SOCIAL MEDIA TRENDS Vs USER SATISFACTION: A CASE STUDY ON THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN JAZAN

Ms. PREETHI RAJAN

Lecturer, Department of Office Management, Jazan University, Saudi Arabia

Ms. SAMIRA YEHIA SBAEE
Student, Department of Office Management, Jazan University, Saudi Arabia
Ms. SALHA MALIK HAMAMI
Student, Department of Office Management, Jazan University, Saudi Arabia

ABSTRACT

Social media is a strong influence to users and continue to penetrate into people's lives from multiple dimensions: commercial, social, cultural, personal and psychological. Social media platforms are used as means of communication, to share information and most importantly to share attitudes and behaviors on a huge breadth of topics.

Social media is advancement to technological changes and has now been recognized as imperative communication platform not only for different online users but also between companies and customers. More and more companies have begun to understand the dominant power of social media and are now exploiting it in various fields such as customer relationship management, branding and product innovation. This research aims to identify the new trends and level of user satisfaction. This is done by conducting a study on the impact of social media on university students. Our study focuses on:i) discussing the challenges faced by social media. ii) Revealingthe inevitable use of social media among the student community. iii) Evaluating reasons behind using social media, and iv) also identifying some problems faced by university students in using social media.

KEYWORDS: Communication, Education, Information, Knowledge, Social Media, Social Networking, Technology

INTRODUCTION

Social media use is a mounting trend in modern-day. Social media platforms offer users an easy gateway to access and develop friend network, family and relevant professionals. Online communities of interest can be found to suit the interests of almost anyone. One major area of concern with social media data is the degree to whether such data should be considered personal or communal. Social media users agree to a set of terms and conditions for the social media platforms they use, in which there are clauses on how one's data may be accessed by third parties including organizations. Over 3 billion people use messaging platforms globally which helps brands to connect with their customers. Artificial intelligence, voice assistants and chatbots will enable brands to offer personalized shopping experiences on messaging platforms like Messenger, WhatsApp and Kik.(*Social Media Marketing for the Future: Strategies for 2020 & Beyond J. E. Ford)*

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The goal of the research is to gain insight on the current trends in social media by conceding the developments in various apps and the extent of user satisfaction among university students in Jizan which will be the primary focus. This will be achieved through;

  a. discussing the challenges faced by social media

  b. analyzing the impact of social media on university students

  c. Evaluating reasons behind using social media

  d. Peeping into the problems faced by university students.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This research intends to focus on students of Jazan University for easy analysis of data. This will reduce the cost and avoid difficulties that may arise from large samples. But since the characteristics of students are quite similar, we can generalize the findings.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Thisresearch will be useful to the society as it gives an insight on the impact of social media among university students. This research will also serve as a platform for future researchers who wish to undergo a detailed study in this field.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research was conducted with the primary focus of determining the trends and user satisfaction among university students. For the purpose of research, primary and secondary data is collected.

Primary data is obtained through structured questionnaire prepared with a set of 10-15 questions. Questionnaire is framed in such a way that it helped to analyze the Behavioral, Social and Personal variables of the target group.

Population of the study was randomly selected using probability sampling methods. Sample size was taken from different colleges in Jazan. The prominent ones are Community, Arts, Computers, Nursing, Pharmacy, Engineering etc. We created an online survey using Google forms. This helped to create quick opinion polls as time was a limiting factor for this research. The survey was open to the above colleges and the target size was 100 surveys. But we got volunteer responses from 103 students, and these responses are considered for our analysis.

The data was tabulated using MS Excel and presented in figures using Data Labels.

Secondary data is collected from reference books, research materials, blogs and websites.

CHALLENGES FACED BY SOCIAL MEDIA

Ethical: One of the strongest forms of argument for regulating social media comes in the form of morality issues, as it may be as important as regulating alcohol and tobacco.

Legislative Issues: it would be difficult to establish who would be qualified to write legislation for social media without limiting future innovation.

*Health Issues***:** Another lesser known aspect to consider is how the constant influx of content from social media affects a person's health. The constant stream of notifications that pour in and the desire to not miss out anything actually activates some part of your brain which inherently does not do much damage to the adult brain but the children might be adversely affected.

Setting Boundaries: Social media should be kept under tight control. For example, Countries like China heavily limit what their people can view and do online.

*Personal Responsibility***:** Finally, there are people who believe that the issue is one that ultimately boils down to personal responsibility. Effective regulations should have clear cut views to address the idea that people should be accountable to when it comes to determining what sources of content they should believe.

POSITIVES OF SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES

Reducing barriers to communication: Social networking sites can be used to convey ideas and opinions on a particular topic to a large number of people in an easy way, from anywhere, at any time and the ability to share the views and exchange ideas and expand opportunities.

Fig:1 Gender

Free Expression of opinion: Social media provides a platform where anyone, in any part of the world can freely express their opinions.

Expanding social Relationships: Social media is a useful tool for acquiring new friends and making it easier to connect with lost friends.

Effective ways to promote: Businesses use social networking as a tool to promote their products. There are many applications that promote a service or commodity at a lower cost, which gains a competitive edge over its rivals, resulting in higher profits.
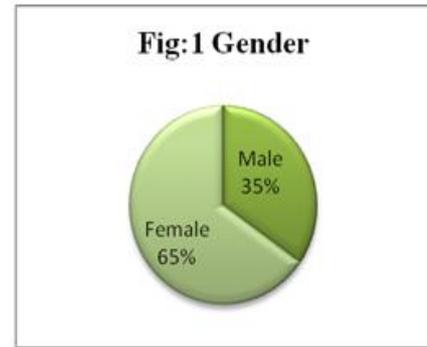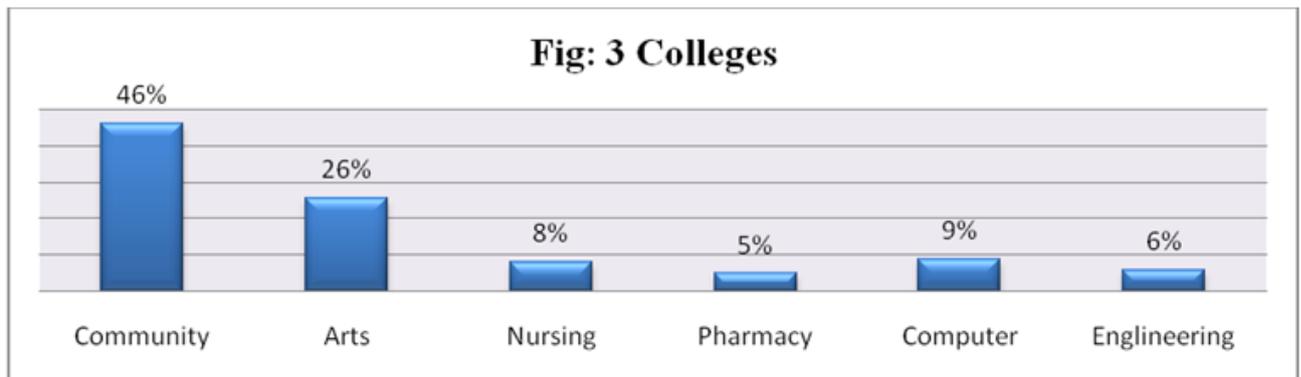
RESULTS

9.1 User Demographics

In Figure 1, a random sample of 103 university students was taken for the research and the majority who participated in the survey was females (65%) and males which contribute 35% of the total sample.


Fig: 2 Age
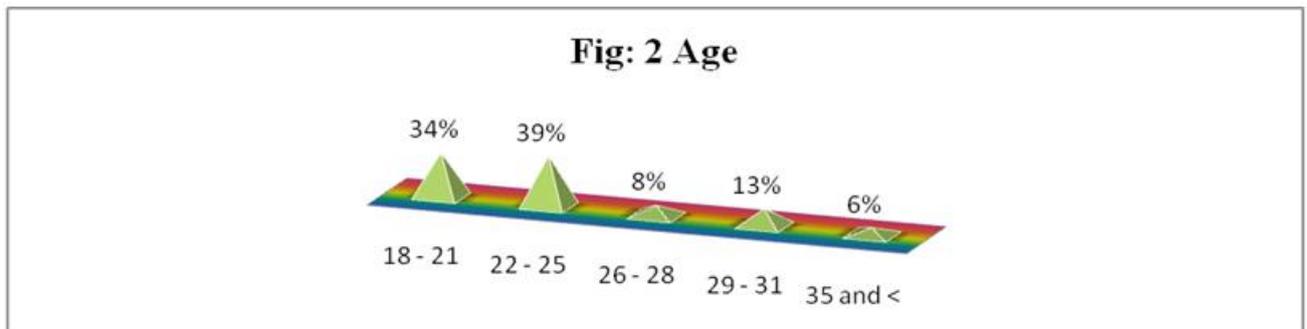
In Figure 2 the sample was collected to determine the impact of social media on university students. As we say, age is not a limiting factor to education, the below figure proves it. University students belong to different age groups, ranging from 18 – 35 and above. The majority of the students who participated in the survey belong to 22-25 (39%) age group18-21 (34%), 29-31 (13%), 26-28 (8%) and 35 and above (6%).

Fig: 3 Colleges

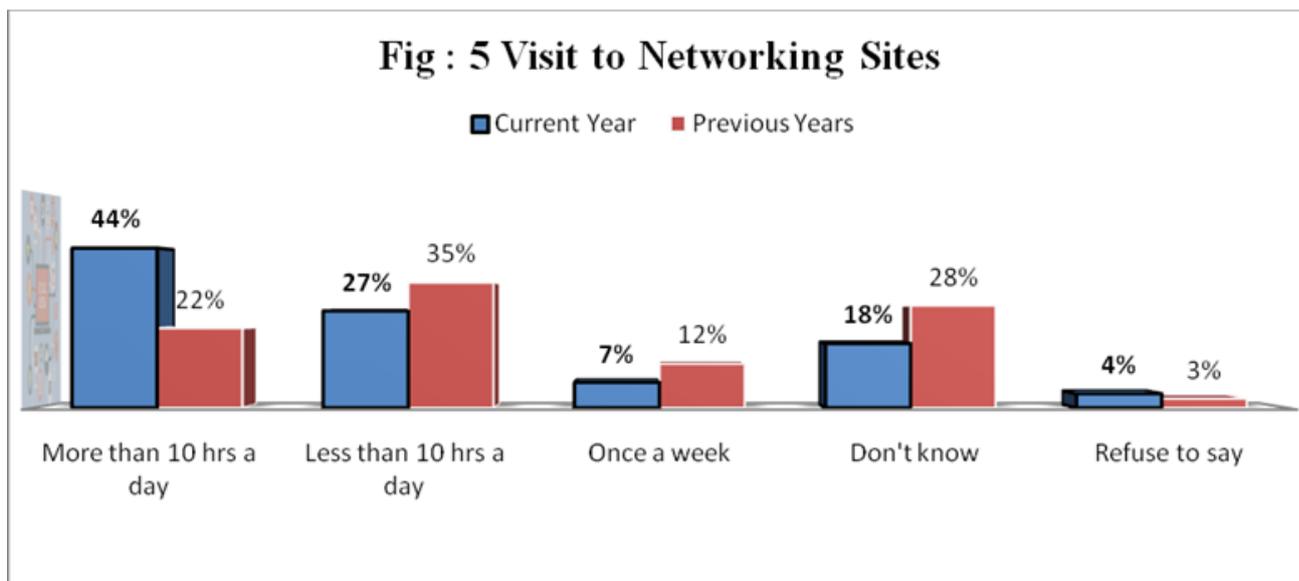| College	Percentage
Community	46%
Arts	26%
Nursing	8%
Pharmacy	5%
Computer	9%
Englineering	6%

In Figure 3 a few colleges affiliated to Jazan University were randomly selected for the survey. Selection involved taking into consideration different streams of specialization like Community, Arts, Computers, Nursing, Pharmacy, Engineering etc. Of these colleges, 46% who did the survey belonged to Community College, 26% belonged to Arts (Samta, Sabya and Jazan regions) participated, 8% from nursing, 5% from pharmacy, 9% from Computers and 6% from engineering.

33% belonged to first year in college, 16% in second year, 26% in the third year and 25% fourth year in college.

Fig: 4 Year in College

Year	Percentage
4th year	25%
3rd year	26%
2nd Year	16%
1st year	33%
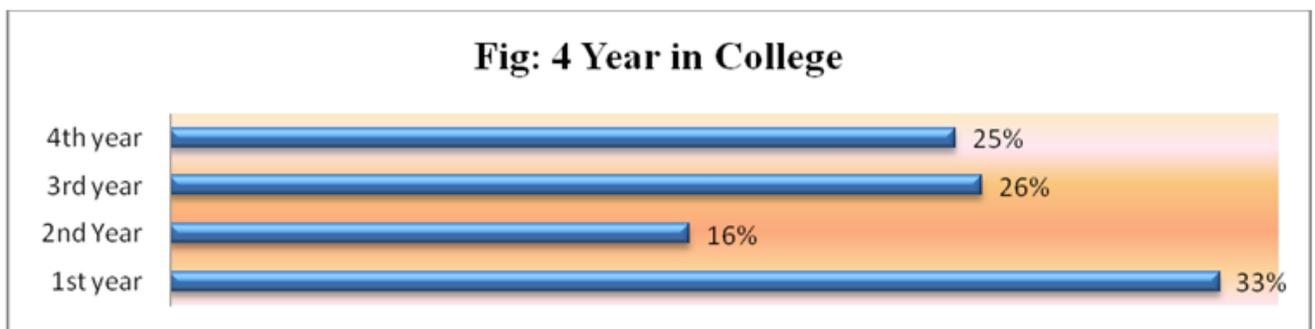
As illustrated in Figure 4 when asked about the frequency of visits in social networking sites in the current and previous years, we found that the amount of time spent on social media is increasing.

Fig : 5 Visit to Networking Sites

◻ Current Year ■ Previous Years

More than 10 hrs a day	Less than 10 hrs a day	Once a week	Don't know	Refuse to say
44% / 22%	27% / 35%	7% / 12%	18% / 28%	4% / 3%

The above graph depicts the following. In the previous years, 22% spent more than 10 hours on networking, whereas, in the current year it has risen up to 44%.

**Fig: 6 Social Media for Learning and Educational Purposes**

11%
89%

■ Yes ■ No
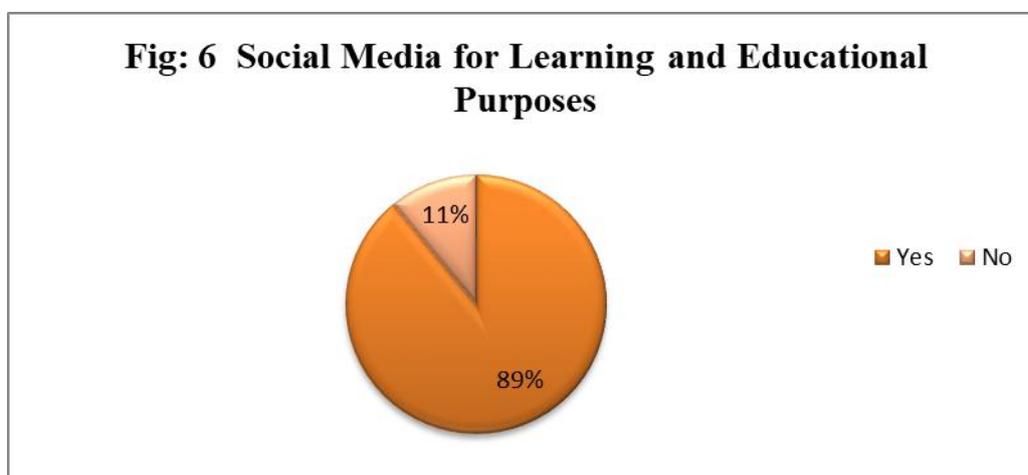
Social media is becoming popular among students and most or almost all have an account in networking sites. It can act as a facilitator and students prefer their institutions to use social networking sites for strengthening classrooms*(Robyler, Mc Daniel, Webb, Herman, & Witty,2010)*Social media can be considered as one of the best platforms for sharing knowledge, skills, exchanging ideas and information, familiarizing with new concepts and technologies. The traditional method of teaching had its own limitations when it comes to education. As we all know, a decade ago, at the age of 6, kids acquired knowledge about animals and plants, and of course, the environment we live in. But now the scenario has changed. We now live in a world where 5 year olds are making millions of dollars in the internet. Currently, technology is growing at a rapid pace where there are solutions to every problem.

Easy accessibility, instant information and response, availability of resources are the major reasons for social media attraction. But what kind of impact does it create on students? Does it have a positive or negative impact? Unlike any other technologies it too has its own boons and dooms.

The positive impact involves gaining new learning experience, encouraging digital collaboration and making them digitally literate. It also helps students to interact with their tutors for queries and clarifications.
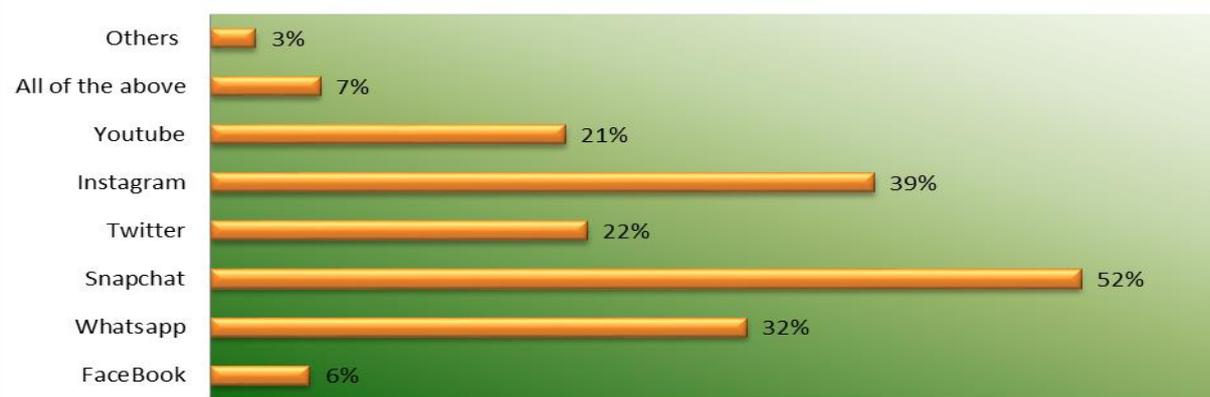
When we look at the negative side, like always the major drawback is that there is no face-to-face interaction, reduces student focus on learning and retaining information as they depend highly on the internet. When students get too involved in social media it might affect their academic performance. It is thus, very difficult to assess whether students are using the medium productively.

Fig: 7 Do you engage in Social Messaging?
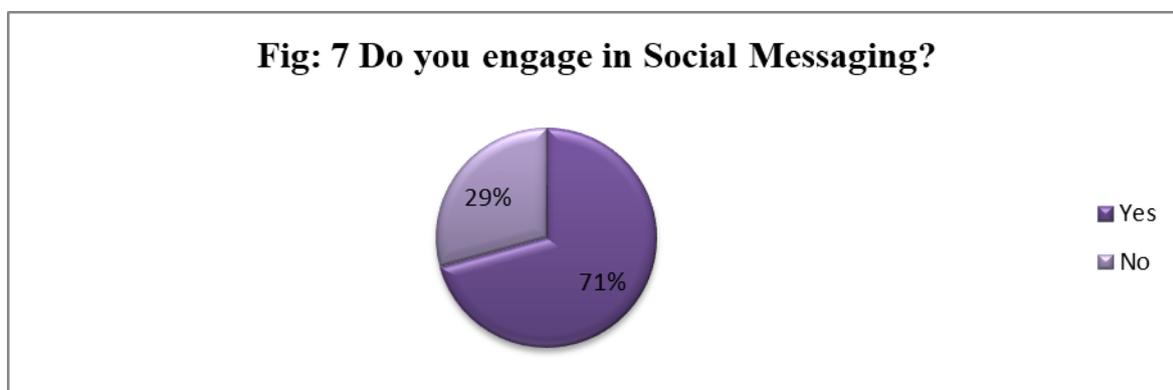
As shown in Figure 7, 71% of the respondents actively engage themselves in social messaging. This reveals the huge impact of messaging apps in the student community.

Short Messaging service (SMS), is a mode of communication which is highly used not just by students and teenagers but also by adults. Studies reveal large scale social messaging. Students communicate with large number of contacts for extended periods of time and often use text messaging as a common means of communication.*(Premadasa, Salinda, Meegama, Gayan, 2016)*

Fig : 8 Changes With Social Networking Sites

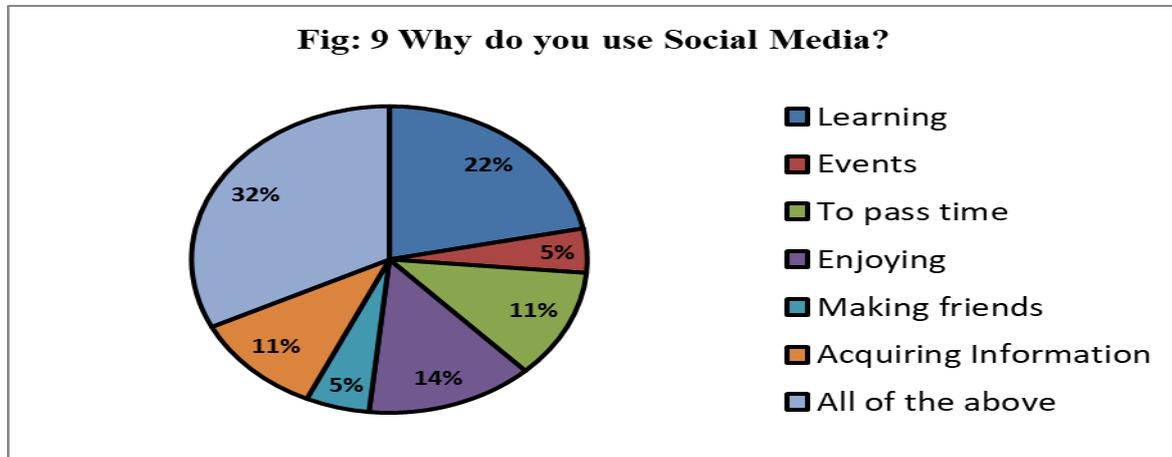| Category	Percentage
Others	3%
All of the above	7%
Youtube	21%
Instagram	39%
Twitter	22%
Snapchat	52%
Whatsapp	32%
FaceBook	6%

When we asked about the trending in social networking, we got multiple responses from respondents. For this question, respondents were free to choose multiple answers. In Figure 8 52% claims that Snapchat has witnessed a tremendous change. Followed by Snapchat, we have Instagram (39%), Whatsapp (32%), Twitter (22%), YouTube(21%), All (7%), FB (6%) and others (3%).

We are in the era of subscribers, fans and followers. Studies reveal that one of the fastest growing social media sites of 2018 is Snapchat especially in the Gulf countries like Saudi Arabia. Snapchat currently reaches about 50 per cent of those belonging to the age group 18-34. Students find it beneficial because of the Discover tab which provides quick access to viral topics, event coverage, and trending stories.
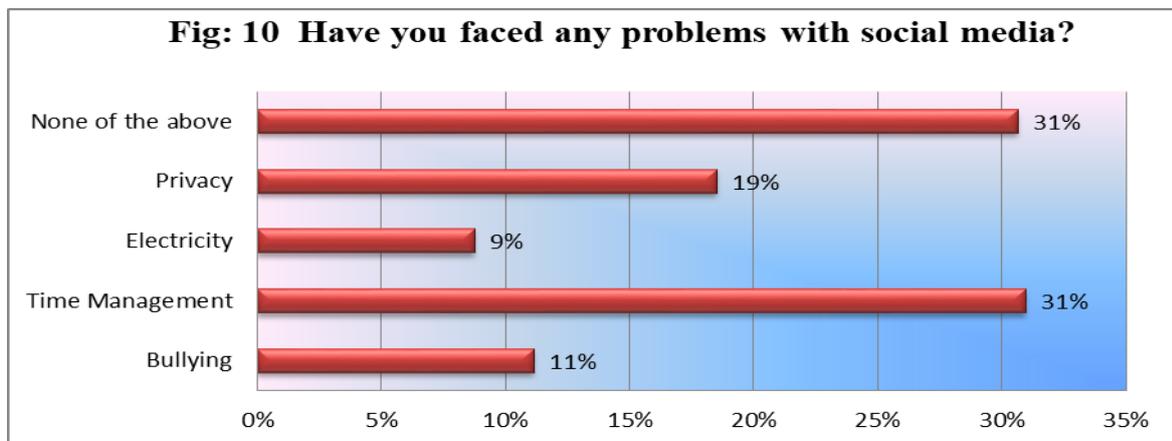
YouTube was founded by former employees of PayPal- Chad Hurley, Steve Chen, and Jawed Karim. Creating and uploading video contenton YouTube is a fantastic method for increasing visibility and reliability.*(David Kelly,2016)*

"Last year was a hit year for Instagram as it had many marketers coming in. Sharing stories on Instagram has come to be ordinary. Vertical videos are also gaining popularity. Users, who couldn't shoot a video properly, clearly benefit from this feature. Instagram has also been re-modifying its shopping features and are becoming more stable. Another attraction of Instagram is the popping up of Story specific Ads. Studies reveal that around 400 million people watch Instagram stories every single day and this is very crucial for the company as it generates a far greater return on investment when compared to Facebook and other media apps." (*Social Media Marketing for the Future: Strategies for 2020 & Beyond J. E. Ford*)

Whatsapp is also another popular platform for communication among students. Students form study groups, where they post lectures, notices, home works and assignments. This is beneficial for the student community as they are updated constantly in groups. Another positive impact is enhancing student-teacher relationships. Many colleges affiliated under JazanUniversity follows virtual teaching. Distance Learning courses, Blackboard are some examples:

Fig: 9 Why do you use Social Media?

Learning — 22%
Events — 5%
To pass time — 11%
Enjoying — 14%
Making friends — 5%
Acquiring Information — 11%
All of the above — 32%

In Figure 9 when asked about reasons for using social media, 22% used for learning purposes, 5% for events, 11% passing time, 14% for enjoyment,5% making friends, 11% acquiring information and 32% for all the above.

Fig: 10 Have you faced any problems with social media?

None of the above — 31%
Privacy — 19%
Electricity — 9%
Time Management — 31%
Bullying — 11%

As illustrated in Figure 10, 31% of the student sample faced problems with time management, 19% had privacy issues, 11% bullying, 9% electricity issues and another 31% did not face any issues.

Fig: 11 How is the internet infrastructure in your area?
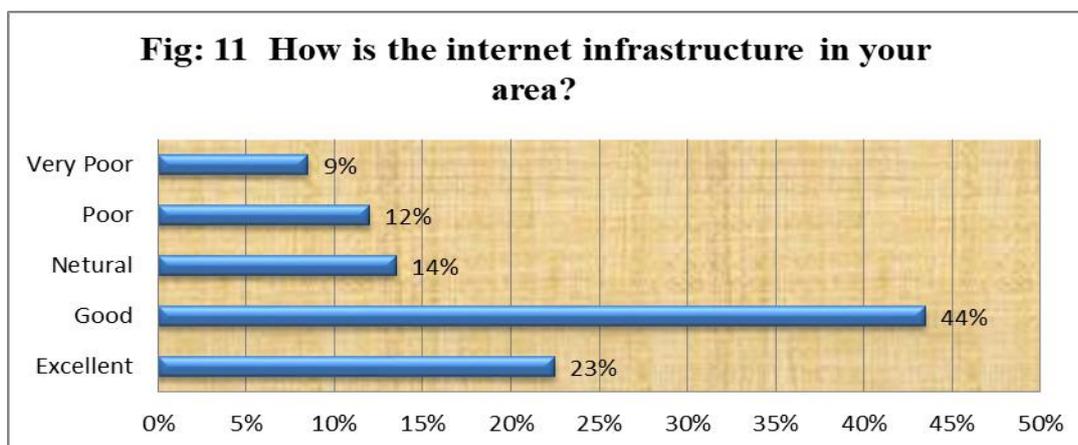
A good percent 23% + 44% enjoys the benefit of good internet infrastructure.

FINDINGS AND SUGGESTIONS

1. Social media plays an inevitable role in the life of every student, needless to say, adults too.

2. A majority of the students views social media as a solution to their queries and try to resolve them.

3. Acquiring knowledge, gaining information, events, creating awareness, making friends, time passing, online payments, government services etc. are some of the basic reasons for social networking.

4. The positive impact involves gaining new learning experience, encouraging digital collaboration and making them digitally literate.

5. Helps students to interact with their tutors for queries and clarifications.

6. The major drawbacks of social media are no face-to face interaction, reduces student focus on learning and retaining information as they depend highly on the internet.

7. Students are getting too much involved in social media which in turn affects their academic performance. It is thus, very difficult to assess whether students are using the medium productively.

8. Findings reveal that Snapchat is the most popular media among students in Jazan, followed by Instagram, Whatsapp and so on…

9. Majority of the respondents does not seem to have any issues with social media. Only a few expressed their concerns for time management and privacy issues. A very few had faced problems arising out of bullying and electricity.

10. Jazan enjoys a very good internet infrastructure and majority are satisfied.

CONCLUSION

Social media is popular among students and most or almost all have an account in networking sites. Easy accessibility, instant information and response, availability of resources are the major reasons for social media attraction. But what kind of impact does it create on students? Does it have a positive or negative impact? Unlike any other technologies it too has its own boons and dooms.

The positive impact involves gaining new learning experience, encouraging digital collaboration and making them digitally literate. It also helps students to interact with their tutors for queries and clarifications.

To conclude, our research reveals that there is a positive impact on students.89% of the sample population are using social media for educational and learning purposes.

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