Effect of Social Networking Sites Usage on Studies

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Abstract

These days most of the students and young adults in various campuses of Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra are mostly and always occupied in the social networking site usage. This paper surveyed students' social networking sites usage and how it affects them. It examines the role which frequent use of social networking sites playing their studies. Questionnaires were designed and sent out to 100 respondents of the different institutions in Kurukshetra University. The students of B.com, B.Sc, BCA, M.Com and MBA surveyed for the study. Out of the 100 questionnaires distributed, all were completely filled and returned giving a return rate of 100%. The data collected was analyzed using frequencies; percentages and graph representations while the hypothesis was tested using chi square ($\chi 2$). The hypothesis that the frequent use of social networking sites by student of institutions in Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra has no effect on their studies was accepted at 5% level of significance. It is found that students use SNS commonly, even during studies, but they also use the information on SNS in their academic assignments too. It was recommended that students should learn to manage their time properly and teachers should use social networking sites to promote teaching-learning process.

Keywords:

Social Networking Sites, Study, Tertiary institution, Usage, students.

Introduction

In the four decades since its inception, the internet has driven dramatic change. It has enabled flows of information, including entertainment, news, and financial and academic material. It has brought people closer together by enabling various forms of interpersonal communication, notably e-mail, instant messaging and video conferencing etc. But internet is more than just that. Social Media Networks are now a primary source of advertising, entertainment and news information for a growing number of people. Social networking sites are internet sites where people interact freely, sharing and discussing information about each other and their lives, using a multimedia mix of personal words, pictures, videos and audio. There are many social networking sites like Facebook, Twitter, Myspace, Bebo, Orkut, flickr and Youtube etc but Facebook is very popular. Not only, individuals but companies are also using these sites to promote their products and services and to communicate with customers.

With the explosive growth of social networking sites (like Facebook and Twitter), education has been faced with an interesting, although expected decision. We know that students are using some of the SNS to connect with one

another, with friends and with family. These sites allow and encourage the development of networks. Connecting people with shared interests, common activities, for example, the SNS have blossomed and continue to find use with people who simply have a desire or need to connect with others. The ease and comfort they exhibit in using these sites has come with their continued and intense use. They share information and pictures with others, and eventually with the world. While the consequences of their actions or disregard of privacy issues may cause us and them some discomfort, their use of these sites outside of the realm of education may not impact us, much.

The popularity of the social networking sites increased rapidly in the last decade. This is probably due to the reason that college and university students as well as teens use it extensively to get global access. These social networking sites such as Twitter and Facebook have become a raging craze for everyone nowadays.

These sites can be used to feed, or push and pull information to mobile devices like many of the contemporary smart phones. The immediacy of information exchange can provide some well desired benefits. Additionally, since many of the students are already familiar with the mainstream SNS, the learning curve is significantly reduced. They are using this medium to communicate and connect, and as such, should be able to connect to their classes with the same medium.

Social Networking

Boyd and Ellison (2007) define Social Networking Sites as: "web based services that allow individuals to i) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, ii) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection and iii) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system. The nature and nomenclature of these connections may vary from site to site".

R. Reuben defines social networking as one aspect of social media in which individuals are in communities that share ideas, interests, or are looking to meet people with similar ideas and interests. Further, the researcher notes that, at present, the two most popular social networking sites are Facebook and MySpace. Another definition of social networking is given by

D. M Boyd and N. B. Ellison that social networking sites are web-based tools that allow users to develop a public or quasi-public profile, electronically communicate with other users with whom they share a connection, and view and comment on their list of communications with other members of the group. Similarly, according to E. M. Ayiah and C. H. Kumah (2011), a social networking site is defined as any website designed to allow multiple users to publish content of themselves. The information may be on any subject and may be for consumption by friends, mates, employers, employees just to mention a few.

A similar definition is given J. Powell (2009) wherein social networking is defined as a community in which individuals are somehow connected through friendship, values, working relationships, idea and so on.

While J. Palfrey and U. Gasser (2008) defined the services in the foregoing section as social digital technologies. G. Bull et. al (2012) defined social media as participatory media

D. M Boyd and N. B. Ellison suggest that interactions through social networking sites can result in more and different types of connections that would not otherwise be made. In addition to individual profiles, Social Networking Sites may include profiles of bands, companies, events, non-profit organizations or political parties. Social networking sites can serve a range of purposes, including helping users maintain existing friendships or forge new relationships based on shared professional goals, political views, a common language or shared racial, sexual, religious, or cultural identities.

These social sites are very easy to operate, anyone who has little knowledge to access internet can use these social networking sites. This is very important factor of using SNS widely.

The negative effects of these social networking sites overweigh the positive ones. The students become victims of social networks more often than anyone else. This is because of the reason that when they are studying or searching their course material online, they get attracted to these sites to kill the boredom in their study time, diverting their attention from their work.

Students who get involved in activities on social media sites while studying result in reduction in their focus of attention. As a result their academic performance gets affected. The more time the students spend on these social media sites, the less time they will spend socializing in person with others. This reduces their communication skills. They will not be able to communicate and socialize effectively in person with others. Sometimes students are not able to deliver their work in the specified time frame because of excess internet usage.

Effect on Health

The excessive use of these sites affects the mental as well as physical health. Students do not take their meals on time and do not take proper rest. They take excessive amount of coffee or tea to remain active and focused which effects negatively on their health.

The overuse of these sites on a daily basis has many negative effects on the physical and mental health of students making them lethargic and unmotivated to create contact with the people in person.

Literature Review

Ellison et al (2007) found 94% of the under graduate students were Facebook members. They spent 10 to 30 minutes on average using Facebook everyday and reported having between 150 and 200 friends on Facebook. The students used SNS to maintain existing relationships and fewer to meet new friends. Facebook was indeed implicated in students' efforts to develop and maintain social capital at college. The researcher found that an interaction between bridging social capital and subjective well-being measures. For intense user students reported low satisfaction and having much lower bridging social capital than those who used Facebook more intensely.

E. Klopfer et. al (2009) hypothesizes that many students are using new media and technologies to create new things in new ways, learn new things in new ways, and communicate in new ways with new people. The researchers went on to say, "It is our position that these technologies are safe, valuable tools schools must take seriously." They further note that the 'tween' and teen group (nine-to 17-year-olds) are the heaviest users of Social Networking Technologies.

Further supporting evidence is provided by National School Board Education (2007) that 96 percent of youth in 'tween' and teen group

have used Social Networking Technologies at some time, with their average engagement with them rivaling time spent watching TV at 9 hours a week. Higher Education Research Institute (2007) published its report that almost 60 percent of the students spent between one and five hours on online social network websites in a typical week and spent 19 percent of the time in a week watching TV.

Similarly, T.A. Pempek et al (2009) studied that Facebook use was integrated into students' lives, regardless how busy they were. The amount of time ranged from 2.00 to 117.00 min per weekday and from 0.00 to 165.00 min per day on Saturday and Sunday. Large majority of students reported using Facebook to communicate with friends, mostly friends who were not on campus. Females reported having more friends on Facebook than males. 26.37% students accepted the fact that they use of Facebook to establish personal identity while majority of students 64.13% did not use Facebook as such. Majority of students 76.09% said that it had a 'somewhat negative effect', 3.26% a 'very negative effect' on their academic studies and only 14.13% said as a 'somewhat positive effect'.

On the other hand, Urista et. al. (2009) examined that young adults depended heavily on internet for entertainment and information. The vast majority of participants stated that they use SNS because it is an efficient way to communicate with friends. It was noted that many significant events like engaged, getting married, travelling and accident etc either shared or learned via SNS. Most of the respondents were encouraged to use SNS by their friends and family. Overall, participants agreed they enjoy the convenience and accessibility SNS offer users for communicating with others. Many participants used SNS to obtain information about old acquaintances while some used SNS for reading comments, discussions on friend's profile to find out information about what is happening in that friend's life. Participants considered SNS as a very effective means for building and maintaining relationship.

West et al. (2009) found in their study that 80% of Facebook friends were peers of similar age. Attitudes varied when participants were asked about having older adults (especially parents) as Facebook friends. Some said they felt it would attack their privacy; others said that they needed to separate family life from their own social life. This study suggested that friendships with parents on Facebook could create problems and threaten their self-concept because their private life could become public.

Jayme, Waddington (2011) concluded that social networking sites among adolescents are not just a fad; it is part of their culture. While social networking can expose teens to danger, they are exposed to the same dangers in real life as well. A parent or teacher cannot expect a teen to abandon the internet and be able to flourish in modern society as computers, technology, the internet, and social networking is utilized in all aspects of modern life, even in the workplace. This is why social networking should not only be included as a valuable tool to enhance the classroom but should also be utilized as an opportunity to teach students the skills that ensure safe and enriching use of social media.

Whereas, Chuck Martin (2011) conducted study on college students at Whittemore School of Business and Economics. He found that 96% of all students were using Facebook and only 10% students were using LinkedIn. He found no significant correlation between those students who were considered to be heavy users of social media and grades. Almost, the same number of heavy and light users of both Facebook and Youtube received the same category of high and low grades. Researcher also realized that on a typical weekend day, 41 % of students increased their usage of the social media networks. 24% of all university students decreased usage. 36% of students did not change their use of social media. The majority (89%) of students used these networks for social reasons and entertainment. 26% of students used social media for educational reasons and 16% for professional reasons.

Sponcil and Gitimu (2012) also suggest that almost all college students are using some form of social networking sites. Facebook is the most popular among the all social networking websites. Twitter placed second. Communicating with friends and family on social media is very common among college students. Students use variety of ways to communicate with friends and family on SNS. Status updates and wall post are the most common ways to communicate. Results also shows that these websites have helped students better communicate with others face to face as well. A particular interesting finding is that most college students rate the quality of communication as good, but not excellent, fair or poor. This indicates that quality of communication over the computer is not ideal, but it has positive qualities to it.

Same as, Hart (2013), finds the motives of undergraduate college students and high school students for using Facebook to predict attitudinal and behavioral outcomes of Facebook use. The study compares the descriptors of the behavioral and attitudinal outcomes of high school students to the descriptors of the behavioral and attitudinal outcomes of undergraduate college students. High school students are motivated to visit Facebook to pass time. In contrast, relationship maintenance is the most salient motive of undergraduate college students to visit Facebook. Four of six behavioral and attitudinal questions on the instrument failed to produce statistical significant differences between undergraduate college students and high school students. The amount of Facebook use, frequency of Facebook use, satisfaction with Facebook, and attachment to Facebook are not notably different. Two of the six behavioral and attitudinal descriptors do show statistically significant differences. These includes the duration of Facebook use and amount of Facebook friends. Undergraduate college students have been using Facebook for a longer period than high school students. High school students have significantly more friends on Facebook than undergraduate college students.

The Problem Statement

The students of Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra are always very busy with their handset and laptops. Most of students have easy access to the Internet via gprs plans and wifi at the campus and they spend considerably more time on chatting, checking their email, their Facebook profile, their MySpace Web page, updating their Twitter accounts and their LinkedIn profile, and it does not happen only once a day. It is speculated that an average Indian youth spends about 6 -7 hours on the internet daily, some browse the internet all night. When do they have the time to read or study their books or make research? This paper investigates the effect of social networking site usage on the studies of students of Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra.

Methodology

A 15 questions structured questionnaire was designed and

administered to students from the various departments of Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra. These departments include commerce, management, chemistry, arts, maths and computer science. The questionnaire was designed in secrecy to enable the student fill them truthfully without fear of intrusion of privacy. Of the 100 questionnaires administered, all were returned adequately filled.

Objectives

a) To assess the usage of social networking sites by the students.

b) and how social networking sites usage affects them.

c) To examine the role which frequent use of social networking sites playing their studies.

Sampling Design

Random sampling is used to collect data

Method of Data Collection

Primary data is used. The instrument used for data collection for this study was the questionnaire method.

Research Questions

The following research questions were used to guide the study

i. Which of the SNSs is mostly used by students?

ii. How much time do students spend on the SNSs daily?

iii. Why do students of tertiary institutions use SNSs?

iv. How does the use of SNSs affect students' academics?

v. Do students use the SNSs for their academic assignments?

Hypothesis

H_0: Frequent use of Social networking sites by the students has no effect on their studies.

Data Analysis: Data collected was statistically analyzed using descriptive statistics like frequencies, percentages, and graphs. The null hypothesis involved in the study was tested using **chi-square**. 100% respondents are aware of and use the SNSs.

Table 1

Respondent's Age	Percentage
17-19	12%
18-20	57%
21-23	31%
24-26	0

Table 2

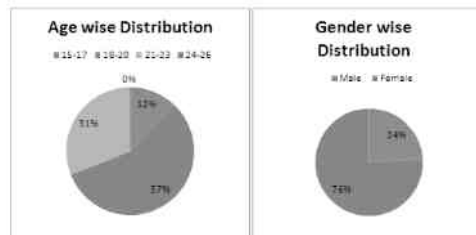| Respondent's Gender	Percentage
Male	24%
Female	76%

Figure 1 : Age in Years   Figure 2 : Gender

Research question 1: Which of the SNSs is mostly used by students of Tertiary institutions in KUK?

Table 3: SNS mostly used by students.

SNS_Most

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Facebook	91	91.0	91.0	91.0
	Youtube	8	8.0	8.0	99.0
	Myspace	1	1.0	1.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

From table 3, four social networking sites are used by students, Facebook is seen to be mostly used by student with 91% (91) respondents using it, whereas YouTube with 8% (8) respondents and Myspace with only 1% (1) respondent using daily. Twitter is not used by the students as yet. This shows that Facebook is the social networking site mostly used by students of various campuses in Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra. Figure is given below :
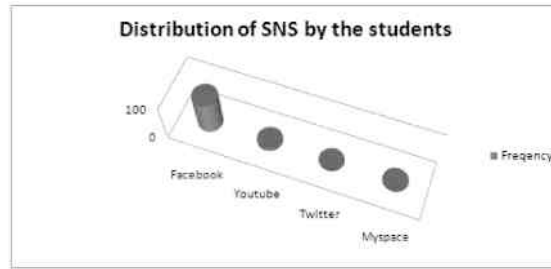
Figure 3 : Representation of the SNSs used by students

Research question 2: How much time do students spend on the SNSs daily?

Table 4: Time spent by students on the SNSs daily.

Time

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0-1	43	43.0	43.0	43.0
	1-3	40	40.0	40.0	83.0
	3-5	11	11.0	11.0	94.0
	5-8	6	6.0	6.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Table 4 shows that 44% of the respondents use the SNSs for about one hour each day, 40% of the respondents use it for about 1 to 3 hour per day, 10% of the respondents use it for about 3 to 5 hours per day and 6% of the respondents use the SNSs for about 5 to 8 hours each day. From this study, it means that most students of in Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra use the SNSs for 0 to 3 hours daily. Fig. 2 shows the distribution of hours spent by students on the SNSs
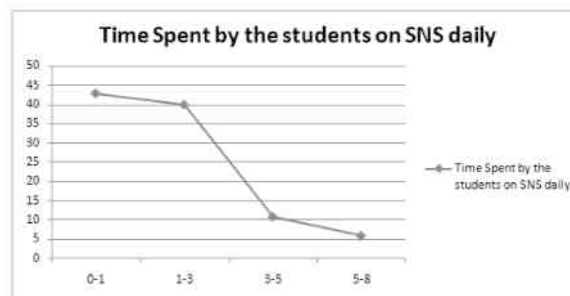

Figure 4 : Time spent on SNS usage.

Research Question 3 : How do you operate SNS?

Ope_SNS

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	PC	25	25.0	25.0	25.0
	Mobile	36	36.0	36.0	61.0
	Both	39	39.0	39.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Above table is showing that mostly 39% (39) respondents use to access social networking sites through mobile and pc both. It can also be seen that accessing SNS through mobile is also very common, 36% of respondents use mobile to access SNS's. Whereas, only 25% of the respondents use pc to access SNS's.

Research question 3: Why do students of higher institutions use SNSs?

Table 5: Reasons students use the SNSs

Reason

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	To Keep in Touch	46	46.0	46.0	46.0
	Pass away time	27	27.0	27.0	73.0
	Just to belong	1	1.0	1.0	74.0
	To solve social problems	5	5.0	5.0	79.0
	To access information	21	21.0	21.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

As seen from table 5 above, 46% of respondents use the SNS to keep in touch with friends and family members, 27% use it to while away time, 1% of the respondents say they use the SNS just to belong, while 5% use it to solve their social problems and 21% of the respondents access SNS to get information. This shows that most of the students of Kurukshetra University use the SNSs to keep in touch. Fig. 5 below further distributes reasons why students use the social networking sites.
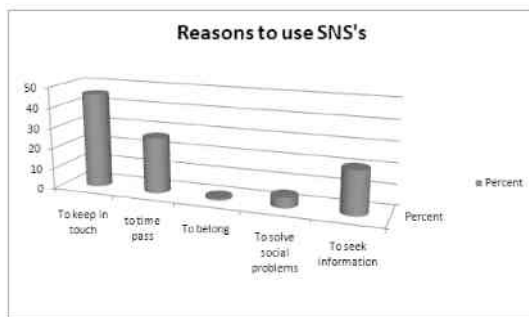

Fig. 5 : Representation of reasons why students use the SNSs

Research question 4: How does the use of SNSs affect students' academics?

Table 6: the effect of the use of SNSs on students' academics

Eff_acad

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	—vely	45	45.0	45.0	45.0
	-vely	9	9.0	9.0	54.0
	No Effect	46	46.0	46.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Table 6 shows that 45% of respondents agreed that the use SNSs affect their academics positively, 9% are affected negatively while 46% are not affected in any way by their use of the SNSs. This shows that though students devote their times on the SNS, their studies and academics are not affected by it as seen by the percentage of no effect (46%).Fig. 6 below further displays the distribution of the effect of SNSs on the studies of students.
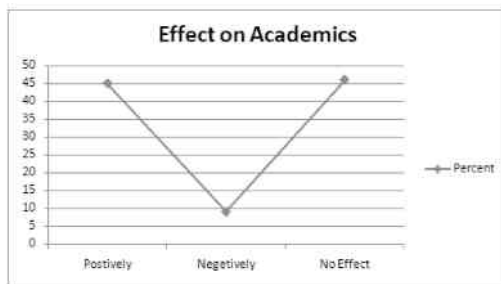

Fig. 6 : Representation of the effect of use of SNSs on the studies of students

Research question 5: Do students use the SNSs for their academic assignments?
Table 7: Students' use of SNSs for academic assignments

Use_assin

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	57	57.0	57.0	57.0
	No	43	43.0	43.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Table 7 shows that 57% of the respondents agreed to use the SNSs for their academic assignment while 43% said they do not use it for their assignments. Fig. 7 below shows the distribution of the use of SNSs for academic assignments.
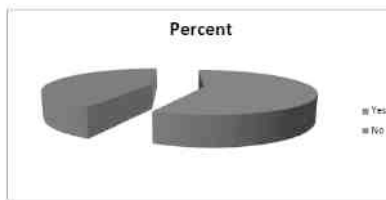

Fig. 7 : Representation of Students' use of SNSs for academic assignments

Research hypothesis

H0 = Frequent use of Social networking sites by the students has no effect on their studies The data used to test the hypothesis are drawn from the questionnaire. They include
1) At times do you use the SNSs (like chatting) when lecture is going on?
2) If yes do you understand the lecture?
3) Do you have special time for using the SNSs?
4) At times do you use the SNSs (like chatting) while studying?

Table 6: Variables of Frequent use of Social networking sites

	Yes	No	Total
1	40	60	100
2	29	11	40
3	26	74	100
4	44	56	100
Total	140	200	340

Chi square ($\chi 2$) is used for the analysis:

Table 8: Chi-square distribution

	Observed (O)	Expected (E)	O-E	$(O-E)^2$	$(O-E)^2/E$
1	40	41.176	1.176	1.0844	0.0263
2	60	58.823	1.177	1.0838	0.0184
3	29	16.470	12.53	3.5396	0.2149
4	11	23.529	12.529	3.5396	0.1504
5	26	41.176	15.126	3.8956	0.0946
6	74	58.823	15.177	3.8957	0.0662
7	44	41.176	2.824	1.6804	0.0408
8	56	58.823	2.823	1.6801	0.0285
Total					0.6401

χ^2 = chi- square value, O = observed value, E = expected value
Degree of Freedom (df) = (R-1) (C-1), df = (4-1) (2-1) = 3, α = 5% , χ^2 = 7.815
Chi square (χ^2) = 0.64. The table value of chi square at alpha = 0.05 and df = 3 is **7.815.** Which is greater than the calculated chi square therefore we accept the null hypothesis. This means that the frequent use of the SNSs by students has no effect on their studies.
Discussion

The study tested a hypothesis that the frequent use of social networking sites by students has not effect on their studies. The hypothesis was accepted and proven to be correct. The result obtained in this study supports the use of Facebook does not have adverse effect on the academic performance of students in the Kurukshetra University. It is also found that many students agreed that the social networking sites have positive influence on their academic performance. This study contradicts the findings of which indicates that youths in Kurukshetra are spending too much time on social networking sites at the detriment of other necessary things such as their studies. This study reveals that the students are not entirely wasting their time on SNS and are using it for infotainment.

The findings of this study shows that the students of tertiary institutions in Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra use Facebook (almost all the students have Facebook account) more than any other social networking sites followed by Myspace and Youtube. This shows that Facebook is the most popular SNSs used by students in Kurukshetra University. The study also revealed that they mostly use these sites for keeping in touch. They do this by updating their status regularly, writing on friends' walls and uploading pictures. Some of these students also go online just for

time pass; they allocate more time for SNSs and less time for studying. The study also noted that the students spend zero to three hours (0 – 3 hours) daily on the SNSs doing their updates, postings and visiting others profile. A majority of the students agreed to use the SNSs for their academic assignment, which is good development. The researchers observed that with the widespread of internet services provided by telecommunication companies and the increased use of internet via computers, smart phones, tablets and other handheld devices, students have been seen to always spend a lot of time on the internet. Students are able to use the internet more probably because of cheaper data services provided by the telecommunication companies.

Conclusion

Although, this study revealed that SNS does not affect in the students' studies. However, there is a need for creating a balance between the use of SNS and studies. This is because students are seen using the SNS even in the lecture hall while lectures are going on and also while studying. The students are required to learn time management and to allocate, to each task, a specific timeframe. Students and young adults should always take out special time for using the SNSs rather than devoting all their available time to it. This would increase students' academic performance. Since students are also using SNSs for their academic activities, lecturers should use SNSs to enhance teaching-learning process by uploading academic contents for use by the students. Students are experiencing the world through more than just books and assignments; they are learning and adapting to the world using a relatively new form of communication. The information on SNS is more than funny videos or photos; these sites share views and opinions, tips and useful information among the users, which can be used in increasing their academic as well as general knowledge. So, the use of social networking sites is not only for entertainment, but for infotainment.

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