SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY ON INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES AMONG YOUTH

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"A Sociological Study on influence of social networking sites among youth"

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A THESIS SUBMITED TO THE MAHATMA GANDHI UNIVERSITY IN FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEGREE OF **BACHELOR OF SOCIOLOGY.**

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DECLARATION

I, Sana .A hereby declare that the dissertation entitled "A Sociological study on influence of social networking sites among youth" submitted to Mahatma Gandhi University in fulfilment of the requirement of the degree of bachelor of Sociology is a bonafide work carried out by me in St Teresa's college under the guidance of Mrs. Elizabeth Abraham , St.Teresa'scollege, Ernakulam and that it has not formed the basis for the award of any degree or diploma.

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March 2013

CERTIFICATE

I hear by certify that the thesis entitled " A sociological study on influence of social networking sites among youth " is her original investigation which she carried out under my guidance and supervision.

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INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

A social networking service is an online service, platform, or site that focuses on facilitating the building of social networks or social relations among people who, for example, share interests, activities, backgrounds, or real-life connections. A social network service consists of a representation of each user (often a profile), his/her social links, and a variety of additional services. Most social network services are web-based and provide means for users to interact over the Internet, such as e-mail and instant messaging. Online community services are sometimes considered as a social network service, though in a broader sense, social network service usually means an individual-centered service whereas online community services are group-centered. Social networking sites allow users to share ideas, activities, events, and interests within their individual networks. The main types of social networking sites are Face book, Google plus, Tumbler, Twitter, Orkut etc.

HISTORY

The potential for computer networking to facilitate newly improved forms of computer-mediated social interaction was suggested early on. Efforts to support social networks via computer-mediated communication were made in many early online services, including Use net Arpanet and bulletin board services (BBS). Many prototypical features of social networking sites were also present in online services such as America Online, Prodigy, CompuServe, Chat Net, and The WELL Early social networking on the World Wide Web began in the form of generalized online communities such as Theglobe.com (1995), Geocities (1994) and Tripod.com (1995). Many of these early communities focused on bringing people together to interact with each other through chat rooms, and encouraged users to share personal information and ideas via personal WebPages by providing easy-to-use publishing tools and free or inexpensive web space. Some communities - such as Classmates.com - took

a different approach by simply having people link to each other via email addresses. In the late 1990s, user profiles became a central feature of social networking sites, allowing users to compile lists of "friends" and search for other users with similar interests. New social networking methods were developed by the end of the 1990s, and many sites began to develop more advanced features for users to find and manage friends. Attesting to the rapid increase in social networking sites' popularity, by 2005, it was reported that MySpace was getting more page views than Google. Face book, launched in 2004, became the largest social networking site in the world in early 2009.

Importance Social Networking in the present Society

Social networking sites are playing a vital role now days. The Internet is one of the most popular means of the communication. A site which has got its height in the past few years is social networking sites. They make people to know about what is happening around. Using the social networks we are able to connect people miles apart. These social networks help us to socialize, share our ideas, and develop the vocabulary. Even it is helping the business world by promoting and advertising the new ideas of young and adult.

The aim of this social network is to make the world more open and connected, the only thing is to use it in a right way. The disadvantage is we are interested to talk with people who are miles apart and forgetting the one who are a centimeter away from us. With the sites the people who cannot express their views by words or in front of people are coming forward to share their views and ideas by writing.

As everything has some positive and negative points so do social networking sites. On one side we use it to be in contact with our friends or relatives who are far away from us or whom we have left after school. It also help us to remain aware about daily news, videos etc. But now a days we see people are so much addicted to it they do want to go out of their houses and meet other persons and talk to them, all they do is that they chat on sites. Children are spoiling their health because at the age in which they should play outdoor games they sit on computer and chat with their friends. Some students make use of it by downloading motivational quotes and study material but others make misuse of it.

But the cons of these social networking sites are more devastating. A study has revealed that excessive use of social networking sites like Face book and twitter is causing depression and

frustration in youths. People to people contact in actual physical appearance has reduced and now people prefer to contact each other on social networking sites. Human socialization is fading. There is a constant threat of cyber snooping in people's personal life. As these mediums have the ability to spread a message at a rocket speed to a very vast audience, some notorious and fundamentalist groups are using it to spread hatred among different communities. For example the recent unfortunate event of mass exodus of north east people from some southern Indian cities to their respective homes in northeast was triggered by threats spread through social media.

There is a need of constructive restriction on the content and the mode of use of these social networking sites .It's better for these networks to have a self regulating mechanism than to have a government censorship .People should also respect others life and their personal views. Then only these social networking sites will actually be "social" in their true meanings.

Advantages of Social Networking

1. It helps individuals in making new friends and also finding old friends who might not have been touch for years and without this platform it would have been impossible to get in touch with them again. In simple words it helps in reviving old relations and helps in making new relations.

2. It helps in breaking monotonous life of individuals as these sites are filled with activities and really have interesting applications which never allow you to get bored which is great since people need enjoyment after hard day of work which these sites provides.

3. It also helps in expanding your business because there are millions of people who are on these sites and there is no better medium to promote your business among you friends, family and others than social media.

4. One never feels left out due to it because you get know about your family and friends birthdays, anniversaries and other important things which are happening in their life.

5. People can share their ideas and view with each other.

6. Crate and maintain many relationships.

7. Information comes to you.

8. Easy to communicate and connect with others at low price.

9. Low cost advertising; we can advertise the products at low price in this websites.

10. Spread the important information and also discuss about the present events and current afire.

Disadvantages of Social Networking

1. The biggest disadvantage of it is that there is possibility that someone may extract your personal and professional information and use it to do harm to you and therefore you should be fully aware of such things and never disclose any sensitive information like bank account details, credit card details and so on.

2. Children at young age should never be allowed to use these sites because at such young age they would be exposed as at their age they are not in a position to decide whether it is right or wrong to be friends with strangers and also exposing them to social networks will erode their innocence. All things should be done at right time and social networking is not a right thing for very young kids.

3. One should not get addicted to it because it can have severe repercussions like losing your productivity at work, loneliness , social networking should be done but one should not do it continuously as anything done in excess is bad for you.

4. Identity theft:-hackers can theft the identity and launch the span and virus attacks.

5. Online harassment.

6. Creating fake profiles.

7. Anyone can upload any kind of photo, video (e.g. porn).

8. Any comment you can pass through it either good or bad.

9. You can create any community here (bad or terror).

10. People lose their security by providing self information in this sites.

11. Teenagers and adults show more interest to chat with strangers.

12. Lot of time waste.

Relevance of a Sociological study on Social networking Sites

The rise of the internet age has enabled us to live a life at a faster pace. Because of the freedom the web provides, millions of people can communicate at the same time. Never before in human history has there been a time like this. What's most intriguing about this revolution is that teens and youth are leading the way.

But the ongoing popularity (or maybe dependence) on the internet and social networking carries not only positive but also negative effects. First, we have to consider that the web is responsible for making media, society, and our lives in general work faster. A fast paced society has its ups and downs and the way it affects teens and youth is two-fold – on one hand, social media makes life easier and more convenient, but it also puts traditional relationships in a new and sometimes distorted light.

For instance, teens and youth are supposed to learn how to build relationships with other people around the neighborhood or in school. Traditionally, they have been taught by their parents, religious ministers, guidance counselors, and teachers to respect authority and follow what older people say. Furthermore, they are also taught to earn friends by means of showing respect and practicing good manners. Our point here is that building quality relationships with people takes time and effort.

Some people seem completely comfortable divulging extremely personal information on blogs and home pages. Perhaps because of our fascination with the private lives of celebrities, letting others in on personal information may seem very normal. It's also a way of creating a sense of identity—having lots of online "friends," announcing one's relationship status and posting snapshots are ways of making statements about who we are. Descartes, the seventeenth century French philosopher famously said, "I think therefore I am;" we might now amend that to "I'm online therefore I am."

But because of social networking, real and hard-earned relationships are now replaced with online relationships. Many youths are leaning towards communicating with other people through social media rather than going out in person and making friends with neighbors. What this means is that they are fond of making life faster. But the question is: is this good for them?

Let us find out…

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A literature review is a text written by someone to consider the critical points of current knowledge including substantive findings as well as theoretical and methodological contributions to a particular topic. Literature reviews are secondary source, and as such, do not report any new or original experimental work. Also, a literature review can be interpreted as a review of an abstract accomplishment.

The Internet, sometimes called simply "the Net," is a worldwide system of computer networks - a network of networks in which users at any one computer can, if they have permission, get information from any other computer (and sometimes talk directly to users at other computers).

Human beings by and large are social. They feel an inherent need to connect and expand their connections. There is a deep rooted need among humans to share.

In the past, due to geographical distances and economic concerns, connections between people were limited. A social network is made up of individuals that are connected to one another by a particular type of inter dependency. It could be ideas, values, trade, anything.

Social networks operate on many levels. Initially social networking happened at family functions where all relative and friends would conglomerate less than one roof.

Social networking has always been prevalent; it is just that in these times the face of social networking has changed. Where earlier the process was long drawn, involving a chain movement where in one person led to another through a web of social contacts, today the process is highly specialized.

Communication has been instrumental to a large extent to the growth of social networking. With the advent of Internet and the cell phone a lot of social interaction is captured through email and instant messaging.

Today there are a lot of online social networking sites where individuals volunteer information about themselves and their social networks. Social networking allows for like-minded people to interact with another.

An online social networking site is a place where a user can create a profile and build a personal network that connects the user to other users. What used to be just a niche activity has today taken the proportions of a global phenomenon that engages tens of millions of Internet users.

Online social networks are ideal for exchanging ideas, views, and garnering public opinion; although, these are restricted to the users of the social network. Popular social networking sites, like Orkut, MySpace and Face book are changing the Internet scene. Another social networking program is that used by a company called Amway.

The company operates on the system of multi level marketing. Members make new members and get monetary benefits on the purchases made by down the line members. Members sell the company's products through social networking. And the members of the company itself constitute a large network, which members use for other businesses as well. The Amway model has been so effective that it has been copied by several other businesses.

Social networking sites have recorded phenomenal growth rates. These networks allow individuals to leverage the connections they establish within the social network to achieve a broader objective like job search, a real estate search, a holiday trip plan, etc.

A social network allows independent artists, music labels and video content owners to upload share and sell their content to a community of users with interests in the particular media. Users in turn benefit by being able to sample, hear, download and share songs with friends and other members.

Social network groups like Orkut help people get in touch with people they have lost touch with. They also help people to stay in touch despite their geographical distances. Social networking is important as far as an individual's personal and professional development is concerned.

The social network sites have emerged as a powerful and effective means for people to not only link and get linked but to use these services as effectively as possible. The growing popularity of these networking sites only proves the simple truth – Social networking has arrived!

Social Networking Sites (SNSs)

SNSs have been defined as web based services that enable individuals to construct semi-profile within a bounded system, articulate a list of other users with whom they share connections and views". Another given definition of SNSs is "it is an online community of Internet users who want to communicate with other users about areas of mutual interest"

Harnessing properly the opportunities that are bound through this networks tend to help the students lots in a positive manner and can also be channeled into helping others. Examples of SNSs include; Twitter, Fraudster, MySpace, Face book, Orkut and many others.

Examples of SNSs

Twitter began as an experiment in 2006 with very simple service that is rapidly becoming one of the most talked-about social networking service providers. Twitter is a real-time communication platform. It allows users to create an account, post and receive messages to a network of contacts, as opposed to send bulk email messages. Users also can build their network of contacts, and invite others to receive Tweets, and can also follow other members' posts. Twitter makes it easy to opt into or out of networks..Friendster.com as a social networking site began its activities in the year 2002 as a social complement to Rise and a competitor to the Match.com two other earlier established SNSs . It allows users to contact with others, maintain those contacts, and share online

Content and media with those contacts. Friendster.com is also used for dating and discovering new events, bands and hobbies. Users may share videos, photos, messages and using their profile and their network to comments on each other. MySpace was launched in 2003. The users can create profile, list school friends in which they attend, upload photos and develop a calendar. Additionally, it intends bringing various users together for personal and

professional interaction. This network distinguished itself by frequently creating new ideas as clients continue to ask for innovative introduction and became the most talk about in the United States in June 2006.Today, Facebook is one of the most popular SNSs for students and even the general public. It was developed by sophomore Mark Zucker berg of Harvard University in 2004.The site was originally developed for college and university students as a way to attach with one another. Users spend about 20 minutes a day on the site and two-thirds of users log in at least once a day.In the year 2010 Facebook has more than 500 million active users, attracted 450 visitors and 22,000 photo-views in its first four hours online.

REVIEWS

* Beer D(2008) :Beers essay is a response to boyd's and Ellison's (2007) paper on definitions, history and scholarship of Social Network Sites (SNS). The author puts into question the definitions that boyd and Ellison choose for SNS and also the concept of "Friends" within SNSs. He argues that SNSs are as much part of the real world because the content in them seeks to communicate aspects of the offline life. Explaining that the practice of SNSs is so popular that this could become part of the socializing process in general.In contrast the author suggests that more research is needed to define these terms instead of having a scholar define them in such an early stage. Other than providing a counter opinion to boyd & Ellison (2007), Beer suggest a very important point of view when analyzing SNSs. He suggests that these type of tools should be perceived as tools that maintain and change the capitalist system.

* Boyd D.M & Ellison, N. B. (2007). Social Network Sites: Definition, History, and Scholarship. Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication : This essay builds a framework for the analysis of Social Network Sites (SNS). It seeks to define and sort the multiple keywords used among the literature of SNS. They make differentiation between the terms: Social Network Sites and Social Networking Sites. Arguing that the later does not apply because the users usually has some type of relationship with the person the be-friend even if it is very distant. On that note, it also makes the distinction between the traditional "friends" and the SNS's Friends. By stating that these Friends "provide context by offering users an imagined audience to guide behavioral norms".The authors work an excellent and very needed historical background regarding SNS.

*Ellison N.B.Steinfield (2007). The Benefits of Facebook ,"Friends:" Social Capital and College Students' Use of Online Social Network Sites. Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication : The research focuses in examining how Facebook helps create and/or maintain social capital. To do this the researchers identify the differences between bonding social capital and bridging social capital. The former represents relationships with strong ties while the latter means weak ties among members in a social network. To test these assumptions 800 undergraduate MSU students were surveyed. The Facebook intensity scale was used to measure self assessed Facebook behavior, engagement in Facebook activities and attitudes toward the SNS. Also content published and expected audience was measured and psychological well being. The results showed that Facebook served as a tool to create bridging social capital and not bonding social capital proving that SNS's (in this case) served to create weak social ties.

*Hargittai, E. (2007). Whose space? Differences among users and non-users of social network sites. Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication:This study explored who was more likely to join to ceratin social network sites over others. The sites considered in this study were: Facebook, Myspace, Zanga, Orkut and Friendster. The author proposes that users (college freshmans) select a site regarding offline identities like: ethnic group, living context and parents level of education and sex. The findings suggested that hispanics wil use facebook more than any other ethnic group. While Asians and Asian American will use Xanga and Friendster. Also the findings suggest that "there seems to be a positive relationship between parental schooling and the use of Facebook and Zanga, and a negative relationship between parental education and the use of MySpace. In addition students that live with their parents would be less involve in social network sites in contrast with students that live alone or in dorms. Suggesting that those that dont live with their parents spend more time mantaining their relationships online than those that live with their parents. Also suggesting that "online actions and interactions cannot be seen as a tabula rasa activities, independent of existing iffline identities. In that sense researchers must be cautious not to generalize results of SNS when conducting research if only one site is being considered.

*Haythornthwaite, C. (2005). Social networks and Internet connectivity effects. Information, Communication & Society :Review: This research studies seeks to understand the relationship between media use (type of information shared) and the tie strength of individuals between a network. Two groups were used to assess the issue: co-located

researchers and distance learners. It states that the type of communication differs on the type of relationship and not on the medium. Furthermore it states that the type of relationship will dictate the type of medium that will be used. In addition it suggests that the strong tie will remain intact regardless of the medium while the weak tie will perish in regard of the medium use i.e. the distance learners stopped using the virtual classrooms tools when not require to do so.

*Lampe,C Ellison, N. B & Steinfield, C.(2008). Changes in use and perception of facebook, Proceedings of the ACM 2008 conference on Computer supported cooperative work : This research seeks to measure if there has been any changes in use or perception of Facebook as a Social Network Profile (SNP). To do this the researchers surveyed random undergraduate students throughout 2006(n=288), 2007(n=468) and 2008(n=419). Also in depth interviews were conducted to a subset of the survey participants. Three dimensions were measured to test if there has been change in use or perception of Facebook: reported use, perception of audience and attitude towards Facebook (eg. Privacy settings, daily use and social use.) The authors found that throughout the data collection period users perception and usage didn't change much even when the platform had undergone many changes. One of the constant trends showed that that users tend to be more active on their SNP when offline social context is in flux.

Liu, H. (2007). Social Network Profiles as Taste Performances. Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication:: This research seeks to identify if Social Network Profiles (SNP) are tools used to create "interest tokens [that act] as markers of taste and social identity". In order to prove that assumption the author proposed multiple hypothesis. To prove these hypothesis true the author analyzed the content in the cultural interest area of 127,477 MySpace profiles. A sample from the data corpus was taken in order to identify and codify inputs within the interest area. The author found four types of taste statements that convey: prestige, differentiation, authenticity or theatrical persona."After identifying these statements, data was extracted from the interest boxes to identify the popularity of each. That way the researcher was able to draw a map representing which interest were identified as mainstream or high taste markers and which were low or subculture taste markers. Liu was able to find that users used Myspace profile list of cultural interest as a tool to engage in taste performance, while music played a big role in the MySpace community. The main goals of the taste performances were to express differentiation or prestige. Another interest finding in

this research was that the interest of the profile user tended to be dissimilar from their top friends. The researcher provided three explanations for this:

"1) users tended to friend those who complemented rather than overshadowed their unique tastes; 2) users tended to only select friends who did not overshadow them for the "Top 8;" or 3) users maintained an awareness of their friend's profiles and crafted their own profiles so as to be unique".

* Sonja Utz (2009). The (Potential) Benefits of Campaigning via Social Network Sites. Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication:This article tried to research the effect that Social Network Sites had on voters during political campaigns. SNS's provide a bigger extended social network and information exchange is expected with political candidates. However, if a user hasn't added the candidate is likely because he or she doesn't think positively of this candidate, thus the perception will not change. The type of interaction among voters and candidates was also assessed in this study. The results found that user-user interaction helped foster a more positive image of the candidate, while user-machine communication didn't have significance. The study also revealed that users of SNS's were mostly left wing voters and that left wing candidates were also most expected to response to comments posted on their profiles.

* Pasek, J., more, e., & Hargittai, E. (2009). Face book and academic performance: Reconciling a media sensation with data : This research aimed to prove wrong a study that suggested a negative correlation between Face book use and GPA scores. After pointing out the faults of the past study they gathered three datasets that could prove wrong such suggestion. Indeed they found no significance between the two variables. Furthermore, "Two of our analyses suggest that Face book users were no more or less likely to get good grades than non–users. The third study found evidence that Face book use was slightly more common among individuals with higher grades. Indeed, our findings are in direct contradiction to those presented in the original FG study as well as the flurry of sensational media that ensued." (Pasic, 2009)

METHODOLOGY

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The rise of the internet age has enabled us to live a life at a faster pace. Because of the freedom the web provides, millions of people can communicate at the same time. Never before in human history has there been a time like this. What's most intriguing about this revolution is that youth is leading the way.

The present study is an analysis of extent of influence excerted by social networking sites on youth from a Sociological point of view. Here the researchers aims to study the influence on social networking sites among youth on the basis of age, sex, marital status ,education, occupation and annual income. The various purposes of social networking sites, its uses and its effects on interaction pattern of youth are also analyzed in the study.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Major objective

To find out the extent of influence of social networking sites among youth in Kochi city.

Specific objectives

- To find out the socio- economic profile of youth. who are the members of social networking sites

- To find out the influence on social networking on the social life of youth
- To asses the influence on social networks in promoting social activism
- To find out how the time spend our networking sites influence family relations

DEFINITION OF THE CONCEPTS

Social Networking sites

SNSs have been defined as web based services that enable individuals to construct semi-profile within a bounded system, articulate a list of other users with whom they share connections and views". Another given definition of SNSs is "it is an online community of Internet users who want to communicate with other users about areas of mutual interest"Most social network services are web-based and provide means for users to interact over the internet, such as e-mail and instant messaging. Popular methods now combine many of these, with American-based services such as facebook, google +,and twitter widely used worldwide.

Operational Definition

In the present study Social networking sites refers to facebook, google+ and twitter used by the youth in Kochi city

YOUTH

Youth is generally the time of life between childhood and adulthood. *Youth* is also defined as "the appearance, freshness, vigor, spirit, etc., characteristic of one who is young". *Youth* is a term used for people of both sexes, male and female, of a young age.

Operational Definition

In the present study youth is person between the age group of 18- 30.

SOCIAL RELATIONSHIP

A **social relation** or is any relationship between two or more individuals which involves constant interaction between the individuals.

Operational Definition

In the present study social relation refers to the interaction between the members of networking sites and people around these people .

IDENTIFICATION OF VARIABLES

Independent Variables

Age, sex, marital status, annual income, Education and occupation are the independent variables of this study.

Dependent Variables

Time spent on Social net working, influence on social life, family life effect on dressing and choices of brands

RESEARCH DESIGN

An exploratory study was used, which helps the researchers to find out how social networking sites influence the youth

PILOT STUDY

A pilot study was conducted to find out the feasibility if the study. During the pilot study the researcher could understand the prevalence high usage of networking sites among the youth in Kochi city.

The Universe of the Study

The population of the present study includes all the youth in kochi city who are the members of any one of the networking sites such as as Facebook, Google+, tumblr and Twitter orkut etc.

Sample and sampling method

The present study is conducted in kochi corporation area which comprises a cross-section of the entire Kerala society. The method used is purposive sampling since all the youth in the city are not members of SNS. Only those youths who are members of SNS could be included the sample. The sample consists of fifty respondents, of twenty five are males and twenty five are females.

PRE-TEST

A Pre-test was conducted among 10 youths in kochi corporation area. The respondents were quite sincere and enthusiastic and they found the topic interesting. After the pre-test necessary modifications were made in the questionnaire.

TOOL OF DATA COLLECTION

In this study, questionnaire method was adopted for data collection. Pre –test also contributed to the construction of the questionnaire. The questionnaire was set up and was given to the respondents. . The questionnaire consisted of both open ended and closed ended questions.

FIELD WORK

The actual field work began on October 2012 and was completed by the end of January 2013. The respondents were co-operation by filling the questionnaire on time. Care was taken to ensure that the respondents understood each question clearly and that all questions were answered and completed. However, there was a trend among the youth to leave out open-ended questions without being answered properly.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

The collected data was edited and tabulated using Microsoft excel worksheet. Appropriate tables and charts were prepared for each question. Each table was interpreted on the basis of findings.

Theoretical Framework

Facebook, MySpace, and other social networking uses of the internet can dissolve the boundary between our public and private selves. As many posts on this blog reference,

sociologist Erving Goffman's "front stage" and "back stage" concepts have been a useful way to understand social life. Goffman wrote in 1959 of how we keep certain information private, part of the process of impression management.

The internet in general and social networking sites in particular have blurred the distinction between front and back stage, something that some social theorists would argue is a feature of pos tmodernity. In a postmodern society, binaries (like public and private) merge and cannot be clearly separated. Some postmodern theorists might see the collapse of the boundary between our public and private selves as inevitable. Edwards had a point—we all have *something* to hide, although hopefully not criminal behavior. It's up to us whether we choose to share or not, and we all must deal with the consequences accordingly.

Social networks have come to take on prominence in sociology, other academic disciplines, many policy areas, and even in the public discourse in recent years. "Relationships or ties are the basic building blocks of human experience, mapping the connections that individuals have to one another (Pescosolido 1991).As network theorists claim, the structure of these relationships among actors has important consequences for individuals and for whole systems (Knoke 1990). Some sociologists see social networks as the essence of social structure (Burt 1980); others see social structure governing these networks (Blau 1974); still others see networks as the mechanism that connects micro and macro levels of social life (Coleman 1990; Pescosolido 1992). To many, the power of network explanations lies in changing the focus of social structure from static categories such as age, gender, and race to the actual nature of the social contacts that individuals have and their impact on life chances (White 1992; Wilson 1987, 1996). In any case, there is a clear link between networks and sociology's central concerns with social structures and social interaction.

THE SOCIAL NETWORK PERSPECTIVE

Social actors, whether individuals, organizations, or nations, shape their everyday lives through consultation, information and resource sharing, suggestion, support, and nagging from others (White et al. 1976). Network interactions influence beliefs and attitudes as well as behavior, action, and outcomes.

Individuals are neither puppets of the social structure nor purely rational, calculating individuals. Individuals are "sociosyncratic," both acting and reacting to the social networks

in their environment (Elder 1998a, 1998b;Pescosolido 1992). They are, however, always seen as interdependent rather than independent (Wasserman and Faust 1994). Some theorists (e.g., Coleman 1990) see networks in the purposive action, rational actor tradition, but this represents only one view that can be subsumed within a network perspective (Pescosolido 1992).

Network influence requires the consideration of interactions among these three aspects. Structural elements (e.g., size) of a network may tap the amount of potential influence that can be exerted by the network (i.e., the "push"). However, only the content of the network can provide an indication of the direction of that influence (i.e.the "trajectory"). For example, large networks can influence individuals on the Upper West Side of Manhattan to seek out medical professionals (Kadushin 1966) while keeping individuals in Puerto Rico out of the medical system (Pescosolido, Wright, et al. 1998). The intersection of the structure and content of social networks together calibrates whether and how much individuals will be pushed toward or away from doctors and alternative healers or even rely only on family for assistance (Freidson 1970; Pescosolido 1991).

Social interactions can be positive or negative, helpful or harmful. They can integrate individuals into a community and, just as powerfully, place stringent isolating regulations on behavior. The little research that has explored negative ties in people's lives has found them to have powerful effects (Berkman 1986; Pagel, Erdly, and Becker 1987). Portes (1998), Rumbaut (1977), and Waldinger (1995) all document how tight social interactions within ethnic groups lead to restricted job opportunities for those inside and outside of the ethnic networks.

THE SOCIOLOGY OF SOCIAL NETWORKS

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DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS

Table 4.1 showing the age group

AGE	NUMBER OF RESPONDANTS	PERCENTAGE
20-25	36	72%
26-30	14	28%

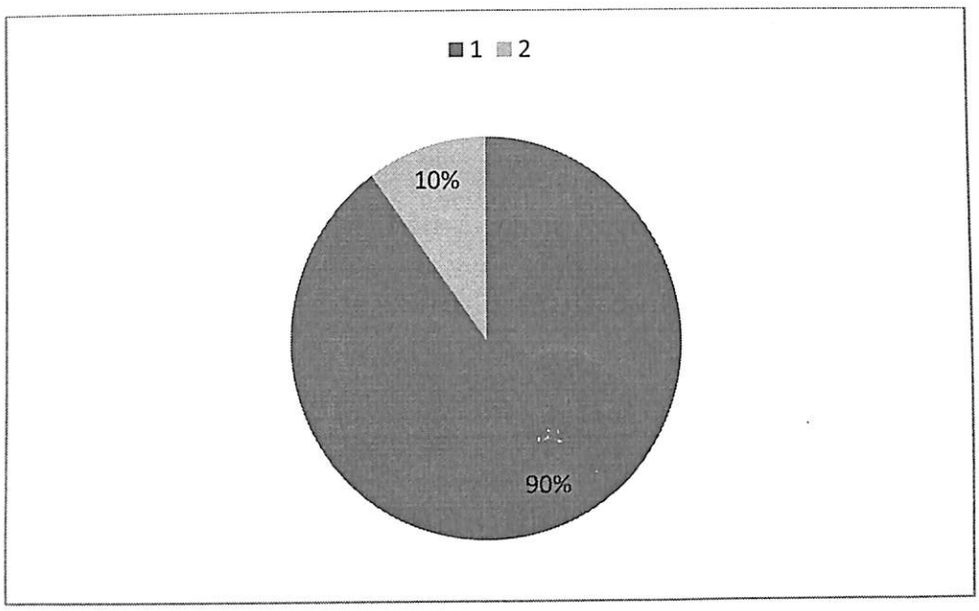
Majority of the respondents are students. 72% of the respondents belong to the age 20-25 ,28% of the respondents belong to the age 26-30.

Table 4.2 showing the gender distribution

SEX	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
MALE	24	48%
FEMALE	26	52%

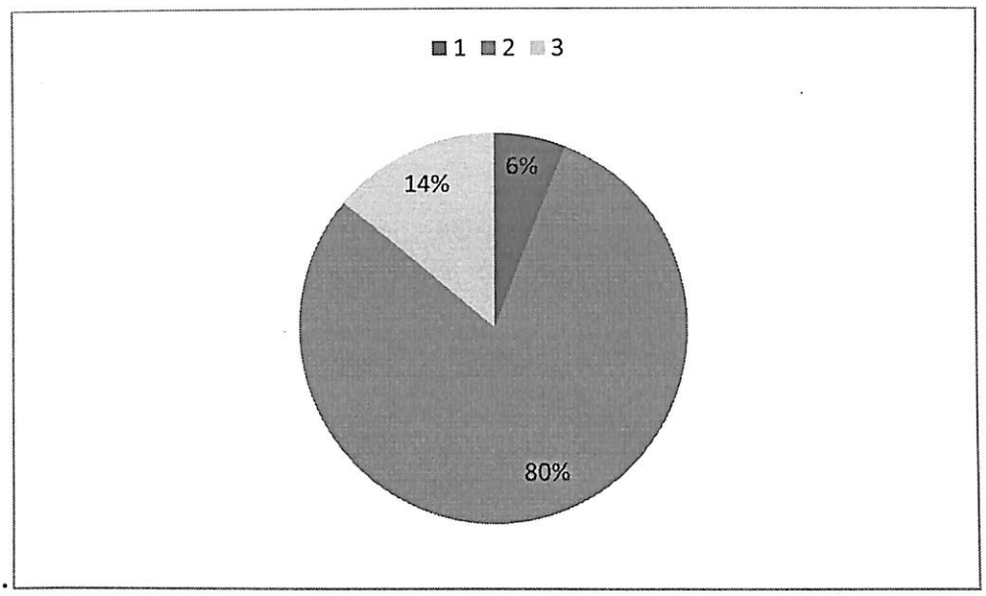
Sample consists of both male and female. 48% of the sample are males and 52% of the samples are females.

The figure 1 showing marital status



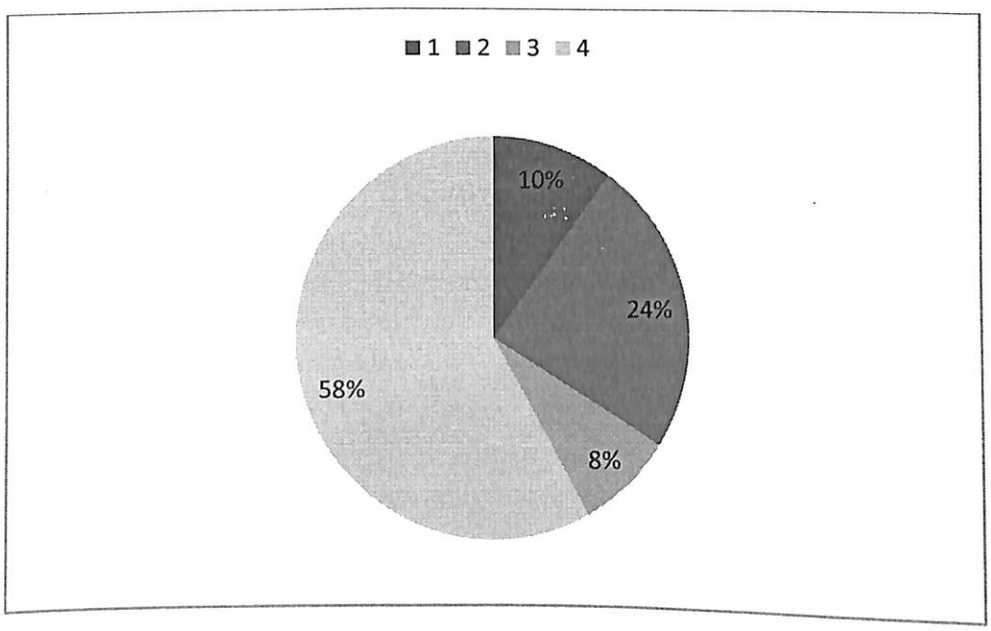
90% of the respondents are single and 10% are married .

The figure 2 showing the educational status



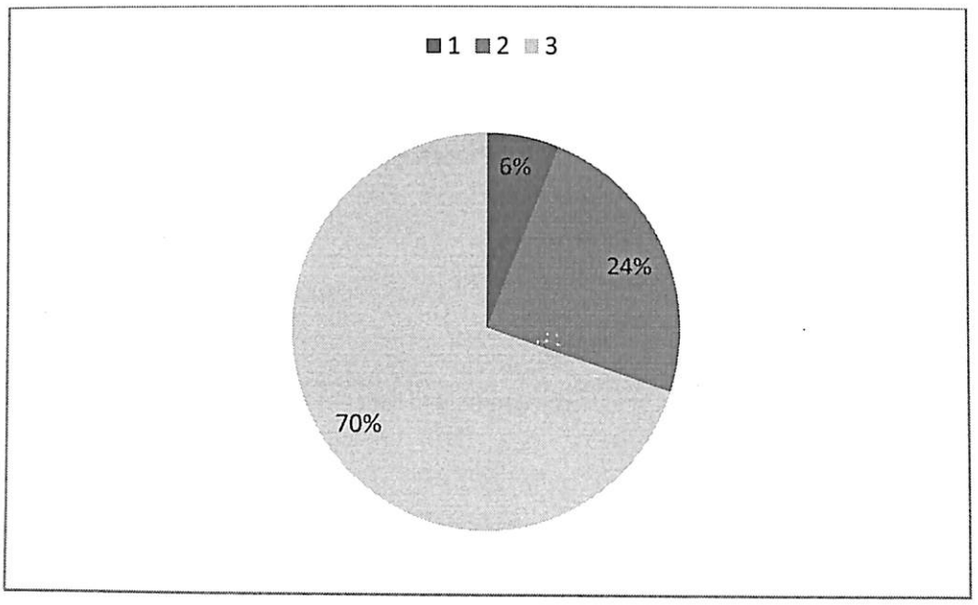
80% of the respondents are graduate , 14% of the respondents are post graduate and 6% of the respondents have studied up to SSLC or plus two.

The figure 3 showing the occupational status.



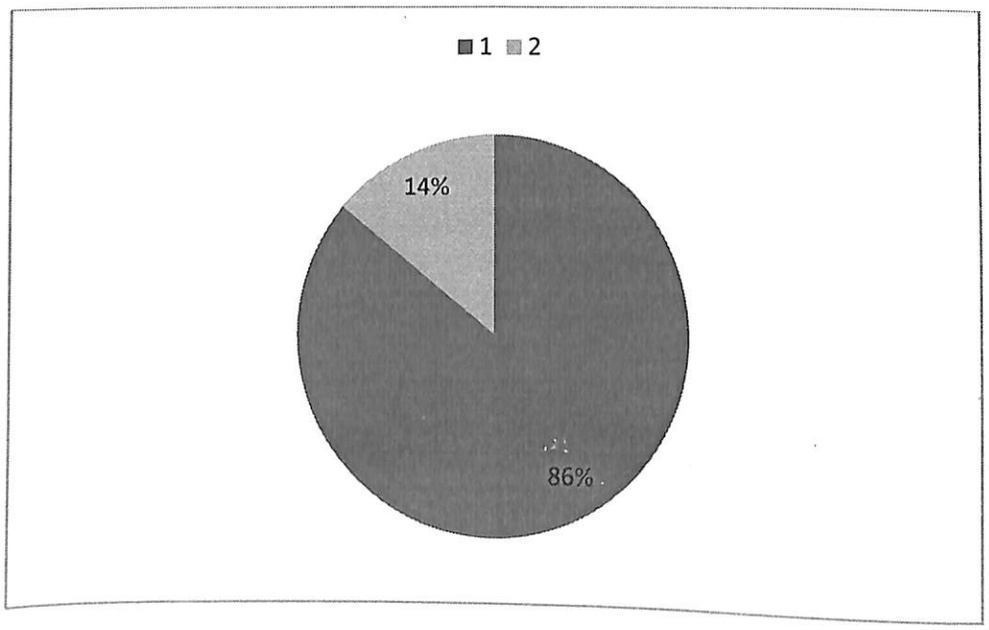
58% of the respondents are not working, 24% of the respondents are occupied ,10% of the respondents have government jobs and the remaining 8% are house wives

The figure 4 showing the annual income



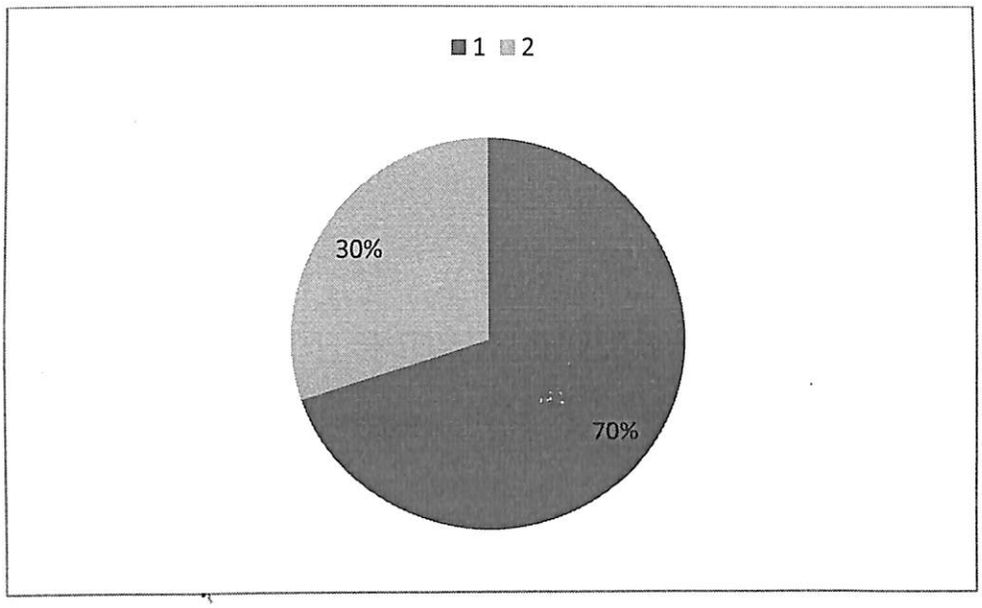
70% of the respondents have no annual income since they are students , 6% of the respondents has annual income of 20,000 – 6,00,000. 24% of the respondents has annual income of 7,00,000 and above .

The figure 5 showing the type of family



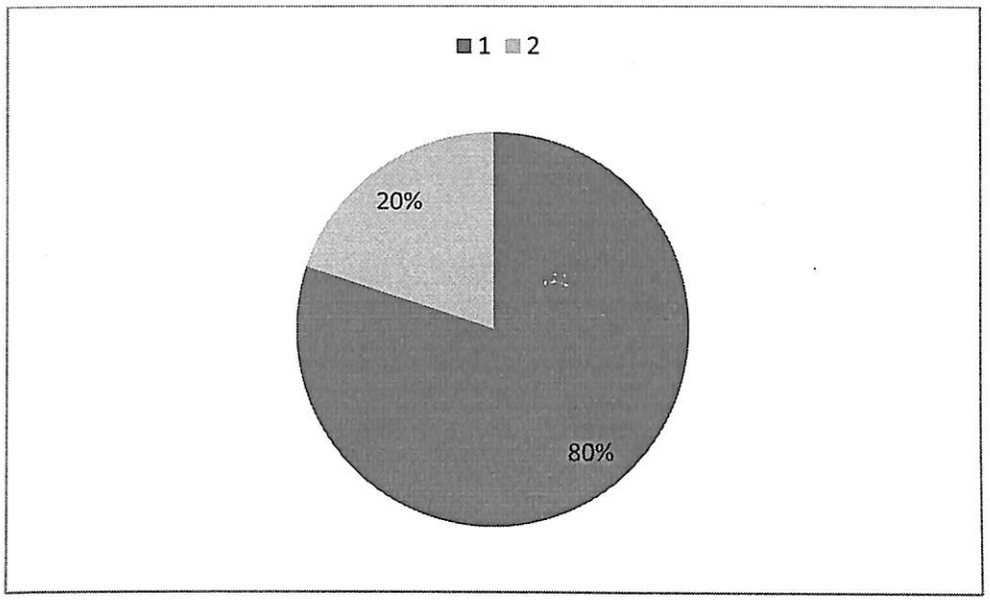
Sample consist of both nuclear and joint family. 86% of the respondents belong to a nuclear family and 14% of the respondents belong to a joint family .

The figure 6 showing respondents with personal computer



70% of the respondents has a personal computer and 30% of the respondents has no personal computer

The figure 7 showing respondents with internet connection at home



80% of the respondents has internet connection at home and 20% of the respondents has no internet connection at home .

The figure 8 showing the type of internet connection

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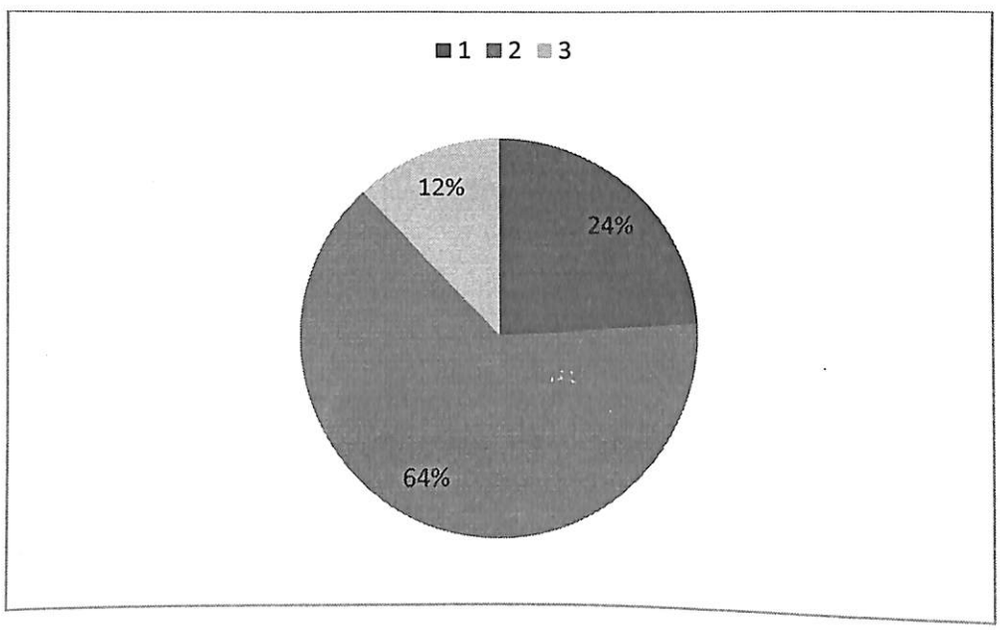

24% of the respondents has a wire line connection at home , 64% of the respondents has wireless connection at home and 12% of the respondents has no internet connection available at home

The table 4.3 showing the time spend on networking sites.

Time spend	Number of respondents	Percentage
Less than one hour	15	30%
2-3 hours	20	40%
4 hours and above	15	30%

30% of the respondents spent less than one hour on networking sites . 40% of the respondents spent two hours and more per day and 30% of the respondents are addicted to the networking sites .

The table 4.4 showing the most visited social networking sites.

Networking sites	Number of respondents	Percentage
Facebook	30	60%
Twitter	10	20%
Orkut	5	10%
Linkedin and any other	5	10%

The most popular social networking sites is facebook , 60% of the respondents has an facebook account .20% of the respondents use twitter and 10% of respondents use orkut , linkedin or any other .

The table 4.5 showing the relationship between social networking sites and friends

Has social networking sites help you connect with friends	Number of respondents	Percentage
yes	50	100%
no	-	-

100% of the respondents agree that social networking sites has helped to connect with their friends . Respondents are happy that they could resume their friendship with long lost friends

.

The table 4.6 showing the networking sites improving friendship.

social networking sites has improved relationship with your friends	Number of respondents	Percentage
Strongly agree	15	30%
Agree	28	56%
Neutral	7	14%

30% of the respondents strongly agreed that networking sites have improved their relationship with their friends . 28% of the respondents agreed that their relationship has increased with the help of networking sites . 7% of the respondents has a neutral opinion to it.

The table 4.7 showing the social networking sites making life worthwhile

Social networking sites makes life worthwhile	Number of respondents	Percentage
Strongly agree	25	50%
Strongly disagree	16	32%
Neutral	9	18%

50% of the respondents strongly agreed that social networking sites has made their life worthwhile . 9% of the respondents had a neutral opinion to it where as 32% of the respondents strongly disagreed that social networking sites have made their life worthwhile .

The table 4.8 showing networking sites affect the family relationship.

Spending time of networking affect your family relationship	Number of respondents	Percentage
Strongly agree	11	22%
Neutral	29	58%
Strongly disagree	10	20%

22% of the respondents strongly agreed that spending time on networking sites have affected their relationship with their family .10% of the respondents strongly disagreed to it and 58% of the respondents had a neutral opinion to it .

The table 4.9 showing relationship between networking and relieving tension from work or studies

Networking sites help you relieve tension	Number of respondents	Percentage
Strongly agree	39	78%
Neutral	8	16%
Strongly disagree	3	6%

78% of the respondents strongly agreed that networking sites helps to relieve tension from work or studies . 6% of the respondents strongly disagreed and 16% of the respondents had a neutral opinion to it .

The table 4.10 showing the networking as powerful medium to create public opinion.

Networking a powerful medium to create public opinion	Number of respondents	Percentage
Strongly agree	49	98%
Strongly disagree	1	2%

98% of the respondents strongly agreed to that networking sites acts as an powerful medium to create public opinion on social issues . only 2% of the respondents had an different opinion to it and strongly disagreed .

The table 4.11 showing networking effect style of dressing

Networking effect your style of dressing	Number of respondents	Percentage
Strongly agree	14	28%
Neutral	17	34%
Strongly disagree	19	38%

28% of the respondents strongly agreed that networking has effected their style of dressing . 34% of the respondents had a neutral opinion to it where as 38% of the respondents strongly disagreed that networking has effected their style of dressing .

The table 4.12 showing managing time on networking sites and for other activities

Spending too much on networking than for other activities	Number of respondents	Percentage
Strongly agree	15	30%
Agree	4	8%
Neutral	15	30%
Strongly disagree	16	32%

30% of the respondents strongly agreed that they spend too much on networking than they spend on other activities . 8% agreed to the point where as 30% of the respondents had a neutral opinion . 32% of the respondents strongly disagree that they spend too much on networking than other activities .

The table 4.13 showing the age group of the friends on networking sites

Age group	Number of respondents	Percentage
15-20	5	10%
20-25	35	70%
25-30	10	20%

10% of the respondents has friends of age group 15-20 . 70% of the respondents has friends of age group 20-25 . 20% of the respondents has friends of age group 25-30 .

The table 4.14 showing use of real name and address on the networking sites

Use real name and address on networking sites	Number of respondents	Percentage
Yes	44	88%
No	6	12%

888% of the respondents use their real name and address on networking sites . 12% of the respondents does not use their real name and address on networking sites .

The table 4.15 showing use of a fake id on the networking sites

Fake id on networking sites	Number of respondents	Percentage
Yes	4	8%
No	46	92%

8% of the respondents has a fake id on networking sites where as 92% of the respondents does not have a fake id on networking sites .

The table 4.16 showing spreading incorrect information through networking sites

Given wrong information through networking sites	Number of respondents	Percentage
Yes	6	12%
No	44	88%

12% of the respondents has given incorrect information through networking sites . 88% of the respondents has not given any incorrect information through networking sites .

The table 4.17 showing the marital status of the respondents

Married	Number of respondents	Percentage
Yes	17	34%
No	33	66%

34% of the respondents are married and 66% of the respondents are not married .

The table 4.18 showing respondent's spouse a member of social networking sites

Spouse has account on networking sites	Number of respondents	Percentage
Yes	16	32%
No	34	68%

32% of the respondent's spouse are member of networking sites . 68% of the respondent's spouse doesn't have a networking site membership.

The table 4.19 showing the respondents access to spouse's account

Do you know the user name and password of your spouse's account	Number of respondents	Percentage
Yes	14	28%
No	36	72%

28% of the respondents know their spouse's user name and password of the social networking sites . 72% of the respondents doesn't know their spouse's user name and password.

The table 4.20 showing the interest to find their life partner through networking sites

Do you like to find your life partner through networking sites	Number of respondents	Percentage
Yes	10	20%
No	38	76%
Not mentioned	2	4%

20% of the respondents like to find their life partner through networking sites . 76% of the respondents does not like to find their life partner through networking sites and 4% of the respondents did not mention .

The table 4.21 showing the posts uploaded through networking sites

Posts	Number of respondents	Percentage
Photos and status update	30	60%
Articles and celebrate events	20	40%

60% of the respondents posts photos and update status . 40% of the respondents posts articles and celebrate events through networking sites .

The table 4.22 showing the highlighted topics on networking sites

Highlights	Number of respondents	Percentage
Political issues	4	5%
Humanitarian concerns	27	54%
Economic issues	7	14%
Personal concerns	26	52%
Not mentioned	2	4%

8% of the respondents highlight political issues . 54% of the respondents highlight humanitarian concerns . 14% of the respondents highlight economic issues . 52% of the respondents highlight personal concerns through networking sites .

The table 4.23 showing the interest between to meet or to chat with friends

Interest	Number of respondents	Percentage
Personal meet	25	50%
Chat	25	50%

50% of the respondents like to personally meet their closest friend . 50% of the respondents like to chat with their closest friend through networking .

The table 4.24 showing effect of networking on enthusiasm for religious activities

Does networking effect your enthusiasm for religious activities	Number of respondents	Percentage
Yes	4	8%
No	46	92%

8% of the respondents agreed that networking effect their enthusiasm for religious activities .92% of the respondents does not agree that networking effect their religious activities .

The table 4.25 showing the effect of networking on time spend for religious activities

Do you spend less time for religious activities	Number of respondents	Percentage
Yes	3	6%
No	47	94%

6% of the respondents agree that they are spending less time for religious activities due to networking .94% of the respondents does not agree that they are spending less time for religious activities due to networking .

The table 4.26 showing effect of networking on family members

Do you spend less time with your family	Number of respondents	Percentage
Yes	8	16%
No	42	84%

16% of the respondents agree that they are spending less time with their family due to netwrokimg.84% of the respondents does not agree that they are spending less time with their family due to networking.

The table 4.27 showing parents reaction to the time spend networking

Do you feel like your family object on spending time on networking	Number of respondents	Percentage
Yes	7	14%
No	42	84%
Not mentioned	1	2%

14% of the respondents agree that their family members object them on spending too much time on networking .84% of the respondents does not agree that their family member object on spending time on networking.2% of the respondents did not mention .

The table4.28 showing number of friends on networking

Number of friends	Number of respondents	Percentage
Below 50	7	14%
50	13	26%
100	5	10%
Above 100	25	50%

14% of the respondents have below 50 friends. 26% of the respondents have 50 friends on networking sites .10% of the respondents have 100 friends on networking sites . 50% of the respondents have 100 and above friends on networking sites.

The table 4.29 showing the facilities mostly used through networking

Facilities used	Number of respondents	Percentage
Messaging ,chatting	25	50%
Skyping ,e-mail,facebook	25	50%

50% of the respondents use networking for messaging and chatting .50% of the respondents use networking for skyping,e-mail and facebook.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The rise of the internet age has enabled us to live a life at a faster pace. Because of the freedom the web provides, millions of people can communicate at the same time. Never before in human history has there been a time like this. What's most intriguing about this revolution is that youth is leading the way.

The present study is an analysis of extent of influence excerted by social networking sites on youth from a Sociological point of view. Here the researchers aims to study the influence onsocial networking sites among youth on the basis of age, sex, marital status ,education, occupation and annual income. The various purposes of social networking sites, its uses and its effects on interaction pattern of youth are also analyzed in the study.

THE FINDINGS ARE :

The main focus of the study is the influence of social networking sites among youth.

*In this study, 50 respondents including male and female were taken from cochin city.

*The majority of our respondents were of age group 20-25, some of them were students and some of them were employed.

*Most of our respondents were unmarried.

* Most of our respondents are under graduate . Few of our respondents have government job, few of them have private job , very few of our respondents are house wives and almost half of our respondents are students .

*Most of our respondents being students have no income .

*Majority of our respondents live in a modern nuclear family.

* 70% of the respondents have a personal computer at home .

* Also majority of them have internet connection . It makes it so much easier for them to access networking sites at any point of time . The most commonly used type of internet connection is wireless .

*Our respondents , majority of them spend 2-3 hours on networking sites .

* The most favourite website of all our respondents are facebook followed by twitter . All of our respondents agree that networking helps them to connect with their friends , We can message them or chat to with our friends at any point of the day , and it is less expensive so it is always good to have a account on networking sites , that is what our respondents believe .

* Also majority of our respondents agree that their relationship with their friends has improved .

*But they are not so addicted to networking in a way that they feel their life is worthwhile .They are well aware of the outside world and active in other activities.

* Our respondents have a neutral opinion on whether networking has affected their style of dressing. Friends on networking sites must be from other countries, and their dressing would be modern but our respondents are not influenced by their western culture.

* Majority of our respondents strongly disagree that they spend too much time on networking which should be used for other activities . They manage time for all the things .

*Our respondents friend's on networking sites fall on age group 20-25.

* Making a fake account was a trend few years back but the with the study we found out that they use their real name in networking sites and majority of our respondents does not have a fake account.

*Also they do not give incorrect information through networking sites.

*Most of our respondents are not married but few questions were asked to those who are married .They responded to that as their spouse has account on networking sites but they do not know their password and user name.

* There are lot of things we can achieve using networking. It's a platform used to get publicity. Our respondents use networking sites to highlight political issues ,humanitarian concerns , economic issues and personal concerns .

* Networking also helps to keep connected with their family member and friends who live across the country . So by uploading photos , status update etc , they can stay connected . Also websites like facebook and skype helps to video chat which helps them to have face to face talk with their loved ones.

* We also found out that networking have not affected their enthusiasm for religion nor they spend less time for religious activities due to networking.

* Our respondents make sure they spent enough time for their family and not spend too much time on networking.

* Majority of our respondents have more than 100 friends on networking sites which is clearly shows that they are more open and extroverts on networking sites than in real life.

*The most commonly used facilities are messaging , chatting , skyping , e-mail and facebook . We are in a world where we cannot think of a day without going online on networking sites .

SUGGETIONS

As networking have become a part of our life, people should make sure that they are not addicted to the networking sites . It should be used for all the right purposes .They should remember to keep time limit. They should never encourage chatting with strangers .

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QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Name :
2. Age :
3. Sex : Male ☐ Female ☐
4. Marital Status : Single ☐ Married ☐

   If married, Number of Children :
5. Educational Qualification :
6. Occupation :
7. Annual Income :
8. Type of family : Nuclear ☐ Joint ☐
9. Do you have a personal computer : Yes ☐ No ☐
10. Do you have Internet Connection at home?

    Yes ☐ No ☐
11. Type of Internet Connection

    Wireline ☐ Wireless ☐
12. Time spend in networking sites per day?

    Less than one hr ☐ Two hours ☐ Three hrs ☐

    Four hours and more ☐ Use only sometimes ☐
13. Websites most visited?

    Facebook ☐ Twitter ☐ Orkut ☐ Linkedin ☐
14. Does networking sites helps you to connect to your friends?

    Yes ☐ No ☐
15. You feel that networking sites improved your relation with your friends?

    Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Neutral ☐

    Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree ☐
16. You feel that networking sites made your life more worthwhile

    Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Neutral ☐

    Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree ☐

17. Does spending time in networking affect your family relationship?

Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Neutral ☐

Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree ☐

18. Do you feel that networking helps you to relieve tension form work or studies?

Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Neutral ☐

Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree ☐

19. Is networking a powerful medium to create public opinion about various social issues?

Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Neutral ☐

Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree ☐

20. Does networking effect your style of dressing?

Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Neutral ☐

Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree ☐

21. Have you ever felt that you are spending too much for networking which you should have used for some other activity?

1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐

22. Do you think there should be as age limit for accessing the social networking sites?

Yes ☐ No ☐

23. In which age group does most of your friends fall?

50-20 ☐ 20-25 ☐ 25-30 ☐ above 30 ☐

28. Do you know his / her user name and password

Yes ☐ No ☐

29. Do you like find the life partner through networking

Yes ☐ No ☐

30. What do you generally post through networking?

31. What do you highlight more using the networking sites?

Political issues ☐ Humanitarian concerns ☐

Economic issue ☐ Personal Concerns ☐

32. If given an option, do you like to personally meet your closest friend or chat with your friends through networking?

Yes ☐ No ☐

33. Is networking affect your enthusiasm for religious activity

Yes ☐ No ☐

34. Do you feel that now you are spending less time for religious activities (eg.Daily prayer) due to networking

Yes ☐ No ☐

35. Do you feel that you are spending less time with your family members due to networking

Yes ☐ No ☐

36. Does your family members object to you spending time in networking sites

Yes ☐ No ☐

37. How many friends you have in networking sites?

Below 50 ☐ 50 ☐ 100 ☐ Above 100 ☐

38. What are the facilities that you use more?

Messaging ☐ Chating ☐ skyping ☐

E-mail ☐ Face book ☐