

**A STUDY ON IMPACT OF SOCIAL NETWORKING
WEBSITES USED AMONG THE COLLEGE STUDENTS IN
COIMBATORE**

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ABSTRACT

The paper entitled “A study on impact of social networking websites used among the college students in Coimbatore” briefs about college student’s attraction towards social networking websites. This research is conducted to explore the impact of social networking websites and its role on academic life and learning experiences of students. This work scrutinizes about the uses in using social networking websites for students. Millions of students are spending many hours for social networking websites. The study endows an overview of various popular social networking websites of Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, LinkedIn, Google plus, Hi5 etc. The questions were also framed based on the social networking websites and answers were collected from the students of various colleges in Coimbatore. The analysis has been conducted from the questionnaire, findings were made and appropriate solutions were also given. It explains various social networking websites briefly and its impact on students. Finally the study imparts with findings by using percentage testing, hypothesis testing namely chi – square and average rank analysis based on the data collected from the questionnaire.

Keywords: Attraction, Colleges, Students, Websites,

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Introduction

Twenty first century is experiencing different kind of attitudes and habits among students especially in this computer world and in the mobile phone network. The computers are occupying every life style, every business activity and almost playing a vital role of more necessity in this society. The world has been made flat by the World Wide Web. Today, we live in a world where contacting someone, sharing our journeys as well as our thoughts is just one click away. Social networking websites are now available to cater to one's immediate social needs.

Today, social networking websites become a phenomenon on this Internet collaboration era. Social networking websites are considered as a new approach to get connected with people wherever they are while the technology, as well as feature supporting it to grow. The characteristic of social networking is gathering people with their colleagues, so they can still keep in touch. When the people are connected, they usually gather, interact, share, and collaborates each other.

Social networking is a way of communicating with people whether far or nearby places with the use of computers and other devices like mobiles which connect to the World Wide Web. A social networking website allows users to create a public profile and interact with other user as an online platform. Social networking websites usually have a new user who share a connection and then allow others on their list to confirm or deny the connection. After that the new users can search the networks of his friend's connections to make more connections. A social networking site may also be known as a social website or a social networking website. Use of Social Networking Services is quickly becoming the number one online activity with 83% of young people reporting they use social networking websites on a regular basis.

The rapid advances in technology have changed the way we learn and communicate. In terms of personal interaction, social networking tools such as MySpace, Facebook, Twitter, Texting, and YouTube etc have become common methods of communication for young consumers and they are gaining interest and acceptance from consumers of all ages. Mobile phones became smart phones and digital transmissions along with data transmissions are becoming an important tool for student's day to day activities. In this junction, google

introduced a social network as “Orkut”, followed by Mark Zuckerberg’s “Facebook” and both of them paved the way for more virtual platform of meeting place for human society.

Social networking websites have become the latest trend famous among youths especially among college students. Students can make friends, interact with them, and get to know the various cultures and places through them and more while sitting at the same desk.

An overview of popular social networking websites

SOCIAL NETWORKING WEBSITES	STARTED (YEAR)	CEO	FOUNDER	HEAD QUARTERS	NUMBER OF USERS
Facebook	2004	Mark Zuckerberg	Mark Zuckerberg	Menlo Park California US	864 Million Users
WhatsApp	2009	Jan Koum	Jan Koum and Brian Acton	Mountain view, California, US	700 Million Users
Twitter	2006	Dick Costolo	Jack Dorsey, Noah Glass, Biz Stone, Evan Williams	San Francisco, California, US	284 Million Users
LinkedIn	2003	Jeff Weiner	Reid Hoffman	Mountain view, California, U.S	259 Million Users
Google Plus	2011	Eric Schmidt	Larry Page, Sergey Brin	Mountain view, CA US	540 Million Users
Hi5	2004	Bill Gossman In April 2009	Ramu Yalamanchi	San Francisco, California, US	46.1 Million Users

Source: www.wikipedia.org

Uses of social networking websites

Social Networking websites are of great help in the youth's daily life; however, it has positive and negative effects which depend on how a person will utilize it. Some advantages of social networking websites to students are

- 1) **Low costs** - Social networking websites for personal and business use is free. It is an easy and user friendly in using these social network websites without any charges.
- 2) **Interact with Friends** - User can communicate to their friends from far away places with many social networking websites functions. They can setup conversations in groups and share their ideas and opinion with the help of such websites. People can socialize virtually.
- 3) **Use various features** - It has many features where a person can join with various communities, applications and do many more activities online. They can post and exchange messages, update their status, communicate with various entertainment pictures and videos provided by other social networking websites.
- 4) **Freedom in sharing their opinions** - The rise of social networking websites have been phenomenal partly due to the immense freedom it affords. They can share ideas in various fields with freedom whether they 'like' or 'unlike' it. They can also give comments on their friend's ideas.
- 5) **Services for students by social networks** - There are other activities provided by social networks, such as for health services, academic support, counseling, library etc... for students career and their life.

Statement of the problem

Social networking websites is an online platform to communicate with old classmates, friends, relatives, colleagues etc. it creates lots of new communication opportunities and possibilities that were unable to be achieved in the past by other media technologies. The social networking websites also have problems in maintaining its privacy. Students get addicted easily and it is waste of time. So it is slightly affecting the students. Just like service industry it is very difficult to refer to which social networking websites provides, "The Best" among the available after conducting a brief study. Even then, some of them get easily popular and familiar among college students. The success of social networking websites depends mainly upon inspiring the

college student life. Hence an attempt has been made by us to study the student satisfaction towards social networking websites in Coimbatore city.

Objectives of the study

The following are the objectives of this study

1. To study the awareness level among college students about social networking websites.
2. To study the students satisfaction level towards social networking websites.
3. To provide some suggestions based on this analysis.

Research methodology

+ Data collection

In this study both primary and secondary sources of data will be included. The primary data for this research study will be collected through a questionnaire; the data of questionnaire was collected from 100 respondents which served as the primary source of data for the analysis of this research and the secondary data is collected through various books, journals and websites.

+ Sampling design

100 respondents were randomly selected from college students of Coimbatore. Respondents were only students who filled a questionnaire the collected data were carefully assessed to the statistical software i.e. SPSS and the results were taken as they were required for the analysis of this research study.

+ Analytical techniques

SPSS Software used in this study for analysis of factors that determine the impact of social networking websites on students. Tools used for analyzing this study are

- 1) Percentage method.
- 2) Chi-square analysis.
- 3) Average rank analysis.

Limitations of the study

1. The study is limited to Coimbatore city only.
2. The study is limited to the social networking websites impacts based on students only.

3. In the questionnaire, a few respondents may provide fake answers.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Table 1: Demographic profile of respondents

Personal Factors	No of Respondents	Percentage %
Gender		
Male	40	40
Female	60	60
Age		
17-19 yrs	34	34
20-23 yrs	52	52
Above 23 yrs	14	14
Level of Education		
Under Graduate	37	37
Post Graduate	50	50
Professional	13	13

Total Respondents is 100, N= 100

Interpretation

Majority of gender are female respondents, belonging to age group of 20-23 years, they are qualified upto post graduate of education.

Table 2: Students response to social networking websites

Students attitude towards social networking websites	No of Respondents	Percentage %	
Type of social networking websites Used	Facebook	41	41
	Google Plus	24	24
	LinkedIn	7	7
	Twitter	2	2
	Hi5	3	3
	WhatsApp	23	23
Purpose of social networking websites	Studying	26	26
	Playing games	9	9
	Making friends	12	12

	Getting connected with friends	50	50
	Others	3	3
Spending time per day	Less than an hour	39	39
	1-2 hour	36	36
	2-3 hour	18	18
	3-4 hour	4	4
	More than 4 hour	3	3
Affecting extension of social networking Websites	Seriously affecting	17	17
	Slightly affecting	47	47
	No impact	17	17
	Slightly helping	6	6
	Seriously helping	13	13
Interacting in social networking websites	Close friends	47	47
	Family	3	3
	Old classmates	32	32
	People that live far away	10	10
	Strangers/people who you do not already know	8	8

Interpretation

Most of the respondents are using Facebook. Majority of respondent's purpose is getting connected with friends, they are spending time is Less than an hour, feel that social networking websites are slightly affecting and they are interacting through social networking websites to become close friends.

Table 3: Two – way classification of age and attractive sites of the respondents

AGE	Facebook	Google Plus	LinkedIn	Twitter	Hi5	Whatsapp	Total
17-19 yrs	10	0	1	1	2	20	34
20-23 yrs	18	13	0	0	0	21	52
above 23 yrs	3	3	4	0	3	1	14
Total	31	16	5	1	5	42	100

Chi-Square Analysis

Hypothesis

Null hypothesis (H₀) – There is no significant relationship between age and attractive sites of the respondents

Factors	Chi-Square Value	Degree of Freedom	P-Value	Result
Age/ Attractive sites of respondents	45.961	10	.000	Rejected null hypothesis and significant

Interpretation

From the above Chi- Square table, it is clear that the P- value is less than significant value 0.05. Hence the null hypothesis is rejected. Thus it is found that there is relationship between age and attractive sites of the respondents towards social networking sites.

Table 4: Two – way classification of education level and purpose of using social networking sites of the respondents.

Level of education	Studying	Playing games	Making friends	Getting connected with friends	Others	Total
Under Graduate	9	3	6	18	1	37
Post Graduate	13	3	4	30	0	50
Professional	4	3	2	2	2	13
Total	26	9	12	50	3	100

Chi-Square Analysis

Hypothesis

Null Hypotheses (H₀) – There is no significant relationship between education and Purpose of using social networking sites of the respondents

Factors	Chi-Square Value	Degree of Freedom	P-Value	Result
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Education Qualification / Purpose of using social networking sites	17.174	8	.028	Rejected Null hypothesis and Significant
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Interpretation

From the above Chi- Square table, it is clear that the P- Value is less than significant value 0.05. Hence the null hypothesis is rejected. Thus it is found that there is relationship between education qualification and purpose of using social networking sites of the respondents.

Table 5: Average rank analysis – Students attitude towards social networking site

Factors	Rank Value	I 10	II 9	III 8	IV 7	V 6	VI 5	VII 4	VIII 3	IX 2	X 1	Mean	Rank
Looks and Layouts	Nos	8	7	8	4	9	1	11	18	15	19	4.41	6
Business Networking	Nos	8	4	5	1	12	16	10	12	10	22	4.33	7
Jobs	Nos	4	2	6	5	12	16	22	26	5	2	4.71	5
Friends	Nos	18	15	20	11	9	7	6	5	3	6	6.92	1
Blogging	Nos	2	3	5	8	9	9	11	15	14	24	3.83	10
Security	Nos	6	6	4	7	8	8	11	12	18	20	4.19	8
User Friendly	Nos	21	13	8	7	12	11	14	9	3	2	6.58	3
Communities	Nos	3	6	7	12	22	18	17	1	8	7	5.40	4
Chatting	Nos	20	17	15	10	8	7	6	2	11	4	6.82	2
Risk	Nos	5	3	1	2	13	17	19	10	10	20	4.08	9

Interpretation

The Above table exhibits the Weighted Average Rank Analysis with regard to the factors influencing respondent’s preference towards social networking sites. Friends is the major influencing factor for selecting social networking sites as it has been ranked first (score 692). Chatting is ranked as second, User friendly and Communities are ranked as third and fourth. Jobs is ranked as fifth and Looks and Layouts is ranked as sixth respectively. Business Networking and security are ranked as seventh and eighth. Risk and Blogging are ranked as ninth and tenth respectively.

Suggestions

From the above analysis following suggestions to improve the service of various social networking sites are

- The social networking sites are most popular among the youngster and it has attracting features to approach them easily. More or less students get addicted to it. They used spend hours in those social networking sites, which can obviously degrade the students academic performance. To avoid this it can be suggested there could be some cost for every message, which are send to others. Then the students will limit their spending time in social networking sites.
- Many of these websites are aiming to attract the students, but very few websites are available for other categories of people. So it can suggest concentrating in launching suitable websites for other category of people, who are in business and other professional activity.
- Some of the students give their phone number, address to unknown person so they may face problems. These sites should provide privacy settings to their members, to avoid these situations.

Conclusion

The conducted study is an attempt to give an overview of social networking websites. This study also gives a statistical survey in expressing college student's opinions on the use of social networking sites. Students welcomed using social networking website as they love spending time on these websites academically and also communicating with their friends. Students use social networking websites for communication personally as well as professionally to contact with others. Currently Facebook and Google plus is the most famous site used by the students, remaining LinkedIn and Twitter are used by mainly by business people. It has become one of the largest platforms in the world for sharing real time information. It also allows users to interact and collaborate with each other in a social media dialogue as creators of user generated content in a virtual community, in contrast to websites where users are limited to the passive viewing of content that was created for them.

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