

## Study on role of Social Networking Sites in College students life during Covid-19 in Mumbai City

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### Abstract

Covid 19 affected whole world. In India State of Maharashtra was having significant no of cases as compared to other states. Mumbai metropolitan city has 50 % cases of state of Maharashtra. Universities colleges & schools are closed to prevent & control spread. Social networking sites are inseparable part of student's life. Face book, Twitter, WhatsApp, Instagram, and LinkedIn are the best-known social media platforms. This study will highlight role of Social networking sites, it functions in college students psychological, social, learning, physical health life aspects. It is found that it has enhanced students engagement on Social networking sites significantly. It shows certain positive & negative effect on student's life.

**Keywords:** Social networking sites, Covid19 pandemic-learning, mental health,

### 1. Introduction

The World Health Organization declared the outbreak a Public Health Emergency of International Concern on 30 January 2020, and a pandemic on 11 March 2020. The whole world is traumatized with this pandemic.

The largest single day spike (68,631 cases), highest peak in all of [India](#) was reported on April 18, 2021. State of Maharashtra was having significant no of cases as compared to other states. Mumbai metropolitan city has 50 % cases of state of Maharashtra. Mumbai with high population density found it more challenging with low capacity of hospital beds, oxygen cylinders to accommodate patients to treat them against Covid-19.

To prevent & control the spread of corona lot of restriction, social distancing norms were declared. School, Colleges and Universities are closed in lock down period. All have faced challenging to cope up with this. College students faced difficulty on various life aspects. They have faced adaptation issues of

online learning, Isolation, direct communication Restrictions, mental health issues like anxiety & depression.

Using social networking sites, internet surfing is unavoidable part of students life .This study will find out what is the role played by Social Networking sites in students life.

Social media are interactive sites where people can do web development, distribute, and exchange content and their thoughts. Websites and applications for social media empower users to generate content and exchange that content through different technologies such as social media sites (SNS), where people chat, share information, share images and interact with each other. Social media is one of the most used and powerful sources for users, where users can update news, read news, search information, watch videos & news, play games etc.

Social media website is just not only meeting online but to build relationship with each other. Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, Instagram, and LinkedIn are the best-known social media platforms. Users can share self-generated content, organize events, chat with friends, share files, search for jobs, read the news, and play online games via these websites. This study will highlight how social networking sites functions in college student's psychological, social, learning, physical life aspects.

## **2. Objective of the Paper:**

1. To understand Covid-19 challenges faced by students.
2. To study role of social networking sites in college students life during Covid-19 in Mumbai City.

## **3. Literature Review:**

*Dr Anuj Sheopuri and Anita Sheopuri (2015)*, in their research observed that, students are distracted by using the SNS, the rampant use of such sites have an adverse impact on their educational performance. Some students have started using social networks for academic purposes. Yet the use of these networks has to be disciplined as it can lead to distraction from education. While some students perceived SNS as a distraction and were hesitant to share their feelings, a high percentage of respondents found it as a cheap avenue to search for information, and join groups / networks. The research concludes that students should capitalize the importance of classroom and face to face instruction. It is wrong perception that SNS have negative impact on students. If parents properly monitor their children activities on internet then it will be very helpful for their learning purposes. The social networks sites should be used for educational / tutoring

purpose also, as it will help the students attending the virtual classrooms. The SNS have revolutionized the world, bringing us closer than ever before. Students must exploit this and use it for a better life, a better tomorrow. It should be used to connect, stay in touch, share views but not waste time on.

***Jeanna Mastrodicasa and Paul Mettelus (2013)***, found it difficult to draw any concrete conclusion from the research about social networking sites and their impact on college students, other than the sites are certainly are a part of today's students' lives. One must remember that technology is merely a tool for concepts that have been around for decades—communication and connections. How college students use these sites makes all of the difference; some researchers have found positive impacts of various activities, while others have found the exact opposite. It is a slightly murky field of understanding for student affairs professionals from which to draw conclusions. Nevertheless, social media sites are evolving in use, purpose, and even existence; and a basic grasp of the options and what is happening with our students is truly important. The list of activities on Facebook presented in this article represent what is current in 2012; the list will certainly change as various applications and preferences evolve based on interests and opportunities.

***Arunangshu Giri, Wendrila Biswas and Debashish Biswas (2018)***, have listed the following impacts of SNS on youngsters through their research. Reduced Closeness with Family, Focus has been diverted from the traditional means of entertainment and games, Exposure to many foul and unnecessary things, Increased stimulation for appreciation, Increased anxiety and attachment to good-image, Wastage of time on non-productive activities. They further infer that nothing is good or bad, it depends on how we perceive and act over a particular thing. Instead of stopping youngsters from what they are doing proper guidance/counseling by elders will help them to think and act/do things in the right perspective.

***K Ebiraj and R Subramani***, did a study on usage of social media and their impact on university students. The research reveals that use of social media is reflected in their social life. It was also found that, web-browsing behavior and demographic-base ads that target people on the basis of a specific factor such as age, gender, education, marital status that influence not only the buying tendencies of students but also their views of what is normal. It is also important for parents to be aware of the behavioral ads because they are common on social media sites and operates by assembling information on the person using a site. Precaution should be used to educate students about online world and how to manage and avoid its hazards. A prime concern of parents is that the internet affects the social skills of students. There are two ways of looking at this; the internet critics would say that students tend to spend less time in social

activities or communicating with family and friends. On the other hand the internet enables them to make new friends who are situated in distant places.

*Seyyed Mohsen Azizi, Ali Soroush and Alireza Khatony (2018)*, found that, the level of social networking addiction of the students was moderate, and male students had a higher level of addiction to social networking than female students. A significant and negative relationship was found between the social networking addiction and GPA. Considering the negative effects of social networking on students' academic performance, the issue of addiction to social networking should be comprehensively reviewed and considered. Also, appropriate planning should be made to prevent addiction to social networking, control its use, and increase the opportunities and reduce the threats of this tool. In this regard, allocating some of the research priorities to the positive and negative applications of social media at individual, social and academic levels can be beneficial. Given the importance of addiction to social networking and its potentially destructive impact on students' academic performance, similar studies are recommended in other universities and in different fields to obtain a more conclusive result. In this regard, the use of mix methods can help to better understand the phenomenon of addiction to social networking and its relationship with the academic performance of students.

*Rashmi Rana and Neetu Singh (2014)*, states that, social networking plays a positive role in youth academic life and gives benefits in academic life and opportunities in carrier making. Benefits in terms of job searching, opportunities in the area of home-work, class work, assignment work and project work. Social networking plays a positive role in youth academic life and gives benefits in academic performance; opportunities in career making must be managed efficiently. Through social networking sites, youth are improving academic life by taking up professional courses which proves as a great career opportunity. It helps in education, may help in realizing positive learning outcomes and experiences for students. In short, social networking services can become research networks as well as learning networks.

#### **4. Research Methodology:**

This is descriptive type of research. Online survey conducted. Primary Data is collected from 200 students from undergraduate colleges of Mumbai university. Out of 200 students 150 students responded. Data is analyzed. Secondary data is collected from research articles, internet websites & books.

#### **5. Data analysis & Interpretation:**

From Data analysis following challenges are faced by students

##### **Mental Challenges:**

60% students reported that, significantly they faced either of anxiety, depression, fear of infection, loneliness, boredom; poor sleep quality issues, emotional complexities. Where fear of losing family member, friend or relative because of pandemic catch is biggest mental condition is reported by the study.

**Physical Challenges:**

Lockdown restrictions restricted students to remain within their homes, which restricted their physical activities. E-learning method of education increased their time in front of digital devices and made them sit for long time at one place. Also use of Social Networking Sites increased their exposure to such devices. Longer exposure of eyes to screen and sitting in same position for longer period with decreased physical activity caused some challenges to Students like, eyestrain, dryness in eyes, headache, appetite problems, backache and postural pain and obesity.

**Economical challenges:**

As E- learning has been adapted nationwide by educational institutions during Covid-19 restrictions, students and their families had to invest or arrange the devices to get access to the E-learning platforms.

26% Student reported that their family income during pandemic reduced drastically, payment of college tuition fees became a challenge for them.

44% of Student's family had to face financial crisis because of hefty medical expenses occurred because of Covid-19.

48% Students reported that to avail E-Learning facility, investing for Cellular Data plan, Broadband, Smartphone or computer was a challenge for their family.

32% Students said they have no laptop or desktop and have to connect through their Smartphone.

45% Students reported that their expenses for Cellular Data or Broadband Plans have been increased by 1.5 times.

26% Student reported that their family income during pandemic reduced drastically and investing for Cellular Data plan, Broadband, Smartphone or computer was a challenge to their family.

36% Student found challenging to get silent and isolated place to attend online classes.

12% Students said that they had to support their families during pandemic for earnings as their regular income was hampered.

**E-learning Challenges:**

As digital platform is the only way to learn for students and for colleges.

85% students reported that it is difficult to be attentive throughout the day and easier to get distracted during online classes.

65% reported that they face connectivity issues.

60% students reported that colleges are not using updated user interface / platforms.

63% found content & teaching monotonous.

70% face lack of trust on teachers in online mode

53% Students reported that they hesitate and they are not willing to reply.

15% Student admitted that they simply join the classes and do some other work simultaneously.

40% Students said that online e-learning does not give them classroom feel and also they miss the practical and workshop sessions which are equally important.

**Communication Challenges:**

95% students reported that there is decrease in face-to-face communication. They explore only online modes for communications.

45% Students reported that they find difficult to catch the flow during online classes and feel left behind.

20% Students admitted that they can't pay attention to classes as they do not have suitable quiet place at their home.

75% Students said that socializing with friends and relatives got restricted during pandemic lockdown. As face-to-face interactions were restricted students find it challenging to express themselves.

**Exam Uncertainty:**

90% Students reported that they faced anxiety due to exam date & pattern uncertainty.

70% Students were concerned about the uncertainty of exams schedules.

85% Students reported the concern about Information Communication Technology (ICT) stability and availability.

75% students reported that they feel pressured and stressed as they are unable to plan their studies and personal life.

74% students reported that they feel alone and in exile as they lost their regular friends and college meet. Subsequently, students were feeling overwhelmed emotions such as boredom, and petrification.

50% Students were concerned about their career as they fear that employers may not consider their candidature for jobs, because of the dilution in syllabus and exams pattern.

38% Students were concerned if they would be rightly evaluated by new exam pattern, with new exam pattern and dilution in syllabus may not justify their talent and may give undue advantage to other average students.

**Role of Social Networking sites in students life during covid-19**

Usage of SNS has been increased in significant manner. They found Social Networking sites as a useful platform to connect with people, access to entertainment and informative videos, information from various domains, resources for curricular as well as extracurricular leanings, platform for socializing, and finding group of common interest. Students also reported that they use such platform to learn and practice yoga and meditations.

65% students found social media Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram very resourceful to reach out their friends and relatives, have virtual meets with them, and express their thoughts and emotions on such platforms.

25% students were also found a way to gain information in the domain of their interest, find guidance for their projects, and find common interest groups, preparation for competitive studies and interviews.

78% Students also utilized such platform to get rid of their boredom, with access to OTT and various video

sharing platforms like Prime, You tube and Netflix which caters to vast collection of movies, documentaries and shows.

However along with benefits, social media platform also has a negative side too; increased usage of such platforms caused impact on students life.

45% Students accessing social media either for education, socializing or entertainment purpose spend their lots of valuable time on these portals. The way these platforms are designed, they keep on providing feeds and suggestions to explore new contents on them.

62% students access the social media app to attends some study related session of half an hour may end up scrolling the app for several hours.

72% Students reported that longer hours on SNS brings at least one of the following issue the stress for eyes and may cause the eye dryness, damage of eyesight, headache. Sitting for longer hour without any movement brings backache, neck ache, cramps to muscles. With no physical movement may also cause obesity.

62% Students feel that accessing SNS is a necessity, as they were already in a lockdown restriction and could not be socialized, they get a feeling of missing out if they do not see and react to the post of their groups or post anything frequently.

14% Students reported that they were victim of at least one of the below: abusive posts or comments hurting sentiments religious, caste or ethnic sentiments. Harsh, disrespectful or sexual comments.

70% students use SNS for engaging them for entertainment trough online shopping, motivational videos, viral videos, tracking fiends activities etc.

Being engaged on digital devices for longer time may also bring impact on mental abilities too. It's been reported by such long exposure disconnects student from real world and they gets addicted to such platforms.

Such platforms have no control on people you meet or connect; and students may not know the intension of strangers they meet virtually.

78% Students reported that they do not validate people before connecting over social media platforms.

48% Students reported that they do not bother to share their personal details with strangers on social media.

60% students are more vulnerable to cyber crimes



## 6. Recommendations:

- Social Networking Sites shall be used for students to socialize and connect to their likeminded group of people during covid 19
- Government authorities should provide online counselling for students at nominal rates
- As students have faced economic crisis because of either losing of family earning member or loss of job or decrease in their parent income. Government should take initiative to help such students to pay colleges fees.
- E learning should be made more interesting by teachers to keep students actively engaged for better teaching learning outcome.
- Lecture recordings, study material should be shared with students. Online activities, case studies should be conducted to make teaching more effective.
- Number of hours for online teaching should be reduced.
- There are lots of motivational speakers, Mentors, trainers keep on sharing contents that could be useful for students to improve their knowledge, hone their skill and motivate themselves. Teachers should use this to keep students motivated.
- Students shall use such SNS platform and learn to practice Yoga, meditation; such lifestyle skill shall help them to overcome anxiety, mental stress and help them to improve their mental as well as health conscious.
- Social networking sites promote videos, content, messages which can have positive effect on students mental health which will give them strength to fight Covid 19
- Students should set their priorities while using Social Networking Sites and set the agenda and time to be spent on such platforms.
- Pre decide the movie or tv show to be watched, otherwise you may end up scrolling and watching the contents which you did not decided and waste time.
- Trainings, workshops should be arranged to make students aware about cyber safety measures while using social networking sites.
- Do not share your personal data and contact details on SNS, if really required provide minimal data and ensure to enable protective settings on them, e.g., lock profile photo on Facebook.
- Do not accept friend request from unknown person, ensure you know the person before sending a friend request.
- Do not click or access on the links received on whatsapp, sms or emails; these links could be malicious or phishing traps and may end up infecting you device or hacking of your email / SNS accounts or stealing your data, which could be used for unlawful activities or you may become a victim of financial fraud.
- Do not share passwords or OTP (One Time Passwords) to anyone.



- Do not involve yourself in any unlawful activity such as harassing individual or a group, online fraud, misleading marketing campaigns etc.
- Workshops Should be arranged for maintaining mental health, physical health, successful online learning during covid 19.
- Parents, Educational institutions, mentors, teachers should guide students with Do's and Don'ts to be followed while accessing such platforms and how to get optimum benefit for their curricular skill honing.

## 7. Conclusion

Social Networking Sites are double edged swords, as they are useful for socializing, education, networking as well as entertainment. They are very resourceful to gain information, knowledge for various purposes. As it is becoming integral part of lifestyle students shall learn to use it judiciously to gain learn lifestyle skills like Yoga, meditation, career skills and soft skills. It can help you to excel in students curricular and non-curricular skills and become a platform to express them. Social networking sites thoughtful use with purpose will definitely help students to tackle covid 19 challenges. Teachers, parents, coach, mentors should train students for Do's and Don'ts to be followed while accessing such platforms and how to get optimum benefit for their curricular skill honing. It will help them for successful coping with challenges of mental health, physical health, uncertainty during Covid-19.

However, addiction to them can cause the damage to the physical, mental health and family harmony. Students should be conscious and ensure to not involve themselves on social media which may disturb personal life of someone or may disturb social harmony. Such activities are restricted by law and may attract the judicial procedures. It is required to train for protection against cybercrimes by following ethical and safe practices while using Social Networking Sites.

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