

# Use and Impact of Social Networking Sites (SNS) among the Student Community of Assam Agricultural University (A.A.U), Jorhat, Assam: A Survey

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## Abstract

Social Networking Sites (SNS) gives us enormous capability to provide services in real time. The paper focused on finding out the opportunities provided by the SNSs to the student as well as the benefits and the challenges faced by the student community while retrieving information and for the purpose of knowing the awareness and usage pattern of SNS by the student community of A.A.U, Jorhat. The paper highlights the important findings in respect to the use and impact of SNS. A self-made questionnaire was constructed and administered on a sample of 150 student community pursuing their degree in A.A.U, Jorhat. Random sampling technique was used. The result of the study showed that all of the students used WhatsApp and they used SNS through their smart phone for both academic as well as for entertainment purposes. Social Networking Sites had both positive and negative impacts on student community.

**Keywords:** Social Networking Sites, Social Media, Communication Tools, Library Services

## 1. Introduction

The 21<sup>st</sup> century is widely known as the networking age which is an age of internet. SNSs are basically those websites which provide social community for people interested in a particular subject or area. It is a tool of self-expression as well as self-presentation. They are the real-time platform which has the ability to connect people across the globe without geographical barriers where the users with common interest create a profile that connect with the other profile and are benefited with the different services provided by networking sites. It has affected our personal and professional life by allowing the community to share feeling, better communication among friends, and meeting new people no matter

where they belong to and from. These networks have become the popular modern tools in making new friends as well as in getting in touch with the old friends.

The revolution of ICT has tremendously changed the education system in the developed and the developing countries. The libraries being a growing organism have revamped the library environment and its services. SNSs play a vital role in getting connected with other libraries and the library professionals so as to share and disseminate the information to their users at least time. It helps the researchers to classify and communicate with the associate and share the ideas, this application is serving as an open access to scientific knowledge and research.



## 2. Review of Literature

The researcher has brought out some earlier studies relating to the topic which is discussed as under along with their findings.

Singh & Gill (2011) conducted a study on usage of social networking sites by the scholarly community of Guru Nanak Dev University and it was found that 77.50% scholars are using Facebook out of which 57% of them are using it for finding information. It is clear from the study that most of scholars were aware of SNSs.

Golwal, Kalbande and Sonwane (2012) measured the aspect of Facebook on Library Professionals and the benefits of using these tools in their life. Data was randomly collected by creating an online group which was named as Maharashtra Librarians Online Study Circle (MLOSC). The result shows that 89% of users are using Facebook daily to interact professionally as well as an effective tool for transmitting awareness among LIS professionals.

Kavita (2015) examine about the effect of social media on Indian students and teenagers and advantages of library information through mobile technologies applications which are used by libraries and the present scenario of mobile communication. The result showed that every library should provide physical and virtual environment for using mobile devices and accessories to their users and library should adopt new technologies and develop new kind of relationships with their users.

Sheopuri & Sheopuri (2015) studied effect of using social networking sites by student and its impact on their studies. For the study, 75 students from engineering and management streams in Bhopal has been taken as a sample. The study found that

Facebook was very popular among students compared to that of other social networking sites.

Ashraf and Mohamed (2016) measured the use of social media tools by the doctoral students of University of Calicut, Kerala with an objective to find out the reason behind using SNS by scholarly communication and the barriers to use social media. It was found that majority of doctoral students are aware and using social media for scholarly purpose. Majority of students use more than one social media tools.

Goel and Singh (2016) inspected the attitude of student towards the usage of different social media in education and the effect of these tools in their academic performances in 3 private colleges and 2 universities of Delhi NCR region. Their result was based on questionnaire which was of two categories: a) demographic and individual preferences related information; and b) student's beliefs and attitudes towards social media usage in education. Their findings suggest that social networking will be useful if student consider it as a learning tool.

Nigam and Singh (2016) explored the usage pattern of social networking sites in scholarly community in the University of Uttarakhand. Their result shows that Facebook is the most widely used SNS by the faculty members.

## 3. Objective of the study

The main objectives of the present study are as under:

- ❖ To identify the use and awareness of Social Networking Sites (SNSs) by the students of Assam Agricultural University, Jorhat (AAU).

- ❖ To find out the purpose of using SNSs by the students of Assam Agricultural University (AAU).
- ❖ To find out the most popular SNSs used by the students taken for the present study.
- ❖ To find out the problems faced by the students while using SNSs.
- ❖ To identify the level of satisfaction in using SNSs by the AAU students.

**4. Research Methodology**

For the present study, a survey method and random sampling technique was used. The sample size comprises 150 students, to which structured questionnaires were distributed for the collection of the data on June, 2018. Out of 150 questionnaires distributed, 121 duly filled-in questionnaires were returned and the response rate of the study was 80.67 percent. The collected data was analyzed by calculating percentages and was presented in tabular form and charts and for analysis the data Microsoft Excel® was used.

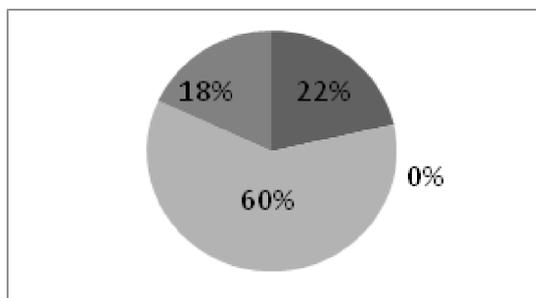
**5. Data Analysis**

After receiving the questionnaires from the student community taken for the study, their responses were analyzed using percentage and graphically represented. As expected all the students (100% response) are member of more than one social networking site.

**5.1 Age Group of the Respondent**

The following Figure-1 provides age wise description of the respondents under study. It was observed from the study that majority (60.34%) of

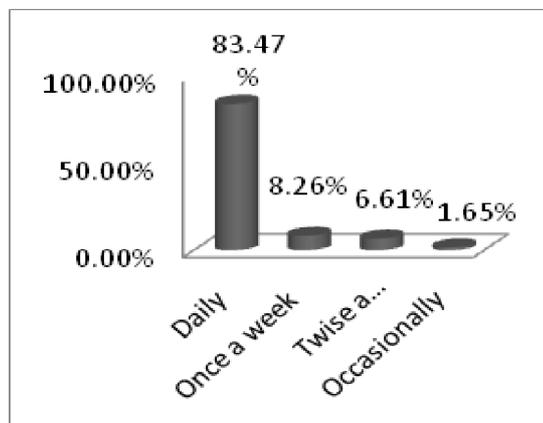
the respondents were from the age group, 21 to 25 years.



**Figure 1: Age Group**

**5.2 Frequency of visiting SNS**

Figure 2 represents the frequency of visiting social networking sites by the respondent which shows that majority of the respondents (83.47%), i.e., 101 total numbers of respondent used SNSs daily and regularly where it was also observed that 1.65% of the respondents are using SNSs occasionally.



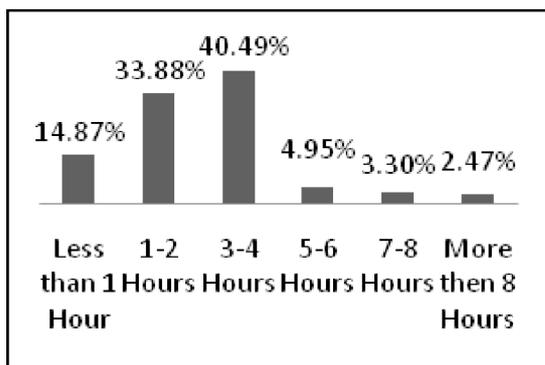
(N=121)

**Figure 2: Uses of SNSs by students**

**5.3 Time Spent on Social Networking Sites**

The figure-3 reveals the time of the respondent spend per day on SNS. It was observed from the study that out of 121 respondents, 49 respondents

are using the SNSs for 3-4 hours. And 14.87% of the respondents are also there who use SNSs for less than 1 hour in their daily lives. Further it is also observed from the study that there are still 2.47% of the respondents who use the SNSs for maximum hours, i.e., more than 8 hours.



(N=121)

Figure 3: Daily use of SNSs by students

#### 5.4 Devices used for accessing Social Networking Sites

SNSs avails the facility for accessing from any electronic devices with the help of internet connections. It is observed from the study that the respondents use the SNSs from different devices and it is not restricted to one device only. It is further observed that 90.08% of the respondents are using the smart phone device for accessing the SNSs followed by the laptop with 39.66% and then by the PCs with 9.91%.

#### 5.5 Purpose for Use of SNS

There are different purposes for which the SNSs are used by different groups of people depending on their needs. Likewise for the present study, as the researcher has listed out different purposes for which one uses the SNSs which has given below in Figure-4. It was observed from the study that majority of the respondents (85.95%) are using SNSs for getting in touch with families and friends, followed by keeping themselves updated (77.68%), instant messaging (57.85%) and so on.

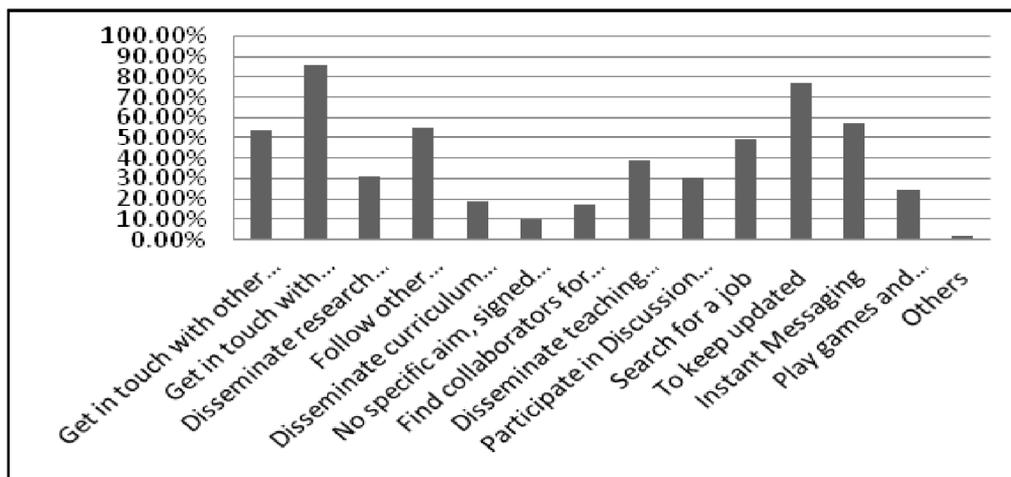


Figure 4: Purpose of using SNS

### 5.6 Popular Social Networking Sites among the Respondent

There are various SNS available at present which people are using for various purposes, like, friendly communication, instant messaging, video and photo sharing, publishing, social bookmarking, social sites, etc. Figure 5 represent several different types of sites used by the respondent. It was observed that WhatsApp is on the top list of the popularity among the SNSs as all the respondents taken for the study are aware and using the WhatsApp, followed by facebook with 95.86%, then YouTube with 88.42%, Instagram with 85.12%, Google+ with 74.38% and so on.

### 5.7 Opinions on usage of SNS

It is known from the study that the users use the SNSs according to their different needs and various purposes as represented in Figure 6. It was observed from the study that majority of the respondent opines that SNSs are helpful for easy communication (72.72%), followed by easy for communicating with many (57.85%), then by easy to get in touch with old and new friends (57.02%) and then followed by useful for academic communications (56.19%).

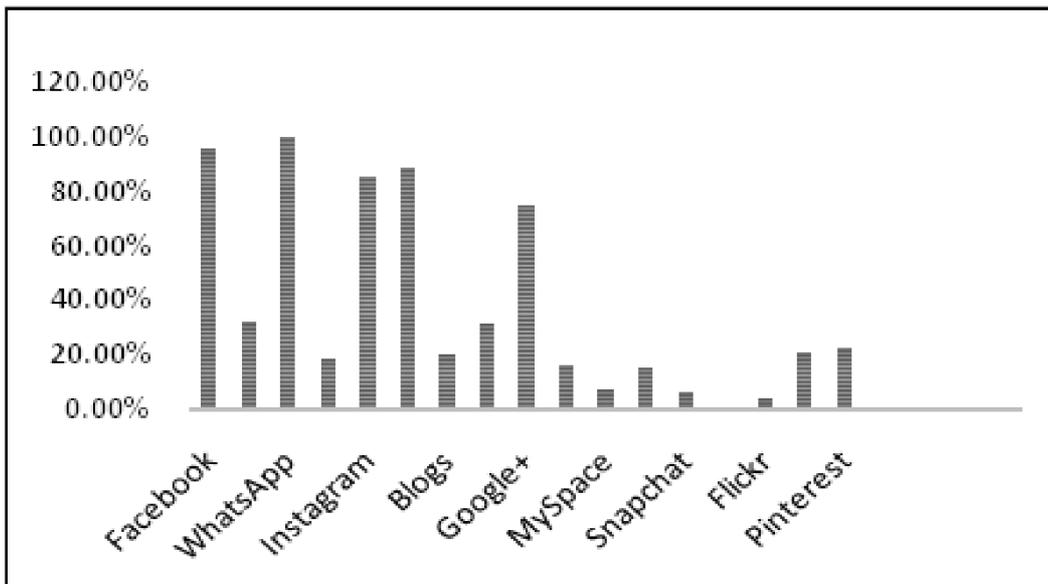
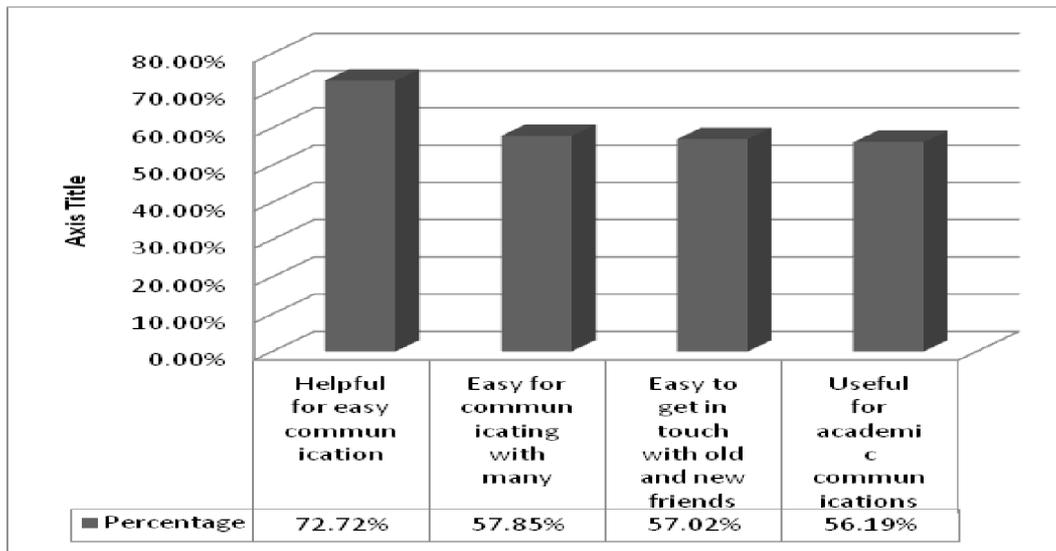


Figure 5: Popular Social Networking Sites



**Figure 6: Opinions about the SNSs**

### 5.8 Problems facing while using Social Networking Sites

It is obvious in the technology world a user may find some kind of problem while accessing the information on internet but those problems are also not faced every time when they access. The several challenges faced that most commonly faced by an individual on using SNS are such as lack of time, security, lack of technical knowledge etc. It was observed from the study that majority of the respondents (53.71%) finds non-availability of full-fledged internet connectivity as their major problem while accessing the SNSs, followed by lack of time with 42.14%. It is to be noted that 0.82% of the respondent finds SNSs as not user friendly.

### 5.9 Level of Satisfaction using SNSs

Figure 8 depicts the level of satisfaction of the respondents taken for the study of AAU using SNSs. It is observed from the study that there is no

respondent who is not satisfied from the SNSs. The majority of the respondents (56.19%) are satisfied using the SNSs where 23.96% of the respondents are highly satisfied and 19.83% of the respondents are partially satisfied from the SNSs. The level of satisfaction depends on the perception of the users.

### 5.10 Reliability of Social Networking Sites

The questions have been asked to the respondents to share their perception on reliability of the information available on the SNSs. It was observed that 57.03% of the respondents opines that the information available on SNSs are reliable where 42.97% of the respondents opines that the information available on the SNSs are partially reliable.

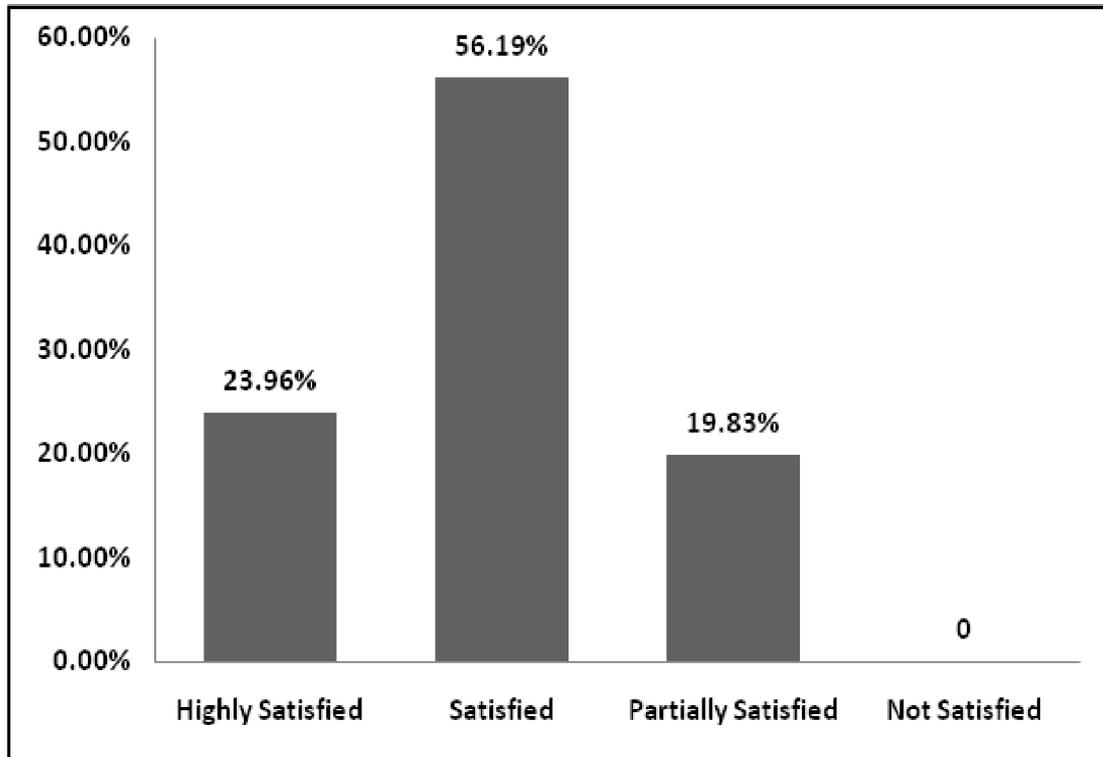


Figure 8: Satisfaction level from SNSs

## 6. Findings

Based on the data analysis and inferences of the study, many findings can be drawn however, the major findings are as follows:

1. All the respondents taken for the study of A.A.U. are pretty aware of SNSs and are using more than one number of SNSs depending on their needs.
2. Maximum (85.95%) number of respondents is using the SNS to communicate and stay in touch with their friends and families. Moreover, they are also using SNS for academic communication and research related activities.
3. WhatsApp (100%) followed by Facebook (95.86%) comes out to be the most popular social sites among the student community of A.A.U
4. Majority of students finds difficult to access SNS due to non-availability of full-fledged internet connectivity (53.71%).
5. It is found from the study that majority (56.19%) of the respondent are satisfied in using the SNS and interestingly it is found that there is not a single respondent who is not satisfied in using SNS.

## 7. Conclusions and suggestions

We are living in a networking era, where social sites are the cheapest mode of communication, through which peers can stay connected. Social networking sites disseminate information quickly to a larger number of users with maximum benefits and minimum cost. This study set out to investigate how SNS are gaining popularity amongst academic users. As per the study conducted, it was found that certain SNSs sites are very common and are used by the student community of A.A.U and using it effectively in their everyday life for their academic as well as for other activities.

Libraries of academic institutions should explore new technology services of social networking sites in a more effective way to meet the information seeking behaviour of the library patrons and integrate the services of SNS into the design of future library services in a cost-efficient manner. The findings suggest that social media tools can be very useful for being used as educational tool. Students' beliefs and attitudes towards social networking tools and its usage in education are positive. Students welcomed using social media tools for providing additional information related to their academic curriculum. It is also being suggested that the user must need to create a balance between the use of SNS and studies. They need to learn time management and to allocate, to each task a specific timeframe to increase academic performance.

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**Note:**

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