



**SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES (SNS): A NEED OF HOUR FOR BUSINESS ORGANIZATIONS
– A NARRATIVE REVIEW**

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Abstract

At present, the Social Networking Sites (SNS) are one of the main channels of communication and most frequently used medium to share and receive information globally. The concept of Social Networking Sites like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, Whatsapp, WeChat, Tumblr, etc. is the fastest growing online domain, connecting millions of users worldwide. This high growth rate of SNS users has attracted the attention of businessmen worldwide, and they have started to apply their marketing and promotional strategies on these sites. The utilization of this platform has helped in targeting the right customer at the right time and right place effectively without any tough hustle. So, effective management of these sites is a crucial aspect for every business organization. The main purpose of this research is to study the role of social networking sites in the growth of a business. The study will throw light on impacts of social networking sites on business performance and growth.

Keywords: Social Networking Sites (SNS), Facebook, Information and Online Domain etc.

Introduction

Continuous growth and development in information and technology (IT) sectors have made it possible for everyone to have an easy access to all the communicating and information exchange sources. Social Networking Sites (SNS) are being one of the main sources of communication and to share information and issues. These provide a platform for users to interact, share information and discuss the things globally. Social Networking Sites basically act as a web-based service which provides every individual to create their profiles, add connections worldwide and share things as per the preferences of the individual. The interface and customization of different social networking sites can be different and customized as per their terms and conditions. The concept of Social Networking Sites is the fastest growing online domain, which is connecting millions of users worldwide. Social Networking Sites like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, Whatsapp, WeChat, Tumblr, etc provide great platforms to interact or discuss things over the internet worldwide. The usage of these social networking sites is increasing at a high pace. These social networking sites have become a very important and needed part of every individual's life. As the maximum of the audience is making great use of social networking sites worldwide, business organizations are also shifting their interests towards these sites. They have started implementing their marketing and promotional practices through these sites. These are helping them in targeting the right audience at the right place and at right time effectively without any tough hustle. These sites are becoming an important part of business organizations.

Businesses are taking advantages of this booming segment of leading technology. Large numbers of business organisations are using these sites as a tool to build a great relation with customers. Social networking sites have become the technological innovations for organizations which can't be ignored. Presently the importance and omnipresence of these networks has made business organisations to take a look on effects of these sites on business activities.

Evolution of social networking sites

The concept of social networking sites was started in early 90's. The first social networking site was started in 1995 which was classmates.com. This website was all about school, college, work and military. The second social networking site was launched in 1996 which was bolt.com. In the year 1997 two social networking sites were launched one was sixdegrees.com and second one was Asian avenue. These were the sites which came with the concept of creating the profiles. Since then, several websites came into existence with different features and tools. In 2003 LinkedIn was launched for the people belonging to professional, corporate world. In year 2004, Facebook and orkut was launched. Orkut could not survive longer but the Facebook is dominating the globe tremendously. At present there are 3.48 billion social network users worldwide.

(Source:<https://www.smartinsights.com/social-media-marketing/social-media-strategy/new-global-social-media-research/>)

Features of social networking sites

Social networking sites contain different technical and non-technical features. There are different features like: visibility of the profile, profile/display pictures, friends list, follower list, likings. Profile includes name, demographic details, addresses, age, gender, locations, date of birth etc. There are different other features like photo sharing, video sharing, blogging, wishes, article submissions etc. Many of the social networking sites are also providing the features of private messaging or secret chats etc to ensure the privacy of the users. With change in time, technology is also changing and improving continuously. These changes are adding new



Cover Page

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exciting and popular features in social networking sites. Many of the sites are also providing features considering the business organisations in mind. These business-oriented features are helping the business organisations to work effectively and efficiently to achieve their goal with minimum investment and maximum output. Concept of Artificial Intelligence in social networking sites making them more engaging and interactive.

Review of Literature

K Abdipour et.al (2019) studied the impact of social networking sites on business performances. The purpose of the study is to investigate the roles and applications of social networking sites in business. **F Awolusi (2012)** studied the impacts of social networking sites on the workplace productivity. In this research it is studied that there is an influence of social networking sites on organisational functions like training, recruiting, communication and brand management etc. In this study it is concluded that social networking sites can influence the productivity of the workplace tremendously in terms of geographic collaboration, communication and effective marketing & promotions of products/services. **T Grizane and I Jurgelane (2016)** threw light on impacts of social media or social network on the business evaluation. The study was focused on the restaurants located in Jelgava town. They have concluded that social networking activities have changed the whole scenario of the business and impacted the ROI positively and the business gained the maximum benefits. **D R Rahadi and L A Abdillah (2013)** studied the utilization of social networking as promotional media. They have discussed that social media or social networking sites like Facebook, twitter etc, are not acting as communication channels only but they are also acting as a promotional tool for the business. The purpose of the research is to determine a kind of model of social networking utilization as a promotional media. They have concluded that businesses are using social networking sites as promotional tools and they are getting benefits from this. Businesses are using social networking sites such as Facebook; twitter etc, because of their minimal cost, easy recognizable, global distribution areas etc. **T. Himaja (2017)** discussed the social media impact on the business. In this it is discussed that web based social networking is changing the way people behave, team up, act and make things. In this study a wide research plan is plotted to make a connection between web based social networking, business and society. The study discussed that web based social networking is a new buzz word for businesses to promote the things. It is concluded that people are dependent on these technological innovations and that is creating a huge impact on businesses. **S Bhagwat and A Goutam (2013)** studied the concept of development of social networking sites and their different roles in business. They have taken the reference of social networking site, Facebook. They have discussed that as this world is too large to make the physical interaction. This is impossible to communicate in this huge world physically, so social networking sites are making this task easier. They have concluded that social technology connecting people and facilitating businesses in beneficial ways. **L Can and N Kaya (2016)** studied the social networking sites addiction and the effect of attitude towards social network advertising. They have discussed that because of penetration of mobile devices social networking sites are becoming the world-wide phenomenon and social networking sites are giving lots of opportunities for businesses. The results of study concluded that social networking sites have partial impacts on approaches of people who are totally bonded and influenced by the advertisements on these platforms. **M. N Hajli (2014)** studied the impact of social media on consumers. He has discussed that social media has provided new opportunities to consumers to interact and communicate worldwide. Online communities are playing an important role in the growth and development of businesses also. He has concluded that recent advancements and technological innovations on internet have facilitated the consumers as well as the businesses. **A Toor, M Husnain et al (2017)** threw light on impact of social network marketing on consumer purchase intention. They have discussed those new trends and modes of digital technologies are encroaching the traditional ones. They have also discussed that if the businesses will not shift to these changes, this may impact the outcomes of businesses drastically. They have concluded that social networking marketing influence the consumers' purchasing intentions to some extent and that is impacting the businesses. **P Hanafizadeh, A Z Ravasan et al (2012)** studied the business impacts of social networking sites. They have discussed that social networking site like Facebook, twitter, YouTube have attracted the millions of people. These are becoming the important part for the business organizations. Business organisations are looking forward to use these sites. The results or the reviews of past literatures are suggesting that social networking sites have impacted the business organizations to a great extent. **M Smits and S Mogos (2013)** studied the impact of social media on business performances. They have discussed that social media or social networking sites are gaining popularity and getting used in different operations of business organisations. These are becoming the essential tool for the marketing and promotional operations and functions of business organisations. They have concluded that social networking sites have enhanced the capabilities and scope for business organizations. **T P. Singh and Dr. R Sinha (2017)** discussed the impact of social media on performance and growth of business in India. They have discussed that social networking sites are like just another medium of communication and interaction but a large extent and scope, they cover wide areas and different innovative techniques. They have mentioned that internationally social networking sites are acting as important and essential tool for the marketing campaigns of the business organisations. They have concluded that social networking sites are impacting businesses to a great extent. These are helping business organizations in creating a great brand image. **M Yadav (2017)** discussed social media as a marketing tool. He has studied the opportunities and challenges in this context. He has discussed about the escalating usage of social networking sites in business world. The study is aimed to discuss how social media has affected the business performances. The paper has concluded the different benefits, scope and problems associated with use of social networking sites in business organizations. **K E. Henderson (2018)** studied the role of social media or social networking sites in recruitment and selection process. He has discussed that in present scenario



maximum of the organizations are hiring employees by making use of social networking sites. He has concluded that there are different characteristics and concerns like professionalism etc, recruiters look for in candidate during the recruitment and selection process. **S. Seol and H Lee et al (2016)** have studied the continuance usage of social networking sites pages. This study has developed a research model that explained the continuance of social networking sites pages in business. The result suggested that quality of social interaction is one of the salient features. Audience like quality content on these pages the most. They have also discussed that these pages are getting maximum of traffic on official business websites. **R Chugh (2012)** threw a light on social networking a boon or bane for business organizations. He has discussed about pros as well as cons of social networking for business organizations. He has discussed that social networking sites are noble way to increase a business worldwide. He also threw light on importance of internet. He discussed that internet is promoting the social interaction globally. He has concluded that social networking sites have revolutionised the whole things in business world. They have also concluded that there is huge scope of these in future as internet is itself a future. **E Constantinides and C L Romero et al (2013)** threw a light on social networking sites as business tool. They have discussed that social networking sites and web applications have helped the users to create the personal as well as professional relations worldwide. They have concluded that business organizations are highly interested in social networking sites as they are increasing relations as well as helping in making the different marketing and promotional strategies. They have concluded that social networking sites are effective tool for business organizations to grow. **S Edosomwan, S K Prakasan et al (2011)** studied the history of social media and its impacts on business. They have discussed that social media has impacted the aspects of human communication and interaction. They have examined the history of social media. They have concluded that for businesses social media sites create a kind of buzz about the brand. They have also concluded that social media is in trend because of its cost effectiveness. **V Bolotaeva and T Cata (2011)** discussed about marketing opportunities with social networks. They have discussed about social networking sites on which users communicate, interact, share ideas and rate or give feedbacks about products and services. In this study they have discussed the advantages and risks associated with social networking sites as well as different opportunities associated with these. They have concluded that social networking sites are the best platforms for every individual as well as for business organisations to enhance their brand value. **V. R. Brown and E. D. Vaughn (2011)** discussed about the use of social networking sites in hiring decisions with special reference of Facebook. They have discussed that according to different media reports, business organisations are hiring professionals through social networking sites. They have also discussed the risks associated with these sites. They have concluded that social networking sites are creating the advantages for business organisations and management should make policies regarding the risks associated with these. **H. K. Davison, C. Maraist et al (2011)** studied about promises and pitfalls of using social networking sites for HR decisions. They have mentioned that different HR practices are getting influenced by the use of Internet. They have discussed about different questions associated with the use of social networking sites for the purpose of recruitment and selection. They have concluded that many HR professionals and managers are making use of the social networking sites like Facebook and LinkedIn for the purpose of recruitment, selection. In fact, there are some issues also associated with these sites which need to be resolved. **R. Ayswarya, S. A. Telreja et al (2019)** studied about the concept of Facebook – which is a boon or bane for social media marketing. They have discussed that Facebook is dominating the global market continuously because of its unique innovative characteristics and features. They have discussed about different opportunities provided by social networking sites for businesses. They have concluded that social networking sites or social media marketing providing a great platform of advertisement for the business organisations. **W Assaad and J M Gomez (2011)** discussed about social networks in social media marketing with different opportunities and scope. They have discussed that social networking sites are providing a very effective platform to communicate and interact globally for every individual as well as the organizations. They have concluded that companies are getting benefits from social networking sites. They have suggested that business organisations should not avoid the usage of social networking sites as these are the need of hours.

Objective of the study

The main purpose of this research is given below:

1. To study the role of social networking sites in the growth of a business.
2. To identify the importance of managing social networking sites for organizations.
3. To study the impacts of social networking sites on business performance.

Research Methodology

In order to achieve above objectives, we have made an intensive Narrative Review of the existing literature and studies conducted by various researches of this field. On the basis of secondary data available in literature, results obtained are discussed in following paragraphs.

Approach: Narrative Review Approach is used for this study. Existing secondary literature was reviewed which was suitable for the sake of research objectives of the study. The selection of the literature was done as per the need and the requirement of the study. The unsuitable literature was excluded after discussing with different research experts and proper analysis.



Cover Page

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Findings and Discussion

Motive of social networking sites

For Consumers: For every individual there can be different purposes or motives of using social networking sites, but generally people use social networking sites to connect with families, friends globally. Other purposes can be sharing photos, videos, listening music, playing games, language learning, dating, talent search, social interaction, education etc. These are general motives or purposes of social networking sites for consumers.

For Business organisations: For business organisations the motives of using social networking sites are different. The major motives of these for business organisations can be sharing information, creating the brand image, sharing the details or information regarding products and services. Business organisations are also using these sites as marketing and promotional tools to setup a brand image of their business. Advertisements are one of the main reasons of using social networking sites for business organisations.

Management of social networking sites: Usage of social networking sites is one thing. But the management of these sites is one of the main concerns. It is very much important to maintain or handle the website properly. What to share, when to share, where to share and whom to share? These are one of the main concerns in the management of these sites. With this the optimization of the content and interface play a very important role in the management of a site. How your website is looking? Interface is user friendly or not? Content is well optimized and attractive or not? These are few concerns which come under the management and maintenance of a social networking site.

Applications of these sites in different sectors: As world is going digital and everyone is adapting the technology and innovation, every sector is making use of social networking sites for the development and growth of their business. These sites are becoming the need of hour for every business organization. These websites are solving different purposes of business organisations like advertisements, marketing, promotions, recruitment, selections etc. So, the applications of these sites are increasing with time in each sector. It was also found that use of SNS has reduced the cost of marketing, operations and different promotional campaigns and activities. Therefore, it can be said that SNS has role in financial health of an organization.

Impacts of social networking sites: From the past studies it is concluded that social networking sites are impacting business organisations positively. Social networking sites are playing an important role in development and growth of business. Social networking sites have brought a revolutionary change in way people interact, connect and think. Social networking sites are bringing people together and creating a healthy relationship between consumers and business organisations. These sites are helping business organisations in brand development etc. These sites helping businesses in creating different marketing campaigns, running advertisements, performing different promotional activities with ease, reducing the cost associated with different functions and operations. Traditional ways of marketing and promotions are now obsolete and online marketing techniques are in trend. These are changing the business scenario completely and these sites are becoming the need of hour for every business organisation.

Benefits of social networking sites: Everyone needs a network to connect with their family, friends etc. But because of busy life style and lack of time people can't meet everyone personally. This concern is solved by social networking sites. Now we can meet or connect with everyone not personally but virtually worldwide.

There are different benefits of social networking sites for everyone such as:

1. Bring people together
2. Allow everyone to share their ideas, stories etc.
3. Helping businesses in different operations and functions.
4. Providing opportunity to make contacts worldwide.
5. These sites are reducing the operational costs.
6. Helpful in targeting the wider audience.
7. Bring people of common interest together.
8. Helpful in increasing the brand awareness etc.

These are some of main benefits or advantages of using social networking sites for individuals, businesses.

Limitations of the Study: There could be some biases as the narrative review approach is used to conclude the results.

Suggestions and Conclusion

Presently social networking sites are playing major roles in operations and functions of business organizations. Social networking sites are also influencing productivity of the workplace. Social networking sites are playing very effective and efficient role in business development because they are cost effective, manpower saving etc. These are the platforms for mass engagements which are offering unparalleled opportunities for business organisations. It is becoming very much important for organizations to make a presence on these sites. Not only the presence but management and maintenance of these sites is also one of the major concerns. What to share, where to share, when to share? These are some of the main concerns in management and maintenance of social networking sites. Social networking sites are proving themselves a big thing in the field of marketing and promotional activities. They are becoming very popular and a need of hour for every individual. Attitude of public is changing towards technology and this attitude is leading to change in behaviour. People are adopting these things with a pace. That is the reason companies or business



Cover Page

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organisations are shifting to adopt the new trends. These sites are providing the advertisement and promotional platforms for business organisations. Advertisements play a very important role in marketing of products and services. This is the reason social networking sites are becoming the need of hour for business development and expansion. Latest advancements and innovations in the field of internet are facilitating the interconnectivity and increasing the interaction. These healthy interactions are providing values to both business organizations and consumers. Social networking sites are also changing the purchasing intentions of consumers by providing values. There are some issues or risks which are associated with the use of social networking sites like security, privacy etc. But the regular change and improvement in technology is reducing these kinds of risks and issues continuously. After reviewing different journal articles in this context, it is found that social networking sites are impacting the business in a great way and there is a vast scope of these in future. So, the usage and management of social networking sites are very much essential concern and need of hour for business organizations.

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