Facebook: Is it undermining Indian culture?

Increasing parental intervention in order to diminish the detrimental effects of social media sites

Tag words: Negative effects of Facebook; Facebook; Social networking sites; Indian culture

Authors: Sneha Sreekumar, Shruti Singh with Julie Fagan, PhD.

Summary

In the past decade, social networking sites (SNS) such as Facebook has become very popular among teenagers all over the world. Many research studies have discovered that SNS negatively affects the mind and health of its users. SNS have triggered the rise of several societal hazards such as online bullying and identity theft that has had consequences as simple as suspension to even death. Thus, it has become extremely important for the parents to protect their children from the perils of SNS. Educating Indian parents by a presentation about negative effects of SNS was an awakening call for Indian parents residing in America. Parents were encouraged to renovate their childrearing methods by communicating and educating their children about the hazards of SNS, adopting parenting styles used in other third world countries, and involving children in extracurricular activities. Increasing parental control would not only help them to prevent their child from spending long hours on Facebook but it will also help Indian parents to preserve their Indian culture. Since this study is first of its kind a survey was given to 30 Indian parents. Likewise, the same survey was also distributed to 30 American parents. The results obtained indicated that parental intervention at a young age is essential and an appropriate solution to this dilemma. The p value was less than critical value which made the hypothesis that increased parental intervention is an appropriate solution to this problem. Due to the fact that the sample size was limited, further studies confirming these results are required.

Video link:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_l6OhCFVLSY&list=UUts4_1Wyl9XmV76fu9ZffstA&index=1&feature=plcp

Effect of social networking sites on teenagers

As time and technology advance, the social interactions between human beings have taken a whole new outlook. With the popularity of social networking sites (SNS) skyrocketing, the interdependence of humans has receded immensely. A SNS is any online service that allows for the contemplation and generation of social relations among individuals (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). SNS on the surface seems advantageous because it allows an individual to maintain connections and provides the user with an opportunity to exhibit his or her individuality to rest of
the world. However, underlying these advantages are horrifying perils that can detrimentally and permanently amend the society if left untouched. SNSs have triggered the rise of several societal hazards that has resulted in many horrifying outcomes that could as simple as school suspension to even death.

History of Social networking sites

SNS began with the Bulletin Board System (BBS) in the early 1980s (Nickson, 2009). Although computers were rare at the time, BBS were accessed through telephones connected to a modem (Nickson, 2009). Like modern SNS, BBSes allowed for its users to download data and games and to post messages. However, BBSes were extremely complex and required the knowledge of codes due to the poor technology available at the time. BBS popularity spanned well into the 1980s and late 1990s after which Internet replaced telephones with modems and SNSs became more abundant (Nickson, 2009). American online, much commonly known as AOL, was the true predecessor for current SNSs with its member-created communities that allowed for users to search through the profiles and seek commonality between the users (Nickson, 2009). Although many SNSs succeeded AOL’s version of a networking site, the popularity of these sites among internet users were relatively low and didn’t start to augment until the release of Friendster in 2002 and ever since its arrival SNS has had immense usage.

Current usage of SNS

Currently, Facebook reigns as the king of SNS with more than 150 million users and after cutting down fierce competition from Twitter and Google plus (Nickson, 2009). Today SNS are ubiquitous and they are so strongly woven into very fabric of its users’ lives. Unfortunately, majority of these users are children under 18 who are mostly females (Lenhart, 2011). 95% of all teens ages 12-17 are now online and 80% of online teens are users of social media sites (Lenhart, 2011). A recently conducted study has shown that in August 2010, American Facebook users spent approximately 41.4 billion minutes on Facebook and this duration is expected to rise in the future (Webster, 2012). This depicts the amount of time and human effort wasted due to Facebook. The figure below further exemplifies the alarmingly fast rate at which SNSs are growing. Google+, a SNS released by Google in order to compete against Facebook, was open to public in the second week of June and within the next 21 days more than 20 million people started using it (Lipsman A, 2012). Even though the fast growing usage is profitable for the Google company, its effects on its consumer are truly appalling.
Psychological disorders in teenagers

The increasing accessibility, ease of use and developing technology has not only improved SNS but also augmented its damaging effects. Several studies have attributed increased SNS usage to severe psychological disorders in its users especially children under 18. Teenagers who use such sites exhibit increased narcissistic tendencies and extreme antisocial behaviors (Huff, 2011). Narcissism is a personality disorder characterized by excessive self admiration and this tendency is augmented by SNS since it allows for individuals to boast about themselves (The Hollywood Reporter staff, 2012). Individuals are allowed to “self construct” themselves to others in order to initiate a social relationship which often is futile and short. Furthermore, by enabling self-reconstruction, SNS is primarily splitting an individual of their true identity or self and this dismembering could lead to severe mental disorders. Moreover, such sites augment the likelihood of an individual being depressed, aggressive and anxious (American Psychological Association 2011). The increased use of such sites also is an impediment to learning as it becomes a huge distraction. Studies have discovered that students from college, high school and middle school usually check Facebook at least once in 15 minute study period (Gross 2009).

Cyber bullying and identity theft

In addition, SNS serves as the breed ground for cyber bullying. There would be at least one report every day in the media that deals with an incident of bullying, a phenomenon that has become extremely prevalent among the teen users in the recent. The Pew Internet survey project, a nonprofit organization set to make SNS a safer place, state that one in three teenagers that use SNS are prone to bullying and online harassment; majority of these sufferers are yet again girls (Sarkis 2011). In a survey conducted, more than 81% of the youth stated that cyberbullying is
easier to get away with and conceal from parents (Enough is Enough, 2009). Just 1 in 6 parents know that they child is victimized to online predation (Enough is Enough, 2009). Although it’s not physical, online bullying has induced devastating effects such as depression and suicide, on its victims. This depicts the increased risk-taking behavior among teenagers. Teenagers are much less likely to instigate bullying in person due to the fear of getting caught. However, in the internet world, the networking sites gives more courage to them by letting them hide while they torment another individual.

In fact, Rutgers itself has its own story of online bullying that triggered the demise of one of its student: Tyler Clementi. Tyler Clementi was a homosexual student who suicided by jumping from George Washington bridge because he believed his roommate was spying on him and posting videos on Twitter of Clementi’s sexual encounter with another male. In fact Clementi’s suicide note was posted by him on Facebook just few hours before his death. Although this incident attracted immense popularity, there are so many incidents much worse than Clementi’s that often get little or no publicity and much often the abusers endure no form of punishment while the victim is traumatized and has to undergo severe psychological damages.

Such distressing effects of cyber bullying can be attributed to the fact that inappropriate statements generated against an individual stays on these sites permanently and it’s a constant torture for its victims. Even if a post is deleted, the post still exists in these sites and these posts are available to a much larger audience and at a quicker speed (Sengupta & Chaudhuri 2011). Just the thought of the number people viewing the video drove Clementi to his death when in reality there were no videos posted. Furthermore, several SNS protects its abusers by enabling them to be anonymous while they prey on innocent victims. Unfortunate victims are left, therefore, with no choice but to endure the misery and live in the disappointment that they are unable to bring their abusers to light.

Similarly, prevalence of identity theft has also increased as usage of these SNS also amplified. Users of networking sites often put personal information ranging from photos, contact information to addresses and passions on these sites (Harris 2011). Therefore, it’s much easier for impostors to just view such information on an individual’s Facebook or Myspace and then utilize that knowledge for their own benefits. In addition, although all of these sites claim to have strong privacy settings, majority of information posted on SNS are readily accessible to third party, which further helps identity thieves to verify themselves as their victims. Oversharing private moments of their life especially by utilizing the “check-in” features, individuals are calling for more hassle by letting burglars know that owners are away from home and it’s safe to strike.

Alternation of human-to-human interaction

Additionally, social networking has altered the social dynamic by limiting human to human interactions. It has severed the ties between the humans and generated a virtual community that exists just in the internet. Social networking site users become “disembodied nodes solitarily attached to their computer” rather than being active members of the human community (Lu 2011). Although it’s termed “social-networking” the contact within these sites are minimal, superficial and very uncongenial. In a survey conducted 57% of the women stated
that they contact. This does take a heavy psychological toll on its users especially teenagers by inducing and augmenting social isolation. According to Sherry Turkle, the author of the book *Alone Together*, “technology is dominating our life under the illusion of allowing us to communicate better” (Harris 2011). In her book she discusses how SNS and the internet is making our society foolish and useless. Furthermore, by diminishing face-to-face interactions SNS pushes people away from reality and forces them into a virtual community. As man is a social animal, depriving him of social interactions will instigate severe psychological distress and traumas.

**The weak current solution**

The detrimental effects of SNS are as popular among its users and nonusers as is its usage. However, the issue is still a novice in the society in terms of the effort that is being taken to prevent or control the adverse effects. There have been debates regarding this issues and whether or not Facebook or any SNS addiction is truly a psychological disorder. So far the only limitation that controls the usage of SNS is that of age. Majority of these sites mandate its users to be more than 13 years although this barrier seems to go down as time progresses. Furthermore, unfortunately this barrier is also being easily bypassed by the younger generations. Thus, this is not a very effective solution to this problem since these networking sites are incapable of conforming the true identity of the prospective member (Gross 2009). Children as young as 4 or 5 are on using SNS and such an early usage can detrimentally alter their social relations and personality even in the future.

Though SNS has been intertwined to the core of many societies, it has yet to gain much popularity in India among teenagers. This can be attributed to increased parental control in their life. Indian parents have much higher restrictions and are more involved in their children’s life compared to Western parents. However, the complete submission of the Indian culture to these sites is simply a matter of time and this is extremely apparent with the Indian communities residing in the United States. Currently the usage of networking sites in India within just a year has augmented greatly and age wise distribution of a social networking site, Facebook, is depicted in figure 2. As shown, 27% of the Facebook users are underage. Therefore, its flagrant that soon the negative impacts of SNS are going to strike on Indian children. Something has to be done to prevent the SNS sites from preying on young children and destroying the society’s and their future. Increased usage of such sites are also a threat to the cultural values and norms, especially that of India, and cyberbullying is great example of that.
Impact of Facebook on Indian culture

In Indian culture, parents protect their child by intervening with their child’s daily life activities. Indian parents are highly involved with their child’s school and extra-circular activities. In Indian culture, developing a strong relationship with children is enormously important for the Indian parents. Strengthening the parent child bond comforts children to communicate and discuss about their problems to their parents. In Indian culture children are expected to listen to their parent’s instruction and follow the home rules made by the parents. Indian parents help children to achieve their academic goals by helping them with their school work, taking them to them libraries during weekends, and reading books to increase their general knowledge. Prior to the introduction of SNS to the Indian society children were used to interact, and increase their knowledge about their culture by listening to religiously and mythological stories read by their grandparents or parents. Children helped their parents and older siblings to complete household chores. Currently, school work assigned by the professional educators involves children to spend time on the internet to complete their homework. Thus, online submission provokes younger generation to go on SNS while completing an online assignment. Children are choosing SNS most popularly Facebook to communicate with their friends over parents. Hence, SNS (Facebook) making it very hard for the parents to instar Indian values, and culture among children because it is depleting the face interactions among family members.

Increasing parental control can reduce Facebook addiction

Western parenting style vs. Foreign parenting styles

The high prevalence of the addiction to SNS can be attributed to the Western parenting styles. A simple compare and contrast of western parenting styles to parents from countries where SNS addiction is scare will depict this phenomenon. Primarily all western lifestyles focuses on independence and from infancy children are persistently taught to pursue this virtue. In an effort to do so, all infants even those who are just days old, are placed away from their parents and in their own rooms. However, in countries like Argentina and India children until their teenage years are allowed to sleep with their parents (Hopgood 2012). Similarly, the Western parents are so absorbed by the technological revolutions that majority of the parents rely on strollers rather than holding their toddlers in their arms (Hopgood 2012). On the other hand, after understanding the significance of physical contact for the proper development of a child, the Kenyans wrap their children in bright swaths of cloth to their front, sides or backs (Hopgood 2012). Actions of western parents are to “mold” a particular kind of children and this has forced social norms to become rules that determine basic daily activities such as sleeping patterns and feeding. But in other countries there are limited rules and stronger attachment between the parents and children. These parents have stronger control of their children’s activities compared to western parents.

By eluding physical contact and detaching themselves from their children, starting with the infancy itself, and Western parents are instigating a weak bond with their children (Hopgood 2012). This weak bond hence provokes the children in the later years to use resources such as SNS to find that intimacy, which they lacked from their parents. Thereby, this quest of intimacy
that is acquired through SNS later becomes a robust addiction. Although foreign parenting styles may seem preposterous they have helped decrease the influence of SNS in teenager’s life.

Proposed Techniques to increase parental control

Finding a solution to this issue is very difficult, yet very essential for the physical and mental wellness of teens. Researchers also mentioned that face to face conversation is keeping the teen girls healthy, who tend to spend majority of their time on internet. Moreover, face to face conversation is highly encouraged by the researchers because it helps a child to gain confidence, and lower the negative consequences of isolation (Silverman, 2012).

Involving children into extracurricular activities, encouraging children to communicate with their siblings or mature members of household, explaining children the negative consequences of having SNS, limiting their time to use internet, not allowing them to move the computer or laptop into their room, encouraging them to participate in community services, allowing them to become an active member of the academic club are some ways parents can control children from being engaged in SNS for majority of their day. A combination of these suggestions must be employed by the parents to successfully control their child’s habit of engaging in SNS. Implementation of these behaviors by parents, and educators, would increase the human to human interaction, help children to discover their interest, and most importantly prevent children to join SNS at a very young age. In addition, parental intervention and strengthening the bond between the parent and the child must be done from a very young age.

Community service project: spreading awareness among American–Indian parents

These solutions along with the information about negative influences of Facebook were provided through a presentation to Indian parents at an religious Indian community center. Presentation helped the investigators to spread the general awareness of detrimental effects of SNS on young minds, and explained the importance of increasing parental control. Presentation was successful because it obtained its purpose of encouraging Indian parents to be more involved in their children activity to avoid the suffering of younger children from increased usage of SNS. Investigators were amazed by receiving positive response from the Indian parents, and their appreciation towards the presentation. Parents residing in United States for very long period of time were highly motivated to increase the parental control, and were willing to practice and adopt the solutions presented to them as well as suggestions from other parents to decrease the usage SNS among their children.

Many parents were complaining, and differentiating between the parenting skills used to control their children in India as compared to Indian children in America. Majority of the parents expressed their frustration regarding the fact that they live in USA and thus, feel hindered from creating that strong bond with their children. For example, it is very common to physically punish children in India for misconduct or unacceptable behavior. On the contrary, physical abuse of any kind is looked down upon in the American society. Some parents shared their personal insights on this issue of children threatening parents to report them to authorities as abusive parents. Indian parents are challenged to raise their children in a different society
because a high percentage of the Indian parents are immigrants. These parents have a hard time morphing their parental style to what is acceptable in American society.

Not only are Indian parents constricted of any inflicting physical abuse on their children but parents also worry about the accessibility of SNS in the United States. Some Indian parents mentioned the availability of computers for younger children is much higher in America compared to the children being brought up elsewhere. Thus, the access to internet or SNS is much easier for Indian children residing in America in comparison to children in India. Through the several suggestions provided during the presentation, presentation investigators were able to help many parents understand and agreed with the fact that making an effort and exploring their horizons in raising their children in America, and renovating their parenting skills would help them preserve the Indian culture among their children.

Study Results and Discussion

Study resulted in strong correlation between increased parental control and usage of social media among younger generation. Based on the responses received from the survey, conclusion can be made that children spend much less time on SNS as compared to those children whose parents do not tend to be more restrictive and do not tend to be highly involved with their children daily lives activities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Indian parents</th>
<th>American Parents</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Analysis of survey results. The above table represents the responses provided by both Indian and American parents and statistical analysis of the results obtained.

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Indian Parents</th>
<th>American Parents</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5.75</td>
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<tr>
<td>Variance</td>
<td>47.5</td>
<td>9.5833333333</td>
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<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pooled Variance</td>
<td>31.25</td>
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<td>Hypothesized Mean</td>
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<td>Difference</td>
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<td>P(T&lt;=t) one-tail</td>
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<td>t Critical one-tail</td>
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<td>1.894</td>
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<tr>
<td>P(T&lt;=t) two-tail</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.949</td>
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<tr>
<td>t Critical two-tail</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.364</td>
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Table 2: Statistical analysis of the obtained data.
Even though responses varied among the Indian and American participants, but majority of Indian and American parents strongly agree that increasing parental control will help to demolish the addiction of social media among younger generation. Response of participants on the importance of increasing parental control to minimize the addictions of SNS is illustrated in both Table 1 and Graph 1. Since the P value of the 2-tail test is 0.95 and is less than the critical T value of 2.364, the null hypothesis that parental control among Indian and American parents should be limited is false and the hypothesis that parental control must be increased is true. In comparison to Indian parents, only 16 people agreed that increasing parents control is a good solution. This is a strong evidence pertaining to the differences in the Western and third world parents as well as the reason why children growing up in Western countries are more prone to the negative effects than the latter.

![Importance of increasing parental control](image.png)

In conclusion, several studies have attributed increased usage of Facebook or any social networking sites induce severe psychological disorders in its users especially teenagers. Teenagers who use such sites exhibit increased narcissistic tendencies and extreme antisocial behaviors. Facebook has yet to penetrate deep into Indian culture but that is just a matter of time. In order to preserve the life of our teenagers and our culture, Facebook usage should be limited among teenagers American Indian and Western parents should emulate the parenting styles used in ancient India and other foreign countries where Facebook and other social networking sites have been barred from teenagers’ life. Although foreign cultural eccentricities may seem absurd to the American mindset, these foreign parenting styles can serve as solution to the Facebook addiction. Thereby, we can inhibit Facebook from being a huge part of their life and then destroying their life.
References


Appendix
Authors: Sneha Sreekumar, Shruti Singh with Julie Fagan, Ph.d

I. Facebook is undermining Indian culture. Relationship between parental control and the usage of social media among young people living in America (group 18)

II. Objectives
To determine the effect of parental control of the usage of social networks among Indian families residing in America on Indian culture. The purpose of the study is to obtain statistics pertaining to current usage of social networking among Indian children and the level of parental control in the usage of social networking sites (SNS).

III. Background and Rationale
Today, for many people, SNS are strongly woven into their very fabric of life. Eight billion hours/month is purportedly spent by internet users on Facebook alone and this is expected to rise in the future (Lu 2011). Unfortunately, the majority of these users are children under 18, many of which are female (Lu 2011). Several studies have attributed increased SNS usage to severe psychological disorders in its users especially teenagers. Teenagers who use such sites exhibit increased narcissistic tendencies and extreme antisocial behaviors. Individuals are allowed to “self-construct” themselves to others in order to initiate a social relationship which often is futile and short. Furthermore, by enabling self-reconstruction, SNS is primarily splitting an individual of their true identity or self and this dissevering could lead to severe psychological traumas. Moreover, such sites increase the likelihood of an individual being depressed, aggressive and anxious. The increased use of such sites also is an impediment to learning by being a huge distraction. Studies have been discovered where students from college, high school and middle school usually check Facebook at least once in 15 minute study period.

Though SNS has been intertwined to the core of many societies, it has yet to gain much popularity in India among teenagers. This can be attributed to the Indian culture which calls for increased parental control in their children’s lives. Indian parents have much higher restriction and are more often involved in their children’s life compared to American parents. However, the situation differs for Indian communities residing in the United States. In Indian communities living in United States, social networking has increasingly become a part of the life of individuals and this is likely due to the lack of parental control. Unfortunately, statistical evidence is lacking about how deep social networking has innervated into the Indian society. Therefore, this research is necessary to gain insight into the issue. Increasing parental control among Indian communities residing in United States will become a barrier for social media to become an addiction for Indian teens. Thereby, it will help preserve the Indian culture among Indian communities here.

IV. Procedures
   A. Research Design
This research calls for surveying parents living in United States. This allow for statistical evidence about firstly, how much social networking has influenced the community here and secondly will provide researchers with how much of the population is willing to increase control. In addition, in order to make the population aware of the mechanisms for control and the importance of parental control, a presentation will conducted in a Hindu temple during an Indian community night. In the presentation, the investigators will be talking about the negative impacts of social networking, comparing parental control among Indian living in India and United States and will be suggesting to the parents to increase their regulation of their children while they use SNS.

B. Sample

The survey is going to be distributed to both Indian and American parents. The survey is going to be given out along with the consent form during a community event. All participants will be over 18 years old and participation will be completely voluntary.

C. Measurement/Instrumentation

Variables of interest include the time spent using social networking sites, parental restrictions on the use of social networking sites by children of differing age groups, and whether they are of American or Indian descent.

D. Study Site (s)/Location of Procedures:

A portion of the study will be conducted at the temple BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha. On March 23, we have arranged to give a presentation on the effects of social networking sites on the Indian culture. We will be able to get a large number (~30 parents) of subjects to complete the survey. We anticipate getting a similar number of American parents to fill out the survey at a local community event.

E. Detailed study procedures

This study involves no risk. It just requires the subjects to volunteer to take the survey.

As individuals enter the temple presentation room, we will distribute the survey with the consent form attached along with a pen. We will explain that we are students at Rutgers University doing a class project on the use of social networking sites by young people. We will read aloud the consent form and ask if anyone has any questions. We will then ask them if they would like to participate, and if so, sign and date the consent form and then to proceed taking the survey. We will then collect the surveys. This will be followed by our presentation on the potential negative influences of social networking sites on the younger generation. By increasing the awareness of Indian parents about the perils of social networking and the advantages of increasing parental control among their young children when it comes to social networking, we can help preserve the Indian culture among Indian communities living in United States.
We will reach out to the American parents at a community event in Johnson Park. We will explain that we are students at Rutgers University doing a class project on the use of social networking sites by young people. We will ask them if they could take 5 min to read the consent form and if interested, sign and fill out our survey. We will explain that their participation is voluntary and completely anonymous.

F. Consent procedures

The study will be explained to the subject by the student principal investigator, the consent form will be read to them and any of the subject’s questions will be answered. Participants will be offered the informational sheet below. The student researcher will say:

“This research study is being conducted as part of a class project at Rutgers University which has been approved by the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board under protocol # E12-342. The study involves only a survey to be filled out that is both anonymous and confidential. Your participation in this study is strictly voluntary. The student researcher has been approved by the Rutgers Institutional Review Board to conduct the research. The consent will be read, and your questions answered. By giving verbal consent, you will be agreeing to participate in the study and that you are over the age of 18.”

G. Internal Validity.

This study is primarily based on the information collected from the surveys and raising awareness, therefore, there won’t be any bias from the investigator’s side.

H. Data analysis

The study calls for inferential tests and it will be utilizing simple statistics.

II. Bibliography


Informational Sheet

Consent form

Study Title: Relationship between parental control and the usage of social media among young people living in America.

Sneha Sreekumar, Shruti Singh with Julie Fagan, Ph.D

INTRODUCTION

You are invited to voluntarily participate in a research study that will measure the relationship between parental control and the usage of social media among young people living in America. Parents who are raising their children in America will be asked to take a multiple choice survey that will take approximately 5 minutes.

INFORMATION: You will be asked to give your opinion on the usage of social networking sites among Indian and American children and possible ways to limit it. You will be asked to provide information about your children’s age, time spent on SNS, and benefits of increasing parental control at home.

BENEFITS: You will not receive any direct benefit for participating in this research. However, it is expected that the research will provide scientists with a better understanding of the usage of social networking sites and the limitations set by parents.

RISKS: This study consists of only a survey—there are no risks involved.

CONFIDENTIALITY: This research is completely anonymous. No information will be recorded that could identify you (you will not be asked your name, address, phone number).

COMPENSATION: You will receive no monetary compensation for participating in this study.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS: If you have any questions regarding the study, you may contact Dr. Julie Fagan at 848-932-8354 or email her at Fagan@rci.rutgers.edu

SUBJECT RIGHTS: If you have any questions about your rights as a research subject, you may contact the IRB Administrator at Rutgers University at: Rutgers University Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects Office of Research and Sponsored Programs 3 Rutgers Plaza New Brunswick, NJ 08901-8559 Tel: 848 932 4058 Email: humansubjects@orsp.rutgers.edu
ATTACHMENT 7  Survey

How many children do you have?
   a. Ages 4-7 ______
   b. Ages 8-12 ______
   c. Ages 13-18 ______
   d. Ages over 18 ______

Do you/will let your children use social networking sites?
   a. Yes
   b. No

Social networking site has become an addiction among teens?
   a. Agree
   b. Strongly disagree
   c. Disagree
   d. Strongly agree
   e. Neutral

Increasing parental control would help to decrease the addiction.
   a. Agree
   b. Strongly disagree
   c. Disagree
   d. Strongly agree
   e. Neutral

Involving children into outdoor sports would prevent them from procrastinating on the internet.
   a. Agree
   b. Strongly disagree
   c. Disagree
   d. Strongly agree
   e. Neutral

Do you allow your children to use the computer in your absence?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. Not applicable

Do you have access to any of their social networking account, such as Facebook?
a. Yes
b. No

Preserving Indian culture would not motivate Indian children to become a part of any social networking site?

a. Agree
b. Disagree
c. Strongly agree
d. Strongly disagree

How important is face to face conversation for your family?

a. Important
b. Not Important
c. Neutral
d. Very important

Social networking sites such as Facebook is undermining Indian culture?

a. Agree
b. Disagree
c. Neutral
d. Strongly Agree
e. Strongly Disagree

Encouraging face to face conversation among family members would help to overcome the problem of social networking sites.

a. Agree
b. Disagree
c. Strongly disagree
d. Strongly agree
e. Neutral

How much time do your children tend to spend on the internet?

What strategies do you use to keep your child away from spending lot of time on social networking sites/ media?

Additional Comments
Letter to Editor #1

Date: 04/03/2012

To,
The Editor,
Indo American News
Email: indoamericannews@yahoo.com

Subject: Facebook undermining Indian Culture

Through your esteemed newspaper, we are pleased and honored to express our views on increasing threats of Facebook on Indian culture. We are undergraduate students of Rutgers University at New Brunswick, New Jersey. Recently our university was in the limelight unfortunately for the suicide of its student, Tyler Clementi. Tyler’s death, shook each and every corner of the university and it definitely gave a strong insight into the detrimental effects of social networking. It is said that the spark that caused the death was his roommate’s action of publicizing Tyler’s personal life on social networking sites. Today for many people social networking sites, especially Facebook, are so strongly woven into their very fabric of life. Unfortunately, majority of these users are children under 18.

Several studies have attributed increased usage of Facebook or any social networking sites induce severe psychological disorders in its users especially teenagers. Teenagers who use such sites exhibit increased narcissistic tendencies and extreme antisocial behaviors. Narcissism is personality disorder characterized by excessive self admiration and this tendency is augmented by SNS since those allow for individuals to boast about themselves. Individuals are allowed to “self construct” themselves to others in order to initiate a social relationship which often is futile and short. Furthermore, by enabling self-reconstruction, SNS is primarily splitting an individual of their true identity or self and this dissonance could deal to severe psychological traumas. Moreover, such sites increase the likelihood of an individual being depressed, aggressive and anxious. The increased use of such sites also is an impediment to learning by being a huge distraction. Studies have been discovered where students from college, high school and middle school usually check Facebook at least once in 15 minute study period.

Facebook has yet to penetrate deep into Indian culture but that is just a matter of time. In order to preserve the life of our teenagers and our culture, Facebook usage should be limited among teenagers. We should implement more stringent parental controls, much similar to the ancestral parental practices used by our culture. Parents should be more involved with their children’s online usage and try to instigate distractions for the children. Thereby, we can inhibit Facebook from being a huge part of their life and then destroying their life. We can rescue our teenagers life by implementing parenting techniques used by our parents or grandparents. We kindly request your newspaper team to take this topic into consideration so it can get recognition; thereby, also preserving our culture!

Yours sincerely,
Dear Editor,

Facebook and AIM (social media networks) have become more and more popular among the younger Indian generation residing in America, and this popularity has impacted the young generations and their interaction with people in real life.

Several studies suggest, extreme use of social networking sites (SNS) have led to severe psychological disorders in teenagers. An increase in narcissism and extreme antisocial behavior has been observed in children who engage in SNS for long hours, each day. Other than psychological problems, children who engage in long hours on SNS suffer from physical ailments due to the sedentary life.

An increase in parental control of the availability of SNS can help children stay and prioritize their tasks. Not to mention the conservation of time from not being engaged in SNS will allow the children to have more interaction with family members and the extra time can be utilized for important tasks.

This paper can be of great benefit to the readers of Desi Talk since a great deal of readers are parents and can benefit from the research and the findings presented in this paper.

Sincerely

Shruti Singh
Rutgers, The State of New Jersey