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Assessment 1

Project Proposal Report



MODULE NAME: CHANGEMAKERS, CREATIVITY AND VALUE CREATION

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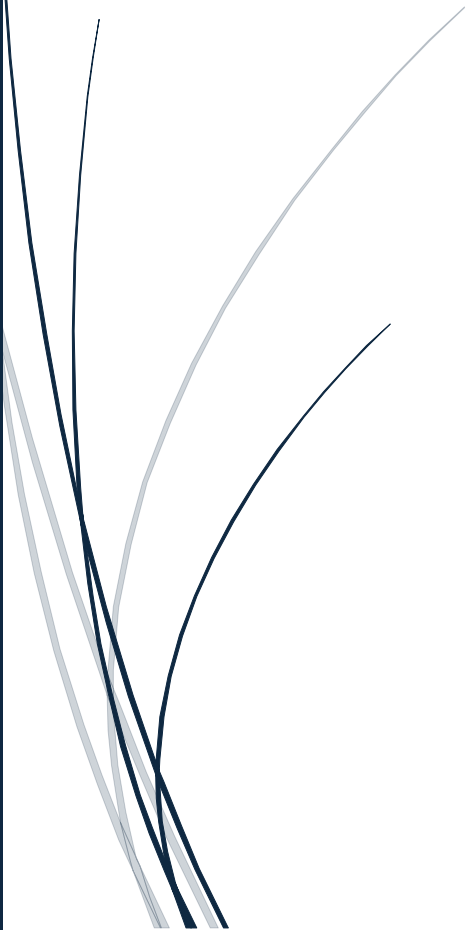


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Introduction

Innovation and creativity have continually shaped human civilisation, driving advancements that transform communication, learning, wellbeing, and community interaction. As highlighted in Topic 1 Units, technological progress evolves through problem-solving, experimentation, and the desire to enhance human capability. Modern digital innovations particularly social media platforms have redefined how communities connect, collaborate, and share knowledge, making them central to contemporary social and technological development. These platforms support real-time communication, educational exchange, wellbeing networks, activism, and creative collaboration, demonstrating how digital tools can strengthen social bonds and empower diverse groups.

Within this context, the JOINT VIBE project aims to design a community-focused social media application that enables users to engage meaningfully through groups, events, messaging, and personalised content. The project aligns with current research showing that digital communities rely on structured communication channels, user-centred design, and accessible engagement features. Guided by a pragmatic research philosophy, the study integrates both qualitative and quantitative methods to ensure practical, user-driven outcomes. Authoritative search tools such as Google Scholar, IEEE Xplore, and the ACM Digital Library support the identification of credible academic sources. Together, these foundations establish a robust framework for exploring innovation, digital community building, and user-centred platform development.

Main Body

Task 1

(600-800 words)

Ideation and Innovation

(Approx. 5/6 sources in total)

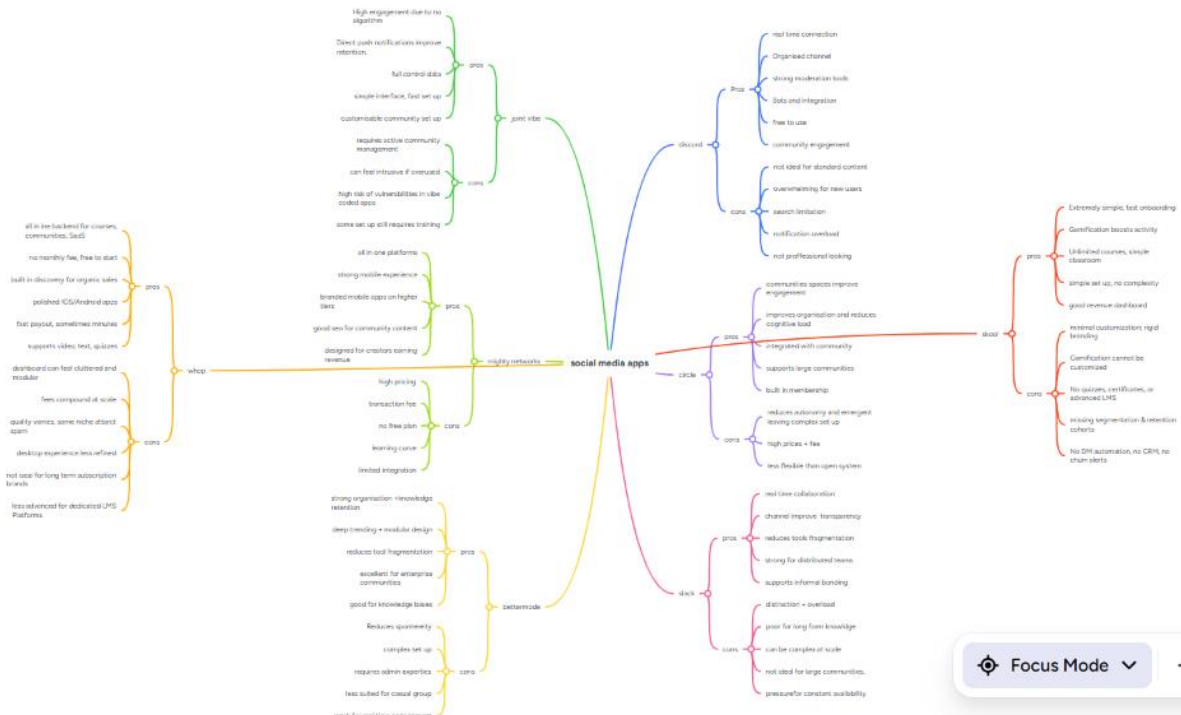


Fig 1: mind map

Mind meister link - <https://mm.tt/map/4058992355?t=bnfnDrh6Vr>

<https://www.mindmeister.com/4058992355/social-media-apps>

Innovation

- I. Paragraph 1: Document a summary of some of the areas/concepts from Topic 1 of Unit 1 on Moodle.

Human creativity and technological advancement have consistently transformed human civilisation, driving major changes in communication, transportation, medicine, engineering, and everyday life. These innovations typically arise from the need to solve real-world problems, enhance efficiency, or extend human capability. Early inventions such as the wheel, the printing press, and electricity laid the foundations for industrial growth, mass knowledge sharing, and modern power systems, as documented in historical analyses of technological creativity and early knowledge dissemination[1][2][3] Subsequent breakthroughs including the telephone, automobile, airplane, and computer dramatically improved global mobility and connectivity, enabling instant communication and reducing physical barriers—developments widely recognised in studies of information and communication technologies[4].

Contemporary digital technologies such as the internet, smartphones, social media platforms, and artificial intelligence have reshaped how people interact, learn, work, and form communities, marking a shift from mechanical tools to

intelligent, data-driven systems. This digital transformation aligns with historical accounts of internet evolution and modern data-driven communication systems[5][6][7]. The list also highlights significant medical and scientific advances, including vaccines, antibiotics, MRI scanning, and genetic engineering, all of which have improved global health and increased life expectancy, supported by research on infectious disease control, medical imaging, and genetic science[8][9].

- II. Explore how innovation shapes the world. The role that creativity and innovation plays in the development of society and self.
 - i. Choose an innovative technology as an example that is creating innovation in your chosen industry and explain how your chosen technology has been used in different areas of your chosen industry.

Social media applications represent one of the most influential innovations in the digital era, transforming how communities connect, communicate, and collaborate. As an innovative technology, social media platforms introduce new ways of building relationships, sharing information, and organising collective activities, making them central to modern community-focused industries. Their impact is driven by features such as real-time communication, user-generated content, personalised feeds, and interactive tools that support engagement at scale. These capabilities demonstrate how digital innovation can reshape traditional community structures by enabling faster communication, wider participation, and more accessible support networks.

How Social Media Apps Are Used in Different Areas of the Community Building Industry

1. Community Engagement & Communication

Social media apps provide tools for real time communication, enabling communities to share updates, organise events, and maintain active conversations. Features such as group chats, discussion forums, and live video sessions help members stay connected and informed. Platforms like Bettermode, Discord communities, and Mighty Networks demonstrate how digital communication can replace traditional in-person meetings with more flexible, accessible alternatives.

2. Education & Knowledge Sharing

Many communities use social media apps to share educational resources, tutorials, and collaborative learning materials. Students, professionals, and hobbyists form online groups to exchange knowledge, solve problems, and support each other's learning. This creates innovation by decentralising education and making learning more community-driven and interactive.

3. Social Support & Wellbeing Networks

Social media apps are widely used to build support communities for mental health, disability support, parenting, fitness, and lifestyle improvement. These platforms allow

individuals to seek advice, share experiences, and receive emotional support from people with similar challenges. This demonstrates how digital innovation can enhance wellbeing by providing accessible, peer driven support systems.

4. Business, Entrepreneurship & Local Communities

Local businesses and entrepreneurs use community-focused social media platforms to promote services, engage customers, and build brand communities. Apps like Instagram, TikTok, and community based platforms help small businesses reach wider audiences, gather feedback, and create loyal customer networks. This fosters innovation by enabling new digital business models and community-driven marketing strategies.

5. Activism, Volunteering & Social Change

Social media apps play a major role in organising community activism, charity work, and volunteering. They allow groups to coordinate events, raise awareness, and mobilise supporters quickly. This demonstrates how digital platforms can amplify community voices and support collective action for social change.

6. Cultural, Creative & Interest-Based Communities

Creative communities such as artists, gamers, musicians, and writers use social media apps to showcase work, collaborate on projects, and build audiences. Platforms like whoop, Discord, and specialised community apps support niche interests and cultural exchange, showing how innovation enables diverse communities to thrive online.

Ideation

- III. Conduct research to choose your project idea that relates to your programme of study and also relates to a particular technology. Then select a project idea that you would like to take forward.

Project Idea Selection – Social Media App for Community Building

Selecting an appropriate project idea requires choosing a concept that aligns with the technology that significantly shapes today's digital environment. Current research indicates that social media platforms represent one of the most transformative digital innovations, influencing global communication, collaboration, and community formation[10]. These platforms integrate essential computing domains such as front-end development, database management, user-centred design, cloud-based services, and increasingly AI driven personalisation making them highly relevant to modern computing studies[11]. They also connect to broader innovation themes discussed in Topic 1, where creativity and digital transformation influence social behaviour and global connectivity.

Studies on digital communities emphasise that social platforms facilitate interaction, knowledge exchange, wellbeing networks, and local engagement[12]. Technologies such as Discord, Mighty Networks, Circle, and BetterMode demonstrate how

contemporary communities rely on digital environments to organise activities, share resources, and maintain meaningful relationships. This evidence supports the selection of social media technology as a suitable foundation for a project exploring innovation, creativity, and user-centred digital design.

Based on this research, the chosen project idea is a Social Media App for Community Building. The project aims to develop a platform that enables users to connect, collaborate, and share information within interest-based or local communities. It aligns closely with the programme of study by incorporating core computing skills such as responsive web design, interactive front-end development, UX/UI principles, and database integration. It also leverages a transformative technology social media while enabling exploration of innovative features such as personalised content feeds, group creation, event-management tools, and real-time communication.

This project is selected because it is both technically relevant and socially impactful. It encourages creativity in interface design, innovation in feature development, and practical application of computing knowledge. Furthermore, it reflects current industry trends where digital communities play a vital role in education, business, wellbeing, and social engagement[11]. Developing a community-focused social media application demonstrates how modern technology can strengthen social connections, support collaboration, and enhance digital communication in the modern world.

Project title: Joint vibe – Social media app for the community

Task 2

Aim and Objectives of your project: one single aim and several objectives

Project Aim

The aim of this project is to design and develop a modern community-building social media platform that enables users to connect, collaborate, and share resources through accessible, user-centred digital features inspired by platforms such as Discord, Slack, Mighty Networks, Circle, BetterMode, Heartbeat, Whop, and Skool.

Project Objectives

Identify user needs

Conduct user research with at least 30 participants to analyse communication, engagement, and support requirements within digital communities, and produce a validated user-needs report within 4 weeks.

Design UX/UI prototypes

Create three high-fidelity UX/UI prototypes (homepage, groups, messaging) that meet usability and accessibility standards (WCAG 2.1 AA), and complete user testing sessions within 6 weeks to refine the designs.

Develop core platform features

Implement essential features—user profiles, groups, posts, messaging, and events—using modern web technologies, ensuring 80% feature completion within 10 weeks and full integration by week 12.

Integrate engagement tools

Develop and deploy engagement features such as notifications, interest-based groups, and personalised feeds, achieving a minimum of 70% user satisfaction in prototype testing within 14 weeks.

Evaluate usability and performance

Conduct usability and performance testing with at least 20 users, ensuring the platform meets 95% responsiveness benchmarks, resolves all critical accessibility issues, and achieves an average usability score of 4/5 within 16 weeks..

Research Area

This project sits within the broader research area of digital community platforms, social computing, and user-centred design. Modern community platforms such as Discord, Slack, Mighty Networks, Circle, BetterMode, Heartbeat, Whop, and Skool have transformed how people interact online by offering structured communication channels, membership systems, learning tools, and engagement features. Research in this area focuses on how digital communities form, how users interact, and how technology can support collaboration, learning, and social connection. Academic studies highlight the importance of usability, accessibility, and engagement design in building sustainable online communities[10]. This project contributes to this field by designing a platform that supports meaningful interaction and reduces barriers to participation.

Research Philosophy

This study adopts a pragmatic research philosophy, which emphasises practical problem-solving and the use of methods that best address the research question. Pragmatism accepts that valid knowledge can come from both quantitative and qualitative approaches, allowing methodological flexibility suited to computing projects.

Epistemologically, pragmatism recognises that knowledge is shaped by usefulness rather than strict adherence to positivist or interpretivist traditions. Ontologically, it views reality as influenced by human experience and technological contexts, making it appropriate for studies involving dynamic systems. Axiologically, it acknowledges that

researcher values guide methodological choices, particularly when aiming for practical outcomes.

Overall, pragmatism provides a coherent foundation for this project by supporting mixed methods, prioritising real-world applicability, and ensuring that the research design remains aligned with solving the identified problem[4].

Search Tools and Strategies for Identifying Research in the Project Area

Identifying high quality academic research for a computing project requires selecting search tools that provide authoritative, peer-reviewed literature. Three of the most appropriate tools for research in web development, social computing, and digital-community platforms are Google Scholar, IEEE Xplore, and the ACM Digital Library.

Google Scholar

Google Scholar is one of the most widely used academic search engines due to its broad coverage of scholarly articles, theses, conference papers, and books. It is particularly effective for initial literature scanning because it indexes publications from multiple disciplines, including computing, human computer interaction, and social media research. Google Scholar also provides citation counts, related-article suggestions, and author profiles, which help identify influential studies and trace research trends. Its accessibility makes it suitable for locating foundational work on digital communities, UX design, and social computing. Studies highlight Google Scholar's strength in comprehensive indexing and citation discovery[13].

IEEE Xplore

IEEE Xplore is one of the most authoritative databases for computing and engineering research. It contains peer-reviewed journal articles, conference proceedings, and technical standards published by the IEEE. This makes it highly relevant for projects involving web technologies, communication systems, cloud integration, and user-centred digital platforms. IEEE Xplore is particularly valuable for identifying research on system architecture, interface design, and digital communication technologies. Its structured metadata, advanced filtering, and high-quality publications make it a core resource for technical research in computing. Scholars emphasise IEEE Xplore's reliability and depth in engineering-focused literature[14].

ACM Digital Library

The ACM Digital Library is another essential database for computer-science research. It provides access to ACM journals, magazines, and conference proceedings, including CHI, CSCW, and Web Conference papers many of which focus on human computer interaction, social platforms, and digital community behaviour. ACM publications are widely cited in research on user engagement, interface design, and social computing,

making the database highly relevant to a project developing a community building social media app. Research highlights ACM's importance in advancing computing knowledge and documenting emerging digital-interaction trends [15].

Search Strategies

Effective search strategies ensure that your research is systematic, precise, and academically credible. Boolean operators are essential for refining queries:

AND narrows results. eg

“social media AND community building”

“digital communities AND user engagement”

“UX design AND social platforms”

“online collaboration AND communication tools”

OR broadens results (e.g., Discord OR Slack OR Circle)

NOT excludes irrelevant terms (e.g., social media NOT entertainment).

Boolean operators are widely recommended for constructing precise academic searches [16].

Research

Research Quality, Data Collection, and Analysis for JOINT VIBE

Ensuring high research quality is essential for producing credible and academically robust findings. This project adopts recognised principles of research rigour, including transparency, reliability, validity, and ethical integrity. Research quality is maintained through the use of peer-reviewed sources, systematic search strategies, and clearly defined data collection and analysis procedures.

Task 3.

Q1. Strategies to Enhance Validity, Reliability, Generalisability, and Ethical Considerations

Developing JOINT VIBE a community focused social media app requires research that is valid, reliable, generalisable, and ethically sound. Validity refers to how accurately the research measures the concepts being studied.

- To enhance validity, the project will use triangulation by combining surveys, interviews, and usability testing. This ensures that findings about user engagement, communication preferences, and platform usability are supported by multiple data sources. Clear operational definitions, such as specifying what “community engagement” means within JOINT VIBE, further strengthen construct validity.
- Reliability concerns consistency across repeated measurements. To improve reliability, the project will use standardised data-collection procedures, including identical survey wording, consistent interview prompts, and uniform usability-testing tasks. Conducting a pilot study will help identify unclear questions and refine instruments, increasing internal reliability. Digital tools such as Google Forms ensure consistent formatting and reduce human error.
- Generalisability refers to how well findings apply to wider populations. Because JOINT VIBE aims to support diverse communities local groups, interest-based networks, and wellbeing circles the project will recruit participants from different age groups, backgrounds, and digital-literacy levels. This mirrors the varied user base of platforms such as Discord, Circle, and BetterMode. Sampling across multiple demographics increases external validity and ensures that results reflect real-world usage.
- Ethical considerations are central to computing research. The project will follow principles of informed consent, ensuring participants understand the purpose of the study and how their data will be used. All data will be anonymised, stored securely, and participants will retain the right to withdraw at any time. No sensitive personal information will be collected. These practices align with established ethical guidelines in digital research[17].

Q2. Research Strategies, Data Collection Methods, and Pilot Study

A mixed-methods approach will be used to collect data for JOINT VIBE. Quantitative data will be gathered through online surveys to measure user preferences, engagement behaviours, and feature expectations. Surveys allow efficient data collection from large groups and support statistical analysis. Qualitative data will be collected through semi-structured interviews to explore user motivations, community experiences, and challenges in depth. This combination aligns with pragmatic research philosophy, which values practical, user-centred insights[18].

Pilot Data Collection Method

A pilot study will be conducted with 3–5 participants to test the clarity and effectiveness of the survey and interview questions. Participants will complete a short survey and provide feedback on question wording, relevance, and length. Their feedback will be documented in an appendix and used to refine the final instruments. Pilot testing improves reliability and ensures that questions accurately capture user needs[19].

Appendix A: Pilot Feedback Summary

Participants indicated that questions about “community engagement” were too broad. They recommended adding examples such as “joining groups,” “attending events,” or “posting content.” They also suggested including options for “local communities” and “interest-based groups.” Based on this feedback, questions were reworded to improve clarity and reduce ambiguity.

Please see the rest of the survey in the appendix section below.

Q3. Types of Quantitative and Qualitative Analysis

Quantitative analysis focuses on numerical data. Techniques include descriptive statistics (mean, median, mode) to summarise user-engagement scores, and inferential statistics such as correlations to examine relationships between variables (e.g., time spent on JOINT VIBE and satisfaction). Visual tools such as bar charts and histograms help interpret patterns.

Qualitative analysis focuses on non-numerical data. Thematic analysis will be used to identify recurring themes in interview responses, such as “sense of belonging,” “ease of use,” or “barriers to participation.” Coding techniques help organise data into meaningful categories. Content analysis may also be used to examine user comments or feedback systematically[20].

Together, these methods provide a comprehensive understanding of user needs and platform effectiveness.

JOINT VIBE – Final User Research Survey

Survey Section	Example Questions
Demographics	1. What is your age? 2. What is your level of experience with online communities (Beginner / Intermediate / Advanced)?
Community Engagement	3. How often do you participate in online communities? (Daily / Weekly / Monthly / Rarely) 4. Which types of communities do you engage with? (Local groups, interest-based groups, wellbeing communities, study groups)
Platform Experience	5. Which platforms do you currently use? (Discord, mighty network, skool, slack, whop, Circle, BetterMode, Other) 6. What features help you feel connected? (Messaging, events, group chats, resource sharing, personalised feeds)
Barriers & Challenges	7. What challenges do you face when using community platforms? (e.g., too many notifications, confusing layout, lack of engagement, privacy concerns)
Motivations	8. What motivates you to join a community? (Learning, social connection, local involvement, shared interests)
Feature Preferences	9. Rate the importance of the following JOINT VIBE features (1 = Not important, 5 = Very important): • Groups • Events • Messaging • Personalised feed • Community badges
Open Feedback	10. What features would you like JOINT VIBE to include? 11. Describe one thing that would make a community app more engaging for you.

Fig 2. Research survey.

Conclusion

The research design developed for JOINT VIBE provides a structured and academically grounded framework for understanding user behaviour within digital communities and identifying features that enhance meaningful interaction. By incorporating strategies that strengthen validity, reliability, generalisability, and ethical integrity, the study ensures that findings are credible, consistent, and representative of diverse user groups. These principles align with established guidance on rigorous social and digital-platform research[21].

The mixed-methods approach combining surveys, semi-structured interviews, and usability testing offers a balanced understanding of both measurable user behaviours and deeper experiential insights. The pilot study was essential in refining the instruments, improving clarity, and ensuring alignment with JOINT VIBE's objectives, reflecting best practice in research instrument development[22].

The project also integrates appropriate analytical techniques. Quantitative methods such as descriptive statistics and correlation analysis support numerical interpretation, while qualitative approaches like thematic analysis enable rich exploration of user perspectives[12],[23]. Together, these methods produce actionable insights that directly inform user-centred design.

Overall, the research framework positions JOINT VIBE to become a community-focused social media platform grounded in ethical practice, robust methodology, and genuine user needs supporting meaningful digital community building.

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Appendices: Supplementary information

Variable	Description	Response Type	Sample Response
Age	Participant age	Numeric	28
Experience Level	Experience with online communities	Categorical (Beginner/Intermediate/Advanced)	Intermediate
Participation Frequency	How often they Engage in communities	Categorical	Weekly
Community Types	Types of communities joined	Multi-select	Interest-based, Wellbeing
Platforms Used	Platforms currently used	Multi-select	Discord, Skool, Slack
Connection Features	Features that help them feel connected	Multi-select	Messaging, Group chats, Events
Challenges Faced	Barriers to using community platforms	Open text	Too many notifications; confusing layout
Motivations	Reasons for joining communities	Multi-select	Learning, Social connection
Importance Groups	Importance of Groups feature	Likert 1–5	5
Importance Events	Importance of Events feature	Likert 1–5	4
Importance Messaging	Importance of Messaging	Likert 1–5	5
Importance Personalised Feed	Importance of personalised feed	Likert 1–5	4
Importance Badges	Importance of community badges	Likert 1–5	3
Feature Suggestions	Features they want in JOINT VIBE	Open text	Better event reminders; cleaner layout
Engagement Improvement	One thing that makes apps more engaging	Open text	More active moderators and structured discussions

Fig 3. Dataset-Style Table (Survey + Sample Responses)

Age	Experience Level	Participation Frequency	Community Types	Platforms Used	Connection Features	Challenges Faced	Motivations	Groups Importance	Events Importance	Messaging Importance	Feed Importance	Badges Importance	Features Suggestions	Engagement Improvement
28	Intermediate	Weekly	Interest-based, Wellbeing	Discord, Skool, Slack	Messaging, Group chats, Events	Too many notifications; confusing layout	Learning, Social connection	5	4	5	4	3	Better event reminders	More active moderators
22	Beginner	Monthly	Study groups	Discord, Slack	Messaging, Resource sharing	Low engagement	Learning	4	3	5	3	2	Cleaner UI	Gamified tasks
35	Advanced	Daily	Local groups, Interest-based	Facebook Groups, Mighty Networks	Events, Personalised feed	Privacy concerns	Local involvement	5	5	4	5	4	Stronger privacy controls	More community leadership
30	Intermediate	Rarely	Wellbeing communities	Circle, Better Mode	Group chats, Messaging	Confusing layout	Shared interests	3	2	4	3	1	Simpler navigation	More structured discussions
41	Advanced	Weekly	Local groups, Study groups	Slack, Whop, Discord	Events, Messaging	Too many notifications	Social connection	4	4	5	4	3	Better notification settings	More interactive events

Fig 4. Dataset Table — 5 Participants