

Digital Fasting as a Luxury Status Symbol

Pushpreet Kaur

Abstract

Digital fasting refers to cutting back on or giving up the use of digital gadgets. People are experiencing mental exhaustion and a constant sense of connection. The idea has evolved beyond a simple wellness practice. Not all, however, can keep on unplugging on equal terms. The ability to cut down on digital time also represents resource and time management. This paper explores digital fasting as a sign of status. It has employed a quantitative design that has involved 150 respondents. The findings suggest that affluent individuals are more likely to adopt it. Therefore, digital fasting is a sign of status and exclusivity as well as inequality in access and reliance on digital.

Keywords: Digital Fasting, Status Signalling, Digital Detox, Conspicuous Non-Consumption, Digital Inequality

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Over the last 10 years, digital usage has changed rapidly. For both personal and professional purpose smartphone are now becoming a necessity. Through social media sites, communication networks have been widened. Nevertheless, this development has resulted in stress, distraction and decreased attention span. In response, the idea of a digital detox has emerged. People have started cutting back on screen time in an effort to improve their well-being (Zimmermann & Sobolev, 2023). Additionally, wellness businesses have also popularised offline experiences and retreats. Such services usually involve money and time. In this way, digital speed has taken on a new form; besides, it is no longer the exclusive coping strategy. While some people disconnect because they have to, others choose and intentionally detach.

1.2 Problem Statement

It appears that digital fasting is a cure-all for digital excess. To earn a living and communicate, a lot of workers are dependent on unceasing connectivity. Students, service workers, and freelancers are forced to spend time online. As per Trabelsi et al. (2022), the use of digital fasting has begun to be embraced by privileged groups as a way of life. Due to selective disengagement, there is a gap that cannot be detached. Moreover, the unequal availability of digital fasting lies at the heart of this problem. It is an indication of wider socioeconomic differences, even though it is promoted as a wellness activity. Overall, the separation becomes a symbol of status, which makes the urgent inequity and privilege conception.

1.3 Research Aim & Objectives

Aim

The purpose of this study is to explore the phenomenon of digital fasting as a new luxury status symbol and its sociocultural implementation.

Objectives

- To look into the differences in society around digital addiction and detox
- To evaluate how digital fasting is used for brand identity
- To comprehend the origins and evolution of digital fasting
- To comprehend how privilege affects one's capacity to abstain from technology
- To consider the link between digital fasting and class

1.4 Research Questions

RQ1: How do disparities manifest as a lack of digital connectivity?

RQ2: What roles does digital fasting play in identity and signaling?

RQ3: What kind of cascades exist between digital fasting and social status?

RQ4: How does digital fasting pave the way to a better life?

2. Reason for Selecting the Present Article

This article discusses the connection between digital platforms and luxury value in modern society. The consumer behaviour and perception among the Millennials and Generation Z has brought to light the impact of social media. Between the digital media openness and luxury remains conflict continues to clash. Continuous communication and visibility are promoted by a digital environment. Regardless, the fact that exclusivity and originality have always been key components of luxury. Additionally, this study describes the social media usage to create identity and convey life status by the users. The participants also cover the online interactions, reinforcing the perceived social and personal ideals. The outcome also demonstrates that luxury values are not diminished by digital places.

Besides, the non-consumption behaviour complies with the concept of conspicuous. Thus, the paper has provided a useful theoretical framework. The luxurious consumption with the online behavioural trends has been linked. Therefore, by incorporating the luxury symbolism into the realm of controlled connectivity and digital minimalism, it contributes to the promotion of the current topic.

3. Review of Literature

3.1 Digital Fasting / Digital Detox

Disconnecting from electronics is known as digital fasting. Setia et al. (2025) depicted that it has been linked to improved mental health and less stress. Additionally, studies show that not everyone can engage in digital detoxification.

3.2 Luxury and Status Signaling

As per Fast et al. (2021), privilege is always shown by luxury. Unplugging is a sign of control and freedom. Consequently, digital fasting is a covert manifestation of an affluent way of life.

3.3 Conspicuous Non-Consumption

Various studies show that people refrain from consumption to show their knowledge and restraint (Volk et al. 2025).

However, the avoidance may not be an option for everyone. Some are forced to stay online, while others choose to disconnect.

3.4 Digital Minimalism and Exclusivity

Using less technology is the goal of digital minimalism. Furthermore, exclusivity and elegance are associated with minimalist methods. However, this way of living necessitates social and economic mobility.

3.5 Social Influence and Identity

Lifestyles are a means of social identification. As per Anandpara et al. (2024), digital detoxes have been popularised by influencers and the media. Digital fasting is therefore utilised to establish one's individuality and set oneself apart.

3.6 Research Gap

The psychological and productivity benefits of digital fasting are now being investigated. However, a limited study has been done on its use as a status symbol. Research on the relationship between digital fasting and social inequality is also missing.

4. Research Methodology

This research takes a *Primary Quantitative Approach*. Students and professionals have been identified as the target audience. The study involves a questionnaire. However, the questions are straightforward and closed-ended. Additionally, the respondents have shared their thoughts based on their digital behaviour and experiences. There were 150 participants in the sample. Because of the time and access constraints, the *Convenience Sampling* method was used in this study. Consequently, the data has yielded an early yet valuable insight. *SPSS*, a fundamental statistical program, is used for data analysis. It has used the frequency and percentage to describe patterns. The methodology used in the research has been constant thus far.

5. Results & Analysis

	Descriptive Statistics				
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
What is your age group?	150	0	3	1.39	.988
What is your gender?	150	0	2	.68	.522
I intentionally limit my use of social media or digital devices.	149	0	4	2.86	1.258
I take breaks from digital platforms to improve my well-being.	150	0	4	2.78	1.355
I prefer spending time offline rather than being constantly connected online.	150	0	4	2.77	1.383
People who reduce digital usage appear more disciplined and in control.	150	0	4	3.03	1.292
Avoiding social media is associated with a high-status lifestyle.	150	0	4	2.96	1.325
Having the ability to disconnect from digital devices reflects exclusivity.	150	0	4	2.97	1.266
Digital fasting is a sign of modern luxury.	150	0	4	2.93	1.232
I admire people who limit their digital presence.	150	0	4	3.01	1.318
I believe digital fasting improves how others perceive a person's social status.	150	0	4	2.93	1.267
Valid N (listwise)	150				

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics

(Source: IBM SPSS)

From the results, there is considerable agreement with the digital fasting habits and perceptions. The slight preference towards time offline and limiting their digital habits suggests that respondents appreciate digital fasting. High average values on variables such as admiration, self-control, and prestige imply that digital fasting is perceived positively and as a luxury practice.

		Correlations						
		What is your age group?	What is your gender?	I intentionally limit my use of social media or digital devices.	I take breaks from digital platforms to improve my well-being.	I prefer spending time offline rather than being constantly connected online.	People who reduce digital usage appear more disciplined and in control.	Avoiding social media is associated with a high-status lifestyle.
What is your age group?	Pearson Correlation	1	.280**	.006	-.041	.066	.116	.094
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001	.939	.616	.419	.158	.253
	N	150	150	149	150	150	150	150
What is your gender?	Pearson Correlation	.280**	1	.156	.118	.203*	.205*	.214**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001		.057	.151	.013	.012	.009
	N	150	150	149	150	150	150	150
I intentionally limit my use of social media or digital devices.	Pearson Correlation	.006	.156	1	.692**	.648**	.550**	.550**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.939	.057		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	149	149	149	149	149	149	149
I take breaks from digital platforms to improve my well-being.	Pearson Correlation	-.041	.118	.692**	1	.821**	.610**	.611**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.616	.151	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	150	150	149	150	150	150	150
I prefer spending time offline rather than being constantly connected online.	Pearson Correlation	.066	.203*	.648**	.821**	1	.654**	.683**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.419	.013	.000	.000		.000	.000
	N	150	150	149	150	150	150	150
People who reduce digital usage appear more disciplined and in control.	Pearson Correlation	.116	.205*	.550**	.610**	.654**	1	.867**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.158	.012	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	150	150	149	150	150	150	150
Avoiding social media is associated with a high-status lifestyle.	Pearson Correlation	.094	.214**	.550**	.611**	.683**	.867**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.253	.009	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	150	150	149	150	150	150	150
Having the ability to disconnect from digital devices reflects exclusivity.	Pearson Correlation	.075	.156	.505**	.571**	.666**	.743**	.775**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.363	.056	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	150	150	149	150	150	150	150
Digital fasting is a sign of modern luxury.	Pearson Correlation	.012	.068	.493**	.577**	.691**	.752**	.730**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.880	.411	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	150	150	149	150	150	150	150

Table 2: Correlation

(Source: IBM SPSS)

From the findings, there are very high positive correlations among the practices of digital fasting, discipline perception, exclusivity, and luxury, reflecting a consistent belief system. People who restrain themselves from using digital technologies also perceive it as a symbol of social superiority. Age is found to have some significant associations, but gender is insignificant.

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.926	11

Table 3: Reliability Statistics

(Source: IBM SPSS)

Table 3 shows that the Cronbach's Alpha score for the presented data set is 0.926, and thus, the internal consistency of the questionnaire and scale-oriented items in the research is excellent. Thus, the results are highly reliable as per statistical analysis.

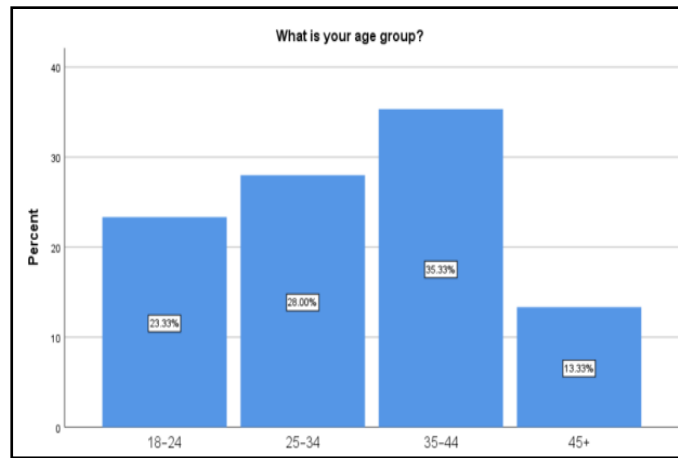


Figure 1: Age Group of Participants

(Source: IBM SPSS)

Figure 1 shows that 35.33% of the participants belong to the age group of 35-44, followed by 28% who are between 25-34 years of age. Those who are between 18 and 24 years correspond to 23.33%, along with 13.33% of participants who are above 45 years of age.

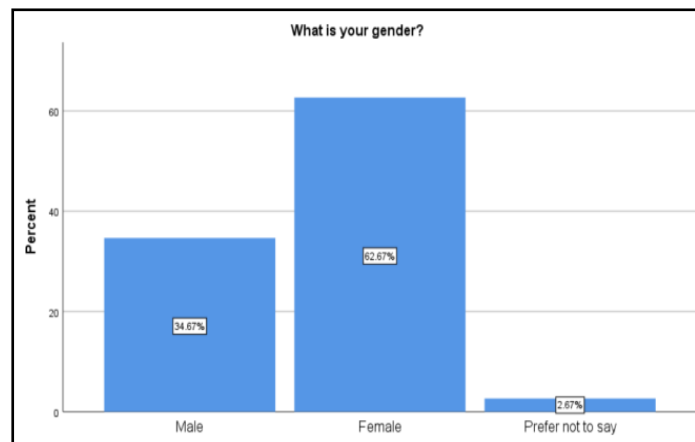


Figure 2: Gender of Participants

(Source: IBM SPSS)

Figure 2 confirms that most of the research participants are female, corresponding to 62.67%, followed by 34.67% of male participants and 2.67% of participants who have not preferred to reveal their gender identity.

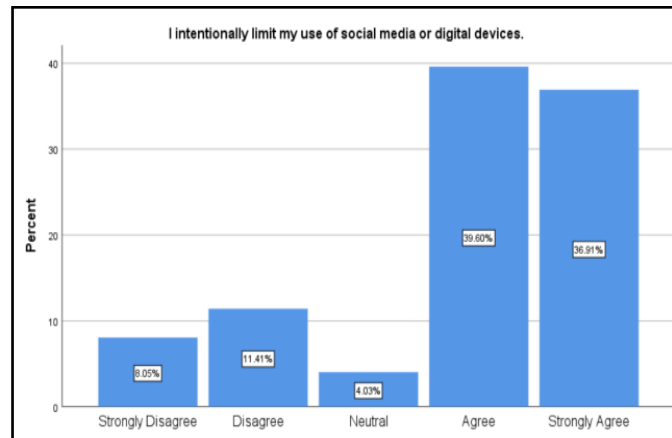


Figure 3: Self Limiting Use of Social Media

(Source: IBM SPSS)

Figure 3 suggests that 39.60% have agreed and 36.91% have strongly agreed on intentionally limiting social media usage. Though strong disagreement and disagreement with corresponding 8.05% and 11.41%, respectively, along 4.03% of neutral responses have been noticed.

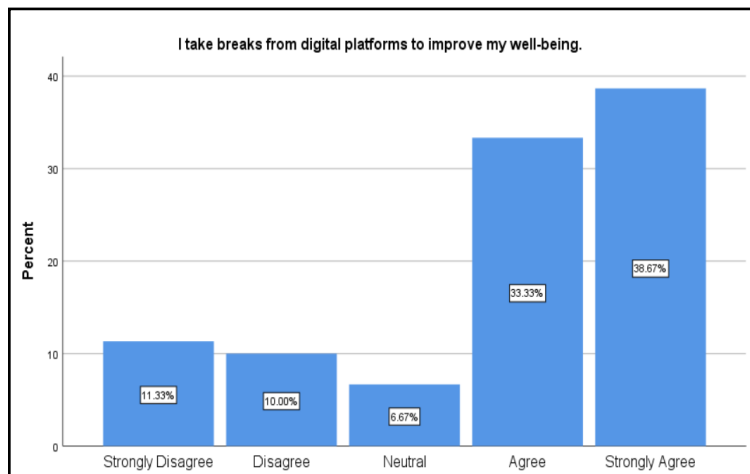


Figure 4: Taking Breaks from Digital Platforms

(Source: IBM SPSS)

Figure 4 depicts that 38.67% participants agree and 33.33% agrees strongly with taking breaks from digital platforms. The notion is challenged by 11.33% strong disagreement, along with 10% of disagreement. Only 6.67% neutral responses have been generated in the question.

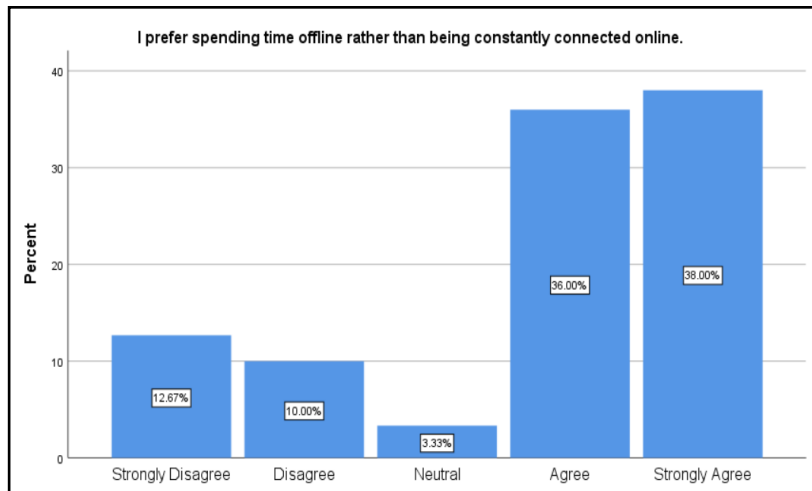


Figure 5: Preference for Offline Time Spending

(Source: IBM SPSS)

Figure 5 portrays that 12.67% strongly disagree and 10% disagree about the general preference for spending time offline, against strong agreement from 38% participants, along with 36% of agreements. Only 3.33% neutral responses have been received in this.

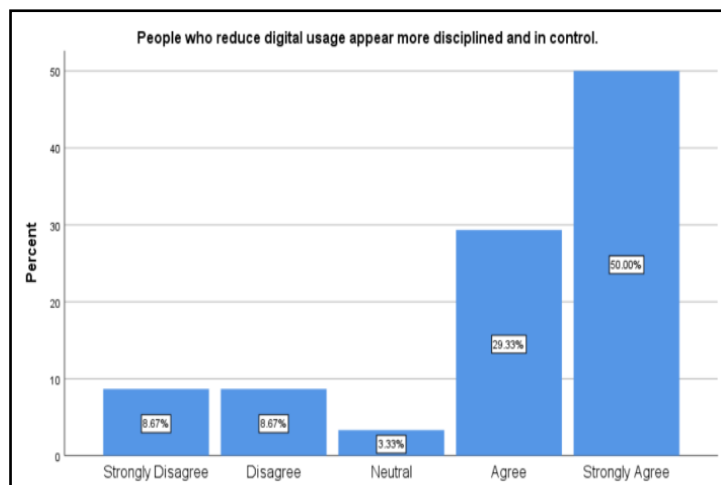


Figure 6: Reduction in Use of Digital Technology

(Source: IBM SPSS)

Figure 6 displays that 50% participants against the presented question have shown strong agreement, along with 29.33% agreeing. Strong disagreement of 8.67% and disagreement of 8.67% is also evident, along 3.33% neutral response.

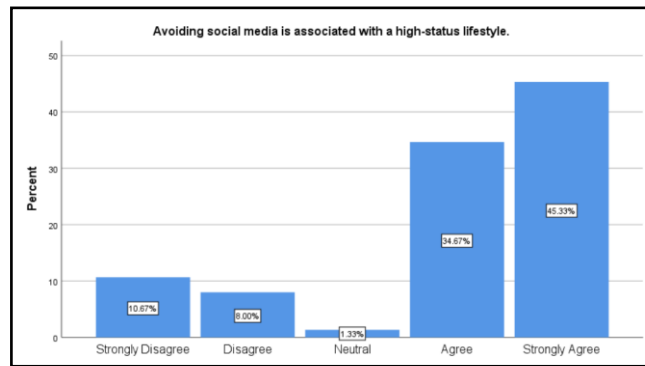


Figure 7: Avoiding Social Media

(Source: IBM SPSS)

Figure 7 shows that 45.33% strongly agree and 34.67% agree with avoiding social media, which has been countered by 10.67% of strong disagreement and 8% of disagreement, with neutral responses accounting for 1.33%.

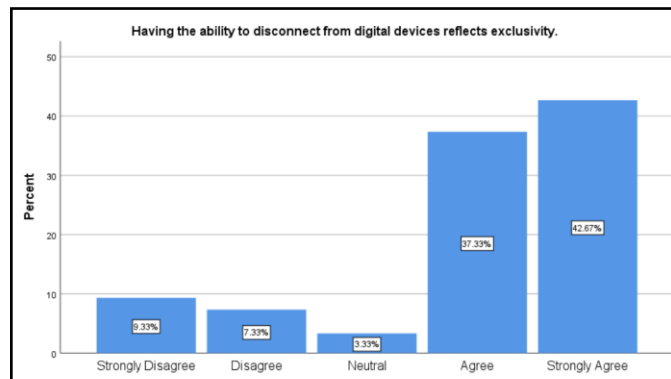


Figure 8: Ability to Disconnect from Digital Devices

(Source: IBM SPSS)

Figure 8 shows that the ability to disconnect from digital devices as a mark of exclusivity has been agreed upon by 37.33% participants, along with 42.67% strongly agreeing supporters. The fact is denied by 9.33% of strong disagreement and 7.33% of disagreement. Also, 3.33% responses are neutral.

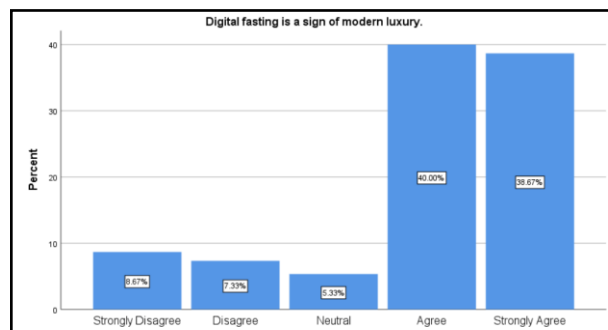


Figure 9: Digital Fasting

(Source: IBM SPSS)

Figure 9 shows that 38.67% agree strongly and 40% agree with digital fasting, whereas 8.67% strongly disagree and 7.33% disagree, respectively. Share of neutral response is 5.33%.

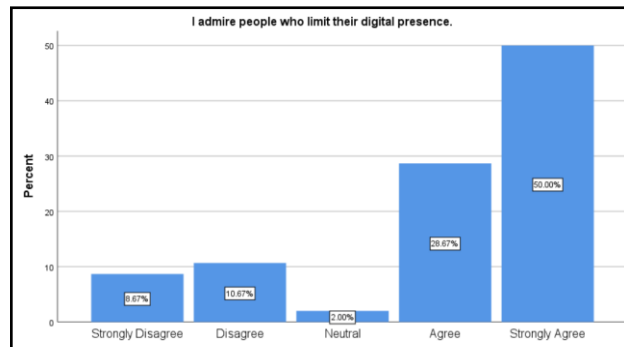


Figure 10: Admiration for People Limiting Their Digital Presence

(Source: IBM SPSS)

Figure 10 shows that 50% strongly agree and 28.67% agree that they admire people limiting digital presence. However, 8.67% of strong disagreement and 10.67% of disagreement have also been noticed. Rest 2% are neutral.

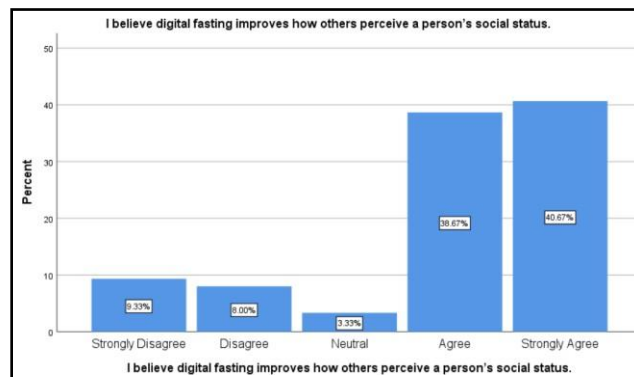


Figure 11: Digital Fasting and Perceived Social Status

(Source: IBM SPSS)

Figure 11 graphically depicts that 40.67% strongly agree and 38.67% agree that digital fasting improves an individual's social status. It has been challenged by strong disagreement and disagreement accounting for 9.33% and 8% respectively, as well as 3.33% stay neutral.

6. Discussion

The present study has identified that digital fasting is linked to high perceived social status and thus denotes the luxury of status. It challenges the notion of the base paper selected in the present study, which suggests that the brand value of luxury products is not compromised by digital visibility and accessibility on social media platforms. The base paper suggests that the luxury customers target only a niche customer, and though there is increased visibility, it is not linked to accessibility. Such brands have a diversified approach of reaching out to customers on online and offline platforms. Such diversification is supported by the present research findings, as participants agreed on decoupling from digital media being a sign of exclusiveness. The research objective related to digital detox has been

successfully answered, as digital fasting is highly perceived by the participants, and the origin of digital fasting is rooted in luxury and social status.

7. Conclusion & Recommendations

The present study has reached the conclusion that luxurious brands can enhance their brand value by addressing the evolving social trend of digital fasting, which is a perceived symbol of social status. Digital fasting has been identified as a sign of modern luxury. The present study has considered gathering data from a more diverse base, whereas the concerned journal has considered only visitors on a Facebook page. Further, the present study is an add-on to the base paper as the focus is beyond millennials and Generation Z, making the study much more generalisable.

It is recommended that the luxury brands successfully utilise the concept of limited digital availability to realise better sales outcomes. The desire for a luxury product is intrinsic and is driven by interest in luxury itself (Wang, 2022). As digital fasting is signaling social status, and luxury brands can use exclusive and limited-time availability offers on digital media to tap into the trend of limited online visibility. This is expected to boost the perceived brand value of the luxury brands.

8. Reference

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9. Appendix

Response **Link:** <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1uSirkrIGpcIw4nusuGwk-soehEMSm57fDqnk6wggkkg/edit#responses>