

IS TIME WELL SPENT? A SURVEY OF ADOLESCENTS ONLINE ACTIVITIES

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Abstract: *The study of this research aims to create an enormous level of awareness among the Adolescents exposure to a virtual world such as social networking sites and many other facilities. Findings of the study will not only elaborate upon the activities which adolescents are doing online but it will also brief about the amount of time spent on various activities. This study was conducted on school going students of Kolkata (urban area). To collect data 240 adolescents both male and female (13-18 yrs) were selected randomly. The data has been collected through administering questionnaire. Findings of the study shows that participants spend their large amount of time on entertainment such as: using Social Networking Sites, Instant messengers, Chat rooms, Online shopping than compared to these activities Blogs, Sharing files and News online. It was found that participants login to social networking accounts almost everyday.*

Keywords: *Adolescents, Internet, Social Networking Sites, Instant messengers, Chat rooms, online shopping, Blogs, Sharing files, News online,*

1. Introduction

The Internet is a widely recognized channel for information exchange, academic research, entertainment, communication and commerce (Moore, 1995; Widyanto and Griffiths, 2006; Douglas et al., 2008; Byun et al., 2009). Although the positive aspects of the Internet have been readily praised, there is a growing amount of literature on the negative side of its excessive and pathological use (Chou and Hsiao, 2000; Caplan, 2003; Beard, 2005; Frangos and Frangos, 2009). (Byun et al., 2009) estimate that 9 million Americans could be labeled as pathological Internet users with unpleasant consequences for their social life, their professional status and their psychological condition (Shapira et al., 2000; Shapira et al., 2003; Young, 2004; Walker, 2006).

It has enabled new forms of social interaction; this is due to its extensive usability and access. In most third world countries use of the internet has been made even more accessible by mobile phones. Most people use the internet to access news, weather and sports reports, to plan and book vacations and to find out more about their interests.

Nowadays, people are using the internet mostly to interact on social media, they chat, message, share photos and stay in touch with friends and relatives worldwide. Adverse media landscape is emerging where media cultures are changing young people's lives in both the private and public domains. A social networking facility is a platform to shape social networks or social relations among people who, for example, share interests, activities, backgrounds, or real-life connections. A social network facility consists of a representation of each user (often a profile), his/her social links, and a variation of additional services. Most social network services are web-based and offer means for users to interact over the Internet, such as email and instant messaging. Online community amenities are sometimes considered as a social network service, though in a broader sense, social network service usually means an individual-centered service whereas online community services are group-centered.

Online social networking and Internet communication is becoming wildly popular with adolescents and young adults (Allen, Evans, Hare, Mikami, & Szewedo, 2010; AndersonButcher, Ball, Brzozowski, Lasseigne, Lehnert, & McCormick, 2010; DeGroot, Ledbetter, Mao, Mazer, Meyer, & Swafford, 2011; Finkelhor, Mitchell, & Wolack, 2002; Greenfield & Subrahmanyam, 2008; Kramer & Winter, 2008; Regan & Steeves, 2010; Sheldon, 2008). 93% of young people in America between the ages of twelve and seventeen are using the Internet (AndersonButcher et al., 2010). 93% of college students report having a facebook account (Sheldon, 2008) and these numbers are only increasing. As youth online social networking usage grows in occurrence, so do psychologist's apprehensions about the effects virtual communication has on adolescent social development.

It is also possible to find existing acquaintances, to allow communication among existing groups of people. Sites like LinkedIn foster commercial and business connections. YouTube and Flickr specialize in users' videos and photographs. Teens mostly use the Internet for entertainment and for communicating with friends and family. They use social networking sites and to create profiles on those sites. (Jones, Fox, 2009). They have been popular since the year 2002 and have attracted and fascinated tens of millions of Internet users (Boyd & Ellison, 2007).

The online survey conducted on "School and Social media" shows that the highest percentage of people using social networking websites is of students. It includes 96% of students who have access to internet. Every 3 in 5 students use these websites for discussing academic activities and topics.

The online survey conducted on "Social media facts and statistics" shows the number of college graduates using LinkedIn is almost 39 million. Study found says that almost 96% of all university students use Facebook in their daily routine. Other most commonly used social media platform is LinkedIn.

According to Survey of Young Americans' Attitudes in "A Study to Determine the Correlation of Social Media Usage and Grades", shows that the percentage of graduate students (61%) who are using social media websites is more than that of high school students (40%), Facebook (87%), Twitter (47%), Instagram (45%), Pinterest (37%), Snapchat (34%) and Tumblr (19%) are all more popular among college students.

(Lenhart, 2009) reveals that the share of adult Internet users who have a profile on an online social network site has more than quadrupled in the past four years – from 8% in 2005 to 35% now, according to the Pew Internet & American Life Projects December 2008 tracking survey. While

media coverage and policy attention focus heavily on how children and youth use social network sites, adults still make up the bulk of the users of these websites. Adults make up a larger portion of the US population than teens, which is why the 35% number represents a larger number of users than the 65% of online teens who also use online social networks. Still, younger online adults are much more likely than their older counterparts to use social networks, with 75% of adults (18-24) using these networks, compared to just 7% of adults 65 and older. At its core, use of online social networks is still a phenomenon of the young.

2. Purpose of the study

As we are aware that Social networking sites allow people to share common interests, photos and linking up acquaintances, people are spend many hours on it. The most affected group is the youths and especially high school students who are in their teenage years. The basic objective of the present study is to find out the amount of time spend on internet by young people and where they are spending their time.

2.1 Objectives

- To determine the usage of Internet by Adolescents
- To understand the activities performed online by the Adolescents
- To analyze the time spent on internet by Adolescents

3. Methodology :

This paper incorporates the qualitative approach towards the research objectives. Sampling has been done effectively and tools administered were mainly questionnaires.

3.1 Hypothesis

- Participants are more inclined towards Entertainment than compared to the information derived sources.
- Participants spend large amount of time on Social Networking Sites.

3.2. Sampling

A total of 240 participants (male and female) were included. The study was mainly conducted in Schools of Kolkata, Urban Area. To collect data 240 adolescents both male and female (13-18 yrs) were selected randomly. The survey questionnaire was administered on the participants.

3.3. Inclusion criteria:

- Between the ages range of 13-18yrs
- Minimum educational qualification studied middle school
- Able to read, write and understand English
- Resides in Kolkata urban area
- Access to Computer

3.4. Tools administered:

- Socio demographic sheet: this has been developed by the researcher to gather socio demographic data of the participants.
- A close ended Survey Questionnaire was developed by researcher to meet the need of the study.

4. Result

Adolescents (Male) survey

Online activities:

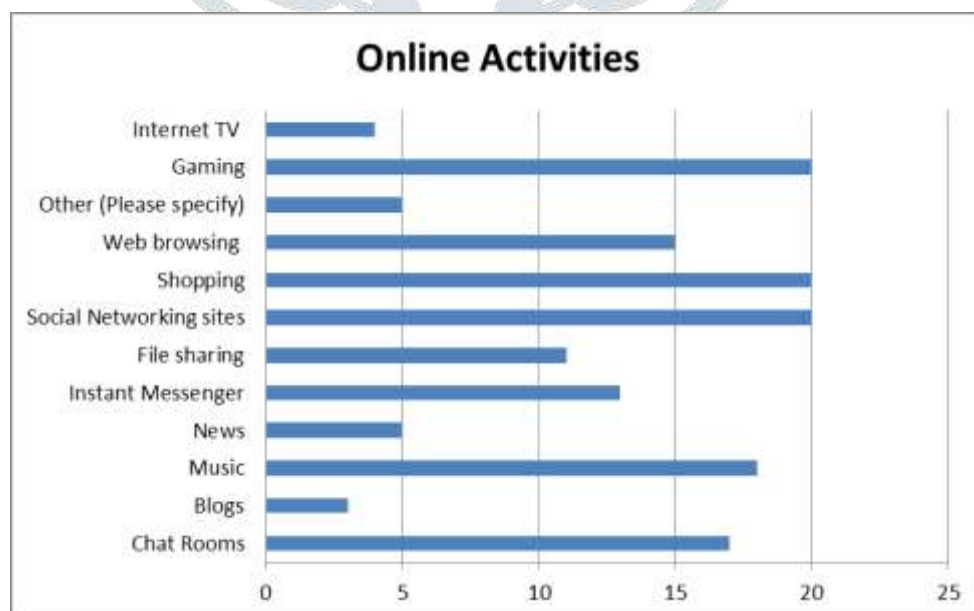


Fig. : 01 Activities done most online

Social Networking sites	Shopping	Web browsing	Other (Please specify)	Gaming	Internet TV
20%	20%	15%	5%	20%	5%

Chat Rooms	Blogs	Music	News	Instant Messenger	File sharing
17 %	3%	18%	5%	13%	11%

This data signifies the online activities performed by adolescents (male). 17% of males use chat rooms when they are online, only 3% uses Blogs, 18% listen music online, 13% of males go online for using instant Messenger, only 11% share files online, 20% go online to use social networking sites, online shopping and play online games, only 5% watch internet(TV), news and for other activities. Overall it denotes that population go online for connecting on Social Networking Sites, online Shopping and playing Games.

Frequency of performing online activities:

This graph denotes the frequency of adolescents of using chat rooms. 35% uses chat rooms everyday, 27% uses chat rooms more than once a week, 19% uses chatrooms once a week, 14% uses it once a month and only 5% uses chatrooms less than once a month.

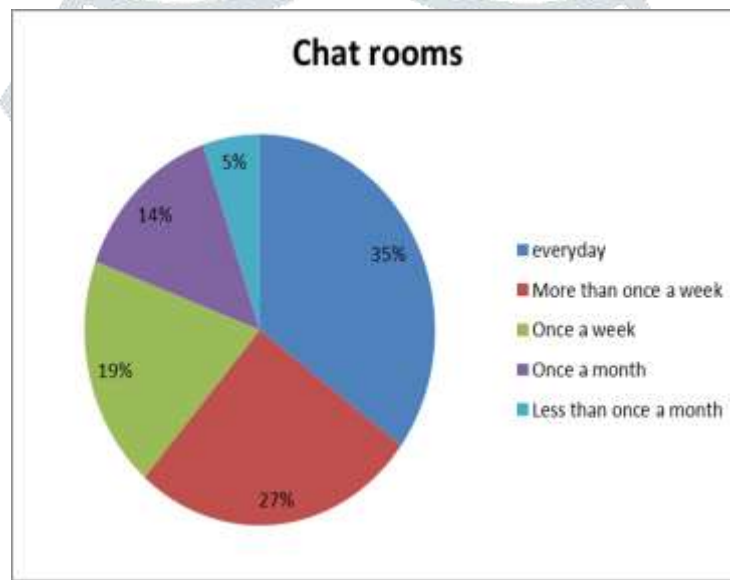


Fig. : 02 Time spent on chat rooms

This graph denotes the frequency of adolescents of using Instant Messenger. 51% uses Instant messenger every day, 38% uses it more than once a week, 8% uses it once a week, only 3% uses it once a month and 0% uses Instant Messenger less than once a month.

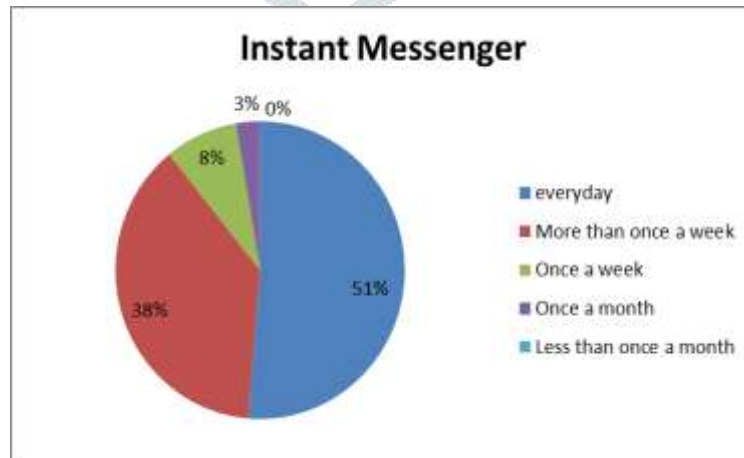


Fig. : 03 Time spent on instant messenger

This graph denotes the frequency of adolescents of using Ins Social Networking sites.26% uses Social Networking Sites every day,22% uses it more than once a week,15% uses it once a week, only 23% uses it once a month and 14% uses Social Networking sites less than once a month.

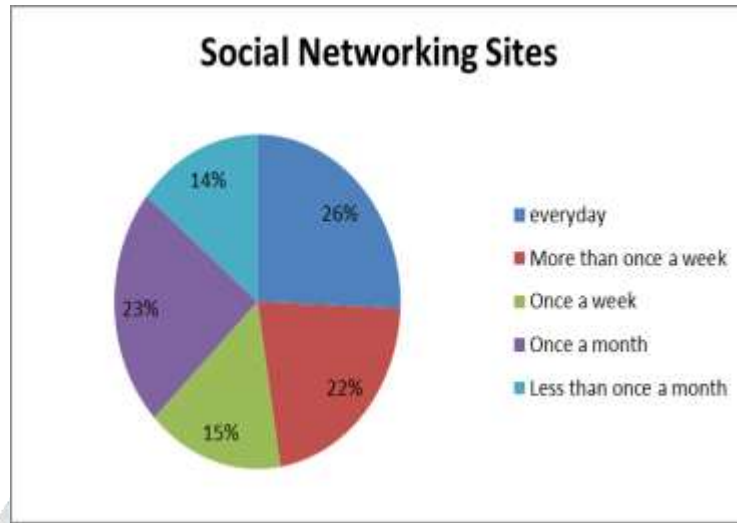


Fig. : 04 Time spent on Social networking sites

This graph denotes the frequency of adolescents of using Blogs.46% uses Blogs every day,31% uses it more than once a week,15% uses it once a week, only 8% uses it once a month and 0% uses blogs less than once a month.

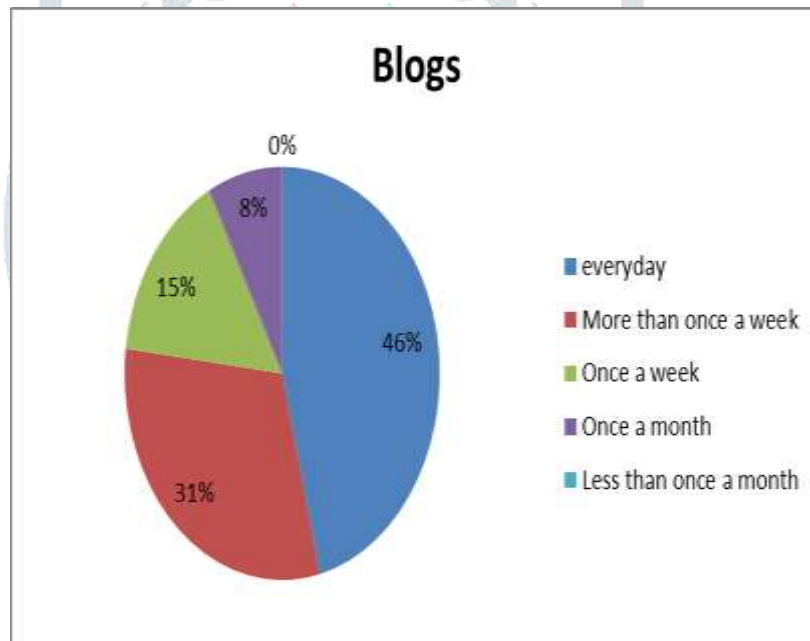


Fig. : 05 Time spent on Blogs

This graph denotes the frequency of adolescents of Gaming online.29% plays game every day,23% plays it more than once a week,16% uses it once a week, only 20% uses it once a month and 12% plays less than once a month.

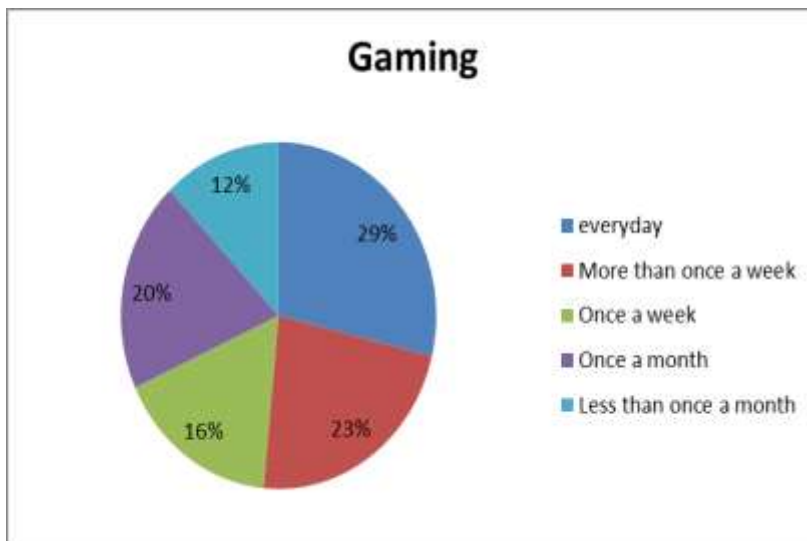


Fig. : 06 Time spent on Gaming

This graph denotes the frequency of adolescents of browsing WEB .37% browse internet every day,25% plays it more than once a week,17% uses it once a week, only 13% uses it once a month and 8% brows less than once a month.

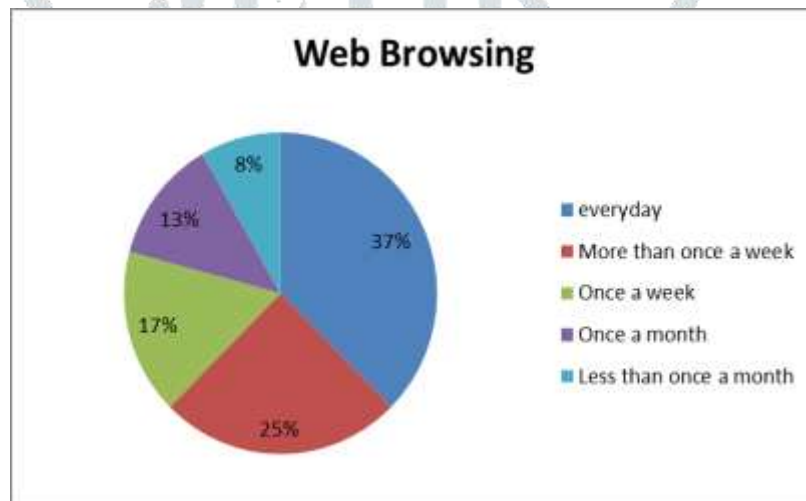


Fig. : 07 Time spent on Web browsing

This graph denotes the frequency of adolescents of listening Music online .31% listen to music every day,23% listens it more than once a week,36% listens it once a week, only 8% listens it once a month and 2% listens less than once a month.

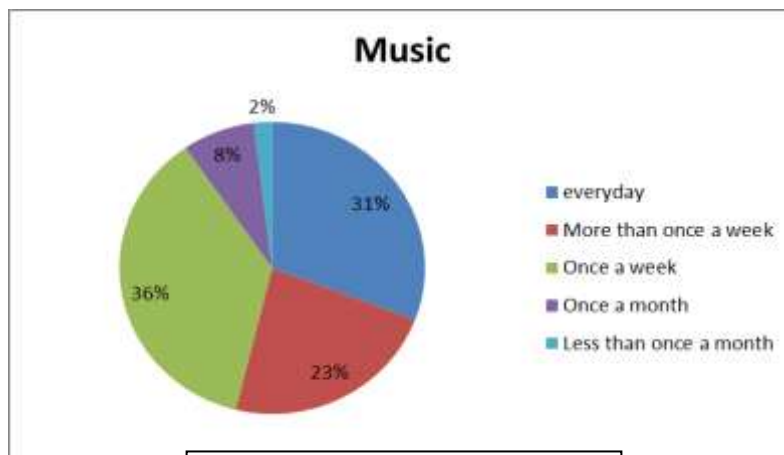


Fig. : 08 Time spent on Music

This graph denotes the frequency of adolescents of sharing files online .21% shares file every day,31% uses it more than once a week,28% uses it once a week, only 15% uses it once a month and 5% uses less than once a month.

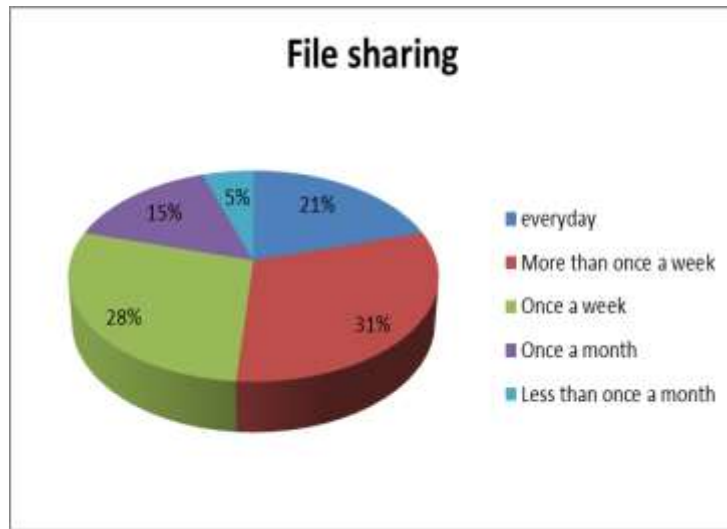


Fig. : 09 Time spent on sharing files

This graph denotes the frequency of adolescents shopping online .13% do shopping every day,24% uses it more than once a week,29% uses it once a week, only 19% uses it once a month and 15% uses less than once a month.

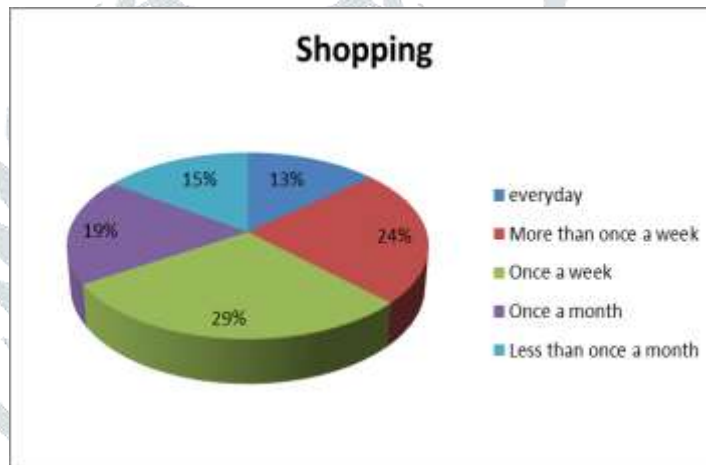


Fig. : 10 Time spent on Online Shopping

This graph denotes the frequency of adolescent watches news online .33% watches news online every day,10% watches it more than once a week,38% watches it once a week, only 17% uses it once a month and 2% watches less than once a month.

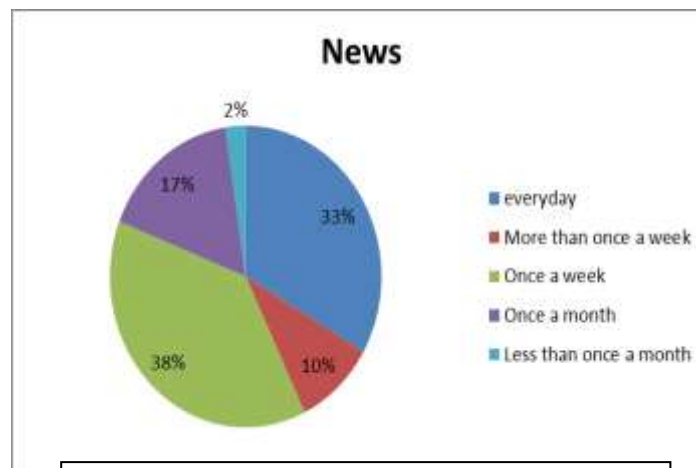


Fig. : 11 Time spent on watching online news

This graph denotes the frequency of adolescent watching internet TV .14% watches Internet TV every day,25% watches it more than once a week,33% watches it once a week, only 10% uses it once a month and 18% watches less than once a month.

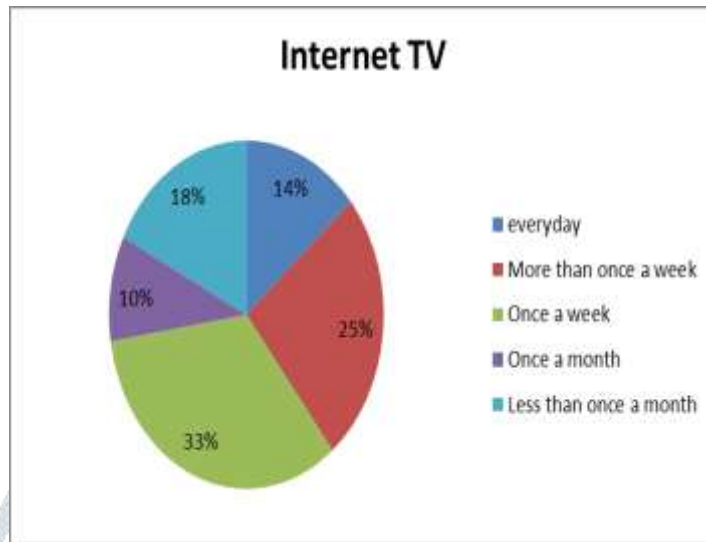


Fig. : 12 Time spent on Internet TV

Female survey

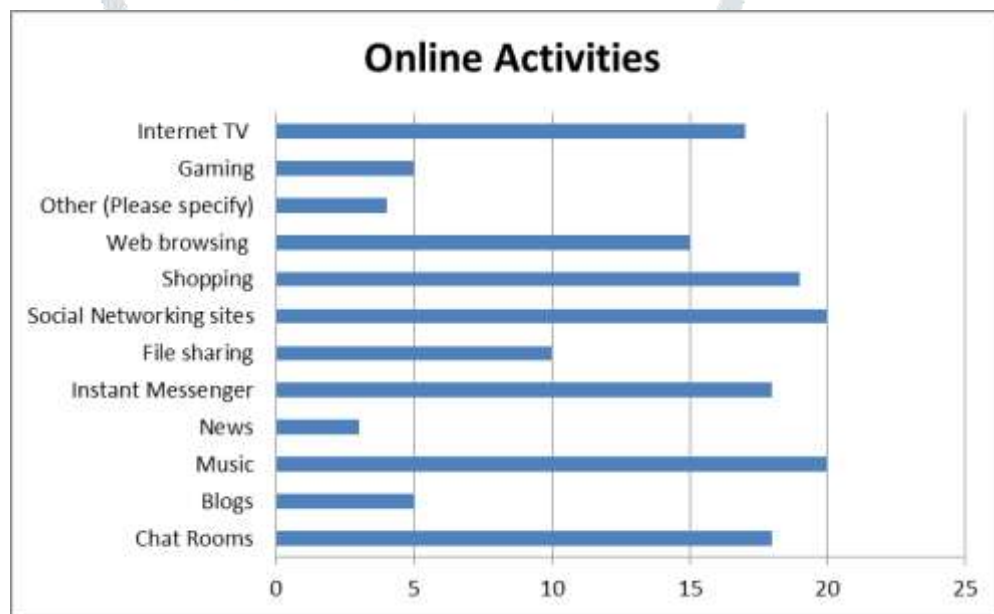


Fig. : 13 Activities done most online

Chat Rooms	Blogs	Music	News	Instant Messenger	File sharing
18%	5%	20%	3%	18%	10%

Social Networking sites	Shopping	Web browsing	Other (Please specify)	Gaming	Internet TV
20%	19%	15%	4%	5%	17%

This data signifies the online activities performed by adolescents (female). 18% of females use chat rooms when they are online, only 5% uses Blogs ,20% listen music online,3%go online to watch news , 18% of females go online for using instant Messenger, only 10% share files online,20% go online to use social networking sites, 19% uses online shopping,15% uses web browsing , 5% uses online games ,17% watch internet(TV) and only 4% uses other activities.

Frequency of performing online activities:

This graph denotes the frequency of adolescents of using chatrooms .33% uses chatrooms everyday,26% uses chatrooms more than once a week,21% uses chatrooms once a week,12% uses it once a month and only 8% uses chatrooms less than once a month.

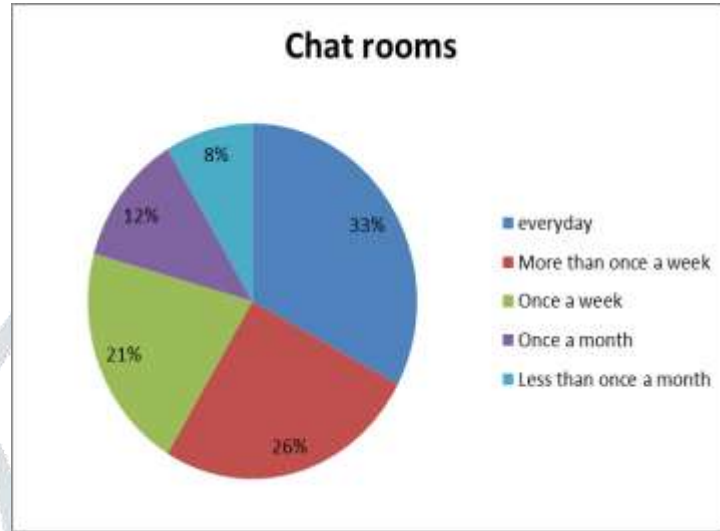


Fig. : 14 Time spent on chat rooms

This graph denotes the frequency of adolescents of using Instant Messenger .51% uses Instant messenger every day,38% uses it more than once a week,8% uses it once a week, only 3% uses it once a month and 0% uses Instant Messenger less than once a month.

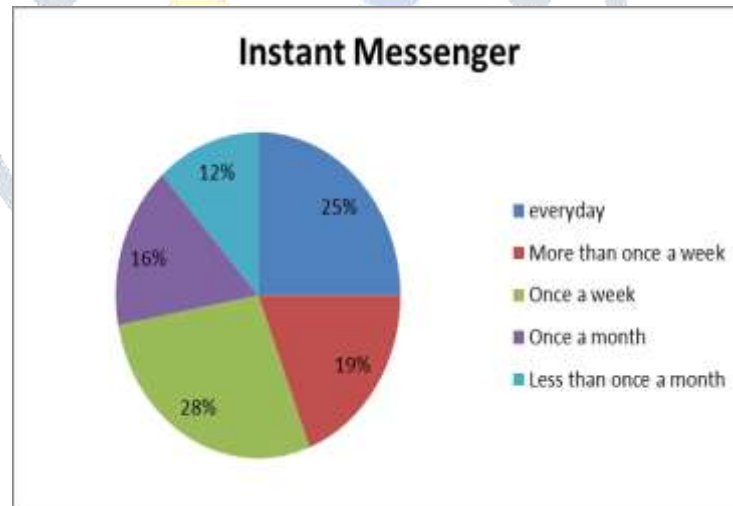


Fig. : 15 Time spent on instant messenger

This graph denotes the frequency of adolescents of using Ins Social Networking sites.28% uses Social Networking Sites every day,20% uses it more than once a week,25% uses it once a week, only 11% uses it once a month and 16% uses Social Networking sites less than once a month.

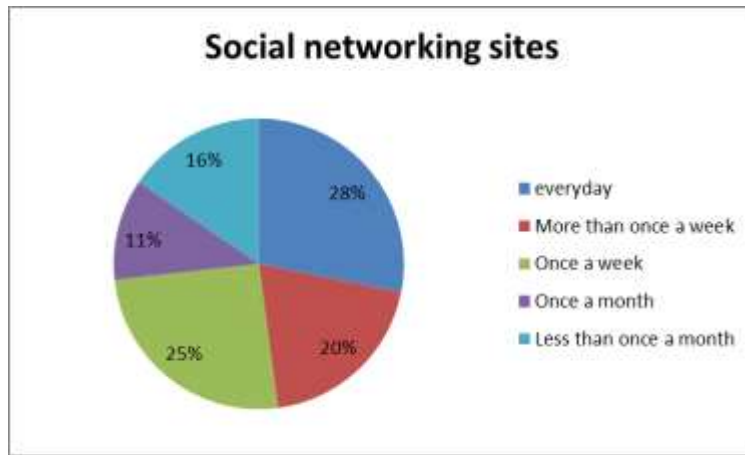


Fig. : 16 Time spent on Social networking sites

This graph denotes the frequency of adolescents of using Blogs.20% uses Blogs every day,26% uses it more than once a week,41% uses it once a week, only 13% uses it once a month and 0% uses blogs less than once a month.

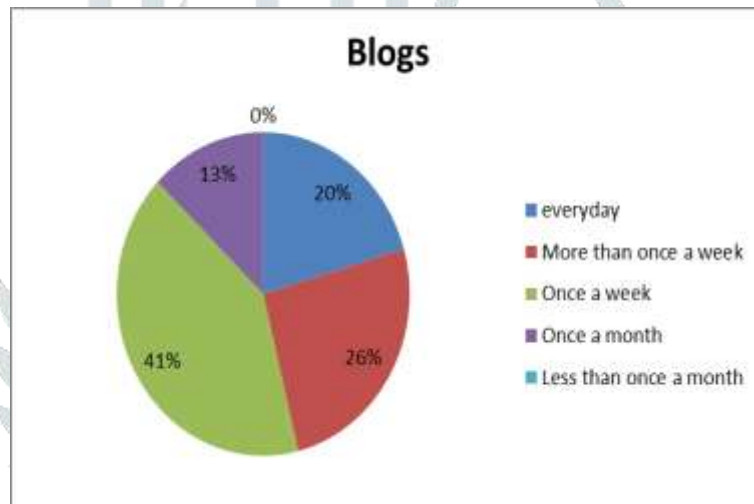


Fig. : 17 Time spent on Blogs

This graph denotes the frequency of adolescents of Gaming online.29% plays game everyday,23% plays it more than once a week,16% uses it once a week, only 20% uses it once a month and 12% plays less than once a month.

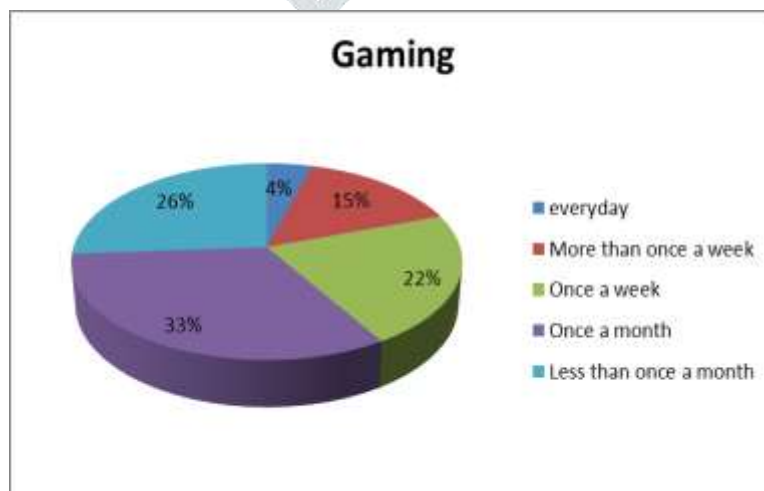


Fig. : 18 Time spent on Gaming

This graph denotes the frequency of adolescents of browsing WEB .10% browse internet every day,21% plays it more than once a week,31% uses it once a week, only 38% uses it once a month and 0% brows less than once a month.

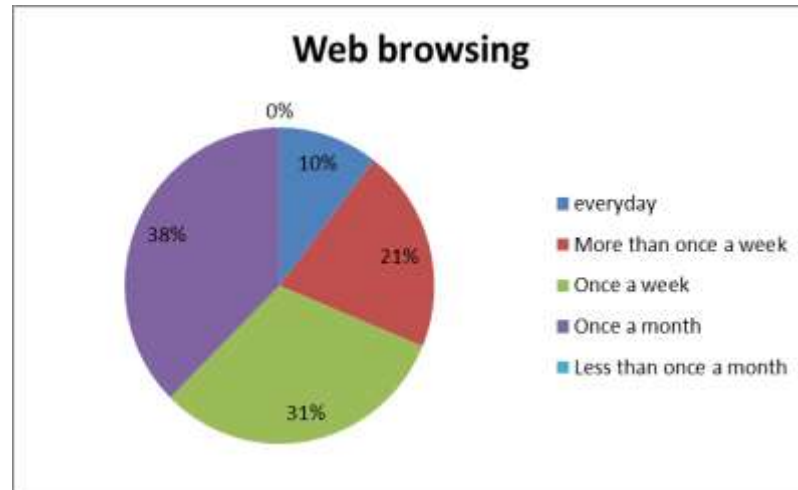


Fig. : 19 Time spent on Web browsing

This graph denotes the frequency of adolescents of listening Music online .31% listen to music every day,23% listens it more than once a week,36% listens it once a week, only 8% listens it once a month and 2% listens less than once a month.

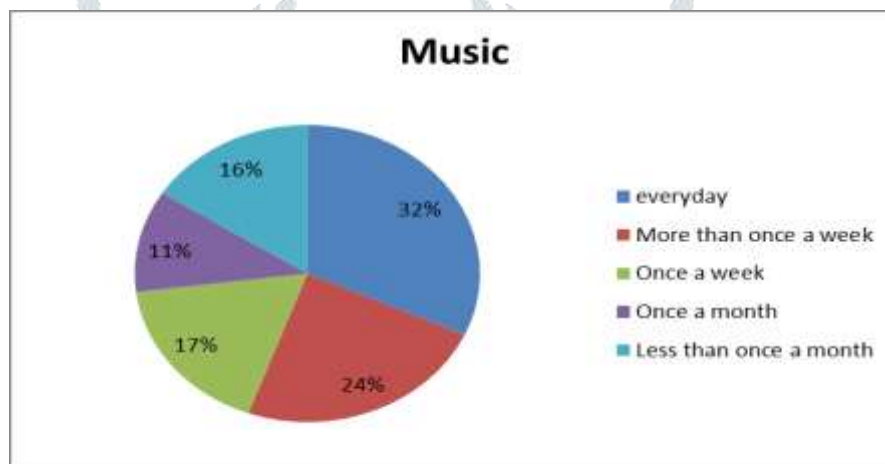


Fig. : 20 Time spent on Music

This graph denotes the frequency of adolescents of sharing files online .13% shares file every day,21% uses it more than once a week,24% uses it once a week, only 34% uses it once a month and 8% uses less than once a month.

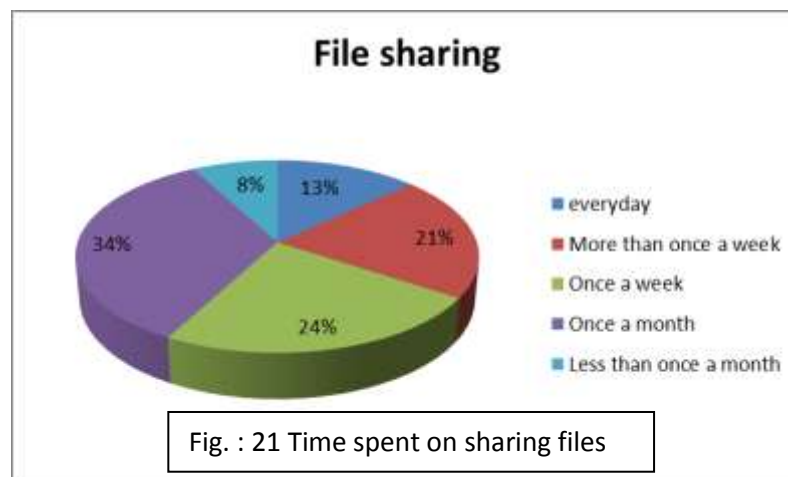


Fig. : 21 Time spent on sharing files

This graph denotes the frequency of adolescents shopping online .19% do shopping every day,23% uses it more than once a week,15% uses it once a week, only 26% uses it once a month and 17% uses less than once a month.

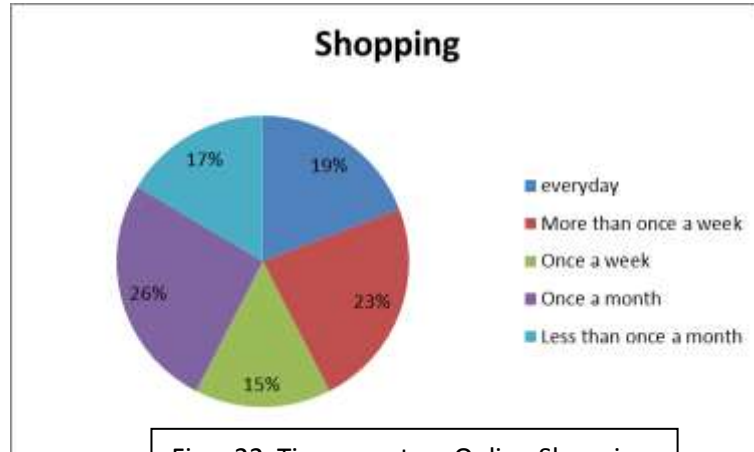


Fig. : 22 Time spent on Online Shopping

This graph denotes the frequency of adolescent watches news online .9% watches news online every day,22% watches it more than once a week,33% watches it once a week, only 7% uses it once a month and 29% watches less than once a month.

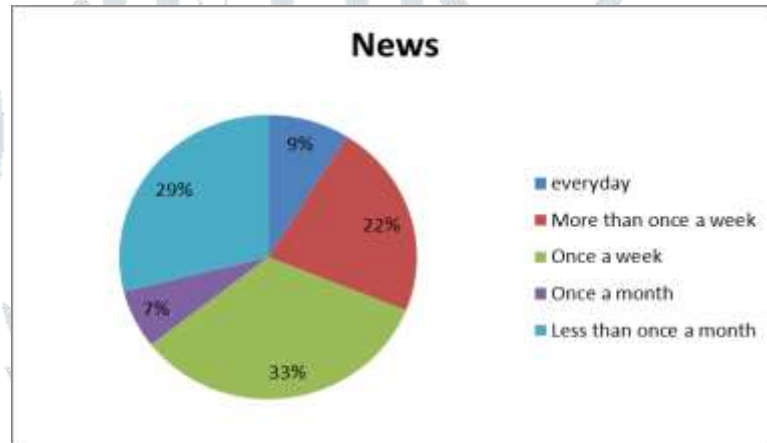


Fig. : 23 Time spent on watching online news

This graph denotes the frequency of adolescent watching internet TV .25% watches Internet TV every day,18% watches it more than once a week,12% watches it once a week, only 25% uses it once a month and 20% watches less than once a month.

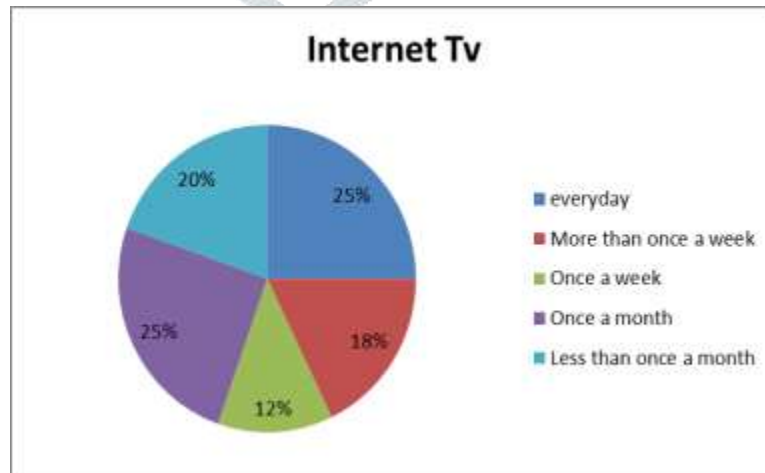


Fig. : 24 Time spent on Internet TV

Interpretation and Discussion:

The major objective of the research undertaken was to throw light on the purpose of using internet by Adolescents.

While evaluating the results for the question asked about the **Online Activities they do mostly** it came out that 20% of the males spend most of their time using social networking sites, Playing online games and online shopping. 18% use it for listening online music and 17% males use for chat rooms whereas only 11% males spend time for sharing file, 3% on Blog and 5% on watching NEWS online.

Similar results were found for females : 20% of females spend most of their time on social networking sites, 19% on online shopping, 18% on instant messenger and chat rooms whereas only 5% spend time on blogs and 10% on sharing files. It can be said that the primary objective of the present study i.e., Adolescents are more inclined towards the entertainment is supported and can be established by the findings.

When respondents were asked about **the amount of time spend on accessing internet on various activities**, it was found that the majority spend time almost every day on various activities such as:

35% of females uses Chat Rooms every day and 27% of them uses it at least once a week. 25% of females uses Instant messenger everyday, 19% of them uses it more than once a week, 28% once a week and 16% at least once a week. It has been observed that adolescents' uses Instant messengers extensively.

28% of the females login to Social Networking Sites everyday for sharing thoughts and post pictures, 20% login for more than once a week, 25% login once in a week and 11% login once in a month.

Similarly, when males were asked about their online activities it was found that: 35% of males uses Chat Rooms every day and 26% of them uses it at least once a week.

51% of males use Instant Messenger everyday and 38% of them use it more than once a month.

26% of the males login to Social Networking Sites everyday for sharing thoughts and post pictures, 22% login for more than once a week, 15% login at least once in a week and 23% login once in a month.

On other activities like online shopping, gaming, web browsing and etc., good amount of time is invested mentioned in the Figures above in result section.

Conclusion

With reference to the study it was evidently figured out how engrossed the current Youth is in their virtual world. Perhaps, like a coin with two sides, social networking sites also have in their own way adversely affected the youth. The target group prefers spending an abundant amount of time on these social networking sites on an average of more than 2 hours a day which keeps them away from their own purpose of existence and interacting with their own natural surroundings. Their social gatherings are troubled because surfing these social networking sites keep them more engaged for which they are bound to ignore other significant social events in their lives. The objectives meant to have targeted have been achieved to an extent through this study. The youth today is not only techno savvy and socially existent but also embody social consciousness. It has now become an evident and usual sight to face individuals being insensitive to chat in worshipping places, homes when relatives and guests are around, highways, schools, colleges and social gatherings wherein they are so preoccupied and engrossed into their phones that they do not even bother to look up as to where they are which results in their inability to prioritize as to what is important and what isn't. As an adult it's a challenge for us to shift our young generation's attention from real to virtual world and visible to invisible friends, acquaintances.

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