

Perception and Attitude of Undergraduate Students Towards Internet and Social Networking Platforms

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Abstract:

The rapid growth of internet access and social networking platforms has transformed the way undergraduate students communicate, learn, and engage with society. These digital technologies have become an integral part of students' daily lives, influencing academic activities, social interactions, information sharing, and personal development. Understanding students' perceptions and attitudes toward these platforms is essential for assessing their impact on educational and social outcomes. This study examines the perception and attitude of undergraduate students toward internet usage and social networking platforms. It explores students' frequency of use, preferred platforms, purposes of engagement, and opinions regarding the benefits and challenges associated with online activities. The study also investigates how social networking platforms contribute to learning, collaboration, communication, entertainment, and self-expression among undergraduate learners. The findings indicate that most undergraduate students hold a positive perception of the internet and social networking platforms due to their accessibility, convenience, and educational value. Students frequently use these platforms for academic research, communication with peers and faculty, and staying informed about current events. However, concerns regarding privacy, misinformation, cyberbullying, distraction, and excessive screen time were also identified. The study concludes that while internet and social networking platforms offer significant opportunities for academic and personal growth, responsible and balanced usage is necessary to maximize benefits and minimize potential risks among undergraduate students.

Keywords: Internet Usage, Social Networking Platforms, Undergraduate Students, Perception, Attitude, Digital Communication

I. INTRODUCTION

We are living in the age of science and technology. The advent of science and technology has made human lives so easy with its innumerable innovations and discoveries. Internet is one of such most beneficial boon of science and technology to the human being. With the advancement of internet all the activities of human being have become easier, less time consuming, effective and perfect. It has become an indispensable part of human life. But it is not only a boon for any particular group of people; the advent of internet in the field of technology

has made human activities very easy. By the use of internet a man can do thousands of tasks in a single moment. As education is considered as an indispensable part of human life, so the whole system of education has also been greatly influenced by technology as well as internet. In ancient days when technology in education was not introduced the teachers or the Gurus used to transmit knowledge only through spoken words. But now a days a number of techniques like computer, television, projector, mobile phones etc. have been developed in order to make education interesting, effective and purposeful. A new

approach of communication called Social Networking site has emerged during.

1.2 MEANING OF INTERNET

The Internet is essentially a global network of computing resources. Internet is also considered as a physical collection of routers and circuits as a set of shared resource. The Internet is a global network of networks connecting millions of users worldwide via many computer networks using a simple standard common addressing system and basic communications protocol called TCP/IP (Transmission Control Protocol/Internet Protocol). This allows messages sent over the Internet to be broken into small pieces, called packets, which travel over many different routes between source and destination computers.

1.3 MEANING OF SOCIAL NETWORKING SITE

Social networking site is also known as social networking service. It is an online platform that is used by people to build social networks or social relations with other people who share similar personal or career interests, activities, backgrounds or real life connections. The variety of stand-alone and built-in social networking sites currently available in the online space introduces challenges of definition. Online community services are sometimes considered as social network service, though in a broader sense, social networking sites usually means an individual centered whereas online community service services are group centered. Social networking sites allow users to share ideas, digital photos, videos, posts and inform others about online or real world activities and events with people in their work. While in-person social networking, such as gathering in a village market to talk about events has existed since the earliest developments of towns, the web enables people to connect with others who live in different locations, ranging from across a city to across the world. Depending on the social media platform, members may be able to contact any other member. In other cases, members can contact anyone they have a connection to and subsequently anyone that contact has a connection to and so on.

- The first characteristic of social networking site is that it is an internet-based application. In order to access social networking site, one has to use internet.
- The sties or the apps that are created by users are designed and maintained by the Social Network Service organization.
- Social networking sites facilitate the development of online social networks by connecting a user's profile with those of other individual or groups.
- Most of the social networking service or sites are web-based and provide means for users to interact over the internet, such as by e-mail and instant messaging and online forums.
- Social networking sites are varied and they incorporate a range of new information and communication tools such as availability on desktop and laptops, mobile devices such as tablet and smart phones.

1.4 TYPES OF SOCIAL NETWORKING SITE

Friendster, LinkedIn, MySpace and Facebook

In 2002, social networking hit really its stride with launch of Friendster. Friendster used a degree of separation concept similar to that of the now-defunct SixDegrees.com refined it into a routine dubbed the "Circle of Friends", and promoted the ideas tht a rich online community can exist only between people who truly have common bonds.

LinkedIn introduced just a year later in 2003. Rather than being a mere playground for former classmates, teenagers and cyberspace Don Juans, LinkedIn was, and still is a networking resource for business people who want to connect with other professionals. In fact, LinkedIn contacts are referred to as 'connections. Today LinkedIn boasts more than.

MySpace also launched in 2003. Though it no longer resided upon the social networking, still throne in many English-speaking countries. My Space was once the perennial favorite. It did so by tempting the key young adult demographic with music, videos and a funky feature filled

environment. It looked and felt hipper than major competitor Friendster right from the start, and it conducted a campaign of sorts in the early days to show alienated Friendster users just what they were missing. Over the years however, the number of causal My Space users declined and today the site exists now as a social networking site targeted to bands and musicians.

Facebook launched in 2004 as a Harvard only exercise and remained a campus-oriented site for two full years before finally opening to the general public in 2006. It was developed by Mark Zuckerberg Yet even by that time Facebook was considered big business. By 2009 Silicon Valley bigwigs such as Paypal co founder and billionaire Peter Thiel invested tens millions of dollars just to see its flourish. The secret of Facebook's success is its tremendous features. Some points to its ease of use, others to its multitude of easily accessed features and still others to its memorable name.

Youtube, Twitter, Whatsaap and Instagram

Youtube began when Paypal employees created a video sharing website where users could upload, share and view content. The social networking site youtube was activated in February, 2005. Chad Hurley, Steve Chen and Jawed Karim jointly founded youtube.

Twitter came into existence in the year 2006. It was founded by Jack Dorsey, Noah Glass, Biz Stone and Evan Williams. It is an online news and social networking service where users can post and interact with messages, tweets. Registered 8 users can post tweets, but those who are unregistered can only read them. Twitter has been succeeded to achieve more than 319 million active users.

WhatsApp. After Facebook and twitter were launched, the next innovation in the field of social networking explosion was WhatsApp. It came into existence in February, 2009 by Jan Koum and Brian Acton. It allows users for end to end encrypted instant messaging. It uses to internet to make voice calls, one to one video calls, send text message, images, GIF, videos, documents, location, audio files, phone contacts and voice notes to other users using standard cellular mobile phones.

Instagram is a mobile based photo sharing application and service that allows users to share pictures and videos either publicly or privately on the service as well as through a variety of other social networking platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Tubnlr, land Flickr. This site was created by Kevin Systrom and Miker Krieger and launched October 2010.

1.5 IMPACT OF INTERNET AND SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES ON THE STUDENTS AT HIGHER EDUCATION LEVEL

Higher education is the most sensitive stage in education. It is the stage where the students have to create new knowledge rather than acquire knowledge from a given phenomenon. They are supposed to generate new knowledge, new principle, new concept, and new theories by making relations of their previously learnt knowledge with new knowledge. Now-a-days, social networking site has become an indispensable part of education, mainly of higher education. It provides plenty of opportunities for learning and interactivity for students.

Now a days, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, Messenger, WhatsApp, e-mail and other social networking sites have become very favourite for the students studying in colleges and universities. Social media stands as an educational aide as students can easily access information for their projects, research and homework. They can also share and express their thoughts and ideas as a form of exercise to the freedom of speech, this creating a positive outlook to the student's personal character. The negative effects of social media sites on students like reduced learning and research capabilities, multitasking, reduction in real human contact, reduces command over language use and creative writing skills, time wastage, loss of motivation in students, effects on health, low grade etc. are a threat for the present generation.

1.6 CRITICICLA ANALYSYS OF REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

By going through different literature the investigator found out that previous were conducted like Where **Goel and Singh (2016)**

found out that there is positive relationship in attitude among undergraduate students towards internet and social networking sites. But on the other hand **Umon and Etuk(2016)** found out that there is significance difference in attitude between boys and girls of undergraduate students towards internet and social networking sites.

William, Cheta and Yinka (2016) and Cheta and Yinka (2017) found out that undergraduate students are using social networking sites for educational purpose on the other hand **Omoroobe and Iguodala (2018)** showed that the undergraduate students are using internet and social networking sites for the purpose of making friendship and for fun. **Jaman and Haldhar (2019)** found out that female students' attitude is better than male students' towards the use of internet and social sites but **Parua and Sahoo (2018)** found out that high percent of respondent reporting stronger attitude towards internet and social sites. However, the present study is an attempt to compare the attitude of undergraduate students.

1.7 RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

The study of **Goel and Singh (2016)** revealed that there is positive relationship in attitude of undergraduate students where **Umo and Etuk (2016)** found out that there is significance difference in attitude between boys and girls based on course, level and age. The research findings of **Cheta and Yinka (2017)** revealed that social sites are only used for educational purpose. But **Omoroobe and Iguodla(2018)** showed that the undergraduate students are using internet and social networking sites for the purpose of making friendship and fun. Hence about this all findings put contradiction to each other. Therefore it is pertinent research question to investigate the attitudinal level of undergraduate students towards internet and social networking sites with reference to their education and gender.

1.8 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The present study which is stated as “ATTITUDE OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS TOWARDS INTERNET AND SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES” has been designed to

answer such questions related to use of social networking sites and their effects on undergraduate students. The present study seeks to answer the following questions- • What are the positive and negative attitudes of internet and social networking sites on undergraduate students? • What are the purposes that compel the students of undergraduate level to access social networking sites? • What is the frequency of using social networking sites that varies among undergraduate students in relation to their sex and disciplines? • What are the social networking sites that students like most? • What are the social networking sites that are used by student for academic purpose ?

1.9 OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS OF THE TERMS USED

Social networking sites: It is an online platform that is used by people to build social networks or social relations with other people who share personal or carrier interests, activities, background or real life connection.

Internet: The Internet is a vast network that connects computers all over the world. Through the Internet, people can share information and communicate from anywhere with an Internet connection.

Attitude: Attitude is the mental state that an individual possesses certain favourable or unfavourable thoughts towards a person, object or organisation. This is the way that an individual think, feels, opines, considers, behaves with a person, object, institution, political party etc,

Undergraduate students: Students who are perusing three-year degree courses in Arts, Science and Commerce stream in Gangadhar Meher University. Sambalpur

1.10 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study the attitudinal level of undergraduate students towards internet and social networking sites.
2. To compare attitudinal variation of undergraduate students with reference to stream of education and gender.

1.11 HYPOTHESES

H01-There is no significant difference in attitude towards internet and social networking sites among undergraduate students of Arts, Science and Commerce?

H02-There is no significant difference in score of attitudes towards internet and social networking sites between undergraduate boys and girls?

1.12 DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The present study is confined to 180 Arts, Science and Commerce undergraduate students of Gangadhar Meher University, Sambalpur. The study is further confined to 30 boys and 30 girls students from each stream (Arts, Science and Commerce).

2.REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

A careful review of the research journals, books, dissertations, theses and other sources of information on the problem to be investigated is one of the important steps in planning of any of the research study. Once the topic has been decided upon, a researcher has to be up to data in his information about studies related his own problem already made by others.

Eke, Omekwu and Odou (2014) carried out a study to investigate the purpose of use of social networking sites among the undergraduate students of University of Nigeria Nsukka. The objectives of the study were to ascertain the various categories of social networking sites used by undergraduate students, to examine the purpose, to examine the extent of uses of social networking sites. For the purpose descriptive survey research design was adopted. 150 undergraduate students were selected as sample randomly and data was collected using questionnaire from this population. The result of this study revealed that most of the students were using social networking sites for the purpose of making friends, interacting with others.

Bicem, Sadikoglu and Sadikglu (2015) conducted a study on impact of social networks on undergraduate students' learning foreign language. The study was based on different departments of East University for knowing the feelings of students in learning foreign language. 16 positive items on a five point Linkert scale was

used. The reliability of questionnaire was measured through Cronback Alpha whose score was 0.89. The study found that students learn foreign language through social networks.

William, Cheta and Yinka (2016) the study was investigated to ascertain the position of students on the use of social media for educational purposes. A sample of 300 students was randomly selected from three faculties in the universities. statistical technique, T- test, Anova and mean score were used for data analysis. The study showed that social media are used for educational purposes for rapid development of science and technology through ICT. It is also found that students are highly motivated by the need to find and bound with new peer and potential social ground.

Parua and Sahoo (2018) carried out a study to examine the attitude of undergraduate students towards using social networking sites for their academic development in Odisha, India.120 undergraduate students were taken as sample. Mixed method approach was used. Self design question was used for data collection. The result indicated a high percentage of respondents reporting stronger attitude towards social networking sites for fun. Lower percentage of students reported for stronger attitude towards social networking sites for academic purpose. Further there is significant difference in attitude.

3.1 METHODOLOGY

One of the most important requisites in any research program is fixation of research design regarding the problem before conducting the actual research. A research design is the arrangement of conditions for collection of data and analysis of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purpose with economy in procedure.

3.2 RESEARCH METHOD

The research method used by the investigator for the present study was Descriptive Survey Method. A descriptive survey method studies the present status of a phenomenon and suggests measures for the future improvements.

3.3 POPULATION

In Research methodology population is generally a large collection of individuals or objects that is the main focus of scientific query. A research population is also known as a well-defined collection of individuals or objects known to have similar characteristics. All individuals or objects within a certain population usually have a common, binding and characteristics or trait. Usually, A population is any group of individuals that have one or more characteristics in common that are of interest to the researcher. The population from which the sample of the present study was selected constitutes of all undergraduate students of Arts, Science and Commerce streams studying in Gangahar Meher University, Sambalpur in the state of Odisha. The investigator selected only those undergraduate students as population who are presently studying under three years of Bachelor Degree course in Arts, Science and Commerce streams in Gangadhar Meher University.

3.4 SAMPLE AND SAMPLING

Sampling is a method of studying from a few selected items, instead of the entire big number of units. The small selection is called sample. The sample of the study is comprised of 180 undergraduate students, 30 boys and 30 girls from each stream (Arts, Science and Commerce) of Gangadhar Meher University, Sambalpur that determines the sample size of the present study.

3.5 TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES USED

Collection of data is very much important in every research study. Tools are the instrument through which the information and data are collected and techniques are the procedure and process through which tools are used for data collection. For the present study the investigator employed attitude scale of Dr. Subash Sarkar and Prasenjit Das to collect pertinent data.

3.6 PROCEDURE OF DATA COLLECTION

After seeking permission from the HOD, School of Education, the investigator met the students at different departments personally and created rapport. The students were appraised about the

purpose of visit and they were assured that the information supplied by them on the questionnaires would be kept confidential and only be used for research purpose.

3.7 STATISTICAL TECHNIQUES USED

The selection of proper statistical techniques for the analysis and interpretation of data is one of the most important steps in research. The investigator has used Arithmetic Mean and T-test technique for the present study to analyze and interpret collected data.

4. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

In this chapter attempt has been made for analysis and interpretation of data in accordance with objectives and hypotheses. The data were analysed by adopting inferential statistics (t-test). The analysis of the data has been presented below on the following manner.

Table-1

Level of attitude towards internet and social networking sites of undergraduate students

Subject	Type of students	N	Mean	Attitudinal Level	Attitudinal Level
Gender	Boys	90	159.3	Average favourable attitude	Average favorable attitude
	Girls	90	158.12	Average favourable attitude	Average favorable attitude
	Total	180	158.71	Average favorable attitude	Average favorable attitude
Stream of Education	Arts	60	157.38	Average favorable attitude	Average favorable attitude
	Science	60	157.03	Average favorable attitude	Average favorable attitude
	Commerce	60	159.61	Average favorable attitude	Average favorable attitude
	Total	180	158	Average favorable attitude	Average favorable attitude

The above table shows the Mean, SD and attitudinal level of students on the basis of the gender, stream of education, where the mean score of boys and girls toward internet and social networking site are 159.3 and 158.12 respectively. On the other hand, the students of all the three streams show equal favourable attitude towards internet and social networking sites. The mean score of girls is partially smaller than the mean score of boys. On the other hand, the mean score with respect to stream of education i.e. Arts, Science and Commerce is 157.38, 157.03 and 159.61 respectively. The mean score of Commerce found slightly greater than the mean score of Arts and Science.

Table No. 2

M, S.D and t-value of boys & girls students of arts stream towards internet and social networking sites.

ARTS						
Subjects		N	M	S.D	t. Value	Remarks
Gender	Boys	30	157.03	16.63	0.08	Not significant
	Girls	30	157.38	15.48		

The table refers the M, SD, and t-values between boys and girls with respect to attitude towards internet and social networking sites. It was revealed from the above table that the mean attitude score of boys and girls belonging to Arts stream are 157.03 and 157.38 respectively. It was interpreted by looking at the mean there is no significant difference between, boys and girls towards internet & social networking sites. Both boys and girls showed similar attitude towards internet and social networking sites. The t-value between boys and girls was 0.08 where was not significant at 0.05 level. The calculated t-value is 0.08 which is less than the table value at 0.05 level is 1.96. Therefore, it is concluded that there is no significant difference between the mean

attitude score of boys and girls belonging to Arts stream. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted.

Table No. 3

M, S.D and t-value of boys and girls students of Science stream.

Science						
Subjects		N	M	S.D	t. Value	Remarks
Gender	Boys	30	158.96	15.53	0.22	Not significant
	Girls	30	159.30	16.23		

The above table shows that the Mean, SD, and t-value between boys and girls of Science stream with respect to attitude towards internet and social networking sites. It was revealed from the above table that the mean attitudes score of boys and girls with respect to science was 158.96 and 159.30 respectively. It was interpreted by looking at the mean that there is no significant difference between the attitude of boy and girls towards internet and social networking sites. Both boys and girls showed similar attitude towards internet and social networking sites. The t-value between boy and girls was 0.22 which was not significance at 0.05 level. Therefore, it is clear that the calculated t-value is 0.22 which is less than the table value at 0.05 level is 1.96. Hence is concluded that that there is no significant difference between the mean attitude score of boys and girls belonging to Science stream. Hence the null hypothesis is accepted.

Table No. 4

Difference in Mean score between boys and girls in respect to attitude of commerce stream towards internet and social networking.

Commerce						
Subjects		N	M	S.D	t. Value	Remarks
Gender	Boys	30	161.90	17.40	0.58	Not significant
	Girls	30	159.61	12.76		

The table represents the mean, SD and t-value between boys and girls in respect of attitude towards internet and social networking sites. It is clear from the above table that the mean attitude score of boys and girls of commerce is 161.90 and 159.61 respectively. It was interpreted on the basis above mean that there is no significant difference between the attitude of boys and girls towards internet and social networking sites, where both boys and girls showed similar attitude towards internet and social networking sites. Here the t-value between boys and girls of Commerce stream was 0.58 which was not significant at 0.05 level. Therefore, it is concluded that there exist no significance difference between boys and girls in their attitude score towards the internet and social networking sites. Hence the null hypothesis is accepted.

Table No. 5

Comparison in attitude towards internet and social networking sites between Arts and Science stream.

ARTS & SCIENCE						
Subjects		N	M	S.D	t. Value	Remarks
Stream	Arts	60	157.38	16.07	0.9	Not significant
	Science	60	159.13	15.88		

The above table represents the M, S.D and t-value of attitude in between the arts and science stream towards internet and social networking sites. It is clear from the above table that the mean attitude

score of Arts and Science are 157.38 and 159.13 respectively. The mean score of Arts streams is slightly smaller than the mean score of Science stream. It was interpreted by focusing at the mean that there exists no significant difference between the attitude towards internet and social networking sites. Both the streams i.e. Arts and Science showed similar attitude towards internet and social networking sites. The t-value of Arts and Science is 0.59 which is less than the table value of 1.96 at 0.05 level. Therefore, it is concluded that there is no significant difference in attitude score between arts & science streams towards internet and social networking sites. Hence the null hypothesis is accepted.

Table No. 6

Comparison between boys and girls in respect to attitude of science & commerce streams towards internet and social networking sites.

SCIENCE & COMMERCE						
Subjects		N	M	S.D	t. Value	Remarks
Stream	Science	60	159.13	15.88	0.19	Not significant
	Commerce	60	159.61	15.43		

The above table shows the M, SD and t-value of attitude in between Science and Commerce stream towards internet and social networking site. It was revealed from the above table that the mean attitude score of Science and Commerce stream are 159.13 and 159.61 respectively, where the mean score of Science stream is slightly smaller than the mean score of Commerce stream. It was interpreted by focusing at the mean that there exists no significant difference between the attitude score of Science and Commerce towards internet and social networking sites. Both the streams (Science and Commerce) showed similar attitude towards internet and social networking sites. The t-value between Science and Commerce a stream is 0.19 which is less than the table value of 1.96 at 0.05 level. Therefore, it is concluded that there is no significant difference in attitude of Science and Commerce streams towards internet and social networking sites. Hence the null hypothesis is accepted.

Table No. 7

Comparison between boys and girls in respect to attitude of commerce & arts streams towards internet and social networking sites.

COMMERCE & ARTS						
Subjects		N	M	S.D	t. Value	Remarks
Stream	Commerce	60	159.61	15.43	0.16	Not significant
	Arts	60	157.38	16.07		

The above table represents the M, SD and t-value in attitude in between Commerce and Arts streams towards internet and social networking sites. It is revealed from table 4.7 that the mean attitude score of Commerce and Arts are 159.61 and 157.38 respectively. The mean score of Commerce stream is slightly greater than the mean score of Arts streams. It was interpreted by focusing at the mean that there exists no significant difference between the attitude Commerce and Science stream towards internet and social networking sites. Both the streams (Commerce and Arts) showed similar attitude towards internet and social networking sites. The t-value between Commerce and Arts stream is 0.16 which is less than the table value of 1.96 at 0.05 level. Therefore, it is concluded that there is no significant difference between the attitude of Commerce and Arts streams towards internet and social networking sites. Hence the null hypothesis is accepted.

Table No. 8

Comparison between boys and girls in respect to attitude of arts, science and commerce streams towards internet and social networking sites.

ARTS, SCIENCE & COMMERCE						
Subjects		N	M	S.D	t. Value	Remarks
Gender	Boys	90	159.30	16.66	0.50	Not significant
	Girls	90	158.12	14.92		

The above table represents the M, SD and t-value in attitude of boys and girls between Arts, Science and Commerce streams towards internet and social networking sites. Here the mean score of

boys and girls of three streams (Arts, Science, and Commerce) are 159.30 and 158.12 respectively. The mean score of boys in all the three streams is slightly greater than the mean score of girls in all the said streams. It was interpreted focusing at the mean that there exists no significant difference in attitude between the boys and girls of Arts, Science and Commerce streams. Both the boys and girls showed similar attitude towards internet and social networking sites. The t-value between boys and girls is 0.50 which is less than the table value of 1.96 at 0.05 level. Therefore, it is concluded that there is no significant difference in attitude between boys and girls of all the three streams (Arts, Science and Commerce) towards internet and social networking sites. Hence the null hypothesis is accepted.

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