

USE OF SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES AMONG UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS OF ARTS AND COMMERCE COLLEGE, MADHA, DIST. SOLAPUR, MAHARASTRA

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ABSTRACT: - *Today in India particularly among the Indian College students the usage of Social Networking Sites (SNS) has significantly increased and it certainly has far reaching impacts on the academic and other activities. The purpose of the study is to investigate the use of SNS among the undergraduate students of Arts and Commerce College, Madha. Structured questionnaire were used to collect the data from a representative sample of 150 students who were selected via random sampling techniques. The collected data was analysed using different statistical methods. Result indicated that all of the sampled undergraduate students are aware about SNS; They were using at least one form of social networking website to interact with friends, connecting to their class mates for online study and for discussing academic issues, sharing multimedia content and watching movies etc. Facebook and Whatsapp are the commonly used SNS among the students and they use this for friendly communication. There are also much of the benefits of using SNS and dangers associated with SNS which are discussed. It was recommended that college authorities should organize seminars to draw the attention of students on the good aspects of SNS etc. Some useful suggestions for further research were made.*

KEY WORDS – Use of Social Networking Sites, undergraduate students, social media, usage pattern.

1. INTRODUCTION

During the last 20 years the world, in general and particular in India significant changes has been made in Information Technology (IT). The IT led to the emergence Social Networking Sites (SNS).

This technology initially designed to move data and information from one location to another in a reliable and most efficient manner. So SNS are currently being used regularly millions of people. People use SNS such as Facebook, Twitter to crates and sustain relationships with others. The

success and popularity of SNS shows that idea of online sharing has been successfully taken to the social and personal level. The usage of SNS has been so widespread that they have caught the attention of academics worldwide. Numerous Social science researchers are now being investigated in SNS. Because of the impact of SNS in society the interest of social scientist in SNS has been increased. It has left a big impact on society in general and college students in particular.

The term Social Networking Sites has been defined by different authors in several ways. It is a modern interactive communication channels through which people connect to one another, share ideas, experiences, pictures, messages and information of interest. Boyd and Ellison (2007) define social networking sites as:

“Web based services that allow individuals to construct a Public or semi-public profile within a bounded system (2) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection and (3) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system.”

Compare to any other age groups of people college students are more interested in using advanced technology. In the category of users of SNS the majority are college youth. In India this fact is acknowledged by the various studies and hence today the usage of SNS has become large

part of the student's. Hence, the study is aimed at conducting exploratory study on the usage pattern of SNS by the students of Arts and Commerce College, Madha.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In the following review of existing studies on the related topic provide us a base to go ahead in the pursuit of understanding usage pattern of SNSs by college student. The report of Nicole Ellison's ECAR studies entitled 'Social Networking Sites' Students and Information Technology (2008) explores how today the importance of SNS is increasing. Study aims to find out who uses SNS?, how they are use?, which SNSs are used?, hours spent on SNS? To what extent do students use the most basic features (Profiles, friends and groups) of SNS? It also focuses on disclosing and protection of personal information on SNS and highlighting reasons for nonparticipation in SNSs. In groundbreaking research, Boyd and Ellison (2008) proffered some universal traits inherent in social media. They include constructing a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, articulating a list of other users with whom participants share a connection, and viewing and traversing their list of connections and those made by others within the system. SMNs are predominantly for making social connections. But some, like LinkedIn, are intended strictly for business and professional purposes.

Madge, Meek, Wellens & Hooley (2009) conducted online survey among first year students of a British university. The findings showed that

Facebook is mainly used as a 'social glue' that helped these students to settle into their university life and the students mainly thought of Facebook use for social reasons and not only for formal teaching purposes; the students did sometimes use it for informal learning purposes such as the micro management of their life.

3. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The general purpose of the study is to find out the various social networking sites are using by undergraduate students of the A&C College, Madha. The specific purposes of the study are as follow:

1. To examine the purpose of the usage of social networking sites by ACC undergraduates.
2. To examine the various categories of social networking sites using by ACC undergraduates.
3. To identify the frequency of use of social networking sites.
4. To determine the duration of access of the social networking sites.
5. To determine the content likely to share through SNS.
6. To determine the benefits of using social networking sites.
7. To identify the dangers associated with social network sites.

4. SCOPE AND OF THE STUDY

Geographical scope: this study is limited to the use of social networking sites by undergraduate students of Arts and Commerce College, Madha.

Content scope: it covers the purpose of the use of

social networking sites, categories of social networking sites, frequency and time duration of using social networking sites, and dangers involved in the use of social networking sites.

5. METHODOLOGY

For the said purposes a survey has been conducted among 150 respondents between age group of 18 to 22 years who were college students were randomly selected. The age group of 18-22 was chosen since they are the heavy users of SNS and also early adopters of advanced technological applications. The surveys were done by circulating questionnaires and also some of the data were collected through interview. This research also involves observation-both direct and participatory method, where direct observation was made with the students, their peers and friends which helped knowing some of the facts related to the study.

6. DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

This chapter deals with the analysis of data collected from the field. They are presented according to the research questions and presented in tabular format.

6.1 Research Questions One: What are the purposes for using social networking sites?

The social networking sites provide various benefits to college students. They can establish their presence in the community through SNS and thereby they get good communication with each other. The students were asked to indicate

different purpose of use of SNS and it is discussed in the table 1.

Table 1: Purpose of Use of SNS

Sr. No.	Purpose of Use of SNS	Respondents
1	For communicating and interacting with friends	42 (28%)
2	For discussing/sharing ideas/news/events	41 (27 %)
3	For finding and meeting new people	40 (26%)
4	For online learning and getting study materials online and share.	30 (20%)
5	For keeping up to date	15 (10%)
6	For entertainment/watching movies.	38 (25%)
7	For private messaging/uploading photos/online profiles.	39 (26%)

Table 1 illustrates that majority of the 42(28%) and 41(27.33%) students use SNS for communicating and interacting with friends and discussing/sharing ideas/news/events. 40 (26%) treated SNS as a way to find and connect new friends and relatives. A good number 39(26%) and 38 (25.33%) of students use SNS for private messaging/uploading photos/online profiles and for entertainment/watching movies. 30 (20%) Students can find relevant materials for their

academic purpose and also they can publish their social ideas through SNS. Keeping update is another benefit of SNS but a few 15 (10%) respondents use SNS for that.

5.2 Research Questions two: what are the various categories of social network sites and there uses?

Out of the different SNS each user has his/her own interest of selecting particular SNS. Here SNS are listed according to the top ranking authorized site.

Table 2: Various categories of social network sites and there uses

Sr. No.	SNS	Respondents
1.	Facebook	138 (92%)
2.	Twitter	39 (26%)
3.	Whatsapp	103 (69%)
4.	Google+	78 (52%)
5.	My space	12 (8%)
6.	Frienster	0
7.	Linkedin	62 (41%)
8.	Yahoo	57 (38%)
9.	You Tube	89 (59%)
10.	Instagram	15 (10%)
11.	Flicker	0
12.	Orkut	12 (8%)
13.	My Life	3 (2%)

Table no.2 reveals that Facebook is the most widely used i.e. 138 (92%) among the students. A good number 103 (69%) of respondents mention Whatsapp is the secondly used SNS. YouTube and Google+ were used by 89 (59%) and 78

(52%) respectively. LinkedIn 62 (41%) and Yahoo 57 (38%) are also usable SNS among students. Very few respondents were used Twitter, My space, Instagram, Orkut and My life. Friendster and Flickr were never used by the respondents.

6.3 Research Question Three:- How frequent do you use the social networking sites?

For different purposes respondents use SNS at different frequency. Some of them visited these sites every day and some others once a week. To the students were asked how often they visit SNS.

Table No. 3 Frequency of Use of SNS

Frequency	Respondents
Everyday	85 (57%)
Weekly	21 (14%)
Twice in a week	26 (17%)
Occasionally	18 (12%)

From table no. 3 it is evident that majority 57% of students were using SNS every day. It is because of Internet packages provided by the mobile companies is available at a very low cost. A few 17% of the students used SNS twice in a week and a very few 14% of the students were using SNS weekly.

6.4 Research Question Four:- How much time do you spend on SNS

Duration of time sometimes depend upon the depth of searching of information and availability of time. Spending too much time on social networking sites for posting entries and comments may affect the academic productivity of students

negatively. But searching information and sharing academic ideas it may be good for their study

Table No. 4. Duration of Access.

Duration	Respondents
Less than one hour	49 (33%)
1-2 hours	78 (52%)
2-4 hours	23 (15%)
More than four hours	0

From table 4 it is clear that 78 (52%) of students were using SNS one to two hours per day. 49 (33%) of students were using SNS less than one hour and few i. e. 23 (15%) used two to four hours and per day. No one is using SNS more than four hours.

6.5 Research Question Five:- Which content do you like to share through SNS?

Social Networking Sites provide attractive content features for their users. Students prefer various types of content to share according to their interest. Content may be videos/audios, pictures, personal profiles, personal blogs, stories etc. Here to students were asked to mention contents they likely to share through SNS responses are summarized in the table 6.

Table 5: Contents likely to share.

Content	Respondents
Videos/Audios	96 (64%)
Pictures	72 (48%)
Personal Profiles	72 (48%)
Personal Blogs	25 (17%)
Stories	92 (61%)

Table no.5 shows that 64% of the respondents likely to share videos/audios. A good number 61% of respondents mention that they share mainly stories and 48% respondents likely to share pictures and personal profiles respectively. Few students i.e. 17% prefer blogs.

6.6 Research Question Six:- What are the benefits do you feel by using social networking sites?

There are different benefits of using social networking sites: it helps in learning, encourages information searching, virtual meeting with classmates and also with teachers; self-esteem and well-being; strengthening interpersonal relationship; improve read and write web skills etc.

Table No. 6 Benefits of using social networking sites

Benefits	Respondents
It helps in learning.	69 (46%)
It helps in strengthening interpersonal relationships.	52 (35%)
It promote read and write web skills.	48 (32%)
Encourages information searching	75 (50%)
It increases self-esteem and well-being.	55 (37%)
It encourages virtual meeting with classmates and teachers	112 (75%)

From table no. 6 discussion shows that the majority 112 respondents accepted that SNS encourages virtual meeting with classmates and teachers. 75 and 69 students said that it encourages information searching and learning. 55 said that SNS increases self-esteem and well-being. And few 48 were accepting that SNS promote read and write web skills.

Research Question Six:- Which dangers do you feel that are associated with the social network sites?

Social networking sites have caused some problems for their users, individuals, families, groups and students like E-crime, Internet addiction, laziness, standard crime like, fraud, murder, kidnapping; Immoral act like, pornography, prostitution, cyber-bullying where identified. Students felt that the following dangers are associated with SNS.

Table No. 7 Responses on the dangers associated with social network sites

Sr. No.	Dangers	Respondents
1	E-crime e.g. identity theft, theft of valuable data, financial loss.	113 (75%)
2	Laziness	125 (83%)
3	Cyberbullying/ cyberstalking	42(28%)
4	Standard crime e. g. fraud, murder,	63(42%)

	kidnapping	
5	Immoral act e.g. Pornography, prostitution	26(17%)
6	Misuse of Personal Information	89 (59%)
7	Waste of time	96 (64%)

Table 7 reveals that the Laziness 83% and E-crime 75% are most acceptable danger associated with SNS. 64% students said that use of SNS is waste of time. 59% felt danger that the misuse of personal information. Remaining 28% and 17% respondents said that cyberbullying/cyberstalking and immoral acts are the dangers associated with social networking sites.

7. CONCLUSION

The results obtained from this study have shown that a reasonable number of A&C College undergraduate students use the social networking sites. Facebook and Whatsapp have emerged the most popular SNS's and have contained to grow in popularity. There are various purposes for which the students use the social networking sites to achieve and that have been investigated. The popularity of the social networking usage by the students and the benefits it has on the student – users have been confirmed from this study. From the results of the study the researcher sees the reason why a famous media scholar argued that technology can be used in ways beneficial and otherwise. Technology is a double-edged sword. Its power for bad and good resides in the users

Baran (2010). Therefore the students of the A&C College are aware of the danger and risk involved in these SNS is positive indicator that students are not only techno savvy and socially active through social networking sites but they also possess social consciousness. Study makes an important contribution in understanding college students' use of social media its effect to communication and self-concept.

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