A STUDY ON THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL NETWORKS ON STUDENTS ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AND HEALTH

[1]Dr. Mona Mehta, [2]Hridishruti Saikia, [3]Eliza Upadhyaya
[1]Assistant Professor, [2]Sr. M.Sc student, [3]Sr.M.Sc student
Department of Family Economics and Community Resource Management,
Faculty of Family and Community Sciences, The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda,
Vadodara, Gujarat, India.

Abstract : Social networks have gained extreme popularity among people all over the world. Many students spend countless hours in surfing social networks such as Facebook, Whatsapp, Instagram, Youtube, Twitter, Wechat, Tumblr, Skype, Viber, Snapchat, Pinterest and so on. Social networks consume a lot of time, however it also helps students to develop important knowledge and social skills and be active citizens who create and share content. At present, many students utilize these sites on a daily basis, for different purpose. Social networks can help students to improve academic performance as well as it can also deteriorate their academic performance and also affect their health depending on how frequently and when they use it. Most of the students spends hours checking updates in social networks which leads them to procrastinate their academic works. Moreover, while studying or searching their course material online, they get attracted to social networks to kill boredom in their study time, diverting their attention from their work. Thus the present study aimed to assess the extent of use of social networks by youth on their academic performance and health. The sample selected for the study were 110 students from The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, Vadodara. Convenience sampling technique was adopted for selecting the sample. For the present study the interview schedule was selected to get the detailed data of the respondents. The major findings of the present study revealed that most commonly used social networks were whatsapp, facebook, instagram and youtube. It was also found that majority of the students used the social networks for getting information, to improve knowledge, for entertainment, and to build personal and business relationships. Moreover, with regards to health problems it was also found that the majority of the students faced problems of eye irritation, lack of concentration, distraction and harmed their psychological well being while interacting with strangers on these various social networks.

Keywords : *Social Network, Students, Academic Performance, Health.*

I. Introduction

The definition of Social Media is 'the relationships that exist between network of people'(Walter and Riviera,2004). Under the umbrella of Social Media, Social Networks are the main applications. Social Networking Sites are defined as web-based services that allows individuals to construct a public or semi-public profile, articulate a list of other users that they share a connection with and view their list of connections within the system. Social networking websites have attracted millions of users and many of the users integrated their sites as a daily practice. The use of social networks by people in India has shifted from 168 million to 258.27 million in 2016.The most popular social networks in India were Youtube and Facebook, followed by social app Whatsapp (www.statista.com).

Social Networking Sites allows users to share ideas, digital photos and videos, posts and to inform others about online or real world activities and events with people in their network. Social Networking Sites gives an opportunity to meet new people around the world. The individual profile on social networking site gives an opportunity which allows people to know more information about a person before they interact with them. Social Networking Sites are built in such a way that they are very much user friendly. Moreover the mobile version of social networks now a days are even more user friendly allowing lot more number of people to connect through them. Most of social networks allows users to create groups which allows people to share their interest and hobbies. Social networking sites are also important as it increases public awareness and people can get latest knowledge quickly about any prevailing situation. Social Networks are becoming major tools for education and entertainment. Social Networking Sites have spread widely all over the world and are used by various users for several reasons and purposes. Social networks also have impact on students academic performance. Gupta, Shingh and Marwaha (2013) conducted a research on 'Relationship between Social Media and Academic Performance in Distance Education'. The research paper has assessed the purpose of usage of social media tools, specifically, facebook, blogs, google groups, sky drive and twitter by the students for academic purpose. The study revealed that majority of the students accessed various social media tools for information sharing and personal interaction. And the academic performance of the students is independent of the use of facebook as a social media tool for academic purpose. A research on 'Social Media and students Academic Performance' was conducted by Aghama (2016) to determine the impact of social media on academic performance of university of Benin students. The results of this study included that the most common reason for social media usage in the order of popularity was to share knowledge and information with other people. It was also found that there is no relationship between social media usage and students academic performance, no difference between male and female students with respect to their level of engagement on social media, and that age has no significant relationship with social media usage. Moreover, a study on 'The effect of Social Media on College Students' was conducted by Qingya Wang, Wei-Chen and Yu Liang (2011). The results of this study indicated while most of college students used social media and spend many hours checking social media sites, there was a negative aspect to college students. It was found that most of the students used social media for their entertainment rather than for their academic works. Tayseer, et.al. ,(2014) conducted a research on 'Social Networks: Academic and Social Impact on college students'. This paper addresses the effect of using social networks, e.g: facebook and twitter on students engagement in both academic and social aspects. The findings of the study revealed that there is a correlation between the students GPAs and their usage of social networks. The findings also indicated that many of the respondents do not use social sites to look for college related information, but many of them encourage the idea of having online study groups. Additionally it also, shows that the students tend to use social networks for social purposes more than the academic ones.

Apart from academic performance social networking sites also have impact on students mental and physical health. A study on the 'Negative effects of Social Networking Sites such as facebook among Asia Pacific University scholars in Malaysia' was conducted by Abdulahi, Samadi and Gharleghi (2014). The purpose of this study was to identify the negative effects of social networking sites such as facebook among Asia Pacific University scholars. The results of the study revealed that as time spent on social networking sites increases, the academic performance of the students is seen to be deteriorate. Also the relationship between health threat and social networking sites was found that to be low, therefore the chance of the students getting addicted is not that high. Prolonged use of social networks can create health issues such as eye irritation, neck and back pain, headache, visual fatigue. It can also cause distraction and lack of concentration. Constant switching from one task to another, which can occur during the work with social networks, strongly tires the brain. Using of social networks during late nights reduce the quality of sleep which can be a cause of lack of concentration. In spite of these, social networks also have positive effect on health. Many people take online health tips on social networks to maintain their good health and well-being. Social networks also helps people in preventing them from diseases

by enlighting them about the causes and symptoms of diseases. With the help of social networks people can easily take medical advises from family and friends.

Social networks have become an important part of life for every students now a days. It has become a convenient way to keep up with the lives of the important people in their life. It can be very influential on society in both positive and negative ways. Most of the students now a days spend most of their time on social networks. Surfing social networks for countless hours might affect the physical health such as eye irritations, thumb pain, neck pain, strain the tendons of fingers, visual fatigue, watering of eye and headache and mental health such as depression, stress, lack of concentration and distraction of the students. On the other hand, it also helps the students in their academic works, to develop knowledge and social skills, share ones expertise, to build personal as well as business relationships. Thus, the present study was undertaken to know the effects of social networks on students academic performance and health. The review of literature also revealed that very few studies were found on impact of social networks on students academic performance and health. Hence, the present study was undertaken with the following objectives.

I.1 Objectives

1. To assess the extent of use of social networks by youth.
2. To assess the impact of social networks on youths academic performance.
3. To assess the impact of social networks on youths health.

I.2 Delimitation

1. The study was limited to Vadodara city.

2. The study was limited to only selected social network namely whatsapp, facebook, instagram, youtube, twitter, wechat, tumblr, skype, pinterest, quora, line, viber, linkedin, snapchat.

II. Methodology

II.1 Research Design

" A research design is an arrangement of conditions for collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purpose with economy in procedure" (Kothari, 2012). Since the present investigation dealt with impact of social networks on students academic performance and health, descriptive research design was considered most suitable for the study.

II.2 Variables under study

There are two set of variables under this study:

Independent variables

A. Personal variable

      i. Age   ii. Education

B. Family variable

      i. Type of family   ii. Monthly family income   iii. Occupation of father

      iv. Education of father   v. Education of mother

Dependent variables

    a. Extent of use of Social Network by the youth.
    b. Impact of Social Network on Academic Performance of youth.
    c. Impact of Social Network on Health of youth.

II.3 Operational Definitions

A. Social Network

It is a type of electronic application which enables users to communicate with each other by posting information, comments, messages and images etc. It includes various electronic applications like whatsapp, facebook, instagram, youtube, twitter, wechat, tumblr, skype, pinterest, quora, line, viber, linkedin, snapchat.

B. Students Academic Performance

It is the end result of the efforts exerted by the students which is assessed through the test, projects, assignments and examinations, that the submit during their period of study.

C. Impact of Social Network

For the present study impact of social networks deals with the health of the youth. The mental health includes lack of concentration, depression, stress, distraction, procrastination and anxiety. The physical health factors included eye irritation, thumb pain, visual fatigue, watering of eye, headache and consuming too much of junk foods which leads to obesity.

II.4 Locale of the study

The present study was conducted in The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, Vadodara, Gujarat.

II.5 Sample selection and size

The samples selected for the study were from the Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, Vadodara. For the present study 110 students were selected . Convenience sampling technique was adopted for selecting the sample.

II.6 Selection, Description and Construction of tools

Keeping in mind the objectives of the study the interview schedule was developed to facilitate data collection for the present study.

Description and construction of tool

Section I (Background information)

This section contained questions regarding background information of the respondent like name, age, education, family income, occupation of father, family type, education of mother and father.

Section II (Extent of use of Social Networks)

This section includes questions regarding the type of Social Networks used by the students , how frequently they use these networks, how much time they spend using social networks during a month and in a day and for what purpose they used Social Networks.

Section III (Impact of Social Networks on Academic Performance)

This section includes questions regarding the reasons of the students using Social Networks.

Section IV (Impact of Social Networks on Health)

This section includes questions related to the various mental and physical health problems faced by the students as a result of using Social Networks.

III. Major Findings of the study

III.1 Background Information

Table No 1: Frequency & percentage distribution of the respondents according to their type of family.

Type of Family	(n=110)	(%)
Nuclear	77	70
Joint	33	30
Total	110	100

It was found that (70%) of the respondents belonged to the Nuclear family and (30%) of the respondents belonged to the joint family.

Table No 2: Frequency & percentage distribution of the respondents according to their age.

Age of the respondents (In years)	(n=110)	(%)
17- 22	71	64.54
23-27	38	34.54
28-32	01	0.90

It was found that (64%)respondents belonged to the age group of 17-22 years. whereas, 34.54 percent of the respondents were from the age group of 23-27 years and(0.90) percent of the respondents were from the age group of 28-32 years.

Table No 3: Frequency & percentage distribution of the respondents according to their total monthly family income.

Total monthly family Income of the respondents (in ₹)	(n=110)	(%)
≤ ₹ 44636	77	70
> ₹ 44636	33	30
Total	110	100

The data revealed that majority of the respondents (70%) had their family income less than in Rs 44636 and few of the respondents (30%) had their income above in Rs 44636.

Table No 4: Frequency & percentage distribution of the respondents according to their Father's Educational Level .

Father's Educations	(n=110)	(%)
Upto10th	10	9.09
Upto 12th	23	20.90
Diploma	05	4.54
Graduate	51	46.36
Post Graduate	20	18.18
Ph.D.	01	0.90
Total	110	100

The data revealed that(46%) of the respondents had their father education up to graduation . and (20.90 %) of the respondents had their father's education up to 12th level, whereas, (18.18%) percent of the respondents had their education up to post graduation level.

Table No 5: Frequency & percentage distribution of the respondents according to their Mothers Educational Level.

Mother's education	(n=110)	(%)
Upto10th	19	17.27
Upto 12th	41	37.27
Graduate	39	35.45
Post Graduate	10	9.09
Ph.D	01	0.90
Total	110	100

The data revealed that (37%) of the respondents had their mother's education up to 12th whereas (35.45 %) of the respondents had their mother's education up to graduation level.

III.2 Extent of use of Social Networks

Table No 1: Frequency and percentage distribution of respondents according to the type of social Networks.

Types of social networks	Yes		No	
	f	**%**	**f**	**%**
WhatsApp	110	100	0	0
Instagram	91	82.72	19	17.27
YouTube	109	99.09	01	0.90
Twitter	22	20	88	80
WeChat	04	3.63	106	96.36
Tumblr	07	6.36	103	93.63
Skype	31	28.18	79	71.81
Pinterest	67	60.90	43	39.09
Quora	32	29.09	78	70.90
Line	04	3.63	106	96.36
Viber	0	0	110	100
LinkedIn	15	13.63	95	86.36
Snapchat	57	51.81	53	48.18

The data revealed that various social networking sites were used by the respondents. Mostly, it was found that all the respondents used whatsapp, (99.09%) of the respondents used youtube whereas, (82.72%) of the respondents used instagram.

Table No 2: Frequency and percentage distribution of respondents according their frequency of use Social Networks.

Frequency of use of Social Networks	Always		Sometimes		Never	
	f	**%**	**f**	**%**	**f**	**%**
WhatsApp	102	92.72	08	7.27	0	0
Facebook	25	22.72	59	53.63	26	23.63
Instagram	73	66.36	25	22.72	12	10.90
YouTube	78	70.90	30	27.27	02	1.81
Twitter	07	6.36	23	20.90	80	72.7

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WeChat	0	0	0	0	110	100
Tumblr	0	0	0	0	110	100
Skype	01	0.90	34	30.90	76	69.09
Pinterest	17	15.45	41	37.27	52	47.27
Quora	05	4.54	08	7.27	96	87.27
Line	02	1.81	0	0	108	98.18
Viber	0	0	02	1.81	108	98.18
LinkedIn	01	0.90	16	14.54	93	84.54
Snapchat	20	18.18	34	30.90	56	50.90

The data revealed that(92%) of the respondents always used WhatsApp and(53.63%) of the respondent sometimes used Facebook whereas none of the respondents used WeChat and Tumblr.

Table No 3: Frequency and percentage distribution of respondents according to their frequency of use social networks during a month.

Frequency of use of Social networks during a month	f	%
Daily	110	100
2-3 days in a week	0	0
Once in a week	0	0
Total	110	100

The data revealed that (100%) of the respondents daily used social networks.

Table No 4: Frequency and percentage distribution of respondents according to the extent of spending hours on social Networks in a day.

Extent of spending hours on social networks in a day	f	%
Less than 2 hours	22	19.09
2-4 hours	62	56.36
More than 4 hours	26	23.63
Total	110	100

The data revealed that (56.36%) of the respondents spend 2-4 hours on social networks in a day and (23.63 %) of the respondents spend more than 4 hours in a day on social networks whereas (19.09%)of the respondents spend less than 2 hours in a day on social networks.

Table No 5: Frequency & percentage distribution of the respondents according to their purpose of using social networks

Purpose of using social networks	Always		Sometimes		Never		Wt.Mean
	f	%	F	%	f	%	
Connect with others	70	63.63	40	36.36	0	0	2.63
Get information from all around the world	84	76.36	26	23.63	0	0	2.38
Use it because my friends use it.	18	16.36	40	36.36	52	47.27	3.10
Save time to connecting with family and Friends	57	51.81	47	42.72	6	5.45	2.81
To improve Knowledge	71	64.54	37	33.63	2	1.81	2.6
Upload photos and Videos	33	30	60	54.54	17	15.45	3.15
To meet new people	23	20.90	53	48.18	34	30.90	3.18
Finding old friends	35	31.81	68	61.81	7	6.36	3.20
For entertainment	67	60.90	42	38.18	1	0.90	2.68
To update myself by following online professional development sources.	43	39.09	53	48.18	14	12.72	3
Writing blog on my interested subjects	11	10	30	27.27	69	62.72	3.08
Discuss/Share/Solves quarries of Research work/Projects/Assignment.	44	36.97	49	44.54	17	15.45	2.95
Connecting with expertise.	28	25.45	57	51.81	25	22.72	3.17
Sharing Documents	50	45.45	55	50	5	4.54	2.95
Too see other photos and videos	44	40	60	54.54	6	5.45	3.05
To see news and articles	66	60	44	40	0	0	2.63
Only to see videos	9	8.18	76	69.09	25	22.72	3.51
Asking help from others to complete projects and assignment.	31	28.18	64	58.18	15	13.63	3.20
To chat.	64	58.18	44	40	2	1.81	2.72
Sharing Notes	64	58.18	45	40.90	1	0.909	2.64
Collect information to prepare notes.	62	56.36	45	40.90	3	2.72	2.75
Prepare Presentations	61	55.45	43	39.09	6	5.45	2.65
To make learning more effective.	65	59.09	43	39.09	2	1.81	2.65
To makes communication between teacher & students easier.	50	45.45	55	50	5	4.54	2.95
To build personal and business relationship.	83	75.45	23	20.90	4	3.63	2.36

Improve the quality of assignments/projects.	38	34.54	70	63.63	2	1.81	3.2
Total Wt.Mean						2.89

The data revealed that (76.36%) of the respondents used social networks for the purpose of getting information from all around the world, (75.45%) of the respondents used to build personal and business relationship, (64.54%) of the respondents used to improve knowledge and (60.90%) of the respondents used for entertainment.

III.3 Impact of Social Networks on Academic Performance

Table No 1: Frequency and percentage distribution of respondents according to reasons for the use of social networks for their academic work:

Statements	Always		Sometimes		Never	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
Helps in research works	80	72.72	29	26.36	1	0.90
Helps in preparing for exams	60	54.54	47	42.72	3	2.72
Helps in making notes	60	54.54	43	39.09	7	6.36
Able to do assignments	68	61.81	39	35.45	3	3.61

The above table indicates that 72.72% of the respondents used social networks for their research works, 61.81 % of the respondent used social networks to do their assignments and 54.54 % of the respondents used social networks for preparing exams and making notes.

Table No 2: Frequency and percentage distribution of respondents according to the frequency of source of social networks used for their academic work.

Sources of Social networks	Always		Sometimes		Never	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
Whatsapp	88	80	17	15.45	5	4.54
Facebook	15	13.63	40	36.36	55	50
Instagram	24	21.81	36	32.72	50	45.45
Youtube	69	62.72	25	22.72	16	14.54
Twitter	5	4.54	10	9.09	95	86.36
Wechat	0	0	1	0.90	109	99.09
Tumblr	1	0.90	0	0	109	99.09
Skype	0	0	4	3.63	106	96.36
Viber	0	0	1	0.90	109	99.09
Line	0	0	0	0	110	100
Snapchat	0	0	2	1.81	108	98.18
Linkedln	0	0	0	0	110	100
Pinterest	10	9.09	35	31.81	65	59.09
Quora	10	9.09	20	18.18	80	72.72

The data revealed that 80% of respondents used whatsapp and 62.72% respondents used youtube for their academic works.

III.4 Impact of social networks on health

Table No 1: Frequency and percentage distribution of respondents according to the extent of health problems experienced with regards to use of social networks:

Health problems experienced by the respondents	Always		Sometimes		Never		
	(n=110)	%	(n=110)	%	(n=110)	%	Weighted mean score
Feeling eye irritation while browsing on social networks for a long period of time.	26	23.63	69	62.73	15	13.63	2.1
Feeling sad as a result of using social networks frequently .	14	12.73	60	54.54	36	32.73	1.8
Constant browsing and replying to online post and blog leads to thumb pain.	14	12.72	50	45.45	46	41.82	1.7
Constant browsing on social media leads to neck pain.	11	10.00	66	60.00	33	30.00	1.8
Interacting with strangers on social networks may harm psychological wellbeing.	25	22.73	51	46.36	34	30.90	1.91
Constant checking your social networks before you go to bed can negatively affect the quality of your sleep.	17	15.45	60	54.45	33	30.00	1.85
Experiencing curiosity when not able to check notifications in every five minutes.	17	15.45	53	48.18	40	36.36	1.79
Too much keying on mobile phones can strain the tendons of finger.	15	13.63	52	47.27	43	39.09	1.74
Visual fatigue due to the continuous using of social networks.	11	10	66	60.00	33	30.00	1.8
Watering of eye due to continuous use of social networks.	13	11.81	65	59.09	32	29.09	1.82
Frequently checking newsfeeds/post/mails on social networks while doing other activity disturbs ones concentration.	23	20.90	55	50.00	32	29.09	1.91
Use leisure times by surfing on social networks, instead of doing something productive.	17	15.45	62	56.36	31	28.18	1.87
Chat with others on social networks while taking meals.	12	10.90	58	52.73	40	36.36	1.74
Consume too much of junk food while watching videos on social networks or chatting with others	7	6.36	57	51.82	46	41.81	1.64
Headache due to the continuous	2	1.81	55	50.00	53	48.18	1.53

use of social networks for a long period.							
Skip meals while watching videos on social network or chatting with others.	8	7.27	68	61.82	34	30.90	1.76
Work kept pending due to the continuous use of social networks.	14	12.73	67	60.90	29	26.36	1.86
Social networks distract mind while doing academic work.	14	12.72	63	57.27	33	30.00	1.82
TO TAL WEIGHTED MEAN							1.8

From the above table it is seen that there were lot of physical and mental problems faced by the respondents. The findings from the weighted mean scores of the respondents with regards to the extent of health problems faced revealed that majority of the respondents faced problems of eye irritation (23.63%), faced problems due to interacting with strangers which disturbed them psychologically (22.73%) and also affected their concentration level (20.90).

IV. Conclusion

The findings of the results revealed that students mostly used Whatsapp, Facebook, Instagram and Youtube daily as the major sources of social networks. It was seen that they mostly use social networks for the purpose of getting information, to improve knowledge, for entertainment and to build personal and business relationship. Moreover, the data indicated that they used social networks for their academic works like research works, assignments and for preparing exams and making notes. Nevertheless, the data also revealed that most of the students felt eye irritation, experienced lack of concentration and also harmed their psychological well being while interacting with strangers while viewing different social networks.

Social networks are becoming very popular among the students now a days. They used to spend most of their time on social networks. They have formed a habit of checking social networks at late night and in early morning. This has affected their physical and mental health to a great extent. Moreover, due to their curious nature they felt uncomfortable if they could not check their notification in every five minutes which in turn affected their concentration level. It was also found that these respondents used to check frequently news-feeds, post, mails on social networks while doing other activity which distracted their mind. Furthermore, they used to interact with strangers on social networks which was very dangerous for their psychological well-being.

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