

Social Networking Sites - Awareness and Perception of the Students Community in Coimbatore District

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Abstract: In the digital society, social networking sites play an imperative role among the students community. They are the wide users of social networking sites. The social networking sites, such as, face book, twitter, linkedin, google plus, etc., offers the scope for connecting the people at worldwide and receive updates at any time. It helps the people to create online profile and share information with any person at global level. It assists the students to obtain information regarding purchasing of product, academic matters, and to build cordial relationship with friends, relatives and class mates. They used to spend elongated period of time in chatting with friends, uploading of images and photos etc.. A sample of 1000 respondents from 48 arts and science colleges in Coimbatore district has been taken for the study by adopting quota sampling technique. The statistical tools, such as, percentage analysis, Descriptive statistics, ANOVA and t- test have been applied to analyse the data. The study has concluded that the majority of the students are aware about face book, you tube and instagram. They are highly aware about chatting, message texting, uploading of photos and videos, building of group conversation etc.. They have strongly agreed that social networking sites helps to connect the people at worldwide and eliminates the distance barriers. The demographic factor, namely, age has a significant difference with the students' perception score. The proper usage of social networking sites by the students community may enhance their knowledge, skill and attitude.

Key Words: Digital society, online profile, knowledge, skill and attitude

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I. Introduction

In the digital society, social networking sites play an imperative role among the students community. They are the wide users of social networking sites. The social networking sites, such as, face book, twitter, linkedin, google plus, etc., offers the scope for connecting the people at worldwide and receive updates at any time. It helps the people to create online profile and share information with any person at global level. It assists the students to obtain information about purchasing of product, academic matters, and to build cordial relationship with friends, relatives and class mates. They used to spend elongated period of time in chatting with friends, uploading of images and photos etc.. In this backdrop, the paper focuses on the awareness level and perception of the students community regarding social networking sites.

II. Review of Literature

Trisha Dowerah Baruah (2012) has conducted a study on "Effectiveness of social media as a tool of communication and its potential for technology enabled connections: A micro-level study". The objectives of the study are i) To analyse the impact of social media as a means of communication tool. ii) To assess the usefulness of social media as a tool of communication and iii) To assess the potential of social media as a tool for technology enabled connection. A sample of 200 respondents consists of students, teachers, engineers, marketing professionals, businessmen etc from Guwahati city have been taken for the study. She has stated that social media has been classified into social networking sites, such as, blogs, content generating and sharing sites and user appraisal sites. She has found that the majority of the respondents are using social networking and it is an interactive medium. She has concluded that the social media can be effective for building social authority.

Gemma Tur and Victoria Marin (2015) have made a study on "Enhancing learning with the social media: student teachers' perceptions on Twitter in a debate activity". They have focused on the educational experience of students using the micro blogging platform, and twitter for debate activities in three groups in different teachers' education programs. The objectives of the study is to empower student teachers personal learning environments, engage student participation and enhance their use of social media and mobile devices for learning. The result shows a positive perception towards the use of social media in education and students'

willingness for future learning opportunities from Twitter and the use of mobile technology were also envisioned.

III. Objectives of the Study

The study focuses on the following objectives:

- ❖ To know the demographic profile of the students and their awareness level regarding social networking sites in arts and science colleges.
- ❖ To examine the perception of the students regarding social networking sites in arts and science colleges.

IV. Research Methodology

Source of data

The study is mainly based on primary data. The data have been collected from 1000 students. Secondary data have also been collected from the journals, books, magazines and websites.

Sample Frame and Size

Coimbatore district is a progressive district and assumes greater importance in the economic development of Tamilnadu. It has 6 universities, 50 arts and science colleges, 67 engineering colleges, 38 college of education etc., In this study, the students of arts and science colleges have been considered. The following table shows the total number of Arts and Science colleges in Coimbatore district.

Table 1: Arts and Science Colleges in Coimbatore District

S.No	Name of the Institution	No of Institutions
1	Government arts and science college	1
2	Aided colleges – Arts and science	8
3	Self financing colleges – arts and science	41
	Total	50

Source : *Joint Director of College Education*

Out of 50 arts and science colleges, only 48 colleges are functioning. A sample of 1000 students from 48 arts and science colleges in Coimbatore district has been taken for the study by adopting quota sampling technique.

Tools for analysis

The following tools are used for analysis:

- Percentage Analysis
- Descriptive Statistics
- Analysis of Variance and
- t-test

Hypothesis

H₀: The demographic profile of the students does not have a significant difference with the perception of the students regarding social networking sites.

V. Analysis and Interpretation

Demographic profile of the college students

The demographic profile of the college students have been presented in the table 2

Table 2: Demographic profile of the college students

Demographic factors		No. of Respondents	Per cent
Age	19 years	159	15.9
	20 years	700	70.0
	21 years	119	11.9
	22 years and above	22	2.2
Gender	Male	480	48.0
	Female	520	52.0
Course	Arts	357	35.7
	Science	297	29.7
	Commerce & Management	346	34.6
Family structure	Joint Family	269	26.9
	Nuclear Family	731	73.1
Students doing Part time Job	Yes	229	22.9
	No	771	77.1
Per month earning in part time job	Less than Rs.3000	131	57.2

	Rs.3000-Rs.6000	78	34.1
	Rs6001- Rs.9000	8	3.5
	Rs.9001-Rs.12000	3	1.3
	Above Rs.12000	9	3.9
Monthly income of the family	Less than Rs.10000	303	30.3
	Rs.10001-Rs.20000	371	37.1
	Rs.20001-Rs.30000	125	12.5
	Rs.30001-Rs.40000	76	7.6
	Above Rs. 40000	125	12.5
	Total	1000	100.0

Age of the students

Youngsters play a vital role in accessing the social networking sites. Table 2 reveals that, out of 1000 respondents, 15.9 per cent of the respondents are in the age of 19 years, 70 per cent of the respondents are belongs to the age of 20 years, 11.9 per cent of the respondents are belongs to the age of 21 years and 2.2 per cent of the respondents are belongs to the age of 22 years and above.

Gender of the students

Out of 1000 respondents, 48 per cent of the respondents are male and 52 per cent of the respondents are female. Among 50 colleges for the study, 5 colleges are women college, Hence, the women respondents are more than male respondents.

Course

Out of 1000 respondents, 35.7 per cent of the respondents are belongs to arts discipline, 34.6 per cent of the respondents are pursuing commerce and management programme, and 29.7 per cent of the respondents are pursuing science programme.

Family structure

Among 1000 respondents, 73.1 per cent of the respondents are in nuclear family and 26.9 per cent of the respondents are in joint family.

Part time Job

77.1 per cent of the respondents are not doing a part time job and 22.9 per cent of the respondents are doing a part time job.

Per month earning in part time job

57.2 per cent of the respondents have been earning less than Rs.3,000, 34.1 per cent of the respondents have been earning Rs.3,000-Rs.6,000, 3.9 per cent of the respondents have been earning above Rs.12,000, 3.5 per cent of the respondents are earning between Rs.6,001-Rs.9,000 and 1.3 per cent of the respondents are earning Rs.9,001-Rs.12,000.

Monthly Income of the family

Out of 1000 respondents, 37.1 per cent of the respondents have a monthly income of Rs.10, 001-20,000, 30.3 per cent of the respondents have been earning less than Rs.10,000, 12.5 per cent of the respondents have a monthly income of Rs.20,001-Rs.30,000 and also earning above Rs.40,000 and 7.6 per cent of the respondents have a monthly income of Rs.30,001-40,000.

Awareness of social networking sites

The following table shows the awareness of arts and science college students towards social networking sites

Table 3 - Awareness of social networking sites

Social networking sites	No.	Per cent
Facebook	836	83.6
Twitter	447	44.7
LinkedIn	118	11.8
Google Plus	464	46.4
YouTube	834	83.4
Instagram	654	65.4
Pinterest	142	14.2
Tumblr	46	4.6
Snap chat	256	25.6
Reddit	42	4.2
Others	340	34.0

The table 3 shows that 83.6 per cent of the college students are aware about face book, 83.4 per cent of the college students are aware of you tube, 65.4 per cent of the college students are aware of Instagram, 46.4 per cent of the college students are aware of google plus, 44.7 per cent of the college students are aware of twitter, 34 per cent of the college students are aware of other social media networking sites, 25.6 per cent of the college

students are aware of snap chat, 14.2 per cent of the college students are aware of pin interest, 11.8 per cent of the students are aware of linkedhn, 4.6 per cent of the students are aware of tumblr and 4.2 per cent of the students are aware of reddit.

Source of Awareness

The following table shows the source of awareness of college students regarding social networking sites

Table 4-Source of awareness

Source of Awareness	No.	Per cent
Self	256	25.6
Relatives	52	5.2
Friends	540	54.0
TV & Radio	124	12.4
Newspaper& Magazine	95	9.5

The table 4 shows the source of awareness, out of 1000 respondents, 54 per cent of the students have known about the social networking sites through their friends, 25.6 per cent of the respondents have known about the social networking sites themselves, 12.4 per cent of the respondents have received information about the social networking sites through television and radio, 9.5 percent of the respondents by newspaper and magazine and 5.2 per cent of the respondents through their relatives.

Awareness of Social Networking Sites features

The following table shows the awareness of the features of social networking sites by the students community

Table 5 - Awareness of Social Networking Sites features

Features of Social Networking Sites	No.	Per cent
SNS provide free web space to the members to publish the content	396	39.6
SNS provide free web address to the members to create the profile	371	37.1
Members can upload photos, audio and video files at free of cost	552	55.2
Members can chat, text the message and build group conversation	581	58.1
Members are able to create pages to post their articles and photographs on a related theme	521	52.1
Members can create blog and also share, give like and comment on post about others blogs	483	48.3
Members are able to create and manage the groups, schedule events etc.,	445	44.5
It allow members to download apps for games and play with their members	513	51.3
Others if any mention	171	17.1

The table 5 depicts that 58.1 per cent of the students are aware of the feature ‘Members can chat, text the message and build group conversation’, 55.2 per cent of the students are known about the feature ‘Members can upload photos, audio and video files at free of cost’, 52.1 per cent of the students are aware of the feature ‘Members are able to create pages to post their articles and photographs on a related theme’, 51.3 per cent of the students are aware about the feature ‘It allow members to download apps for games and play with their members’, 48.3 per cent of the arts and science college students are aware of ‘Members can create blog and also share, give like and comment on post about others blogs’, 44.5 per cent of the respondents are aware of the feature ‘Members are able to create and manage the groups, schedule events etc.,’, 39.6 per cent of the students are aware of ‘SNS provide free web space to the members to publish the content’, 37.1 per cent of the students are aware of ‘SNS provide free web address to the members to create the profile’, and 17.1 per cent of the students are aware of other features also.

Perception of the students regarding Social Networking Sites

Students have been asked to rate their level of agreeability towards perception regarding social networking sites. The students have been asked to express their opinion on a five point likert scale given as strongly agree to strongly disagree from 1 to 5. The ratings have been assigned as 5 for strongly agree, 4 for agree, 3 for neutral, 2 for disagree and 1 for strongly disagree. High score indicates the students having a high level of agreement towards perception regarding social networking sites. Mean ratings have been found for each item and the results are shown in the table 6

Table 6: Descriptive Statistics - Perception of the students regarding Social Networking Sites

Perception	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	S.D
It assist worldwide connectivity and eliminates the distance barriers	1000	1.00	5.00	4.3150	.90697
It allow users to share ideas, activities, events and interest within their individual networks	1000	1.00	5.00	4.1690	.88839

It is a source of information for various topics	1000	1.00	5.00	4.0950	.99245
It is the cheapest and effective mode of communication	1000	1.00	5.00	3.9330	1.06661
It is an effective e-learning tool	1000	1.00	5.00	3.9510	1.06759
It is an effective medium to enhance learning and to acquire skills	1000	1.00	5.00	3.9170	1.04365
Social Media advertisements are interactive, informative and attractive	1000	1.00	5.00	3.7300	1.14473
It is a perfect tool for the business people to interact with the customer, to receive customer feedback	1000	1.00	5.00	3.8850	1.07468
It is a pedestal to reduce stress	1000	1.00	5.00	3.2770	1.22138
It is a good platform for relaxation	1000	1.00	5.00	3.3670	1.28139

The mean rating is found to be high for the statement “It assist worldwide connectivity and eliminates the distance barriers” (4.3150), followed by “It allow users to share ideas, activities, events and interest within their individual networks (4.1690), “It is a source of information for various topics” (4.0950), “It is an effective e-learning tool” (3.9510), “It is the cheapest and effective mode of communication” (3.9330), “It is an effective medium to enhance learning and to acquire skills” (3.9170), “It is a perfect tool for the business people to interact with the customer, to receive customer feedback” (3.8850), “Social Media advertisements are interactive, informative and attractive” (3.7300), It is a good platform for relaxation (3.3670), and “It is a pedestal to reduce stress” (3.2770).

Demographic factors and Students’ perception regarding Social Networking Sites

ANOVA/ t-test has been employed to test whether the scores obtained for students’ perception regarding Social Networking Sites has differed significantly among the respondents classified based on ‘Demographic factors’ with the following null hypothesis:

H₀: Students’ perception score regarding social networking sites does not differ significantly among the demographic factors

Table 7- Demographic factors and students’ perception regarding Social Networking Sites

Demographic factors		Mean	S.D	No.	F value	t value	Table value	Sig
Age	19 yrs	37.12	6.05	159	5.589	-	3.801	**
	20 yrs	38.97	5.67	700				
	21 yrs	39.07	5.14	119				
	22 and above	36.82	5.19	22				
Gender	Male	38.86	5.78	480	-	1.202	1.962	Ns
	Female	38.43	5.63	520				
Course	Arts	38.34	5.82	357	.932	-	3.005	Ns
	Science	38.67	5.61	297				
	Commerce & Management	38.92	5.66	346				
Students doing part time job	Yes	38.15	5.67	229	-	1.483	1.962	Ns
	No	38.78	5.71	771				
Students earning per month	Less than Rs.3000	38.22	5.88	131	1.096	-	2.412	Ns
	Rs.3000-Rs.6000	38.04	5.24	78				
	Rs6001- Rs.9000	39.38	6.28	8				
	Rs.9001-Rs.12000	42.67	4.62	3				
	Above Rs.12000	35.44	5.81	9				
Monthly Income of the family	Less than Rs.10000	38.55	6.01	303	.171	-	2.381	Ns
	Rs.10001-Rs.20000	38.69	5.53	371				
	Rs.20001-Rs.30000	38.97	5.10	125				
	Rs.30001-Rs.40000	38.53	5.79	76				
	Above Rs. 40000	38.45	6.02	125				

(Source: Computed Ns – Not Significant * - Significant at 5% level ** - Significant at 1% level)

The table 7 reveals that the mean score is found to be high (39.07) in the age of 21 years, they have a high perception score than other age. There exist a marginal difference in students’ perception score in the age of 20 years (38.97), 19 years (37.12) and the lowest mean score(36.82) has been found in the age of 22 years and above. The F value (5.589) shows the significant difference in the level of students’ perception regarding social networking sites. Even though there is a marginal difference in their age, their perception level differs. Thus, with a significant F -value, the null hypothesis has been rejected at 1 per cent level of significance with respect to age of the students community.

The male students have higher perception score (38.86) than female students (38.43) regarding social networking sites. There exists a marginal difference in the perception among male and female students. The t-value (1.202) shows that there is no significant difference in the students' perception regarding social networking sites with respect to gender. Hence, the null hypothesis has been accepted.

The commerce and management students' perception score is found to be high (38.92) than science (38.67) and arts students (38.34). There exist a marginal difference in the students' perception score among commerce and management students, science students and arts students. The F value (.932) shows that there is no significant difference in the students perception score, Hence the null hypothesis has been accepted.

The students those who are not doing part time job has the highest mean perception score (38.78) regarding social networking sites and the lowest mean score (38.15) is found for the students doing part time job. The F Value (1.483) shows that the students' perception score does not differ among part time job. Hence the null hypothesis has been accepted.

The students those who are earning Rs.9001-12000 has the highest mean perception score (42.67) regarding social networking sites and the least mean score (35.44) is found among the students earning above Rs.12,000. The F value (1.096) reveals that there is no significant variation between the students earning and perception regarding social networking sites, Hence, the null hypothesis has been accepted.

The students with a family monthly income of Rs.20,001-30,000 has the highest mean score (38.97) and the lowest mean score (38.45) has been found among the students with a family monthly income of above Rs.40,000. The F value (.171) shows that there is no significant difference in the students level of perception about the social networking sites when students are classified based on the monthly income of the family, hence the null hypothesis has been accepted.

VI. Conclusion

The study has concluded that the majority of the students are aware about facebook, you tube and instagram. They are more aware about chatting, message texting, uploading of photos and videos, buiding of group conversation etc., They have strongly agreed that social networking sites helps to connect the people at worldwide and eliminates the distance barriers. Age has a significant difference with the students' perception score. The proper usage of social networking sites by the student community may enhance their knowledge, skill and attitude.

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