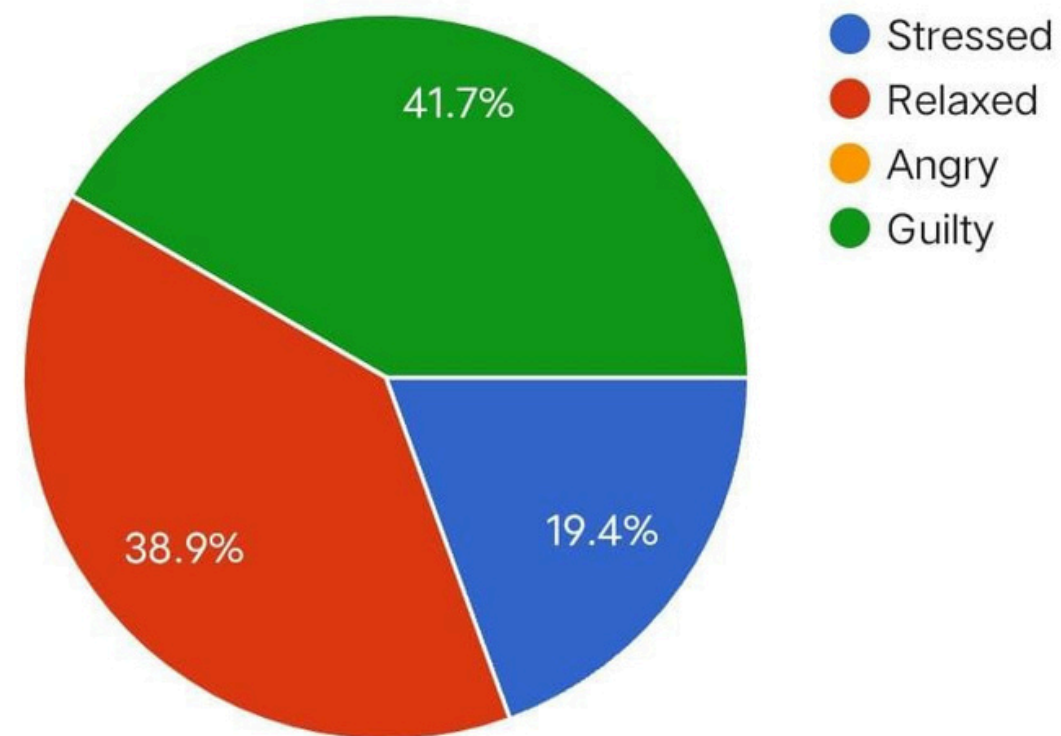1. As soon as one video ends, the next begins—no need to click.

There's no clear stopping point, creating a "flow state" that suspends time.

PRIMARY RESEARCH

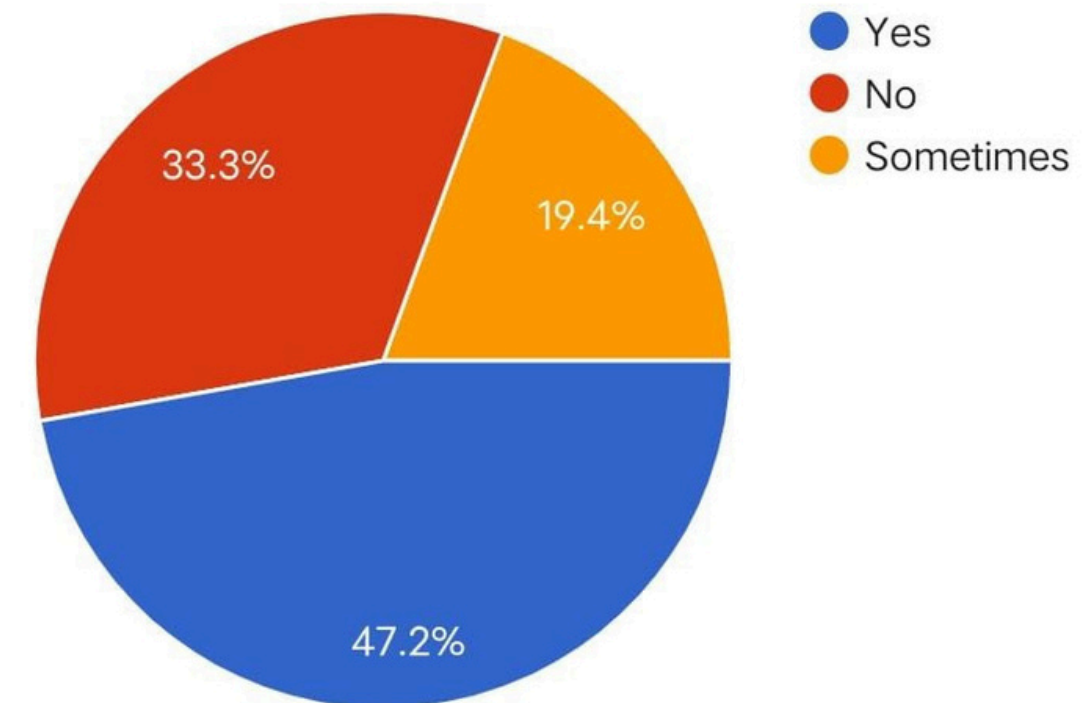After watching reels/shorts for long time how do you usually feel

Copy chart

36 responses

- Stressed
- Relaxed
- Angry
- Guilty

41.7%
38.9%
19.4%

Have your family/friends ever complained about amount of time you spent on watching reels/shorts

Copy chart

36 responses

- Yes
- No
- Sometimes

33.3%
19.4%
47.2%

Prefer platform for short content
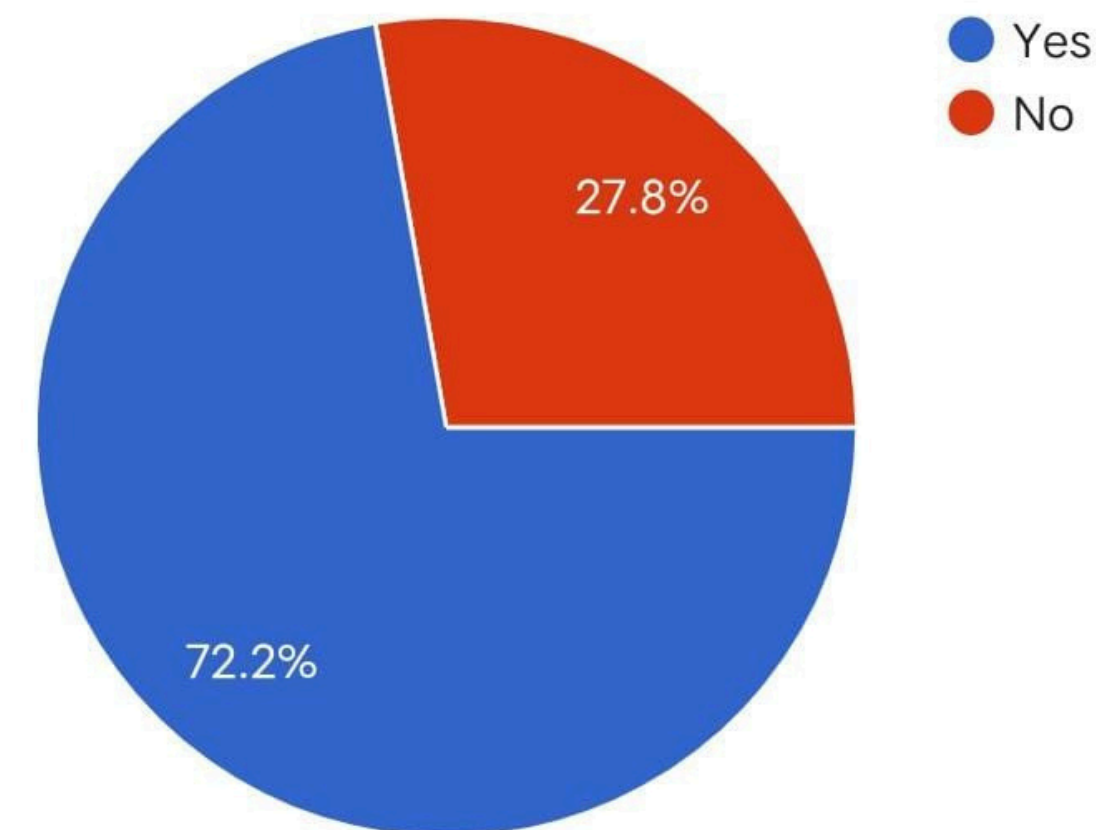
36 responses

- YouTube shorts
- Instagram reels
- Both equally

41.7%

16.7%

41.7%
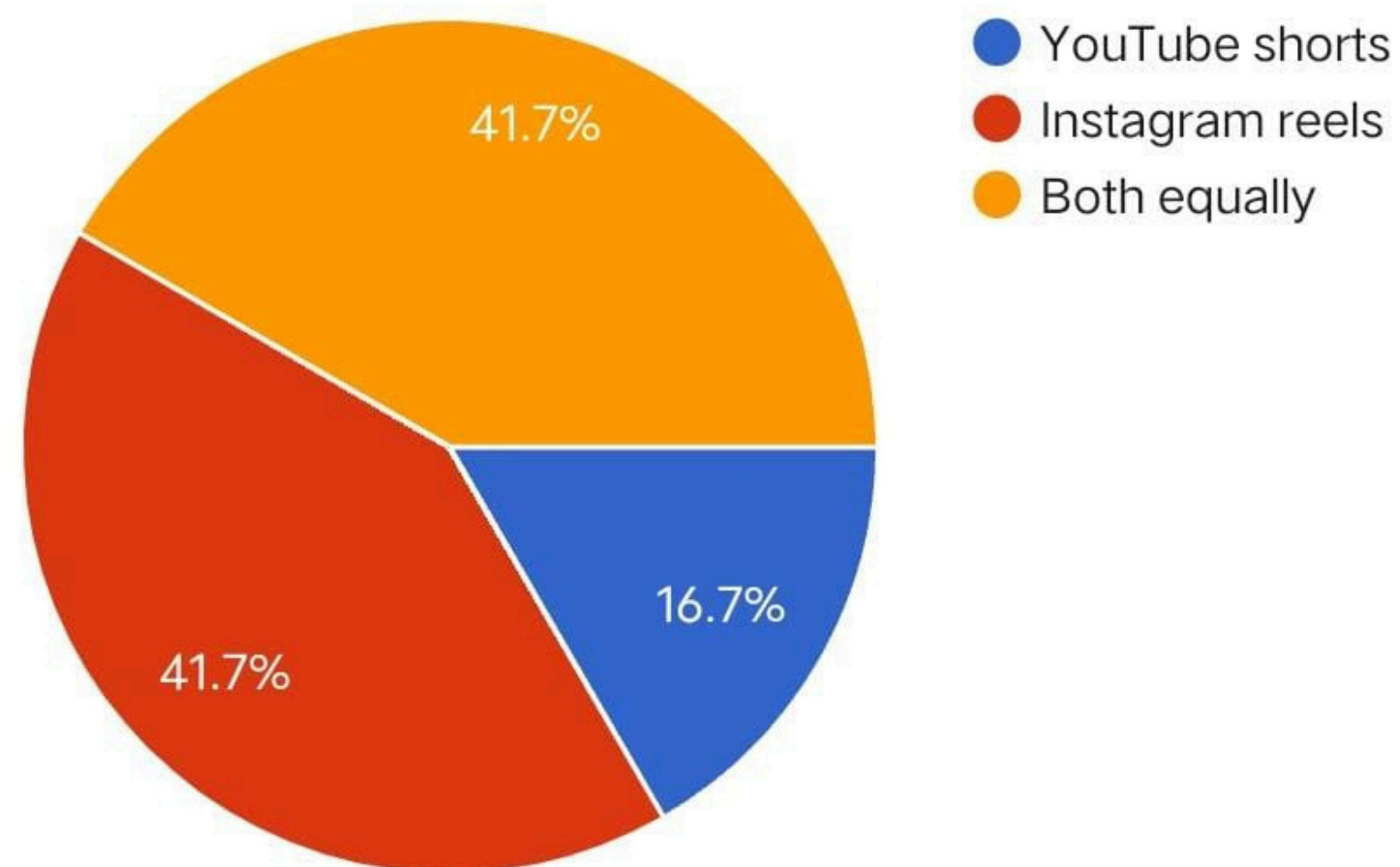
Have you ever postpone tasks (like working , studying, sleeping) to continue watching shorts/reels

36 responses

- Yes
- No

27.8%

72.2%

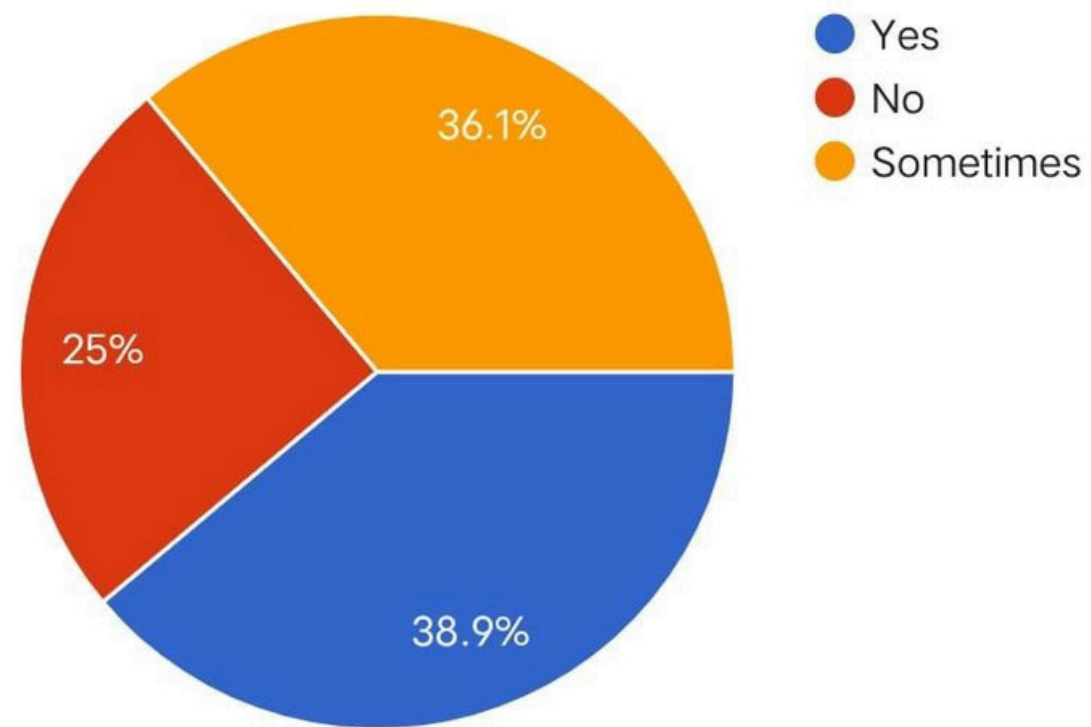## Do you often continue scrolling when you decide to stop

□ Copy chart

36 responses

- ● Yes
- ● No
- ● Sometimes

36.1%

25%

38.9%

Common reason for watching shorts/ reels

□ Copy chart

36 responses

- ● Entertainment
- ● To paas time
- ● Educational content
- ● Escape from stress/anxiety
- ● Other

22.2%

25%

5.6%

44.4%

Prefer platform for short content

36 responses

- YouTube shorts
- Instagram reels
- Both equally

41.7%
41.7%
16.7%
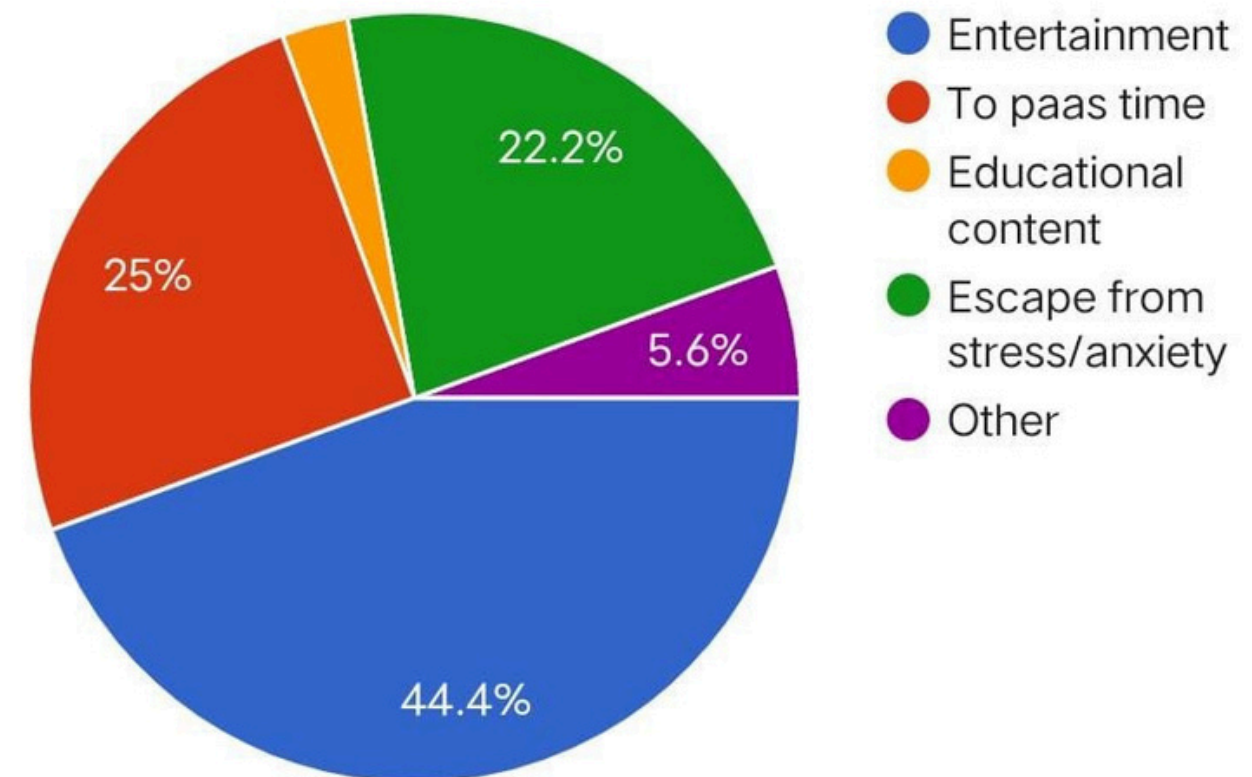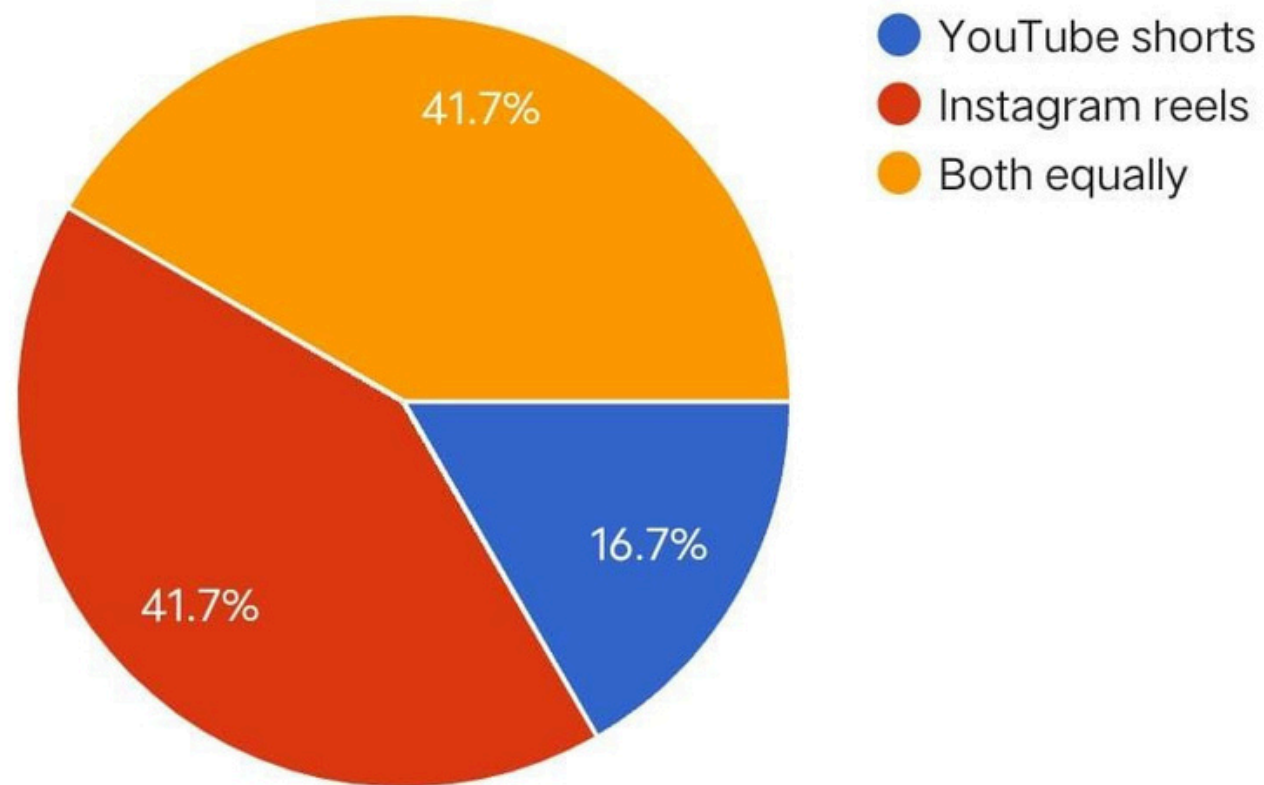
Average time spend per time on shorts/ reels

36 responses

- Less than 30 minutes
- More than 30 min to 1hour
- 1hour to 2 hour
- More than 2 hour

22.2%
25%
25%
27.8%

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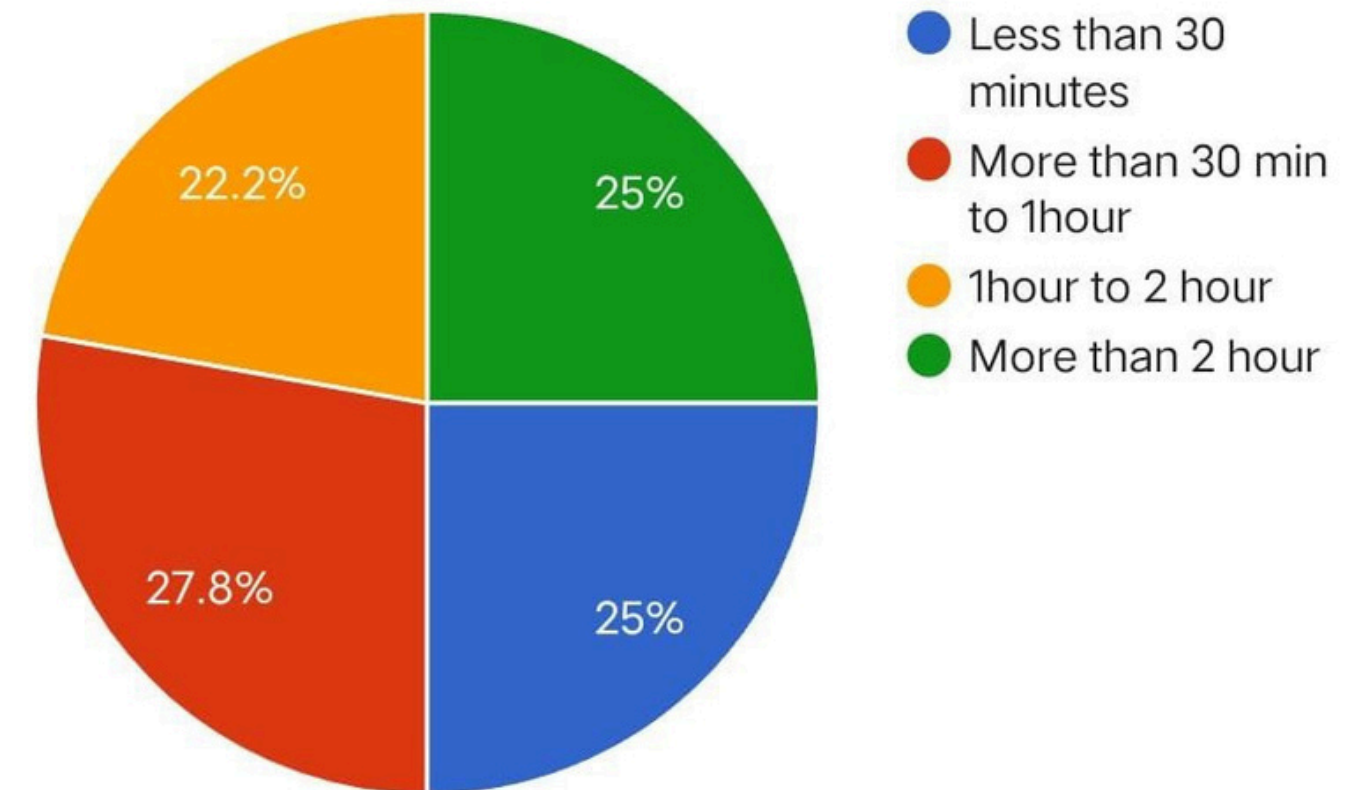
Copy chart

How often do you watch instagram reels or YouTube shorts

36 responses

Legend:
- Rarely (once in a week)
- Occasionally (1-3 times a week)
- Frequently (4 - 6 times a week)
- Daily

75%

16.7%
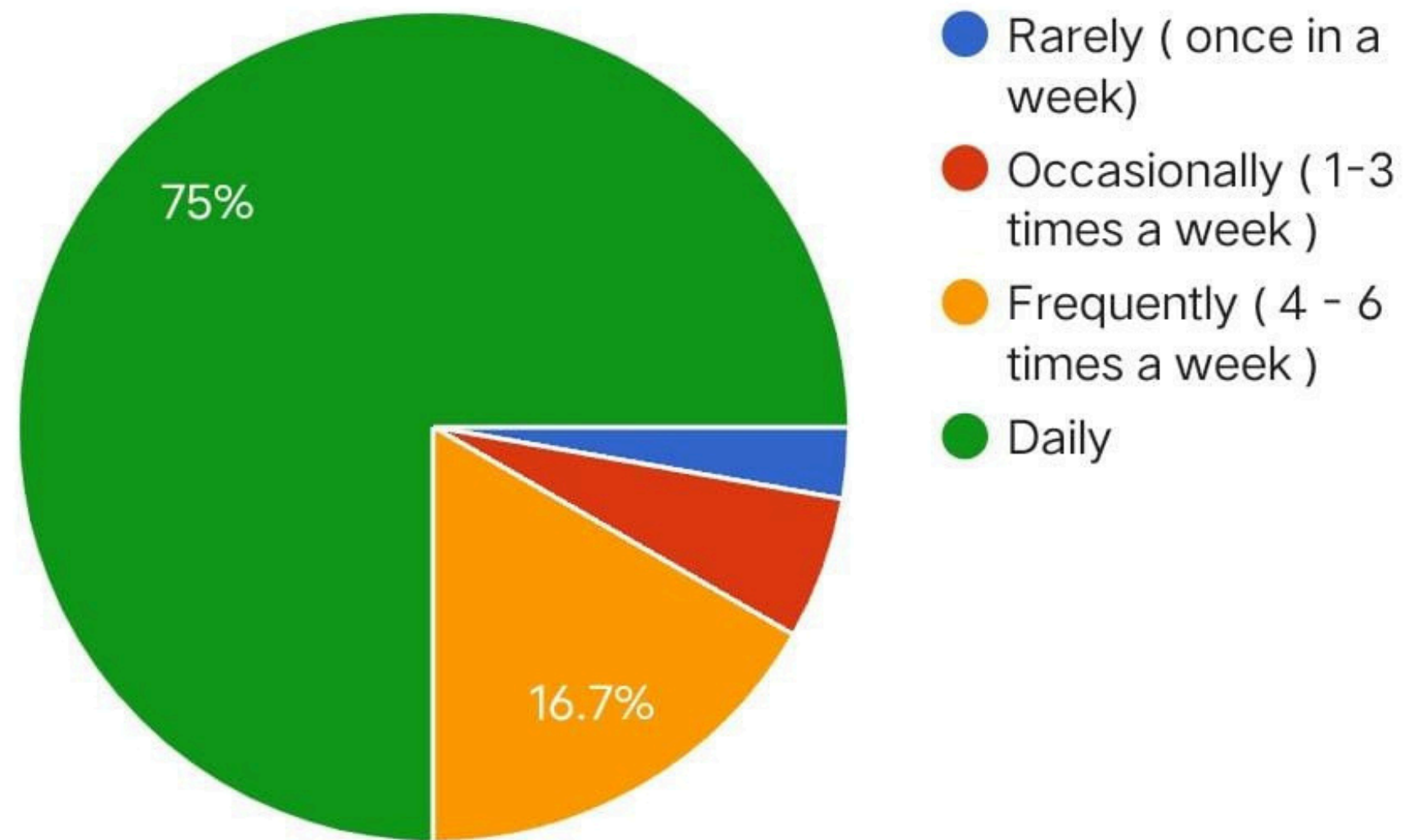
CONCLUSION

Features like instant gratification, personalized recommendations, etc creates an environment to keep users engaged. As a result, short form content has not only reshaped how users interact but has become an important source of digital entertainment

References

https://www.google.com

https://knowledge.hubspot.com

https://www.researchgate.net

Thank You