USAGE OF ONLINE SOCIAL NETWORKS AND EMOTIONAL MATURITY OF STUDENTS AT HIGHER SECONDARY LEVEL

Education

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ABSTRACT

The study is an attempt to find the usage of online social networks and its influence on emotional maturity among students at higher secondary level. 1000 higher secondary school students were selected as samples. Survey method was used. The study revealed that majority of students are users of online social networks and it has great influence on their emotional maturity. Also the students having high social network usage have less emotional maturity.

KEYWORDS

online social networks, emotional maturity, higher secondary level students

1. Introduction

Online Social networking is a type of virtual communication that enables people to connect with each other. This concept arises from the basic need of human beings to stay together in groups forming a community. Social networking is a phenomenon which has existed since society began. Recently, usage of online social networking sites has grown rapidly. It took 38 years to attract 50 million listeners to wireless radio system, 13 years for the television to attract 50 million viewers; in 4 years the internet has attracted 50 million surfers. IPods took 3 years to reach 50 million users, but Facebook, one of the leading social networking sites, had over 200 million users in just 12 months. This shows the penetration capacity and popularity of social networking sites. It serves as a platform and forum for the common man to share information, post their opinions and promote campaigns (Pempek, Yermolayeva,& Calvert, 2009)

The increased use of Social Networking Websites has become an international phenomenon in the past several years. What started out as a hobby for some computer literate people has become a social norm and way of life for people from all over the world. Teenagers and young adults have especially embraced these sites as a way to connect with their peers, share information, reinvent their personalities and showcase their social lives (Boyd, 2007).

In spite of the numerous benefits of the social networking sites, parents are always complaining about the drastic changes in their children's behavior. Adolescents are very daring and will try to imitate everything they see on those online social networks. The result is dangerous and unacceptable habits and practices such as prostitution and use of drugs that significantly affects their life. Many students become wasted due to the use of harmful substances that is mostly a social media influence. Social networks even have caused suicidal behavior. All these shows that adolescents become less mature in their emotions (Boyd & Ellison, 2007).

"The success of a person solely depends on the art of managing emotions which includes practical skills and the ability to handle people." Goleman (1995)

Emotional maturity is a requirement for starting and maintaining relationship Emotional maturity has different levels. Its initial level comprises of being aware of our effect on our own life and being responsible for it, not putting their failures on others. Next comes the part where a person starts to get honest with his/her own emotions, not projecting idealistic emotions but being comfortable in exhibiting the real emotions. The next level comprises of the task to become emotionally decisive which can be attained by respecting our own feelings. And, finally reaching the level of emotional detachment which is the direct consequence of the true understanding of emotions and therefore, letting go of all emotions, whether good or bad; leaving one feeling fulfilled and happy(Camphell, Assanand & Paula, 2003).

2. Significance of the study

Usage of Social Networking Sites might have great influence on the development emotional maturity of students. Present day students are widely using modern Social Networking Sites for their own communication and interaction. Hence, it becomes crucial to analyze the influence of social networking sites on adolescents. Therefore the present study has been proposed as a pioneering attempt to understand the influence of online social networks on emotional maturity of students at higher secondary level.

3. Objectives of the study

1. To identify the users and non users of online social networks among students at higher secondary level
2. To find out the extent of usage of online social networks among students at higher secondary level.
3. To find out the level of emotional maturity among students at higher secondary level.
4. To compare the emotional maturity of users and non users of online social networks among students at higher secondary level.
5. To compare the emotional maturity of students having high, average and low online social network usage.

4. Hypotheses of the study

H1: There are users and non users of online social networks among students at higher secondary level.

H2: Usage of online social networks is moderate among students at higher secondary level.

H3: Students at higher secondary level have moderate emotional maturity.

H4: There exists significant difference in the emotional maturity of users and non users of online social networks among students at higher secondary level.

H5: There exists significant difference in the emotional maturity of students having high, average and low online social network usage

5. Method adopted for the study

Considering the objectives and hypotheses of the study the researcher has chosen survey method for obtaining primary data for the present study.

6. Tools used for the study

The data required for the study were collected through the following tools.

1. Questionnaire on usage of Online Social Networks developed by the researcher.
2. Emotional maturity Scale developed by the researcher.

7. Statistical techniques used

The different statistical techniques used in this study were mean, standard deviation, t test and ANOVA.

8. Data analysis

8.1 Identification of users and non users of online social networks.

In order to identify the users and non users of online social networks a questionnaire on usage of online social networks was administered to 1000 higher secondary school students from 10 schools of three districts of Kerala state. Among them 714 students were users of online social networks and 286 were non users. That means 71.4% of higher secondary school students were members of online social networks and 28.6% of students were not members of online social networks.

8.2 Level of usage of online social networks among students at higher secondary level

The maximum score was 123 and minimum score was 50. The mean and standard deviation calculated were 80.29 and 15.79 respectively. Using this mean and standard deviation students were classified into three categories. From the calculation it is obtained that 122 students (17.09%) students have high usage of online social networks, 467 students (65.41%) have moderate usage and 125 students (17.51%) students have low usage of online social networks.

8.3 Level of emotional maturity among students at higher secondary level

In order to find out the level of emotional maturity an emotional maturity scale was administered to 1000 higher secondary school students. The maximum score obtained was 226 and minimum score was 101. The mean and standard deviation calculated were 163.12and 17.87 respectively. Using this mean and SD students were classified into three categories. On calculating in this way it is obtained that 172 students (17.2%) possess high emotional maturity, 674 students (67.4%) possess moderate emotional maturity and 154 students (15.4%) possess low emotional maturity.

8.4 Comparison of emotional maturity of users and non users of online social networks among students at higher secondary level.

Test of significance of difference between means is employed to find significant difference between Emotional maturity of users and non users. The details of the test are given in table 8.1

Table 8.1 *Data and result of the test of significance of mean difference in the emotional maturity of users and non users of online social networks.*

Subsamples	N	Mean	SD	df	t value	level of significance
Users	714	161.22	17.97	998	5.37	p<.01
Non users	286	167.84	16.71			

From table 8.1 it can be seen that the obtained t value for users and non users (5.37) is significant at .01 level since it is greater than the corresponding table value (2.58)for degrees of freedom 998. Thus it can be concluded that there is significant difference in the emotional maturity of users and non users of online social networks among students at higher secondary level. The mean values shown in the table indicate that non users have high emotional maturity.

8.5 Comparison of emotional maturity of students having high, average and low online social networks usage.

To find out whether there is any significant difference in the emotional maturity of students at higher secondary level having high, average and low online social network usage, the researcher employed ANOVA. The details of the test are given in table 8.2.

Table 8.2 *Result of ANOVA of the emotional maturity of students at Higher Secondary level having high, average and low online social network usage.*

		Between groups			Within groups				
Level of usage	no.of stude nts	sum of squares	mean square variance	df	sum of square s	mean square variance	df	F	level of significan ce
High	125								
Average	467	11646.47	5823.24	2	218380.59	307.15	711	18.96	P<.01
Low	122								

It is observed from the table 8.2 that the obtained F value (18.96) is greater than the table value (4.60) at .01 level of significance. Hence we reject the null hypothesis which means there is significant difference in the emotional maturity of students at higher secondary level having high, average and low online social network usage.
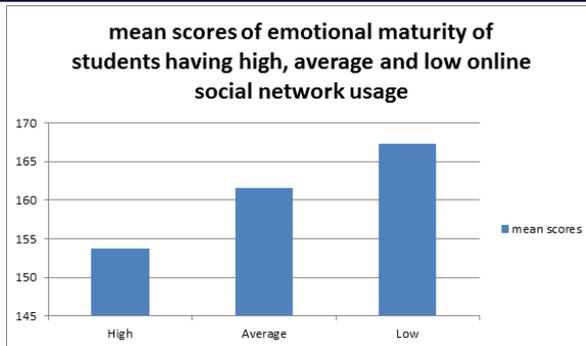

Figure 1: comparison of emotional maturity of students having high, average and low online social network usage.

From the figure it is observed that there is significant difference in the emotional maturity of students having high, average and low online social network usage. Also it can be observed that the students having high online social network usage have less emotional maturity when compared to other two groups.

9. Findings and conclusion

The following were the findings of the study:

1. Most of the students at higher secondary level are users of social networking sites and only a minority are non users
2. Majority of students at higher secondary level have moderate usage of online social networks. The students having high usage and low usage are a few in numbers.
3. Majority of students at higher secondary level possess moderate emotional maturity. The students having high and low emotional maturity are a few in numbers.
4. There is significant difference in the emotional maturity of users and non users of online social networks. The mean values indicate that non users have high emotional maturity when compared to users.
5. There is significant difference in the emotional maturity of students having high, average and low online social network usage. Also the students having high social network usage have less emotional maturity when compared to students having average and low social network usage.

Hence it is important for the teachers and parents to have knowledge on their student's level of usage of Social Networking Sites. They should take special care to improve the social interaction of the students with real world and hence to improve emotional maturity. They should encourage the students to actively participate in co curricular activities of the school. Also the interaction between teachers and students as well as between the parents and children should be improved.

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