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## Impact of Social Networking Sites (SNSs) on the Academic Performance and Social Interactions among the Youth of South Kashmir: A Brief Study

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### **Abstract:**

*Social networking sites (SNSs) have created new social dimensions where people are provided with an opportunity to create their own profile and interact with globe within seconds. Advances in technology have lifted social media to horizon, attaining rapid acceptance in the minds of current generation & especially in youth. No doubt social networking sites (SNSs) provide a new & faster way to communicate, share information, market new products, help companies to develop their profile and like but what for the youth who are at the critical stage of their career building? Spending hours on social networking sites doing nothing but wasting their inventive time. This study was conducted in the four districts of the South Kashmir region (Anantnag, Pulwama, Kulgam & Shopian) in order to find out the usage of social networking sites (SNSs) by the youth and its impact on their academic performance and social interactions.*

**Keywords:** South Kashmir, Facebook, WhatsApp, Social networking sites

### **1. Introduction**

Social networking sites (SNSs) have emerged rapidly over the past ten years and now a day it has become a social norm & way of life for people around the world who are literate in using computer & smart phones (Boyd *et al.*, 2007). Social communication or networking among the humans is since its antiquity & most of times it was purposeful as it took time to convey the message from one corner of the world to other but in the present scenario it has become very easy to create a profile over the social networking sites like Facebook, Linked In, Twitter etc and communicate within seconds throughout world. Social networking sites are a place where people forget the importance of time and youth who have adopted the technology at a rapid pace have always precious time. Use of social networking sites has gained popularity among the youth over last 6-7 years in this region (Kashmir) of the world engaging most of them round the clock.

### **2. Social Networking Sites**

Social networking sites have a history of decades for communicating within societies to develop relationships with others (Coyle & Vaughn 2008). With advancement in technology and evolution of the internet, communication modes became easy and it is now limited to fingertips to communicate throughout globe using various social networking sites (SNSs) like Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, Linked In, Google+ etc. social networking sites are actually web based services that allow us to present ourselves to the world by creating an online profile. Creating an online profile allows people to present him/herself through images, text, music, videos, business profile, political and religious thoughts and like. The main benefits of the social networking sites are:

- People are able to express their thoughts and feelings in an easy & clear fashion.
- People make new friends & connect with those who have not been in contact physically due to their busy schedule.
- SNSs are good places for sharing information related to various fields like general awareness, current affairs, academic resources, research areas, medical topics, job notifications etc.
- Promotion of company profiles for boosting up their business.
- Promotion of religious and cultural information.

Keeping all these features in mind, we tried to find out what youth thinks about the social networking sites, should they use it while they are engaged with their academic careers, if they use it, how long they should spent? and more importantly what differences they observed before and after using different social networking sites.

### 3. Review of Literature

During the emergence of online communication in public, the only mode of communication was in the form of e-mail & later on chat rooms (Peter & Valkenburg, 2009). According to the Dr. Norman Nie from Stanford University these form of technologies would negatively impact adolescent social lives and will reduce their sense of social well being and at the same time it was also predicted that the youth will use it for the purposes of meeting strangers instead of building on established relationships (Peter & Valkenburg 2009). Current literature is supporting the predictions as social networking sites have attracted millions of users due to its easy affordance & reach. Although social networking sites (SNSs) are a good source of e-business, advertising, information sharing hub whether educational or other but our concern is again towards its impact on youth, some of the reputed studies have enlightened the area as follows:

- Baldwin et al., 1997 observed that friendship networks necessitate access to the information & knowledge directly or indirectly affecting the student's academic performance.
- Hinduja S et al., 2007 found that out of 75% of youth (teenagers) owing cell phones, 25% use them for social media and 24% use for the instant messaging & 54% use for texting.
- Lenhart A et al., 2010 observed that youth and adolescents have a limited capacity of regulating themselves are at a risk as they navigate & experiment with social networking sites (SNSs) because of the clique-forming, cyber bullying & sexual experimentation.
- Kuppaswamy S et al., 2010 observed that social networking sites (SNSs) have both negative and positive impact on the education of the youth.
- Leng et al., found that excessive use of social networking sites (SNSs) affect the social, mental and physical health of the users.
- Oye & Rahim A 2012 observed that most of the youth are engaged in using social networking sites (SNSs) mainly for socializing activities rather than academic purpose. However, they have a perception that it is having positive impact on their academic performance.
- Jain et al., 2012 found that graduate students use social networking sites (SNSs) more instead of post-graduate students. Out of 128 students 86% use one or more of the social networking sites like facebook, youtube, twitter, LinkedIn. The largest percentage of respondents used facebook (84.2 %) followed by youtube (82.5%), twitter (22.3%) and LinkedIn (4%) respectively.
- Tariq et al., 2012 found that students are using social networking sites (SNSs) exponentially & there is no check what they are actually doing or exchanging over the internet. They further recommended having a check on the student's activities as it affects their overall performances.
- Madhusudhan et al., 2013 found that most of the respondents preferred the social networking sites (SNSs) facebook and research gate for the academic purposes but at the same time some expressed their concerns over the cyber bullying & privacy and finally majority of respondents using social networking sites (SNSs) said it may be a waste of time as far as academic point of view is concerned.
- Handerson et al., 2013 asserts that social media anxiety disorder is largely at present and a study conducted in United Kingdom among social media users found that more than 50 % users indicated that social media use is associated with negative impact.

### 4. Scope of the Study

The scope of this study was limited to the four districts of the South Kashmir and among each district 6 Higher Secondary Schools and 2 graduate level Government Degree Colleges were selected randomly for the study.

District-wise description of the Higher Secondary Schools and degree Colleges are as follows:

#### 4.1. ANANTNAG

##### 4.1.1. Colleges

- Government Degree College for Boys, Khanabal Anantnag.
- Government Degree College for Women's, K.P Road Anantnag.

##### 4.1.2. Higher Secondary Schools

- Government
  - Government Higher Secondary School, Anantnag
  - Government Girls Higher Secondary School, Lal chowk Anantnag
  - Government M.L.Higher secondary school, Zirpora Bijbehera Anantnag
- Private
  - IMI, Higher Secondary School, Brakpora Anantnag.
  - Hista Higher Secondary School, KP Road Anantnag.
  - Public Higher Secondary School, Bijbehera Anantnag.

#### 4.2. PULWAMA

##### 4.2.1. Colleges

- Government Degree College, Main Road Pulwama.
- Government Degree College, Tral Pulwama.

#### 4.2.2. Higher Secondary Schools

- Government
  - Government Higher Secondary School, Pinglena Pulwama.
  - Government Higher Secondary School, Ratnipora Pulwama.
  - Government Mehjoor Memorial Boys Higher Secondary School, Pulwama
- Private
  - Supreme Higher Secondary School, Awantipora Pulwama.
  - National Institute of Education & Training (NIET), Pulwama.
  - Madrasa Taleem-ul-Islam, Tral Pulwama.

#### 4.3. KULGAM

##### 4.3.1. Colleges

- Government Degree College, Main Road Kulgam.
- Government Degree College, DH Pora Kulgam.

##### 4.3.2. Higher Secondary Schools

- Government
  - Government Higher Secondary School, Qaimoh Kulgam.
  - Government Higher Secondary School, Yaripora Kulgam.
  - Government Higher Secondary School, Chawalgam Kulgam.
- Private
  - Simnaniya Higher Secondary School, Shrine Road Kulgam.
  - Ahmadiya Higher Secondary School, Kanipora Kulgam.
  - Hanfia Model Educational Institute, Ashmuji Kulgam.

#### 4.4. SHOPIAN

##### 4.4.1. Colleges

- Government Degree College, Shopian.
- Government Polytechnic College, Alyalpora Shopian.

##### 4.4.2. Higher Secondary Schools

- Government
  - Government Higher Secondary School for Boys, Shopian.
  - Government Higher Secondary School, Zainapora Shopian.
  - Government Higher Secondary School, Harmain Shopian.
- Private
  - New Greenland Educational Institute, Shopian.
  - Haji Momin Higher Secondary Institute, Hajipora Shopian.
  - Mohammadiya Educational Institute, Shopian.

### 5. Methodology

The educational Institutes were selected by random sampling method. The data was collected by visiting the said institutes personally during the working hours. A set of preliminary questionnaires was randomly distributed among the students of different classes belonging to various streams (Science, Arts, and Commerce). The questionnaires were distributed during leisure time of students, so that they feel comfortable to answer in a right fashion. Further the questionnaires were distributed according to the strength of the educational Institutes. In Government Degree Colleges 200 questionnaires were distributed among each class i.e Under-graduate (UG) 1<sup>st</sup> year, 2<sup>nd</sup> Year & 3<sup>rd</sup> year respectively who use Social networking sites (SNSs). In Anantnag district we have separate college for boys and girls and co-education system in rest three districts. Among the Higher Secondary Schools of all the four districts under study 50 questionnaires among boys and 50 among girls of class 11<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup> were distributed who use Social networking sites. The questionnaires broadly consisted of three headings:

- What is the main reason of using social networking sites (SNSs) and how long you use it?
- How does it affect your academic performance and social behaviour?
- How long you interact with your family since you started using social networking sites (SNSs)?

The above questions were supported by the earlier studies done by Tawfeeq *et al.*, 2014, Juang *et al.*, 2010, Banquil *et al.*, 2009 & Roblyer 2010.

### 6. Results & Discussion

After analysing the data from the area under study we found that male respondents were more in comparison to the females (Table 1) and the usage of the social networking sites varies from class to class which may have some relation with age and the academic pressure. However a trend has been found that respondents were more from the academic classes (11<sup>th</sup> & UG 1<sup>st</sup> year) which are being taken as easy in this region

of the world and at the same time within South Kashmir the state of mind of the students regarding the usage and candidness towards using social networking sites was diverse.

Anantnag			Pulwama			Kulgam			Shopian		
Class	Gender	No.	Class	Gender	No.	Class	Gender	No.	Class	Gender	No.
11 <sup>th</sup>	M	40	11 <sup>th</sup>	M	33	11 <sup>th</sup>	M	41	11 <sup>th</sup>	M	20
	F	31		F	24		F	31		F	15
12 <sup>th</sup>	M	45	12 <sup>th</sup>	M	29	12 <sup>th</sup>	M	35	12 <sup>th</sup>	M	25
	F	30		F	22		F	29		F	13
UG 1 <sup>st</sup> year	M	173	UG 1 <sup>st</sup> year	M	167	UG 1 <sup>st</sup> year	M	175	UG 1 <sup>st</sup> year	M	87
	F	132		F	121		F	162		F	60
UG 2 <sup>nd</sup> Year	M	181	UG 2 <sup>nd</sup> Year	M	179	UG 2 <sup>nd</sup> Year	M	187	UG 2 <sup>nd</sup> Year	M	93
	F	157		F	154		F	151		F	78
UG 3 <sup>rd</sup> Year	M	107	UG 3 <sup>rd</sup> Year	M	118	UG 3 <sup>rd</sup> Year	M	149	UG 3 <sup>rd</sup> Year	M	87
	F	100		F	91		F	145		F	71

Table 1: Average No. of respondents (Male & Female) using SNSs from different Higher Secondary Schools and Degree colleges belonging to diverse classes among four districts of South Kashmir (Anantnag, Pulwama, Kulgam & Shopian).

So, our next step was find out what are the sites they usually visit and what are their views about using Social networking sites (SNSs). Although the spread of the social networking sites increased swiftly from last three-five years throughout Kashmir and it was assumed that the South region which is mostly considered as the rural area would be contributing not as much of towards social networking sites, but the trend seems to be changing and we found that youth is using multiple sites (Facebook & WhatsApp messenger) at one time rather than using single. The table below (Table 2) is showing the average No. of the respondents who use different Social networking sites (SNSs). The main reason what we found of using the multiple sites at once was the property of the smart phone to run the multiple applications in the background.

Name of the Website/Messenger	Anantnag		Pulwama		Kulgam		Shopian	
	Gender	No.	Gender	No.	Gender	No.	Gender	No.
Facebook	M	321	M	278	M	302	M	136
	F	273	F	202	F	221	F	99
WhatsApp	M	432	M	398	M	450	M	198
	F	341	F	349	F	309	F	107
Twitter	M	21	M	19	M	12	M	05
	F	5	F	12	F	03	F	0
LinkedIn	M	17	M	19	M	09	M	13
	F	03	F	07	F	0	F	01
Pinterest	M	02	M	01	M	0	M	0
	F	0	F	0	F	0	F	0
Tumbler	M	0	M	0	M	0	M	0
	F	0	F	0	F	0	F	0
Instagram	M	03	M	01	M	0	M	0
	F	0	F	0	F	0	F	0
Nimbuzz	M	60	M	45	M	19	M	30
	F	12	F	38	F	04	F	04
Google+	M	49	M	60	M	30	M	39
	F	30	F	41	F	21	F	12
Line	M	21	M	35	M	31	M	31
	F	7	F	12	F	09	F	06

Table 2: Average No. of the respondents using different SNSs from the four districts of the South Kashmir (Anantnag, Pulwama, Kulgam and Shopian).

From the data we tried to look the percentage wise usage of the Social networking sites (SNSs) by the students from different districts as well as type of social networking site they use and could find out that facebook and WhatsApp are mostly used (Fig.1) and at the same time the usage differed from class to class as well as gender wise. The students from Higher Secondary Schools were mostly using the WhatsApp than facebook especially girls as they don't want to share their photos and other stuff online, however they feel WhatsApp secure to share with their known mates but among the undergraduate students facebook and WhatsApp are both running simultaneously and they think themselves as mature to share their philosophy of life with the world.

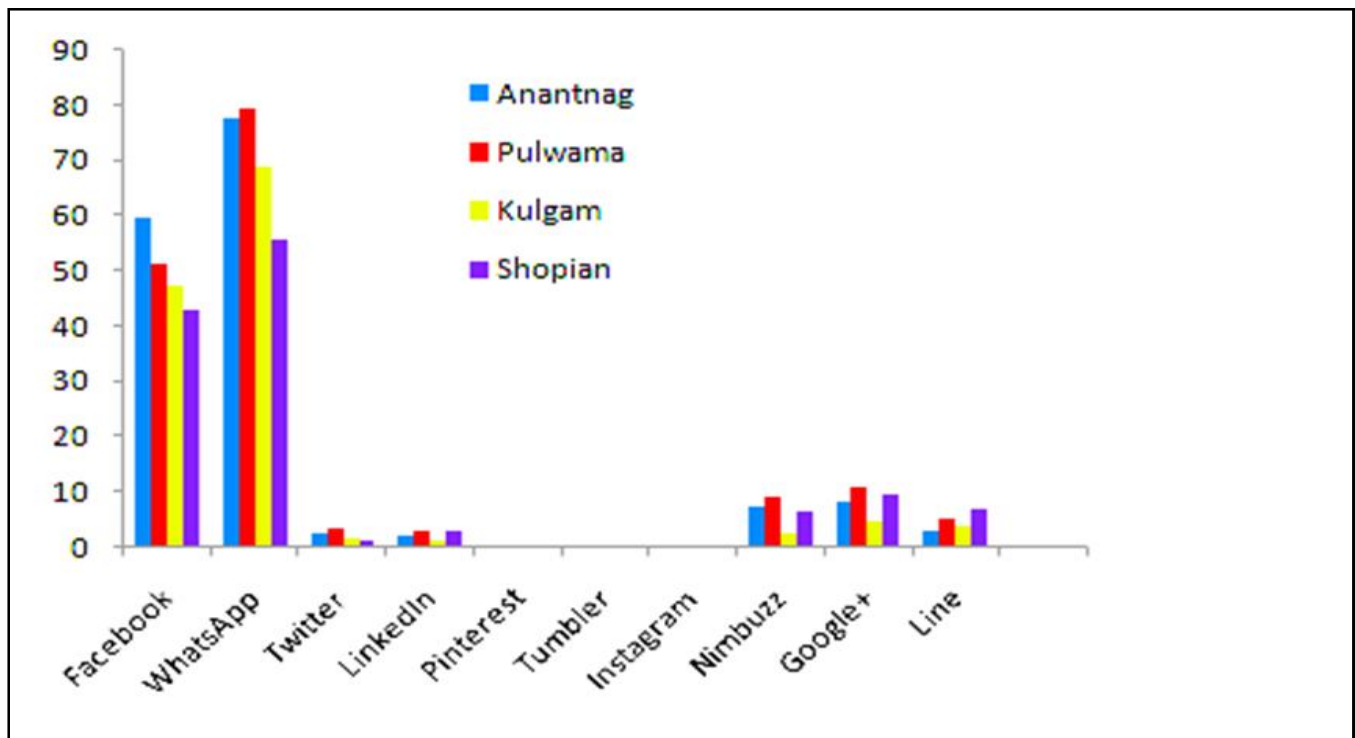


Figure 1: Percentage wise use of different SNSs by the students of Higher Secondary Schools and Degree Colleges among the four districts of South Kashmir (Anantnag, Pulwama, Kulgam and Shopian).

Average Time Spent of SNSs	Anantnag		Pulwama		Kulgam		Shopian	
	Gender	Time	Gender	Time	Gender	Time	Gender	Time
Facebook	M	90-120 min.	M	60-70 min.	M	80-90 min.	M	50-60 min.
	F	30-45 min.	F	25-30 min.	F	30-50 min.	F	25-40 min.
WhatsApp	M	2-4hrs.	M	3-4 hrs.	M	3-4 hrs.	M	3-4 hrs.
	F	1-1.3 hrs.	F	1-2 hrs.	F	2-3 hrs.	F	1-2 hrs.
Nimbuzz	M	20-25 min.	M	10-15 min.	M	5-10 min.	M	0-5 min.
	F	10-12 min.	F	5-10 min.	F	0-5 min.	F	0-5 min.
Google+	M	5-10 min.	M	5-10 min.	M	2-6 min.	M	10-15 min.
	F	0-5 min.	F	5-10 min.	F	0-5 min.	F	5-10 min.
Line	M	10-20 min.	M	5-15 min.	M	5-10 min.	M	5-10 min.
	F	5-10 min.	F	5-10 min.	F	0-5 min.	F	0-5 min.

Table 3: Average time on a daily basis spent on frequently using SNSs by the respondents (Male & Female) of Higher Secondary schools and Degree Colleges among the four districts of South Kashmir (Anantnag, Pulwama, Kulgam and Shopian).

The most important concern of the study was how much time they spent on these Social Networking Sites? The table above (Table 3) is showing the average time spent by the students on different frequently using Social Networking Sites (SNSs) and on an average most of the students spent at least one hour on facebook and 2-3 hours on WhatsApp, however the trend was different in all the four districts under study. Among the four districts students from Kulgam district were using more WhatsApp followed by Anantnag, Pulwama and Shopian respectively (Fig.2) and gender wise the males students were using more than girls among all the four districts.

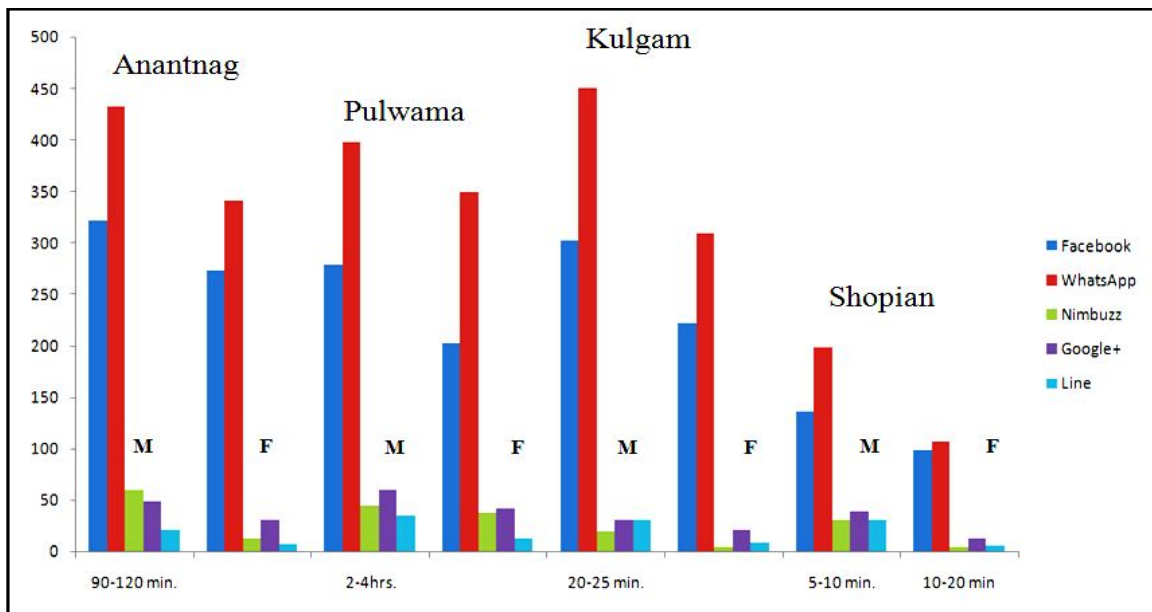


Figure 2: Percentage wise time on a daily basis spent on frequently using SNSs by the respondents (Male & Female) of Higher Secondary schools and Degree Colleges among the four districts of South Kashmir (Anantnag, Pulwama, Kulgam and Shopian).

The last and immense part was to find out the what most of the students think and how they react towards the queries regarding the prime use of the Social networking sites (SNSs), table below (Table 4) is showing the reactions of the average students from various areas of the four districts under study.

Prime purposes of visiting SNSs	Anantnag	Pulwama	Kulgam	Shopian
Making new friends	102	79	100	92
Chatting with friends	262	278	332	84
Uploading Status and Photos	60	30	41	21
Sharing important information	200	260	178	77
Communication with teachers	20	15	10	12
Information regarding admissions, examination dates and more importantly about jobs.	113	98	97	102
Wishing friends and relatives on special occasions like birthdays	12	10	19	10
News and sports updates	31	45	37	48
Knowledge about general awareness and current affairs	133	80	60	70
Sharing thoughts and experiences of Life	16	23	6	10
Watching amazing videos	6	2	4	0
Just for fun	30	40	28	10
Promoting regional culture and ethnicity	0	0	0	0
Promoting political activities	0	0	0	0
Promoting religious information.	12	20	6	35

Table 4: Average reaction from the respondents (male & female) regarding the main purposes of using different SNSs in different Higher Secondary schools and Degree Colleges among the four districts of South Kashmir (Anantnag, Pulwama, Kulgam and Shopian).

**7. Conclusion**

Though the Social networking sites (SNSs) emerging as important places to share your thoughts and gain some information but it does not provide with what we are in need at specific times so far as academic career is concerned. Although we found that it increases the communication skills and overall updates among the students but we are always dependent upon other for the information, we never know who updates what and when till it is done. In the present study we found that most of the students reacted towards chatting with friends and sharing important information as the prime motive of using social networking sites but does their studies and social interactions move in a positive direction, though they learned the vocabulary and communication but it is limited to the computer and smart phone literates only, what about the other members of the society and more importantly their family members. The average population of this region are not computer literates and the students now a day’s don’t have time to interact with them as they are busy with their already known mates discussing each others like, comments or status of their online profiles. After having a verbal discussion with different students and comments of their family members towards them during the study we found that the pace with which the Social networking sites (SNSs) have been adopted by the students in this region of the world is distracting the students from their main goal at this critical juncture of their life. So we suggest that a parental check is necessary to look into the activities at least during the time students spent with their families.

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