

Social media analysis of the UK's prospective international students

India deep dive

July 2022

www.britishcouncil.org

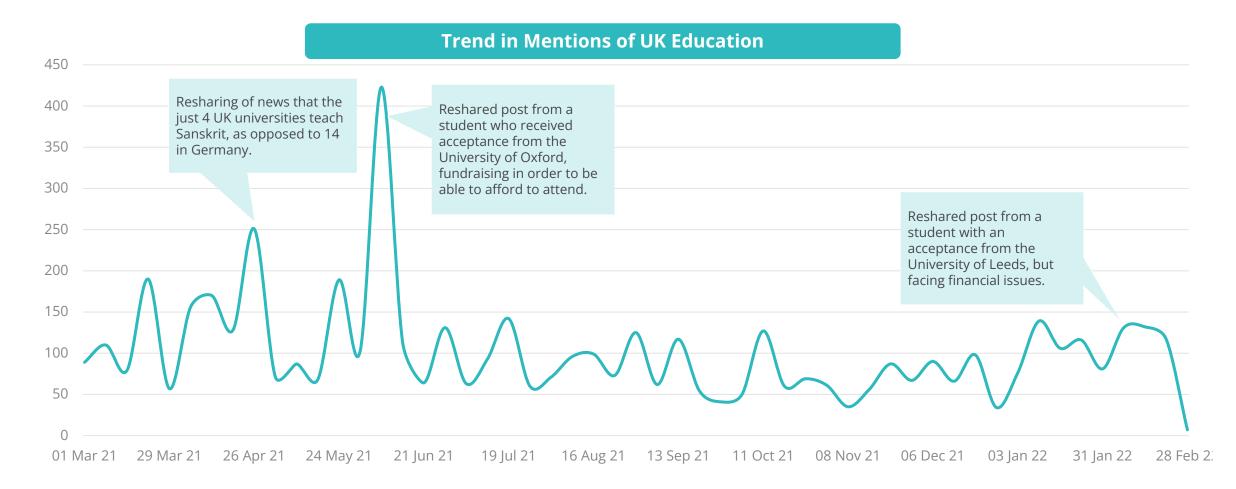
Contents

India deep-dive
- Social media listening
- Search and website traffic analysis
- Student profile estimation

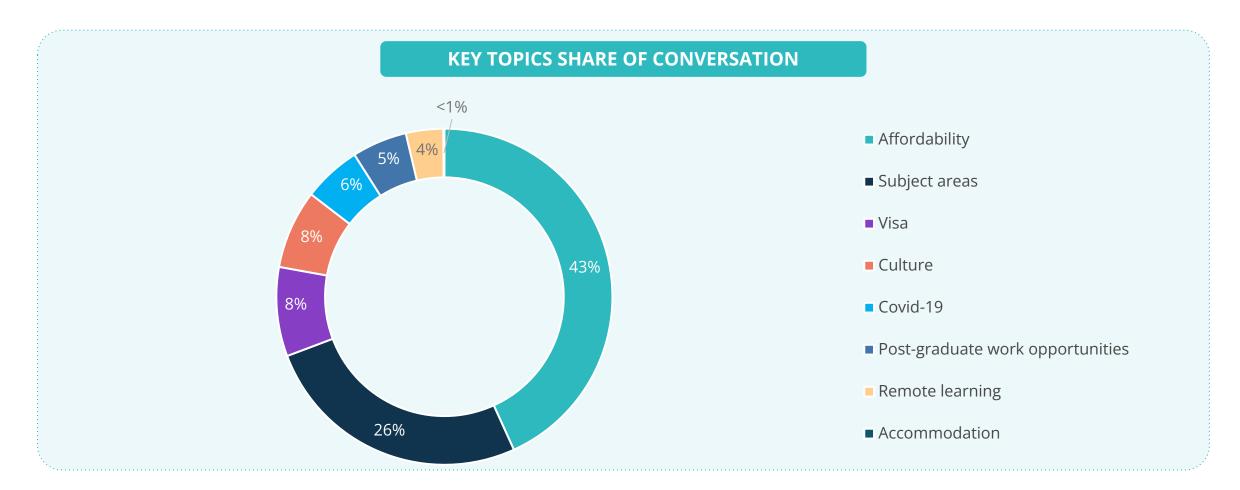
INDIA DEEP-DIVE

Social media listening: INDIA

Peaks in social media discussion in India tend to result from individual posts which gain traction in the audience and are reshared



Affordability is a key issue for Indian students, driving close to half of all mentions



Platforms analysed: Twitter, Forums, YouTube. Users aged <35.

While the UK is considered an expensive place to study, prospective students from India believe it to be cheaper than the US

AFFORDABILITY

- For prospective Indian students getting a scholarship is a primary concern, due to the high cost of studying/living in UK. The decision of where to apply is greatly influenced by the availability of scholarships. Many search for a UK university with more affordable fees.
- When comparing tuition fees in the UK and the US, the former is considered to be more affordable. Additionally, new UK visa rules are more encouraging for international students. However, the US is considered to have better job prospects for international students after the completion of their studies.

I would check external scholarships. University's rarely have full tuition scholarships, but you can still get significant funding if you apply to multiple scholarships.

66

66

66

66

I am really confused about which country to choose? I have done some research but couldn't really wrap my head around. I'll be taking an education loan to fund my graduate studies.

SUBJECT AREAS

- The most popular subject mentioned in connection with UK study is computer science.
- Other subjects of interest for students are Business Administration, Engineering, Finance, Architecture, Law and Graphic Design.

Help me pick between University of Nottingham, Bath and Exeter for a MSc Finance degree. Want to work in entry level Mergers & Acquisitions in a bulge bracket investment bank.

Edinburgh and Bath will probably have more resources and they're better to known. As for architecture specifically, I have no idea. They're both ranked similarly on QS, if that makes any difference.

Platforms analysed: Twitter, Forums, YouTube. Users aged <35.

Students turn to social media with their questions about the visa application process

VISA

- Preparing for the visa interview and preparing the necessary documents are leading drivers of conversation for this topic. Many students have multiple queries in relation to visa documentation in a range of situations, such as a Tier 2 vs Tier 4 Visa application, list of documents needed, interview scheduling etc.
- Delays in visa issuance have been among the key concerns for prospective students.
- The recent migration and mobility partnership between India and the UK has been discussed on the forums and generated some concern. This MoU is to ensure legal movements of students and professionals between the two nations.

CULTURE

- Many Indians could not pursue studies in the UK because of a lack of English proficiency.
- There are counselling services being provided to Indian students who want to pursue education in the UK so that they can become acclimatised to the culture.

@VFSGlobal @vfsglobalcare guys please help me to get status update of my visa application as my university is about to start on 27th September and I've to be in UK before that.

66

66

More than enough to give some people heart attack.

??

Many prospective students would need the higher earning opportunities in the UK in order to recover the investment in their education, post-graduation

COVID-19

- During the pandemic many institutions in India promoted students without conducting exams. Students worry with that this could have impacted their eligibility to study in UK universities.
- Due to Covid-19, replies/action on visa applications were delayed. Additionally, people mention that usually any institution in the UK takes 90 days to reply in general.
- Questions were posed about the impact of travel on visa terms during the pandemic.

So, overall, I won't have any scores/marks on my 1st and 2nd year transcript, just a 'promoted due to Covid-19' remark is there.

66

66

??

99

PG WORK OPPORTUNITIES

- The UK's post-study work visa for international students has been a welcome move as this would allow Indian students to stay & search for job opportunities in the UK.
- There are questions on getting a permanent residency after completing their studies in the UK.
- For many Indian students the reason for completing their post graduation in the UK is to get a job there. This is also to recover their financial investments in their studies and repay any debts.

My only concern is getting a job after I finish my studies, I'm an average student thus I'm not aiming at tier 1 colleges.

During the pandemic, Indian students wondered if they would be able to take classes virtually from India, showing an appetite for remote learning

REMOTE LEARNING

- Due to the pandemic many UK universities have transferred their courses online mode. As a result, students wondered whether they could study from India instead.
- Students were also more likely to consider 'downgrading' their course options to be less demanding, due to the challenges posed when studying online.
- Many universities were said to be launching online courses to attract international students.

66

However, we have been told by an education consultant that it is not possible to downgrade my visa status from UKBA Level 6(for undergraduate) to UKBA Level 5 (for diploma).

ACCOMODATION

• Questions about shared accommodation, including the realities of sharing communal living spaces and age restrictions on who may stay in halls.

Is it possible to work with a shared kitchen for every meal of the day, how much troublesome would it be?

99

Platforms analysed: Twitter, Forums, YouTube. Users aged <35.

Questions asked on social media are wide-ranging, including the accessibility of permanent residency and how to choose a university

COMPETITOR COUNTRIES

- The US and Canada are the competitor countries most mentioned alongside the UK.
- There are two key factors considered when students are discussing where to study:
 - Affordability
 - Opportunities for staying in the country to work after graduation
- The US is discussed as the most expensive and the least likely to allow students to stay after graduating, while the UK and Canada are discussed as being more on a par with each other.

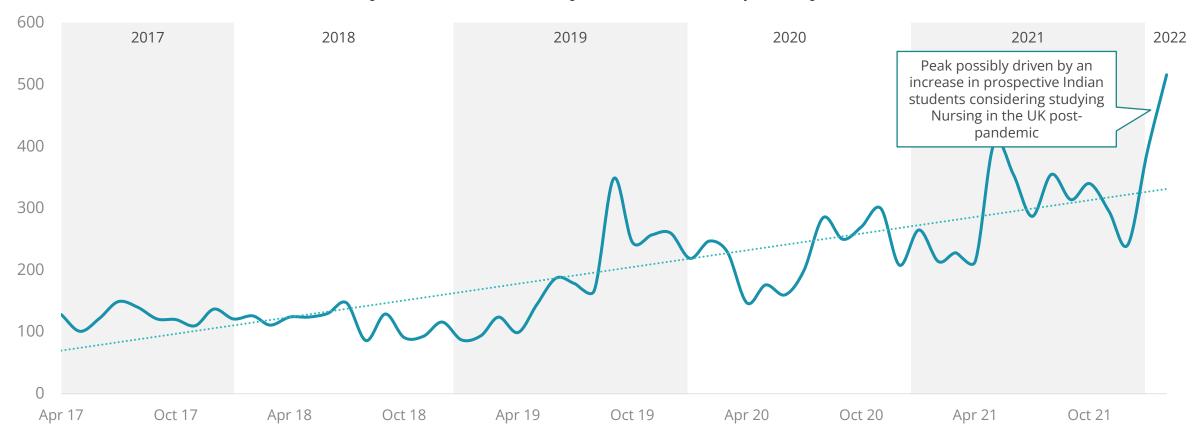
KEY QUESTION TYPES

- Is it possible to get permanent residency after university?
- Offers from Edinburgh, Bath and Westminster which one to consider?
- How good is Royal Holloway university?
- Is it a good time to seek higher education in the UK?
- As an International student, is taking a foundation year worth it?
- What are the requirements for International students applying in the UK?
- Graduate visa: impact of travel during term time on a student visa?
- Student Visa Check list. Do I need additional documents?

Search & website traffic analysis: INDIA

Search trend analysis

An increase in searches in early 2022 may have been driven by news of the UK easing immigration restrictions for Indian citizens as part of trade talks.



Monthly searches for 'Study in UK' over the past 5 years

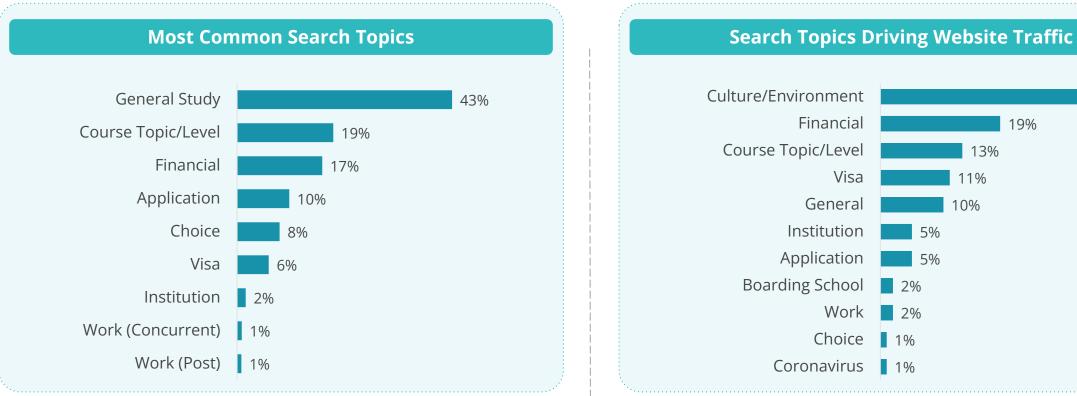
Search Data: Google.

Search & website traffic analysis Overview

People from India use the Study UK website as a resource for understanding UK culture and environment, including religions practiced and languages spoken.

Finance- and course-related questions are key drivers of search data and also drive website traffic. However, there is not much traffic from people asking questions around general study (e.g. 'how to study in UK'). Similarly, how to make the right choice of which country to study in drives a higher share of search data than website traffic.

33%



Search Data: Google.

General search topic data is from the last 12 months, while search topic data for website traffic is from February 2022. Because multiple topics may be included in a single search, percentage data may not equal 100%.

Search Analysis

Searches relative to study in the UK indicate that Indian students are interested in the costs and levels of safety associated with studying in the UK, as well as wanting to understand any other potential benefits of UK study in comparison to other English speaking countries

General Study (43%)

- 'Why' and 'how to' study in the UK are the key questions searched for
- Information about how much of a 'study gap' is accepted in the UK is a particular question searched for
- Searches for whether the UK is a 'safe' place to study

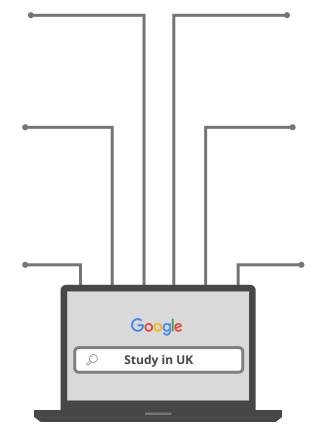
Course Topic/Level (19%)

- The most searched-for courses are highly related to areas of science (e.g., biology, oncology), medicine (e.g., dentistry, biomedical, doctor), business & marketing and language (e.g. English)
- Looking for 'best course' or 'top 10 courses' to study in the UK

Financial (17%)

- 'Costs' of study, 'tuition fees', 'expenses', as well as financial aids available to Indian students (e.g., scholarship, education loan) are searched for. The British Council is mentioned in searches seeking scholarship information
- Searches for the 'cheapest course' and 'cheapest place' indicate that Indian students' hope to minimise the financial burden of studying in the UK
- The UK is compared to the US and Australia in terms of affordability of study

Search Data: Google.



Application (10%)

- Searches for application requirements and whether it is possible to study without IELTS
- Preparation of personal statement and interview drives search questions such as 'why study in UK'
- Looking for consultants in Indian regions (e.g., Bangalore, Chennai) who assist with applications

Choice (8%)

- Searches for the 'benefits' and 'perks' of studying in the UK compared to India and 'why' study a subject or degree in the UK
- English speaking countries, such as the US, Canada, New Zealand and Australia are compared to the UK to understand which country is 'better' and 'why'

Visa (6%)

- Visa search questions are centred around postgraduate work permits, the possibility of obtaining permanent residency, and visa types and fees required to study
- Keywords such as 'new rules' and 'recent change' are used to obtain the latest visa information

Search volume (%) by topic is based on the average number of monthly searches for a 'study in UK' keyword over a 12-month period. Because multiple topics may be included in a single search, percentage data may not equal 100%.

Search Analysis: Sample Searches

General study

- Study in UK
- Study in UK from India
- Study in UK for Indian students after 12th
- How to study in UK
- How to study in UK as international student
- Is it safe to study in UK
- Study life in UK
- Study opportunities in UK

Application

- Study in UK without IELTS
- Study in UK requirements
- Study in UK without IELTS for Indian students 2020
- What exams are required to study in UK
- Why study in UK personal statement
- Requirements to study in UK for international students
- Why study in the UK interview question answer
- Study in UK with IELTS

Course Topic/Level

- Study MBBS in UK for Indian students after 12th
- Study MBA in UK
- Study medicine in UK
- Best university to study data science in UK
- Study law in UK for Indian students
- Best universities in UK for film studies
- Study MSc nursing in UK

Choice

- Benefits of studying in UK
- Best courses to study in UK
- Why study in UK not in India
- Benefits of studying in UK compared to India
- Is it worth studying law in UK
- Why study in UK for masters
- Easiest course to study in UK
- Study in UK or USA

Financial

- Scholarships for Indian students to study in UK
- Cost of studying in UK for Indian students
- Scholarship to study in UK
- Study in UK for free
- Cost of studying in UK for international students
- Education loan to study in UK
- Average cost of studying in UK
- Is studying in UK expensive

Visa

- How to get PR in UK after study
- Permanent residency in UK after study
- What visa is required to study in UK
- Can asylum seekers study in UK
- What is tier 4 visa to study in the UK
- Stay after study in UK
- 2 year work permit after study in UK
- Can a Tier 4 dependant study in UK

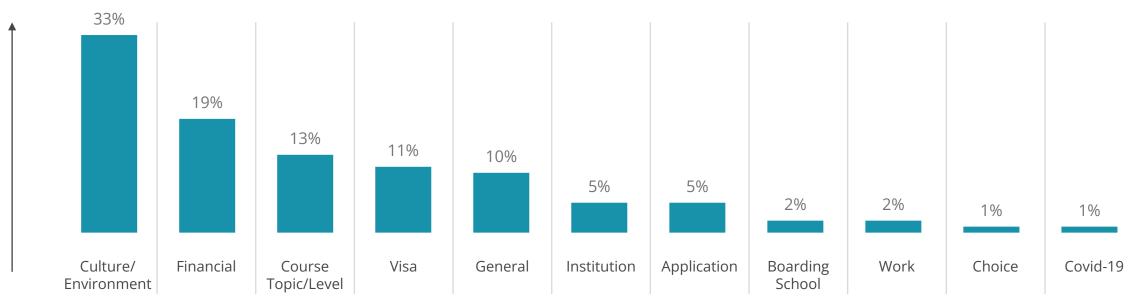
Search Data: Google.

Search volume (%) by topic is based on the average number of monthly searches for a 'study in UK' keyword over a 12-month period. Because multiple topics may be included in a single search, percentage data may not equal 100%.

Website Traffic Analysis

People based in India visited study-uk.britishcouncil.org **50.3K** times in February 2022. People based in India visited https://www.britishcouncil.in **325.8K** times in February 2022.

There are 3.8K key search terms leading people to visit the UK website, and 18.1k key terms leading people to visit the India domain. We conducted an analysis of the **top 100 search terms** (driving 91% of website visits). Within this data, we identified 11 search topics that lead people to visit the site:



Topic Footprint in Website Traffic Search Data

Website Traffic Analysis: Sample Searches

A high share of the Study UK website traffic from India is from people hoping to understand what language is spoken in the UK, and what the weather is like. With regard to course level, the majority of traffic comes from those who are interested in postgraduate education.

Culture/ Environment	Financial	Course Topic/Level	Visa	General	Institution
 UK/British language UK weather England/British religion Summer in UK/England UK holidays UK temperature Summer months in UK 	 Scholarships UK Commonwealth scholarship Scholarship to study in UK Chevening scholarship UK scholarships for Indian students Great scholarship International student health insurance UK 	 Postgraduate Creative arts Postgraduate education/courses UK Nursing in UK Degree courses UK Master's scholarships UK 	 UK student visa UK visa PSW UK UK study visa Post study work visa UK study visa requirements UK post study work permit 	 Study Study in UK UK students Study UK British Council Free online courses with certificates UK How to study in UK Support and guidance Education in UK 	 UK universities UCL Nottingham Trent University Goldsmith's UK schools

Website Traffic Analysis: Sample Searches

Some visit the Study UK website hoping to understand how to approach applying to stud in the UK.

Application	Boarding School	Work	Choice	Covid-19
 How to apply for scholarship in UK Apply to UK universities UK university admission How to get scholarship in UK Clearing 	 Boarding school What is boarding school 	 Post study UK post study work permit 	• Why study in UK	• British coronavirus

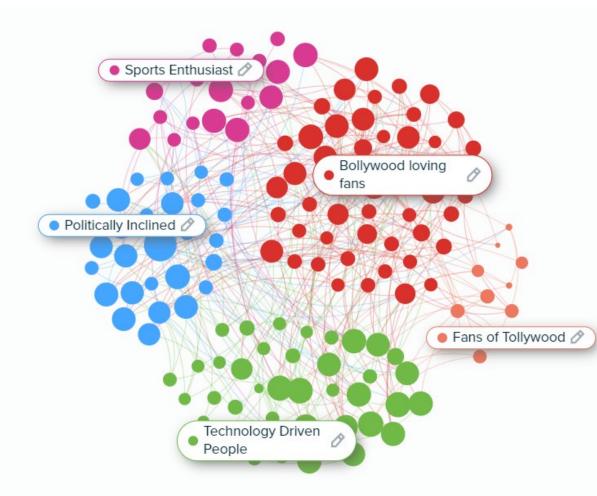
Leading Study UK Subdomains

Subdomain	29,035	S
https://study-uk.britishcouncil.org/	28,381	
https://study-uk.britishcouncil.org/moving-uk/student- life/language	2,698	
https://study-uk.britishcouncil.org/after-your-studies/post- study-work	2,358	uk
https://study-uk.britishcouncil.org/moving-uk/student-visas	2,172	<u>h</u>
https://study-uk.britishcouncil.org/find/study- options/postgraduate	1,483	htt
https://study-uk.britishcouncil.org/moving-uk/student- life/weather	1,438	<u>ht</u>
https://study-uk.britishcouncil.org/scholarships	1,407	
https://study-uk.britishcouncil.org/find/study- options/boarding	1,333	ł
https://study-uk.britishcouncil.org/moving-uk/student- life/religion	1,252	
https://study-uk.britishcouncil.org/find/university	868	h

Subdomain	Traffic
<u>https://study-</u> uk.britishcouncil.org/scholarships/commonwealth- scholarships	730
https://in.registration.study- uk.britishcouncil.org/institution/ucl-university-college-london	728
https://study-uk.britishcouncil.org/find/choosing-university	666
https://study-uk.britishcouncil.org/find/how-to-apply	632
https://study-uk.britishcouncil.org/find/subject-areas/creative- arts?utm_campaign=Study_UK_Awareness_2021	504
https://study-uk.britishcouncil.org/find/how-to-apply/clearing	254
https://study-uk.britishcouncil.org/find/study- options/boarding	224
https://study-uk.britishcouncil.org/moving-uk/coronavirus	202
https://study-uk.britishcouncil.org/moving-uk/student- life/health-safety	193
https://study-uk.britishcouncil.org/scholarships/chevening- scholarships	174

Student profile estimation: INDIA

Audience segmentation of young Indian Twitter users



Bollywood Loving Fans (25%)

This group is a mostly young male group, who are avid fans of sports and movies. They follow Bollywood celebrities like Lara Dutta, Sonam Ahuja, and Arjun Rampal. They are extroverts who are very active on social media.

Technology Driven People (20%)

This group of people are open to new experiences in life. They are mostly college grads, mostly interested in technology and computing, They are interested in shows like NDTV, BBC, National Geographic etc. They are very active on Reddit and Medium. They have affinity towards Elon Musk and TechCrunch.

Politically Inclined (14%)

This group is very interested in the political situation of the country. They follow political parties like BJP and political heads like Amit Shah, Rajnath Singh, Yogi Adityanath. They are philosophical, self-assured individuals with a sense of individuality.

Sports Enthusiasts (9%)

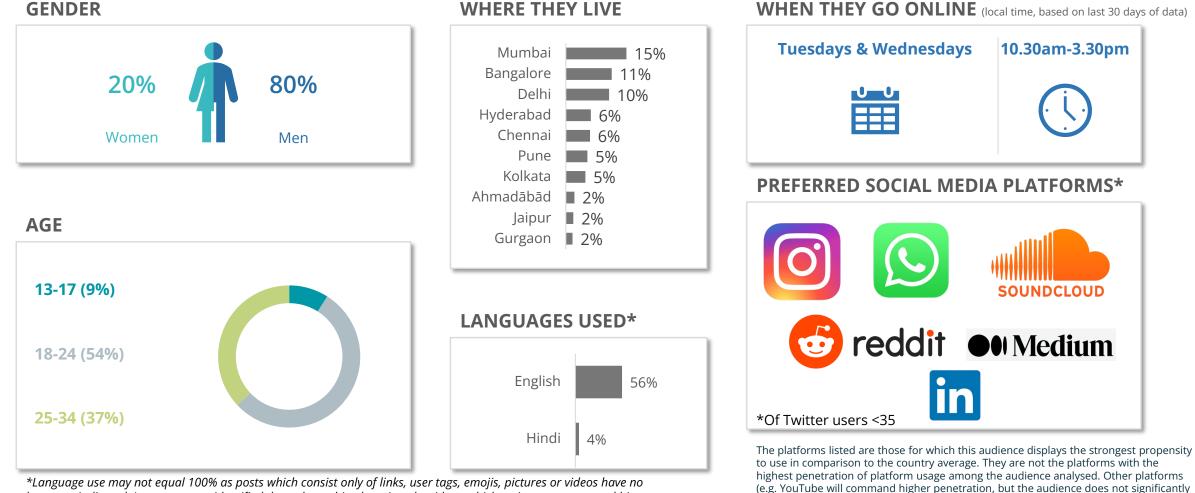
This group tends to follow the accounts of various athletes. and are avid fans of cricket. They are very active on social media and watch TV shows like ESPN and Star Sports.

Fans of Tollywood (5%)

This group is from the South of India, heavily influenced by Tollywood celebrities and highly engaged with them on Instagram and Facebook.

Source: Twitter users aged<35.

Who are young Indian Twitter users?



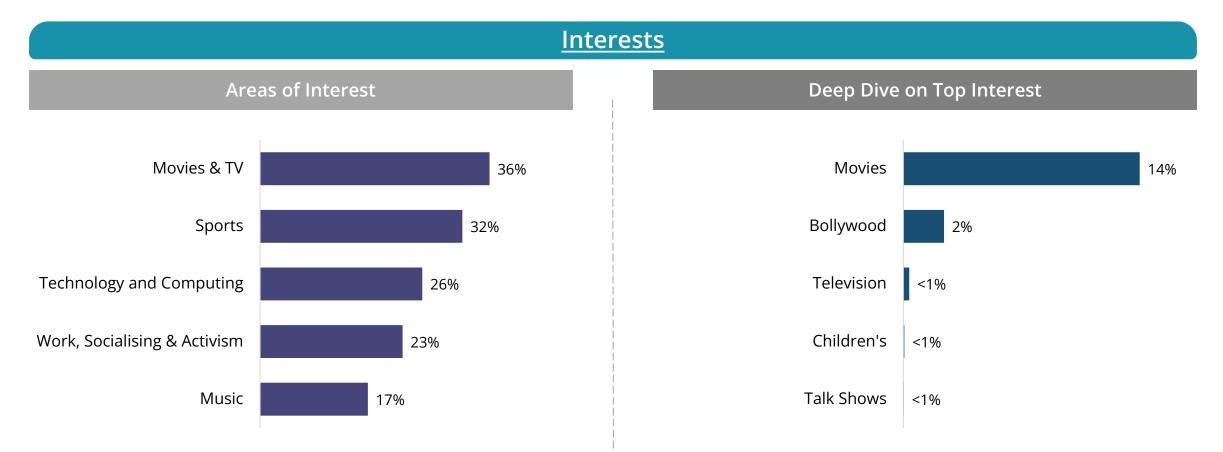
over-index on these compared to the average. Twitter does not feature as the sample is

derived from users of the platform.

*Language use may not equal 100% as posts which consist only of links, user tags, emojis, pictures or videos have no language indicated. Languages are identified through machine learning algorithms which review user posts and bios. Source: Twitter users aged<35.

What are young Indian Twitter users interested in?

The keen area of interest for most people is movies and TV, and they enjoy Bollywood. This is followed closely by sports and technology as well as society in general and music.



Source: Twitter users aged<35.

Accounts that influence young Indian Twitter users

They are highly influenced by famous celebrities from India and the US. They are very invested in social media and in the lives of popular celebrities.

	Name	Description	Social Media Pages
	Sameera Reddy	Indian celebrity and former actress.	9 (a) (b) (c) (c) (c) (c) (c) (c) (c) (c) (c) (c
HOJEST COM	Sidhartha Mallya	Indian-American actor and model.	🍤 🞯 🕑 🕤 💼
	S. Sreesanth	Indian former cricketer and film actor.	9 () () () () () () () () () () () () ()
0	Instagram	Social media platform.	9 (a) (b) (c) (c) (c) (c) (c) (c) (c) (c) (c) (c
	Celina Jaitly	Bollywood actress and UN Human Rights activist.	9 (a) (b) (f) (in)
	Tom Hanks	US actor and filmmaker.	🍤 🗿 🕑 🕤 🗓
	Tom Cruise	American actor and producer.	9 (0) (1) (1) (1) (1) (1) (1) (1) (1) (1) (1
	Mandira Bedi	Indian actress, fashion designer, and television presenter.	9 (a) (b) (c) (c) (c) (c) (c) (c) (c) (c) (c) (c
OMG FACTS	OMGFacts	Online source of interesting facts.	🕑 💿 🖸 🗓
	Uday Chopra	Indian actor, film producer, director, screenwriter and assistant director in Bollywood.	9 (a) (b) (c) (c) (c) (c) (c) (c) (c) (c) (c) (c

Media enjoyed by young Indian Twitter users

They prefer current news more than entertainment and digital magazines mostly feature latest news around the world. They also show a keen interest in cricket.

Most Popular TV			
Region Visual	Rajeev Masand	YouTube channel for a former Indian film critic. Interviews high profile industry figures.	
National Geographic	<u>National</u> Geographic	TV channel that features Non-fiction and documentaries	
MTV India	MTV India	TV channel that specialises in music, reality and youth culture programming	
	<u>CNN</u>	TV channel focusing on the updating the people about the current happenings in the world	
BBC News (World)	BBC News (World)	News Channel covering the important activities happening in the world.	
CNN Breaking News	<u>CNN Breaking</u> <u>News</u>	News channel broadcasting the latest news around the world	
BBC Breaking News	BBC Breaking <u>News</u>	TV News channel showcasing latest news.	
Nows18	News18	Indian TV News Channel owned by CNN.	
@indiatoday IndiaToday	<u>India Today</u>	Twitter of the India Today	
ABP News	ABP News	Indian News Channel focusing on news around the world as well as India.	

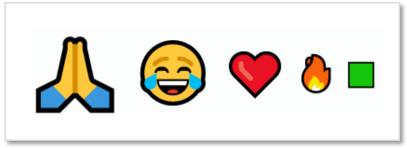
Source: Twitter users aged<35.

Most Popular Digital Magazines			
BBC NEWS	BBC News (World)	World news Platform for the BBC	
Page Base dana	Press Trust of India	Largest News Agency of India	
BBC NEWS BREAKING	BBC Breaking News	News Magazine featuring current news.	
ESFT cricinfo	<u>ESPNcricinfo</u>	Platform featuring latest news on cricket.	
ee	<u>someecards</u>	Website showcasing funny take on popular news.	
CHEEZ	Cheezburger	Digital comedy network that features cat pictures and videos.	
ROC4LIFE	ROC4LIFE	Online publication updating the world about latest fashion and entertainment content.	
	Michael Ausiello	Instagram page of Michael Ausiello	
style	<u>PeopleStyle</u>	Platform for the latest style news and features around the world.	
BUSINESS INSIDER	Business Insider Tec	Platform featuring the latest business news around technology.	

Content posted by young Indian Twitter users

They are very active on platforms like YouTube and Instagram. They post about hashtags related to Bollywood and current news.

POPULAR EMOJI

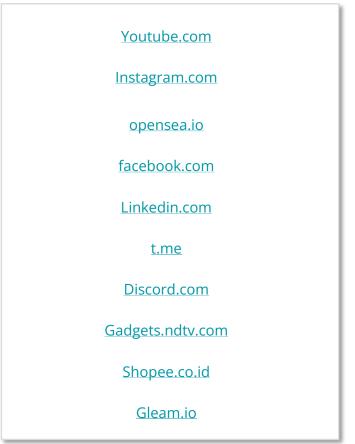


POPULAR HASHTAGS

Hashtag	Meaning
#valimai	Used in posts mentioning the popular Tollywood movie valimai
#latamanges hkar	Used in post mentioning the Late Indian Singer who passed away in 2022.
#ukraine	Used in post supporting Ukraine in crises.
#iplauction	Used in posts talking about the Indian Premier League Auction.
#hijab	Used in the posts regarding a political debate on hijab

MEDIA FORMAT Pictures (64%) $\bigotimes \bigotimes$ <u>t.me</u> Video È (36%) GIFs (<1%)

DOMAINS THEY SHARE LINKS TO



Source: Twitter users aged<35.

3. Student profile estimation – exploratory profiling: INDIA

Audience: Profile

This audience is constructed of Twitter users who participated in the social media listening conversation, as well as under 35s from India who on Twitter follow the British Council (India or Global accounts), Study UK, or one of several accounts we identified as offering information or support to prospective international students

Personality Traits

Personality

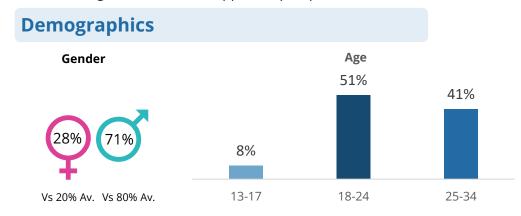
They are analytical, helpful and social.

They are philosophical: they are open to and intrigued by new ideas and iove to explore them. They are adventurous: they are eager to experience new things. And they are energetic: they enjoy a fast-paced, busy schedule with many activities.

Needs Their choices are driven by a desire for discovery.

Values

They consider both independence and achieving success to guide a large part of what they do. They like to set their own goals to decide how to best achieve them. And they seek out opportunities to improve themselves and demonstrate that they are a capable person.



Top Content Engaging With



Numbers as a Means to Power : Politics of Caste as a Census Category in Colonial India c 1871-1941

Historians working on colonial India have often argued that the colonial censuses hardened caste divides in Indian society. Contrarily, this paper showcases that the history of colonial caste census is more complicated than what was assumed by historians who simplistically identify it as a divisive colonial instrument.

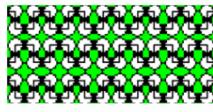


Career Development Courses - in partnership with Udemy

Spice up your career with useful online business courses, suggestions and tips! Redeem exclusive deals for career development courses.

Read the full article on media4you.social \rightarrow

Hackernoon



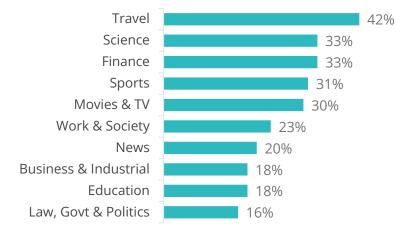
HackerNoon - read, write and learn about any technology

How hackers start their afternoon. HackerNoon is a free platform with 25k+ contributing writers. 100M+ humans have visited HackerNoon to learn about technology.

Read the full article on hackernoon.com \rightarrow

Interests

(More likely to follow accounts about the following compared to the national average)



Who Influences them?

