



# Laguna Beach High School Senior Perceptions on a Current Events Journal

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## INTRODUCTION

In the 21st century, social media has created an unprecedented impact on news outlets as a new way to access information has been created. The study of journalism and the field itself has changed drastically over the years with the invention of the Internet. As the Internet has evolved into Wifi and cell phones have become more and more common, resulting in an excess of information.

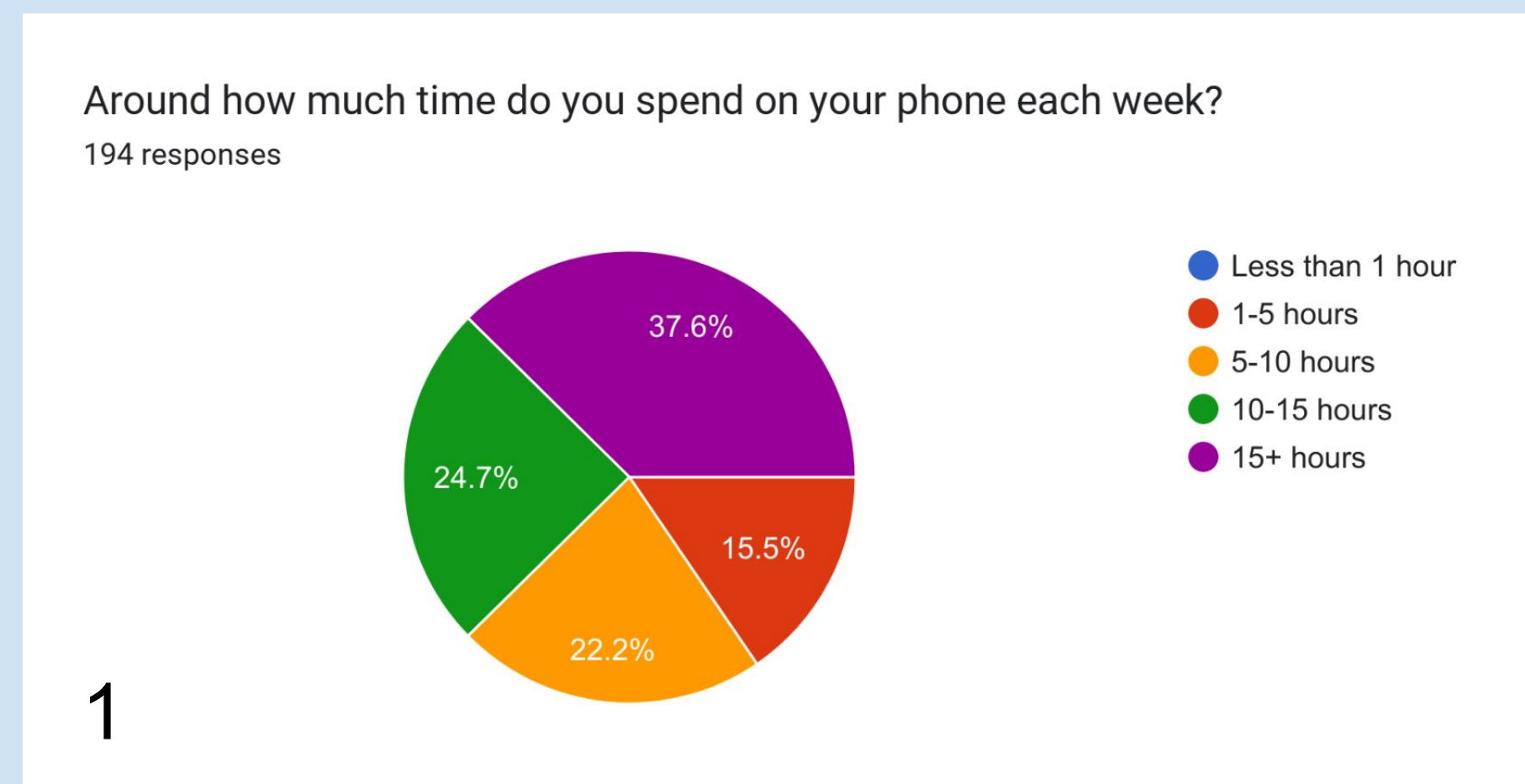
Throughout my process I have asked myself the same question: How does social media affect how students approach the news and journalism in general? I created a journal with six different articles, two based on local affairs, two on statewide affairs and two on global affairs. I presented these articles in the form of a journal, both digital and hard copies to each student in the senior class of Laguna Beach High School. After going through the same procedure for each student I asked them the same questions about their social media use and how they perceived the articles hoping to draw a common conclusion from this.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES

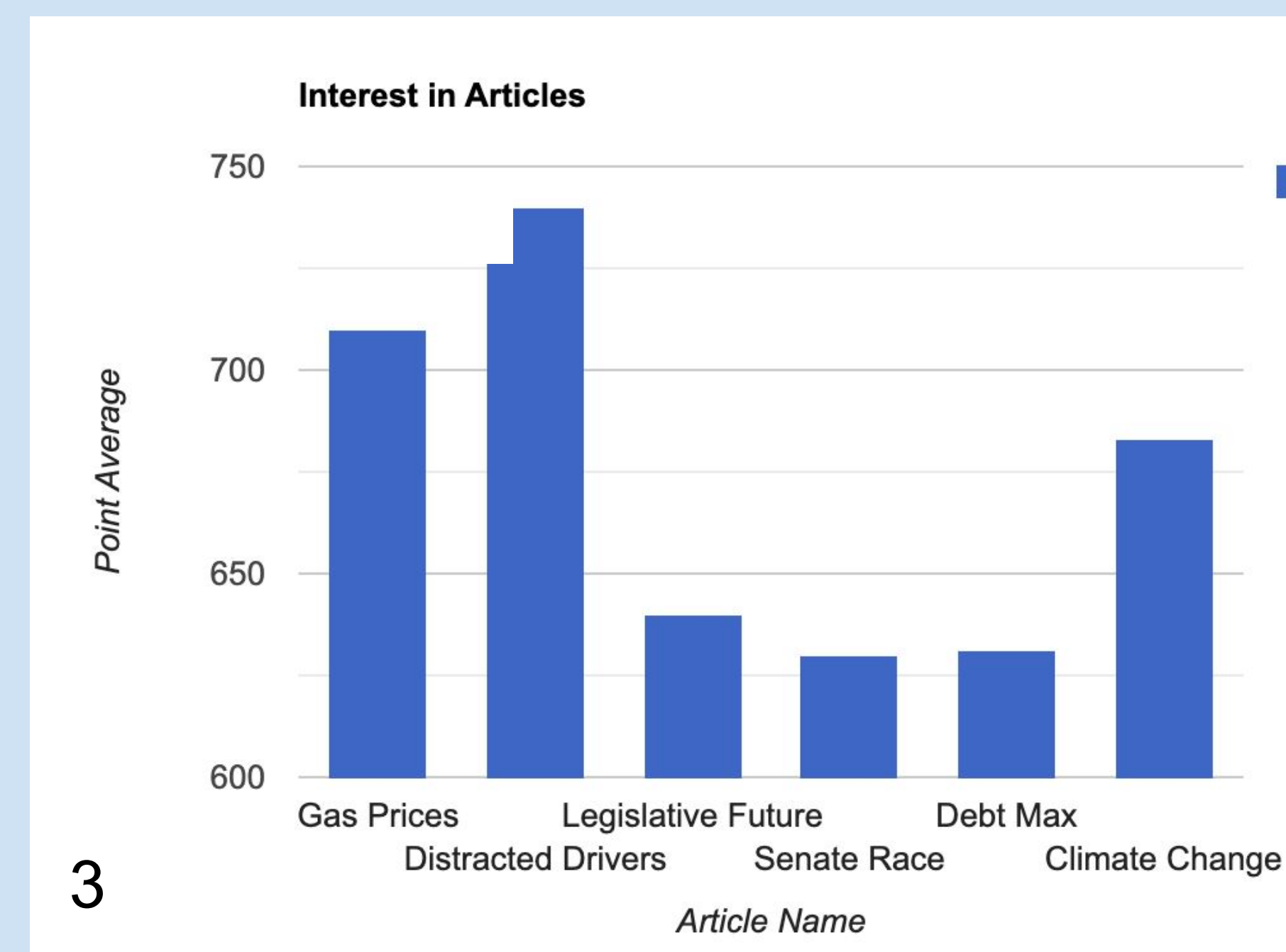
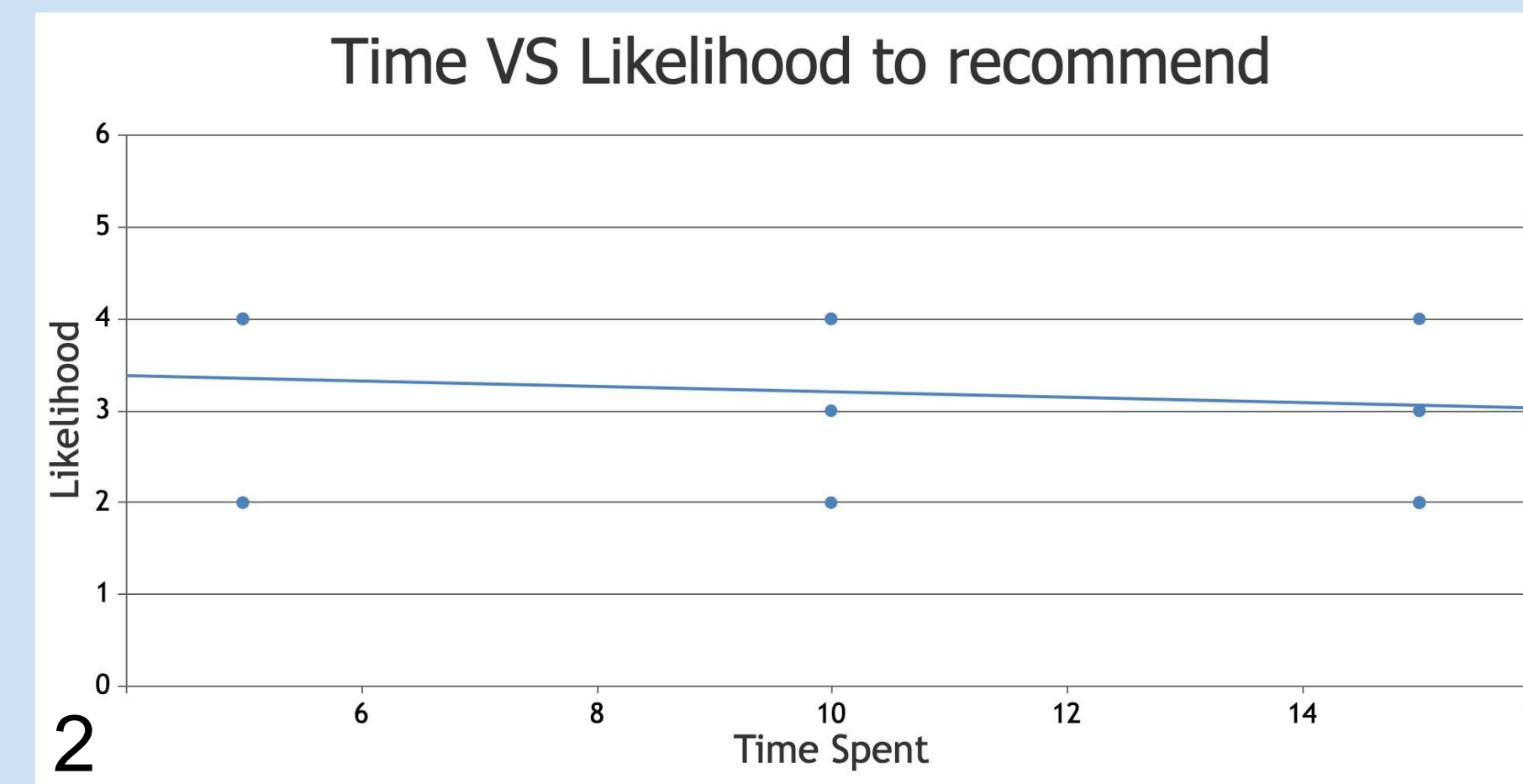
For the collection of my data I focused on the senior class of Laguna Beach High School and collecting both quantitative and qualitative data I went to every regular Government and Advanced Placement (AP) Government class and distributed a survey as well as my political journal. I did this over several days and was able to give every student the ability to respond to my survey within the senior class. This amounted to a total of eighty-two student responses from the AP Government classes and a total of 194 student responses from the regular classes.

To begin, I presented for a total of twenty minutes in each classroom. I first gave the students an option of having a paper copy of the journal or a PDF version in the AP Government classes. I was expecting to do the same procedure for the regular Government classes, however; with Mr. Shen's suggestion I ended up converting my original PDF into a website that resembles a class digital journal. After giving the various classes the option of having a paper or online copy of the affairs journal I instructed them to read as many or as few articles they wanted in the next ten minutes. Following these ten minutes I had students respond to my Google Form which I will link below. This Google Form contained questions ranging from "Which articles did you look at?" to "Give a brief description of what you look at on social media. (Funny animals, news, random, etc.)". These questions were designed by me to be able to draw conclusions about social media use and its effect on students' political characters.

## DATA AND FINDINGS



Link to Journal Articles



## DISCUSSION, ANALYSIS, AND EVALUATION

1. The first graph shows the amount of time that each student spends on their phone per week.
2. Graph two explains how likely each student is to recommend the news to a friend. vs the amount of time spent on a phone
3. Graph three shows which articles are most interesting to students. The lower the number the higher the level of interest

### Drawing Conclusions:

To begin I found several studies done that concluded the average teenager in the United States spends around 7 hours and 22 minutes per day on their phone or around 50 hours per week on their phone. Based on the data given, 62.4% of our students are not on their phones as often.

After using a random number generator to get 30 samples of students I created graph 2. This graph shows that there is a slight pattern between the time spent vs the likelihood of recommending the news. As a student spends more time on their phones per week the likelihood of them recommending the news to a friend does go down. I believe that this is because they are more invested in their devices rather than current events.

Finally I found that students found the local news articles the most interesting on average and the article on gas prices was deemed most interesting. While on the other hand, the article on the US debt limit (article one of the global pairing) and the Senate Race article (article two of state pairing) were ranked the least interesting overall. To make these conclusions I took each value the student assigned an article and added all 194 points into a singular value. then each value was entered into the bar graph. The lower the number the lower the level of interest shown by students.

## CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND NEXT STEPS

While the implications of my research are clear, students who spend less time on their phones are more likely to recommend news to a friend, there are others as well. Over half of our senior population spends less time on their phones per week than the average American teenager. Additionally, our senior students find local news the most interesting (articles 1&2 shown on Graph three)!

My next steps would be to repeat my experiment so I am able to show that the conclusions I drew were substantial. I would also like to see if the article topics changed how much students were interested in them. I would put similar topics in the articles but have them be related to different levels of news (levels being local, state or global). After doing so I would like to give the same experiment to each grade level at LBHS to see if there are similarities or differences between the different grade levels.

While working out the logistics of this would be complicated as we have many students on campus I believe that I could randomly sample a portion of the students from each grade level for this experiment and be able to generalize that to the population if the sample is larger than 30 students.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS / REFERENCES

I would like to thank my mentor Mr. Greg Hardesty so much for being my supporter and so helpful throughout this process! He has given me so much advice about writing in general and how I can grow as an individual. I would also like to thank Mr. Shen for putting together this program in the first place! AER has been such an interesting and unique experience and I am so happy I was able to take the class my senior year.

### Works Cited:

My works cited can be found by using the QR Code listed below:

