Periodic Research

Impact of Social Networking Sites on College Students

Shailendra Gehlot
Assistant Professor,
Dept. of Sociology,
Govt. College,
Jodhpur, Rajasthan, India

Abstract

Originally the Internet was an emergency military communications system operated by the Department of Advanced Research Project Agency (ARPA). The entire operation was referred to as ARPANET. The speed of the internet has changed the way people get information. It combines the broadcasting of the news with deep coverage of newspapers and weather information that makes it the right source. Even with the multimedia enthusiasm of the web, electronic mail (email) is the most commonly used application on the Internet. Many people, who have access to the Internet at school, home and work, use the internet for any other purpose than sending and receiving mail. These are not just friends and colleagues receiving emails. Wherever you look, the web is providing email addresses. This has made communication between strangers easier than ever. Chatting is one of the more popular activities on the Internet - people can talk to anyone around the world. The introduction of social online networking sites has facilitated communication. These are the web-sites where users can create a profile and connect to that profile to create a clear personal network.

Through social networking, people can access the network of online friends and group members so that they stay in touch with existing friends, reunite with old friends or make real life friendship through common interests or groups. In addition to establishing significant social relationships, social networking members can join groups and forums and share their interests with other equal members. Some networking members can also help in finding jobs or establishing business contacts. Most social networking websites also offers additional features. In addition to blogs and forums, members can express themselves by designing their profile page to reflect their personality. Most popular extras features include music and video sections.

The video section may include member-generated videos from hundreds of topics to TV clips and movie trailers (YouTube). Social networking sites have facilitated communication. Members of such sites can easily create groups (which are called communities) and can share their opinions among discussion threads, forums and elections. Although these sites work well in many ways, but have negative implications such as cybercrime which has become a privacy threat to people all over the world.

Keywords: Social Networking Sites, Communication, Online Access, Internet, Media, Mindset of Students.

Introduction

We define social network sites as web-based services that allow individuals to create a public or semi-public profile within a bound system, clarify a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and see their connection list and those people created by others within the system. The nature and nomenclature of these connections can be different from each other. When we use the term 'social network site' to describe this event, the term 'social networking sites' also appears in public discourse, and two words often used for each other is done. We chose to not employ the term "networking" for two reasons: emphasis and scope. "Networking" emphasizes on initiation, often between strangers. Although networking is possible on these sites, it is not a primary practice on many of them, nor is it that separates them from other forms of computer-mediated communication.Although making new relationships and reuniting with lost or old contacts is beneficial in many ways, it also brought some behavioral changes among the youth, not only the behavioral changes but also their

Periodic Research

social behavior and attitude. This has also ended as a nightmare for some people.

Some key questions arise when adolescents adopt social network sites rapidly in INDIA and many other countries around the world. Why do youngsters come to these sites? What are they expressing on them? How do these sites fit into their lives? What are they learning from their participation? Are these online activities similar to face-to-face friendship, or are they different, or are complementary? During 2008, online social network sites like MySpace and Facebook became the common destination for young people in India. Throughout the country, young people were entering, creating detailed profiles, expressing their relations with other participants publicly, and writing comprehensive comments back and forth. By the end of 2009, a number of major social network sites, MySpace involvement were considered which were necessary for schools to be quiet in colleges.

Review of Literature

To make social network sites unique, it is not that they allow individuals to meet strangers, but rather that they enable users to clarify and clarify their social network. As a result, there can be a connection between those people who will not be otherwise, but this is not often the goal, and these meetings are often between ties 'latent relationships' which share some offline connections. On many large SNSs, participants must not necessarily meet 'or networking' or new people; Instead, they are mainly communicating with people who are already a part of their extended social network[1].

In less than five years, these sites have evolved into an event with an online activity through which millions of internet users are connected, in their spare time and at work. There are various factors that have prompted us to consider the implications of these techniques for policy-making. One of these is the desire of the users to embrace SNS as a means of communication and social networking in everyday life. The importance of increasing dependency analysis on technology for basic communication also highlights how SNS is affecting daily processes. Sites like Facebook and LinkedIn are influencing the way in establishing, maintaining and cultivating a range of social relations, from close friendships to casual acquaintances[2].

According to the definition given above, the first identifying social network site started in 1997. SixDigris.com allowed users to create profiles, list their friends and start in 1998, friends list surf. Each of these features was present in some form before Six Degrees. There were profiles on most major dating sites and many community sites. The AIM and ICQ friends list of friends supported lists, although they did not appear to others[3].

Classmates.com allowed people to be associated with their high school or college and surfed the network for others who were affiliated, but users could not create profiles or lists after years. Six Degrees was the first to combine these characteristics. SixDegrees encouraged themselves as a tool to help people connect and send messages to others. While SixDegrees attracted millions of users, it failed to become a sustainable business, and in 2000, the service ceased. Looking back, its founder believes that SixDegrees was ahead of its time[4].

While people were already coming to the internet, most did not have a network of friends who were online. Early adaptors complained that the friend request was very less after accept, and most of the users were not interested in meeting strangers. From 1997 to 2001, many community instruments began supporting various combinations of profiles and publicly expressed friends. Friendster became the biggest disappointment in the history of social networking sites, which has been removed by LinkedIn[5].

Since 2003, many new SNS launched, most took the form of profile-focused sites, tried to replicate Friendster's initial success or targeted specific demographics. The socially organized SNS organizes extensive audiences, professional sites such as LinkedIn, Visible Path, and Xing concentrates on business people. In addition, as social media and user-generated content incidents increased, websites focused on media sharing started implementing SNS features and became SNS itself[6].

College students are in a period of transition of awareness of childhood dependence to the independence of adulthood and awareness of our interdependence as a community member. Young people have a higher degree of fluid than a certain age group.

However, age is the simplest way to define this group, especially in relation to education and employment. Therefore collegiate is often indicated as a person between that age where he can leave compulsory education, and at the age he finds his first job. This latter age limit is increasing because high levels of unemployment and the cost of setting up an independent home puts many young people in long-term dependence.

Impact of Social Networking Websites on Education of Youth

Researcher tries to portray social networking sites like Facebook, MySpace and Twitter gaining popularity so fast. Due to their attractive characteristics, today's generation youth are fascinated towards them. They study argues against the notion claiming that due to rapid popularity of social networking sites, youngsters distracting themselves from their studies and profession but on the contrary, developing friendly and social relationships the world that revolves around them[7].

Impact of Social Networking sites in the Changing Mindset of Youth on Social Issues

This letter indicates that more time is spent by men on Social networking sites than women to review these social issues and still women are very sensitive to these issues which are existing in the world. Young people take active participation and take their voice in order to express their opinions and thoughts on social issues being discussed on these sites. In addition, the findings show that even though young reciprocates to these events they still do not take up discussions beyond web and forget about them once they sign off. These sites prove to be a

Periodic Research

boon for the youth in spreading awareness about these issues that arise[8].

Impact of Social Networking Sites on Students

This study establishes the fact that among all the respondents targeted; approximately 55.4% of the total population of the people aged 15 to 25 use social networking sites and also say that most users of the same age group use these sites as a medium to get entertained. In terms of gender division, male users are more as compared to female users, in which male users are usually derived knowledge-based information from these sites. It focuses on the fact that most young people use these sites due to the influence of their friends and just because their friends are using and accessing these sites. It also shows the academic performance of students using social networking sites. Students receiving 3.0 to 3.5 GPA in the exams are most inclined to these sites for entertainment[9].

The Effect of Social Networking Sites on Adolescent's Social and Academic Development

The paper provides a review of the emerging research surrounding social networking site and youth. Technologies and proposals of these sites are such that they fascinate and attract youth and adolescents. Determining its popularity, parents and teachers have given an ear for its concern and consideration. These concerns are with the youth privacy, security, time consumption, health issues, psychological wellbeing and academic performance. However, they study should be finally specified about theories as to how youth uses social networking sites and must enact communication behavior that should result in their benefit[10].

Purvapresented that online social networking like Facebook and Twitter have the fastest means of communication and having gained wide popularity, have revolutionized interpersonal communications by providing a platform to individuals for expressing themselves at a global level, beyond their immediate geography. The authors present the study on diffusion dynamics of specific real world events, discussed on Twitter, with respect to location and time. The events were categorizes into broad categories based temporal (short or long), geographical distribution (local or global), information diffusion (viral or gradual), influence (popular or unpopular) and the cause (natural or planned). It was conclude that the three-dimensional analysis of real-world events by exploring relationships among them. The number of social networking site users is increasing immensely not only in India but also across the globe[11].

Davmaneanalyzed the factors for the online social networking sites as per users behavior regarding user friends, the peer groups, access patterns, amount of time spend, the effect on personal and professional life. User attitude and behavior is also surveyed for over seven hundred users using a questionnaire consisting of 27 questions which focused on behavior of Indian users in terms of usability, trends and access[12].

Wintour (2009)in the article titled Facebook and Beborist infantilizing the human mind says thatSocial networking sites, such as Facebook, are putting attention span in jeopardy. Wintour refers to Baroness Greenfield who believes ministers have not yet looked at the broad cultural and psychological effect of on-screen friendships via Facebook, Bebo and Twitter; She has told the House of Lords that children's experiences on social networking sites "are devoid of cohesive narrative and long-term significance and as a consequence, themid-21st century mind might almost be infantilized, characterized by short attention spans, sensationalism, inability to empathize and a shaky sense of identity"[13].

Arguing that social network sites are putting attention span in jeopardy, she said: "If the young brain is exposed from the outset to a world of fast action and reaction, of instant new screen images flashing up with the press of a key, such rapid interchange might accustom the brain to operate over such timescales. Perhaps when in the real world such responses are not immediately forthcoming, we will see such behaviors and call them attention-deficit disorder. "It might be helpful to investigate whether the near total submersion of our culture in screen technologies over the last decade might in some way be linked to the threefold increase over this period in prescriptions for methylphenidate, the drug prescribed for attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder."

Larsen (2009),based on the empirical data, says that both genders seek the acknowledgement they get from having their looks commented on, but the girls are more preoccupied with what kind of comments they get and whom they come from. In general, it is very important that the comments come from friends and people they know, rather than strangers. This indicates that photo comments are not just about having ones outer looks valued and acknowledged, but also about practicing and maintaining friendships[14].

Objective of the Study

1. To determine the usage of specific social networking sites by the youth.
2. To analyze the credibility over the information received from social networking sites.
3. To understand the pros and cons of social networking sites known by the youth.
4. To study the influence of social networking sites on the personal and professional life of the youth.

Hypothesis

1. Social Networking sites are more of a demerit as compared to merit.
2. The youth is more inclined towards fields of entertainment other than relevant information derived sources.
3. The participation of youth is invisible in social gatherings due to overutilization of social networking sites.

Sampling

In present study 100 college students were selected by simple random sampling from university and government college of Jodhpur. All were undergraduate students from arts, commerce and science faculty.

Periodic Research

Data Analysis

Most of the members of Social networking sites prefer using cell phone for accessing it. Less number of students use tablets and laptop.

Among this sample, hours spent on social networking sites was less than 1 hr for 10% of the respondents while there were 32 % respondents using the social networking sites for more than 5 hrs.

Moderate responses of about 51% use for 1-2hrs but a very low percentile of 7% uses it for 3-5hrs.

Majority of the respondents were exposed to social networking sites for varying duration of time due to various reasons such as no Internet connectivity at home, residing at hostel with no Internet provisions.(Fig 1)

Figure 1

Usage
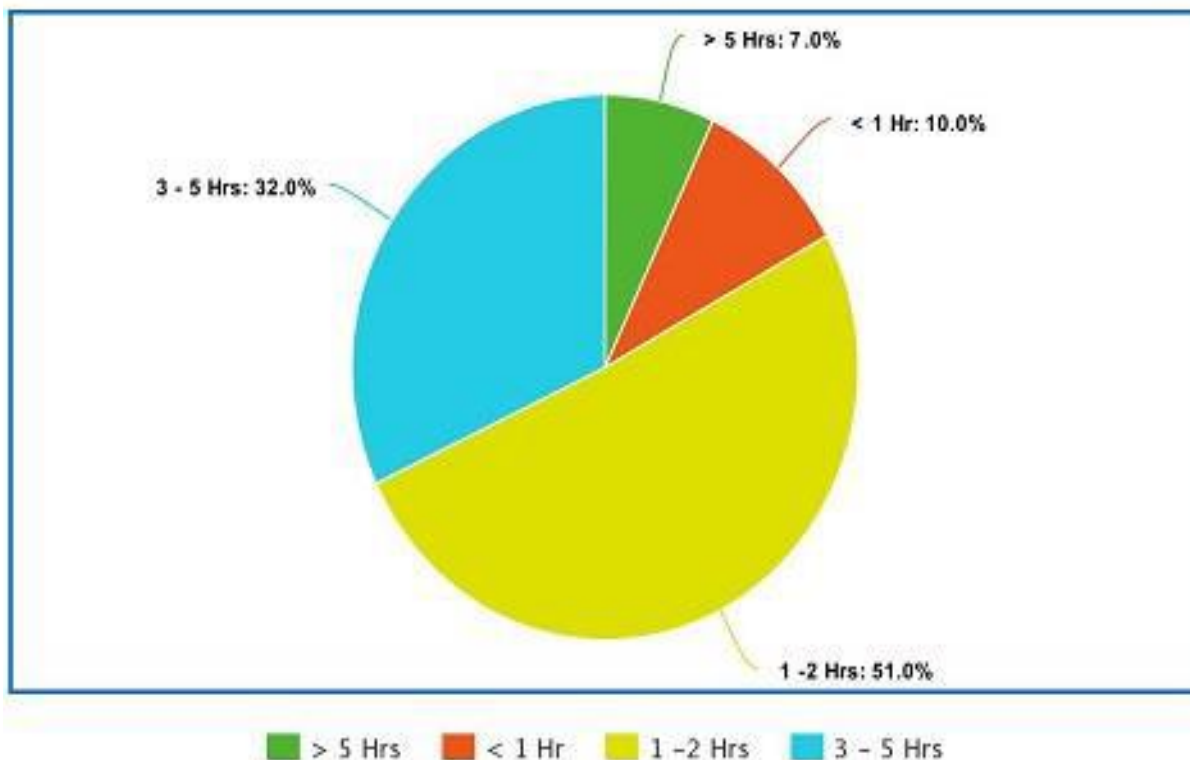
Most of the respondents are using smart phone and there is very less percentage of Symbian phone user these days. Almost 73% of the respondents were members of Facebook and 15 % were in Twitter While other sites mentioned were MySpace, WhatsApp, Google+, LinkedIn, Hi5, Tagged, e-buddy and tumbler. Majority of the Respondents visit or use their SNS account Twice or Thrice in 1 day that is 48% . And Less Respondents use their SNS account Very Often that is 25% . As per data people like to visit social networking sites at least twice or thrice in a day.

Almost similar result was seen i.e. 25% & 27% of people visiting social networking sites very often and rarely respectively.

50% were using these sites not more than 2 years and 30% said they are active members on social networking sites more than 3 years.

72% college students like to use friends network based social networking sites where they can add friends from old schools or colleges. Only 5% blogs about different topics.

Study reveal that youth the respondents- are cautious in their online social networking and understand the underlying threat to individual's privacy.

It's a positive social behavior reflected among the sample with maximum awareness of the medium along with its advantageous and dangerous features.

Friend network is favored by 46% of sample with features such as communities and photo sharing leading in the second place with 30%. Profile setting comes as fourth in list of favored applications.

Periodic Research

Figure 2

SNS affecting social life
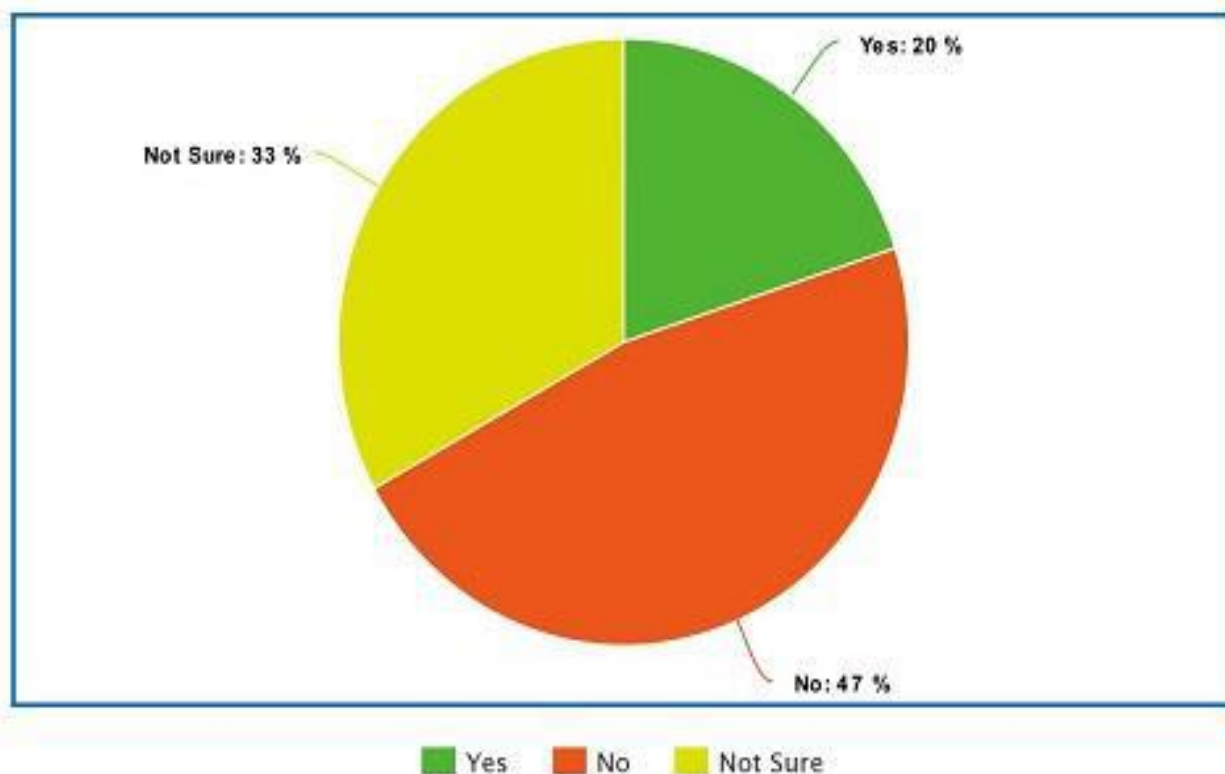
A vast majority of the sample (63%) attempt to establish their identity/personality in social networking sites but a nearly close 37% have responded as not attempting to establish their identity / personality in such sites.

Above percentage shows that today's new generation of India knows how to keep balance between real life and virtual world, 47 % say social networking sites are not affecting their social life but sometimes it helps to improve much more, few thinks use of social networking sites affecting them and 33% were not sure about it. Like this Majority of the Respondents Believe that SNS is affecting their Study that is 70% only 30% do not believe that SNS is affecting their studies.

Majority of students accepted that somehow social networking sites are affecting their studies more or less. 85% respondents' youth have friendship networks with people of different cultural/racial backgrounds through social networking sites.

It could be impossible in real life circumstances.

Social networking sites give an opportunity to socialize among people from different cultural/racial backgrounds.

People sharing similar thoughts and interests could use such sites as platform to participate in communities, discuss on social topics or simply share their everyday chores which in a way could lead to broader global perspective.

Privacy of individual is one of the causes of these studies, many unwanted cases reported in media shows that people are not aware of it. 55 % say they have very well knowledge of privacy policies of social networking sites and only 2 % says they no know nothing about such policies of social media.

Shocking outcome of this study is that still respondents said their favorite way of communication is face to face i.e. 54%. Only 23% prefer social networking sites as a way of interaction with friends. 15% and 8% were preferred calls text and other ways of communication respectively.

78% suggest social networking sites to friends but only 40% said they suggest social networking sites to younger siblings but for a surprise 60% didn't like the idea of suggesting social networking sites to their younger siblings because they don't want them to get distracted from studies and get separated from real world.

But majority of respondents like to keep checking the activities and updates by younger siblings on social networking sites.

57% respondents denied that judging people based on social networking sites not their cup of tea. They like to know them personally before giving any judgment on life or character but 43% happily agreed that they judge people on the basis of their activities, posts or updates on social networking sites.

65% will going to use social networking sites in near future also.

It's very difficult for them to imagine life without it because through social networking sites they can share what's going on in their life with friends living far away. 30% didn't much like the idea of using the social networking sites in near future sites but just

Periodic Research

because of same reason above mentioned they are confused about it.

Only 5% decided that they are not going to use social networking sites in near future.

Findings

Besides the love for new technology and constant text messaging, youth's favorite way to communicate with their friends is still face to face. 54% of the youth said that it is more fun to have face to face communication and is better because they can understand what people really mean better in person, feel more comfortable or can have serious talk in person. Some of the Students mentioned pleasures of laughing together in person.

From these samples who have account on social networking sites, 45% check their account from mobile device. 67% of Youth have their own cell phone which is a "Smartphone". About 50% of the respondents said that social networking has helped them feel connected with family and friends and also help in maintaining relationships with their friends.

SNS has helped them to keep in touch with friends they can't meet regularly and also helped them get to know about other students at their colleges or school and SNS also connected people who share common interest or hobby from all over the world. SNS users agree that they "love" posting photos on their timeline with girls more likely than boys.

One aspect of online life that has been unexplored is that young people come across hateful or discriminatory content – sexist, racist remarks, or comments criticizing someone for their religion. For all their love of new media, 40% of the respondents expressed and desire to "unplug" or back to a day when there was no Facebook or Twitter. 30% of the Respondents described themselves as "addicted" to their Cell phones. Those who desired to unplug or go back to a time when there was no Facebook are more likely than others to come across racist, sexist or anti – religious content.

They have more negative reaction to social networking, like having low confidence or feel worse about themselves. At the same time, least – happy youth say that using social networking site make them feel less depressed and majority say it doesn't make much difference one way or the other.

65% respondents said they have never experienced any type of bullying, hate speech or other abuse on social networking sites.

Conclusion

The generation of Today's youth are so complexly woven into the frame of their lives that they don't really know what life would be like without them. They youth are so much likely to get a positive boost from using their social networking site than it is for it to make them fee low. Some reports and other research mentioned that for some young people, social networking leads to feelings of depression or social isolation. As with increasing of technology, adoption of the Internet for its social use is seen highest levels of usage among younger users.

These new technologies perceive social networking sites as often a much quicker and more convenient way to interact. Some observers may get surprised to see that technologies have grown up with social networking sites as a part of their lives still prefer hanging out with each other in person. Being together in person involve texting and checking Facebook site and sometimes annoying friends by doing so but it is interesting that even today's youth see the value in being able to look a friend in the eye and make her laugh. Yes, texting is fast and easy and they use it a lot, as one youth quoted, "moments only happen in person."

Of course, those who are immersed in social networking sites may not be best positioned to assess whether it is having an impact on them or not. Parents, educators, and child development experts all need to keep a careful eye on the role of social media in upcoming generation lives, and these adults may offer critical insights and cautions.

After all, none of us can accurately assess the impact that relentless advertising may have on our desires or behaviors or fully understand how our horizons may be limited or expanded by ubiquitous cultural messages. But hearing from youth firsthand about how they assess the impact of social networking sites on their own social and emotional well-being is important; their perspective, while not the only one, is critical.

So we should focus on the ethical use of these social networking sites so that it serves our society in a right way and the youth can play an important role because social networking sites is a boon and curse both for the Indian society. In one hand it provides away to connect our dear ones on the other side it gives a platform that become danger for Indian heritage and culture. None of this means that there's nothing to worry about when it comes to youth and social networking sites.

The concerns are real: about privacy, bullying, hate speech, body image, and over-sharing, and we won't know for a long time how the immediacy of digital communication may be shaping interpersonal relationships and social skills[15].

Endnotes

1. Introduction to SNS technology, Retrieved From www.wi-fitechnology.com
2. Mlaiki, Alya. "Why do we continue using social networking sites? The giving loop that feeds computer-mediated social ties".Systèmesd'Informationet Management.
3. Cotriss, David (May 29, 2008). "Where are they now: TheGlobe.com".The Industry Standard.
4. Romm-Livermore, C. &Setzekorn, K. (2008). Social Networking Communities and E-Dating Services: Concepts and Implications. IGI Global. p.271
5. Thelwall, M. & Stuart, D. (2010).Social Network Sites.In Panayiotis Zaphiris&Chee Siang Ang, Social Computing and Virtual Communities, p.271; Boyd, D. &Ellson, N. (2008). Social Network Sites: Definition, History and Scholarship. Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication.p.210-230.
6. Steve Rosenbush (2005). News Corp.'s Place in MySpace, Bloomberg BusinessWeek, July 19, 2005.

7. *Kuppuswamy S, Narayan PB (2011) The impact of social networking websites on the education of youth.*

8. *Jain MR, Anand N, Gupta P (2012) Impact of social networking sites in the changing mindset of youth on social issues-A study of Delhi-NCR youth. Journal of Arts, Science and Commerce 3: 36-43.*

9. *Khan S (2011) Impact of social networking websites on students.Abasyn Journal of Social Sciences 5: 56-77*

10. *AhnJ (2011) The effect of social networking sites on adolescents' social and academic development: Current theories and controversies. Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology 62: 1435-1445*

11. *P. Purva, A. Yadav, F. Abbasi, D. Toshniwal, "How Has Twitter Changed the Event Discussion Scenario? A Spatio-temporal Diffusion Analysis.*

12. *M. Devmane, N. Rana, "Usability Trends and Access of Online Social Network by Indian population and its analysis.*

13. *Wintour, Patrick Wintour, Facebook and Bebo risk 'infantilizing' the human mind,2009 Retrieved from http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2009/feb/24/social-networking- site-changing- childrens-brains*

14. *Larson. (2011). Teens, kindness and cruelty on social network sites. Washington, D.C.: Pew Internet and American Life Project*

15. *15 Project Report On "IMPACT OF SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES ON INDIAN YOUTH" Submitted byPankajMeena- Submitted to sardarpatel police university- jodhpur*