

## Social Networking System and Its Impacts on Tertiary Level Students Learning: Bangladesh Perspective

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### Abstract:

*This study is employed to explore the impacts of social networking system (SNS) on tertiary level students learning in Bangladesh. A Mixed research method is used to fulfill the purpose of this study. Total 120 and 32 tertiary level students for questionnaire survey and 4 Focus Group Discussion (FGD) are selected purposively. The findings show that 92% respondents have account in SNS and the most popular SNS is Facebook. At the same time, around 69% respondents say that SNS has the positive effect on tertiary level students learning. They mention that SNS helps to share data and sheet among the teachers and friends easily (96%), it is an easy way to communicate with friends for academic purposes (95%) and it helps to get necessary academic information (100%). On the other hand, least 31% respondents articulate that it reduces the learning and research capabilities (100%), it decreases the academic performance and concentration to study well (100%), it reduces the student's*

*communication skills (100%),it wastages the valuable time(100%) and responsibilities of getting lower grades (100%) in their examinations and it also effect the health (100%).*

**Key words:** Social networking sites, tertiary level, students learning, Facebook, Twitter, and Google Plus+.

## INTRODUCTION

Social Networks have undergone a dramatic growth in recent years. Such networks provide an extremely suitable space to instantly share multimedia information between individuals and their neighbors in the social graph. It is changing the way we communicate with others, entertain and actually live (communities, 2010). Social network creates web that connects the people all over the world like a society member. Boyd & Ellison (2008)define it as web-based services that allow individuals to i) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, ii) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and iii) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system (Boyd & Ellison, 2008). The nature and nomenclature of these connections may vary from site to site. Social Networking System (SNS) allows users to communicate with others in many ways. The most frequently used forms of communication include: profile updates, comments on photos or other posts, posting public messages to others or wall-style messages, social network based instant messaging (Nielson, 2010). Now a day in Bangladesh, Social Networking Sites are getting popular tremendously. The Social Networking Sites (SNS) such as twitter and Facebook are giving our general people a useful but common platform for disclosure of their thinking and ideas (Faruq et al., 2017). As a result it has a major impact on universities and colleges level students. In Bangladesh, the number of Social Networking System (SNS) users has crossed

the 10 million thresholds and it is still increasing day by day. A lot of students are now using social networking sites like Myspace, Twitter and Facebook to communicate, search and share data and even to socialize through them. Facebook is very popular among the young people of Bangladesh and 73% of the Facebook users in Bangladesh have between 13 and 25 years, meaning they are students either at secondary school or at university (Mouri & Ali Arshad, 2016). So our young generation is spending more and more time in their virtual world which are segregating them from their real world rather than their fancy world. Students are now spending noteworthy amount of time, but we do not know about the impacts of social networking sites on tertiary level students learning in Bangladesh. This study is intended to explore the impacts of social networking sites on tertiary level students learning in Bangladesh.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The social media has become one of the most important communication means in recent times. These systems are referred to as social, simply because they allow communication with buddies and co-workers so easily and effectively. It is also becoming probably the most important communication tools among students especially at the higher level of educational pursuit (Al-Rahmi & Othman, 2012). Several discussions, opinions and sharing have emerged in social networking context (Awodele et al, 2009). The impact of social networks on learning of tertiary students is an important issue that has caught both educators' and practitioners' attention in recent years (<http://www.ukessays.com/essays/english-language/impact-of-social-networking-on-tertiary-students-english-language-essay.php>).

People's perception on effectiveness of social networking system on tertiary level students learning of Bangladesh can be categorized in two types. It means that there are some people in

Bangladesh who consider social networking system positively. In a study Mouri & Ali Arshad (2016) explored that Social Networking System (SNS) does not reduce their study time, rather than it helps them to get the latest study related information, sharing courses, class schedules etc. In a word, it does not influence the students' academic results. In a study of Shohrwardhy & Hassan (2014) also find that most of the respondents report of their study consider social networking as positive impact on their academic purposes and there is a favorable perception of social networking taking different nuances. It helps to make academic progress too (Montoneri, 2015). On the other hand, there are also some people in Bangladesh whose ideas on social networking system are negative. Islam et al. (2014) finds that students' engagement with social media for entertainment competes with study time is one of the most vital reason for poor academic achievement of university students of this time. There is limited study regarding this issue. So this study implies to explore the real impacts of social networking sites on tertiary level students learning in Bangladesh which becomes a key issue to fold out.

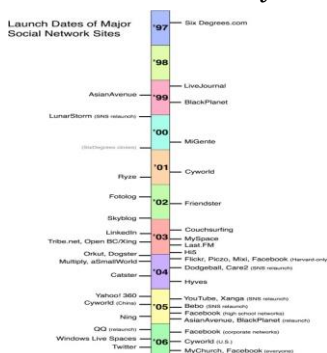
### **Research Objectives**

The main objective of this study is to measure the impact of social networking system on the tertiary level students learning in Bangladesh. There are also some additional objectives to fulfill the main objective of this study. These objectives are given bellow:

- To explore the social networking state of affairs among the tertiary level students of Bangladesh.
- To identify the nature of impacts of social networking sites in Bangladesh.
- To explore the nature of impact (positive and negative) on tertiary level students learning in Bangladesh.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Social networking has a major impact on tertiary level students. It helps to communicate, search and share data and even to socialize through them. These sites are attracting a huge number of people as they use them to establish links between friends, even publishing and maintaining their profiles (Subrahmanyam et al.2008). Social network can be said to be a group of socially related nodes linked by the means of one or more relationships. A set of connections (members) are those nodes connected by the relations whose patterns can be studied. The units are commonly known as organizations or persons, thus the connected units can be studied as the principle says, (Marin A. and Wellman B. 2009).At the most basic level, social networking sites allow users to set up online profiles or personal homepages and develop an online social network. The profile page functions as the user’s own webpage and includes profile information ranging from their date of birth, gender, religion, politics and hometown etc. In addition to profile information, users can design the appearance of their page and add contents such as photos, video clips and music files (Ofcom Social Networking Sites research, 2008).In addition to this, users can also create a network connection here they can make friends. It is important to note that the term friend in this context does not refer to the traditional friend. It means anyone who has been invited by the account holder or sent invitation to the account holder or has been invited by the other user.



In 1997, social networking system started its first journey. The first site was SixDegrees.com. These sites were permitted the users to list friends after making profiles. After that in 1998 they were able to view friend's lists and profiles existed on community and dating sites. Other social networking site, name Classmates.com permitted persons to connect with friends from different institutions and search the network for any other person they would have known before. Even though they were not able to create profiles and listing their friends. The combination of these features was then made through Six Degrees a couple of years later (Boyd et al 2007).

Gradually social networking sites are becoming more popular in young generation. New sites have also launched during the last years. Presently most popular social networking sites of Bangladesh are Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Pinteres, and Google Plus+. These sites are also most popular in world wide.

There are a number of ways in which social networks influence the lives of students and people. Some of the positive usage are: it allow teachers and coaches to post club meeting times, school projects, and even homework on these sites, it helps to share interest, idea, data, information, document, picture, games, notice, circular with the friends, it also helps to search a job, it can also be used as a positive cause, i.e, money raising benefits for someone who was in a car crash, house burnt down, or also raise funds for the people involved in natural catastrophes like flood, cyclone etc. These sites are also helping the people, especially young people to stay in touch with long distance friends; it is also used to renew friendships of school/college friends.

Some others have also said that it is enhancing relationship, improving learning motivation, offering personalized course material, and developing collaborative abilities (Wheeler et al, 2008 & Rifkin et al, 2009). This means that social networking activities have the possibility of

enhancing student contact and is used to improve their participation in class, particularly where introverted students are involved. Students can plausibly function well in online group learning with less or no anxiety of needing to raise questions before peers at school (Al-Rahmi & Othman, 2012). Continuously these types of sites are adding different apps like Skype, messenger, voice call, group chat etc.

Social networks also have negative impacts on the lives of students or people in general. Some of them are: Students waste precious time that could be spent in doing homework, thus social networking websites are encouraging the creation of a lazy generation. Users of social networking websites are extremely vulnerable to fraud, and can have money stolen from their bank accounts just because of signing up for these sites. Users of social networking websites are extremely vulnerable to sexual abuse or harassment. In the case of computer labs, social networks use up most of the bandwidth in them. It is so interesting that one will want to open a lot of web pages at the same time and imagine if 50 students do that at the same time. It is making our youth more introvert and virtual world oriented. These sides are time consuming. Sometimes it works like an addiction. Sometimes people become a freak of Facebook. When a job holder spends his time in these sites it become illegal something. In a word social sides are selling our privacy and this is their hidden but main business strategy.

### **Significance of the Study**

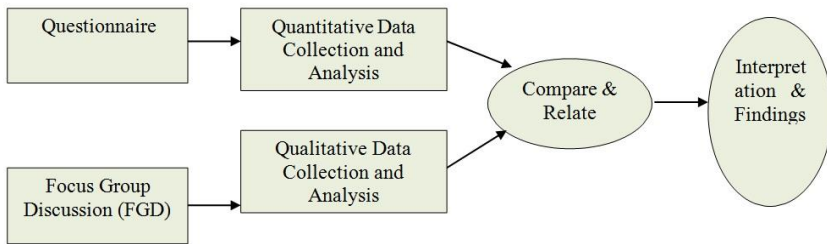
Social networking system has become one of the most vital integration of communication way in the world. It has changed the dimension of people, society and connectivity. A large number of people especially young people are mostly used social networking system in their daily life. But we don't know much about the advantage and disadvantage of social networking system in tertiary level student learning. This study explores the impact of social networking system on tertiary level

students learning in Bangladesh. That will help the government, authority, university authority, policy maker, parents, teachers and students to take necessary steps to make the system more effective and helpful for the tertiary level students learning.

## **METHODOLOGY**

A mixed research methodology is used that involved the use of various methods to generate various types of data. The study uses mixed method which used both qualitative and quantitative methods to get the strength of the qualitative and quantitative data by minimizing the limitations of each approach. Data and evidence have been gathered from a range of source using a combination of instruments which allowed both qualitative and quantitative data to generate. Questionnaires for 120 tertiary students and 4 Focus Group Discussion (FGD), each group comprises of 8 participants are used to collect primary data. All tertiary level students of Bangladesh are the population of this study. To fulfill the purposes of this study non-probability sampling techniques are used to select the respondents. The non-probability sampling methods are the purposive and snow ball sampling. Samples are selected from all types of universities, colleges and madrashas. The study is confined in Dhaka city of Bangladesh. For analyzing the data obtained from questionnaire and 4 FGD a Thematic Descriptive Approach is used. Different themes related to social networking and its impacts on tertiary level students learning are identified and data are analyzed under each theme. Simple percentages of respondents against the supplied evidence are computed from questionnaire. To interpret both qualitative and quantitative data Convergent Parallel Design is followed in this study. This design is taken place in the following way:





**Figure 1: Data Interpretation Design**

### **Limitations of the Study**

There are some limitations of the study. These are - Data are collected from Dhaka city only which could not be the representative of the whole country. At the same time, Data are also collected from 152students (120 for questionnaire survey and 32 for FGD) so it is not possible to generalize.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

### ***Social networking account:***

Majority of the students have at least 1 account of social networking sites. The percentage of this type of students is 92 percent. Among of the 92 percent respondents, 50 respondents say that they have 2 and more accounts in different sites.

Responses		
	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Yes	110	92
No	10	8
Total:	120	100

### ***Regular time wasting for social networking***

F1P8 says that “On an average 50 to 60 minutes are spent in social networking sites”. Almost all FGD participants have said that they passed less than 60 minutes in their social networking accounts. Same pictures are also shown in the questionnaire survey.

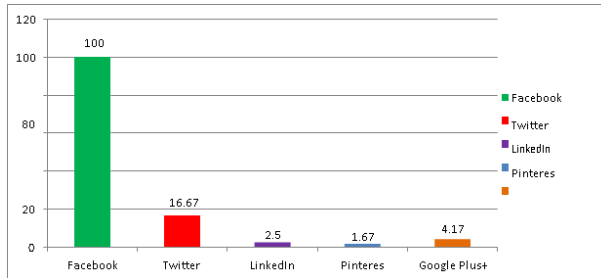
**Table-2: Regular time wasting for social networking**

	Responses	
	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Less > 15 Minutes	14	11.67
15 Minutes > 30 Minutes	9	7.50
30 Minutes > 45 Minutes	21	17.5
45 Minutes > 60 Minutes	15	12.5
60 Minutes > 75 Minutes	7	5.83
75 Minutes > 90 Minutes	9	7.50
90 Minutes > 105 Minutes	11	9.17
105 Minutes > 120 Minutes	4	3.33
120 Minutes > 135 Minutes	7	5.83
150 Minutes > 165 Minutes	4	3.33
165 Minutes > 180 Minutes	6	5.00
180 Minutes > 195 Minutes	1	0.83
195 Minutes > 210 Minutes	4	3.33
210 Minutes > 225 Minutes	2	1.67
225 Minutes > 240 Minutes	1	0.83
240 Minutes > 255 Minutes	2	1.67
255 Minutes > 270 Minutes	0	0.00
270 Minutes > 285 Minutes	1	0.83
285 Minutes > 300 Minutes	2	1.67
Total:	120	100

Here, large number of respondents say that on average they pass 30 Minutes > 45 Minutes in a day in social networking sites. The percentage of this type of respondents is 17.5 percent. Second large number of respondents say that they pass 45 Minutes > 60 Minutes in each day. On the other hand, there are also few persons who spend 225 Minutes > 240 Minutes and above in social networking sites. The percentage of this type of respondents is 5 percent [Table: 2]

### ***Most used social networking site***

Most popular social networking sites in Bangladesh are Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Pinteres and Google Plus+ [Figure: 2].



**Figure 2: Most popular social networking site among the tertiary level students**

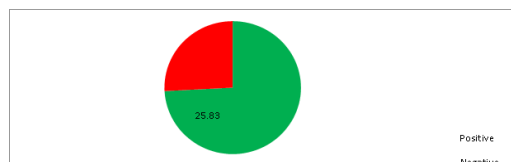
It is the most interesting finding that all respondents have an account on Facebook [Figure 2], where only 20 respondents have account on Twitter. The percentage of this type of respondents is 16.67 per cent. Percentage of having accounts in other social networking sites are also said about LinkedIn (2.5%), Pinteres (1.67%) and Google Plus+ (4.17%).

The same opinions are also expressed by the all FGD participants. Almost all have an account in Facebook. Among them F<sub>2</sub>P<sub>5</sub> says that *“I have two accounts one is in Facebook and another one is in Twitter. But most of the time I spent in Facebook, rarely I login Twitter”*. On the other hand, F<sub>3</sub>P<sub>1</sub> says that

Presently I have only one Facebook account in active but few days ago I had around 3 accounts, I deactivated these two accounts last 15 days ago. Here it is noted that among these two accounts, one account is in the name of female. That means it was a fake account.

### ***Students thought about social networking system***

Majority of the respondents except that social networking sites are good for them.



**Figure 3: Students thought about social networking system**

The percentage of this type of respondents is 74.17 percent. On the other hand, around 26 percent of respondents take it negatively. They think it is harmful for them and their study [Figure: 3].

***Reasons to take social networking sites positively:***

Social Networking System (SNS) makes the world too small so that we can make and keep friends from all over the world. It also gives the opportunity to share our thought, opinions, picture and information (F1P3). Similarly, F4P3 has also said, "It helps to share interest, idea, data, information, document, picture, games, notice, and circular with the friends. We can also share class time and date easily". It helps to get lots of friends. Now video call can be done here which makes relation closer (F2 P4).

On the other hand, F2P1 says that

Through the Facebook account we can easily share course material, lecture sheet, note. At the same time, our teachers have also provided homework or home task. For that reason, I think that now-a-days social networking sites are working as a common platform for teachers, students where all are friends.

Almost same opinions have been obtained from the respondents of the questionnaire survey. Here, all participants express that social networking sites help them to share interest, mind, data, information, document, picture, games and notice with the friends (100%). At the same time 100 percent respondents have also said that it can help to make and keep friends from all over the world (100%). It helps to in touch with family members, other relatives and friends (100%) and it makes the world a smaller place (100%). Simultaneously, some have also said that it is helpful for the teachers and students. They said that it improves learning motivation (78.65%), it enhances relationship (89.89%), it offers personalized course material (89.89%), it allows teachers, students and coaches to post class

times (73.03%), it allows the teachers and students to share projects, assignment and homework on these sites (75.28%) and students can function in online group learning (100%).

On the other hand, some have also said that it gives the chance to be up-to-dated (89.89%),it allows you to live a life unhindered by small talk (67.42%), it develops collaborative abilities (84.27%), it gives the chance to do social welfare work (88.76%), it helps to raise fund for the poorer and sufferer and it helps to find a common ground in an open society (93.26%) [Table: 3].

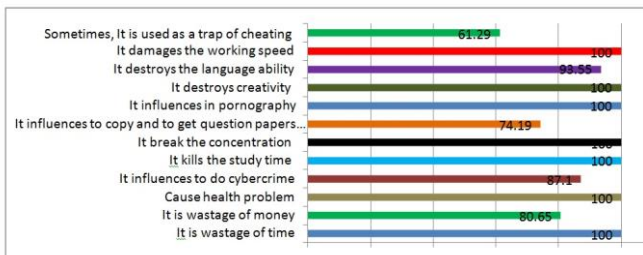
**Table- 3: Reasons to take social networking sites positively**

	Responses	
	Frequency(f)	Percentage(%)
It gives the chance to be up-to-date.	80	89.89
It can help to make and keep friends from all over the world	89	100
It makes the world a smaller place	89	100
It allows you to live a life unhindered by small talk.	60	67.42
It helps to keep in touch with family members, other relatives and friends	89	100
It enhances relationship	80	89.89
It improves learning motivation	70	78.65
It offers personalized course material	80	89.89
It develops collaborative abilities	75	84.27
It allows teachers, students and coaches to post class times	65	73.03
It allows the teachers and students to share projects, assignment and homework on these sites	67	75.28
It helps to share interest, idea, data, information, document, picture, games, notice with the friends	89	100
Students can function in online group learning.	89	100
It gives the chance to do social welfare work	79	88.76
It helps to find a common ground in an open society	83	93.26
Total:	1184	1330.34

***Reasons to take social networking sites negatively***

Respondents (31 out of 120) who consider social networking sites as negative say that it is the wastage of time (100 percent), it is wastage of money (80.65 percent) [Figure: 3]. Some also say that sitting for long time in front of computer is

also harmful for health (100 percent). It kills the study time (100 percent) of the students, it breaks the concentration (100 percent), it destroyed creativity (100 percent), it destroys the language ability (93.55 percent), and it damage the working speed (100 percent) Figure: 3]. On the other hand, some also said that it influences to do cyber crime (87.10 percent), it influences to copying (74.19 percent), it influences users in pornography (100 percent) and sometimes, it is also used as a trap of citing evoke (61.29 percent) [Figure: 4].



**Figure 4: Reasons to take social networking sites negatively**

Same opinions are also expressed by almost all FGD participants. F1P7 says that social networking sites are hampering the health and it is also wasting of time and money. On the other hand, F2P4 says that it influences to do cyber crime and it influences in pornography.

***Effects on tertiary level students learning:***

Among 120 respondents, 69% respondents say that social networking sites have the positive effect on tertiary level students learning. On the other hand, other 31% respondents articulate the opposite opinion about the effect of social networking sites on tertiary level students learning.

Reasons to take social networking sites as positive on tertiary level students learning: Respondents of the questionnaire survey mentioned some reasons these are- it helps to easily share data and sheet among the teachers and friends (96.39%), it is an easy way to contact with friends for academic purposes (95.18%), it develops the sincerity about the

study and careers (90.36%), it develops the understanding (67.47%) and it helps to get necessary academic information (100%) [Table: 4]

**Table-4: Reasons to take social networking sites as positive on tertiary level students learning**

	Responses	
	Frequency(f)	Percentage (%)
It is a easy way to contact with friends for academic purposes	79	95.18
It helps to share data and sheet among the teachers and friends easily.	80	96.39
It develops the sincerity about the study and careers	75	90.36
It develops the understanding	56	67.47
It helps to get necessary academic information.	83	100
It helps us to take preparation like BCS and other competitive examination	73	87.95
It helps to get rapid notification of new circular or notice	83	100
It helps to get information about seminar, workshop etc.	83	100
It creates a platform for group study or discussion	77	92.77
It gives the opportunity to develop connectivity with the seniors.	81	97.59
It gives the opportunity to get suggestion for increasing the academic performance.	67	80.72
Total:	837	1008.43

On the other hand, some also said that it helps them to take preparation like BCS and other competitive examinations (87.95%), it helps to get rapid notification of new circular or notice (100%) and it helps to get information about seminar, workshop etc. (100%) [Table: 7]. Simultaneously, some also said that it creates a platform for group study or discussion (92.77%), it gives the opportunity to develop connectivity with the seniors (97.59%) and it gives the opportunity to get suggestion for increasing the academic performance (80.72%) [Table: 4].

Beside these, FGD participants have also mentioned some others significant positive sides of social networking sites. F3P7

says, “our class teachers often take advantage of students’ social networking abilities to create class blogs, discussion forums, videos, and more”. F1P5 state that “sometimes social networking sites are also used to collect data for any study by a scale or questionnaire. It also helps to smoothen teacher-student relationship. It gives us current news about jobs. Jobs for a fresh graduate too”.

Reasons to take social networking sites as negative on tertiary level students learning: Respondents (37) who took the social networking sites negatively have mentioned some specific reasons, these are- it reduces the learning and research capabilities (100%), decreases the academic performance and concentration to study well (100%), reduces the student’s communication skills (100%) and reduces the command over language and creative writing skills (100%) [Table: 5]. On the other hand, some also said that it wastages the valuable time of the students life (100%) as a result students get low grades (100%) in their examinations, it also reduces the motivation of student in study (81.08%) [Table: 5].

**Table-5: Reasons to take social networking sites as negative on tertiary level students learning**

	Responses	
	Frequency(f)	Percentage (%)
Reduces the learning and research capabilities	37	100
Decreases the academic performance, and concentration to study well	37	100
Reduces the students’ communication skills	37	100
Reduces the command over language and creative writing skills	37	100
Wastage of time	37	100
Low grades	37	100
Loss of motivation in students	30	81.08
Effect on health	37	100
Students begin to rely on the accessibility of information on social networking sites	37	100
Too much internet use for young children can cause learning disabilities in the future	30	81.08
Total:	356	962.16



Some also said that it effect the health (100%) and other said that too much use of internet for young children can cause learning disabilities in the future (81.08%). Simultaneously, students who use social networking sites begin to rely more on the accessibility of information on it (100%) [Table: 5]. At the same time, F1P2 says that “Students are attempting to multi-task. They are trying to check various social media sites while they are studying. This leads to reduced academic performance. Besides, their ability to concentrate in their tasks on hand significantly get hampered due to the distraction that is brought by all these social media sites”. Students today have begun to rely on the accessibility of information that is available on the social media platforms and web sites in order to get answers. This means that there is a reduced focus on learning as well as on retaining information (F3P3).

## **CONCLUSION**

To explore the impact of social networking system on tertiary level students learning of Bangladesh, the study is conducted. The study addresses the positive and negative impacts of social networking system on these students learning. This study may help the tertiary level or university level students to realize the actual impacts of social networking system. It may also help the future researchers in this field of Bangladesh education.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Daily overuse of these social networking sites tends to have a negative effect on the health of all students as it makes them more susceptible to various health problems in the future. This is where peers, teachers and parents need to play a major role by making the students aware of what they are missing out while spending too much time on these sites.

As tertiary level students are mature enough so counseling and proper guideline may safe them from the bad effect of social networking system. That is why, university authorities may introduce a separate compulsory one or more lessons for all students.

Cyber crime is a rising issue and it is also occurring in the social networking system. So everybody should be aware of the cyber crime before publishing any identifying information about him or her as phone number, mobile number, picture, address etc.

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