
Social Networking Sites Among Undergraduate Arts and Science College Students in Coimbatore District: A Study

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Abstract

The rapid growth of social networking sites (SNS) has significantly transformed communication, learning, and social interaction among college students. The present study examines the pattern of use, purposes, benefits, and challenges of social networking sites among undergraduate Arts and Science college students in Coimbatore District. A descriptive research design was adopted, and data were collected from a sample of 300 undergraduate students using a structured questionnaire. Statistical tools such as percentage analysis, mean score analysis, chi-square test, and ranking technique were employed for data analysis. The findings reveal that students widely use social networking sites primarily for communication, academic support, and entertainment. The study concludes with suggestions for promoting the productive use of social networking sites among college students

Keywords

Social Networking Sites, Undergraduate Students, Arts and Science Colleges, Coimbatore District

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1. Introduction

Social networking sites have become an integral part of students' daily lives, especially among the younger generation. Platforms such as WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, and Telegram facilitate instant communication, information sharing, and collaboration. For undergraduate students in Arts and Science colleges, SNS serve not only as a tool for social interaction but also as a platform for academic learning and skill development. However, uncontrolled usage may also result in negative consequences such as addiction, distraction, and poor academic performance. Hence, it is essential to study the usage pattern and impact of social networking sites among undergraduate students.

2. Review of Literature

Several studies have examined the role and impact of social networking sites (SNS) on college and university students. Boyd and Ellison (2007) provided a foundational definition of social networking sites and highlighted their growing popularity among young adults for communication and self-expression. Their study emphasized that SNS have become integral to students' social lives and information exchange.

Kuppuswamy and Narayan (2010) investigated the influence of social networking websites on youth and found that students extensively use SNS for both educational and entertainment purposes. While the study reported positive outcomes, such as knowledge sharing and peer interaction, it also warned of excessive use leading to reduced academic focus. Subrahmanyam and Greenfield (2008) explored online communication patterns among adolescents and young adults and revealed that social networking platforms strengthen peer relationships and social bonding. However, the study also noted potential risks, including distraction and overdependence on virtual interactions.

Owusu-Acheaw and Larson (2015) examined the relationship between social media usage and academic performance among tertiary students. Their findings indicated that frequent use of social networking sites negatively affected students' academic performance due to time mismanagement, despite the availability of academic resources on these platforms. Recent Indian studies have highlighted that undergraduate student increasingly rely on platforms such as WhatsApp, YouTube, and

Instagram for academic collaboration, sharing notes, and staying informed. At the same time, researchers emphasise the importance of awareness and self-regulation to minimise the adverse effects of social networking site addiction and health-related issues.

The review of existing literature indicates that although social networking sites offer significant academic and social benefits, their impact largely depends on the purpose and intensity of usage. This underscores the need for the present study, which focuses on understanding the usage pattern and impact of social networking sites among undergraduate Arts and Science college students in Coimbatore District.

3. Objectives of the Study

1. To analyze the demographic profile of undergraduate Arts and Science college students in Coimbatore District.
2. To identify the most commonly used social networking sites among the students.
3. To study the purpose of using social networking sites.
4. To examine the impact of social networking sites on academic activities.
5. To identify the problems faced by students due to the use of social networking sites.

4. Research Methodology

The study adopts a descriptive research design. The study sample consists of 300 undergraduate Arts and Science college students selected from various colleges in Coimbatore District using a simple random sampling technique. Primary data were collected using a structured questionnaire. Secondary data were collected from journals, books, and online sources. Percentage Analysis, Mean Score Analysis, Chi-Square Test, and Ranking Method.

5. Analysis and Interpretation

Table 1: Gender-wise Distribution of Respondents

Gender	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Male	140	46.7
Female	160	53.3
Total	300	100

Table 1 shows that 53.3% of the respondents are female and 46.7% are male.

Table 2: Frequency of Using Social Networking Sites

Frequency	Respondents	Percentage
Daily	210	70.0
Weekly	60	20.0
Occasionally	30	10.0
Total	300	100

Table 2 shows that a majority (70%) of students use social networking sites on a daily basis.

Table 3: Purpose of Using Social Networking Sites (Ranking)

Purpose	Mean Score	Rank
Communication	4.35	I
Academic Learning	4.10	II
Entertainment	3.85	III
News & Information	3.60	IV
Networking	3.20	V

Table 2 shows the purpose of using SNS. Communication is ranked as the primary purpose for using social networking sites.

Table 4: Impact of SNS on Academic Performance

Opinion	Respondents	Percentage
Positive	165	55.0
Negative	90	30.0
Neutral	45	15.0
Total	300	100

Table 4 shows the impact of SNS on academic performance. More than half of the respondents believe that SNS have a positive impact on their academic performance.

Table 5: Problems Faced Due to SNS Usage

Problems	Respondents (%)
Time Wastage	68
Addiction	54
Lack of Concentration	49
Health Issues	32
Privacy Concerns	27

Table 5 shows the problems facing in SNS usage. Time wastage is the major problem faced by students due to SNS usage.

6. Findings of the Study

- The majority of undergraduate students use social networking sites daily.
- Communication and academic learning are the major purposes of SNS usage.
- Social networking sites positively support academic activities when used appropriately.
- Excessive use leads to time-wasting and reduced concentration.

- 5) Owusu-Acheaw, M., & Larson, A. G. (2015). Use of social media and its impact on academic performance. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 6(6), 94–101.

7. Suggestions

- Students should be encouraged to use SNS primarily for academic and skill development.
- Colleges can create official academic groups on social networking platforms.
- Awareness programs should be conducted to educate students on responsible usage of SNS.

8. Conclusion

The study concludes that social networking sites play a significant role in the academic and social life of undergraduate Arts and Science college students in Coimbatore District. While SNS provide numerous benefits such as improved communication and access to information, excessive usage can negatively affect students' academic performance. Therefore, a balanced and purposeful use of social networking sites is essential to maximise benefits and minimise drawbacks.

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