ATTITUDE TOWARDS INTERNET AND SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES (SNS) AMONG POSTGRADUATE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN RELATION TO THEIR GENDER

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Abstract

The present study aimed to examine the attitude of postgraduate university students towards the Internet and Social Networking Sites (SNS) with reference to gender. A sample of 100 postgraduate students was selected for the study. Out of 12 faculties and 31 departments of the university, 8 departments were chosen through simple random sampling using the lottery method, and the students available at the time of data collection were included in the sample through incidental sampling. Data were collected using the Internet and Social Networking Site Attitude Scale *developed by Subhash Sarkar and Prasenjit Das (2017). Before conducting the main statistical analysis and testing the hypotheses, the distribution of scores related to students' attitudes towards the Internet and SNS was examined to ensure the suitability of the statistical techniques used in the study. To determine whether any gender-based difference existed in the attitudes of students, the mean scores of male and female postgraduate students were compared using the t-test. The findings of the study indicated that there was no significant difference between male and female postgraduate students in their attitudes towards the Internet, social networking sites, or the overall use of Internet and SNS.*

Keywords: Attitude, Internet, Social Networking Sites (SNS), Postgraduate Students, Gender.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Education is an important part of everyone's life as it shapes present as well as future of an organism. It is the education which differentiates an organism from animals. Education focuses on the modification of the behavior of an organism. Through the use of modern science and technology, education is evolving to meet the changing needs of students. In recent years, the integration of Internet and social networking sites in education has become increasingly prevalent (Batool, 2017). Over the past decade, social networking platforms such as Facebook, WhatsApp and Twitter have become popular means of maintaining social relationships and exchanging ideas online (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). In the modern era, the internet is considered one of the most

significant developments in the field of communication and information technology, as it connects millions of users worldwide and facilitates the rapid exchange of knowledge, thereby contributing to the creation of a more interconnected global society. Internet is an address for a fastest and largest World Wide System (WWS) comprising of persons, computers and information's which make us to connect, distribute and share the data among the uncountable number of users at a single time scattered throughout the world (KesarapornandWanajak,2011). It is a planetary network connecting millions of computing devices more than 189 countries are coupled into sharing of data, news and conviction (Ananthula.et al.,2017). Internet is a useful and very indispensable part of life from advertisements, purchasing, shopping to electronic mails and education. It is an omnipresent fact that internet use has an effective role on the students' academic achievement and social life. Internet is used for educational purpose by a large number of people. But today large number of people use internet for only social. The use of the internet and social networking sites has become a ubiquitous aspect of modern life, particularly among university students. Social networking sites have become an integral part of modern university students' lives, with platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and Snapchat connecting them to friends, family, and the wider world (Hooda and Tyagi, 2017). While these sites offer numerous benefits, including enhanced communication, networking, and socialization, they can also have negative effects on students' academic performance. A sense of community and active engagement are fostered by discussion boards, live chats, and cooperative initiatives. Learning results and engagement are positively correlated. The effectiveness of online learning through internet and social sites depends on a strong technological infrastructure, which includes dependable internet connectivity and user-friendly interfaces (Gonda et al., 2020). In order to serve a diverse student body, accessibility considerations are crucial (Kimmons and Veletsianos, 2018). Informational technology has been the greatest changing agent of India and promises as to play this role even more dramatically in coming decades. Internet is developing very fast in every dimension of human life especially in the field of education. So, Internet / social networking sites will be helpful to them to use in daily life for various activities. Thus in view of the related studies on "Attitude towards Internet and social networking sites" in both India and abroad, the findings were analyzed critically for taking present investigation. The study of the attitude of university students towards Internet and social networking sites is crucial and holds significant importance in today's educational landscape. Understanding the needs and preferences of students regarding technology in education can help educators and policymakers make informed decisions and design effective strategies to enhance learning experiences. Here are some key reasons why studying this topic is essential: Understanding students' attitudes towards Internet and SNSs is crucial as it allows educators to design and implement tools that align with their preferences and needs. By incorporating technology that students find engaging and intuitive, the learning experience can be enhanced. This can lead to increased motivation, participation, and knowledge retention. Studying students' attitudes helps educators personalize learning experiences. By identifying individual preferences, educators can adapt the use of technology accordingly. This enables the delivery of customized content, pace, and feedback, catering to the unique learning styles and needs of each student.

1.2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

"Attitude towards Internet and Social Networking Sites (SNS) among Postgraduate University students in relation to their Gender".

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The present study taken under consideration aims to achieve the following objectives:

1. To study the nature of distribution scores of postgraduate university students on the basis of variable "Internet and social networking sites".

2. To find out the difference between mean scores on attitude of male and female postgraduate university students regarding internet use.

3. To find out the difference between mean scores on attitude of male and female postgraduate university students regarding usage of Social Networking Sites (SNS).

4. To find out the difference between mean scores on attitude of male and female postgraduate university students regarding usage of Internet and Social Networking Sites (SNS).

1.4 HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

The hypotheses given below have been formulated for the present study:

1. There will be no significant difference in the mean scores on attitude towards internet use between male and female postgraduate university students.

2. There will be no significant difference in the mean scores on attitude towards the usage of Social Networking Sites (SNS) between male and female postgraduate university students.

3. There will be no significant difference in the mean scores on attitude towards the usage of Internet and Social Networking Sites (SNS) between male and female postgraduate university students.

1.5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The descriptive survey method is used to study the attitude towards Internet and Social Networking Sites (SNS) among Postgraduate University students in relation to their Gender.

1.5.1 Sampling:

In this study all the postgraduate students studying in different departments of Himachal Pradesh University Shimla forms the population for the study. Sample of 100 students studying in post – graduation classes were taken for data collection. Out of 12 faculties and 31 departments 8 departments were selected using simple random sampling i.e., the lottery method. From the selected departments by incidental sampling of all the postgraduate students those who were available on the day of data collection were considered for the final sample of the study.

1.5.2 Independent Variables and Dependent Variable:

In the study, gender (male and female), as independent variables and the dependent variable was Internet and social networking sites (SNS).

1.5.3 Tool Used:

Internet and Social Networking Site Attitude Scale by Dr.Subhash Sarkar and Prasenjit Das (2017) research tool was used. The scale for attitude towards Internet and Social Networking Websites s constructed keeping two dimensions namely, Attitude towards internet and attitude towards social networking websites. Scoring system has been given in below:

Nature of Item	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Positive	5	4	3	2	1
Negative	1	2	3	4	5

The minimum and maximum range of the score is 50 to 250 respectively.

1.5.4 Statistical Techniques used

To achieve 1st objective Simple Mean, Median, Standard Deviation, Skewness and Kurtosis was applied to study the attitude towards Internet and Social Networking Sites (SNS) among Post Graduate University Students in relation to their Gender. To achieve the (2nd to 4th) objectives "t" test was used to test the significance of difference between mean scores of attitude towards internet and social networking sites among university postgraduate students in relation to their gender.

1.6 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Before carry on the actual data analysis and discussion of findings and outcomes pertaining to the hypotheses, it was deemed desirable to describe the nature of distribution of scores of Internet and Social networking sites (SNS) attitude among postgraduate university students so as to ensure whether the condition of basic assumption implicit in some of the statistical techniques employed here were fulfilled.

Objective 1: **To study the nature of distribution scores of postgraduate university students on the basis of variable "Internet and social networking sites".**

The description of scores are presented in measures of Mean, Median, Mode, S.D., Skewness and Kurtosis in the table 4.1 to table 4.4 and figure 4.1 and 4.2

Table 4.1

Frequency Distribution of scores of postgraduate university students on the usage of Internet (N = 100)

Class Interval	Frequency
60 – 70	8
70 – 80	54
80 – 90	31
90 – 100	5

100 – 110	2
TOTAL	100

Table 4.2

Statistical values of Mean, Median, Standard Deviation, Skewness and Kurtosis for postgraduate university students with respect to Internet usage (N = 100)

Group	Mean	Median	S.D.	Skewness	Kurtosis
Postgraduate University Students	78.56	78.00	7.1	0.697	1.150

Table 4.2 indicates that the **Mean** and **Median** scores of postgraduate university students regarding the usage of internet are 78.56 and 78.00 respectively, which are very close to each other. The values of **skewness (0.697)** and **kurtosis (1.150)** suggest that the distribution of scores is slightly positively skewed and platykurtic in nature. However, the magnitude of these values is relatively small, indicating that the distribution does not deviate much from normality. Therefore, the distributions can be considered as normal.

Fig. 4.1

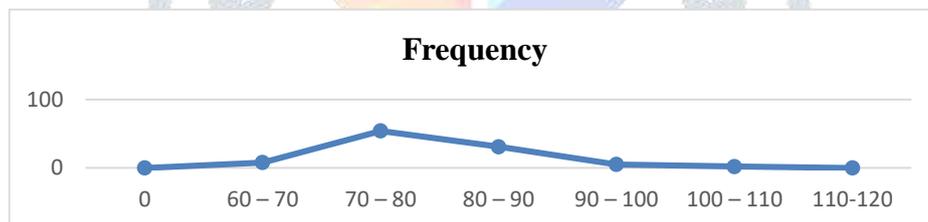**Frequency Distribution of scores of postgraduate university students on the usage of Internet (N = 100)**

Fig 4.1 Showing usage of Internet

Table 4.3

Frequency Distribution of scores of post graduate university students on the usage of Social Networking Sites (SNS) (N = 100)

Class Interval	Frequency
60 - 70	15
70 - 80	48
80 - 90	30
90 - 100	6
100-110	1
Total	100

Table 4.4

Group	Mean	Median	S.D.	Skewness	Kurtosis
Postgraduate University Students	77.44	76.50	7.4	0.487	0.045

Table 4.4 presents the descriptive statistics of postgraduate university students regarding the usage of social networking sites. The **Mean** and **Median** values are 77.44 and 76.50 respectively, which are relatively close to each other. The skewness value (0.487) indicates that the distribution is slightly positively skewed, while the kurtosis value (0.045) shows a platykurtic pattern. Since these values are small in magnitude, the distribution of scores can be considered reasonably normal.

Fig. 4.2

Frequency Distribution of scores of postgraduate university students on the usage of Social Networking Sites (N = 100)
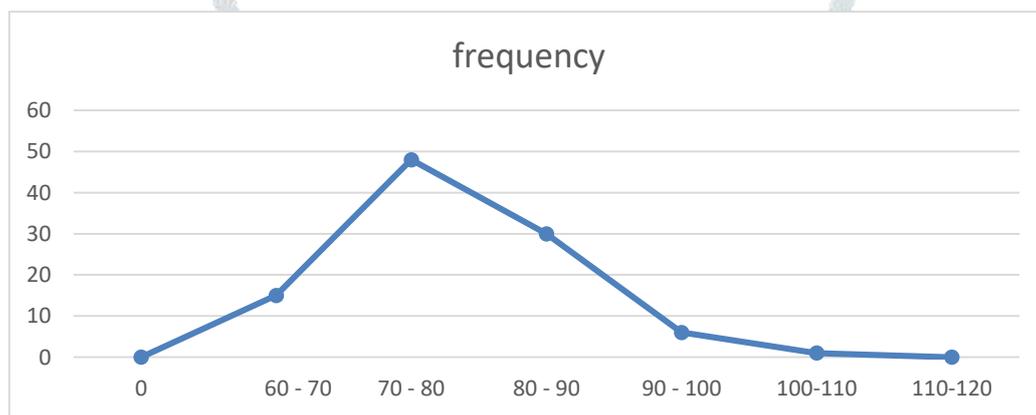

Fig 4.2 showing usage of social networking sites

1.6.1 ATTITUDE TOWARDS INTERNET USE AMONG POSTGRADUATE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN RELATION TO THEIR GENDER

Objective 2: **To find out the difference between mean scores on attitude of male and female postgraduate university students regarding internet use.**

Hypotheses (1): " There will be no significant difference in the mean scores on attitude towards internet use between male and female postgraduate university students".

The mean scores of Internet use among postgraduate university students along with their means, standard deviation, $SE_{DM,}$ df and t - value are given in table 4.5

Table 4.5

Comparison of Attitude among   male and female postgraduate university students toward Internet use

Sr. No.	Name of the Dimensions	Gender				df	SE$_{DM}$	't' Value	Level of Significance
		Male (N= 50)		Female (N= 50)					
		Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D				
1.	Internet Use	79.66	7.94	77.46	6.21	98	1.123	1.54	* NS

* NS - Not statistically significant at 0.05 level of significance

Table value of 't' for degree of freedom (df) is 98 at 0.05 level of significance = 1.98

    From the close perusal of the Table 4.5 indicates that the mean score of internet use of male and female postgraduate university students are 79.66 and 77.46 respectively, with standard deviations of 7.94 and 6.21.

   Table 4.5 shows that the computed value of 't' for   studying the significance of the difference between means of internet use of male and female postgraduate university students come out to 1.54, which is non-significant at 0.05 level of significance for 98 degree of freedom.

     This implies that there is no significant difference in the mean scores on attitude of male and female postgraduate university students regarding Internet use.

Hence, The **Hypotheses (1) : " There will be no significant difference in the mean scores on attitude towards internet use between male and female postgraduate university students"** was accepted.

1.6.2   ATTITUDE   TOWARDS   USAGE   OF   SOCIAL   NETWORKING   SITES   AMONG POSTGRADUATE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN RELATION TO THEIR GENDER

Objective 3:   To find out the difference between mean scores on attitude of male and female postgraduate university students regarding usage of Social Networking Sites (SNS).

Hypotheses (2): "There will be no significant difference in the mean scores on attitude towards the usage of Social Networking Sites (SNS) between male and female postgraduate university students".

The mean scores of usage of social networking sites (SNS) among postgraduate university students along with their means, standard deviation, SE$_{DM,}$ df and t - value are given in table 4.6

Table 4.6

Comparison of Attitude among   male and female postgraduate university students toward usage of social networking sites

Sr. No.	Name of the Dimension	Gender				Df	SE$_{DM}$	't' Value	Level of Significance
		Male (N= 50)		Female (N= 50)					
		Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D				
1.	Social Networking Sites (SNS)	77.74	8.20	77.14	6.75	98	1.160	0.39	* NS

* NS - Not statistically significant at 0.05 level of significance

Table value of 't' for df 98 at 0.05 level of significance =1.98

From the close perusal of the Table 4.6 indicates that the mean score of social networking sites (SNS) of male and female postgraduate university students are 77.74 and 77.14 respectively, with standard deviations of 8.20 and 6.75.

   Table 4.6 shows that the computed value of t-value for examine the significance of the difference between means of social networking sites (SNS) of male and female postgraduate university students come out to 0.39 , which is non-significant at 0.05 level of significance for 98 degree of freedom (df).

        This indicates that there is no significant difference in the mean scores on attitude of male and female postgraduate university students regarding social networking sites (SNS).

Hence the **Hypotheses (2) : "There will be no significant difference in the mean scores on attitude towards the usage of Social Networking Sites (SNS) between male and female postgraduate university students"** was accepted.

1.6.4 ATTITUDE TOWARDS USAGE OF INTERNET AND SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES (SNS) AMONG POSTGRADUATE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN RELATION TO THEIR GENDER

Objective 4:   To find out the difference between mean scores on attitude of male and female postgraduate university students regarding usage of Internet and Social Networking Sites (SNS).

Hypotheses (3): "There will be no significant difference in the mean scores on attitude towards the usage of Internet and Social Networking Sites (SNS) between male and female postgraduate university students".

The mean scores of Internet and social networking sites (SNS) use among postgraduate university students along with their means, standard deviation, SE$_{DM,}$ df and t - value are given in table 4.7

Table 4.7

Comparison of Attitude among male and female postgraduate university students toward usage of Internet and Social Networking Sites (SNS)

Sr. No.	Name of the Dimension	Gender				df	SE$_{DM}$	't' Value	Level of Significance
		Male (N= 50)		Female (N= 50)					
		Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D				
1.	Internet and Social Networking Sites (SNS)	157.40	12.78	154.60	11.40	98	1.808	1.15	* NS

* NS - Not statistically significant at 0.05 level of significance

Table value of 't' for df 98 at 0.05 level of significance = 1.98

It is evident from table 4.7 indicates that the mean score of internet and social networking sites of male and female postgraduate university students are 157.40 and 154.60 respectively, with standard deviations of 12.78 and 11.40.

Table 4.7 reveals that the calculated value of t- value for analysing the significance of the difference between means of internet and Social networking sites (SNSs) of Male(M) and Female(F) postgraduate university students come out to 1.15, which is non-significant at 0.05 level of significance for 98 df.

This indicates that there is no significant difference in the mean scores on attitude of male and female postgraduate university students regarding internet and Social networking sites.

Hence the **Hypotheses (3) : "There will be no significant difference in the mean scores on attitude towards the usage of Internet and Social Networking Sites (SNS) between male and female postgraduate university students"** was accepted.

1.7 GENERAL CONCLUSION

The findings indicate that the attitude of postgraduate university students towards internet use does not differ significantly on the basis of gender. The comparison of mean scores shows that both male and female students exhibit almost similar attitudes towards the use of the internet. In the same way, the analysis also reveals that there is no statistically significant difference between male and female postgraduate university students with regard to their attitude towards the usage of social networking sites. These results suggest that gender does not play a significant role in influencing the attitudes of postgraduate university students towards internet as well as social networking sites.

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