



USER PERCEPTION TOWARDS SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES - AN ANALYTICAL APPROACH

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Abstract:

A social networking site (SNS) or social media is an online platform that people use to build social networks or social relations with other people who share similar personal or career interests, activities, backgrounds or real-life connections. The advent of Social Networking sites and its resources have revolutionized the communication and social relation world. This paper aims to assess the user perception towards SNS like Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. In the study data was obtained through structured questionnaire collected from 250 users and the research data was tested using Percentage analysis, chi-square and spearman's rank correlation. Factor of gender, age and purpose of social networking sites of Facebook users have significant association with level of perception. Age, occupation and annual income of Twitter users have significant association with level of perception and Gender, age and occupation of LinkedIn users have significant association with level of perception. The study says there is a moderate association between ranks of Facebook and Twitter. Facebook was the most popular site compared to other Social Networking sites.

Key Words: Social Networking Sites/Social Media & User Perception

Introduction:

Social networking is the grouping of individuals into specific groups, like small rural communities or a neighborhood subdivision. Although social networking is possible in person, especially in the workplace, universities, and high schools, it is most popular online. This is because unlike most high schools, colleges, or workplaces, the internet is filled with millions of individuals who are looking to meet other people, to gather and share information. When it comes to online social networking, websites are commonly used. Social networking websites function like an online community of internet users. Some great examples of popular social networks are Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. Most people have heard of these services and many use them on a daily basis. Facebook.com site is very much about building profiles and linking those profiles through an eavesdropping feature that Facebook calls "the wall". LinkedIn.com has taken the concept of a social network and polished it with a professional touch. With this service, people can build a professional profile, connect with recruiters, connect with other professionals in your area, and most importantly, connect with everyone with whom they are connected. LinkedIn has really latched onto the power of the extended network concept. Twitter.com is what most would call a microblog. This site allows you to post very small blurbs to blog which are then fed out to friends. This service is largely used for letting people know what you are up to with a great use of this feature is posting. This study has been carried out to know the user perception on the above mentioned social networks Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. The study has been divided into two categories one in users of single social network(individual) and second is users of multiple social networks(users of more than one network). This study throws light majorly on user of individual social networks . In this study an attempt has been made to find the level of perception towards social networks by the users.

Review of Literature:

Thiyam Satyabati Devi (2015) in her article present comparative study between the students of Agriculture and Health Science concentrate more precisely on the students who come to the library. The research explores how the students create identity for themselves in the virtual world and how they relate to others online. The findings disclosed that social networking is gaining popularity among them. Facebook is the most popular and used social networking site followed by WhatsApp and Google plus.

Praveen k. Choudhary, Susmi Routray (2016) in their article they aims to identify user perception of SNSs get affected due to feature evolution of the SNSs? The study corroborates existing literature on SNS usage context in terms of usage purpose, usage impact due to user profile and age-group, user presence on different SNS platforms, and also shows some feature affect user perceptions.

Anthoniraj Amalanathan, S. Margret Anounicia (2016), the aim to throw light on the role of these functional blocks in terms of user influence ranking. The user influence ranking generally reveals the impact that an individual has on the social network. Hence, the review has identified the adoption of these functional blocks in popular social networks to determine users' influence ranking method.

Neeraj Kumar (2012), the purpose of the study was to investigate the user perception and use of Social Networking sites by the Sikkim University students. It has been observed in the study that majority parts of the

students expressed the use of their internet for Social Networking sites. Facebook was the most popular site compared to other Social Networking sites.

Mohamed Haneefa K. Sumitha. E (2011), the purpose of this study was to investigate the perception and use of social networking sites by the students of Calicut University, Kerala. Structured questionnaires were used to collect data from a representative sample of 150 students. The study found that a majority of the students were aware of social networking sites and use these sites for friendly communication.

Johannes A.Wild, Michael C. Cant, Corinne E. Nell (2014), The purpose of this study was to determine South African students' perceptions and uses of social media networking systems. The study made use of the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) constructs in order to test the objectives. These constructs are; 'Perceive ease of use', 'Perceived usefulness', 'Attitude towards using', 'Intention to use', and 'System accessibility and it was found that social media is mostly being used by students for social purposes rather than for educational purposes.

Objectives of the Study:

- ✓ To ascertain the personal profile of users of social networking sites.
- ✓ To identify level of perception of users on individual social networking sites
- ✓ To identify the extent of users in multiple social networking sites.
- ✓ To identify whether there is association between social networking sites.

Research Methodology:

The study is based on primary data. Primary data have been collected with the help of questionnaire consisting of close - ended questions to extract the view points of the respondents. A sample of 250 users residing in Coimbatore district has been considered for the study. The sample respondents are selected on the basis of Convenience sampling method. To achieve the objectives of the study statistical tools like Percentage analysis , Chi – square, Weighted average method and spearman's rank correlation have been made use to analyze the data.

Analysis and Interpretation:

The data for the present study was collected from the respondents through questionnaire. The socio profile of users have been analysed by applying percentage analysis. The following are the results and analysis advent through applying statistical techniques.

1. Percentage Analysis:

Table 1: Socio - Profile of Users - Individual Social Networks

S.No	Particulars	No. of Respondents (N = 200)	Percentage to Total
1.	Gender		
	Male	102	51
	Female	98	49
2	Age	31	15.5
	Below 20	95	47.5
	21-30	27	13.5
	31-40	27	13.5
	41-50	20	10
	Above 51		
3.	Occupation	83	41.5
	Student	22	11
	Business	35	17.5
	Professional	37	18.5
	Employee	23	11.5
	Employer		
4.	Annual Income (in Rs.)	10	5
	Below 1,00,000	25	12.5
	1,00,001 – 3,00,000	23	11.5
	3,00,001 – 5,00,000	60	30
	Above 5,00,001	82	41
5.	Nature of the Family	118	59
	Nuclear	82	41
	Joint family		
6.	Members of Family	62	31
	1 - 3	98	49
	3 - 5	40	20
	Above 5		

7.	Educational Qualification		
	School level	26	13
	UG	38	19
	PG	84	42
	Professional	27	13.5
8.	Purpose of Social Networking Sites		
	Communicate	79	39.5
	New friends	41	20.5
	Learn	55	27.5
	Meet group of people	18	9
	Job	7	3.5
9.	Ways to Communicate with Friends		
	Instant messaging	88	44
	Read blogs	34	17
	Post comment	47	23.5
	Post photos	20	10
	Others	11	5.5

Source: Primary Data

Out of 200 respondents, the sample users are largely male. (102) 51% of users are male. It is further revealed that the sample users predominantly more consists of adults they are 95 (47.5%) of respondents falling in the age group of 21-30 years. Classification of occupation shows that 83(41.5%) of respondents are students. It is found that most of the respondents in annual income were from no income category 82 (41%) respondents. In terms of nature of family 118 (59%) of users belong to nuclear family. Most of the respondents 98 (49%) in members of family belong to 3-5 members in the family. It is found that majority of respondents in educational qualification are post graduates 84(42%) respondents. It reveals that educated people prefer more on networking. The respondents also mentioned that majority of purpose of social networking is to communicate with friends 79(39.5%) respondents. It is found that majority of the respondents 88(44%) were using instant messaging to communicate with friends.

Table 2: Extent of Users in Multiple Social Networks

S.No	Social Networks	No. of Respondents	Percentage
		N = 50	
1	Facebook	15	30
	Twitter		
	Linkedin		
2	Facebook	15	30
	Twitter		
3	Facebook	10	20
	Linkedin		
4	Twitter	10	20
	Linkedin		

Source: Primary Data

Out of 200 sample, there are 50 respondents holding account in many social networking sites (i.e.) multi social networking sites.

Out of 50 respondents, fifteen (30%) users in Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn; fifteen (30%) users in Facebook and Twitter; ten (20%) users in Facebook and LinkedIn; ten (20%) users in Twitter and LinkedIn. There are 15 respondents who hold accounts in all select social networking sites.

2. Chi-Square Analysis:

The following variables have been taken:

- ✓ Gender
- ✓ Age
- ✓ Occupation
- ✓ Annual income
- ✓ Nature of family
- ✓ Educational qualification
- ✓ Purpose of social networking

In order to examine the association of user perception on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. The following hypothesis has been framed.

Ho: There is no significant association between selected variables of socio-profile and level of perception on Facebook.

Ho: There is no significant association between selected variables of socio-profile and level of perception on Twitter.

Ho: There is no significant association between selected variables of socio-profile and level of perception on LinkedIn.

Table 3: Level of Perception of Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn

S.No	Socio Profile	Facebook (P -Value)	Twitter (P- Value)	LinkedIn (P- Value)
1	Gender	0.0476*	0.6369	0.0497*
2	Age	0.0138*	0.0380*	0.9997
3	Occupation	0.0507	0.0480*	0.0221*
4	Annual Income	0.0836	0.0162*	0.9833
5	Nature of Family	0.6327	0.9993	0.9782
6	Educational Qualification	0.0035**	0.9803	0.9995
7	Purpose of social networking	0.0386*	0.3707	0.0316*

Source: Computed

Note: * - Significant at .05 alpha level, ** - Significant at .01 alpha level

It can be observed from the above test that the P-value of gender , age and purpose of social networking of Facebook , age, occupation and annual income in Twitter and gender , occupation and purpose of social networking in LinkedIn are less than .05. Educational qualification of Facebook is less than .01. So, reject H0 and accept H1. Therefore, it is concluded that there is significant relationship between gender, age and purpose of social networking of Facebook, age, occupation and annaual income in Twitter and gender, occupation and purpose of social networking in LinkedIn and level of perception. And, it has significant relationship between educational qualification of Facebook and level of perception.

3. Spearman's Rank Correlation:

In order to examine the association of ranks between the selected social networking sites spearman's rank correlation has been applied. Weighted average method has been applied to find ranks of opinion on variables like speed, higher public access, security, scams, features and lack of privacy in Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. The result of weighted average method (table no.4:R1, R2 and R3) has been taken to apply spearman's rank correlation .The results has been disclosed in following tables:

Table 4: Spearman's Rank Correlation

R1	R2	R3	(R1-R2) ² = D	(R1-R3) ² = D	(R2-R3) ² =D	(R1-R2) ² D2	(R1-R3) ² = D2	(R2-R3) ² =D2
1	2	2.5	-1	-1.5	-0.5	1	2.25	0.25
5	4	6	1	-1	-2	1	1	4
4	6	5	-2	-1	1	4	1	1
3	5	2.5	-2	0.5	2.5	4	0.25	6.25
6	3	1	3	5	2	9	25	4
2	1	4	1	-2	-3	1	4	9
						$\sum d_2=20$	$\sum d_2=33.5$	$\sum d_2=24.5$

Source: Computed

R1= Facebook; R2 = Twitter; R3 = LinkedIn

The following range has been framed for correlation: 0.00 -0.19 = very weak correlation; .20-.39 = weak correlation; .40-.59 = Moderate correlation; 0.60-.79 = Strong correlation; .80 - .10 = Very strong correlation

4. Range of Association between Social Networking Sites (SNS):

To ascertain whether the user's perception on Facebook have a significant influence on user perception on Twitter and LinkedIn and Twitter have a significant influence on users perception on LinkedIn. Spearman's rank correlation has been applied between SNS .The results are disclosed in the following table.

Table 5: Determinants of rank correlation

S.No	Determinants	Correlation (r)
1	Facebook and Twitter	0.42857*
2	Facebook and LinkedIn	0.0428
3	Twitter and LinkedIn	0.3

Source: Computed

Facebook and Twitter have moderate association of ranks. Facebook and LinkedIn have a very weak association of ranks. It is understood that the user's perception on Facebook have moderate significant influence on Twitter, Facebook does not have significant influence on LinkedIn. Twitter and LinkedIn have weak positive correlation. This it is understood that the user's perception on Twitter does not have any significant influence on LinkedIn

Findings:

- ✓ Facebook have highest respondents compared with other social networking sites.
- ✓ Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn in group and Facebook and Twitter in group have highest multiple number of users.
- ✓ Gender, age and purpose of social networking sites indicates that the user influence the level of perception in Facebook.
- ✓ Age, occupation and annual income indicates that the user influence the level of perception in Twitter.
- ✓ Gender, occupation and purpose of social networking sites indicates that the user influence the level of perception in LinkedIn.
- ✓ Perception of Facebook have moderate significant association on Twitter.

Suggestions:

- ✓ To tighten the privacy settings in social networks
- ✓ To improve security settings
- ✓ To Improve speed while uploading
- ✓ To indicate scam.

Conclusion:

This study investigated some of the most important aspects of social networking sites. This research has confined itself to an exploration of user perception on social networking sites. This study focus on social networking sites namely Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. Some of variables have been selected for research. The selected variables influence perception on social networking sites. As far as this research work is concerned. There are lots of scopes for future research. This study has been undergone mainly by taking into consideration of individual social networking sites and not that much analysis has been applied on multiple social networking sites. Future studies may be conducted by incorporating multiple social networking sites in each category and various analyses may be applied to further emphasize the findings.

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