# SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES USAGE AND CHANGING FAMILY RELATIONSHIP AMONG HIGHER SECONDARY STUDENTS IN KERALA

**Amitha C.A.(Research Scholar),   Dr.Sr.V.J.Kochuthresia (Research Guide)**
Social Work Department, Centre for Doctoral Research,
Rajagiri College of Social Sciences, Kalamassery, Kerala, India
Email.- amiamji@gmail.com

**Abstract:**  Today in Kerala, especially in Alappuzha district, the usage of social networking sites among higher secondary students have become considerably higher and it has significant effects on changing family relationship of the students. The study is aimed to find out the usage of social networking sites and its effects on changing family relationships. The descriptive research design with total sample in the study comprised of 100 Higher Secondary students aged between 16-18 years. The respondents were selected from the different schools located in Alappuzha district, Kerala through simple random sampling techniques. Questionnaire was used to collect data and then analyzed by using statistical tests like frequencies percentages and Chi-Square test. The studies found that majority of the students were using social networking sites for more than two hours daily. It was found that the interactions among the family members were decreased due to the usage of social networking sites. Student's purpose and pattern of usage, time spent on networking sites and their awareness on security and privacy concerns were also analyzed. The hypothesis, the usage of social networking sites among higher secondary students in Alappuzha district, Kerala state has effect on changing family relationship was accepted at 5% level of significance. The study also suggested that the parents and teachers should alert the students to limit their usage pattern and protect them from risks associated with the usage of social networking sites. From the findings, it was suggested that school authorities should organize awareness programmes to enlighten students on the security and privacy concerns of usage of social networking sites.

**Key words:** Social networking, family relationship, Higher Secondary Students, Interaction, Security and Privacy.

## INTRODUCTION:

One of the simplest yet most profound truths about human beings is that people are connected to others by a variety of social ties.  We live in a networked society (John, 2007).  During the last two decades the world in general and India in particular has witnessed for remarkable changes in Information Technology. The advancement in IT led to the emergence of Social Networking Sites (Yamakanith & Gurusamy, 2014). Social Networking Sites as: "web-based services that allow individuals to i). construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, ii). Articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection and iii). View and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system. The nature and nomenclature of these connections may vary from site to site" (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). Social Networking Sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, Instagram etc., have multiple features, like instant messaging, sharing material, building a self descriptive profile and maintaining a network of social connections. The most well-known Social Networking Sites, widely used is Facebook. The main reason for adolescents usage of Social Networking Sites are similar to more traditional forms of communication, that is, to stay in touch with existing friends, get to know them better, as well as to meet new people (Shapiro & Margolin, 2014).   (Digital Agency Network, p. 2016),reveals that 3419 billion people across the globe are connected to the internet while, 2307 billion users are actively involved in social media. It also unveils that an astounding number of 3790 billion people are unique mobile users, whereas 1968 billion users are utilizing social media on mobile. About one-third of the world's population is now active on social media, with number of users reported increasing by 10 percent in the past year. (Digital India, 2016), shows that 353 million people of India are using internet. India has overtaken USA as the second largest internet user base in the world.

**DEMOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION OF INTERNET USERS IN INDIA:**

| Age Group | Percentage |
|-----------|------------|
| 16-25years | 37 |
| ]26-35years | 38 |
| 36-45years | 16 |
| Others | 9 |

The age wise distribution of population shows thatb37% of the internet users belong to the age group of 16-25 years, 38% of the users belong to 26-35 age group, 16% to the 36-45 years of age group and only 9% of users are above 45 years.

In Kerala, the situation is similar to the national level as we also have very much improved living standard especially with the highest literacy rate and access to all the modern communication facilities. Kerala, the Southern Indian State has been declared India's first "Digital State" for its seamless rural-urban connectivity and a successful e-governance drive towards creating paperless offices. Kerala has achieved 100% mobile connectivity and 75% Internet literacy in the past few years. The overall digital growth in the southern state is remarkable. The state has a mobile coverage of 95%and Internet access to over 60 percent of its total population-the highest among all the 29 states (Digital India Programme, 2016).

**SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES AND ADOLESCENTS:**

With emergence of Social Networking Sites such as Facebook, usage has become a global consumer phenomenon. Today, more than 500 million users are active participants in the Facebook community alone and students suggest that between 55% to82% of teenagers and young adults use social networking sites on a regular basis (Griffiths & Kuss, 2011). (McAfee's Tweens,Teens and Technology Report, 2014), conducted a survey among Indian online tweens aged 8-12 years old and teens aged 13-17 years old respondents from Mumbai, Delhi, Chennai, Bangalore, Hydrabad and Pune. This report points out that 70% of online teens in India spend more than five hours on the internet in a normal week.

The topmost concern of social networking sites are privacy and concern. The main risk to preadolescents and adolescents online today are risks from each other, risks of improper use of technology, lack of privacy, sharing too much information, or posting false information about themselves or others (Barnes, 2006).

Teenagers are generally inquisitive at this age, seeking to form new friendships and strengthen existing relationships. Social Networking sites provide them an alternative means from the real world to do so (Lakshmi, Krishnatray, & Shrivastava, 2014). In this advanced technological era, the usage of social networking sites among teenagers have changed the way of interaction in the family. The usage of SNSs among the adolescents of Kerala is drastically increasing. To my knowledge there was no study conducted in Kerala related with usage of social networking sites and changing family relationships. So the present study is an attempt to find out the usage of social networking sites and its effects on changing family relationship.

**LOCATION OF THE STUDY:**

Kerala is a state in south western India. The study is conducted in the urban, rural and coastal area of Alappuzha district, Kerala state. Alappuzha is referred to as the 'Venice of the East'. Alappuzha is also famous for its boat races, houseboat holidays, beaches, marine products and coir industry. Lower areas of the district, known as Kuttanad, is one of the few places in the world where farming is done below sea level. It was formed as Alleppey district on August 17th 1957. The name of the district was officially changed to Alappuzha in 1990.

**Demography of Alappuzha District**

| Population | 21,27,789 |
|-----------|-----------|
| Population growth | 0.88% |
| Area sq.km. | 1415 |
| Proportion of Kerala Population | 6.37% |
| Sex ratio | 1100/1000 |
| Average literacy | 94.24 |

The higher secondary students in Alappuzha district are prone to use Social Networking Sites for various purposes. They are spending a lot of time on these kinds of sites. Spending too much of time on social networking sites having serious effect on their academic as well as interrelationships. This study was conducted among the higher secondary students of four selected areas of Alappuzha district. In Kerala very few studies have been conducted on social networking sites and among them very few have focused on social networking usage and changing family relationships. So the researcher decided to conduct a study on social networking sites usage and changing family relationships to explore this knowledge gap.

## LITERATURE REVIEW:

In review of literature the researcher reviewed number of studies related to the topic which provides a background about the usage of social networking and the relationship with the family of adolescents. The usage of social networking sites have been studied and discussed at different levels. But this seems to be that very few studies have been conducted on usage of social networking sites and changing family relationships in the Kerala context.

A study conducted by (Manjunatha, 2013), found that majority (80%) of students spend significant amount of time on social networking sites regularly and 20% of them were non-users and 62.6% spent 1-10 hours per week on social networking. It was also found that most of the Indian students have accounts in more than one sites and and 48% of them were using networking sites for social connection.

(Cox Communications, 2007) , conducted a National Survey among 1,000 U.S. teenagers aged between13-17. The study confirmed that 58% of the teens do not agree that posting photos and personal information on online networking sites is unsafe and 49% of teens are not concerned that posting personal information  on networking sites might negatively affect their future. 75% of the teens reported that their parents have talked about the potential risk of posting personal information on online sites and one out of five teens said that parents never discussed about the online privacy concerns.

 (Yamakanith & Gurusamy, 2014) , in their article entitled "A Study On The Influence Of Social Networking Sites On The Interpersonal Relationships Of College Students In Chennai And Coimbatore Cities Of India" is focused to find out the effect of social networking sites on interpersonal relationships of college students. It was found that 39.7% of the students were using 4-7 hours per week and 81.5% of the students agreed that there were changing in the relationship with the family after using social networking sites. The study confirmed that the impact of social networking sites on the interpersonal relationships of college students. According to (Undiyaundeye, 2014), using excessive amount of time on networking lessens children's interaction with the family and friends. Gradually this weakens the family bond and limited face to face interaction. These children lost their real life experience with others and that leads to distorted social skills and social interaction.

## METHODOLOGY:

A descriptive research study was conducted among 100 higher secondary students who are in the age group of 16-18 years. The respondents were selected randomly from the schools located in urban, rural and coastal areas in Alappuzha District, Kerala. Self prepared questionnaire was used to get scores on social networking sites usage, changing family relationships and awareness on privacy concerns and obtained data was analyzed statistically. Collected data were analyzed using frequencies and percentages and the hypotheses were tested by using Chi – square. The hypothesis states that there is a significant relationship between social networking sites and changing family relationship which are accepted at 5 % level of significance. The time spent for collecting the entire data was around 4 weeks. The collected data was then analyzed and interpreted.

## OBJECTIVES:

The main objective of the study is to find out the social networking usage and changing family relationship. The specific objectives are:
1. To examine the purpose and usage pattern of social networking sites by students'.
2. To understand students' awareness about security and privacy concerns.
3. To find out the effect of social networking sites on changing family relationships.

## HYPOTHESIS:

There is a significant relationship between social networking usage and changing family relationships.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS:**

TABLE :1 SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

| Age | Category | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|---|
| | 16 | 34 | 34 |
| | 17 | 51 | 51 |
| | 18 | 15 | 15 |
| | Total | 100 | 100 |
| Sex | Male | 62 | 62 |
| | Female | 38 | 38 |
| | Total | 100 | 100 |
| Financial Status | Low Income | 69 | 69 |
| | Middle Income | 23 | 23 |
| | High Income | 8 | 8 |
| | Total | 100 | 100 |
| Geographical Area | City | 43 | 43 |
| | Village | 20 | 20 |
| | Coastal Area | 37 | 37 |
| | Total | 100 | 100 |
| Family | Nuclear Family | 79 | 79 |
| | Joint Family | 17 | 17 |
| | Others | 4 | 4 |
| | Total | 100 | 100 |

The study revealed equal percentages (51%) of the students are belonged to the age group of 17 years. It was found that 69% of students belong to low income families from coastal area. So the study confirmed that a large number of school going teenagers especially who are living in the coastal area are using the social networking sites excessively. A vast majority of (79%) the students are from nuclear family. In modern nuclear family the interaction among the family members is less. So children find other sources to interact and share their feelings.

TABLE : 2 ADOLESCENTS' AWARENESS ON SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES SECURITY AND PRIVACY CONCERNS

| | Opinion | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|---|
| Be alert while chatting and putting pictures in the sites | Yes | 72 | 72 |
| | No | 28 | 28 |
| | Total | 100 | 100 |
| Are you think these kind of sites are misleading children | Yes | 72 | 72 |
| | No | 28 | 28 |
| | Total | 100 | 100 |
| Are you aware of privacy concern regarding these sites | Yes | 39 | 39 |
| | No | 57 | 57 |
| | A little | 4 | 4 |
| | Total | 100 | 100 |
| Do you need an awareness class about security and privacy concerns on social networking sites usage | Yes | 73 | 73 |
| | No | 27 | 27 |
| | Total | 100 | 100 |

It was found that large number (72%) of students are alert while chatting and putting pictures in social networking sites. 57%  of the students are not much aware of the security and privacy concerns. They usually reveal personal details without knowing that networking sites are public and information can be easily accessible to those who are

internet connectivity. Some of the students revealed that they have not posted photos and details due to the fear of security and misuse of personal information. Majority (73%) of students showed interest for attending an awareness class on security and privacy regarding social networking sites usage.

TABLE :3 ADOLESCENTS AND SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES USAGE

| Que. | Categories | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|---|
| Do you have mobile phone | Yes<br>No<br>Total | 68<br>32<br>100 | 68<br>32<br>100 |
| Do you have account in any social networking sites | Yes<br>No<br>Total | 86<br>14<br>100 | 86<br>14<br>100 |
| Have you use social networking sites everyday(frequency of accessing sns) | Everyday<br><br>Total | 61<br>39<br>100 | 61<br>39<br>100 |
| As an higher secondary student social networking sites are | Very essential<br>Essential<br>Not essential<br>Total | 31<br>47<br>22<br>100 | 31<br>47<br>22<br>100 |

The study depicted that majority (68%) of students' have mobile phones. So they are more prone to use social networking sites. Higher number (86%) of students has account on networking sites. Nowadays students are more prone to use social networking sites due to their easily accessibility of technology. Another thing is that 14% of students are never using these sites. The young generation is very much influenced by online networking. It was also found that 61% of students are accessing social networking sites every day. One of the remarkable finding of the study is that, 9% of students are spending immense amount of time on networking sites and it prevents them to do their daily activities properly. Majority (47%) of students agreed that as higher secondary students social networking sites are essential for their educational purpose and socialization. A very few number (22%) of students revealed that networking sites are not essential for any kind of study purpose.

TABLE : 4 PURPOSE AND PATTERN OF USAGE OF SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES BY ADOLESCENTS

Table No: 4.1

| From which age started using these sites | Categories | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|---|
|  | 13 years below<br>13 years<br>14 years<br>15 years and above<br>Not using<br>Total | 11<br>23<br>27<br>25<br>14<br>100 | 11<br>23<br>27<br>25<br>14<br>100 |

Table 4.1 shows 52% of the students began to use networking sites after 14 years of age. Most of them are aware of the minimum age criteria to access these sites. It is also found that higher number of student's access more than 2 sites daily.

Table No. 4.2

| In which sites you are having account | Categories | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|---|
|  | Facebook<br>Whatsapp<br>Facebook & Whatsapp<br>Youtube | 26<br>14<br>30<br>5 | 26<br>14<br>30<br>7 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| All the above | 9 | 9 |
| None | 14 | 14 |
| Total | 100 | 100 |

From the table 4.2 we can see that majority (56%) of the respondents prefer to use Facebook, most popular social networking sites among adolescents. Various features of Facebook allow teenagers to communicate with friends and families in an enjoyable way.

Table No: 4.3

| Duration of usage | Categories | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Below 1 hour | 14 | 14 |
| | 1 hour | 20 | 20 |
| | 2 hours | 31 | 31 |
| | 3 hours and above | 21 | 21 |
| | Not using | 14 | 14 |
| | Total | 100 | 100 |

It is found that 52% of students spent 2 hours and more than 2 hours a day. So the study confirmed that social networking sites are became inevitable part of students' daily life. At the same time they not interested in the outdoor activities due to the excessive indulgence on these sites.

TABLE NO: 5 HYPOTHESIS TESTING

Relationship between times spent on social networking sites and changing family relationship

| | | | Change family relationships | | | | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Interaction increased | Interaction decreased | Create problems | No change | Non-users | |
| Time spent on social networking sites | Below 1 hour | F | 5 | 6 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 14 |
| | | % | 23.8 | 12.2 | 0 | 37.5 | 0 | 14 |
| | 1 hour | F | 4 | 10 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 20 |
| | | % | 19 | 20.4 | 37.5 | 37.5 | 0 | 20 |
| | 2 hours | F | 8 | 18 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 31 |
| | | % | 38.1 | 36.7 | 50 | 12.5 | 0 | 31 |
| | 3 & above | F | 4 | 15 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 21 |
| | | % | 19 | 30.6 | 12.5 | 12.5 | 0 | 21 |
| | Non - users | F | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 14 | 14 |
| | | % | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 100 | 14 |
| Total | | F | 21 | 49 | 8 | 8 | 14 | 100 |
| | | % | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

Chi- Square Test

| | Value | Df | Asymp.sig (2 –sided) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Pearson Chi-Square | 111.751 | 16 | .000 |

Table :5 reveals that above 50% of the students using social networking sites for 2 and more than two hours. From this above 70% agreed that excessive usage of social networking sites have effects on changing family relationship.

Chi – Square test was carried out to test the relationship between usage of social networking sites and changing family relationship of the students. Results shows that Chi- Square value is significant ($p<0.05$) at 0.05 levels. This indicates that there is a significant relationship between social networking sites usage and changing family relationships.

Table No: 6 Purpose of usage of social networking sites

| Purpose of usage | Categories | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Social connection and Entertainment | 29 | 29 |
| | Educational | 8 | 8 |
| | Social connection and Educational | 24 | 24 |
| | All the above | 25 | 25 |
| | Not using | 14 | 14 |
| | Total | 100 | 100 |

Nowadays students use social networking sites for various purposes because it perform multipurpose task. Majority (53%) of students were using these sites for building social connection. The adolescents are not much aware of the educational purpose of social networking sites. It was found that majority (48%) of the students spend almost all their leisure time on networking sites through mobile phones and computer.

TABLE : 7 SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES USAGE AND CHANGING FAMILY RELATIONSHIP

Table No: 7.1

| Is there any change in your family atmosphere due to the usage of social networking sites | Categories | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Interaction increased | 21 | 21 |
| | Interaction decreased | 49 | 49 |
| | Create problems | 8 | 8 |
| | No change | 8 | 8 |
| | Non - users | 14 | 14 |
| | Total | 100 | 100 |

Tables 4.2 shows that majority (57%) of students agreed that use of social networking sites have caused lots of changes in family relationship. They revealed that social networking sites usage lessen interaction among family members.

Table No: 7.2

| Whether these sites strengthen or weaken family bond | Categories | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Strengthen | 18 | 18 |
| | Weaken | 82 | 82 |
| | Total | 100 | 100 |

Vast majority of (82%) of respondents agreed that social networking sites usage weaken the family bond. So the study confirmed that usage of networking sites weaken the family relationships.. Due to the excessive indulgence on social networking sites limited interaction takes place within the family especially because nowadays there are more and more nuclear families.

## CONCLUSION:

The study revealed that social networking sites have clearly become an integral part of an adolescent day to day life. The social networking sites usage brought various changes in the interaction pattern of students with their family members. It was found that the students who are more indulged in online networking neglect face to face interaction. It showed that 52% of students are using these sites for two or more hours which prevent them to perform their daily activities properly. Study confirmed that excessive usage of social networking sites lessens the interaction with family members. Study revealed that 57% of students are not aware of the security and privacy concerns. Drawn from the findings, it was recommended that the school authorities should educate the students about the security and privacy concerns and dangers associated with social networking sites usage through proper training and awareness programme.

## REFERENCES:

1. John, C., Social Networks in Youth and Adolescence (London: Routeledge,2007).
2. Yamakanith, P., & Gurusamy, P.,  A Study on the Influence of Social Networking Sites on the Interpersonal Relationships of College Students in Chennai and Coimbatore Cities in India, International Journal of World Research , 1(11), PP- 48-56. 2014..
3. Boyd, D. M., & Ellison, N. B., Social Networking sites: Definition, History and Scholarship, Journal of Computer Mediated Communication , 13(1), PP- 210-230. 2017.
4. Shapiro, L. A., & Margolin, G.,  Growing Up Wired :Social Networking Sites and Adolescent Psychosocial Development, Clinical Child and Family Psychology Review, 17(1), 1-18.
5. Digital Agency Network,  We Are Social, 2016 January 28, Retrieved on September 8, 2016, from Digital Agency Network: http://digitalagencynetwork.com/digital-social-media-statistics-2016
6. Digital India, Snapshot of Digital India, 2016 March, Retrieved on August 28, 2016, from Diigital India Website: http://www.slideshare.net/Ethonos/Snapshot-of-digital-india-march-2016
7. Digital India Programme. Kerala Declared first Digital State in India. India Today, February 2016, http://indiatoday.intoday.in/education/story/kerala-digital-state/1/607961.html.
8. Griffiths, M. D., & Kuss, D. J., Excessive Online Social Networking: Can Adolescents become addicted to Facebook?,  Education and Health, 29(4),  63-66, 2011.
9. McAfee's Tweens,Teens and Technology Report, Growing into their Online Life, 2014, Retrived from https://cybermumindia.files.wordpress.com/2014/11/ttt-2014-infographic-final.pdf.
10. Barnes, S. B.,  A Privcy Paradox: Social Networking in the zunited States, First Monday- Peer Reviewed Journal of Internet , 11 (9), 2006.
11. Lakshmi, P. V., Krishnatray, P., & Shrivastava, S.,  Social Networking Sites and Indian Teenagers, Covenant Journal of Communication, 2(1), 2014, 21-39.
12. Manjunatha, S.,  The Usage of Social Networking Sites among College Students in India, International Research Journal of Social Sciences,2(5), PP- 15-21.2015.
13. Cox Communications, Teens Online and Wireless Safty Survey: Cyberbullying, Sexting and Parental Control, Cox Communications Teen Internet Safty Survey, Wave II- in Partnerhip with the National Centre for Missing and Exploitted Children (NCMC) and John Walsh (Field among Young People Aged 13-17), 2007.
14. Undiyaundeye, F., Impact of Social Media on Children, Adolescents and Families. Global Journal of Interdisciplinary Social Sciences, 3(2), PP- 1-4, 2014.