

# Motives for Students Using Social Networking Sites: Findings from Sukkur, Pakistan

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**Abstract.** The social networking sites are popular these days among all ages. These sites have been very critical in removing the geographical boundaries and provide a common platform all over the world. This paper attempts to find out the reasons of students using these social networking sites in Sukkur city. The survey of 150 students was conducted in different educational institutes. The analysis of data revealed that students are more likely to use these sites to find old friends, maintain their existing offline relations, pass time and be entertained. Some of students are likely to develop new relationships.

**Keywords:** Social Networking Sites (SNS), Sukkur, Online Social Networking(OSN)

## 1. Introduction

Social networking site (SNS) is a social space created on internet for the people for their connection and communication, where people can create or share their contents with people on the same site [1] Face book, MySpace and LinkedIn are examples of such sites. These sites target the different people and different contexts for example getting jobs, finding romance or simply having online social network. The people create profiles on these sites and communicate with other members, discuss different topics and share their ideas with online friends. [2]. It has generally been observed that the companies crete their online peofiles, some events are also available on these sites and political parties have also been obserevd with their online profiles on social networking sites. These sites allow you many private restrictions in which everyone can not be your online friend unless you both agree. But their main purpose is to create online display of social networks.

Facebook was originally created for college students to communicate online on campus. The registered students could create online profile, express their likes and dislikes online. The website allows to upload pictures and member students can join different groups of interest. The friends is a social group can post and receive comments on different activites [3]. Because of this popularity of facebook, it was opened for all outside the campus also and now anyone from any where(where it is not banned) can join this site.

## 2. Problem statement/Research question

The social networking sites have become an important source of building online relations and staying in touch with online friends. Hence the objective of this research is to find out the reasons of students in Sukkur city for using these social networking websites. What motivates and encourages students to be a part of these sites and remain active online.

## 3. Methodology

For this purpose a questionnaire was developed and the survey was conducted from 150 students of graduate and undergraduate students of Sukkur city. The sample included the students of management Sciences, Computer science and medical science.

## 4. Literature review

Looking at the popularity of Social networking sites (SNS) it is necessary to understand the reasons and motives for college students who use these sites. Through their studies[2-4] all reported that students commonly used Facebook for staying in touch with their old friends or high school friends. [2] reiterates

that students use Facebook profile particularly for maintaining the offline relations or to further strengthen the temporary or common acquaintanceships. This study demonstrates that students use face book account mainly for two reasons, first one to stay in touch or maintain relations with old friends who are not in their close circles and second reason is to communicate with people who are close to their circles like other students on campus. Although staying in touch with offline friends on social networking sites is the most popular use among students, some other common reasons among students are making plans, finding out more about people through online activities, looking for boyfriend or girlfriend and online entertainment [4] posting their pictures on site and looking at other friends' pictures, to create new friendships or to find old friends[2]. [5] did a study at Midwestern university students Facebook usage by professors. The study required students to view professors's profile page with certain variations of self-disclosure on facebook page by professor. The perceptions and opinions were recorded. The study concluded that as the professor disclosed more information on Facebook so the views gave mpore positive comments. They explain in their results the self-disclosure by a teacher on SNS like posting his pictures, messages and opinions on certain topics creates perceptions of similarity among students. Professors having high seld disclosure on SNS, like having informal photographs, but they maintain stict environment in class coild have negative effects on students' relationships with him[5].

The Educause Center for Applied Research report[6] mentions that staying in touch with friends was the top choice of students with 96% response followed by sharing photos or videos with 71.1% response. According to report other preferences were finding more people and communication with classmates.

With increasing numbers of users on Facebook and SNS, these sites are part of daily life of every internet user, they can be used to form study groups, promote research and other academic support[7].

## 5. Discussion

Returning to the original research question, the study finds that there are certain motives of students for using OSN's such as finding old friends, making new friends, and increasing their social network.

Although all the sampled students used online social networking, the students of both genders use these sites with little differences that girls do not make new friends while male students did that. The younger students were more eager to use these sites while senior students (having age more than 29) were not found using SNS. Generally found all the students using online social networking and has no exception of excluding any group of students.

The participants used OSN for staying in touch with old friends with 70% respondents maintained their accounts on two sites mainly Face book and LinkedIn. While individually Facebook received 57% response, which makes it the first choice among SNS within the given sample. The majority of respondents 43.3% have been using OSN for the last two years.

For many like 73% respondents, OSNs was a way to find new friends. When asked about finding old friends 93% agreed that SNS helped them in finding old friends and acquaintances. They also agreed that SNS are effective in maintaining relations with existing offline friends. There are certain people from sample, who believe that OSNs especially LinkedIn is a useful social networking site which enables them to link with recruiters and find employment. The empirical results show that people use SNS to start new friendships, but their main reason for using these websites is that they want to remain connected with their old and present friends. A very small proportion believes that in order to entertain themselves with games, they use these social websites.

From results, it is clear that facebook.com is the most used website within given sample, mainly because it has got the most interactive features that an OSN provides. While using these websites, students most of the time check their friend's activities and keep themselves updated about friends and chat with them. Along with this, they are mostly interested to comment on the different pictures and videos that are posted by their friends. Female students do not seek new friends while male students are more interested in new friends. This could be because of culture within this part of world. Furthermore, male side showed strong motive to find girl friends in the open ended question. When asked some respondents had no better idea of creating an account on SNS, they did that only when encouraged by friends.

The results show that gender wise there are no differences among students for the use of SNS. They use these sites for almost similar reasons. When compared on discipline of studies, the students had no differences for the use of SNS. However, one fact that majority of people are using these websites for last 2 years, shows that with the growth of these websites, people started using these sites as they became popular all over the world.

## 6. Conclusion

Although, Online Social networking is in use for the last two years in Sukkur, but the students are using it in their daily life. These students use online social networking sites to be connected with other people from their offline circles who may be either their friends or family members. Many students want to meet new people on these sites, whereas only few are aware that online networks can be used for job hunting and want to get jobs by using these websites. The results also suggest that for students, online social networking sites are the means to strengthen their connections with offline networks.

## 7. References

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