

## Awareness and Use of Social Networking Sites by Librarians of Management Institutions in Mumbai: A State-of-the-Art

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### ABSTRACT

With the rising demand of the new users about technological assistance, the libraries need to change their traditional way of functioning. The present generation is very much attracted towards social networking sites (SNS). It is obvious for the libraries and information centres to tap the opportunity and provide services to the users by using SNS. Since these sites provide quick and free access, the libraries can make good use of it. The present study attempts to find out the awareness of the librarians of management institutions towards SNS and explores how much they are using it. The study highlights that the librarians are much aware of SNS and are using them for their personal and professional purpose, but on the same hand fails to use the SNS in their libraries.

**Keywords:** Social networking sites, librarians, management institutes

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The new tools on internet enables users to access information, exchange data and create content more efficiently. Social networking sites (SNS) emerged as for finding friends and getting connected with known circles. Buroughs<sup>1</sup> mentioned that 'social networking websites allow users to share interests and communicate with others. Barsky & Purdon<sup>2</sup> emphasised that SNS collect data about members, store and share user profiles. These websites are free and allow users to easily create personal pages filled with content in the form of images, music, and videos. Such websites function as a social network because members are able to share web pages with friends and search for new friends who have similar interests.' Boyd & Ellison<sup>3</sup> defined it as "web-based services that allow individuals to (1) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, (2) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and (3) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system." The users of the facebook and twitter are increasing day by day. There are millions of users who use these sites on daily basis. The youngsters seem to be crazy about these sites. The different studies stated that the uses of SNS are more personal than academic purpose. The libraries are also taking initiatives to participate on these sites but the ratio is low. Breeding<sup>4</sup> stated that SNS can provide opportunities to promote library services, contents and activities. Library outreach and public relation can be stronger and easy with the help of SNS. But there are limitations and need of proper policy to implement any

new path by going out of the walls to reach maximum users.

### 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Traditionally libraries were only storekeeper of knowledge resources but with the change in time libraries have more responsibilities. They not only have to collect, store, disseminate the information but also have to transform it into new ways of information packages. With the rising demand of the new users about technological assistance the libraries need to change their traditional way of functioning. With new techniques librarians need to upgrade their skills. They have to develop competencies in searching online resources, communicating online, posting right things and updating comments, etc. Social networking can be helpful; in information seeking and sharing. Information is easily available for users by connecting with community and sharing data on this through SNS. Literature showed various benefits of using SNS in libraries. MacAdam<sup>5</sup> stated that Knowledge sharing is possible for libraries through SNS. O'Dell<sup>6</sup> emphasised that 'SNS can help libraries to reach out to communities and gather knowledge from the interaction between librarians and users.' Casey & Savastinuk<sup>7</sup> mentioned that this online network can help libraries to create new services by getting ideas, suggestions from Users. The study done by Palmer<sup>8</sup> revealed that maximum Australian University libraries are using Twitter and Facebook more than any other social media.

Literature also highlighted that there are several factors that may hamper relation between libraries and

users. In the study of fresher done by Connell<sup>9</sup> reported that students are ready to accept libraries on SNS but are concerned about their private space on it and even interference of library. Different studies done by Chu,<sup>10</sup> *et al.*, and De Rosa<sup>11</sup>, *et al* found out that the concerns of privacy from users have negative impact on usage. Stuart<sup>12</sup> stated that the if information does not get updated regularly there will be negative impact on effectiveness of SNS.

**3. OBJECTIVES**

The present study attempts to find out the awareness of the librarians of management institutions towards SNS and explores how much they are using it.

The objectives of the study are to:

- (a) Find out infrastructure facilities available for accessing SNS in their parent institute.
- (b) Find out whether the management librarians are aware about SNS.
- (c) Identify the purpose and frequency of usage by management librarians.

**4. METHODOLOGY USED**

The coverage of this study encompassed management institutions affiliated to University of Mumbai and courses approved by Directorate of the Technical Education (DTE) and the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE). All other institutions were not taken into consideration. The list of the institutes was finalised by referring to the standard sources, namely, the Affiliation section of Mumbai University and its website. Moreover, the same has been crosschecked through the Directorate of the Technical Education (DTE) and the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) websites. There are 82 such institutions out of which 10 are closed or not fulfilling the criteria. The librarians of these institutions were the main stakeholders for data collection. From these 72 institutions 70 (97.22 %) librarians had responded. Thus the data of these 70 librarians are taken into consideration.

Questionnaire was used to collect data from librarians of these management institutes. The structured questionnaire was framed keeping in view of the objectives set for the study. In addition to e-mail and online media, the questionnaires were sent by couriers and even in some cases researcher visited the respondents personally. Personal visits were done for few institutions and thus interviewing method was also adopted whenever required to collect data.

**Table 1. Facilities available in the institutions**

Response	Computer (%)	LAN (%)	Wi-Fi (%)	Scanner (%)	Photocopy (%)	CD Player (%)
Yes	70 (100)	65 (92.85)	53 (75.71)	54 (77.14)	54 (77.14)	55 (78.57)
No	00 (0)	5 (7.15)	17 (24.29)	16 (22.86)	16 (22.86)	15 (21.43)
	70 (100)	70 (100)	70 (100)	70 (100)	70 (100)	70 (100)

**5. DATA ANALYSIS**

**5.1 Facilities Available in the Institutions**

Whether libraries have basic infrastructure facilities or not is an important issue. Without basic infrastructure it is not possible for libraries to provide fast and accurate services. To know the facilities provided by institutions the responses received are tabulated in Table 1.

From Table 1, it can be analysed that all 70 (100 %) librarians under study had facility of computers, 65 (92.85 %) had LAN, 53 (75.71 %) had internet via Wi-Fi in their institutions. Other facilities like scanners were available to 54 (77.14 %) librarians, photocopying facility was available to 54 (77.14 %), CD/DVD players for 55 (78.57 %) librarians.

It can be interpreted due to their parent organisation maximum have basic infrastructural facilities in. Due to these facilities the librarians can access internet and are in a position to interact through this.

**5.2 Awareness and Accessibility of SNS**

Modern trend shows that SNS has entered in all kind of services. Students of this generation are the best adopter of these technologies. So it is important to find out whether librarians are also aware and access SNS or not. Responses about whether the librarians under study are aware about SNS and access it are tabulated in Table 2.

From the Table 2 it can be analysed that all 70 librarians were aware of the SNS. Out of 70 librarians, 64 (91.42 %) were actually accessing SNS and 6 (8.57 %) were not accessing SNS. Out of these 6 librarians, 2 (2.86 %) librarians mentioned as they don't have time for accessing SNS; 2 (2.86 %) librarians stated that they don't have interest in accessing SNS and 2 (2.86 %) accepted the fact that there is a lack of infrastructure for accessing SNS.

Out of 70 librarians only 64 are accessing SNS. Thus for further research only these 64 librarians are taken into consideration as total.

**Table 2. Awareness and access of SNS**

	Yes (%)	No (%)	Total (%)
Awareness	70 (100)	00 (0)	70 (100)
Access	64 (91.42)	6 (8.58)	70 (100)

### 5.3 Frequency of Accessing SNS

As SNS is available 24x7 and users of SNS such as Facebook are increasing day by day, it was interesting to find how frequently librarians access SNS to be connected with social groups. Thus responses regarding how frequently librarians are using SNS are received and is tabulated in Table 3.

From Table 3, it can be seen that out of total 64 librarians, 33 (51.56 %) were accessing SNS on daily basis, followed by 14 (21.88 %) librarians accessed it on weekly basis, 1 (1.56 %) librarian was using it fortnightly, 1 (1.56 %) librarian was accessed SNS once in a month and 15 (23.44 %) librarians access it occasionally.

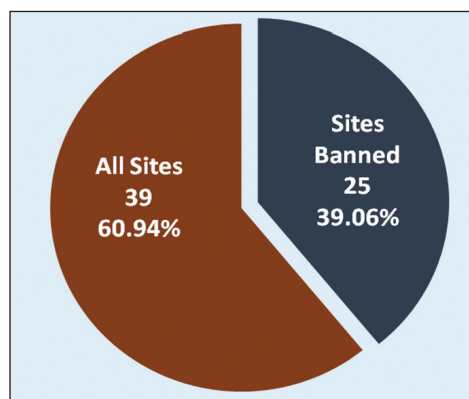
**Table 3. Frequency of accessing SNS**

	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Daily	33	51.56
Weekly	14	21.88
Fortnightly	1	1.56
Monthly	1	1.56
Occasionally	15	23.44
	64	100

It can be interpreted that accessibility of SNS not only depends on infrastructure but also on individual's interest. The interest of using and time investment may affect the frequency of accessibility.

### 5.4 Policy for Accessing SNS

Many organisations do not allow its employees to use SNS to their librarians, a question was asked and the responses are presented in Fig. 1. Many access SNS because of many reasons. The SNS may have both



**Figure 1. Policy for accessing SNS.**

positive and negative impact on usage on campus. The privacy of a user can be a negative issue whereas facility of updating about happenings can be a positive. From the Fig. 1, it can be analysed that out of 64 librarians 25 (39.06 %) librarians opined that the SNS sites are banned in their institutions and 39 (60.93 %) agreed that all sites were accessible in their organisations.

It can be interpreted that the sites are banned in many institutions may be due to security reasons, or due to time management, or due to institution's policy or one of the reason may that SNS sites requires high bandwidth and the institutes may be short falling of the same.

### 5.5 Accessibility of Specified SNS

There are various types of SNS available on internet. But few SNS has got significance worldwide because of their features and accessibility provided. The literature shows that the users of these are increasing day by day. The study finds out which SNS is in more demand and used frequently by librarians by giving some of these know specified options. The responses tabulated in Table 4 show that out of 64 librarians, 42 (65.63 %) have strongly agreed that they use Facebook more frequently; 40 (62.50 %) agreed to LinkedIn, 25 (39.06 %) were neutral about Myspace usage; and 25 (39.06 %) agreed to Google+.

It can be interpreted that maximum librarians are comfortable with Facebook and LinkedIn than other two. The reasons could be (a) the features provided by these sites, (b) more people from known circles are using these, (c) demand from peers or interest.

### 5.6 Common Factors in Personal and Professional Use of SNS

Study was done to find out the reasons librarians are using SNS whether they use it for personal reasons or professional reasons. To know some common factors are taken into consideration like connection with relatives or professionals, getting information personally or professionally. The values of agree are considered and those values are considered for exact comparative analysis. This analysis is represented in Fig. 2. From Fig. 2 it is analysed that:

- Out of total 64 librarians 35 (54.69 %) librarians accepted the fact that SNS has added value to their personal life and 29 (45.31 %) librarians expressed the same for professional life.

**Table 4. Accessibility of different SNS**

	Strongly agree (%)	Agree (%)	Neutral (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly disagree (%)	Total (%)
Facebook	42 (65.63)	20 (31.25)	2 (3.12)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	64 (100)
LinkedIn	18 (28.12)	40 (62.50)	0 (0.00)	6 (9.38)	0 (0.00)	64 (100)
Myspace	12 (18.75)	16 (25.00)	25 (39.06)	11 (17.19)	0 (0.00)	64 (100)
Google+	19 (29.68)	25 (39.06)	0 (0.00)	14 (21.88)	6 (9.38)	64 (100)

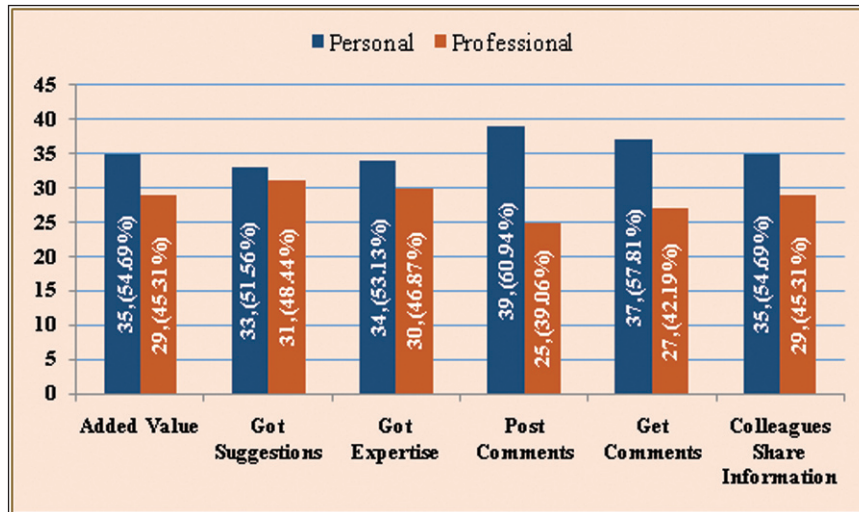


Figure 2. Common factors of impact.

- 33 (51.56 %) librarians stated that SNS provided suggestions in personal life and 31 (48.44%) stated that they have got professional suggestions.
- 34 (53.13 %) librarians opined that they got expertise through SNS in personal life and 30 (46.87%) opined the same for professional life.
- 39 (60.94 %) librarians stated that they post personal comments and 25 (39.06 %) stated they post professional comments.
- 37 (57.81 %) librarians stated that they get personal comments and 27 (42.19 %) librarians stated that they get professional comments regularly.
- 35 (54.69 %) librarians stated that their colleagues post personal information regularly and 29 (45.31 %) stated that their colleagues post professional information regularly.

Thus, it can be interpreted that more librarians believed that SNS has added value to their personal life than professional life. For expertise or for getting

comments the impact is more on personal life. It can also be seen that more librarians are posting comments personally than professionally. Even colleagues share more personal things than professional things.

### 5.7 Benefits of SNS

The SNS has various benefits like easy access, communication and faster information transfer. The question was asked whether these librarians believe in benefits of SNS. The responses are represented in Fig. 3 which shows that out of total 64 librarians, 30 (46.88 %) librarians agreed that because of SNS all can get easily connected, 32 (50.00 %) librarians agreed that SNS ease regular work, 39 (60.94 %) librarians agreed that SNS are helpful for knowledge sharing, 32 (50.00 %) agreed that SNS can help for building knowledge repository and 37 (57.81 %) librarians agreed that SNS should be used to develop interactive learning environment.

It can be interpreted that librarians strongly believed that the SNS can help in being connected with their

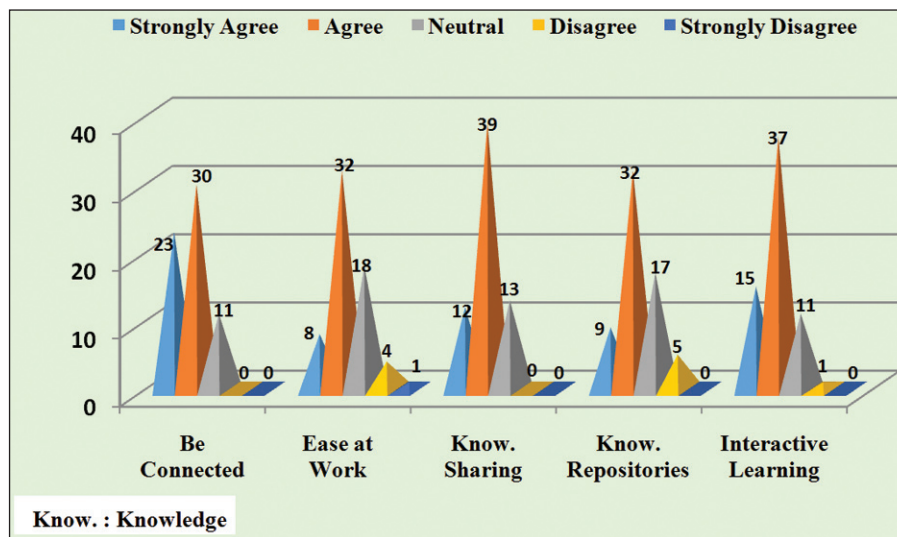


Figure 3. Benefits of SNS.



colleagues, friends or relatives very easily. It is good to see that librarians believed that SNS can help in building knowledge repositories which may give them good resource for hunting knowledge. Followed by this maximum agreed that SNS can help in interactive learning which shows that librarians have positive feeling about use of SNS in learning process and if used properly it may have good impact on learning.

### 5.8 Library Profile and Reasons

The SNS applications are open, and free to use. The functionality of SNS provides opportunities to enhance the effectiveness of any processes if used properly. To find out whether libraries are taking help of SNS to enhance their services librarians were asked if they has created library profile on SNS, if not then reasons for the same by giving options. Out of total 64 librarians 16 (25 %) said their their library has profile on SNS and 48 (75 %) said they did not have it but were interested to have in future. Those who are not having profile on the SNS were further asked about reasons which are mentioned in Table 5.

From Table 5, it can be analysed that out 48 librarians who have said that they don't have profile on SNS, 36 (75 %) were believed that there can be possibility of misusing account, 45 (93.75 %) said the unwanted comments can damage the image of the library, 39 (81.25 %) said that there is less to update on SNS as very few new things take place on regular basis, and 35 (72.91 %) stated that there is a less demand from users to go on these sites for library use.

It can be interpreted that many librarians are scared of wrong comments or comments can come which can damage the image of the library. It can also be seen that misuse of account can take place which may create wrong impression about library. Thus librarians are not creating profiles on SNS.

**Table 5. Reasons for not having profile on SNS**

	Yes (%)	No (%)	Total (%)
Misuse of account	36 (5)	12 (25)	48 (100)
Unwanted comments	45 (93.75)	3 (6.25)	48 (100)
Less to update	39 (81.25)	9 (18.75)	48 (100)
Less demand from users	35 (72.91)	13 (27.09)	48 (100)

## 6. DISCUSSIONS

The main purpose of the study was to find out the awareness of SNS among librarians of management institution in Mumbai. The data indicates that all librarians are aware about SNS and are using it on daily basis for one or the other reasons. It is good to see that maximum institutions are providing infrastructural facilities like computers and internet to librarians. But some institutions banned such sites due to policy or fear of misuse. The

purpose for accessing was shown that maximum librarians are using these sites for personal reasons than professional. Though librarians believed in benefits of SNS like getting connected, knowledge sharing and interactive learning is possible, but many don't have library profile on SNS. Overall it can be observed that the librarians are using new techniques of SNS, but the usage is towards personal than professional information. This is may be due to hindrances like fear of privacy, getting misused by users and even very less to update.

It may be suggested that proper policy for accessing SNS and training may lead to right use of SNS for right purpose. The study suggests that the effective change and general acceptance may lead to more clear communication and more interactive growth of library profession among management institutions.

## 7. CONCLUSIONS

This exploration revealed that libraries need to upgrade with the upcoming tools like SNS. The combination with these will help libraries to provide more quality services by interacting users more efficiently. Users can response quickly which may help libraries to improve on their services. Libraries and users community can change the perspective of using SNS for more knowledge sharing. The time will need to change the user's perspective in using SNS with libraries. Libraries may need to put some restrictions and limitations on users usage to avoid inconvenience and misuse of this facilities. The findings imply that libraries can improve the efficiency of functions, communication and interaction through SNS.

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