A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY OF THE USAGE PATTERN OF SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES BY ADOLESCENT STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

Social Networking Site is a platform to build social networks or social relations among people who share interests, activities, backgrounds or real-life connections. Adolescents use Social Networking Sites for different reasons. They use them for entertainment and sharing other social and political issues. This paper focuses basically on the major activities they perform by using Social Networking Sites. The present study is made on 400 adolescent students of Meerut City where 211 respondents are male and 189 female. Questionnaire method is used to collect the primary data and secondary data is collected from the studies which are conducted earlier in this field. The Social Sites considered for the study were Facebook, Google Plus, Twitter and Instagram, The data is analysed using SPSS software and Chi-test is used to find the association among categories regarding usage pattern while using Social Networking Sites.

KEYWORDS: Adolescents, Usage Pattern, Social Networking Sites, Communication.

INTRODUCTION

A Social Networking Site (SNS) is a dedicated website or other application which enables users to communicate with each other by posting information, comments, message, images etc. It is a platform to build social networks or social relations among people who share interests, activities, backgrounds or real-life connections. According to Boyd (2007), "Facebook is used as a medium to "hang-out" with friends. Facebook is used to be in touch with people with whom the user had spent time earlier. It helps to know a person better since it contains a lot of information about the person."

Adolescents are very active users of Social Networking Sites. They use social sites for entertainment as well as to be aware of various social and political issues. They also prefer these sites for educational discussions and arranging parties. However, the adolescents using these sites for personal development are less than those who are using them for entertainment purpose. The present research paper aims to know what actually the adolescents are interested to look and share while sharing social sites.

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RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study is made over 400 respondents of Meerut city among which 211 respondents are males and 189 respondents are females. The age group of the respondents is 14-18 years of age. The social sites chosen for study were Facebook, Google Plus, Twitter and Instagram. Questionnaire method is used to collect the primary data and secondary data is collected from the studies which are conducted earlier in this field. The data is analysed using SPSS software and chi-test is used to find out the association among gender and purpose of using Social Sites.

The following research questions are designed to know the usage pattern of SNS by the adolescents:

1. While using Social Networking Site whether you view friend's profile?
2. Whether you view pictures and ideas posted by others?
3. Whether you search for people's profile?
4. Whether you add unknown people to your friend's list?
5. Do you share any information using Social Sites?
6. Whether you ask for answers to your subject related question on SNS?
7. Whether you look for people with common interest on SNS?
8. Do you arrange parties and get-together through SNS?
9. Do you interact about society using SNS?
10. Do you think SNS are helpful in maintaining friendship?

USAGE PATTERN

Table 1.View your friend's Profile

Gender * View your friend's Profile Cross tabulation								
Count								
		View other's Profile					**Total**	
		Never	**Rarely**	**Sometimes**	**Often**	**Always**		
Gender	Male	50	40	74	11	36	211	
	Female	45	47	71	7	19	189	
Total		95	87	145	18	55	400	

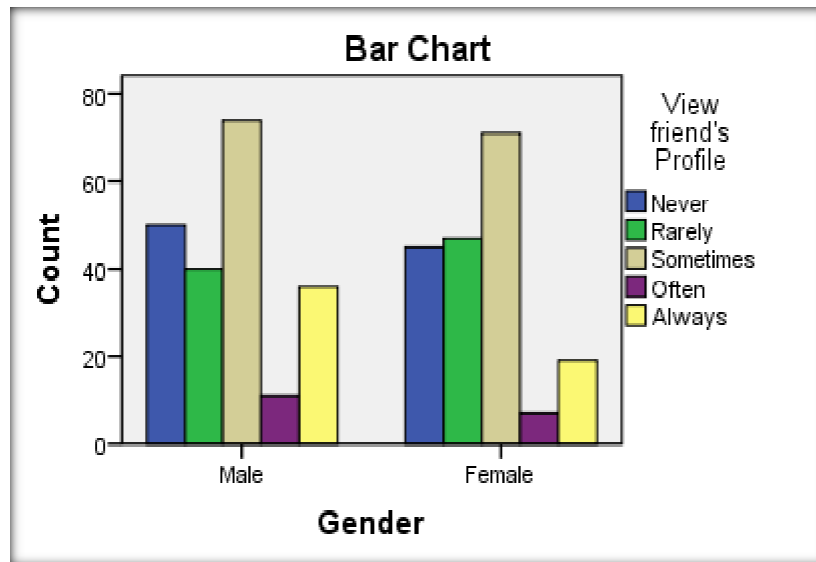| Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	**df**	**Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)**
Pearson Chi-Square	5.840[a]	4	.211
Likelihood Ratio	5.917	4	.205
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.874	1	.090
N of Valid Cases	400		

Figure 1

Profile is actually a short description of the person who is handling an account on Social Networking Site. It tells about person's details like contact number, e-mail, interests, status etc. Generally, after visiting someone's profile it is decided to add him in friend list or not. Profile is actually the representation of the person itself. When the respondents were asked whether they view friend's profile 23.8% responded that they never visit friend's profile, 21.8% responded that they rarely visit friend's profile followed by 36.3% sometimes, 4.5% often and 13.8% always view friend's profile.

Chi-square test is used to find out whether there is association between gender of adolescents and viewing of friend's profile. From the chi-square value (χ^2 =5.840; p=.211) where p>.05; it is statistically proved that there is no significant difference between the categories so we can say that there is no association between the gender and both males and females equally view friend's profile.

Table 2.View posted pictures and ideas

Gender * View Posted pictures and ideas Cross tabulation							
Count							
		View Posted pictures and ideas					Total
		Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always	
Gender	Male	15	32	80	34	50	211
	Female	30	32	37	28	62	189
Total		45	64	117	62	112	400

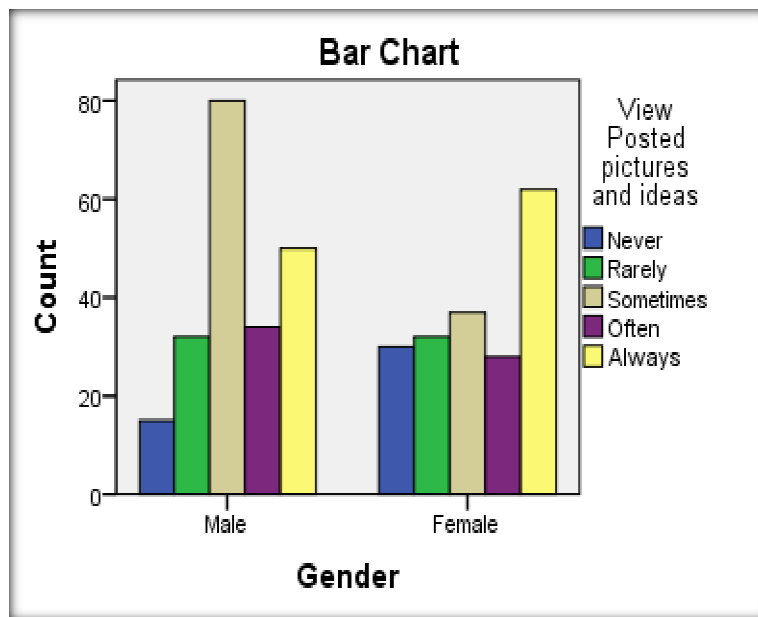| Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	21.525[a]	4	.000
Likelihood Ratio	21.936	4	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	.032	1	.859
N of Valid Cases	400		
a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 21.26.			

Figure 2

Figure 2 represents that most of the respondents view posted pictures and ideas on Social Networking Sites. When we talk about posted pictures and ideas 29.3% responded that they sometimes, 28% of the respondents replied that they always view posted pictures and ideas, 16% rarely, 15.5% often view posted pictures and ideas and only 11.3% responded that they never view posted pictures and ideas.

From the chi-square value (χ^2 =21.525; p=.000) where p<.05; it is statistically proved that there is significant difference between the gender so we can say that there is association between the categories and both males and females don't equally view posted pictures and ideas. Here, male respondents are more who sometimes or often view posted pictures and ideas as compared to female students.

Table 3.Search for people's profile

Gender * Search for people's profile Cross tabulation							
Count							
		Search for people's profile					Total
		Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always	
Gender	Male	52	40	75	26	18	211
	Female	79	31	45	22	12	189
Total		131	71	120	48	30	400

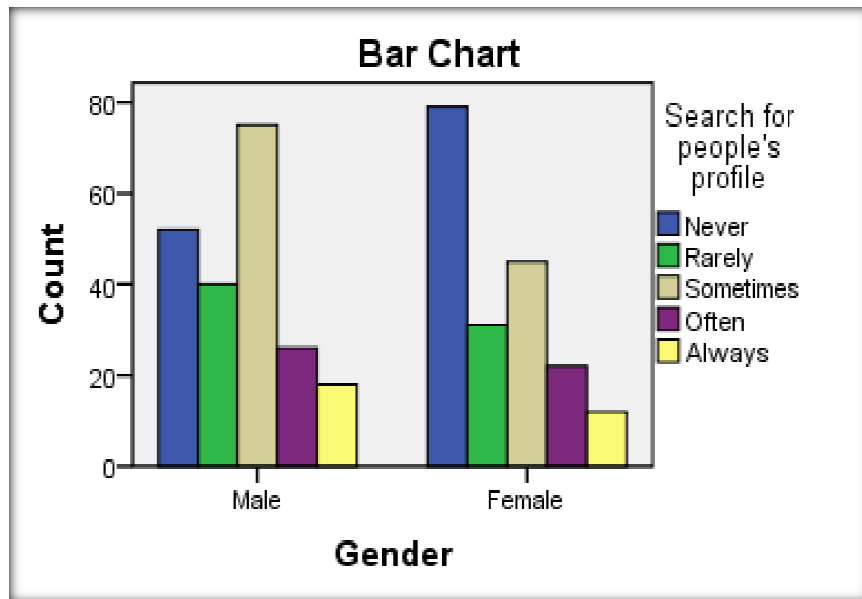| Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	14.573[a]	4	.006
Likelihood Ratio	14.660	4	.005
Linear-by-Linear Association	8.464	1	.004
N of Valid Cases	400		
a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 14.18.			

Figure 3

Adolescents search other's profile on Social Networking Sites for contact information, common interests and other details about the person. Most of the respondents (32.8%) said that they never view other's profile, 30.0% respondents sometimes view other's profile, 17.8% rarely, 12.0% often and 7.5% respondents always view other's profile.

From the chi-square value (χ^2 =14.573; p=.006) where p<.05; it is statistically proved that there is significant difference among the users who look at other's profile. The significant difference would mean that there is association among gender and there are many respondents who search for other's profile. Here male respondents are more active in viewing other's profile than female respondents.

Table 4.Add unknown people to your friend list

Gender * Add unknown people to friend list Cross tabulation							
Count							
		Add unknown people to friend list					Total
		Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always	
Gender	Male	97	27	46	30	11	211
	Female	112	10	37	20	10	189
Total		209	37	83	50	21	400

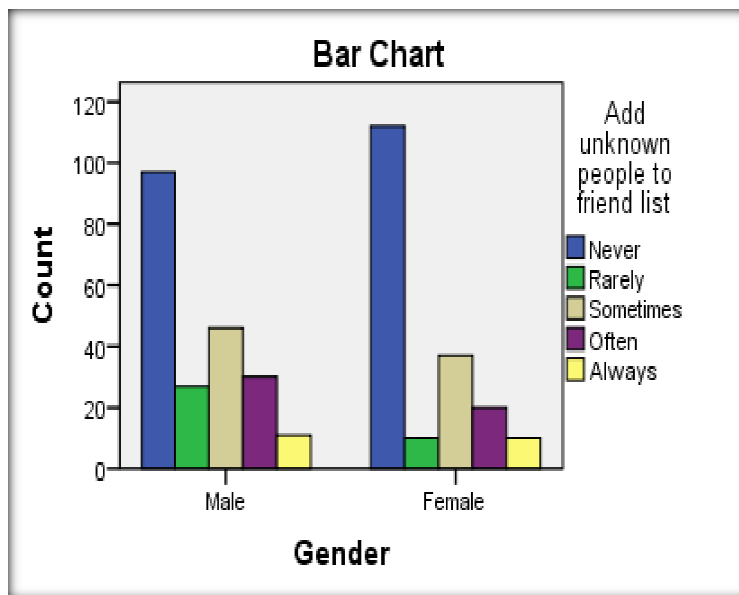| Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	10.733[a]	4	.030
Likelihood Ratio	11.018	4	.026
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.986	1	.084
N of Valid Cases	400		

Figure 4

Adolescents are active in making new friends on Social Networking Sites. Very often they add unknown people to their friend list and share their information with them. When asked whether they add unknown people to friend list 52.3% responded that they never add, 9.3% replied they rarely, 20.8% replied they sometimes, 12.5% replied they often and 5.3% replied they never add unknown people to their friend list.

Chi-square test is used to find out whether there is association between gender of adolescents and adding of the unknown people to their friend list. From the chi-square value (χ^2 =10.733; p=.030) where p<.05; it is statistically proved that there is significant difference between the categories so we can say that there is association between the gender and males respondents add unknown people to their friend list more often as compared to female respondents.

Table 5.Share what you know through SNS

Gender * Share what you know through SNS Cross tabulation							
Count							
		Share what you know through SNS					Total
		Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always	
Gender	Male	29	28	58	28	68	211
	Female	40	22	52	25	50	189
Total		69	50	110	53	118	400

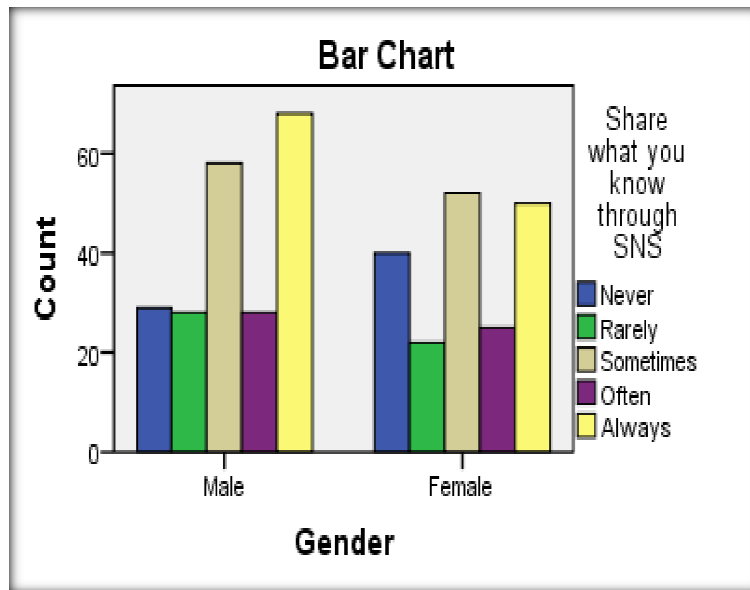|	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	4.520[a]	4	.340
Likelihood Ratio	4.526	4	.339
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.963	1	.085
N of Valid Cases	400		
a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 23.63.			

Figure 5

Social Networking Sites is a platform for sharing information. Adolescents are active in online discussions and they share what they know through Social sites. There are 12.5% respondents who said that they rarely, 27.5% respondents sometimes, 13.3% respondents often and 29.5% respondents always share what they know through Social Networking Sites. However, 17.3% respondents said that they never use SNS for sharing information.

Chi-square test is used to find out whether there is association between gender of adolescents and sharing what they know through SNS. From the chi-square value (χ^2=4.520; p=.340) where p>.05; it is statistically proved that there is no significant difference between the categories so we can say that there is no association between the categories and both males and females equally share what they know through SNS.

Table 6.Ask answers for your subject related questions

Gender * Ask answers for your subject related questions Cross tabulation							
Count							
		Ask answers for your subject related questions					Total
		Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always	
Gender	Male	11	32	67	37	64	211
	Female	27	25	38	39	60	189
Total		38	57	105	76	124	400

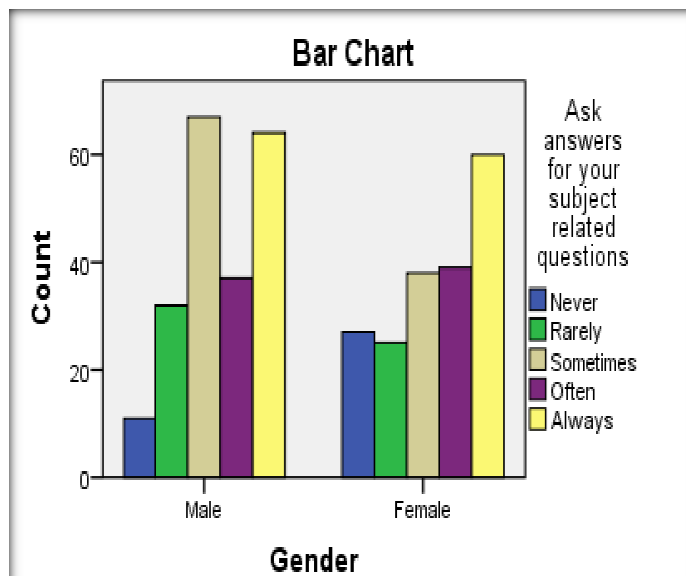| Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	14.622[a]	4	.006
Likelihood Ratio	14.899	4	.005
Linear-by-Linear Association	.609	1	.435
N of Valid Cases	400		
a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 17.96.			

Figure 6

Adolescents are actively using SNS for subject related queries. They use these sites for educational discussions. The respondents said 14.3% rarely, 26.3% sometimes, 19.0% often, 31.0% always share subject related questions on SNS. Only 9.5% responded that they never share subject related questions on SNS.

From the chi-square value (χ^2 =14.622; p=.006) where p<.05; it is statistically proved that there is association among the gender of the respondents who share subject related queries on SNS. The association means that male respondents are more active in sharing subject related questions than female respondents.

Table 7.Look for common interest

Gender * Look for common interest Cross tabulation							
Count							
		Look for common interest					Total
		Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always	
Gender	Male	39	34	60	38	40	211
	Female	47	28	55	22	37	189
Total		86	62	115	60	77	400

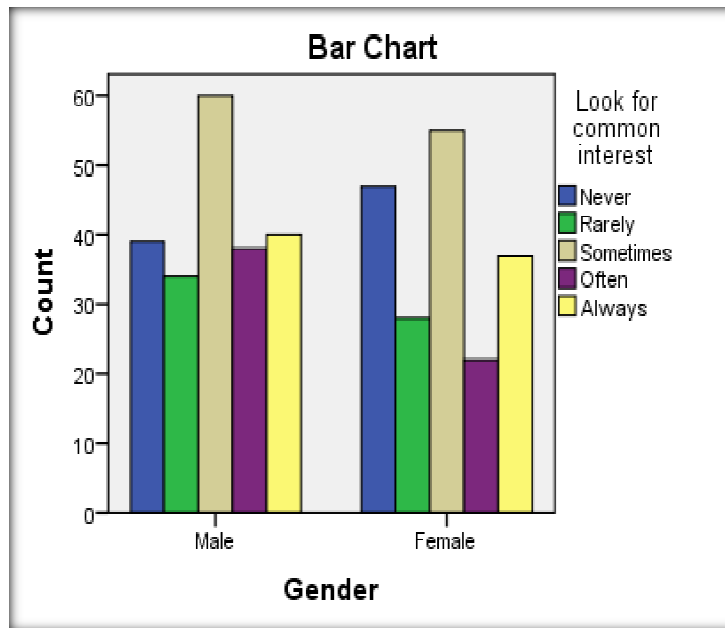| Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	4.730[a]	4	.316
Likelihood Ratio	4.769	4	.312
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.418	1	.234
N of Valid Cases	400		
a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 28.35.			

Figure 7

Adolescents look for common interest on SNS for making friends. Among the respondents, 21.5% replies that they never look for common interest. However, 15.5% replied rarely, 28.8% replied sometimes, 15.0% replied often and 19.3% always look for common interest.

From the chi-square value (χ^2 =4.730; p=.316) where p>.05; it is statistically proved that there is no association among the gender of users who look for common interest on SNS. Here, no association mean that both male and female respondents are equally active to look for common interest on SNS.

Table 8.Arrange parties and get together through SNS

Gender * arrange parties and Get together through SNS Cross tabulation							
Count							
		arrange parties and Get together through SNS					Total
		Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always	
Gender	Male	50	16	23	29	93	211
	Female	63	17	16	22	71	189
Total		113	33	39	51	164	400

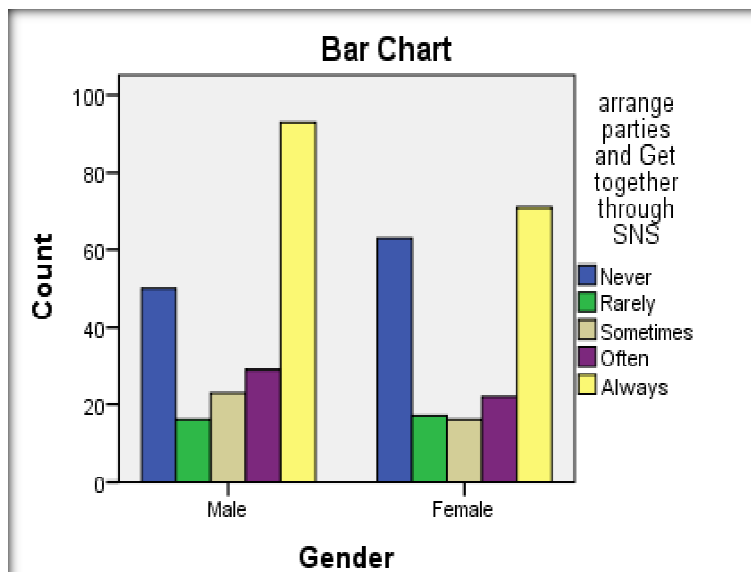| Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	5.501[a]	4	.240
Likelihood Ratio	5.506	4	.239
Linear-by-Linear Association	4.412	1	.036
N of Valid Cases	400		
a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 15.59.			

Figure 8

Social Networking Sites are being used by adolescents for arranging parties and get together. They make plans of outings on these sites as it's easy to forward common message to many people at the same time. Here, 41.0% always, 12.8% often, 9.8% sometimes, 8.3% rarely and 28.3% never arrange parties and get together through Social Sites.

From the chi-square value (χ^2 =5.501; p=.240) where p>.05; it is statistically proved that there is no association among the gender of users who arrange parties and get together through Social Sites. Here, no association means that both male and female respondents actively arrange parties and get together through Social Sites.

Table 9.Have interaction about the society

Gender * Have interactions about society Cross tabulation							
Count							
		Have interactions about society					Total
		Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always	
Gender	Male	44	40	50	37	40	211
	Female	41	46	35	37	30	189
Total		85	86	85	74	70	400

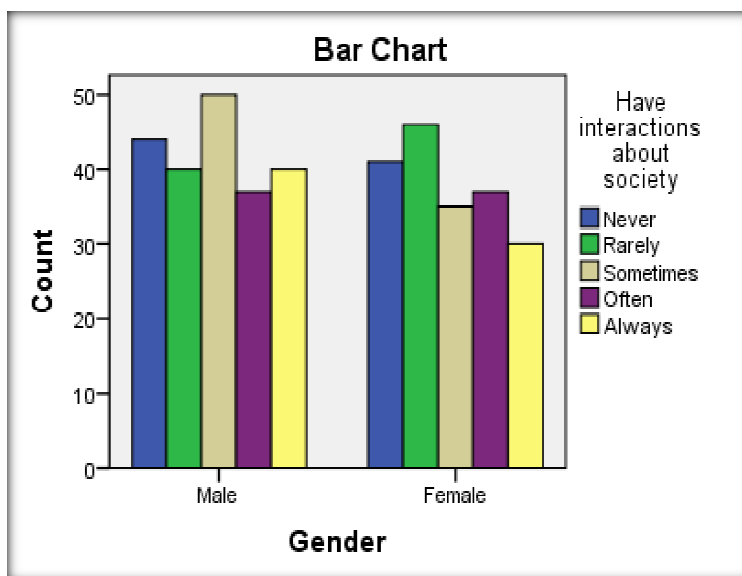| Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	3.400[a]	4	.493
Likelihood Ratio	3.409	4	.492
Linear-by-Linear Association	.642	1	.423
N of Valid Cases	400		
a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 33.08.			

Figure 9

Apart from entertainment Social Sites are also used to share and discuss about social issues. Here, 21.5% respondents rarely, 21.3% sometimes, 18.5% often, 17.5% always have interactions about the society. Only 21.3% respondents said that they never have interactions about social issues. The overall percentage of respondents who have interaction about social issues is more than those who never have such interactions. It's quite interesting to know that adolescents are active towards social issues and discuss them on Social Sites.

The chi-square value (χ^2 =3.400; p=.493) where p>.05; it is statistically proved that there is no association among the gender who have discussions on social issues on Social Sites. Here, no association means that both male and female respondents have interactions on social issues while using SNS.

Table 10.SNS helps to maintain friendship

Chi-Square Tests						
Gender * Helps to maintain friendship Cross tabulation						
Count						
		Helps to maintain friendship					Total
		Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always	
Gender	Male	16	18	45	42	90	211
	Female	35	17	34	39	64	189
Total		51	35	79	81	154	400

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	11.966[a]	4	.018
Likelihood Ratio	12.128	4	.016
Linear-by-Linear Association	7.860	1	.005
N of Valid Cases	400		
a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 16.54.			

Figure 10
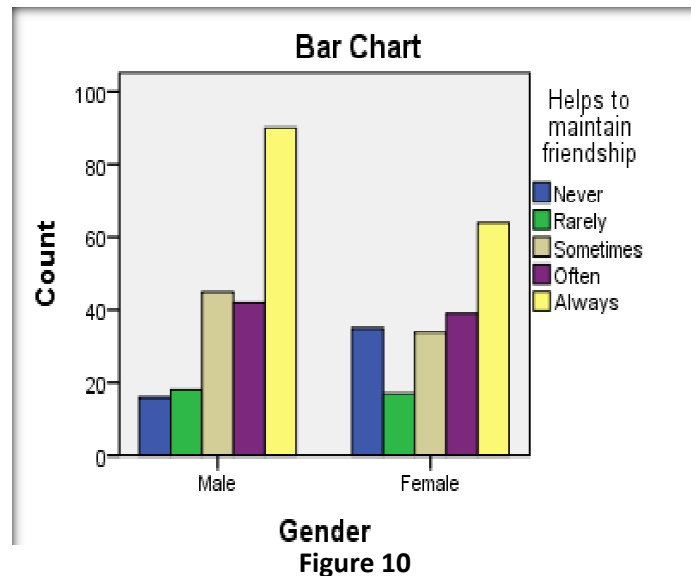
Social sites make it easy to search friends and other known people who are no longer in contact. It even helps in maintaining friendship with the people whom we already know. Various reminders like birthdays, anniversaries and other important events are reminded to the user so that we can wish the person on his/her special day. The respondents of the present study are also agreeing with the fact that Social Networking Sites helps them to maintain friendship. However, 12.8% respondents said that they never find that SNS helps them in maintaining friendship but the overall percentage of the respondents who rarely or always use these sites for maintaining friendship is much more. Here, 8.8% respondents rarely, 19.8% sometimes, 20.3% often, 38.5% always find the sites useful in maintaining friendship.

To check the association between gender chi-square test is used. The chi-square value (χ^2 =11.966; p=.018) where p<.05; it is statistically proved that there is significant difference among the categories who agree that Social Sites helps in maintaining friendship. Here, significant difference would mean that there is association between categories in maintaining friendships on Social Sites. Here, the male respondents are more who use SNS in maintaining friendship as compared to female respondents.

FINDINGS

- Viewing of friend's profile is common among adolescents. Both males and female respondents equally view friend's profile.
- Male respondents are more active in viewing posted pictures and ideas as compared to female respondents.
- Male respondents are more involved in viewing other's profile than female respondents.
- Male respondents quite often add unknown people to their friend list.
- Social Networking Sites are used positively by both male and female respondents for sharing what they know.
- Male respondents are more active in sharing subject related questions on Social Networking Sites as compared to female respondents.
- Male and female respondents are equally active to look for common interest on Social Networking Sites.
- Social Networking Sites are actively used by both male and female respondents to arrange parties and get together.
- The respondents of both categories have interaction on social issues over Social Networking Sites.

- Male respondents are more to use Social Networking Sites for maintaining friendships as compared to female respondents.

SUGGESTION AND CONCLUSION

- Social sites can be used effectively to make adolescents aware of social issues.
- Social Sites can be used by educational institutes for imparting education.
- Male adolescents must be made aware of the consequences of adding unknown people to the friend list.
- Adolescents must be made aware to use "Social Networking Sites" for personal development.

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