

Implications of Social Media Amongst College Students

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Abstract: There is no doubt that social media has gained wider acceptability and usability. It is also becoming the most important communication tool among students, especially, at the higher level of educational pursuit. Social media is viewed as having bridged the gap in communication. Among the social media, Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp and others are gaining popularity. Herein, with this paper, the researcher is focusing on the impact of WhatsApp on the college students. WhatsApp and other social networking sites are seen as 'Global Consumer Phenomenon' with an exponential rise in usage, within the last few years. Therefore, this study is intended to provide insight into emerging phenomenon of addiction to WhatsApp. The findings indicate that extroverts appear to use WhatsApp for social enhancement, whereas introverts use it for social compensation. Negative correlates of WhatsApp usage include decrease in real life social community participation and academic achievements as well as relationship problems, each of which may be indicative of potential addiction.

Introduction

Social Networking Site (SNS) is a web-based service that allows the user to construct a public profile, which facilitates to connect with other people. New developments in technological world had paved way for individuals and families to communicate through social media. Various social media like Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp etc, are used to create and sustain relationships. Also, users can upload their photos, post what they are doing, at any given time and send personal or public messages to whomever they choose.

In this information age, social media sites seem to be growing in popularity rapidly, especially, amongst youth. In particular, college students form a large proportion of users on social media networks.

Social media networks offer a straight forward way to converse with peers and get a feedback which may influence young adults' self esteem. For example, WhatsApp is used by students primarily to maintain relationships with individuals they are acquainted with who live, near and far. This field of study is important because socializing is the underlying theme in using forms of social media, since this social media phenomenon is continuing to grow at a fast pace. Smartphones have become super-colossal and crowd-pleasing because many free applications such as WhatsApp have been launched which entirely makes it more popular. The idea is that this application is plainly a messaging application with no advertisements, games, reminders, gimmicks and extra banners. This is the major reason that users get addicted to it. But every beautiful thing has a dark side, in the same way WhatsApp has its own disadvantages i.e. it keeps you busy, it creates social detachment, becomes watchdog, etc.

Students were asked whether spending time on WhatsApp affects their time management and schedule, whether they lose their productivity at work or study, whether it affects the use of proper language. Also, the researcher investigated whether WhatsApp helps in instant communication; or, whether it reduces the cost of communication. The questionnaire includes whether WhatsApp reduces the real life interactions; also, whether it satisfies their emotional needs, etc.

Research Methodology

Objectives

- To study the implications of social media networking amongst college students.
- To understand the effects of social media on personal communication as it is growing at a fast pace.

Hypothesis: Students are Addicted to WhatsApp

Sample Size

A sample size of 60 students was taken.

Respondents Selected

- Students: Second Year B.Com.
- Students from Second Year/ Third Year BBA.
- Students from First Year/ Second Year/ Third Year BA.

Sources of Data Collection

- *Primary Data*: Collected through survey (questionnaire)
- *Secondary Data*: Internet, Wikipedia, Google
- *Books*: Reference from Second Year B.Com. communication book

Limitation

The study was conducted at SP COLLEGE only.

Findings

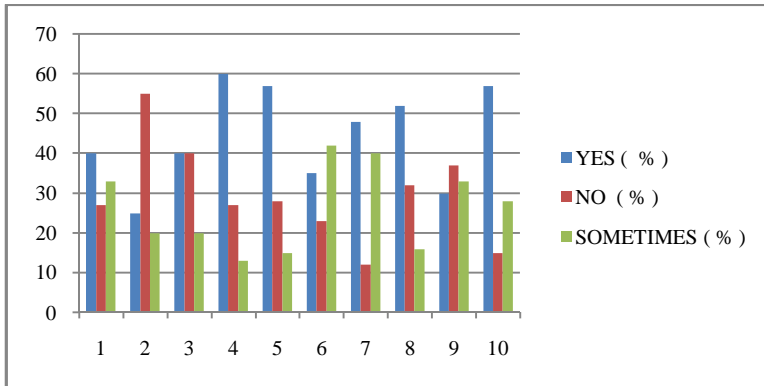
1. The findings indicated that 40% students are addicted to WhatsApp. According to one of the previous survey, only 25% students were addicted to WhatsApp (sample size 60 students). There is a 15% rise as compared to previous survey. A total of 27% students say: no, they are not addicted and 33% students say sometimes they are addicted to WhatsApp.

2. A total of 57% students say that they use WhatsApp as a cost reducing tool and 60% students say that they use WhatsApp for instant communication; 27% students say they don't use WhatsApp as a source of instant communication and 13% students say that they sometimes use WhatsApp as an instant communication tool; 28% students say they don't use WhatsApp as a cost reducing tool and 15% students say sometimes they use WhatsApp as a cost reducing tool.

Table 1: Source: Primary Data

Sr. No.	Questions	Yes (%)	No (%)	Sometimes (%)
1	Do you think you are addicted to WhatsApp?	40	27	33
2	Whether it affects your time management and schedule?	25	55	20
3	Whether you lose your productivity at work or study?	40	40	20
4	Does it help you in instant communication?	60	27	13
5	Do you use this tool in reducing the cost of communication?	57	28	15
6	Do you rely on the information you receive on WhatsApp?	35	23	42
7	Do you think WhatsApp is knowledge sharing tool?	48	12	40
8	Does it affect the proper use of language?	52	32	16
9	Does it satisfy your emotional needs?	30	37	33
10	Do you think it has reduced your real life interaction?	57	15	28

3. Mostly short forms of language are used while communicating on WhatsApp to reduce the time and to type fast. Due to this, in examinations same form of language is used. When students were asked about this, 52% students said yes WhatsApp has affected the proper use of language; 32% said no and 16% students said sometimes it affects the use of proper language.
4. Not only WhatsApp but several other social media have reduced the real life interaction. Hardly do people meet and have a conversation. A total of 57% students say yes WhatsApp has reduced their real life interaction with friends and even families. 28% students say sometimes use of WhatsApp reduces the real life interaction, but only 15% say no WhatsApp has not affected the real life interaction. When asked about the satisfaction of emotional needs, 30% said yes it satisfies their emotional needs, 37% said no, it does not satisfy their emotional needs and 33% said sometimes it satisfies their emotional needs. The response was mixed and so no definite inference can be drawn. Surprisingly 55% students said that WhatsApp didn't affect their time management and schedule. Only 25% students said yes and 20% said sometimes it affects their time management.
5. 40% students said yes and 40% said no, 20% said sometimes, when asked whether WhatsApp reduces their productivity at work or study. Only 35% students rely on the information received on WhatsApp; 23% students said no and 42% students said sometimes they rely on the information received on WhatsApp. A total of 48% of the students think that WhatsApp is really a knowledge sharing tool; 12% students said no and 40% students said sometimes they think WhatsApp is a knowledge sharing tool.



Graph 1: Showing Findings (in %)

Recommendations

Following can be ways to reduce the WhatsApp addiction:

- Finding a better addiction
- e.g.: reading books, playing musical instruments, etc
- To un-install the application
- One can simply decide a time when to check it
- Avoiding sending jokes, irrelevant messages etc. Once in a while is all right, but making it a daily practice is not good.
- WhatsApp should be used as a communication tool only, addiction should be avoided.

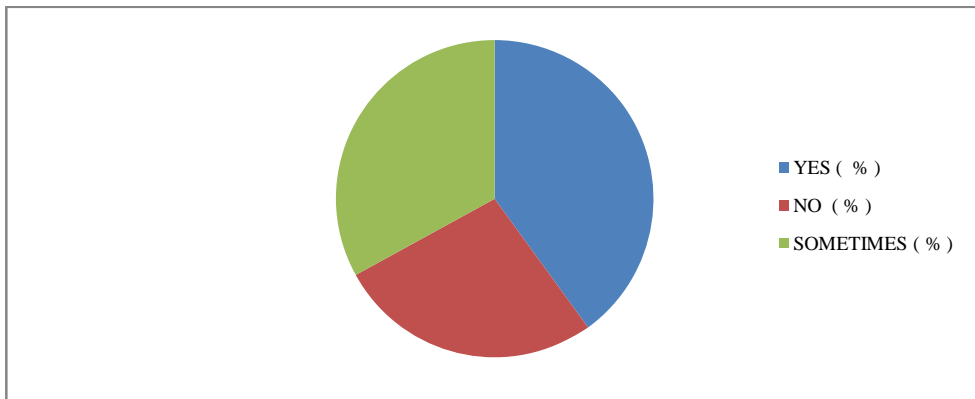
Justification of Hypothesis

QUE: Do you think you are addicted to WhatsApp?

ANS:	Yes	-	40%
	Sometimes	-	33%
	No.	-	27%

So 73% respondents says that they are using WhatsApp in which 40% are addicted to WhatsApp and 33% are sometimes addicted to it.

Hence, hypothesis is accepted.



Graph 2: Diagram Showing Percentage of Students Addicted to WhatsApp

Conclusion

From the survey, it could be said that the percentage of WhatsApp addiction among students is rising. There could potentially be a cause for concern particularly, when there is a rise in amount of time that the students spend online. The stated recommendations can be taken into consideration to reduce the WhatsApp addiction. Students should not forget the main aim behind WhatsApp and other social medias that, it is just a medium to connect to people and share information.

References

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