

Social Media Networking Sites Usage among Girl Students: A Survey Analysis

I. Tarakeswara Rao, Research Scholar, Dept. of Journalism and Mass Communication, Acharya Nagarjuna University, Guntur, Andhra Pradesh, India

ABSTRACT

Social Media networks offer a straightforward way to converse with peers and get feedback as well which may influence a young adult's self-esteem and examines how social media affects college students' communication with others and their levels of engagement and connectedness; as well their effects and impacts on their social life, privacy, emotional health and education. This study intends to delve into - Classification of Social Media, Different sites of Social Media, Managing Social Media, Long term effects of Social Media usage, Advantages and Disadvantages of social Media, Reliability, Privacy and Other issues related to Social Media. The focus of the study will be on the usage Social Media by college students and the factors that compel them to choose one or more forms of this media over others. In pursuit of the same, a survey was conducted amongst 100 girl students. The data was analyzed using SPSS-Statistics software and results presented. Probability threshold has been fixed at 5%, as generally done in Quantitative Data Analysis. It is confirmed that the constructs in the questionnaire are independent and their distribution among the respondents varies.

Keywords

College Students, Social Media, Social Networking Communication,

INTRODUCTION

New developments in the technological world have made the internet an innovative way for individuals and families to communicate. Social media networks have created a phenomenon on the internet that has gained popularity over the last decade. People use social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, and My space etc., to create and sustain relationships with others (Boyd and Ellison, 2007). These social media sites let those who use them create personal profiles, while connecting with other users of the sites. Users can upload photographs, post what they are

doing at any given time, and send personal or public messages to whomever they choose. In this Information Age, social media sites seem to be growing in popularity rapidly, especially among young adults (Pempek, Yermolayeva, and Calvert, 2009).

Gender is the only significant demographic variable affecting social media use, as there are some differences between use by men and women. Women are more likely than men to have a personal profile on Facebook, but men are more likely than women to sustain a profile on LinkedIn (Lenhart et al., 2010). Furthermore, women were four to five times more likely than men to use social networking sites (Tufekci, 2008). Moreover, Sheldon (2008) found that overall women were more likely to use social media for maintaining relationships with family and friends, passing time, and entertainment, but men were more likely to use social media to meet new people. College women were also more likely than men to use the internet for relational communication, such as contacts with friends, family, and romantic partners (Baym, Zhang, Kunkel, Ledbetter, & Mei-Chen, 2007). Educational experience of men and women seemed to play a factor in social media use as well. Men and women were more likely to use social network sites frequently if they had college experience (Lenhart et al., 2010).

As a channel of communication for social interaction, online social interaction fundamentally differs from face-to-face interactions. Online social networking typically offers opportunities for expressions that are less restrictive. Users may disclose at levels quite different than in their face-to-face conversations (De batin et al; 2009). Describing Facebook as social networking site par excellence, Warike and Cook (2010) stated that 'Never before have so many people gathered to communicate through a single medium.' Maintenance of relationships online has become common' emphasized Parley and Emmes Sommer (2007).

Emerging adulthood into a more contemporary stage of development for individual in their late teens and early 20s. Entering adulthood which is described as age 18 to 26 is a combination of the late adolescence and early adulthood stages. Identity formation during emerging adulthood as young adults are figuring out who they are as a person. Since this is a time of exploration and change, individuals may seek peer feed-back to help, foster their self-identity. Emerging adults use social media communication methods, as they make life long decision for themselves (Arnett JJ, 2000).

SOCIAL MEDIA & SOCIAL NETWORKING STRATEGY

The term Social Media refers to the use of web-based and mobile technologies to turn communication into an interactive dialogue. Andreas Kaplan and Michael Flaenlein define social media as ‘a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content’. Social media are media for social interaction, as a superset beyond social communication. Kietzmanri *et al* (2011) argue that ‘social media introduce substantial and pervasive changes to communication between organizations, communities, and individuals’ enabled by ubiquitously accessible and scalable communication techniques

There are many reasons for young adults to join social networking websites as they try to communicate within their social system. The principal reason reported was to maintain relationships with existing acquaintances that were already part of their social network. Social media websites allow users to keep in touch with family and friends in a fairly easy and convenient way. They spent much of their time viewing information without interacting in any way. These lurking activities of reading other individuals profiles or news feeds or looking at photographs were performed frequently by a majority of respondents in a 2009 study (Pempek et al.).

Further, “social grooming” was an aspect of social networking that has received attention in a comparison of users and non-users of social media sites. Social grooming included expressive activities of social interaction, communication, gossip, and entertainment. Users have expressed enjoyment from keeping track of their friends’ lives and activities, but non-users were less interested in these activities (Tufekci, 2008). This social interaction of

users may make it easier to communicate with others by keeping in touch with friends and family on a regular basis more often than non-users. Perceived communication was reported as being more satisfying in same-sex relationships rather than in cross-sex relationships. In recent months there has been many webinars and websites discussing the value added reasons in combining communications, a key social strategy for online presence. Social networking is a key tool to build resources and promote expertise and ideas in an easy and effortless way. During the last two decades the process of convergence of information technology accelerated. The internet and applications based on internet, a new form of media has emerged – the social media. Social media is described as Web 2.0 phenomenon. Web 2.0 is commonly associated with the internet and refers to an integrated and dynamic service platform that is highly interactive and facilitates content generated by interconnected user communities utilizing applications that allow interoperability, collaboration and information sharing. Social media websites have become ubiquitous, giving young people a new to interact with each other and communicate with the world. Social media’s rise to prominence has experienced some very serious growing pains. Companies like Facebook, My Space, and Twitter have struggled to balance and inviting interactive environment with the ultimate pursuit of profits.

IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON STUDENTS

These emergent new forms of user generated content are transforming mediated communication in the 21st century. Students of Social networks will come away with a fresh understanding of how user generated content is fundamentally reshaping, mediated communication on multiple levels. Social media such as Twitter, Facebook, MySpace, YouTube, Flickr and others have been growing at a tremendous rate and the adoption rate for such media has been sky rocketing which in turn has delivered astronomical numbers of users (in less than 10 years).

Social Media for Educational purposes - Students have significantly changed their modes of communication, ever since the Internet has become available to most of the students worldwide with software applications and online tools like the (Girl Students) evolving into more modern trends. Students found suitable online resources and started using them to add up to their needs. Social media has particularly influenced and enabled students to easily

connect and communicate with people across the globe and find available opportunities.

As a consequence of this cutting-edge technology and its adoption, social media have become an integral part of the contemporary classroom. The incorporation of this massive media upsurge brings with it challenges and opportunities that need to be analyzed with scholarly research. Implementation and effect of Social media in various environments including educational settings & strategic communication and ethical issues explore the emerging role of and impact of social media as they evolve. With the rapid proliferation and adoption of social media, it is a juggernaut that must be addressed in the higher education curriculum and research.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Research into the field of Social Media usage is comparatively new as the medium itself is new and fast evolving. As more research has been conducted in the developed world, the data pertains to those countries' students. Research on usage of social media on students in general and the girl students in particular are few. College students form a large proportion of users on social media networks, Lenhart, Purcell, Smith, and Zickuhr (2010) found that 72% of all college students have a social media profile with 45% of college students using a social media site at least once a day. Many of these young adults use social media networks to communicate with family, friends, and even strangers. Social media sites have created new and non-personal ways for people to interact with others and young adults have taken advantage of this technological trend. Social network sites help to fulfill communication needs and wants. It is a convenient method of communication and provides the ability to stay connected with friends and family, but on the users own rate and time (Urista, Dong and Day, 2011). Users can manage their interactions within their own schedule by choosing when they want to read and respond. The internet communication is a solitary activity usually done alone. However, it is efficient because it is a one to many method of communication that allows users to quickly spread information.

Beer (2008) observed the intricacies in Boyd and Ellison's (2007) usage of these terms social media network and Social Media Network sites. The social media phenomenon over the years has metamorphosed into a seamless mesh where by their purposes include both

relationship initiation in terms of strangers and relationship maintenance in the case of family and friends, sharing of information via text video, audio, picture as well as learning and a plethora of other uses. People use social media sites such as Face book, Twitter and MySpace to create and sustain relationship with others (Boyd & Ellison 2007). These social media sites let those who use them create personal profiles while connecting with other users of the sites. In this "information age" Social media sites seem to be growing in popularity rapidly especially among young adults (Pempek, Yermolayeva & Calvert 2009).

USAGE OF SOCIAL MEDIA AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS

According to Lenhart et al., (2010), about 57% of social network users are 18-25 years old and have a personal profile on multiple social media websites. In a study by Pempek, Yermolayeva, and Calvert (2009), the amount of time spent daily on social network sites varied greatly. However, an analysis of the data indicated most participants spent approximately 30 minutes a day socializing, mostly during the evening hours between 9 p.m. to 12 a.m. Students spent an average of 47 minutes a day on Facebook. More than 50% of college students go on a social networking site several times a day (Sheldon, 2008). Quan-Haase and Young (2010) found that 82% of college students reported logging into Facebook several times a day. Younger students tended to use Facebook more frequently than older students to keep in touch with friends from high school or from their hometown (Pempek et al., 2009). College students' use of social media is happening in rapidly growing amounts as new technology becomes available. Computer-mediated communication allows young adults to interact over social media with family and friends. Few studies have been conducted to examine how using social media and other computer-mediated communication affects communication skills (Baker & Oswald, 2010).

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To examine the student personal profile on multiple Social media sites.
2. To examine the time they spend on networking sites.
3. To examine the purpose of using the social networking sites.

4. To examine the social media technologies facilitate by enhancing their learning skills.
5. To examine that social media provide opportunity for user's self-presentation and identity.
6. To examine the feasibility of adoption of social media in the higher education curriculum.
7. To examine the students change of attitude and perception because of addiction to networking sites.
8. To examine the students awareness about cybercrimes and legal issues involved.

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this research is to examine the extent of usage of Social media networking sites among college students (Female) and the relationship between extent of usage of social media and communication with family and friends. The networking sites use in educational setting and the advantages and disadvantages of social networking are also focused in this study. The students' awareness on the ethical and legal issues that are involved in using these sites has to be known. The study aims to test the hypothesis on a large section of students in a women's college. It is necessary to collect the relevant data and use the statistical techniques to decide the usage of Social networking sites among girl students.

QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH

Quantitative research is an inquiry into a social or human problem based on testing a theory composed of variables measured with numbers and analyzed with statistical procedures. 'Quantitative Research is as the term suggests, connected with the collection and analysis of data in numeric' (Itaghes and Tight, 1996). 'Quantitative research refers to the systemic empirical investigation of social phenomenon via statistical, mathematical or computational techniques.' (Given, Lisa M. 2008).

SURVEY METHOD AND INSTRUMENT

Survey method is generally used to assess the opinions and feelings. A survey consists of fixed set of questions that are asked to target respondents. The respondents for this study are the students in the degree colleges in Vijayawada, Krishna District of Andhra Pradesh. 'Survey can provide a reasonably accurate description of events in the real world' (Galliers, 1992). In general for social and

behavioral surveys, questionnaires are used as Survey Instrument. 'The aim of a Survey Instrument is to translate the information needs of the researcher into a form that will elicit data from respondents.' (Alreck and Settle, 1995). These are four basic ways to collect data in Survey i.e. by administering the survey instrument 'live' to a group, by mail, by telephone or through face to face interviews. The order of the questions in each section has been constructed carefully. The more interesting questions have been kept at the beginning of each section and the demographic question's has been kept at the end. The questionnaire in the survey included the following areas – the demographics, extent of usage of social media, effect on communication and change of attitude of students. The questionnaire was designed to satisfy the research questions that were mentioned in the introduction. Therefore the questionnaire was considered to have content validity.

SURVEY EXTENT

This study used a purposive sampling method to ensure a good representation of the target group that is college students (female) as users of the social media networking sites. The study was conducted to know the usage of social media among girl students of the undergraduate students in the degree college studying B.A., B.Sc. and B.Com courses, I, II, III year students who are in the age group of 18 to 22 years. The expected number of students are one hundred. The questionnaire was divided into A, B & C sections basing on Yes or No Question, multiple choice questions and Agree Strongly agree, disagree and strongly disagree type of question. A Validity test or a pretest was administered on a few students to check the validity of the questionnaire and adequate adjustments were made.

DATA COLLECTION

Data was collected from 100 students of St. Ann's Degree College for Women, Hyderabad. Data was collected between August 1st and August 6th, 2017 using questionnaire. The questionnaire was in paper version. This was to ensure that all participants who are willingly volunteered to be a part of the study were given opportunity to do so. Undergraduate classes were targeted because they encompass diverse, student population. The questionnaire comprised 30 questions that elicited quantitative data. This was a great effort aimed at collecting good data that allowed students to unite their opinions and provide richer responses. Students were

asked to give information on age, gender, college and email id. A total of 100 responses were received. The data was analyzed using SPSS-Statistics.

DATA ANALYSIS

Section A

Table-1: Number of responses from the girl students for each question

Questions	N	
	Valid	Missing
Are you a member of a Social networking sites?	100	0
Do you have a personal profile on multiple Social media websites	99	1
Do you find face to face communication is neglected with the rising popularity of SMN Sites?	95	5
Do you feel girls use SMN Sites for passing time or for entertainment	95	5
Do you go on watching Social networking sites several times a day?	96	4
Do you agree college girls use SMN Sites more than boys?	96	4
Do you find Social media improves quality relationship between users?	97	3
Have you ever been a victim of online bullying? (Offensive Comments)	97	3
Are your parents aware of your Social networking activities?	88	12
Do you observe any change in your attitude with your family? (friends after using these sites)	99	1
Do you find them important for your educational purpose?	97	3
Do you accept strangers who try to be friend you in SMN Sites?	88	12
Do you spend time watching others individual profiles & their updates secretly?	100	0
Do you know about cybercrimes?	99	1
Do you know about the punishment for cybercrimes?	99	1

Table-2: Cross Tabulation of the girl students according to the responses to social media

Questions	Opinion		
	Yes	Yes	Yes
Are you a member of a Social networking sites?	90 90.0%	10 10.0%	100 100%

Do you have a personal profile on multiple Social media websites	67 67.7%	32 32.3%	99
Do you find face to face communication is neglected with the rising popularity of SMN Sites?	52 54.7%	43 45.3%	95
Do you feel girls use SMN Sites for passing time or for entertainment	47 49.5%	48 50.5%	95
Do you go on watching Social networking sites several times a day?	39 40.6%	57 59.4%	96
Do you agree college girls use SMN Sites more than boys?	33 34.4%	63 65.6%	96
Do you find Social media improves quality relationship between users?	59 60.8%	38 39.2%	97
Have you ever been a victim of online bullying? (Offensive Comments)	20 20.6%	77 79.4%	97
Are your parents aware of your Social networking activities?	61 69.3%	27 30.7%	88
Do you observe any change in your attitude with your family? (friends after using these sites)	42 42.4%	57 57.6%	99
Do you find them important for your educational purpose?	79 81.4%	18 18.6%	97
Do you accept strangers who try to be friend you in SMN Sites?	14 15.9%	74 84.1%	88
Do you spend time watching others individual profiles & their updates secretly?	14 14.0%	86 86.0%	100
Do you know about cybercrimes?	58 58.6%	41 41.4%	99
Do you know about the punishment for cybercrimes?	39 39.4%	60 60.6%	99
Total	714 49.4%	731 50.6%	1445 100%

Chi-Square test is done to test the hypothesis of no association between two or more groups, populations or criteria. Observed counts are compared to expected counts. It tests the hypothesis that the row and column variables are independent.

P Value or Probability Value quantifies the strength of the evidence against the null hypothesis in favor of the alternate hypothesis.

Chi-square test

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-square	281.760 ^a	14	.000
N of valid cases	1445		

H₀: Opinions about social networking sites are independent of the question- groupings.

H₁: Opinions about social networking sites are not independent of the question- groupings.

Pearson chi-square tests the hypothesis that the row and column variables are independent. The chi-square test is highly significant (null hypothesis is rejected) at 5% I.o.s,

$\chi^2_4 = 281.760$, $p(0.000) < 0.05$. In this case, the significance value is so low that it is displayed as 0.000, which means that it would appear that the two variables are, indeed, related. We conclude that opinions about social networking sites are not independent of the question- groupings.

Section-A: Analysis

The Table 1 and 2 reveals that 90% of the students of SDMS College, Vijayawada are member of social networking sites. This confirms that almost all the students are communicating via social networking sites. This also confirms the studies conducted in developed countries and the literature reviewed for this study, that this is the most preferred method of communication adopted by urban college girl students. The remaining 10% too may join in if opportunities are available. Social networking sites allow people to build personal web pages and then connect with friends to share content and communication. Moreover, 67.7% of the students have a personal profile on multiple social media websites. If the majority of the students have profiles on more than one social media site, it suggests that students are using various networking sites for different purposes. It leaves to imagination whether the information in the profiles varies and to what extent self-identity is created through these profiles. 54.7% of the students find face to face communication is neglected with rising popularity of SMN sites. This is an inevitable result of more time used for networking which will be equal the time not spent on face to face communication; as networking has to be done alone. It is a solitary activity and the more the time spent in solitary activities, the less time will there be for face to face communication. 49.5%

of the students felt use of SMN sites for passing time or for entertainment. This shows that at least half the students believe that they are mostly wasting time on non-significant chatter and watching assorted entertainment. 40.6% of the students watching social networking sites many times in a day. They do this to check the updates they receive on their sites. Most of the cell phone beep when they receive an update on their networking site. 34.4% of the students agreed use of SMN sites more than boys. They may not be aware that statistics worldwide prove that girl students spend more time on socializing on the networks and share more personal information than boys. 60.8% of the students agreed social media improves quality relationship between users.

Interestingly, 20.6% of the students faced online harassment. Stalking, trolling, posting abusive comments, revealing content not meant to be shared with others, morphed images circulation, indecent proposals are all various forms of harassment faced by girl students, while they navigate the social networking sites. It is here that the role of the school and the college comes to the fore. It will be more secure and fun if the social networking sites are used for classroom buddy bonding and collaborative educational work on within their class groups and school/college groups. 69.3% of the student’s parents aware of social networking activities. 42.4% of the students agreed some changes in attitude with their families. As time spent alone on social networking increases, it interrupts quality time spent with the family. This leads to complaints from the parents and discord in communication. In extreme cases there can be a complete change in the attitude of the family towards their daughter. Crucially, the growth in the use of social networks by young people in recent years has come at the expense of their consumption of traditional media such as TV and magazines. 81.4% of the students opined that social networking is important for educational purpose. It indicates that most of the girl students are already using social networking sites for exchanging notes, recording guest speakers and listening again, etc. and are aware of the potential uses of social networking sites for educational purposes. College life focuses on academic and social community.

These emergent new forms of user generated content are transforming mediated communication in the 21st century. Students of Social networks will come away with a fresh understanding of how user generated content is fundamentally reshaping, mediated communication at multiple levels. 15.9 % of the students accepted the strangers, who try to friend in SMN sites. A few students

are venturing out to befriend strangers, which can be considered risky in sites like Facebook. But the opposite is true in the case of sites such as LinkedIn, which are patronized by professional and befriend people in similar profession or business interests, is one of the key purpose of registering on this site. Only 4.0% of the students spend time watching others individual profiles and their updates secretly. Everybody does see other individuals' profiles as they are made available an easily accessible. But spending time on only watching profiles, may not be in good taste. Immediate communication benefits of Facebook users were seen for individuals reporting various levels of shyness. 58.6% of the students known about cybercrimes. It is quite heartening to note that majority of the girl students are aware about the type of crimes that other using the internet and social networking sites. However, a strong case remains, that social networking sites should be used for educational purposes by the schools and colleges, so that Dos and Don'ts of net surfing and networking sites can be taught to the students from the early stages and simultaneously enjoy the benefits of bonding through a networking site, in a regulated manner and for both educational and recreational purposes. 9.4% of the students know about the punishment of cybercrimes. It is evident that though a majority of the girl students know about cybercrimes, very few of them are aware of the legal protection available to the victims and judicial punishments that can be awarded to the accused.

Section – B

Table-3: Number of students responded for each question

Questions	N	
	Valid	Missing
What device you use to connect to social media?	100	0
How do you use internet?	100	0

Table-4: Cross Tabulation of the girl students according to the responses to group of questions in Section-B

What devices do you use to connect to social media?	Devise	PC	Laptop	Smart Phone	Tab	Total
	Count	15	90	60	6	100
	Percentage	15.0	19.0	60.0	6.0	100.0
How do you use internet?	Internet	At home	Mobile	Campus Wi-Fi	At net	Total
	Count	52	45	2	1	100
	Percentage	52.0	45.0	2.0	1.0	100.0
On average how much time do you spend daily on social networking sites?	Time	1-2 Hours	2-3 Hours	3-4 Hours	More than 5 Hours	Total
	Count	69	20	6	4	99
	Percentage	69.7	20.2	6.1	4.0	100.0
What type of social media	Social Media	Facebook	YouTube	Twitter	Google plus	Total

On average how much time do you spend daily on social networking sites?	99	1
What type of social media platform do you use more?	100	0
At what time do you spend socializing most during?	99	1
How long have you been using social networking sites?	96	4
How many contacts (friends) do you have on social networking sites?	93	7
How often do you post updates?	86	14
Why do you use an online social media networks?	100	0
What type of cybercrimes do you know?	86	14

Most of the 100 students responded to the questions in Section-A in a varied manner. Out of the 10 questions, five questions have been answered by all the students. The lowest number of responses has been received for the question – ‘How often do you post updates?’ 14 students chose not to answer this question.

Section-B Analysis

The following aspects can be deduced from Table 3 and 4 explains that of the 100 students surveyed 60% have a smart phone and 19% have laptops. The rest of the students, i.e. 15% of them have Desktop PCs and 6% of them have tabs. It is noteworthy that all of them have access to internet through some device or the other, as all the 100 students have responded.

The usage of internet is predominantly from home with 52 respondents, while another 45 students do it from their mobile phone when they are away from home. Only 2% of them use the campus Wi-Fi system, may be due to the awareness of protocols and only 1 student uses the internet centre. At the time, the girl students spent daily on social networking sites varied.

platform do you use more?	Count	44	19	3	34	100
	Percentage	44.0	19.0	3.0	34.0	100.0
At what time do you spend Socializing most during?	Time	7pm-8pm	8pm-9pm	9pm-10pm	10pm above	Total
	Count	53	27	15	4	99
	Percentage	53.5	27.3	15.2	4.0	100.0
How long have you been using social networking sites?	Years	1 year	2 years	3 years	4 years and above	Total
	Count	29	28	13	26	96
	Percentage	30.2	29.2	13.5	27.1	100.0
How many contacts (friends) do you have on social networking sites?	Contacts	40-60	60-80	80-100	More than 100	Total
	Count	44	17	12	20	93
	Percentage	47.3	18.3	12.9	21.5	100.0
How often do you post updates?	Hours	Every one hour	2 hours	4 hours	5 hours above	Total
	Count	7	9	3	67	86
	Percentage	8.1	10.5	3.5	77.9	100.0
Why do you use an online social media network?	Online	To make new friends	To keep in touch with family & friends	To share pictures & videos	To play games	Total
	Count	9	82	7	2	100
	Percentage	9.0	82.0	7.0	2.0	100.0
What types of cybercrimes do you know?	Cybercrime	Morphing	Hacking	Malicious Software	Cyberstalking	Total
	Count	11	68	2	5	86
	Percentage	12.8	79.1	2.3	5.8	100.0

However, nearly 70% of them spent an average of 1-2 hours per day. 20% of them spent 2-3 hours while 6% spent 3-4 hours per day. At least 4% of the students surveyed spent a very high amount of time, which is more than 5 hours per day. Only one student was reluctant to respond to this question, as to how much time she spent on the social networking sites per day. All the students were fully forthcoming in informing us the social media platform they use more. 44% of them use Facebook more, followed by 34% on Google Plus. 19% of the students were using YouTube more. However, only 3% of the students spent more time on Twitter. Social networking is a solitary activity and by its very nature, it reduces the existing level of face to face communication with family and friends. Hence it is imperative to understand, at what times the students are communicating on the social networking sites. Most of the students i.e. 53% of them network at 7-8 pm and 27% at 8-9 pm. 15% of these students did it between 9-10 pm and 4% of them after 10pm. As most of the students are networking in the evening between 7-8 pm, which is directly clashing with quality time spent with the family and thus tends to disrupt or reduce familial face to face relationships. As to how long they have been using the social networking sites, it turns out that many of them (26%) have very good experience of above 4 years and 28% of them have been using for more than 2 years. Of the remaining 29% of

them have been using since 1 year and 13% of them around 3 years. 4 students did not respond as they may have been new or much less than 1 year experience on the sites.

The extent of the girl students' network of friends on the social networking sites can be gauged by the fact that at least 20% of them have more than 100 in their circle of friends. But most of the students i.e. 44 of them have around 40-60 friends and around 17 of them had 60-80 friends. 12 of them had 80-100 friends. However 7 of the students have not responded, which may mean that the number of friends they have on the social networking sites are much more than the 'more than 100' tag or much lower than 40 friends or even worse; they simply disliked to respond to this question. Most of the students or nearly 78% of them updated their status or post any other comments once or twice in a day. However there are around 18% of the students who post updates once in 1-2 hours. This indicates that though these students are in a minority they are almost in continuous touch throughout the day or all their waking hours. However majority to the students post their updates in the evening, especially at home, as seen from the responses to other questions.

A vast majority of the surveyed girl students or 82% of them use online social networks to keep in touch with their family and friends. 9% of the students say they look out to

make new friends, whereas 7% of them are more interested in sharing videos and pictures and only 2% of the students prefer to play online games. But that girl students are on to online gaming is itself a revelation; as this behavior is more common among boy students. Most of the college girl students of Vijayawada, know about the problem of cybercrimes and they have heard more about

hacking as 68 students know about that. This may be so as it is the most common complaint they hear from other girls. They have also heard about morphing and how certain people post morphed photos to malign others. Cyber stalking and tagging is also known to the girl students.

Section - C

Table-5: Number of students responded for each question with mean response rate and standard deviation

	N		Mean response rate	Std. deviation
	Valid	Missing		
Do you think Social networks are important?	99	1	1.37	.708
Do you support using social networking technology for learning in colleges?	99	1	1.76	.822
Do you know private policies are effective in social networking sites?	99	1	1.76	.980
Do you know that the number of cybercrimes are more in the age group between 18-25 years?	100	0	1.66	.831
Do you think that cybercrimes in the age 18-25 group lead to cultural disasters?	100	0	1.65	.903
Do you feel that social media provide opportunity for user's self-presentation and identity?	100	0	1.79	.935
Do you believe that social media become an integral part of the contemporary classroom?	100	0	1.95	1.048
Do you believe that adoption of social media in the higher education curriculum and research is relevant?	98	2	1.53	.815
Do you find social media can facilitate learning by enhancing students engagement, enjoyment, of a given assignment and independent of the content to be learned?	99	1	1.55	.872
Do you read any article in newspaper or any TV channel complain about college students change of attitude and perception because addiction to social networking sites?	99	1	1.49	.787

Section-C: Analysis

Tables 5 and 6 provide the following information based on the students' responses. A whopping percentage of more than 92 of the students believe and agree or strongly agree that social networking sites are important. The reasons may vary, but primarily they are important to the lives college students as well as everybody else. Only 7% of the students disagreed or strongly disagreed with the rest of the students and one student did not answer. More than

81% of the students agreed or strongly agreed that social networking technologies should be used in colleges for learning purpose. Only 18% of them disagreed or strongly disagreed. Most of them agreed as they are already using it for sharing notes, sometimes even clicking a page from a book and sending / sharing it through WhatsApp. The rest 18% may have disagreed or strongly disagreed because social networking sites are still considered frivolous by college authorities and many colleges, ban usage of cell phones and internet on the premises of the college.

Table-6: Cross Tabulation of the girl students according to the Responses to group of questions

Question- Groups	Opinion	Agree	Strongly Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Do you think social networks are important?	COUNT	72	20	4	3	99
	Percentage	72.7	20.2	4.0	3.0	100.0
Do you support using social networking technology for learning in colleges?	COUNT	45	36	15	3	99
	Percentage	45.5	36.4	15.2	3.0	100.0
Do you know privacy policies are effective in social	COUNT	56	17	20	6	99

networking sites?	Percentage	56.6	17.2	20.2	6.1	100.0
Do you know that the number of cybercrimes are more in the age group between 18 and 25 years	COUNT	52	35	8	5	100
	Percentage	52.0	35.0	8.0	5.0	100.0
Do you think that the cybercrimes in this age 18-25 group lead to cultural disasters?	COUNT	59	22	14	5	100
	Percentage	59.0	22.0	14.0	5.0	100.0
Do you feel that social media provide opportunity for user's self-presentation and identity?	COUNT	49	30	14	7	100
	Percentage	49.0	30.0	14.0	7.0	100.0
Do you believe that social media become an integral part of the contemporary classroom	COUNT	49	15	28	8	100
	Percentage	49.0	15.0	28.0	8.0	100.0
Do you believe that adoption of social media in the higher education curriculum and research is relevant?	COUNT	63	21	11	3	98
	Percentage	64.3	21.4	11.2	3.1	100.0
Do you find social media can facilitate learning by enhancing students engagement, enjoyment of a given assignment and independent of the content to be learned?	COUNT	66	16	13	4	99
	Percentage	66.7	16.2	13.1	4.0	100.0
Do you read any article in newspaper or any TV Channel complain about college student's change of attitude and perception because of addiction to social networking sites?	COUNT	64	25	6	4	99
	Percentage	64.6	25.3	6.1	4.0	100.0

A majority of the students i.e. more than 73% of the students agreed or strongly agreed that the social networking sites follow the privacy rules they have set for their site and that they are generally safe as long as they follow guidelines of the service provider. However 26% of the students disagreed or strongly disagreed with the majority and think that privacy rules can be easily bypassed and the users are at risk of others seeing or following their posts. 87% of the students agree or strongly agree that girls in the age group of 18 to 25 years are more at risk of various cybercrime attacks. It is not known what precautions the students are taking to protect themselves and whether they are aware of the precautions to be taken. Nobody really reads all the fine print that one signs while registering as a member of a social networking site. However the remaining 13% of the students disagree or strongly disagree that cybercrimes victims can be of any age group or sex. 81% of the students believe that cybercrimes on girl students in the age group of 18 to 25 years can lead to cultural disasters. This is very surprising and may be result of observing from close quarters the mass agitations that followed the Nirbhaya case, Valentine Day attacks and vigilante' groups. The remaining 19% of the students disagreed or strongly disagreed to this view and may believe that these incidents may not be called cultural disasters. 79% of the students agree or strongly agree that social networking sites provide users the opportunity to create their self-profile in a manner that they want and since many of them are on multiple sites, it may be interesting to know how a given student presents her profile and creates her identity on each of these sites. 21% of them disagreed or strongly disagreed with the rest,

as they may have felt that creating false or fancy profiles on the networks will not help as very soon they will stand exposed and may even lose face and most prudent thing to do is creating a realistic profile and sticking to it.

Moreover, 64% of the students agree or strongly agree that social networking sites have become an integral part of the classroom. This may not be officially so, but at an informal level, students of a class who are general friends, bond over social network sites and share notes and educational information with their classmates/friends. The rest 36% did not think so and disagreed or strongly disagreed that social networking sites have become an integral part of classroom. Primarily, cell phones are banned in the premises of the college and their usage for surfing the internet and social networking sites is not encouraged by the lecturers. 85% of the students agree or strongly agree that social media should be included into the curriculum and research in Higher Educational institutions. All of them see that social media is a powerful means of communication in a variety of ways to suit various purposes and should first be understood better, so that it can be put to good use in colleges and classrooms. 14% of the students disagreed or strongly disagreed and may believe that it is a frivolous media and requires no adoption in curriculum and research. 82% of the students agree or strongly agree that social media enhance learning by making the learning process more engaging and enjoyable, irrespective of the subject or content that has to be learnt. The very idea has excited many of these students. However 17% of the students do not think so and disagree or strongly disagree with the rest, as they may not

have reconciled with the idea of social networking for education.

Almost all or 89% of the students have seen an article in the newspapers or a panel discussion on TV discussing the very high usage of cell phones and internet by college students and that many of them are becoming addicted to the same and that they are neglecting their studies and a big attitudinal change in them. However 10% of the students have not seen or heard so. It can be presumed that though the students have heard their elders criticizing their use of cell phones with internet, they are sure that the way forward is for these sites to be used for educational purposes. Majority of them already feel that social media networks are being used for educational purposes, because they are already using them to share notes, pictures, material, web links, etc. with their friends who also happen to be their classmates. They strongly feel that Higher Education curriculum and research should include work on social media and its utility for educational purposes. Students think that whatever be the subject or content to be learnt, just learning it by using the social network sites is itself fun, entertaining and also very engaging.

CONCLUSION

The summary is multilayered, as it checks for patterns in the responses to the questions in each section and how they correlate to the literature already reviewed and highlight the patterns that are of significance to college girl students. Empirical results from the responses received from 100 college girl students of Vijayawada city reveal that most of them (90%) have access to a device through which they can source the internet and social networking sites. However a smart phone is the most desired and used device for it is handy and connected to the net and using the Android Operating System. They use the social networking sites mainly to keep in touch with their family and friends and sometimes make new friends. Some of them have been members of these sites for more than 4 years, a statistic that shows that the girl students are navigating the social networking sites deftly, without falling into the usual pitfalls. It shows a certain level of openness, genuinity and maturity to have been on the sites for many years and clearly indicates that these college girl students are aware of the various cybercrimes that they are vulnerable and the general precautions they should take while navigating the social networking sites. The students believed that the Privacy Rules set out by the Service providers i.e. the social network sites, implement them strictly and also have a grievance redressed

mechanism. The students are also registered users on multiple sites and use the sites as per their necessity.

Creation and maintenance of a user profile or self-identity creation is a big favorite among many of the students. Most of the students spent around 1-2 hours on the social networking sites, especially from home during 7-8 pm in the evening. Facebook is the most preferred social network, followed by Google+. Most of the above aspects are corroborated by the 'Uses and Gratification theory' of Katz and Blumler, 1974, that people use different media for different purposes and there will be use that are gratified by their actions. Present day research into Information and Communication Technologies; have validated the Uses and Gratification Theory. However music, entertainment and activities that are casually called 'time-pass' consume nearly 50% of the time spent on the social networking sites. Whatever be the attitude of the parents and teachers of these college students, towards their social networking habits; the students themselves strongly believe that it is all for the better and that the actual advantages of using these sites will ultimately nullify the disadvantages. Many of the students have even seen or heard in newspapers and TVs that students have become addicts to social networks, but in actuality students believe that it the future of communication and everyone might as well get used to it and follow suit. Though usage of cell phones in the college premises is banned at present, the students are sure that, they will be used in the future classrooms for educational purposes.

LIMITATIONS

The survey was conducted in one college for 100 girl students of St. Ann's Degree College for Women, Hyderabad. Hence it can be said to be particular to the said college or city. However this is not true, as the demographic details of the students reveal that they are from different social strata of the society and vary in all general aspects seen in general society, except that they are college students and girls. The consolidated findings prove that the data correlates favorably with other surveys conducted in other countries.

The value of the collected data depends on how truthfully the respondents have replied to the questions administered to them. However, all the students were explained the purpose of the survey and requested to reply truthfully and there is no reason to suspect otherwise. Some of findings are presumed, as the 30 questions administered cannot fully elicit replies to all the aspects of their responses. Hence, they can only be deduced based on their responses to other questions. Though much research is being carried

out at present on the usage and effects of social media on the society, long term effects cannot yet be predicted as the medium itself is new and fast transforming in a myriad ways. Hence not much can be said about the long term effects of social networks on the society. But the advantages far outweigh the disadvantages and hence social media networking is bound to flourish and be employed for educational purposes as well.

SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As the students themselves are recommending, it pertinent for the educators of Higher Education in India to investigate the reasons and contemplate inclusion of studies on social media networking into the curriculum of colleges and also encourage research into how effectively social media and their technological platforms can be used in educational settings. It should also examine the long term impacts on the social life, education, privacy and emotional health on the youth. There are also misconceptions or otherwise that compassion towards others, a key requirement for civilizational progress, is reducing in the present generation due their engrossed online activities. In actuality, the reverse may be true, as online social activity is all about bonding and sharing with family and friends and that can only increase compassion and not decrease it.

REFERENCES

- [1] Alreck, P.L. & Settle, R.B. (1995). *The Survey Research Handbook*, 2nd edition. Chicago: Irwin.
- [2] Andreas M. Kaplan, Michael Haenlein, (2010). Users of the world, unite! The challenges and opportunities of Social Media, Definition and classification of social media, *Business Horizons* 53(1).
- [3] Arnett JJ. (2000). Emerging adulthood. A theory of development from the late teens through the twenties, *Am Psychol*, 55(5): 469-80.
- [4] Baker, L. R., & Oswald, D. L. (2010). Shyness and online social networking services. *Journal of Social & Personal Relationships*, 27(7), 873-889.
- [5] Baym, N. K., Zhang, Y.B., Kunkel, A., Ledbetter, A., & Mei-Chen, L. (2007). Relational quality and media use in interpersonal relationships. *New Media & Society*, 9(5), 735- 752.
- [6] Beer David, (2008). "Social networking sites...revisiting the story so far: A response to danah boyd & Nicole Ellison", *Journal of Computer – Mediated Communication*, 13(2).
- [7] Boyd M. Danah and Ellison B. Nicole, (2007). "Social Network Sites: Definition, History and Scholarship", *Journal of Computer –Mediated Communication*, (13.1) p210-230,
- [8] Debatinet al, (2009). Facebook and Online Privacy: Attitudes, Behaviors, and Unintended Consequences, *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, Vol. 15 (1).
- [9] Galliers R. (1992). *Information Systems Research: Issues, Methods and Practical Guidelines*.
- [10] Given, Lisa M. (2008). "Qualitative research methods." In *The Encyclopedia of Educational Psychology*, edited by Neil J. Salkind, 827-831. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- [11] Kietzmanri *et al*, (2011). Social media? Get serious! Understanding the functional building blocks of social media, *Business Horizons*, Vol. 54 (3).
- [12] Lenhart et.al, (2010). *Social Media and Mobile Internet Use Among Teens and Young Adults*, Pew Internet and American Life Project, Washington DC, [http://pewinternet.org/Reports/2010/Social Media and Young Adults](http://pewinternet.org/Reports/2010/Social%20Media%20and%20Young%20Adults), DOI=202-419-4500
- [13] Pempek, T. A., Yermolayeva, Y. A., and Calvert, S. L. (2009). "College students' social networking experiences on facebook", *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology*, 30(3), 227-238. DOI: 10.1016/j.appdev.2008.12.010,
- [14] Quan-Haase Anable and Young L. Alyson (2010). "Uses and Gratifications of Social Media: A Comparison of Facebook and Instant Messaging", *Bulletin of Science Technology Society*, (30), <http://bst.sagepub.com/content/30/5/350>
- [15] Tufekci Zeynep (2008). *Grooming, Gossip, Facebook and MySpace: What can we learn about these sites from those who won't assimilate?* <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13691180801999050>
- [16] Urista M.A., Dong,Q and Day K.D., (2011). "Explaining why young adults use MySpace and FaceBook through uses and gratification theory", *Human Communication*, 12(2), 215-229.