

## **Usage of Social Networking Tools by Researchers of Maharshi Dayanand University, Rohtak: A Study**

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### **Abstract**

*This study explores the significance of Social Networking Tools (SNTs) among research scholars. Particularly social media platforms the academic landscape has witnessed a transformation in communication, collaboration and information exchange. The objectives of this research include assessing the awareness, purposes, preferences, privacy concerns, and challenges associated with the use of SNTs among research scholars. Drawing upon a comprehensive review of literature, which encompasses studies from various disciplines, the research situates itself within the context of evolving digital communication trends and the increasing integration of technology into academic practices. By examining the historical evolution of social networking and its contemporary relevance, this study aims to provide insights into the multifaceted role of SNTs in academic pursuits. Through empirical investigation and analysis, it seeks to contribute to the understanding of how research scholars engage with SNTs, the benefits they derive, and the obstacles they encounter. Ultimately, this research endeavours to shed light on the intricate dynamics between technology and academia, offering implications for educational institutions, policymakers, and researchers alike.*

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**Keywords:** Social Networking Tools (SNTs), Research Scholars, Social Media.

### **1. Introduction**

Starting from the vision of JCR Licklider in 1960s, active discussions were always there to use the networked computers to connect the people to boost their intellects as well as their ability to learn. Tim Berner Lee's World Wide Web also promoted the same as he had foreseen an active suite of tools to allow users to create rather than just browsing passively. Social networking began in 1978 with the Bulletin Board System (BBS). It went from BBS to messaging systems like messengers to Fotologs where people shares their photographs accompanied by ideas, feelings etc. and so on. Then the social media reached the professionals in the form of LinkedIn in 2003. 2004 is considered the year of social networks as it witnesses the origin of some most popular social networking tools like Flickr and Facebook. In academic community, students today are actively sharing their views, experiences and are getting actively involved in the discussions with their peers through

social networking tools. Internet has made it accessible to each and every patron at their own convenience. Presently the Social Media Tools are becoming the part of our life in the all kinds of activities performed by the individuals.

## **2. Objectives**

This study was conducted to find out the usage of SNTs by patrons of Maharshi Dayanand University, Rohtak. The following objectives were chosen for this study.

- To find out awareness to use SNTs among the research scholars of MDU, Rohtak;
- To find out the frequency of usage of SNTs by the respondents;
- To find out the time spent by respondents on SNTs;
- To find out the most preferred SNT through usage analysis;
- To find out the purpose of using SNTs;
- To find out the constraints faced by the respondents in accessing SNTs.

## **3. Review of Literature**

The review of literature serves as a structured examination of earlier research endeavours pertaining to the topic. Some of the major reviews are presented here.

Parhamnia (2023) conducted a study at G.H Arts, Science, and Commerce College in Haveri, revealing the significant role of Social Networking Sites (SNSs), particularly in education, among younger generations. The research concluded that SNSs play a vital role in educational growth, with a majority of respondents (63.1%) acknowledging their usefulness in academia. The study of Chavan et al. (2023) at Shri L.K. Khot College of Commerce in Sankeshwar, surveyed 180 students predominantly comprising females (61.11%), emphasized the popularity of SNSs among students across different fields. The research concluded that majority of respondents (40.0%) were using twice a week in order to fulfil information needs. Holeyannavar et al. (2023) investigated the impact of social networks on university students' utilization of academic libraries. Their study, involving 461 participants, highlighted a concerning trend where a substantial number of students preferred spending time on social networks rather than utilizing university libraries. The research identified several predictor variables, including social influence and information retrieval, contributing to this inclination. This study sheds light on the negative effect of social networks on library usage among students. The study of Bakar and Zaini (2021) explored various factors influencing social media usage, emphasizing its significance as a marketing tool in contemporary society. Despite the evident importance of social media in marketing, the study noted a lack of research in this area, indicating a gap in current literature.

Hailu & Wu (2020) conducted a comprehensive analysis of academic social networking sites (ASNs) in scholarly communication. Their research focused on understanding the interplay between social interactions and technology in ASN usage, emphasizing motivations and impacts. This study contributes to a better understanding of ASNs and highlights the need for further exploration in this evolving field. Radford and colleagues (2020) investigated the advantages and drawbacks of online platforms for academic networking and research dissemination. While acknowledging the benefits, such as networking opportunities, the study also highlighted concerns regarding privacy and reputational risks associated with these platforms. Another study of Naeem (2019) explored the potential of social networking applications in enhancing knowledge-sharing practices in universities. The study revealed

various ways in which social media tools could positively impact university environments, including facilitating communication and promoting research engagement.

Ibrahim et al. (2018) examined the popularity of Facebook among students at the University of Toyama, Japan, emphasizing its utility in language learning support. Munshi, Mostafa, and Alam (2018) investigated the use of social networking tools for educational purposes among PG students at the University of Rajshahi, Bangladesh. The study highlighted the prevalence of social media usage among students and its impact on academic activities. Backchannel (2017) provided insights into the usage patterns of various social media platforms, emphasizing differences in content and user engagement. The study of Froment, González, and Bohórquez (2017) conducted a bibliographical review on the use of social networks in teacher-student communication, highlighting the prevalence of such interactions in higher education. Goel and Singh (2016) examined the relationship between students' beliefs and social media use in education, emphasizing its positive impact on academic performance.

#### 4. Methodology

For the conduct of the study, research scholars of Social Science (Economics, Political Science, History, Library and Information Science, Law education, Geography, Commerce) stream at Maharshi Dayanand University were chosen as the population. Questionnaire method was adopted to collect data from the respondents. A total of 150 questionnaires were distributed. Out of the 130 questionnaires received back, 108 were found valid for the analysis. MS Excel is used to tabulation and analysis of the data. Statistical methods like percentage are actively used during the study.

#### 5. Data Analysis and Interpretation

##### 5.1 Subject and Gender wise distribution of respondents

Table 1 shows that out of the total 108 respondents, 60.2% are male while the remaining 39.8% were female and nil from the transgender category. It is significantly noted that the number of male research scholar is more as compared to females in most of the departments. Highest number (n=21) of respondents were from the Education discipline and the least (n=8) are from the subject of Law. It is noted during the data collection that all the 108 respondents use internet as well as the SNTs.

**Table 1: Subject and Gender wise distribution of respondents**

Stream	M.Phil. (Male)	M.Phil. (Female)	Ph.D. (Male)	Ph.D. (Female)	Total	Percentage (%)
Commerce	2 (11.1)	4 (22.2)	8 (44.5)	4 (22.2)	18	16.7
Economics	3 (23.1)	3 (23.1)	4 (30.7)	3 (23.1)	13	12
Education	3 (14.3)	5 (23.8)	6 (28.6)	7 (33.3)	21	19.4
Law	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	6 (75)	2 (25)	8	7.4
Library Science	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	7 (70)	3 (30)	10	9.25
Public Admin.	7 (43.8)	3 (18.7)	2 (12.5)	4 (25)	16	14.8
Political Science	4 (33.3)	3 (25)	3 (25)	2 (16.7)	12	11.1
Sociology	4 (40)	0 (0.0)	6 (60)	0 (0.0)	10	9.25
Total	23 (21.3)	19 (17.6)	42 (38.9)	24 (22.2)	108	100

Note: Number given in brackets represent percentage.

## 5.2 Frequency of SNT usage

Table 2 shows that a quite larger portion of the respondents 74 (68.5%) are using SNTs on daily basis. It is interesting to note that only 13.0% respondents accepted that they use SNTs either once/ twice a week or occasionally that shows that SNTs are actively being used by most of the researchers these days.

**Table 2: Frequency of using SNTs by respondents**

S.N.	Frequency	M.Phil. (n=36)	Ph.D. (n=72)	Total
1	Daily	24 (66.7)	50 (69.4)	74 (68.5)
2	Once in a week	1 (2.8)	1 (1.4)	2 (1.9)
3	Twice in a week	0 (0.0)	1 (1.4)	1 (0.9)
4	Once in a month	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
5	Occasionally	3 (8.3)	8 (11.1)	11 (10.2)
6	Any time	8 (22.2)	12 (16.7)	20 (18.5)

Note: Number given in brackets represent percentage.

## 5.3 Awareness about SNTs

Table 3 shows that majority 56.5% and 25.9% of the respondents marked themselves respectively as aware and full aware of SNTs while 25.9% marked themselves as fully aware. It is interesting to note the 16.7 % respondents accepted that they are either less aware of unaware of using SNTs but they use the internet as well as the SNTs.

**Table 3: Awareness of respondents about SNTs**

S.N.	Awareness	M.Phil. (n=36)	Ph.D. (n=72)	Total (n=108)
1	Full Aware	13 (36.1)	15 (20.8)	28 (25.9)
2	Aware	16 (44.4)	45 (62.5)	61 (56.5)
3	Less/Least Aware	6 (16.7)	12 (16.7)	18 (16.7)
4	Not Aware	1 (2.8)	0 (0.0)	1 (0.9)

Note: Number given in brackets represent percentage.

## 5.4 Time Spent on SNTs

Table 4 shows that the largest number of respondents 44 (40.7%) belong to the category that spend two to three hours on social networking tools while 33.3% respondents use SNTs for one to two hours daily. Some of the researchers (1.9%) even stated that they use SNTs for more than five hours on daily basis.

**Table 4: Time spent on SNTs**

S.N.	Time Spent	Responses (%)
1	Below 1 hour	21 (19.4)
2	1-2 hours	36 (33.3)
3	2-3 hours	44 (40.7)
4	3-4 hours	2 (1.9)
5	4-5 hours	3 (2.8)
6	More than 5 hours	2 (1.9)

Note: Number given in brackets represent percentage.

## 5.5 Different SNTs used by respondents

Table 5 shows the data collected by respondents on asking whether they use the mentioned social networking tool or not. The table shows that 100% respondents use Youtube that makes it the most popular SNT among the researcher on the basis of usage. It is followed by Facebook (n=97) and Wikipedia (n=93) which are being used by 89.8% and 86.1% respondents respectively. One of the major thing that came to the light from the data is that MDU researchers are not using LinkedIn very much despite it being one of the major SNTs used to highlight ones academic and professional skills and get recognized. Only 5 respondents (4.6%) marked themselves as the user of LinkedIn SNT.

**Table 5: Usage of different SNTs by the respondents**

S.N.	Usage	Yes (%)	S.N.	Usage	Yes (%)
1	Facebook	97 (89.8)	8	LinkedIn	5 (4.6)
2	Twitter	49 (45.3)	9	Blogs	45 (41.6)
3	YouTube	108 (100.0)	10	Wikipedia	93 (86.1)
4	Teacher Tube	26 (24.1)	11	SlideShare	32 (29.6)
5	Lislinks	8 (7.4)	12	Myspace	3 (2.8)
6	Instagram	45 (41.6)	13	Lis café	0 (0.0)
7	Flickr	4 (3.7)	14	Any other	1 (0.9)

Note: Number given in brackets represent percentage.

## 5.6 Purpose of Using SNTs

Table 6 represents the various reasons for the use of SNTs by the respondents. It is noted that 100% percent respondents marked that they use SNTs for the educational purpose. 76.9% (n=83) found SNTs as a mode of socializing. Respondents are also using SNTs to explore their views and to engage in online shopping that highlights a strong inclination towards commercial and exploratory activities. 63.9% response for fun and entertainment and 53.7% response for an easy mode of interaction show that SNTs are the platforms for both leisure and communication. Usage of SNTs to connect with friends and family (61.1%) shows that these are also the tools to maintain the personal relationships. 34.3% respondents actively use SNTs for chatting with multiple friends at once.

**Table 6: Purpose of Using SNTs**

S.N.	Purpose	Response (%)
1	Socializing	83 (76.9)
2	Education	108 (100)
3	Online shopping	77 (71.3)
4	To explore their views	73 (67.6)
5	Buy study material	71 (65.7)
6	To get and give feedback from online community	41 (38)
7	To see the present scenario of online community	56 (51.9)
8	Just for fun and entertainment	69 (63.9)
9	Research work	91 (84.3)
10	Chatting with friends/colleagues	65 (60.2)
11	Spend the boring time	47 (43.5)
12	Easy interaction	58 (53.7)

13	Popularity on SNTs	26 (24.1)
14	Chat with multiple friends at a time	37 (34.3)
15	Keeping in touch with friends and family	66 (61.1)
16	Making new acquaintances	56 (51.9)
17	Share their views/video/picture/status update	71 (65.7)
18	SNTs help me establish new relationships with others	42 (38.9)

Note: Number given in brackets represent percentage.

### 5.7 Constraints faced in using SNTs

Table 7 shows that 33.3% respondents are facing constraints of technical awareness and same numbers of respondents are facing the security constraints during the access of SNTs. While 28.3% respondents felt constraints of time and 25.9% felt constraints of concentrate on study and stress on mind. More than 20% respondents were facing constraints of poor internet connectivity, most of friends' offline during self-online and relationship maintenance. Only 18.5% respondents were facing of truthiness facts unavailability and 5.6% felt SNTs are not user friendly.

**Table 7: Type of constraints faced**

S.N.	Type of Constraints	Number (%)
1	Technical Awareness	36 (33.3)
2	Time Constraints	31 (28.7)
3	Stress on Mind	28 (25.9)
4	Security Constraints	36 (33.3)
5	Poor Internet Connectivity	26 (24.1)
6	Lack of Electronic Devices	12(11.1)
7	Truthiness Facts Unavailability	20 (18.5)
8	Fake Id	18 (16.7)
9	Make Limited Friends	17 (15.7)
10	Not User Friendly	6 (5.6)
11	Concentration on study	28 (25.9)
12	Constraints on Relationship Maintenance	24 (22.2)
13	Most of Friends Offline During Self Online	25 (23.1)
14	Any Other	3 (2.8)

Note: Number given in brackets represent percentage.

## 6. Conclusion and Discussion

Current study focuses upon the usage of SNTs by the research scholars of Maharshi Dayanand University in their academic and personal lives. The study highlighted both the areas where SNTs are actively being used as well as the constraints that are being faced by the research scholars of MDU. The study affirms that SNTs are widely being used by the research scholars and majority of them accept that they are aware of these tools and their usage. A substantial fraction of the respondents (74%) engage themselves with SNTs on daily basis with a significant portion spending one to three hours on these platforms indicating a deep integration of SNTs into their daily routines, both for the academic as well as personal use. Scholars use SNTs for multiple purposes such as socializing, online shopping, entertainment, and research reflecting the multifaceted role of SNTs in the lives of the respondents. The study also revealed that the YouTube, Facebook, and Wikipedia are being

used by most of the respondents however the low usage of LinkedIn among research scholars of MDU points out a potential gap in the utilization of professional networking tools. Lack of technical awareness, security concerns and stress on the mind are the major constraints that were found among the respondents. Other than these, poor internet connectivity in remote areas also hinders the effective usage that appears to be the areas where improvements could enhance the user experience. In conclusion, we can say that addressing these issues and challenges could lead to more balanced and productive usage of social networking tools among the academic community.

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