



A STUDY OF ATTITUDE OF STUDENT TEACHERS TOWARDS SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES

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Abstract :

This study has been undertaken in order to find out the attitude of student teachers towards Social Networking Sites as a collaborative tool. In today's age of digital learning and post Covid -19 scenario, is it truly possible to use SNS for the purpose of teaching and learning is a question that all irrespective of whether belonging to the field of education or otherwise seem to be asking. Though educational institutions moved the entire curriculum transaction in online mode, but many developing societies are still struggling to cope up with the demands of virtual learning. Educationists all over the world are predicting that Blended Learning practices is the future. If so, then what do prospective teachers feel about the same. How inclined are they to using Social Networking Sites (SNS) as collaborative tool? The findings of the study reveals that the future teachers are open to using SNS as a techno pedagogy.

Keywords : *Social Networking Sites, Student teachers, Attitude, Collaboration*

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Introduction :

Covid-19 pandemic and the subsequent lockdown have resulted in a complete overhaul of the communication between people on daily basis. The web-based resources and the manner in which social media or social networking services/sites (SNSs) are utilized by people to maintain and sustain relationships professionally and personally have become ubiquitous. Social Networking has been defined as a range of activities that are facilitated by social technologies and operationalized by a group of people popularly described as 'Digital Natives' (Juang, 2010; Prensky, 2001a, 2001b, 2004). It is amazing to see that today's youth are majorly utilizing social networking technologies in two very significant manners. First, the youth engage in 'friendship-based ways', which help them to be 'connected'. Secondly, the youth is using Social networks for connecting with people with the same interests or passions, but not necessarily with people whom they know or are familiar with. The youngsters of today are engaging more and more in 'self-directed learning' which is more peer-based. Hence in the 'peer-based learning' scenario, they become teachers as well as a learner in the same space. In such a learning scenario, the youngsters are able to learn things that the school



can't or won't teach them. More than anything else, social networking technologies are the new participatory and active methodologies being adopted worldwide, particularly for "collaborative working", which is understood as a means of achieving identical academic goals via the exchange and expansion of information among small peer groups.

Many educational researchers opine that Social Networking Sites have a tremendous possibility to carve the manner in which a learner will learn. (Barbour and Plough 2009; Drexler, Baralt, and Dawson 2008). It appears reasonable that educators should make instructional use of the social nature of SNS in order to create optimal, natural environments for learning to take place (Mills, 2011). Researchers have analyzed interaction that has taken place in social networking sites and have identified sharing of ideas, providing of peer feedback, and engagement in critical thinking (Selwyn, 2007). On the other hand, learning has traditionally assumed a winner- take all competitive form rather than a cooperative form. It is often seen that cooperation is maximum when there is self-interest involved and this itself becomes an extremely narrow view of why there should be cooperation in the classroom. In contrast to this Networked learning, is dedicated to a goal of the social that stresses cooperation, interactivity, mutual benefit, and social engagement. The power of ten working interactively will invariably outstrip the power of one looking to beat out the other nine (Johnson and Johnson, 1989). Bangert (2009) and others have empirically shown that sense of classroom cohesiveness is an essential element of successful e-learning. Summers and Svinicki (2007) found that the students in cooperative learning classrooms perceived higher sense of group mind and reported greater motivation in achievement goals than those in non-cooperative learning classrooms. The educational potential of Social Networking Platforms is infinite, though collaborative working is its most significant educational benefit. This is mainly because Social Networking Sites are not bound by the space and time constraints of a formal learning environment. Despite the broad consensus, on the amazing benefit of most social networking platforms, it is interesting to note that there hasn't truly been rampant use of Social Networking sites. The educational exploitation of these resources is limited to isolated experiences in higher education more so in teacher education, especially in a developing country like India. The question that is dodging most educationists today is whether we can bring together elements of models and evidence from informal learning theory with observations of current and emerging behaviors in social networking sites to inform formal education. Educationists, industrialists and policymakers all over the world urge educators to make optimum use of such technologies at all levels of teaching. The 2008 Horizon Report suggests, "...the challenge faced by the educational community is to seize those opportunities [for use of social networking and other collaborative tools] and develop effective ways to measure academic progress as it happens." Learning in digital age, the student teachers too use social networking sites not different from other students. Some use it as a fashionable tool or use it as a regular communication tool. And some use it as communication tools for teaching and learning during the teaching practicum (Suwannathachote, 2012). This is also in congruence with research findings by Schlager et al. (2009) that suggests that teachers are comfortable and knowledgeable enough to use social networking for educational purposes with students. The study also notes the potential for online social networks to become central context for student and teacher learning and catalyst for instructional improvement. According to



Schlager et al., " research must help education communities convert enthusiasm for online social networking into reliable evidence of how, when, and why online social networks do and do not advance learning, and we must develop scalable and replicable models that maximize the value and benefits of emerging social networking models and technologies" (p.87)

This study, therefore, explored the attitude of student teachers towards use of social networking sites.

Aim of the Study :

The main aim was to study the attitude of the student teachers towards social networking.

Objectives of the study :

With a view to achieving the stated aim of the study, the following objectives were formulated

1. To construct the tool to measure the attitude of the student teachers towards social networking.
2. To study the attitude of the student teachers towards social networking with respect to (a) Gender (b) Age

Hypotheses :

In order to achieve the aforesaid objectives, the following hypotheses of the present study were formulated:

1. There is no significant difference in the attitude of the male and female student teachers towards social networking.
2. There is no significant difference in the attitude of the student teachers towards social networking with respect to their ages.

Methodology:

For the present investigation, the researcher used the Descriptive method of the comparative type.

Sampling Technique :

The technique of random sampling was employed to select student teachers from the colleges of education situated in Greater Mumbai.

Sample:

For the present study the sample size of 300 student teachers doing their B.Ed. Degree Course from different Colleges of Education situated in Greater Mumbai were selected.

Tools :

As no tool to measure student's attitude towards social networking was available, tool was constructed to measure the same. Attitude Towards social networking sites Scale [ATSNS] investigated student teachers' attitudes toward SNS with respect to time required in planning, preparation and implementation of social networking sites, the infrastructure required in social networking sites, learner development brought about in social networking sites, processes involved in social networking sites, classroom discipline in social networking sites.



Split half reliability for the aforementioned tool was calculated as 0.79 and Cronbach alpha coefficient for the same was calculated as 0.89.

Data Collection :

The entire data collection process took almost three months. Due permission was taken from the heads of the colleges of education before the data collection. Student teachers available on the day of data collection were administered the tool and the demographic details were also collected from the subjects.

Data Analysis :

Collected data was tabulated and was then analyzed using Inferential techniques. Inferential techniques used to analyze the data are t-test. The t-test was used to compare the scores of Attitude towards Social Networking Sites with respect to gender and age.

Testing the Hypothesis :

Hypothesis 1 : There is no significant difference in the attitude of the student teachers towards Social Networking Sites with respect to gender. The statistical technique used to test this hypothesis was t-test. The following table shows the significance of difference in level of attitude towards Social Networking Site of male and female Student teachers.

TABLE - 1
**Relevant Statistics Of Attitude of the Student Teachers towards
Social Networking Sites with respect to Gender**

	Male	Female
Mean	72.9677419	75.84507
Variance	42.4322581	70.332797
Observations	41	251
Pooled Variance	61.9626352	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
Df	100	
t Stat	-1.6979873	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.04630998	
tCritical one-tail	1.66023433	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.09261997	
tCritical two-tail	1.98397147	


Interpretation :

Calculated 't' is 0.092 and Tabulated 't' is 1.983. Since $0.09261997 < 1.98397147$
Therefore calculated 't' is lesser than tabulated 't'. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted.

Conclusion :

There is no significant difference in level of attitude of the student teachers towards Social Networking Site with respect to gender.

Hypothesis 2 : There is no significant difference in the attitude of the student teachers educators towards Social Networking Sites with respect to age. The statistical technique used to test this hypothesis was t-test.

The following table shows the significance of difference in level of attitude of student teachers towards social networking site whose age is more than or equals to 30 years and student teachers whose age is up to 29 years.

TABLE - 2
**Relevant Statistics Of Attitude of the Student Teachers towards
Social Networking Sites with respect to Age**

	Male	Female
More than or equals to 30 years	Up to 29 years	
Mean	73.2162162	75.969231
Variance	81.5075075	50.967788
Observations	41	259
Pooled Variance	61.9620873	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
Df	100	
t Stat	-1.6982552	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.04628462	
t Critical one-tail	1.66023433	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.09256924	
t Critical two-tail	1.98397147	

Interpretation :

Calculated 't' = 0.09256924 and Tabulated 't' = 1.98397147. Since $0.09256924 < 1.98397147$. Calculated 't' is lesser than tabulated 't'. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted.

Conclusion :

There is no significant difference in level of attitude of the student teachers towards Social Networking Site with respect to age.



Major Findings and Conclusions:

The following are the conclusions of the present study

- There is no significant difference in level of attitude of the student teachers towards educational use of social networking sites with respect to gender. It is seen that both male and female student teachers are comfortable with the idea of using Social Networking sites in education.
- There is no significant difference in level of attitude of the student teachers towards educational use of social networking sites with respect to age. It has been observed that irrespective of the ages the student teachers are open to the idea of using Social Networking Sites in education.

Suggestions :

For the colleges of education :

- The workshop on educational use of social networking site may be organized for student teachers.
- The topic of Social Networking Sites could be included in the B.Ed. Syllabus
- The training should provide to student teachers for success of the strategy.
- A suitable pedagogy needs to develop for the use of Social Networking Site.

For further research :

- Attitude towards educational use of Social Networking sites of the teachers teaching at different levels.
- Students' expectations of Social networking sites.
- Effectiveness of different social networking sites in the field of education.

It is therefore, recommended that the existing teacher training course should be practical oriented incorporating the pedagogy of using Social Networking Site in the classroom, so that the teachers of tomorrow are equipped and well versed with all the latest skills and innovative techniques required to teach in the classrooms of tomorrow.

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