Effects of social networking sites on the students of Sardarkrushinagar Dantiwada Agricultural University, S.K. Nagar

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■ **ABSTRACT :** This paper is an attempt to study the utilization pattern and effects of Social Networking sites on the students. The effort has been made in this paper to analyze the pattern of usage to see whether they have been caught in the trap of Social Networking addiction. For the same, a representative sample of Sardarkrushinagar Dantiwada Agricultural University students was taken and analyzed. It was found that most of the students have account with facebook and preferred this site. Overall it was found that social networking sites affected students positively as well as negatively.

■ **KEY WORDS:** Social networking sites, Facebook, students

The technological advances and increased use of the Internet in recent years have led to a communication revolution (Moqbel, 2012). This communication revolution, as well as the more technologically empowered lifestyle of individual users, has changed the way people communicate and connect with each other (Coyle and Vaughn, 2008 and O'Murchu *et al.*, 2004). Social networking sites are a recent trend in this revolution. In the last ten years, the online world has changed dramatically. Thanks to the invention of social media, young men and women now exchange ideas, feelings, information, pictures and videos at a truly astonishing rate. Seventy-three per cent of wired American teens now use social media websites (Oberst, 2010). As SNS are increasingly popular with millions of

users connecting within and beyond the platform, it is important to understand the effects of SNS use to identify the potential benefits and costs to personal relationships. Therefore, the research was undertaken to find out the utilization pattern of the social networking sites by the students with following objectives :

– To explore the type of social networking sites accessed by students

– To study the spent time on social networking sites by students

– To identify the purposes of using social networking sites by students

– To study the effects of social networking sites on the students.

■ RESEARCH METHODS

Locale and sample of the study:

Present study was conducted in eight colleges of Sardarkrishinagar Dantiwada Agricultural University. A sample of 150 Under Graduate and 50 Post Graduate students were selected for the present study. The total sample of the study was 200 students. Purposive Random Sampling was used for sample selection.

Procedure of data collection:

Questionnaire technique was used for data collection. Keeping in mind the objectives of the study questionnaire was developed for collecting data. The questionnaire consisted of five sections *viz.,* background information, type, time spent, purpose and effects of social networking sites on the students.

Data analysis:

Data was analyzed by using frequency, percentage, mean and z test.

■ RESEARCH FINDINGS and DISCUSSION

The findings of the present study as well as relevant discussion have been presented under following heads :

Demographic profile of the respondents :

Demographic profile of the respondents shows that Majority of the under-graduate students were of age between 20-22 years (74%) and have been studying (48%) in fourth year. Most of the post-graduate students were in the age group of 23-25 years (82%) and studying in the second Year (86.0%). 36.7 per cent under-graduate students and 60 per cent post-graduate students belonged to the general caste. One fourth of the post-graduate students (26.0%) and 41.3 per cent under-graduate students were from backward castes. It is encouraging to note that almost all the Under-graduate (99.3%) and Post-graduate (100%) students had mobile phones whereas 92 per cent Post-graduate and 52 per cent Under-graduate students owned laptops. However, very few of them owned computers. Majority of the students (52.7% and 74.0%) secured grade point average between 7.0 -8.4 for their current GPA.

Types of social networking sites accessed by students :

This part of the study included information about the use and preferences of social networking sites.

Use of social networking sites :

Data in Table 1 shows that all the Post-graduate students and most of the Under-graduate students (90.7%) used and had accounts with one or more social networking sites.

Data further reveal that all Post-graduate students (100%) and most of the Under-graduate students (84.0%) used mobile phone to access social networking sites. Laptop was used to check social networking sites

Table 1 : Distribution of respondents according to the use of social networking sites		(n=200)	
Sr. No.	Aspects	Under Graduate (n=150)	Post Graduate (n=50)
		f (%)	f (%)
1.	Use social networking sites	136 (90.7)	50 (100.0)
Devices used for login to the social networking sites			
1.	Computer	12 (32.0)	5 (10.0)
2.	Laptop	51 (34.0)	41 (82.0)
3.	Mobile	126 (84.0)	50 (100.0)
Number of social networking sites with which students have their accounts			
1.	One	43 (28.7)	15 (30.0)
2.	Two	55 (36.7)	18 (36.0)
3.	Three	24 (16.0)	14 (28.0)
4.	Four	14 (9.3)	5 (10.0)
Account with social networking sites			
1.	Facebook	130 (86.7)	48 (96.0)
2.	Twitter	42 (28.0)	19 (38.0)
3.	Linkedin	17 (11.3)	17 (34.0)
4.	Google Plus	66 (44.0)	23 (46.0)

by 82.0 per cent Under-graduate and 34.0 per cent Post-graduate students. Lesser Under-graduate students used computers than Post-graduates (10.0% and 32.0%).

Number of social networking sites with which students have their accounts :

Findings regarding number of social networking sites with which students had account show that almost equal number of Post-graduate and Under-graduate students had accounts on one (28.7% and 30.0%) and two (36.7% and 36%) social networking sites. It was found from the data that three or four social networking sites were accessed by 9.3 to 28.0 per cent Under-graduate and Post-graduate students.

A national survey in 2009 finds that 73% of online teenagers use SNS, which is an increase from 55 per cent three years earlier (Lenhart *et al.*, 2010).

Account with social networking sites :

Table 1 clearly shows that most of the students had account with Facebook (86.7 and 100%) which was followed by Googleplus (44.0% and 46.0%), Twitter (28.0% and 38.0%) and Linkedin (11.0% and 34.0%). Facebook has become the communication portal for social networking, which has rapidly transformed the way people communicate. Linkedin has allowed professionals to create their own profiles as well as invite other professionals to be part of their networks (O'Murchu *et al.*, 2004). Linkedin also facilitates business inquiries and expertise requests, as well as job postings by recruiters.

It was found in discussion with students that they preferred Facebook and some of the Post-graduate students also preferred Linkedin (36.0%) while Under-graduate students had less preference for linkedin. Googleplus was least preferred by the students.

Discussing the reasons for their preferences students said that their preferred sites were faster and cheap and that these platforms provide better and easier communication experience with friends and others.

Spent time on social networking sites by students:
Duration of using social networking sites :

Table 2 presents data about the duration of using social networking sites. It is divided into two categories. First category mentions membership of site from less than a year and second category is about membership of site for more than a year. Data clearly show that Under-graduate (20.7% to 76%) as well as Post-graduate students (26 % to 90%) joined all four sites before a year with the exception of one site *i.e.* Linkedin (11.3%) of which only Under-graduate students had become member during this year.

Time spent on social networking sites per day :

The students were asked as to how much time they spend on social networking websites. Most users of Facebook (41.3% and 70.0%), Twitter (16.0% and 22.0%), Linkedin (2.7% and 14.0%) and Googleplus (6.7%) spent less than one hour per day on the respective sites. The table shows that 22 per cent Post-graduate and 28.7 per cent Under-graduate students used Facebook for 1-3 hours and 16.0 per cent Under-graduate students for more than 3 hours. However, students confided that since they were constantly connected to various social networking websites through their mobile phones, it is quite challenging to calculate the exact time they spent online on social networking websites; so the mentioned time spent mentioned is more approximate than exact.

Findings also show that surfing through the social

Table 2 : Distribution of respondents according to duration of using social networking sites			(n=200*)	
Sr. No.	Duration	Application	Under Graduate (n=150)	Post Graduate (n=50)
			f (%)	f (%)
1.	Less than a year	Facebook	16 (10.7)	3 (6.0)
2.		Twitter	11 (7.3)	6 (12.0)
3.		Linkedin	17 (11.3)	3 (6.0)
4.		Google Plus	15 (10.0)	5 (10.0)
1.	More than a Year	Facebook	114 (76.0)	45 (90.0)
2.		Twitter	31 (20.7)	13 (26.0)
3.		Linkedin	0 (0.0)	14 (28.0)
4.		Google Plus	41(27.3)	18 (36.0)

*Multiple responses

networking sites reduced during holidays except for Facebook. In fact, Facebook was used for long hours during holidays. The data related to the use of Facebook during holidays by Post-graduate students' show that 16 per cent students used it for more than 3 hours, 48 per cent for 1-3 hours and 30 per cent for less than one hour. Nearly 29 per cent Under-graduate students used Facebook for more than 3 hours per day, 32 per cent for 1-3 hours and 24 per cent for less than an hour. Going by the data and the discussions on increased use of Facebook during holidays it may be safely concluded that Facebook has fascinated students more as a 'cool' platform to chill out and chit-chatt.

Purpose of using social networking sites by students :

Interaction through social networking sites:

Data in Table 4 depict that most of students have used social networking sites for communicating with friends (92.0% and 76.0%), relatives (46.0% and 34.0%) and teachers (24.7% and 26.0%). Not many used these sites for interacting with unknown persons (12.0% and 14.0%).

Lenhart and Madden (2007) reported that approximately 91% of youth who use SNS report that they utilize the sites to communicate with already known friends.

Purpose of using social networking sites :

Social networking sites are quite common amongst students and they use it for various purposes, which include recreational and academics. It is observed from data that students mostly used these sites for chatting (72.0% and 60.0%), entertainment (68.0% and 62.0%), maintaining social relations (62.0% and 54.0%) and getting News (58.7% and 58%).

However, findings depict that students used these sites for study purpose (24.7% and 30.0%) also. They shared notes, created educational pages, discussed academic matters etc., which were beneficial for their studies. Some of the Post-graduate students (30.0%) used these sites for job searches. The young generation also wants to follow celebrities and stay updated about their favourite celebrity; the response of Under-graduate (16.0%) as well as Post-graduate (20.0%) students show that social networking sites, especially Twitter, was used

Table 3 : Distribution of respondents according to time spend on social networking sites					(n=200*)
Sr. No.	Duration	Application	Under Graduate (n=150) f (%)		Post Graduate (n=50) f (%)
			Working days	During holidays	Working days	During Holiday
Social Networking Sites						
1.	Less than a hour	Facebook	62 (41.3)	36 (24.0)	35 (70.0)	15 (30.0)
2.		Twitter	24 (16.0)	24 (16.0)	11 (22.0)	10 (20.0)
3.		Linkedin	4 (2.7)	5 (3.3)	7 (14.0)	5 (10.0)
4.		Google Plus	10 (6.7)	3 (2.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
1.	1-3 hours	Facebook	43 (28.7)	48 (32.0)	11 (22.0)	24 (48.0)
2.		Twitter	2 (1.3)	1 (0.7)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
3.		Linkedin	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	1 (2.0)
4.		Google Plus	0 (0.0)	5 (4.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
1.	More than 3	Facebook	24 (16.0)	43 (28.7)	1 (2.0)	8 (16.0)
2.	hours	Twitter	1 (0.7)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)

*Multiple responses

Table 4 : Distribution of respondents according to interaction with social networking sites			(n=200*)
Sr. No.	Application	Under Graduate (n=150) f (%)	Post Graduate (n=50) f (%)
Social networking sites			
1.	Friends	136 (92.0)	38 (76.0)
2.	Relatives	69 (46.0)	17 (34.0)
3.	Teachers	37 (24.7)	13 (26.0)
4.	Unknown person	18 (12.0)	7 (14.0)

*Multiple responses

to get news of their favourite celebrity.

Facebook (FB) is used by a great variety of people, both for social and professional purposes; youth, in particular, use these new technologies to communicate and stay connected (Castells, 2007).

Effects of social networking sites on students :

Social networking sites affected students positively as well as negatively.

Positive effects of using social networking sites:

Table 5 highlights the positive effects of social networking sites on the students. The students (24.0%

and 40.0%) were happy to note that they could easily communicate with their friends, family members and relatives through these sites and also knew about social functions (53.3% and 42.0%). Other positive effects reported by the students were usefulness in study (20.0 % and 10.0%), creating awareness (6.7 % and 8.0%), career enhancement and job opportunities (6.7 % and 12.0%), improvement in personality (18.0% and 26.0%), improvement in communication skills (24.7 and 36.0%), increased typing speed (32.0% and 22.0%) and increased self confidence (8.7% and 10.0%).

Gillingham and Topper (1999) suggest the positive impacts of collaborative learning through social

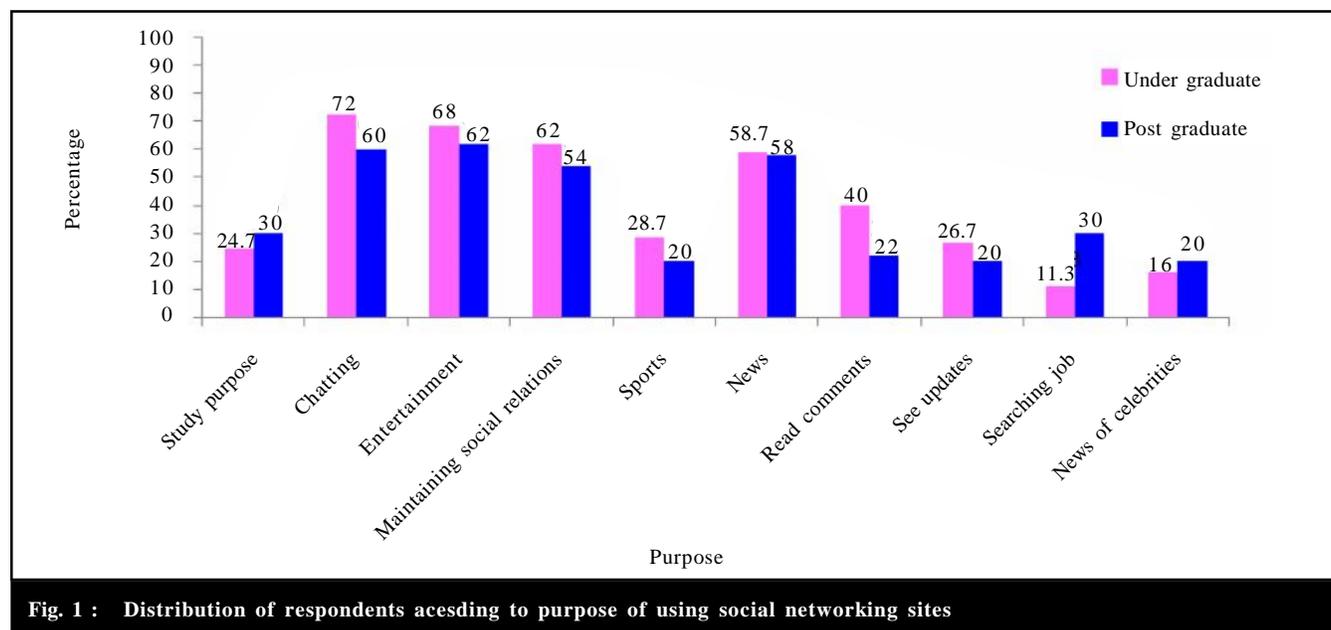| Table 5 : Distribution of respondents according to positive effects of using social networking sites			(n=200*)
Sr. No.	Positive effects	Under Graduate (n=150) f (%)	Post Graduate (n=50) f (%)
1.	Update knowledge /current affairs	40 (26.7)	18 (36.0)
2.	Communication with friends and relatives	36 (24.0)	20 (40.0)
3.	Get in touch with old friends	65 (45.3)	19 (38.0)
4.	Creating Awareness	10 (6.7)	4(8.0)
5.	Useful in study	31 (20.7)	5 (10.0)
6.	Career enhancement and job opportunities	10 (6.7)	6 (12.0)
7.	Get social news about friends and relatives	80 (53.3)	21 (42.0)
8.	News of celebrity personalities	24 (16.0)	10 (20.0)
9.	Improved personality	27 (18.0)	13 (26.0)
10.	Improved communication skills (reading and writing)	37 (24.7)	18 (36.0)
11.	Increased typing speed	48 (32.0)	11 (22.0)
12.	increased self confidence	13 (8.7)	5 (10.0)

*Multiple responses

Fig. 1 :   Distribution of respondents acesding to purpose of using social networking sites

networking (Facebook, WhatsApp, etc.) and its effects on the learning process.

Online communication among students and their instructor create an affective learning and teaching environment (Zengin *et al.*, 2011).

Negative effects of using social networking sites:

Table 6 highlights the negative effects of social networking sites. Students also realized that quite a length of time was wasted in chatting, reading comments and watching photos, thus they have less time for constructive work; 58.0 per cent Under-graduate and 68.0 per cent Post-graduate students reported this waste of time. Almost 41.3 per cent under graduate and 56 post graduate students reported that these sites lessen personal interaction as they conversed more through these sites. Excess usage also interrupted their studies (25.3% and 36.0%). Forty six per cent Post Graduate and 43.3 per cent Under-graduate students reported that they got late in submitting assignments once or several times due

to social networking sites. Students also faced problems due to fake requests or frequent contact by unknown persons (13.3 and 18.0%). Other negative effects reported by the students were related to health, loss of concentration, waste of money, misuse of photos, videos and documents, phone numberand even addiction and depression.

Arora (2014) had reported in her study that 76% of respondents agreed that social networking sites are harmful to physical health with only 9% disagreeing with it. Identical results were found in her study in which 75% of the students were of the opinion that spending a lot of time on social networking sites could be detrimental to health. Informal discussions revealed that lack of physical activity and sleep deprivation due to spending hours on social networking websites may very well pose mental and physical issues.

Kuppuswamy and Shankar (2010) explained that the social networks grab the total attention and concentration of the students and divert it towards non-

Sr. No.	Application	Under Graduate (n=150) f (%)	Post Graduate (n=50) f (%)
	Table 6 : Distribution of respondents according to negative effects of using social networking sites		**(n=200*)**
1.	Waste of time	87 (58.0)	34 (68.0)
2.	Health problem	10 (6.7)	2 (4.0)
3.	Interruption in study/Poor exam result	38 (25.3)	18 (36.0)
4.	Problems occurs due to contact with unknown /Fake person	20 (13.3)	9 (18.0)
5.	Break concentration on important things	40 (26.7)	12 (24.0)
6.	Waste money	10 (3.3)	5 (10.0)
7.	Misuse of photos, videos and documents	11 (14.7)	7 (14.0)
8.	Addiction	13 (8.7)	7 (14.0)
9.	Temptation towards girls	14 (9.3)	2 (4.0)
10.	Depression/ Demotivation	35 (23.3)	3 (6.0)
11.	Less personal meeting and interaction	62 (41.3)	28 (56.0)
12.	Late submission of assignments	65 (43.3)	23 (46.0)

*Multiple responses

Sr. No.	Aspects	Under Graduate (n=150)	Post Graduate (n=50)	Z value
	Table 7 : Significance of difference in utilization level of undergraduate and post graduate students of social networking sites			**(n= 200)**
			Mean	
1.	Accounts with social networking sites	1.70	2.10	2.3899**
2.	Duration of use	2.93	3.67	2.5341**
3.	Hours spent per day	1.75	1.56	0.9924 NS
4.	Purpose of use	3.27	3.62	1.0717 NS
5.	Positive effect	1.04	1.22	1.0694 NS
6.	Negative effect	1.3	1.1	1.1892 NS
	Overall utilization	12	13.27	1.3359 NS

** indicates significance of value at P=0.05   NS= Non-significant

educational, unethical and inappropriate actions such as useless chatting, time killing in random searches and not doing their jobs.

Comparison of utilization level of undergraduate and post graduate students of social networking sites :

The mean scores computed for assessing use of social networking sites by undergraduate and post graduate students in six different aspects *i.e.* account, period and purpose of using, hours spent per day and positive and negative effects of social networking sites. As it is apparent from the data that there is no significant difference between under graduate and post graduate students regarding utilization and effects of social networking sites for four aspects *i.e.* hours spent (1.75 and 1.56), purpose of using (3.27 and 3.62), positive (1.04 and 1.22) and negative effect (1.3 and 1.1). Data further reveal that more number of post graduate students had account with social networking sites and using those sites from long duration than under graduate students as calculated 'z' value was greater than its tabulated value at 5% level of significant for these two aspects. It was due to the only reason that post graduate students were aware and using these site from long time. Overall it is concluded that there no significant difference was found for utilization of social networking sites by undergraduate and post graduate students (Table 7).

Conclusion :

It can be concluded that majority of the students used and preferred Facebook and had accounts with this site more than a year ago. Students were using these sites in limit during college days but the usage increased during holidays. Students used these sites for chatting with friends and relatives, entertainment, maintaining social relations and getting news. Thus it can be concluded that these sites affect the students positively as well as negatively depending on the amount and purpose of usage. Although students are already using social networking sites for constructive purpose but the usage can be improved for their betterment. Social networking sites should consider having pages or features for students which would encourage them to do academics while being on the site so as to not have a negative effect on their studies.

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