

Socio-Cultural Effects of Social Media on Students' Life

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ABSTRACT

The progress of modern society throughout the world has become heavily dependent on social media. The last few decades have witnessed the transition of social media from fun to necessity. A present generation student's social, cultural and academic lifestyle appears to be very closely connected to social media. This paper is aimed at investigating the impact of social media and social networking sites on social, cultural and academic life of graduate/ post-graduate students of the district of Burdwan, W.B., India. A sample of 103 college/university students from the said district have been considered. These students' responses regarding their perception of different aspects of social media have been obtained with the help of questionnaire method. The data thus obtained has been subjected to several statistical analyses comprising of discriminant analysis, F-test, descriptive statistic etc., which resulted in various interesting revelations. Finally, logical and analytical discussions have been done with those findings or revelations.

Keywords: Social Media, Socio-cultural effects, Students' addiction, Academic life, Discriminant Analysis

I. INTRODUCTION

In the modern world, social media has become an inseparable component of our lives. It assists in sharing ideas, thoughts, data and knowledge. Millions of internet users across the globe interact with each other through powerful electronic communication medium comprising of various social networking sites. The impacts of social media can be both positive and negative

because any information irrespective of whether it is good or bad can be easily transmitted through it, without even checking its authenticity.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Alwagait et. al (2015) and Michikyan et. al. (2015) social media technology is not restricted to computer or laptop. To maintain the ever growing demand of the users now it is compatible with mobile technology. This basically

changes the concept of digital communication as people can always carry most popular social media platforms like Facebook, Whatsapp, Twitter, Instagram, linkedin in their pockets.

People are actively using one or more social media platforms and getting benefits out of it (Khan et. al., 2017). Social networking can work as a motivational tool by developing bonds among people (Baker, 2009). Although, El-Badawy and Hashem (2015) showed that there is no correlation between the students' academic performance and social media but from some earlier works it is evident that there are significant effects of communication technology and social networking sites on students' academic performances (Lomi et. al., 2011; Mehmood & Taswir, 2013; Ellore et. al., 2014; Junco, 2015). According to Abousaber & Oueder (2018) social media play a crucial role on communication between faculty students, which helps in circulating correct information and leads to clear understanding and the development of the ideas. Social media has a great influence on learning method and relationship among people (Butler & Matook, 2015). It can be used positively in sharing and generating ideas and concepts related to studies (Amin et. al., 2016). Mingle and Adams (2015) suggested for proper monitoring and counselling of students, so that social media can be used by them for educational purposes only. Students can increase their academic grade by using social media (Amin et. al., 2016). Some researchers such as Osharive (2015), Allam and Elyas (2016), Alsuraihi et. al. (2016) believed that social media can be used as a training, development and motivational tool.

However, social media can also have negative impacts. Students' addiction to social media can adversely affect them. In this regard, Masters (2015) and Owusu-Acheaw and Larson (2015) rightly felt the importance of restricted and controlled use of social media. This is reflected in the fact that some colleges and universities around the world restricted the access to social networks within its campus area (Kolan & Dzandza, 2018). Al-Tarawneh (2014) and Al Suwayri (2016) are concerned with the negative influence of social media on students due to addiction, wasting of time, harming sleep quality, disturbing mental health by lowering self-esteem, and physical isolation from society. Social networks may create false impression of friendship for teenagers, that may take them away from ground reality (East, 2016). Some researchers pointed out important negative areas and its adverse impact on academia caused by distracting the

attention of the students (Paul et. al, 2012; Wentworth & Middleton, 2014; Hasnain et. al., 2015; Halboub et. al., 2016; Ali Aljabry et. al., 2017; Amadi and Ewa, 2018).

The resultant effect of the various ideas/views generated from the above mentioned works ignited within us the curiosity to investigate the effect of using social media with special reference to its impact on social, cultural and academic life of the students of Burdwan district.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the research are as follows:

1. To examine the socio-cultural effects of social media on students' life.
2. To study the addiction level of students to social media and check whether they are addicted to social media or not.
3. To find out the effect of social media on our tradition and culture.
4. To examine the effect of social media on purchasing behavior/pattern of the customers.
5. To investigate the impact of social media on students' academic performance/study time.
6. To study the influence of social media on the personal and academic life of the students and determine their main purpose of using social media

A sample of 103 college/university students accustomed to using social media, from the district of Burdwan (comprising of higher educational institutions like The University of Burdwan, University Institute of Technology etc.) of West Bengal, India, has been considered with the help of convenient sampling technique. However sufficient care has been taken to ensure that randomness is incorporated as far as possible during the sampling procedure. The questionnaire served to each of these 103 respondents/students carried questions about

- (i) their demographic characteristics
- (ii) frequency of checking the social media account per day (represented by x_2 , in the subsequent portion of this paper)

- (iii) number of people they are associated with through social media (represented by x_3)
- (iv) normal time for which they are active in social media per day (x_4)
- (v) number of social media sites they have associated themselves with (x_5)
- (vi) whether they are habituated to use mobile in dark (x_6)
- (vii) their main purpose for using social media (x_7)
- (viii) their view as to whether they are addicted to social media (x_8)
- (ix) their view as to whether social media is hampering our traditional culture (x_9)
- (x) view as to whether social media is affecting purchasing behavior (x_{10})
- (xi) their view as to whether social media is hampering their study time (x_{11}), and
- (xii) how long they have been using social media (x_{12})

Some of the responses corresponding to the above mentioned points produced ratio data (like (ii), (iii), (iv), (v) and (xii)), some produced nominal (categorical) data (like (vi), (vii), (viii), (ix), (x) and (xi)).

While providing their responses related to each of the points (viii), (ix), (x) and (xi) respondents were restricted to give their views within three options, namely 'agree', 'moderated' and 'disagree'.

All these data obtained from the respondents' responses regarding the above mentioned points have been subjected to various statistical analyses like discriminant analysis, F-test for comparing means with the help of SPSS 16.0 to study the impact of social media on various aspect of academic life of the students.

IV. DATA AND EMPIRICAL RESULTS

A. Analysis Related To Addiction To Social Media

On the basis of the respondents' views on 'addiction to social media' (x_8), respondents may be classified into three categories: (I) Not addicted, (II) Neutral and (III) Addicted. To check whether this categorical classification is dependent

on variable like x2, x3, x4, x5 and x12, a discriminant analysis has been done taking the categorical variable x8 as dependent variable and the ratio variables like x2, x3, x4, x5 and x12 as the independent variables. Fisher's linear discriminant equations for each of the three categories has been obtained and displayed in Table 1. The test of equality of the group means for each of the independent variables have been calculated and displayed in Table 2. The standardized canonical discriminant function coefficients are depicted in Table 3. From the result depicted in the above tables it is clear that the variable 'addiction to social media' (x8) is significantly affected only by the variable 'how long they have been using social media' (x12). Specifically, from Table 2 it is observed that the mean value of variable x12 is significantly different in at least one of the groups or categories (I), (II) or (III), F being 8.351 with significance value equal to 0.000 and Wilk's lambda being 0.857. However, the remaining variables do not play any significant role in classifying the individuals into the three categories of addiction to social media.

<Table: 1>

<Table: 2>

<Table: 3>

Further, it is obtained that out of the 103 respondents, 41 respondents (i.e., 39.80%) feel that they are not addicted to social media, 30 respondents (i.e., 29.13%) are unable to realize whether they are addicted to social media or not and 32 respondents (i.e., 31.07%) feel that they are addicted to social media (as shown in Fig. 1).

<Figure: 1>

B. Analysis Related to the Impact of Social Media on Our Tradition and Culture

In order to verify whether the respondents/ students feel that social media is hampering our tradition and culture, respondents on the basis of their views, have been classified into three categories: (I) Hampering, (II) Neutral and (III) Not hampering. Also in order to study the impact of different variables like x2, x3, x4, x5 and x12 on this classification, taking x9 (social media is hampering our traditional culture) as the categorical dependent variable and x2, x3, x4, x5 and x12 as the independent variables, a discriminant analysis has been done.

However, as revealed by the Table 4, for each of the variables the means across the three groups/categories are equal. Thus, none of the variables is having any significant effect on this categorization. Out of the 103 respondents there were 40 female respondents and 63 male respondents. Taking only the responses of the female respondents, an identical analysis has been done. A striking revelation from the outcome of this analysis is that variable x2 (frequency of checking the social media account per day) is taking significantly different mean values across the three groups/categories as shown in Table 6. Thus for female respondents 'frequency of checking the social media account per day' is having a significant impact on their views as to whether social media is hampering traditional culture. This fact is further supported by Table 5 where we find that corresponding to variable x2 the F- statistic value is 3.76 with significance level of 0.033.

<Table: 4>

<Table: 5>

<Table: 6>

C. Analysis related to the impact of social media on the purchasing pattern of customers

Social media is widely accepted to have played a crucial role in bringing a revolutionary change in the purchasing pattern of customers. This has made us interested to study the impact of social media on the purchasing pattern of the students. With this objective, on the basis of the respondents' view as to whether 'social media is affecting purchasing behavior' (x10) the respondents are again classified into three categories: (I) Not affecting, (II) Neutral and (III) Affecting. Now following the identical procedure adopted in the previous analyses within this paper, discriminant analysis has been done and its result is visible from Table 7, which reveals that the two variables, 'number of social media sites they have associated with' (x5) and 'how long they have been using social media' (x12) are significantly affecting the purchasing behavior of the respondents. The means of x5 across the three categories are not all same, at least one is significantly different with F-value equals to 3.742 and corresponding level of significance is 0.027. The case is same for x12, i.e., at least for one category the mean value of x12 is significantly different from others, F-value being 3.542

with 0.033 level of significance. Table 8 displays the linear discriminant functions and Table 9 displays the standardized canonical discriminant function coefficients.

<Table: 7>

<Table: 8>

<Table: 9>

D. Analysis related to the impact of social media on hampering the study time of the students

There is a common believe among the parents of the students as well as the students of the present generation that high involvement in social media is eating away the study time of the students. Driven by the curiosity to test the authenticity of this belief, on the basis of the respondents' views as to whether social media is hampering their study time, we have classified the respondents into three categories: (I) Not hampering, (II) Neutral and (III) Hampering. To test whether this classification is affected by variables like x_2 , x_3 , x_4 , x_5 and x_{12} , a discriminant analysis has been done by taking x_{11} (whether social media is hampering their study time) as dependent categorical variable, and x_2 , x_3 , x_4 , x_5 and x_{12} as independent variables. The result of this analysis (as visible from Table 10) indicates that none of these independent variables (apart from variable x_3 to some extent) is having any significant impact on respondents' views as to whether social media is hampering their study time. Table 10 shows that in the context of testing the equality of the means of variable x_3 in the three categories, the F-value is 2.838 with significance level being 0.063. Thus considering 10% level of significance one may state that mean of x_3 is different for at least one category. Hence, x_3 may have some impact on the respondents' views as to whether social media is hampering their study time. It has been found that out of 103 respondents, 26 respondents (25.24%) are of the view that social media is not hampering their study time, 20 respondents (i.e., 19.42%) are neutral about their opinion and 57 respondents (i.e., 55.34%) believed that social media is hampering their study time (as shown in Fig. 2).

<Table: 10>

<Figure: 2>

We extended this study by segregating the data on the basis of gender. The analysis in the said extension revealed some interesting facts. It is seen that for male respondents, none of the variables x2, x3, x4, x5 and x12 has any significant effect on their views regarding the effect of social media on hampering their study. However, for female respondents (as visible from Table 11), the variable x12 is having a significant effect (significance level being 0.017) on their views regarding the effect of social media on hampering their study. Variable x2 is also having an effect (significance level being 0.057) for female respondents.

<Table: 11>

E. Analysis Related to the Determination of Main Purpose for Using Social Media

From the responses obtained, it was found that there are mainly four purposes for using social media, such as gaining Knowledge (Category - I), gathering Information (Category - II), Communication (Category - III) and Entertainment (Category - IV). Taking the variable 'main purpose for using social media' i.e., x7 as the dependent categorical variable and x2, x3, x4, x5 and x12 as independent variables a discriminant analysis is carried out to check whether these independent variables have any effect on this categorization (i.e., purpose). The results (as displayed in Table 12) shows that only the variable x12 is affecting the purpose of using social media. In the context of testing the equality of the means of variable x12 in the four different categories, it is found that the F-value is 4.35 with the significance being just 0.006. Thus for respondents using social media with different purposes, the durations for which they are using social media are also different. Table 13 shows that to the respondents using social media for relatively shorter duration (mean being 3.94 years), the main purpose for using social media is for satisfying their inquisitiveness for 'Knowledge'. As their association with the social media increases (mean duration being 4.027 years), they start using social media as a medium of 'Communication'. With further increase in association, their purpose shift to gathering 'Information' (mean duration of association being 5.00 years) and thereafter culminates at 'Entertainment' (mean duration being 5.43 years).

<Table: 12>

<Table: 13>

V. CONCLUSION

With the advent and popularization of social media, our society has undergone a revolutionary change. Specially, the social life/ lifestyle of the modern generation is consistently becoming dependent on social media. In this paper, we have tried to investigate the effect of social media on the academic, social and cultural life of the students in the district of Burdwan, with special reference to The University of Burdwan and University Institute of Technology. Employing several statistical analyses such as discriminant analysis, F-test, descriptive statistics etc., the study has resulted in various interesting revelations.

Whether a student is addicted to social media is solely dependent on the duration for which he/she is using social media. None of the other factors like 'the number of sites they are associated with', 'frequency of checking', 'number of people they are associated through social media' is having any impact on the addiction of the students to social media.

On the whole in general, it has been found that social media is not playing any role in hampering our traditional culture. However, if we consider the views of the female respondents, then strikingly it reveals that the 'frequency of checking the social media account per day' is having a significant impact on our traditional culture.

In order to test the common belief that social media is changing the purchasing pattern of customers, our study on the views of UG/PG students has isolated out two factors, which significantly affect the purchasing behavior. Those two factors are 'number of social media sites with which the customer is associated' and 'duration for which the customer has been using social media. All other factors seemed to be insignificant in this regard.

The study further reveals that apart from the factor 'the number of people a student is associated through social media' (to some extent), no other factor considered in this study is believed (by the male students) to have any significant impact in hampering their study time. However female respondents' views are different. According to them 'the total duration of time they have been using social media' is playing a key role in hampering their study time. However contrastingly, from the views of all the respondents it has been obtained that

only 25.24% believed that social media is not hampering their study time and 55.34% believed that social media is hampering their study time.

From the responses obtained, four main purposes of using social media have been identified, namely gaining Knowledge, gathering Information, Communication and Entertainment. Very interesting finding is that this purpose is significantly dependent on and is guided by 'how long a student is using social media'. It has been observed that mostly students enter social media in search of knowledge. However, with the passage of time as their association with the social media increases, they start using social media as a medium of 'Communication'. With further increase in association their purpose shift to gathering 'Information' and thereafter culminates at 'Entertainment'.

For further research, one may carry out similar analysis in other geographic areas with respondents of different age groups and different professions. Further, apart from the independent variables considered in this study one may identify other variables playing crucial roles in determining the effect of social media.

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List of Figures

Fig. 1: Addiction to Social Media

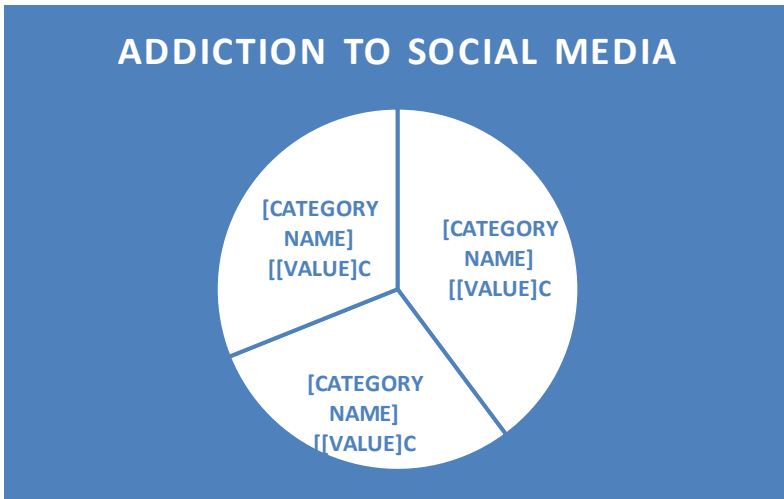
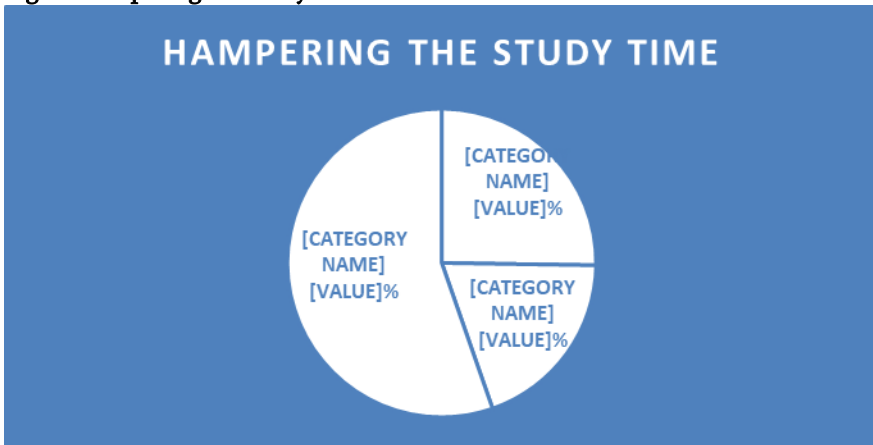


Fig. 2: Hampering the study time



List of Tables

Table 1: Classification Function Coefficients (for addiction as the dependent variable)

| Independent variables ↓ | addiction | | |
|----------------------------|-----------|------|------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| x_2 | .058 | .084 | .055 |
| x_3 | .000 | .000 | .000 |

| Independent variables ↓ | addiction | | |
|--|-----------|--------|--------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| x_4 | .017 | .018 | .018 |
| x_5 | .743 | .601 | .611 |
| x_{12} | 1.237 | 1.814 | 1.427 |
| (Constant) | -6.254 | -8.814 | -6.787 |
| Fisher's linear discriminant functions | | | |

Table 2: Tests of Equality of Category (for Addiction) wise Means of each independent variable

| Independent variables ↓ | Wilks' Lambda | F | df1 | df2 | Sig. |
|-------------------------|---------------|-------|-----|-----|------|
| x_2 | .984 | .825 | 2 | 100 | .441 |
| x_3 | .972 | 1.440 | 2 | 100 | .242 |
| x_4 | .999 | .031 | 2 | 100 | .969 |
| x_5 | .988 | .597 | 2 | 100 | .552 |
| x_{12} | .857 | 8.351 | 2 | 100 | .000 |

Table 3 : Standardized Canonical Discriminant Function Coefficients (for Addiction)

| Independent variables ↓ | Function | |
|----------------------------|----------|-------|
| | 1 | 2 |
| x_2 | .356 | -.449 |
| x_3 | -.319 | .725 |
| x_4 | .065 | .251 |
| x_5 | -.219 | -.643 |
| x_{12} | .902 | .257 |

Table 4: Tests of Equality of Category (for hampering culture) wise Means of each independent variable considering overall respondents

| Independent variables ↓ | Wilks' Lambda | F | df1 | df2 | Sig. |
|-------------------------|---------------|-------|-----|-----|------|
| x_2 | .995 | .251 | 2 | 100 | .778 |
| x_3 | .979 | 1.087 | 2 | 100 | .341 |
| x_4 | .960 | 2.069 | 2 | 100 | .132 |
| x_5 | .996 | .200 | 2 | 100 | .819 |
| x_{12} | .999 | .073 | 2 | 100 | .930 |

Table 5: Tests of Equality of Category (for hampering culture) wise Means of each independent variable considering female respondents

| Independent variables ↓ | Wilks' Lambda | F | df1 | df2 | Sig. |
|----------------------------|---------------|-------|-----|-----|------|
| <i>x2</i> | .832 | 3.736 | 2 | 37 | .033 |
| <i>x3</i> | .987 | .248 | 2 | 37 | .781 |
| <i>x4</i> | .847 | 3.348 | 2 | 37 | .046 |
| <i>x5</i> | .992 | .153 | 2 | 37 | .858 |
| <i>x12</i> | .997 | .048 | 2 | 37 | .953 |

Table 6: Category (for hampering culture) wise Means of 'frequency of checking social media account per day' (variable *x2*) considering female respondents

| Independent variable ↓ | Mean for category I | Mean for category II | Mean for category III |
|------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| <i>x2</i> | 6.4167 | 7.0714 | 13.7857 |

Table 7: Tests of Equality of Category (of 'Affecting purchasing behaviour') wise Means of each independent variable

| Independent variables ↓ | Wilks' Lambda | F | df1 | df2 | Sig. |
|----------------------------|---------------|-------|-----|-----|------|
| <i>x2</i> | .989 | .541 | 2 | 100 | .584 |
| <i>x3</i> | .985 | .740 | 2 | 100 | .480 |
| <i>x4</i> | .986 | .699 | 2 | 100 | .500 |
| <i>x5</i> | .930 | 3.742 | 2 | 100 | .027 |
| <i>x12</i> | .934 | 3.542 | 2 | 100 | .033 |

Table 8: Classification Function Coefficients (for 'affecting purchasing behaviour' as the dependent variable)

| Independent variables ↓ | Affecting purchasing behaviour | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------|----------|--------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| <i>x2</i> | .061 | .041 | .059 |
| <i>x3</i> | .000 | 9.524E-5 | .000 |
| <i>x4</i> | .018 | .017 | .018 |
| <i>x5</i> | .754 | .498 | .873 |
| <i>x12</i> | 1.114 | 1.470 | 1.411 |
| (Constant) | -6.005 | -6.377 | -7.725 |

Fisher's linear discriminant functions

Table 9: Standardized Canonical Discriminant Function Coefficients (for 'Affecting purchasing behaviour')

| Independent variables ↓ | Function | |
|----------------------------|----------|-------|
| | 1 | 2 |
| x_2 | .326 | -.001 |
| x_3 | .238 | -.039 |
| x_4 | .083 | .034 |
| x_5 | .751 | .471 |
| x_{12} | -.422 | .865 |

Table 10: Tests of Equality of Category (for 'hampering study') wise Means of each independent variable, considering overall respondents

| Independent variables ↓ | Wilks' Lambda | F | df1 | df2 | Sig. |
|----------------------------|---------------|-------|-----|-----|------|
| x_2 | .979 | 1.092 | 2 | 100 | .340 |
| x_3 | .946 | 2.838 | 2 | 100 | .063 |
| x_4 | .971 | 1.479 | 2 | 100 | .233 |
| x_5 | .989 | .572 | 2 | 100 | .566 |
| x_{12} | .990 | .483 | 2 | 100 | .618 |

Table 11: Tests of Equality of Category (for 'hampering study') wise Means of independent variables, considering Female respondents

| Independent variables ↓ | Wilks' Lambda | F | df1 | df2 | Sig. |
|----------------------------|---------------|-------|-----|-----|------|
| x_2 | .856 | 3.100 | 2 | 37 | .057 |
| x_{12} | .802 | 4.562 | 2 | 37 | .017 |



Table 12: Tests of Equality of Category (for 'purpose of using social media') wise Means of each independent variable, considering overall respondents

| Independent variables ↓ | Wilks' Lambda | F | df1 | df2 | Sig. |
|----------------------------|---------------|-------|-----|-----|------|
| x_2 | .961 | 1.334 | 3 | 99 | .268 |
| x_3 | .983 | .555 | 3 | 99 | .646 |
| x_4 | .967 | 1.111 | 3 | 99 | .348 |
| x_5 | .965 | 1.201 | 3 | 99 | .314 |
| x_{12} | .883 | 4.354 | 3 | 99 | .006 |

Table 13: Purpose of using social media vs experience in social media.

| Purpose → | Knowledge (1) | Information (2) | Communication (3) | Entertainment (4) |
|---------------------------|---------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| How long in SM (in years) | 3.9412 | 5.0000 | 4.0278 | 5.4333 |

ABOUT AUTHOR

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