Use of Social Networking Sites among the Students of Engineering & Education Colleges in Karaikudi. A Study

G. Stephen
Department of Library and Information Science
Alagappa University, Karaikudi, India

S. Thanuskodi
Associate Professor,
Dept. of Library and Information Science
Alagappa University, Karaikudi, India
Email: thanuskodi_s@yahoo.com

Abstract

This paper has made attempt to study the activities and reasons for using Social Networking Sites by the students of Engineering and Educational colleges in karaikudi city, Tamilnadu, India. This study found 100% were aware about various SNSs, 95% of the respondents using for interact with their friends, 62% respondents using Smartphones to accessing SNSs and 26% of the students are frequently using 2-5hours per day. These results indicate while most college students use social media and spend many hours checking social media sites, there was a negative aspect to college students' use of social media

Keywords

Social Networking Tools; Facebook; twitter; Blogs

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INTRODUCTION

Social networking has become part of the daily life experiences for an increasing number of people. The rapid adoption of social network sites by teenagers in the United States and in many other countries around the world raises some important questions. Why do teenagers flock to these sites? What are they expressing on them? How do these sites fit into their lives? What are they learning from their participation? Are these online activities like face-to-face friendships, or are they different, or complementary? (Danah Boyd, 2007). Penuel and Riel define social networking as "a set of people and the relationships between them". That definition is found today in the social networking services that promote the development of online communities of people. Social networking such as Facebook, Orkut, Myspace, Flickr and Youtube are sites where users apply for membership and maintain their personal profile information in a centrally organized database. Each network member controls access to their profile by accepting or declining requests from other network members to be "friends". And social networking websites is very popular among the college students. So, the researcher wanted to study the use of SNSs among the students of engineering and Education colleges in Karaikudi City.

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Karaikudi is eternally indebted to one man – Padmabhushan Dr. R.M.AlagappaChettiar. He is called 'Vallal' (philanthropist), more suitably as VallalAlagappaChettiar, who gave all his wealth to create an outstanding educational empire in pure nobility to provide affordable quality education to the rural masses; and without whom Karaikudi would have been a trivial town. VallalAlagappaChettiar, founded the "AlagappaChettiar Educational Trust" with the aim of developing the backward area of Karaikudi into a centre for higher education and provided necessary funds for the establishment of educational institutions. The education development went to its peak around 1947 when, VallalAlagappar established the Alagappa Arts College, AlagappaChettiar College of Engineering and Technology (A.C.C.E.T.), and Alagappa technical institution and school. He was the key person in establishing the Central Electro Chemical Research Institute (C.E.C.R.I.) in 1948 at Karaikudi by providing land and funding.

Karaikudi and its adjoining places have a growing array of educational services and facilities right from pre-kg to doctorate. Now this city has Eleven Schools, Four Engineering Institutions, Four polytechnic colleges,Four Arts and Science colleges, Four Educational colleges and One University.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Kumari, Kantharaju (2014) studied "Awareness and use of Social networking sites among the student of business Schools & management college libraries in Mysore city". They found that all the students are aware of social networking sites and they use these sites to interact with their friends. It should be noted that social networking sites can be used as an interactive plat form for academic communication and can be a source of information, knowledge and help. Singh and Anil Kumar (2013) in their paper entitled 'Use of Social Networking Sites (SNSs) by the research scholars of Panjab University, Chandigarh: A study' explored to study the activities and purposes for using SNSs by the scholars of Panjab University, Chandigarh. The findings of their study shows that majority of the respondents were found to be aware and making use of such applications in their research work. Their study also reveals that Facebook is the most popular SNSs by all categories of researchers. Jahan and Zabed Ahmed (2012) studied perceptions of academic use of social networking sites (SNSs) by students of the University of Dhaka, Bangladesh. That study indicates a positive attitude towards academic use of SNSs by the students. Although there are some differences in terms of students' opinions on academic applications of SNSs, these differences are largely due to the fact that the use of these sites in academic contexts is not well-defined. The higher academic institutions need to devise appropriate policies and strategies on how they can utilize social networking sites to support education and learning beyond the classroom.

Kindi&Alhasmi (2012) conduct a study " use of Social networking among Shinas college of Technology students in Oman". The study found that the major reasons for frequent use of SNSs are finding information and sharing news. The study also indicated that lack of experience as well as insufficient time and IT skills are effective factors of not using SNSs. Finally, the study discovered that Google Groups, Facebook and Yahoo! 360 are the most popular SNSs used by SHCT students. Yan Zhang (2012) explored college students' use of social networking sites for health and wellness information. Thirty-eight college students were interviewed. The interview transcripts were analyzed using the qualitative content analysis method. Overall, participants were skeptical about the quality of information. Based on the results, a model of students' acceptance of social networking sites for health and wellness information was proposed and implications for designing social platforms to better support health inquiries were discussed Using social networking sites for health and wellness information is not a popular behavior among college students in this study. Mahajan (2009) in her paper entitled 'Use of social networking in a linguistically and culturally rich India' explored the usage, impact and problems related to social networking sites and their impact on the social and cultural values of India. She also described the top most social networking websites of India along with their bad and good factors.

Thanuskodi (2009) India has significant advantages in the 21st century knowledge race. It has a large higher education sector – the third largest in the world in student numbers, after China and the United States. Next to China, India is the most populated country in the world. The purpose of education is well-rounded development. Students need a combination of arts, computer science, science, and humanities or literature courses to achieve this kind of development. A well-equipped and well-managed library is the foundation of modern educational structure. It is said that education without library services is like a body without soul, a vehicle without an engine, and building with bricks but no cement. Jeff Cain (2008) in the research paper "Online Social Networking Issues Within Academia and Pharmacy Education" has discussed that Facebook is a tool that aids students in developing their identities and finding their ''fit'' within a college community. Helping students connect, establish a network and stay in contact with old and new friends is the center of attraction and significant benefits of Facebook. Making connections on campus which help them feel that they belong may be an important factor in student retention.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To find out level of awareness among the students about various SNSs.
2. To know the sources of information about how to use the SNSs
3. To know the top five commonly using SNSs among the users under study.

4. To identify the purpose of using Social Networking Sites by students.
5. To find out the frequency of use of Social Networking Sites per day.

SCOPE AND LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The scope of the study is limited to use of social networking sites at selected engineering & Education colleges in Karaikudi by students. Geographically the study is confined to Kariakudi city. The investigators have selected only four colleges (Two engineering colleges and two education colleges) for the study. List of Four selected engineering and Education colleges taken for the study are:

1. Alagappa Chettiar College of Engineering and Technology (ACCET)
2. Raja Rajan College of Engineering and Technology(RRCET)
3. Alagappa College of Education (ACE)
4. Raja Rajan College of Education (RRCE)

METHODOLOGY ADOPTED

To collect the comprehensive and relevant data, the investigator visited selected college libraries in Karaikudi city. The survey method used to collect the data. 15 concrete questions Structured designed and distributed 200 questionnaires among the students. Each college have 50 numbers are sample.Out of which 152 questionnaire were filled and received back with a response rate of 76%. The Collected data were tabulated, analyzed, interpreted and presented in tables and charts.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table 1: College wise Response

Name of Colleges	Questionnaire Distributed	Questionnaire Received	%
ACCET	50	45	22.5
RRCET	50	41	20.5
ACE	50	35	17.5
RRCE	50	31	15.5
Total	**200**	**152**	**76**

Table-1 shows that out of 152 respondents, 86 (56.6%) were engineering students and 67 (40.8%) respondents were college of education students. Out of 50 questionnaires 45 ACCET students were highly response of this study.

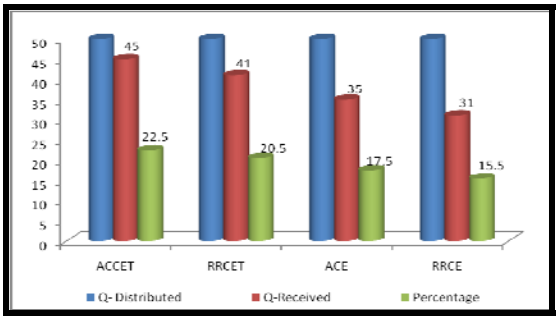


Figure 1: Questionnaire distributed/ received by respondents

Table 2: College wise & Gender wise Respondents

Name of the Colleges	Male	Female	Total
ACCET	25(55.6)	20(44.4)	45(29.6)
RRCET	23(56.1)	18(43.9)	41(26.9)
ACE	22(62.9)	13(37.1)	35(23.0)
RRCE	20(64.5)	11(35.5)	31(20.4)
Total	**90(59.2)**	**62(40.8)**	**152(100)**

Table 2 shows that our of 152 respondents, 90 (59.2%) were male and 62 (40.8%) respondents were female. ACCET students are majority respondents of this study. Out of 45, 25(55.6%) male and 20(44.4%) female were respondents. In Education College ACE are majority respondents (23.0%).

Table 3: Age wise respondents

Age	Respondents	Percentage
20-25	62	40.8
26-30	48	31.6
31-35	29	19.1
Above 36	13	8.5
Total	**152**	**100**

Table 3 presents the age wise distribution of respondents. The data shows thatmajority of the 62 (40.8%) of respondents fall between the age group of 20-25, 48respondents (i.e.31.6%) fall between the age group of 26-30, whereas 29 (i.e. 19.1%) of respondents are the age group of 31-35 and 8.5% of respondents are age group of Above 36, who used SNSs.

Table 4: Awareness about SNSs (College wise)

SNS	ACC-ET	RRC-ET	ACE	RR-CE	Total
Facebook	45	41	35	31	152

	(100)	(100)	(100)	(100)	(100)
You Tube	45 (100)	41 (100)	28 (80)	27 (87.1)	141 (92.8)
Twitter	45 (100)	36 (87.8)	21 (60)	26 (83.9)	128 (84.2)
Orkut	41 (91.1)	33 (80.5)	19 (54.3)	22 (70.9)	115 (75.6)
LinkedIn	37 (82.2)	32 (78.0)	14 (40)	19 (61.3)	102 (67.1)
Blogs	36 (80)	29 (70.7)	11 (31.4)	18 (58.1)	94 (61.8)
MySpace	24 (53)	21 (51.2)	10 (28.6)	16 (51.6)	71 (46.7)
Wikis	42 (93.3)	36 (87.8)	19 (54.3)	19 (61.3)	116 (76.3)
Slideshare	38 (84.4)	21 (51.2)	8 (22.3	9 (29.0)	76 (50)
Flickr	33 (73.3)	19 (46.3)	2 (5.7)	5 (16.1)	59 (38.8)
Research gate	27 (60)	25 (60.9)	11 (31.4)	14 (45.2)	77 (50.6)

It was found that from the table 4 that among the students 100% aware of Facebook. Those students who were aware of You Tube are 141 representing (92.8%) and twitter 128 (84.2%). There are equal number of students i.e.,.(115,116. 75%) who are aware of Orkut and Wikis, followed by LinkedIn (67.1%), Blogs (61.8%), equal number of Slide Share and Research gate (50%), MySpace (46.7%), and Flickr (38.8%). In college wise 100% aware about Facebook site. And also clear those ACCET college students are aware number of SNS and much aware of other college students.

Table-5: Top Five Commonly Used SNS

SNS	Respondents	Percentage
Facebook	152	100
You Tube	133	87.5
Twitter	97	63.8
Orkut	81	53.3
LinkedIn	80	52.6

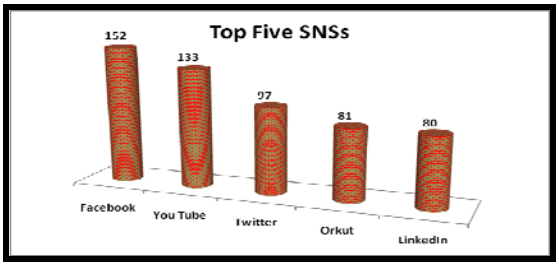


Figure-2: Top Five commonly used SNSs

Table 5 presents the Top five commonly used SNSs among the students of engineering and educations colleges of karaikudi city. The data depicts that 152respondents (100%) are using facebook, 133 respondents (i.e. 87.5%) are using You Tube, 97 respondents (i.e. 63.8%) are using Twitter , 81 respondents (53.3%) are using Orkut and 81 respondents (i.e. 52%) are using LinkedIn Social networking sites.

Table 6: College wise Sources of Information about how to use SNSs

Sources	Engineering Students	Education College Students	Total
Friends	53 (61.6)	44 (66.7)	97 (63.8)
Teachers	9 (10.6)	9 (13.6)	18 (11.8)
Trial and error method	11 (12.8)	4 (6.1)	15 (9.9)
Through external course	4 (4.7)	2 (3.0)	6 (3.9)
Library Staff	9 (10.6)	7 (10.6)	16 (10.5)
Total	**86**	**66**	**152**

Table - 6 shows that a majority (97; 63.8%) of the student got information about usage of SNS from their friends and a good number (18; 11.8%) of the students of the students from their teachers as well as library staff (16; 10.5%) . A few (15; 9.9%) students tried their own trial and error method and only a small percentage (6; 3.9%) through external courses. It is found that the students learn about SNS through their friends. They join in these sites because their friends invite and compel them to become the member of these sites.

Table 7: Purpose of Using Social Networking Sites

Purposes	Respondents	Percentage
To interact with friends	143	94.1
To meet new people	121	79.6
To find useful information	103	67.8
Exchange photos, files, music and videos	96	63.2
To give feedback to friends	89	58.5

Professional activities (Searching for Job)	82	53.9
To promoting own knowledge	71	46.7

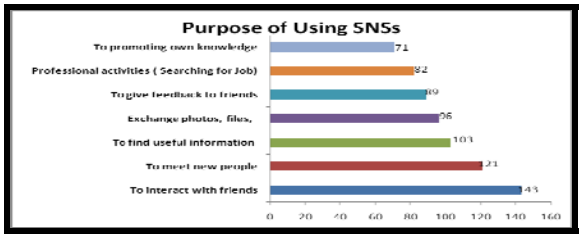


Figure-3: Purpose of Using SNSs

The respondents were asked why they used Social Networking Sites. Table 7 and Figure -3 reveals that 143 respondents (i.e. 94.1%) used SNSs to interact with friends, 121 respondents (i.e. 79.6%) used to meet people, 103 respondents (i.e. 67.8%) used to find useful information, 96 respondents (i.e. 63.2%) used to exchange the photos, files, music and videos, 89 respondents (i.e. 58.5%) used to give feedback to friends, 82 respondents (i.e. 53.9%) used to professional activities. Only 71 respondents (46.7%) used SNSs to promoting own knowledge.

Table 8: Frequency of Using SNSs per day

Frequency	Engineering College Students	Educational College Students	Total	%
0 – 1 Hrs	17	23	40	26.2
2 – 3Hrs	22	22	44	28.1
4 - 5 Hrs	28	13	41	26.9
Above 5Hrs	19	8	27	17.8
Total	**86**	**66**	**152**	**100**

Table 8 shows the frequency of using per day, for which the respondents used SNS. It indicates that majority of respondents 44 (i.e. 22%) were using the SNS 2-3 hours and followed by 41 respondents (i.e.26.9%) were using 4-5 hours , 40 respondents (i.e-26.2%) were using 0-1 hours. Only 27 respondents (17.8%) were using Above 5 hours.

Favorite tool for using to accessing SNS

This study also found favorite tools that are being used for accessing SNSs. This study found that 24 (i.e. 15.8%) of respondents usedDesktop computers (PCs) for accessing these sites, while 32 (21.1%) of respondents use Laptops and 96 (63.2%) of respondents use Smart phones as a tool for accessing Social Networking Sites.

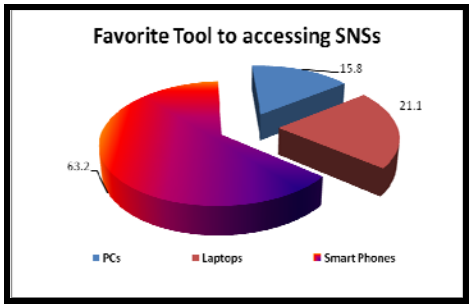


Figure 4: Favorite Tool to accessing SNSs

Findings of this study

- This study found awareness about various SNSs among the students 100% aware of Facebook. Those students who were aware of You Tube are 141 representing (92.8%) and twitter 128 (84.2%).
- This study found top five commonly used SNSs that 152respondents (100%) are using Facebook, 133 respondents (i.e. 87.5%) are using You Tube, 97 respondents (i.e. 63.8%) are using Twitter , 81 respondents (53.3%) are using Orkut and 81 respondents (i.e. 52%) are using LinkedIn Social networking sites.
- Majority 97(63.8%) of the student got information about usage of SNSs from their friends and a good number (18; 11.8%) of the students of the students from their teachers as well as library staff (16; 10.5%) . A few (15; 9.9%) students tried their own trial and error method.
- Majority of respondents 44 (i.e. 22%) were using the SNS 2-3 hours and followed by 41 respondents (i.e.26.9%) were using 4-5 hours.
- This study also found that 24 (i.e. 15.8%) of respondents used PCs for accessing these sites, while 32 (21.1%) of respondents use Laptops and 96 (63.2%) of respondents use Smart phones as a tool for accessing Social Networking Sites.

CONCLUSION

Since the massive popularity of social networking sites come about until the early 2000s, research in this field is obviously incredibly students and there is still much to be done. Internet communication is an outlet for both extroverted and introverted students. Students most often use social networking sites to connect with friends and build communities,

something they are also doing offline. Nevertheless, risks lie in communication with dangerous strangers, lack of face-to-face interaction, and the weakening of family ties. Much research remains to be done in this field before any conclusive assumptions can be made.This research has revealed that engineering and educational college students were likely to be affected by SNSs. SNSs is attractive; it not only provides college students another world to make friends, also provides a good way to release pressure. To some degree, it absolutely affects the lives of college students including the grades. This research also indicates that an approach is needed to better balance the relationship between SNSs and academic study. Therefore, college students should think more about the balancing equation of Social Networking Sites and academics.

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