

Use of Social Networking Sites (SNSs) by the Research Scholars of Sri Krishnadevaraya University, Anantapur: A Study

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ABSTRACT

This paper attempts to study the activities and purposes for using Social Networking Sites (SNSs) by the research scholars of Sri Krishnadevaraya University, Anantapur. The study was conducted through a questionnaire administered among the research scholars pursuing their research at Sri Krishnadevaraya University, Anantapur. It is found that majority of the respondents were found to be aware and making use of such applications in their research work and it was revealed that facebook is the most popular Social Networking Sites by all categories of research scholars.

Keywords: Social Networking Sites, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Research Gate

1. INTRODUCTION

Time flies quickly, a few years ago people tend to communicate using wired gadgets such as telephones or ham radios. Today, the internet has reshaped our world beyond our imagination. Part of the ever growing popularity of the World Wide Web as a new means of communication is the advent of social networking sites. These are proprietary websites that can be used by common people to post personal profiles, pictures, videos, music and messages. Social networking sites [SNSs] are publicly accessible virtual meeting spaces where users present information about themselves and view information about others. These sites have created a new medium for public self-expression that allows individuals to connect with others who share an area of interest, but also possess the power to potentially shape public opinion, drive commerce, and change society (Klaassen, 2008; Wortham, 2009). Facebook is one of the most famous social networking sites in these days. Social networking is an online service, platform, or site that focuses on building and reflecting of social networks or social relations among people. According to Boyd and Ellison (2007), as a “Web-based services that allow individuals to construct a public or semi public profile within a bounded system, articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system”.

Social networking is the grouping of individuals into specific groups, like small rural communities or a neighbourhood subdivision. Although social networking is possible in person, especially in the workplace, universities, and high schools, it is most popular online. This is because unlike most high schools, colleges, or workplaces, the Internet is filled with millions of individuals who are looking to meet other people, to gather and share first-hand information and experiences about cooking, golfing, gardening, developing friendships professional alliances, finding employment, business-to-business marketing and even groups sharing information about baking cookies to the Thrive Movement. The topics and interests are as varied and rich as the story of our universe. According to Hindustan Times ‘Facebook crosses one billion milestone – the social networking site now reaches one out of every seven people on earth’. Examples of SNSs are Facebook, Research Gate, Hi5 etc.

2. Literature Review

The studies which were found suitable were thoroughly reviewed along with their findings.

Boyd and Ellison (2007) described the comprehensive concept, definition and features of Social Networking Sites. They also presented the historical development of these sites and changes which had happened over the time. They discussed the recent scholarship on SNSs, highlighted key works and gave suggestions for further research in the concerned areas. Mahajan (2009) explored the usage, impact and problems related to social networking sites and their impact on the social and cultural values of India. She also described the top most social networking websites of India along with their bad and good factors. Mansour (2012) in his paper found that Facebook users in Egypt increased dramatically in 2011, from 4.5 million users in August, 2010, to 5.2 million in January–February, 6.6 million in March, and 7.3 million users in August, 2011. According to Chan (2011) statistics showed that the advertisement was shown frequently to the targeted user group, and that the click through rate for the advertisement was high. Furthermore, the advertisement accounted for over half of the new connections made to the library's Facebook page during the campaign period. Daqing and others (2012) confirm that undergraduate students use different information resources for various academic tasks. In their tasks, online electronic resources including search engines are the most commonly used resources, particularly for complex academic tasks. Social networking sites are not used for the students' individual academic tasks, and traditional resources still play equal or more important roles in certain specific academic tasks. Students in collaborative tasks look for resources that make it easy to share documents. Participants from the two countries also exhibit interesting and important differences in their usage of information resources.

3. Objectives of the study

- To find out the role of social networking sites in creating awareness among the research scholars under study.
- To identify the age group of the research scholar for using social networking sites;
- To find out the most popular social networking sites among the research scholars;
- To find out the most used tools for accessing social networking sites;
- To know the purpose of using the social networking sites by the research scholars;
- To find out the frequency of using the social networking sites;
- To know the problems being faced by the research scholars while using social networking sites.

4. Scope of the Study

The scope of the present study is only confined to the scholars of Sri Krishnadevaraya University, Anantapur who are pursuing their research in different disciplines. For the survey of the primary data, questionnaire method was used to collect data. The questionnaire was distributed among the randomly selected research scholars of Sri Krishnadevaraya University, Anantapur. 50 questionnaires were received and analyzed for the present study. Research scholars from all disciplines of Sri Krishnadevaraya University, Anantapur form the universe of study. The Sri Krishnadevaraya University has approximately 500 hundred research scholars. It was not possible to cover all the departments and entire population. Hence, the present study is limited to 14 Departments of Sri Krishnadevaraya University, Anantapur as a representative sample. The representative sample was formed by taking 10% of respondents (i.e., 50) from several Departments of Sri Krishnadevaraya University, Anantapur sample random sampling technique has been used for collecting the data.

5. Data Analyses and Interpretation

5.1. Specializations of the respondents

Table 1 : Department wise respondents

S. No	Departments	No of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Public Administration	2	4
2	Sociology	2	4
3	Maths	2	4
4	Economics	6	12
5	Political Science	4	8
6	Botany	4	8
7	Chemistry	6	12
8	Telugu	6	12
9	Geography	2	4
10	Physics	4	8
11	Zoology	2	4
12	English & Culture Studies	2	4
13	Library and Information Science	6	12
14	History	2	4
Total		50	100

Table 1 explained that 14 departments of Sri Krishnadevaraya University, Anantapur have been covered under the study. Respondents were from various schools includes School of Social Science (i.e. 6), Humanities (i.e. 3) and Scjejice (i.e. 4) numbers. Majority of respondents were from Department of Economics, Chemistry Telugu and Library & Information Science which is 6 Numbers i.e.12% from each department.

5.2. Sex ratio of the respondents

Table 2 provides gender wise distribution of the respondents which shows that 30 respondents (i.e. 60%) were male and 20 respondents (i.e. 40%) female, who are found using Social networking sites.

Table 2: Distribution of respondents by Gender

S. No	Sex	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Male	30	60
2	Female	20	40
Total		50	100

5.3. Age group of the respondents

Table 3 presents the data related to the age of respondents. It shows that 48 respondents (i.e. 96%) fall between the age group of 20–30, whereas 2 (i.e. 4%) respondents are the age of 30–40, who used SNSs.

Table 3: Distribution of respondents by Gender

S. No	Age Group	No of respondents	Percentage (%)
1	20–30	48	96
2	31–40	2	4
3	41–50	NIL	NIL
Total		50	100

5.4. Research Experience of respondents

Table 4 shows the research experience of the scholars. It indicates that 31 respondents (i.e. 62%) have 0–2 years research experience, whereas 14 (i.e. 28%) respondents have 2– 3 years of research experience. Researchers who have 3–4 years experience are only 5 respondents i.e. (10%) respondents.

Table 4: Research Experience of respondents

S. No	Research Experience (Years)	No of respondents	Percentage (%)
1	0–2	31	62
2	2–3	14	28
3	3–4	5	10

5.5. Research Publications of respondents

From the table 5, it is clear 24 respondents (i.e. 48%) do not have not any research publications yet, 21 respondents (i.e. 42%) have 1–5 publications, 4 respondents (i.e. 8%) have 6–10 publications and only one respondent has more than 10 publications.

Table 5: Research Publications of respondents

S. No	Research Publications	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Nil	24	48
2	1–5	21	42
3	6–10	4	8
4	More than 10	1	2
Total		50	100

5.6. Commonly used SNSs by the respondents

Table 6 shows the commonly used SNSs among the researchers at Sri Krishnadevaraya University. It depicts that 43 respondents (i.e. 86%) are using facebook, 40 respondents (i.e. 80%) are using LinkedIn, 11 respondents (i.e. 22%) are using twitter, 17 respondents (i.e. 34%) are using Research Gate, 7 respondents (i.e. 14%) are using others like LinkedIn and HI5.

Table 6: Commonly used Social Networking Sites (SNSs)

S. No	Commonly used SNSs	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Facebook	43	86
2	LinkedIn	40	80
3	Twitter	11	22
4	Research Gate	17	34
5	Others	7	14

5.7. Tools of using SNSs by the respondents

Table 7 depicts tools that are being used for accessing SNSs. It shows that 27 respondents (i.e. 54%) use PCs for accessing these sites, while 29 respondents (i.e. 58%) respondents use Laptops and 22 respondents (i.e. 44%) respondents use mobile as a tool for accessing Social Networking Sites.

Table 7: Tools of using Social Networking Sites (SNSs)

S. No	Tools of Accessing SNSs	No of respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Personal Computer	27	54
2	Laptop	29	58
3	Mobiles	22	44

5.8. Place of accessing SNSs by the respondents

Table 8 reveals that majority of 40 respondents (i.e. 80%) are accessing SNSs from their hostel followed by 20 respondents (i.e. 40) are accessing SNSs from Cybercafes and other place. Few of SNSs are blocked in the University Library. Hence, 10 respondents (i.e. 20%) are accessing SNSs from the Library.

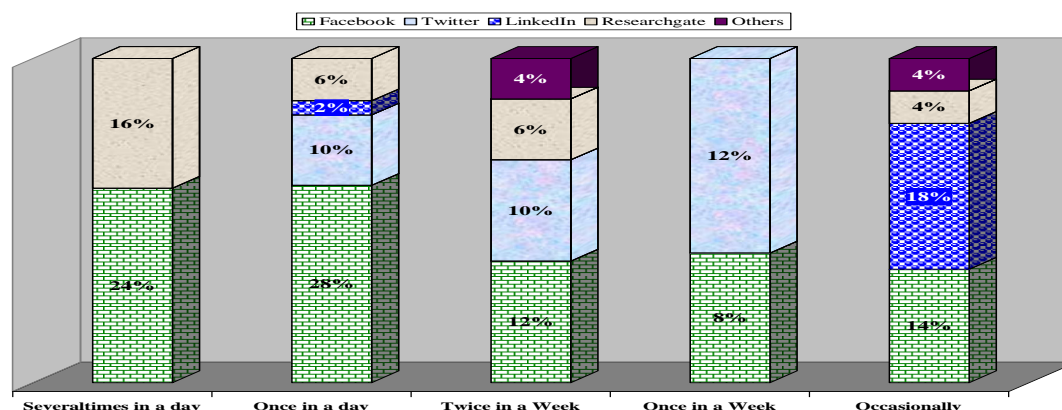
Table 8: Place of accessing SNSs

S. No	Place of Accessing SNSs	No of respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Library	5	10
2	Hostels	40	80
3	Cybercafes	10	20
4	Others	10	20

5.9. Frequency of using SNSs by the respondents

Graph 1 shows that Facebook is the SNSs which is highly used by 12 respondents (i.e. 24%) several time in a day, which is followed by Research Gate as 8 respondents (i.e. 16%). Again Facebook is used by 14 respondents (i.e. 28%) scholars once in a day, which is followed by Twitter as it is used by 5 respondents (i.e. 10%).

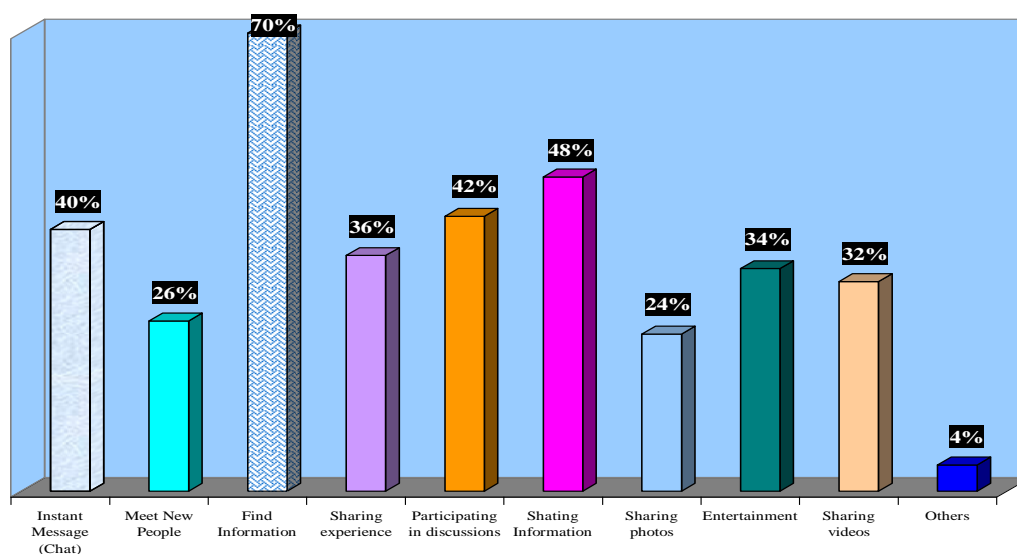
Graph 1: Frequency of using SNSs



5.10. Purposes of using SNSs by the respondents

The respondents were asked as the why they used SNSs. Graph 2 reveals that 20 respondents (i.e. 40%) used to such sites to instant message (chat), 13 respondents (i.e. 26%) to meet new people, 35 respondents (i.e. 70%) to find information, 13 respondents (i.e. 26%) to share experience, 22 respondents (i.e. 44%) to participate in discussions, 24 respondents (i.e. 48%) for sharing information regarding Seminars and Conferences, 17 respondents (i.e. 34%) to entertainment, 16 respondents (i.e. 32%) use such sites to share videos and picture. 2 respondents (i.e. 4%) respondents used these sites for other purposes like making friends. The need and importance of these social networking sites is reflected from their interpretation.

Graph 2: Purposes of SNSs



5.11. Friends in SNSs of respondents

Table 9 shows number of contacts the research have on Social networking sites. In which 2 respondents (i.e. 4%) have less than 10 friends, 10 respondents (i.e. 20%) have between 10–49 friends, 12 respondents (i.e. 24%) have from 50–99 friends, 10 respondents (i.e. 20%) have from 100–200 friends and only 16 respondents (i.e. 32%) have more than 200 friends.

Table 9 : Friends in SNSs

S. No	No. of friends	Respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Less than 10	2	4
2	10–49	10	20
3	50–99	12	24
4	100–200	10	20
5	More than 200	16	32
		50	100

5.12. Ease of use of SNSs by the respondents

Table 10 shows that researcher have no difficulty while using social networking sites. It shows that only 2 respondents (i.e. 4%) feels it is moderately difficult, 18 respondents (i.e. 36%) found them average, 16 respondents (i.e. 32%) felt that it is moderately easy and 14 respondent (i.e. 28%) found it very easy to use social networking sites.

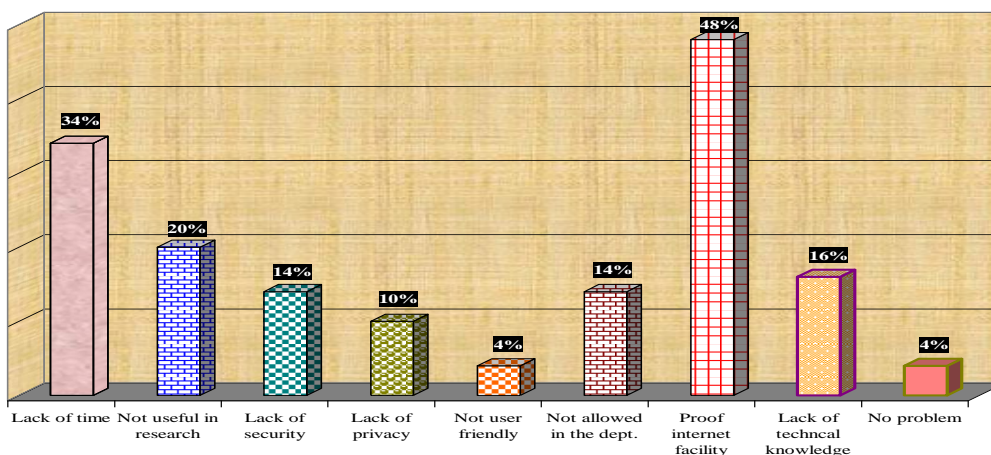
Table 10: Flexible with SNSs

S. No	Flexibility in use of SNSs	Respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Very difficult	NIL	NIL
2	Moderately difficult	2	4
3	Average	18	36
4	Moderately easy	16	32
5	Very easy	14	28
		50	100

5.13. Problems in accessing in SNSs by the respondents

From graph 3 it is clear that various problems have been mentioned by the respondent among them 17 respondents (i.e. 34%) have no time for using SNSs, 10 respondents (i.e. 20%) fee. that is is not used in research, 7 respondents (i.e. 14%) believed it to be less secure, 5 respondent (i.e. 10%) think such sites lack privacy, 2 respondents (i.e. 4%) said that it is not allowed in tilt departments, 24 respondents (i.e. 48%) pointed out poor Internet facility, 8 respondents (i.e. 16%) have lack of technical knowledge, but only 2 respondents (i.e. 4%) said that they do not have an;. problem in using the SNSs.

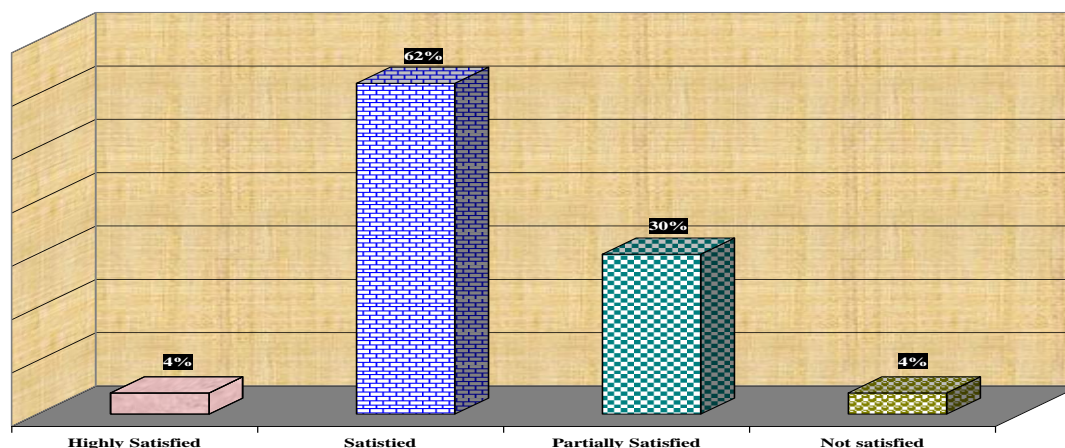
Graph 3: Problems accessing in SNSs



5.14. Satisfaction from SNSs of the respondents

Graph 4 shows that majority of the researchers are satisfied in the use of social networking sites. It indicates that 2 respondents (i.e. 4%) are highly satisfied, 31 respondents (i.e. 62%) are satisfied, 15 respondents (i.e. 30%) are partially satisfied and only 2 respondents (i.e. 4%) are not satisfied with it.

Graph 4: Satisfaction from SNSs



5.15. Reliability on SNSs by the respondents

Table 11 presents the data related to reliable of information on SNSs. It shows that 13 respondents (i.e. 26%) respondents believed that information on SNSs is reliable, 32 respondents (i.e. 64%) feel it is partially reliable, while 5 respondents (i.e. 10%) said that information on SNSs is not reliable.

Table 11 : Reliability of SNSs

S. No	Information on SNSs	Respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Reliable	13	26
2	Partially reliable	32	64
3	Not reliable	5	10
Total		50	100

Major Findings of the Study

The following are the major findings from the study:

- It is observed that majority of the scholars from all disciplines are aware of the SNSs and have accounts in them;
- Facebook is the most popular SNS (86%) being used by all categories of respondents followed by LinkedIn (80%);
- Majority of the scholars (96%) are between the age group of 20–30 years followed by these is the age group of 31–40 years (4%);
- Majority of the respondents are new in research (i.e. 62%) and have only 0–2 year of experience followed by 28% with 02–03 year and 10% with 03–04 years of research experience;
- Majority of scholars (i.e. 48%) don't have any publications so far 42% researcher have 01–05 publications, followed by 8% who have 06–10 publications and only 2% have more than 10 publications;
- Majority of the scholars (i.e. 58%) use laptop for accessing SNSs followed by those who accessing such sites on their PCs;
- 46% researcher login SNSs once in a day, followed by 20% those who accessed them several time in a day;

- The main purpose of using SNSs is find useful information by 70% of the respondents followed by 48% who use them by interacting with family and friends though instant chat;
- Majority of scholars (i.e. 32%) have more than 200 friends/colleagues on SNSs followed by 24% who have between 50–99 friends;
- 36% of scholars faced average difficulty while using SNSs followed by 32% who found it moderately easy;
- Majority of the scholars (i.e. 48%) pointed out poor Internet facility while accessing SNSs followed by 34% who pointed out that they do not have time;
- Majority of the scholars (i.e. 62%) are satisfied from the use of SNSs followed by 30% who are partially satisfied;
- Majority of the scholars (i.e. 64%) believed that information on SNSs is not reliable followed by (26%) who consider it reliable.

7. Conclusion

SNSs are quite popular and being used by the research scholars at Sri Krishnadevaraya University, Anantapur. The primary purpose of using SNSs is not the research, these are providing several ways to interact with friends, colleagues and family. Social networking sites are not used for the scholars individual academic tasks, and traditional resources still play equal or more important roles in certain specific academic tasks. Research Scholars keep themselves updated by surfing profile of each other, posting of messages, photos and videos, share professional and personal information. Today, SNSs have become one of the largest platforms in the world for sharing real time information. However, during the survey it was noted that Sri Krishnadevaraya University has blocked some of the SNSs including Youtube, which provides information including education videos. It is to high time that the Sri Krishnadevaraya University should consider none blocked of such sites.

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