

FEATURES ACCESED IN SOCIAL NETWORKING APPLICATIONS: Examining the features and contents used by social media users in Coimbatore district

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Abstract: Features are the unique selling point of any product. It is therefore essential to have multiple features a product or a brand to sustain its base and gain new grounds. Social Media is being used through mobile phones and it has been distinctly designed and marketed for Smartphone, it is generally accessed in almost all type of modern smart phones. It is actually a refined and contemporary text messaging tool which is way ahead of traditional text messaging applications and scarcely uses Internet to send data, which really relives people from spending money for quick sharing text message through mobiles. Social Media gives people a varied platform for sharing text, contact numbers, links, pictures, videos, etc. which helps them in providing multiple benefits like low cost, sharing Rich media messages, confirmation of messages for sending, delivering and reading and group chatting, etc. For any social media application to thrive and sustain, it is essential to have a handful features in the application. So, it would be really inappropriate if there is no research study in understanding how users use social media applications for the features that they provide. The research will examine the various features preferred and used in social media applications by users in Tamil Nadu.

Key Words: Social media, Users, Features, access,

1. INTRODUCTION: *Social Media:*

There is a demonstrated positive relationship between young people's use of social networking services and self-esteem (Valkenburg, Peter and Schouten, 2006). It is also argued that a sense of community and belonging has the potential to promote young people's resilience, giving them the ability to successfully adapt to change and stressful events (Oliver et al 2006:1). This is an area that requires more large-scale research, particularly considering the over-emphasis within the public realm on the negative psychological effects of SNS and social media. However, overall, it appears that the social connections developed and fostered through SNS play an important role in promoting young people's wellbeing (Berson 2003; Campbell 2005; Gross, Juvonen & Gable 2002).

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

2.1 *Social media & Social Networking Apps*

Garton, Haythornthwaite & Wellman (1997) said that Social media and social networking apps are the newest addition that is ruling the internet now. Social media apps are used more by adolescents as they happen to be the main target audience for major companies like Social Media, Social Media, and Telegram etc. Social media apps have made communication with fellow colleagues as well as strangers much easier. Chatting which is one of the more popular activities on the Internet has found its calling in the form of "instant messaging." Introduction of social media apps has facilitated communication to reach the next level. Social media apps facilitates the speed of communication. Communication speed is highly increased as messages are sent to people across the globe in an instant and at a frenetic speed. When Short Messaging Service were introduced, it served people in real time. The social media apps

enables users not only in connecting with people across their own country but also easily break international borders. Apps especially like Social Media, Skype and Social Media makes it easier for people to connect with a large group of people who happen to be strangers also. The social media apps creates a new window of opportunity for people to connect with thousands of people across the globe and also getting an acquaintance with them. A social network comprises of a set of individuals who are interconnected through certain relationships such as friendship, co-working or information exchange.

2.2 Social Media & Features:

According to Kaplan and Haenlein (2010), there are six different types of social media: collaborative projects (e.g. Wikipedia), blogs and microblogs (e.g. Twitter), content communities (e.g. Youtube), social networking sites (e.g. Facebook), virtual game worlds (e.g. World of Warcraft) and virtual social worlds (e.g. Second Life). Technologies include: blogs, picture-sharing, vlogs, wall-postings, email, instant messaging, music-sharing, crowd sourcing and voice over IP, to name a few. Many of these social media services can be integrated via social network aggregation platforms.

3. METHODOLOGY:

The methodology adopted for this study is quantitative research approaches in the form of surveys. The Analysis is done over social media applications and responses received with reference to interpersonal relationships, shared by a random sample of 300 users belonging to various regions of Tamilnadu and the analysis as follows

3.1 OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

- To analyze the most preferred social media application by users.
- To explore the social media application this is used most by the users.

Table 1: Age Group

Category	Respondents	Percentage %
16 – 20	58	18.9
20 – 25	80	27
25 – 30	64	21.3
30 - 35	46	15.5
35 – 40	25	8.3
40 >	27	8.7
Total	300	99.7

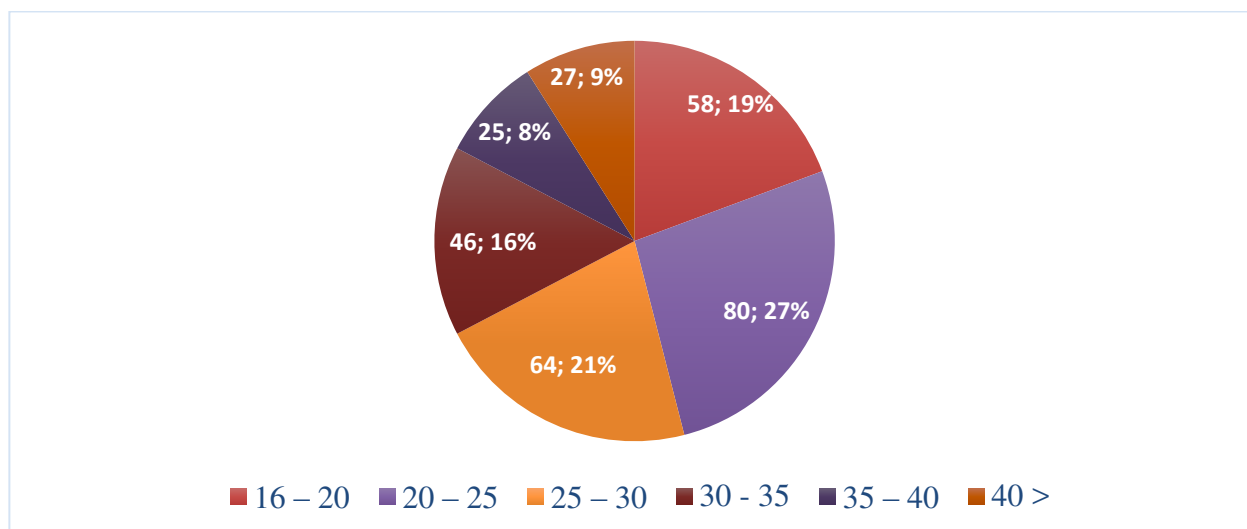


Figure 1

Table 2: Features used by respondents in Facebook

Particulars	Respondents	Percentage%
Chat & Messaging	45	16.9
Friend communication	33	12.9
Job seeking	15	5.8
Searching new friends	31	12.3
Video sharing	29	9.6
Photo sharing	51	19.1
Self-Promotion	9	2.8
Professional Connection	12	4.1
Forming Groups	15	4.9
Games	25	9.8
Personal branding	19	6.9
Events	14	5.5
Not Applicable	2	1.6

Table 3: Features used by respondents in Twitter

Particulars	Respondents	Percentage %
Messaging (Tweets and Retweets)	57	19.1
Friend communication	19	6.1
Job seeking	24	7.9
Searching new followers	17	5.6
Video sharing	0	0
Photo sharing	0	0
Self-Promotion	43	14.3
Professional Connection	47	15.7
Forming Groups	18	6.1
Personal branding	27	9.1
Events	21	6.9
Not applicable	27	8.8

Table 4: Features used by respondents in LinkedIn

Particulars	Respondents	Percentage %
Formal / Informal Messaging / Corporate communication	34	11.4
Friend communication	28	9.3
Job seeking	59	19.5
Searching new friends	17	5.6
Uploading or sharing Video	13	4.4
Uploading or sharing Photo	24	7.9
Self-Promotion	35	11.6
Professional Connection	51	17.1
Forming Groups	7	1.9
Games	0	0
Personal branding	29	9.4
Events	3	0.8

Table 5: Features used by respondents in Instagram

Particulars	Respondents	Percentage %
Messaging and Chat	45	14.9
Friend communication	34	11.2
Job seeking	0	0
Searching new friends	11	3.5
Video sharing	46	15.2
Photo sharing	73	24.3
Self-Promotion	47	15.5
Professional Connection	0	0
Forming Groups	0	0
Games	0	0
Personal branding	29	9.6
Events	15	4.9

Table 6: Features used by respondents in Pin Interest

Particulars	Respondents	Percentage %
Messaging and Chat	12	3.9
Friend communication	15	4.8
Job seeking	0	0
Searching new friends	31	10.4
Video sharing	54	17.9
Photo sharing	73	24.3
Self-Promotion	27	8.9
Professional Connection	0	0
Forming Groups	0	0
Games	0	0
Personal branding	15	4.9
Events	10	3.3
Not applicable	63	21.1

Table 7: Features used by respondents in Snap Chat

Particulars	Respondents	Percentage %
Messaging and Chat	50	16.6
Friend communication	24	7.9
Job seeking	0	0
Searching new friends	19	6.3
Video sharing	0	0
Photo sharing	0	0
Self-Promotion	11	3.5
Professional Connection	0	0
Forming Groups	0	0
Games	0	0
Personal branding	15	4.9
Events	7	2.4

Not Applicable	174	58
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Table 8: Features used by respondents in Whatsapp

Particulars	No of Respondents	Percentage %
Messaging and Chat	68	22.6
Friend communication	35	11.5
Job seeking	7	2.2
Searching new friends	15	4.9
Video sharing	38	12.5
Photo sharing	41	13.7
Self-Promotion	21	6.9
Professional Connection	18	6.1
Forming Groups	11	3.5
Games	39	12.9
Personal branding	0	0
Events	7	2.2

4.FINDINGS:

- Maximum percentage of respondents were in the age group of 20-25 years with 27% followed by those who were 25-30 years old with 21.3%. Respondents who were 16-20 years old were the next with 18.9% followed by those who were 30-35 years old with 15.5%. Respondents who were above 40 years and those who were 35-40 years old were the least with 8.7% and 8.3% respectively. (Table 1)
- Maximum percentage of respondents used Facebook for Photo sharing followed by chat and messaging with 16.9%. Friend communication and searching new friends were the next highest with 12.9% and 12.3% respectively. Games and video sharing came next with 9.8% and 9.6% respectively. Personal branding was next with 6.9% followed by job seeking with 5.8%. Events, forming groups, professional connection and self -promotion were the lowest with 5.5%, 4.9%, 4.1%, 2.8% respectively. (Table 2)
- Messaging (Tweets and retweets) were the highest in Twitter usage with 19.1% followed by professional connection with 15.7%. Self-promotion was next with 14.3% followed by personal branding with 9.1%. Job seeking was next with 7.9%. Events were next with 6.9% which were followed by forming groups and friend communication with 6.1% each. Searing new followers was next with 5.6%. Photo and video sharing had no takers. (Table 3)
- Maximum percentage of respondents used LinkedIn for job seeking with 19.5% followed by professional connection with 17.1%. Self-promotion and formal / informal / corporate communication were the next with 11.6% and 11.4% respectively. Personal branding and friend communication were the next with 9.4% and 9.3% respectively. Uploading or sharing photo was next with 7.9% followed by searching new friends with 5.6%. Uploading or sharing video was the least with 4.4%. (Table 4)
- Maximum percentage of respondents used Instagram for photo sharing with 24.3% followed by self-promotion with 15.5%. Video sharing was the next with 15.2% followed by messaging and chat with 14.9%. Personal branding was next with 9.6%. Events were next with 4.9% and searching new friends were the least with 3.5%. (Table 5)
- Maximum percentage of respondents used Pin Interest for photo sharing with 24.3% followed by not applicable with 21.1%. Video sharing was the next with 17.9% following by searching new friends with 10.4%. Self-promotion and personal branding was the next with 8.9% and 4.9%, Friend communication, messaging and chat an events were the least with 4.8%, 3.9% and 3.3% respectively. (Table 6)
- Maximum percentage of respondents did not use any of the features in snap chat with 58% opting for not applicable followed by messaging and chat with 16.6%. Friend communication was the next with 7.9% followed by searching new friends with 6.3%. Personal branding, self-promotion and events were the least with 4.9%, 3.5% and 2.4% respectively. (Table 7)

- Maximum percentage of respondents used Whatsapp for 22.6% followed by photo sharing with 13.7%. Games and video sharing came next with 12.9% and 12.5% respectively. Friend communication was the next with 11.5% followed by self-promotion with 6.9%. Professional connection was next with 6.1% followed by searching new friends with 4.9%. Forming groups and events were the least with 3.5% and 2.2% respectively. (Table 8)

5. CONCLUSION:

Features happens to be prime focus for users when opting for a new social media application. Features are also something that the users look forward to in usage of existing applications. Users happen to the target audience for any social media application to have a grand success. Users and their acceptance of the social media application go a long way in the success of the social media application. Features plays a vital part in the same. According to the study, maximum percentage of respondents' were in the age group of 20-25 years illustrating the fact that there is wide preference among the younger generation for social media applications. Maximum percentage of respondents used Facebook for photo sharing. Messaging (Tweets and retweets) were the highest in Twitter the study revealed. Job seeking was the highest among respondents in their usage of LinkedIn. Photo sharing was the highest among respondents in using Instagram and Pin Interest. An overwhelming majority of respondents did not use any of the features in snap chat. Whatsapp also had high patronage for photo sharing. It can be concluded that there is wide patronage among the users especially the younger generation. Photo sharing and job seeking seem to be the features that interests the younger generation although they do not give attention to many other features.

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