

Attitude of Higher Education Students towards Social Media in West Bengal

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Abstract: The present study aims to measure the attitude of higher education students towards social media. The investigator has adopted the descriptive survey method for this study. 187 post graduate students were taken as a sample from University of Kalyani through simple random sampling. The investigator developed a self-made questionnaire of 45 items to examine the attitude of higher education students towards social media. To find out the interpretation from collected data, the data were analyzed using mean, S.D. and 't' test. The findings revealed that there is no significant difference in attitude between rural boys and urban boys, rural girls and urban girls, rural boys and rural girls, rural boys and urban girls, rural students and urban students. And there is significant difference between boys (rural + urban) and girls (rural + urban), urban boys and urban girls, urban boys and rural girls.

Keywords: Social Media, Attitude, Higher Education Students.

1. INTRODUCTION:

“Social media appeal to human’s basic need –which is the desire to socially connect with each other.”

– Evan Williams (founder of Twitter & Blogger)

Social media is a significant aspect of our life in present day. We cannot think a single moment without social media. Social media affects our life in many ways. Even social media is an important tool, which develops our attitude towards many things. The use of new technologies, especially social media, is becoming increasingly ubiquitous in students’ daily lives.

In 1844 Samuel Morse made the first step towards a resemblance of social media when he sent a telegram from Washington D.C to Baltimore. From 1997 to 2001 Six Degrees had a peak of about 1 million members who were able to create profile. In January 2004 google creates its own email service ‘Gmail’. Mark Zuckerberg and his friends launched Facebook in February 2004. After that very popular video sharing app Youtube launched in February 2005. Then with the modernizing of technologies, various social media platforms were developed. (Ahmad, 2018). Everything has a positive as well as negative side. Similarly, uses of social media can enhance students’ academic performance and also can interrupt performance. Gorhe (2009) found from her research that impact of social media on students’ academic performance is two-way. This means that if used smartly and judiciously social media can have positive effect on academic performance of students, while it used carelessly and without awareness, it can affect students’ academic performance, thus endangering their future.

1.1. Meaning and Definition of Social Media:

Social media is basically an online tool by which we can create or/and share our information news, ideas and other forms of expressions via virtual communities and networks. There are several websites and applications that make it possible.

Social media is perceived as a Web 2.0 development, which is to say that it is founded on the concept of a user-driven, interactive web. Blogs, message boards and chat rooms provide an experience that could be described as social media, but the term is more strongly identified with sites like Twitter, Facebook, Digg, LinkedIn, and so on. Like many buzzwords, the meaning of social media is a moving target that gets shifted around according to what the person using it wants it to mean. (Technopedia)

Merriam-Webster defined "social media" as "forms of electronic communication (such as websites for social networking and microblogging) through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content (such as videos)"

Social media is defined by Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) as “internet-based applications which permit the formation and exchange of content which is created by user”. Social media permits users as well as communities to build, co-operate and change the matter.

1.2. Different Types of Social Media:

- (i) **Social Networks: Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn** - These types of social media are used to associate with individual on the web.
- (ii) **Media Sharing Networks: Instagram, Snapchat, Youtube** - Such types of social media are used to find and share photographs, live video, and other kinds of media on the web.

- (iii) **Discussion Forums: *Reddit, Quora, Digg*** - These types of social media channels are used for finding, sharing, and discussing different kinds of information, opinion and news.
- (iv) **Bookmarking & Content Creation Networks: *Pinterest, Flipboard*** - Opting for such types of media will help you find out, share, discuss, and save a variety of latest content and media that are trending as well.
- (v) **Bloggng & Publishing Networks: *WordPress, Tumblr, Medium*** - These types of social media networks you will use for publishing, discovering, and commenting on articles, social media blogs and other content on the web.
- (vi) **Social Shopping Networks: *Polyvore, Etsy, Fancy*** - When you want to find out all the latest trends in the marketing or crave to know the shopping tips then these networks are for you. (Digital vidya)

2. OBJECTIVES:

The main objective of the study was to examine the relationship between students' beliefs and attitude towards social media use in education. Specifically, the objectives of the study were:

- To study the difference in attitude of higher education students towards social media between boys and girls in West Bengal.
- To study the difference in attitude of higher education students towards social media between urban boys and rural boys in West Bengal.
- To study the difference in attitude of higher education students towards social media between urban girls and rural girls in West Bengal.
- To study the difference in attitude of higher education students towards social media between urban boys and urban girls in West Bengal.
- To study the difference in attitude of higher education students towards social media between rural boys and rural girls in West Bengal.
- To study the difference in attitude of higher education students towards social media between urban boys and rural girls in West Bengal.
- To study the difference in attitude of higher education students towards social media between rural boys and urban girls in West Bengal.
- To study the difference in attitude of higher education students towards social media between urban students and rural students in West Bengal.

3. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Das and Shikder (2018) conducted a study to investigate attitude of university level students towards social media. The findings presented that there is a significant difference between attitude of university level boys' and girls' students. And no significant difference between attitude of rural boys' and girls' students towards social media, And also no significant difference between rural girls and urban girls.

Nachimuthu (2013) explored student teachers attitude towards social media. The results demonstrate (a) attitude towards social media networks do not differ while utilizing their level in B.Ed. students either in gender wise and in locality wise. (b) Social media network sites are effective in teacher education programme and it improved their level of learning.

Bullu (2016) et. al. conducted a study on examination of the attitude of middle school students towards social media. They used descriptive survey as a method of study. The results revealed that general attitude scores of the participant students towards social media was high, based on mean and standard deviation scores. There were not any significant differences based on gender, school, class, mother's education, father's education, perceived income level, social media membership, social media use length, location to connect to social media, tool used to connect to social media.

Samsujjaman and Halder (2019) examined a study on student attitude towards social media in relation their academic achievement. The findings were a significant difference existed between male and female students regarding the attitude towards social media. Female students' attitude is better than boys' students regarding social media. And a significant relationship between students' academic achievement and attitude towards social media of the students. A significant difference has existed between Urban and Rural Students regarding attitude towards social media. Urban Students attitude are higher than rural students regarding attitude towards social media.

4. HYPOTHESIS:

The null hypotheses for the present study are as follows:

- H₁:** There is no significant difference in attitude towards social media between boys (urban & rural) and girls (urban & rural).
- H₂:** There is no significant difference in attitude towards social media between urban boys and rural boys.
- H₃:** There is no significant difference in attitude towards social media between urban girls and rural girls.
- H₄:** There is no significant difference in attitude towards social media between urban boys and urban girls.
- H₅:** There is no significant difference in attitude towards social media between rural boys and rural girls.
- H₆:** There is no significant difference in attitude towards social media between urban boys and rural girls.
- H₇:** There is no significant difference in attitude towards social media between rural boys and urban girls.

H₃: There is no significant difference in attitude towards social media between urban students (boys & girls) and rural student (boys & girls).

5. DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY:

These are the characteristics that limit the scope and describe the boundaries of my study...

- Population: The subjects of the present study were selected as university level students; the study was confined to the Kalyani University in West Bengal.
- Sample: Only 187 students were selected during the investigation.
- The study was further delimited to attitude.
- As region, rural and urban are included.
- To complete the research work I have taken helps of Mean, SD, T-test.

6. OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS:

Social Media: Social Media are interactive computer-mediated technologies that facilitate the creation and sharing of information, ideas, career interests and other forms of expression via virtual communities and networks. The variety of stand-alone and built-in social media services currently available introduces challenges of definition.

Higher education students: A student is primarily a person enrolled in a school or other educational institution who attends classes in a course to attain the appropriate level of mastery of a subject. Higher education is an optional final stage of formal learning that occurs after completion of secondary education. Often delivered at universities, academies, colleges and institute of technology etc. So, a Higher education student is a person who get admission and going through or completed his higher education.

Attitude: In psychology, attitude is a psychological construct, a mental and emotional entity that inheres in, or characterizes a person. According to **Colesnick** "An attitude is emotionally toned predisposition to act in a certain way toward a person, object, an idea, or a situation."

7. METHODOLOGY:

7.1. Method:

Research methods are utmost important in research process. There are many types of methodologies in the educational research. Among those methodologies this research employed descriptive survey research as well as quantitative research approach. Survey was conducted to collect the primary data and to prove the hypothesis. Participants were invited to complete the questionnaire with a schedule to collect personal information.

According to Creswell, survey research method are procedures in quantitative research in which investigators administer a survey to a sample or the entire population to describe the attitudes, opinions, behaviours, or characteristics of the population.

7.2. Tool:

The investigator prepared a questionnaire for university students to find out their attitude towards social media. This is a five-point Likert type scale consists of 45 items whose sample items are given in table no-1. The reliability of the scale was 0.78 by split half method. In this study content validity and face validity of the scale was ensured through consultation with faculty member from Kalyani University.

Table 1- Sample Items for Measuring Students' Attitude towards Social Media

Sl. No.	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	Social media develops students' creativity.					
2	Social media increases communication skills.					
3	Social Media is costly for me.					
4	Social media helps to reduce my mental stress.					
5	Social media develops positive attitude towards English language					

7.3. Population and Sample:

Population: All the university students of West Bengal (India) are the population of the study.

Sample: A sample is a representative of population. The sample size of the study was 187. The sample size was settled on after considering the time and resources available for this study. The target population for the study was higher education level students of West Bengal. In rural area 93 students selected through simple random sampling from

University of Kalyani. In urban areas 94 students selected through simple random sampling from University of Kalyani also.

8. RESULTS:

8.1. Testing of H_1 :

Table No.-2

Measures	Number	Mean	Standard Deviation	Pooled SD	SE _D	Degrees of Freedom	't' Value
Boys(U+R)	95	164.4	23.12	27	3.78	185	3.06**
Girls(U+R)	92	152.8	30.50				

**=Significant at 1% level of significance

Analysis & Interpretation:

The researcher found from 't-table' that the critical value of t with 185 degrees of freedom(df) at 5% level of significance is 1.97 and 1% level of significance is 2.60. Our computed value of 't' i.e. 3.06 is greater than the critical value and hence it is significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected and alternative hypothesis is accepted. It means that there is significant difference in attitude between Boys (Urban+ Rural) and Girls (Urban + Rural) towards social media in west Bengal.

8.2. Testing of H_2 :

Table No.-3

Measures	Number	Mean	Standard Deviation	Pooled SD	SE _D	Degrees of Freedom	't'-Value
Urban Boys	47	160	20.8	22.91	4.582	93	1.85 ^{N.S}
Rural Boys	48	168.5	25.41				

N.S.= Not Significant

Analysis & Interpretation:

The researcher found from 't-table' that the critical value of t with 93 degrees of freedom(df) at 5% level of significance is 1.99. The computed value of 't' i.e. 1.85 is quite smaller than the critical value and hence is not significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis cannot be rejected. It means that there is no significant difference in attitude between Urban Boys and Rural Boys towards social media in West Bengal.

8.3. Testing of H_3 :

Table No.4

Measures	Numbers	Mean	Standard Deviation	Pooled SD	SE _D	Degrees of Freedom	't' Value
Urban Girls	46	156.4	33.82	30.74	6.148	90	0.55 ^{N.S.}
Rural Girls	46	151.2	27.05				

N.S.= Not significant

Analysis & Interpretation:

The researcher found from 't'-table that the critical value of 't' with 90 degrees of freedom(df) at 5% level of significance is 1.99. The computed value of 't' i.e. 0.55 is quite smaller than the critical value and hence it is not significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis cannot be rejected. It means that there is no significant difference in attitude between Urban Girls and Rural Girls towards social media in West Bengal.

8.4. Testing of H_4 :

Table No.-5

Measures	Numbers	Mean	Standard Deviation	SE _D	Degrees of Freedom	't' Value
Urban Boys	47	168.5	27.87	5.57	91	2.15*
Urban Girls	46	156.5				

*=Significant at 5% level

Analysis & Interpretation:

The researcher found from 't-table' that the critical value of t with 91 degrees of freedom at 5% level of significance is 1.99. Our computed value of 't' i.e. 2.15 is greater than the critical value and hence it is significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected and alternative hypothesis is accepted. It means that there is significant difference in attitude between Urban Boys and Urban Girls towards social media in West Bengal.

8.5. Testing of H_5 :

Table No.6

Measures	Numbers	Mean	SD	Pooled SD	SE _D	df	't' Value
Rural Boys	48	160	25.41				1.71 ^{N.S.}

Rural Girls	46	151	27.05	26.26	5.25	92	
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N.S.=Not Significant

Analysis & Interpretation:

The researcher found from 't-table' that the critical value of t with 92 degrees of freedom at 5% level of significance is 1.99. The computed value of 't' i.e. 1.71 is greater than the critical value and hence it is not significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis cannot be rejected. It means that there is no significant difference in attitude between Rural Boys and Rural Girls towards social media.

8.6. Testing of H₆:

Table No.-7

Measures	Numbers	Mean	Standard Deviation	Pooled Sd	SE _D	Degrees of Freedom	't' Value
Urban Boys	47	168.5	20.08	23.78	4.75	91	3.679**
Rural Girls	46	151	27.05				

**= Significant at both 5% & 1% Level

Analysis & Interpretation:

The researcher found from 't-table' that the critical value of t with 91 degrees of freedom at 5% level of significance is 1.99 and 1% level of significance is 2.63. The computed value of 't' i.e. 3.679 is greater than the critical value and hence it is significant at both level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected and alternative hypothesis is accepted. It means that there is significant difference in attitude between Urban Boys and Rural Girls towards social media.

8.7. Testing of H₇:

Table No.8

Measures	Numbers	Mean	Standard Deviation	Pooled SD	SE _D	Degrees of Freedom	't' Value
Rural Boys	48	160	25.41	29.94	5.98	92	0.91 ^{N.S.}
Urban Girls	46	154.5	33.82				

N.S= Not Significant

Analysis & Interpretation:

The researcher found from 't-table' that the critical value of t with 92 degrees of freedom at 5% level of significance is 1.99. The computed value of 't' i.e. 0.91 is quite smaller than the critical value and hence it is not significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis cannot be rejected. It means that there is no significant difference in attitude between Rural Boys and Urban Girls towards social media.

8.8. Testing of H₈:

Table No-9

Measures	Numbers	Mean	Standard Deviation	Pooled SD	SE _D	Degrees of Freedom	't' value
Urban Students (Boys & Girls)	94	161.5	28.29	27.5	3.85	185	1.42 ^{N.S.}
Rural Students (Boys & Girls)	93	156	26.66				

N.S. = Not Significant

Analysis & Interpretation:

The researcher found from 't-table' that the critical value of t with 185 degrees of freedom at 5% level of significance is 1.97. The computed value of 't' i.e. 1.42 is quite smaller than the critical value and hence it is not significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis cannot be rejected. It means that there is no significant difference in attitude between Rural Students and Urban Students towards social media.

9. CONCLUSION:

From the above findings and discussion, it can be concluded that university students' attitude towards social media is high. It is without doubt social media is and will remain an important tool in human life as far communication is concerned. Today mankind is harvesting tremendously from its existence not only in mere communication point of view but also in most scholarly activities. Observing the whole study, we can say that boys have higher attitude than girls, and urban students have higher attitude than rural students towards social media in West Bengal.

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