

Impact of social media on Tamil Nadu Agricultural University students

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ABSTRACT

The present study was conducted to find out the impact of social media on the students of Tamil Nadu Agricultural University. A sample of 30 students was randomly selected. The study revealed that majority (83.33%) of the users expressed that their main purpose of using social media was to communicate with family or friends whereas 80.00 per cent needed it to become updated on events. Half (50%) of the users had positive perception that social media created awareness among the youth for new trends and 43.33 per cent each perceived that it helped in research and learning, connected gender and families especially youth and use of social media was a hobby. Majority (80.00%) of the users had perception that social media decreased face to face communication among the people whereas 73.33 per cent perceived that anti-religious posts created hatred among people.

Keywords: Social media; students; impact; communication; perception

INTRODUCTION

Social media is most recent form of media having many features and characteristics. It has revolutionized the way people communicate and socialize on the web. It has many facilities on same channel like communicating, texting, image sharing, audio and video sharing, fast publishing, linking with people all over the world, direct connecting etc (Shabir et al 2014). Social networking has changed the way the youth live, socialize and share. It is a socially networked life. The bonus of using social media is plenty. Youth recognize it and use it to its potential (Arora 2014).

Social media is also cheapest fast access to the world thus is very important for people of all ages. Its use is increasing day by day with high rate all over the world. Majority of people are shifting speedily from electronic media as television viewers and radio listeners towards the social media among all age groups. Youth are very much shifting attention towards social media so its influences are much on youth. This craze of social media has led to a host of questions regarding its impact on the society while it is agreed that the

social media affects people's living styles. It is an ongoing process to identify the nature of these influences in every society and country especially on youth. The present study was focused on the influence of social media on youth and their lifestyle, trends, physical activities, social life, learning and so on.

METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted on students of Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu. Ex post facto research design was used in the study. Appropriate sampling technique was employed to select required number of respondents. A sample of 30 students was randomly selected for the study. Data were collected by using a well-structured and pre-tested interview schedule.

RESULTS and DISCUSSION

Profile of the sample respondents

Data given in Table 1 infer that among the total users majority (76.67%) of the users were females and majority (83.33%) of them were having medium number of social media accounts. More than

Table 1. Profile of the users with respect to social media (n= 30)

Parameter	Category	Respondents	
		Number	%
Sex	Male	7	23.33
	Female	23	76.67
Number of social media accounts	Low	3	10.00
	Medium	25	83.33
	High	2	6.67
Awareness	Low	4	13.33
	Medium	10	33.33
	High	16	53.34
Frequency of usage	Less than one hour per day	13	43.34
	1-3 hours per day	10	33.33
	4-6 hours per day	4	13.33
	7 or more hours per day	3	10.00
Primary source	Smart phone	24	80.00
	Personal computer	3	10.00
	Cell phone	0	0
	Tablets	0	0
	Library or public computer	3	10.00

half (53.34%) of the users were having high level of awareness about social media. Most of them (43.34%) were using social media for less than one hour per day and majority (80.00%) of them used smart phones as their primary source.

Purpose of using social media

Data given in Table 2 reveal that the purpose of using mass media of majority (83.33%) of the respondents was to communicate with family/friends; 80.00 per cent used it to get updated of events; half of them (50.00%) used it to become updated on their friends' activities. Other purposes of using social media were to meet new people (36.66%), to use applications for smart phones (23.33%), for playing online games (16.66%), to find people (13.33%) and to promote a business or organization (10.00%).

Positive perception of youth about social media

Data given in Table 3 reveal that half (50.00%) of the users had positive perception that social media created awareness among the youth for new trends followed by 43.33 per cent who perceived that social media helped in research and learning, connected gender and families especially youth and its use was a hobby. As per 40.00 per cent students social media promoted reading and writing skills, connected people all over the world and created awareness among youth to develop environmental knowledge.

Negative perception of youth about social media

Majority of the students (80.00%) opined that social media decreased face to face communication skills followed by 73.33 per cent who perceived that anti-religious posts on social media created hatred among people. Equal number of them (70.00%) opined that social media deteriorated social norms, useless information created ambiguity and confusion in the minds of youth, affected relationships among countries by negative usage and killed the time of youth.

Khurana (2015) reported that social networking sites offer youth a platform to connect with new people, share experiences and gain exposure. The youth come to terms with gaining relevant and quick information about what goes around in their near and dear ones' lives through the source of social networking sites offering them a ground to updates. The youth can thus discriminate between the real and virtual world and admit to the fact that social networking sites do not provide an opportunity to build stronger contacts with people than in person. Like a coin with two sides social networking sites also have in their own way adversely affected the youth. The target group prefers spending an abundant amount of time on these social networking sites on an average of more than 2 hours a day which keeps them away from their own purpose of existence and interacting with their own natural surroundings.

Table 2. The purpose of using social media by the students (n= 30)

Purpose	Respondents	
	Frequency	%
To communicate with family/friends	25	83.33
To become updated on events	24	80.00
To become updated on friends' activities	15	50.00
To meet new people	11	36.66
For using applications for smart phones	7	23.33
For playing online games	5	16.66
To find people	4	13.33
To promote a business or organization	3	10.00

Multiple responses

Table 3. Positive perception of users about social media (n= 30)

Statement	Respondents	
	Frequency	%
Creates awareness among the youth for new trends	15	50.00
Helps in research and learning	13	43.33
Connects gender and families especially youth	13	43.33
Use of social media is a hobby	13	43.33
Promotes reading and writing skills	12	40.00
Useful to connect people all over the world	12	40.00
Creates awareness among youth to develop environmental knowledge	12	40.00
Helps to strengthen interpersonal relationships	10	33.33
Acts as facilitator to advertise and search business for youth	10	33.33
Plays a key role in creating political awareness	10	33.33
Increases self-esteem and well-being	9	30.00
Improves academic work	9	30.00
Develops social norms and ethics among youth	8	26.66
Plays essential role for betterment of the society	6	20.00
Supports peer to peer learning	5	16.66

Multiple responses

Table 4. Negative perception of users about social media (n= 30)

Statement	Respondents	
	Frequency	%
Decreases face to face communication	24	80.00
Anti-religious posts on social media create hatred among people	22	73.33
Deteriorates social norms	21	70.00
Useless information creates ambiguity and confusion in the minds of youth	21	70.00
Affects relationships among countries by negative usage	21	70.00
Kills the time of youth	21	70.00
Promotes unethical pictures/videos	20	66.67
Inculcates negatively in youth	19	63.33
Affects academic performance of students	19	63.33
Chatting, calling, sharing etc lead to wastage of time	15	50.00

Their social gatherings are hampered because surfing these social networking sites keep them more involved for which they are bound to ignore other significant social events in their lives. Jain et al (2012) reported that social networking sites are acting as great medium for view mobilization. People are feeling free in sharing their thoughts on any issue and even youth are raising their voice against social acts like violation of human rights, corruption etc. These social networking sites are proving themselves a boon at least in bringing thoughts of people on these social issues. Most of the people think that youth can play a positive role in changing our society.

In a study conducted by Khan (2011) concluded that students whose age range was from 15 to 25 years mostly used social networking websites for entertainment. The study determined that most of the students used social networking websites due to their friends.

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