

Usages of Social Media Sites among Adolescents: An Explorative Study

Kshiptimayee Patra^{1*} and Sampreety Gogoi²

¹Research Scholar, Department of Human Development and Family Studies,
College of Community Science, Assam Agricultural University, Jorhat-13, (Assam), India.

²Assistant Professor, Department of Human Development and Family Studies,
College of Community Science, Assam Agricultural University, Jorhat-13, (Assam), India.

(Corresponding author: Kshiptimayee Patra*)

(Received 03 August 2021, Accepted 06 October, 2021)

(Published by Research Trend, Website: www.researchtrend.net)

ABSTRACT: The use of social media has led to a significant transformation in how individuals communicate and interact. People are increasingly using Social Networking Sites (SNS), particularly young teens. Social media allows us to interact with others and maintain a good social relationship with them. Adolescents are more dependent on such sites for a variety of reasons, including keeping in touch with friends, taking notes, staying up to date on new trends, and staying up to date on current events, among others. Adolescents become social media addicts who spend more time on these sites than adults. This can have an impact on their academic performance as well as their physical and mental health in their later life. The study was an attempt to identify different social media sites used by adolescents, reasons for using different social media sites by the adolescent. The respondents were high school students of class VII to class X from the Jorhat block of Assam. A total of 118 numbers of adolescents were selected from five schools of Jorhat block. The samples were selected by using the probability proportional to size (PPS) method. A self-constructed questionnaire was prepared to gather the desired information from the respondents. The results revealed that the majority of adolescents have no extracurricular activities as they spend more time on social media and in terms of the most popular site, the majority of them are using WhatsApp and the reason for using these sites was to share their photos and update their status. The results also revealed that adolescents spend 3-4 hours per day on social media and post-entertainment-related updates on their social media sites.

Keywords: Social media sites, adolescents, usage, probability proportional to size (PPS), WhatsApp

INTRODUCTION

Since the beginning of the 21st century, people rely on social media because it provides a platform for entertainment and communication. Any website that allows for social interaction and the exchange of ideas is referred to as social media. (O'Keefe & Clarke-Pearson, 2011). Social media sites like Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, and different websites link people to share information, connect with friends, and make them aware of any event that happens within the world. Users can access these social media sites through web-based technologies on desktops, laptops, smartphones, tablets, etc (Brahma and Varma, 2018). The relationships between technology and humans had developed so rapidly, that human needs frequent help from technologies, like phones, tablets, and computer for maintaining their personal as well as social life. Communication, which once was done face to face or by telephones, is now being done online without physical contact or connection. Individuals spend most of their time attached to these devices with the intent of communicating with others, sharing their daily lives, and acquiring new information. Social media sites like Facebook and YouTube were the fast-emerging sites because of the most well-liked services online.

Adolescents have turned to social media as their primary means of communication, and now it became an integral part of their life. Adolescents are getting more socialized in different sites and now it has become an essential part of their life. They were the active members of one or more social media sites, most of the adolescents used the internet for social networking sites and some of them used the internet for emailing and surfing (Agarwal, 2019). Most of the preadolescents and adolescents operated different social media sites and it has become the key media, through which they maintained their online networks (Junco *et al.*, 2010). Adolescents are more dependent on social media as they spend more time on these sites frequently for making new friends and communicating with others (Nevil *et al.*, 2015; Haneefa and Sumitha, 2011). Adolescents can create and personalize online accounts by uploading photos, videos, and other content to social networking sites. By linking their page to their friends, they can connect to a larger online network (Reid and Weigle, 2014). Among all social media adolescents used Facebook mostly, because of its popularity they use it every day for making new friends, uploading content, and maintaining their friendship with others (Pomtia, 2017; Zwart *et al.*, 2011).

According to Common Sense Media (2015), 8-12 years of adolescents spend 6 hours every day on social media.

For many adolescents, social media helps them to reinforce their skills by sharing their knowledge regarding any topics. Adolescents can join social media platforms to express themselves and share their work (O’Keeffe and Clarke-Pearson, 2011). Adolescents can share their creative skills and other things as per their interests and the feedback they received from their posts can improve in sharpening their creative ability (Moreno, 2012; Valkenburg and Peter, 2011). Social media has provided effective educational opportunities. Adolescents used social media not only for entertainment and communication; they also used it to share assignments, discuss academic work and other topics among other friends (Yunus and Salehi, 2012). Through Social media, they can boost their studies by using new online tools. As they are getting more benefit from these social media so they believed social media to be a lifestyle instead of a trend. It also has the potential to improve their skills Waddington, (2011). The present study was undertaken to identify different social media sites used by adolescents, to find out the reasons for using different social media sites by the adolescent.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

An explorative research design was used to accomplish the objectives of the study. The study was conducted in the Jorhat Block, Jorhat district of Assam state, India. The data collection was initiated in the month of January – March 2020. For conducting the study, a multi-stage sampling design was adopted. Out of all schools in Jorhat Block, a total of five schools comprising of both Assamese and English medium schools were selected randomly. A total sample of 118 adolescents was selected by the method of probability proportional to size (PPS) from the selected schools of classes VII to X. After the selection of samples, the researcher took permission from the principal of the respective schools and briefed them about the

objectives of the study and importance of their sincere responses before distribution of the questionnaire. A self-constructed questionnaire was used. The questionnaire consisted of background information i.e related to their hobbies, extracurricular activities, types of family, and numbers of siblings. The other part of the questionnaire includes the uses of social media sites and the reasons for using those sites. After the collection of data, frequency and percentage were computed and the results were interpreted.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data were examined to identify different social media sites used by adolescents and to find out the reasons for using different social media sites by adolescent. The response received has been presented in the form of a table.

Table 1 shows the hobbies of the adolescents and the table revealed that the majority of 25.4 percent of respondents' hobby was watching television. It may be because Television is very common in every family; most adolescents were watching television for their entertainment. Kirik and Murngo, (2018) supported that most of the adolescent's hobby was watching television because from this they get pleasure and various information through news and entertainment.

The results showed that the majority of 60.2 percent of respondents' have no extracurricular activities. It may be, due to the busy classroom schedule, most of the students cannot manage both academic and extracurricular activities at a time. Guardians and teachers do not allow students to participate in extracurricular activities, because the student may become too much involved with these extracurricular activities and lose their focus on studies. They also feel that students may not be left with enough time for homework if they attend excessive training classes or gatherings (Table 2).

Table 1: Hobbies of the Adolescents.

Hobbies	Total number of respondents (n= 118)	
	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Dancing	22	18.7
Art and craft	10	8.4
Listening songs	12	10.2
Doing social media activities	17	15.7
Watching television	30	25.4
Playing (cricket/football)	27	22.8

Table 2: Extracurricular activities of Adolescents.

Involved in any extracurricular Activities	Total number of respondents (n= 118)	
	Frequency	Percentage (%)
No	71	60.2
Dancing	34	28.8
Swimming	3	2.5
Sports	10	8.5

Table 3: Types of family.

Type of family	Total number of respondents (n= 118)	
	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Nuclear family	80	67.7
Joint family	30	25.5
Extended family	8	6.8

The findings indicated that the majority of 67.7 percent were living in nuclear families. It is because most of them were in the urban area and those who are living in a rural area or in joint families they were shifted to the urban area, with their children for better education, health facilities, and exposure. It was also observed that due to modernization the traditional joint family practices changed to the nuclear family (Table 3).

The findings revealed that the majority of adolescents used WhatsApp among all social media sites (Table 4). It may be the fact that most of the parents have WhatsApp on their phones so it is easy for their children to communicate with their friends and through WhatsApp, they can create groups and connects with one or many people at the same time in the group. The finding can be supported by Suryawanshi and Suryawanshi, (2015) revealed that social media had changed the adolescent's connection with their family

and friends. The majority of adolescents used WhatsApp because it is a more convenient and user-friendly app as it helps to maintain their academic work like assignments, homework, and maintain their social life too.

Adolescents spend 3-4 hours per day on social media sites (Table 5). Because adolescents are more curious to know about the sites they used and to explore new things from these sites. They are more interested in chatting with their friends and making new friends on social media, so they spend more time on these sites. The findings can be supported by the study done by Anderson and Jiang, (2018) that adolescents spend more time on their social media sites, as using social media strengthens their friendships with family and friends. It provides them a valuable source of creative self-expression and makes them feel less lonely and more connected.

Table 4: Social media sites used by adolescents.

Social media sites used	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Whatsapp	46	39.0
Facebook	25	21.1
TikTok	8	6.8
Instagram	11	9.3
Snap chat	3	2.5
Any other	21	17.7
All	4	3.4

Table 5: Time spent on social media sites.

Time spent	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1-2 hour per day	8	6.7
2-3 hours per day	24	20.3
3-4 hours per day	80	67.7
4 hours and above	6	5.3

Adolescents posted entertainment stories on social media sites (Table 6). It may be because their interest is more in entertainment stories, so they want to share these posts through some videos to get more likes and comments on the shared post. Another fact is that they want to spread some important messages among people and friends regarding any concerned matter which can be helpful for others. It was found that the adolescents update their social media accounts very often (Table 7).

Because whenever the adolescents get the chance, they update something new because they want to share their lives through photos, videos, and status. As for them, it's a way to maintain their relationship and popularity with their friends. By sharing their updates they also get more comments and likes on their social media account which makes them feel accomplished among their friends.

Table 6: Stories posted in social media.

Stories posted in social media	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Entertainment	67	56.8
Sports	21	17.8
Educational	9	7.6
Personal stories	21	17.8

Table 7: Update of social media accounts.

Update social media account	Frequency	Percentage
Very often	67	56.8
Often	13	11.0
Sometimes	12	10.2
Rarely	16	13.6
Never	10	8.4

Adolescents used their social media account for multiplayer games (Table 8). As the adolescents are more engaged in social media therefore they are getting the opportunity to engage themselves in online games than ever. Most adolescents used their accounts for multiplayer games because at the same time they can play and chat with others.

It showed that the majority of (20.3%) adolescents used WhatsApp for sharing photos (Table 9). It may be because WhatsApp is more secured in terms of sharing photos as compared to other social media sites. Adolescents used WhatsApp for sharing their pictures and videos because of its good privacy policy and status security.

Adolescents did not accept any stranger's friend request (Table 10). This may be because adolescents are aware that social media is not a safe platform to accept the friend request of a stranger. They are conscious in terms of choosing and making friends, although they use

social media for making friends and get connected with peoples, at the same time they are aware of the harmful effect of social media. They do not accept everybody who tries to be friends on social media. Lenhart and Madden, (2007) found that nearly 65% of adolescents ignored or deleted stranger's requests on their social media while 21% of adolescents accept stranger's friends requests so that they could find out more about the persons.

It was found that 60.2 percent of adolescents cannot live without using social media (Table 11). It may be because of the fear that many adolescents have different accounts on social media, if they don't use social media they will miss out on a huge event, or something that they deem as important. Most of the time they discussed the post or videos they have viewed and shared on their social media, and if someone was not on social media at that time, they feel left out of the conversation or disconnected from their friend groups.

Table 8: Use of social media account for playing multiplayer games.

Use of social media account for playing multiplayer games	Total number of respondents (n=118)	
	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	76	65.0
No	42	35.0

Table 9: Reasons for using different social media sites by adolescent.

Sites	Reason	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Facebook	Make new friends	12	10.1
	Keep in touch with family	8	6.7
	Share photos	3	2.5
Whatsapp	Keep in touch with family and friends	10	8.4
	Share photos	24	20.3
	Assist in learning	10	8.4
	Time pass	6	5.0
Instagram	Share photos	11	9.3
TikTok	Sharing music videos	10	8.4
Snap chat	Make new friends	4	3.3
YouTube	Time pass	5	4.2
	Assist in learning	6	5.0
Likee and Musically	Sharing music videos	10	8.4

Table 10: Accepts strangers friend request on social media.

Accepts strangers friend request on social media	Total number of respondents (n=118)	
	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	34	28.8
No	84	71.2

Table 11: Can live without using social media.

Can live without using social media	Total number of respondents (n=118)	
	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	47	39.8
No	71	60.2

CONCLUSION

Social media has become an inevitable part of adolescent's life. Among all social media sites mentioned by adolescents, Whatsapp is more popular than any other site. The reason is to share their images with their friends or upload them to their accounts.

Adolescents spend most of their time on social media platforms, which may have adverse effects on their health and education. To combat this, we can limit their time spent on social media platforms and educate them on its negative consequences.

FUTURE SCOPE

A comparative study may be undertaken between young and late adolescents.

Acknowledgement. I would like to extend my gratitude to the department of Human Development of Family Studies, College of Community Science, Assam Agricultural University, Jorhat for providing me with all the facility that was required for completing my research.

Conflict of Interest. None.

REFERENCES

- Agarwal, S. (2019). Impact of social networking media on students and teenagers of Punjab. *Journal of Advances and Scholarly Researches in Allied Education*, 16(1): 1-4.
- Anderson, M., & Jiang, J. (2018). Teens and their experiences on social media. Retrieved from <https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/2018/11/28/teens-and-their-experiences-on-social-media/>.
- Brahma, K., & Verma, M. (2018). Students' Attitude towards Social Networking Sites (SNSs): A Case Study of Central Institute of Technology (CIT) Kokrajhar, Assam. *Library Philosophy and Practice*. 1878.
- Common Sense Media (2015). https://www.commonsensemedia.org/sites/default/files/uploads/research/census_researchreport.pdf.
- Haneefa, K. M., & Sumitha, E. (2011). Perception and use of social networking sites by the students of Calicut University, *DESIDOC Journal of Library & Information Technology*, 31(4): 295-301.
- Junco, R., Heiberger, G., & Loken, E. (2010). The effect of Twitter on college student engagement and grades. *Journal of Computer Assisted Learning*, 27(2): 119-132.
- Kirik, A. M., & Muyingo, R. I. (2018). The relationship between Television Watching Habits and Lesiure Time: A research on Ugandan Students in Turkey. *International Journal of Cultural and Social Studies*, 4(1): 334-346.
- Lenhart, A., & Madden, M. (2007). Friendship, Strangers and Safety in Online Social Networks. Retrieved from <https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/2007/04/18/friendship-strangers-and-safety-in-online-social-networks/>
- Moreno, M. A., & Kolb, J. (2012). Social Networking Sites and Adolescent Health. *Pediatric Clinics of North America*, 59(3): 601-612.
- Nevil, J. R., Blessy, P. V., & Noronha, J. (2015). Online social networking usage in adolescents. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 6(22): 80-85.
- O'Keeffe, G., & Clarke-Pearson, K. (2011). Council on Communications and Media. The impact of social media on children, adolescents and families. *Pediatrics*, 124: 800-804.
- Pomtia, V. N. (2017). Study on the effects of social networking sites among the youth of shillong, Meghalaya. Master Thesis: Assam Donbosco University.
- Reid, D., & Weigle, P. (2014). Social media use among adolescents: benefits and risks. *Adolescents Psychiatry*, 4: 73-80.
- Suryawanshi, S., & Suryawanshi, M. (2015). Impact of whatsapp on teenagers: Pune city. *International Journal of Science and Research*, 6(11).
- Valkenburg, P. M., & Peter, J. (2011). Online communication among adolescents: An integrated model of its attraction, opportunities, and risks. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 48: 121-127.
- Waddington, J. (2011). Social networking: The unharnessed educational tool. Undergraduate. *Research Journal at UCCS*, 4(1): 12-18.
- Yunus, M. M., & Salehi, H. (2012). The Effectiveness of Facebook Groups on Teaching and Improving Writing: Students' Perceptions. *International journal of education and information technologies*, 6(1): 87-96.
- Zwart, M. D., Lindsay, D., Henderson, M., & Phillips, M. (2011). Teenagers, Legalrisk, and social networking sites. Victoria: Monash University.

How to cite this article: Patra, K. and Gogoi, S. (2021). Usages of Social Media Sites among Adolescents: An Explorative Study. *Biological Forum – An International Journal*, 13(4): 71-75.