

A STUDY ON THE USAGE OF SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES BY THE COLLEGE STUDENTS IN COIMBATORE DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

This research paper aims to identify the most prominent usage of social networking sites by the college students and the variables influencing the students develop usage in Coimbatore district. The data used in the study or primary in nature which has been collected through the issue of structured questionnaire. A sample of 840 students from 60 colleges has been selected through snowball sampling method. Simple percentage analysis, weighted mean score and chi-square test are applied to analyses the data. This study delineates that the students usage is high with academic purpose followed by social purpose and economic purpose. Further, the study indicates that majority of the students have moderate level of usage and the variables like age, degree pursuing, discipline, marital status, pocket money per month, type of accommodation, late night usage, number of contacts in social media, frequency of sharing news are found to be associated with the level of usage of social networking sites by the college students.

KEYWORDS: College students usage of social networking sites in Coimbatore District.

1. INTRODUCTION

The social media has become one of the most crucial communication means in recent times. However, social networking subsist so as to provide communication among people irrespective of the distance, making it open to people easily share information, files and pictures and videos, create blogs and send messages, and conduct real-time conversations. These systems are referred to as social, simply because they allow communication with buddies and coworkers so well and effectively. It also strengthens the ties between people of those systems. The favorite in the realm of internet sites are Facebook, Twitter and others. These websites and social forums are way of communication directly with other people socially and in media. They are playing a large and influential role decision-making in the occasions from the global world economically, politically, socially and educationally. **Waleed Mughed Al-Rahmi and Mohd Shahizan Othman (2013).**

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The studies carried out with regard to usage of social networking sites for academic, economic and social achievements by the college students in India and abroad are reviewed in the paragraph that follows. **Aamo Iorliam and Egena Ode (2014)** observe that the time spent on social media, the frequency of visit and the total number of online friends has a statistically significant relationship with a student's academic performance. **Abdulla Jaafar Moh'd Desmal (2017)** discloses that the social media has a positive impact on academic performance and 57% of students prefer the mobile application WhatsApp as a social media for their academic purpose.

Peter Jegrace Jehopioet al. (2017) observe that students who manage their time well are likely to perform better than those who do not, by up to 48 percent. Also, the study found that students who reported that they use online social networking sites more for academic purposes also reported better academic performance, by up to 11 percent compared to those who engage in online social networking

sites usage for more for non-academic purposes. **Gilbert M. Talaue et al. (2018)** They find that social media have both positive and negative factors of the spiritual and intellectual development of the younger generation, and it is necessary to approach adolescents' use of social networks with ultimate responsibility.

3. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Social networking is the use of internet-based social media sites to stay engaged with friends, family, colleagues, customers, or clients. Social networking can have a social purpose, a business purpose, or both, through sites such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, YouTube, and Instagram, among others. Social networking has become an essential base for marketers try to engage customers. **Aamo Iorliam and Egena Ode (2014)**, said that the time spent on social media, the frequency of visit and the total number of online friends has a statistically significant relationship with a student's academic performance. **Hossain Shahid Shohrwardhy and Kamrul Hassan (2014)** depicts that Bangladeshi students are mostly driven by entertainment needs followed by social needs. Also, they finds that Social networking is used for different purposes such as fraud, transferring misinformation, odd presentation and plagiarism the statements of people in order to create misunderstandings for the users. These patterns negatively affect university students and divert their concentration from academic purpose to others. This raises the following questions: What are the usages of social networking site for academic, economic and social achievements by the college students? What is their level of usage? What are the variables leading to their level of usage?

4. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The following are the objectives of the study.

1. To examine the usage of Social Networking Site for academic, economic and social achievements by the college students.
2. To identify the students usage of Social Networking Site and the variables influencing their level usage for academic, economic and social achievements by the college students.

5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present investigation is mainly based on the primary data which have been collected from the college students in various arts and science colleges in Coimbatore district through the issue of structure questionnaire. The questionnaire comprises questions relating to the personal profile and the usage of social networking sites by the college students. The study consists of 840 students which have been collected from 60 arts and science colleges in the district using snowball sampling method. The data gathered from the college students have been analysed by using simple percentage, weighted average score and chi-square test.

6. RESULTS OF THE STUDY

The findings of the study are segregated into four sections namely, the socio-economic profile of the sample students, usage of social networking sites and the variables associated with their level of usage of social networking sites by the college students.

(i) Socio-economic profile

- Majority of students, 444 (52.90%) are residing in rural areas
- Majority of 549 (65.40%) students are female
- Majority of the students, 759 (90.40%) are up to the age group of 20 years
- Majority of the students, 761 (90.60%) are under graduates

- Majority of the 525 (62.50%) students are commerce discipline
- Majority of the students, 820 (97.60%) are unmarried
- Majority of the 661 (78.70%) students are belong to nuclear families
- Majority of the students, 713 (84.90%) have up to two earning members in the family
- Majority of the students, 511 (60.80%) have up to two non-earning members in the family
- Majority of the 486 (57.90%) students family size is four and five
- Majority of the students, 569 (67.70%) family monthly income is up to Rs. 25,000
- Majority of the 718 (85.50%) student's pocket money is up to Rs. 500
- Majority of the students, 596 (71.00%) studying in self-financing college
- Majority of the 774 (92.10%) students are day-scholar

(ii) Usage of Social Networking Sites

- Majority of the students, 743 (88.50%) are using formal language for searching
- Majority of the 810 (96.40%) students are preferred smart phone for searching
- Majority of the 408 (48.60%) students are using social network up to two years
- Majority of the students, 321 (38.20%) never have late night usage of social network
- Majority of the students, 701 (83.50%) are member of up to 10 groups
- Majority of the 409 (48.70%) students have less than 100 contacts
- Majority of the 642 (76.40%) students are sharing news on social network
- Majority of the students, 297 (35.40%) are occasionally share news in social networking sites

(iii) Usage of Social Networking Sites

The table below shows the usage of social networking sites.

Table 1: Usage of Social Networking Sites

Social Networking sites	Yes	No	Total
Facebook	235 (38.84%)	605 (72.02%)	840 (100.00%)
Whatsapp	819 (97.50%)	21 (2.50%)	840 (100.00%)
Twitter	166 (19.76%)	674 (80.24%)	840 (100.00%)
Youtube	774 (92.14%)	66 (7.86%)	840 (100.00%)
Instagram	651 (77.50%)	189 (22.50%)	840 (100.00%)

The table above shows that out of the total 840 students, 819 (97.50%) students are using whatsapp; 774 (92.14%) students are using YouTube; 651 (77.50%) students are using instagram; 235 (38.84%) students are using facebook and 166 (19.76%) students are using twitter. Thus, it is observed that most of the students are using whatsapp followed by YouTube and instagram.

(iv) Prominent factors for the Reason for Usage of Social Networking Sites of Students

To find out the most prominent factor that leads to the reason for usage of social networking of the students, weighted mean score analysis has been employed by considering nineteen variables under three heads and the findings of the analysis are given below.

Table 2: Reason for usage of Social Networking Sites- Weighted Average Score

Reason	Average	Weighted Avg. Score
I) Academic Purpose		
(i) Stay in touch with Friends/Teachers/Classmate	4.40	4.02
(ii) Competitive exam	4.04	
(iii) Find and update useful information/ knowledge/resources for assignments and project work	4.07	

(iv) Online learning	3.98	
(v) Develop reading/writing skills on the web	3.96	
(vi) Virtual meeting with classmates and faculty members	3.90	
(vii) Share and exchange teaching learning materials, photos and videos with friends	4.12	
(viii) Tagging related resources	3.66	
II) Economic Purpose		
(i) Professional activities (Searching for Job)	4.12	3.45
(ii) Online Business	3.37	
(iii) Financial loss	2.85	
III) Social Purpose		
(i) Download/Upload photos, files, music \ video	4.14	3.53
(ii) Plan or invite people to events	3.65	
(iii) Participate in special interest groups	3.63	
(iv) As a forum to express my opinions and views	3.47	
(v) For time pass / Social contact	3.53	
(vi) Publicity	3.04	
(vii) Impact of personal interaction	3.35	
(viii) Promotes moral and ethical posting of videos, pictures, images	3.40	

From the above table, it is found that among the various usage variables considered, the mean score value, based on academic purpose is found high with 'Stay in touch with Friends/Teachers/Classmate' i.e., 4.40 where as it is found low with 'Tagging related resources' followed by virtual meeting with classmates and faculty members. On the other hand, the mean score value, based on students usage on economic purpose is found high with 'Professional activities' i.e., 4.12 while it is found low with 'Financial loss' followed by online business. On the other hand, the mean score value, based on students usage on social purpose, is found high with 'Download/Upload photos, files, music \ video' i.e., 4.14 while it is found low with 'Publicity' followed by impact of personal interaction.

Finally, the overall weighted mean score depicts that among the various usage variables considered, the mean value is found high with 'academic purpose' i.e., 4.02 then the mean score value of 'social purpose' (3.53) and economic purpose (3.45), which signifies that the students usage is high with 'academic purpose'.

(v) Usage of College Students

This section deals with the college students level of usage and the variables considered for measuring and leading their level of usage of college students based on Chi-square test.

(a) Level of Usage

Students usage on various social networking sites has been measured by giving scores to usage related questions. Nineteen such questions are included in the questionnaire. The answers to the questions have been rated on five-point scale. Thus, the maximum score a student would get is 95. The scores obtained by each student is divided by 95 and multiply by 100 to convert it into an index. This index is termed as 'usage index'. Based on the usage index, the students are divided into three groups as students with low, moderate and high level of usage. In order to classify the students such groups, quartiles have been made use of. Accordingly, students with usage index ranging up to 62.97 are termed as students of low level of usage; those with usage index between 62.98 and 85.82 are termed as students of moderate level usage and those students with usage index above 85.83 are termed as students

of high level of usage. Of the 840 students, 129 (15.36%) have low level of usage; 589 (70.12%) have moderate level of usage and the remaining 122 (14.52%) have high level of usage.

(b) Variables Considered for Level of Usage

Twenty one variables namely area of residence, gender, age, degree pursuing, discipline, marital status, type of family, earning members in the family, non earning members in the family, size of the family, family income per month, pocket money per month, type of college, type of accommodation, device preferred, late night usage, member in social network, contacts in social network, share news on social media, frequency of sharing news, parents awareness on social networking sites have been selected in order to test whether there really exist any association between each of the variable and level of usage. Chi-square test has been applied to test the association between each of the variables and level of usage. Levels of significance chosen are one and five percent.

Table 3: Select Variables and Level of Usage of Social Networking Sites College Students - Chi-square Test

Variables Considered	d.f	Calculated χ^2 Value	Table Value		Remarks
			5%	1%	
Area of Residence	4	5.355	9.488	13.277	Not Significant
Gender	2	5.827	5.991	9.210	Not Significant
Age	2	23.205 **	5.991	9.210	Significant
Degree Pursuing	6	17.829 **	12.592	16.812	Significant
Discipline	8	40.712 **	15.507	20.090	Significant
Marital Status	2	6.965 *	5.991	9.210	Significant
Type of Family	2	0.566	5.991	9.210	Not Significant
Earning members in the family	4	4.436	9.488	13.277	Not Significant
Non-earning members in the family	4	2.882	9.488	13.277	Not Significant
Size of the family	4	1.202	9.488	13.277	Not Significant
Family income per month	6	12.497	12.592	16.812	Not Significant
Pocket money per month	6	14.218 *	12.592	16.812	Significant
Type of College	4	5.623	9.488	13.277	Not Significant
Type of Accommodation	4	10.478 *	9.488	13.277	Significant
Device Preferred	4	4.536	9.488	13.277	Not Significant
Late night usage	6	20.058 **	12.592	16.812	Significant
Member in social media	4	3.453	9.488	13.277	Not Significant
Number of Contacts in social media	6	23.920 **	12.592	16.812	Significant
Share news on social media	2	3.551	5.991	9.210	Not Significant
Frequency of sharing news	6	20.824 **	12.592	16.812	Significant
Parents awareness about Social Networking	2	3.078	5.991	9.210	Not Significant

* Significant at five per cent level

** Significant at one per cent level

Out of the total nineteen variable selected for testing, nine variables are found to be associated with the level of usage of social networking sites by the college students. Of which, marital status, pocket money per month and type of accommodation are found to have significant association at five per cent level whereas the variables like age, degree pursuing, discipline, late night usage, number of contacts in social media, frequency of sharing news are found to have high significant association with the level of usage of social networking sites by the college students at one per cent level.

7. CONCLUSION

From the study it is found that the students usage is high with academic purpose followed by social purpose and economic purpose, which signifies that the students usage is high with academic purpose. Further, the study indicates that majority of the students have moderate level of usage and the variables like age, degree pursuing, discipline, marital status, pocket money per month, type of accommodation, late night usage, number of contacts in social media, frequency of sharing news are found to be associated with the level of usage of social networking sites by the college students. Hence, it is suggested that there is a need for higher education policy makers precisely connect the students (especially college students) involvement in social networking with their academic purposes to facilitate the current generation to fully take benefit of the technological advances that are changing the educational background.

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