

## Use of Social Networking Sites by PG Students and Research Scholars of Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi (India) : A Survey

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### ABSTRACT

Advancement in information communication technology has significant impact on the communication and dissemination of information on the web. Web is a common platform to acquire and share information without any discrimination. Social networking sites empower to the users for efficiently, expedite and exchange their ideas, thoughts, on social, cultural and academic interest. This paper deals with use of social networking website and describes the awareness, popularity and frequency of visit. It is also highlighted the purposes to utilize social networking websites. This study also explored the opinions of the users regarding barriers, advantages & disadvantages of social networking sites.

**Keywords :** Social networking, use and Information technology, social media, Information dissemination, information communication.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Social networking is an assemblage of individuals into specific group e.g. students of particular stream. It is a relation between people belonging to different regions but having same purpose. Social networking is possible in school, college, university etc. It is a popular communication tool or channel on the internet where peoples come to online using websites. These websites are known as social networking sites. It is an online community of users of the internet. The socialization means accessing profile of the users, expressing views on social issues or making contacts with them. These are web based services allowing users to create own profile of interest and share it with friends, colleagues, professionals, etc. The online community of people share information, news, hobbies and political issues in the social networking sites.2 Presently many libraries are utilizing social networking websites for the promotion of library services and getting feedback from the users which is used for the betterment of the library activities and services. Therefore, it is necessary to evaluate the use of the social networking website by the library users. The membership of these websites is open for all, those who have an e-mail ID of any service providers like Yahoo, Google, Rediffmail, Hotmail, etc. can signed and utilized it.

### 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Sharma & Saini (2012) explored that the students of age group from 20 to 24 in BBA University are more aware with the use of SNSs. It is also highlighted that female students are more interactive with SNSs than male students. Facebook is most Popular SNS. Devi (2012) found that students were well aware of facebook, youtube and twitter because of the increasing popularity of these social networking sites among the public. Internet is the main source of information about these sites. It also highlighted that they preferred face book, blog, youtube and twitter for exchanging information through social networking sites. (Marion & Omotayo, 2011) stated that majority of the respondent (97.5%) are aware about online social networking and facebook site is most used by them. Kaveri and others (2008) found that myspace and facebook are popular online communication form among college students for manking network, instant messaging and face to face. Yoojung (2011) highlighted the cultural difference in the utilization of technology among college students in the US and Korea and found that major motives for using social network sites are same other than the cultural difference between the two countries regarding developing and managing social relationships. Charles (2008) has conducted surney in the large U.S. univerity in interviews with 18 Facebook users regarding social capital, self-esteem and use social networking sites. Roblyer and others (2010) have found students used facebook more tha faculty members.

It also highlighted that faculty members use email for personal and educational purpose. Sebastián (2009) study reveals that Facebook has strengthened students' life satisfaction, social trust, public and political participation whereas those who fear with Facebook has negative effects on young adults.

**3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:**

1. To explore the awareness, frequently used and popular social networking sites
2. To locate the places of access, frequency of visits and time spend on social networking sites.
3. To investigate the purpose of using social networking sites.
4. To explore advantages, disadvantages and barriers of the social networking sites.

**4. METHODOLOGY:**

In order to assess the exact status of the topic, a survey has been conducted. A detailed questionnaire was formulated to collect the information for data analysis. Pilot study to assess the accuracy, usefulness of the questionnaire was conducted followed by necessary amendments/ modifications. The researchers personally visited Banaras Hindu University, circulated and collected the filled-in questionnaires. Thereafter the collected data was codified, classified and tabulated for data analysis.

**5. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS:**

**5.1 Details of the Respondents**

Table 1  
Details of the respondents

Sl. no	Faculty	Questionnaire distributed		Questionnaire Received	
		R.S.	P.G.	R.S.	P.G.
1	Faculty of art	33	53	29	48
2	Faculty of Science	26	45	24	37
3	Faculty of commerce	28	47	25	42
4	Faculty of social science	30	45	27	41
5	Faculty of management	26	45	23	42
6	Faculty of education	27	40	24	38
7	Faculty of visual art	25	45	22	41
8	Faculty of medical science	00	10	00	9
	Total	200	370	174	298

Table 1 depicts that 570 questionnaires were distributed and 472 questionnaires received along with the response. It was indicative of healthy participation by the users. Total 82.80% of questionnaire received.

**5.2 Awareness of social networking sites**

Table - 2  
Awareness of social networking sites

S.No.	Awareness of SNSs	R.S.	P.G.	Total	Response %
1	Yes	174	292	466	98.72%
2	No	0	6	6	1.27%

Table-2 represents that 98.72% of the users are aware of social networking sites while only 1.27% of the users don't have any idea of it. This indicates that all research scholars and most of the P.G. students are aware of SNSs.

**5.3 Sources of awareness**

Table 3  
Sources of awareness

Sl.No.	Things	Users		Total	%
		R.S.	P.G.		
1	Internet	138	288	426	91.41%
2	Newspaper	94	100	194	41.63%
3	Friends	132	150	282	60.51%
4	Magazine	50	80	130	27.89%

Table-3 depicts that majority of users 91.41% are aware of social networking sites through internet, 60.51% by friends and 27.89% through magazine. It highlights that mostly users gather information through internet and friends.

**5.4. Most popular social networking sites among users**

Table - 4 : Most popular social networking sites among users

S.No.	SnS	Users		Total	%
		R.S.	P.G.		
1	Facebook	167	229	396	84.97%
2	Orkut	131	150	281	60.30%
3	Youtube	141	200	341	73.17%
4	Flicker	100	80	180	38.62%
5	Twitter	148	160	308	66.09%
6	Mv space	30	50	80	17.16%
7	Blog	60	60	120	25.75%
8	LinkedIn	18	38	56	12.01%
9	Slideshare	7	28	35	7.51%

Table-4 shows that Facebook is the most popular site among research scholars and P.G. students. Youtube is a second choice of the users while slideshare is the least popular site.

**5.5. Frequency of visiting social networking sites by users**

Table - 5 : Frequency of visiting social networking sites by users

Sl.no.	Day	Users		Total	%
		R.S.	P.G.		
1	Evervdav	90	140	230	49.35%
2	Once in a week	32	60	92	19.74%
3	Twice in a week	22	90	112	24.03%
4	Occasionally	15	17	32	6.86%

Table-5 represents that 49.35% of user's visit social networking sites every day. Few users (6.86%) use it occasionally. Result of the survey shows that average number of students and research scholars use SNSs.

### 5.6. Time spend by users on social networking sites

Table - 6: Time spend by users on social networking sites

Sl.no.	Time	Users		Total N=466	%
		R.S.	P.G.		
1	Less than one hour	85	100	185	39.69 %
2	Less than two hour	30	80	110	23.27%
3	Two to four hour	30	82	112	24.29%
4	Four to six hour	10	49	59	12.95%

Table-6 depicts that most of the users (39.69%) spend less than one hours and 23.27% less than two hours while 12.95% spend four to six hour on social networking sites.

### 5.7. Ranking of social networking sites by users

Table - 7 : Ranking of social networking sites by users

SNSs	Lowest	Mid-Lowest	Middle	Mid-highest	Highest
Facebook	44	9	11	80	<b>332</b>
Youtube	18	30	50	<b>320</b>	86
Flicker	23	12	21	21	
Twitter	14	22	<b>344</b>	11	11
Orkut	32	<b>328</b>	11	11	19
Classmet	19	15	18	15	15
Mv space	22	15	17	14	
Linkedin	25	18	11	11	15
Blog	<b>297</b>	45	11	11	16

Table-7 highlights that majority of users prefer face book, u tube is second preference while twitter is third one. Orkut and Blog is fourth and fifth choice respectively.

### 5.10. Purpose of using social networking sites

Table - 10 : Purpose of using social networking sites

Sl. no.	Purpose	users		Total N=466	%
		R.S.	P.G.		
1	To express individually and creativity	152	251	403	86.48%
2	To discuss social and cultural events	141	253	394	84.54%
3	Updating knowledge	170	263	433	92.91%
4	Sharing information ,comments ,opinion	145	265	410	87.98%
5	Sharing photograph and videos	142	222	364	78.11%
6	To find and share Topic related interest	140	235	375	80.47%
7	For entertainment	148	246	394	84.54%
8	Making network of friends, professionals and academicians	164	255	419	89.91%
9	To keep in touch with friends	147	260	407	87.33%
10	Improvement of writing skills and publishing	140	21	161	34.54%

Significant purposes of using social networking sites are depicted in table no.10. It was found that 92.91% for updating knowledge, 89.91% for networking with friends, professionals, academicians, 87.33% for being in touch with friends, 86.48% of the students and research scholars use it for expressing individuality and creativity, 84.54% for discussion on social & cultural events and entertainment, 87.98% for sharing information and expression of views, 78.11% for sharing photograph and videos, 80.47% for finding topic of related interest and 34.54% for improvement of writing skills and publishing .

### 5.8. Places where users mostly using social networking sites

Table - 8 : Places where users mostly using social networking sites

Sl.no.	Places	Users		Total N=466	%
		R.S.	P.G.		
1	Home	60	110	170	36.48%
2	Cyber café	20	46	66	14.17%
3	Campus	80	120	200	42.91%
4	Library	10	20	30	6.43%

Table-8 shows that 42.91% students and research scholars use social networking sites within the campus, 36.48% use at home, 14.17% in cyber café and remaining 6.43% at the library through proxy websites as university library has banned social networking sites.

### 5.9. Devices used for accessing social networking sites

Table - 9. Devices used for accessing social networking sites

Sl.no.	Devices	Users		Total N=466	%
		R.S.	P.G.		
1	Desktop	55	111	166	35.62%
2	Mobile	36	44	80	17.16%
3	Laptop	69	131	200	42.91%
4	I-pad	9	11	20	4.29%

Aforesaid table depicts that 42.91% students and research scholars use laptop for accessing social networking sites, 35.62% use desktop, 17.16% use mobile and rest 4.29% use I-pad.

### 5.11. Advantages of the social networking sites

Table - 11 : Advantages of the social networking sites

Sl no.	Advantages	users		Total N=466	%
		R.S.	P.G.		
1	Sharing information .comments opinion etc.	168	292	432	92.70%
2	Effective and Expedite communication	139	255	366	78.54%
3	Latest news / Alerts	163	276	411	88.19%
4	Quick answers to the queries	144	246	362	77.68%
5	To know the profile of any SNS users	149	234	355	76.18%
6	Wider recognition and publicity	142	26	140	30.04%

Table-11 represents that 92.70% of research scholars and students are of the view that sharing information, comments or opinion through SNSs is advantageous. 88.19% agreed for latest news/alerts, 78.54% opted for effective communication, 77.68% agreed for quick answers to the queries, 76.18% to know the users profile, 30.04% for wider recognition and publicity.

### 5.12. Disadvantages of the social networking sites

Table - 12 : Disadvantages of the social networking sites

Sl no.	Disadvantages	users		Total N=466	%
		R.S.	P.G.		
1	Dirty comments posted by users	152	275	399	85.62%
2	Pornography literature posted by strangers	161	263	396	84.97%
3	Alerted / combination of photograph by strangers	148	247	367	78.75%
4	Fake information on the social networking sites	164	269	405	86.90%
5	Not control over the social networking sites	146	266	384	82.40%
6	Lack of privacy	137	238	347	74.46%

Table-12 elaborates disadvantages of the social networking sites. The data reveals that 86.90% of students agreed with fake information available on the social networking sites. 85.62% students and research scholars accepted for the presence of dirty comments, 84.97% agreed with pornography literature posted by strangers, 78.75% students abide by alerted / combination of photograph by strangers. 82.40% students agreed with no control over the social networking sites. 74.46% students agreed with lack of privacy.

### 5.13. Barriers on social networking sites

Table - 13. Barriers on social networking sites

Sl.no.	Places	Users		Total N=466	%
		R.S.	P.G.		
1	Internet speed	154	301	427	91.63%
2	Parents	30	93	95	20.38%
3	Teacher	10	35	17	3.64%
4	University administration	20	65	57	12.23%

Table-13 shows barriers on social networking sites among users. The study reveals that 91.63% of students and research scholars opined that the Internet speed is one of the barriers in making use of SNSs, 20.38% of students are in agreement that parents are also an important barrier and 3.64% of students are of the view against teachers. 12.23% of P.G. students and research scholars of BHU informed that university administration also imposes restrictions in using social networking sites within the campus or library.

## 6. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION:

The study reveals that 98.72% of P.G. students and research scholars have awareness of social networking sites and majority of users (91.41%) became aware of it through internet. It is found that face book is one of the most popular SNSs among users, you tube stands as next to it while slide share is the least popular site. It is also came to notice that 49.35% of users visit social networking sites everyday, 39.69% spend less than one hours, while 23.27% spend less than two hours. Only 12.95% of users spend four to six hours everyday on social networking sites. The survey also highlights that majority of users (42.91%) utilized social networking sites within the campus and make use of laptop, where as 35% use desktop, 16.3% use mobile and remaining 5.8% use I-pad for accessing social networking sites.

The survey reflect the main purpose of the utilization of social networking sites and are expressing individuality and creativity, discussion on social and cultural events, updating knowledge, sharing information, comments, opinion, photograph, videos, etc.. Networking with friends, professionals, academicians and be in touch with them. Major advantage of social networking sites is effective and expeditious communication which helps in communicating message, ideas, comments on various topics and sharing information on different files and formats. The study reveals that majority of users agreed that few persons post dirty comments, pornography literature, alerted photographs etc. and transmit it on the social networking sites.

The users are of the view that we don't have any control over the social networking sites and there is lack of privacy. Majority of users (91.63%) expressed that the Internet speed is one of the barriers.

20.38% of users considered parents as a barrier, 12.23 % of users agreed with university administration as the barrier imposing restrictions on social networking sites within the campus or library. The most of the studies highlighted that the majority of the users are aware about the social networking website. Libraries are utilizing social networking sites for the sharing of the information among library users and getting feedback from them. The study also reveals that face book is the first choice of the libraries and users. In the foreign countries most of the libraries utilizing social networking sites for sharing of information related to product, services, and programmes. In India very few libraries are using social networking sites. Thus the library professionals should come forward and utilized social networking sites for promotions of library product and services.

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