THE USES AND GRATIFICATIONS OF FACEBOOK.COM: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN PAKISTAN

ZUBAIR MAHMOOD

UNIVERSITI SAINS MALAYSIA

2019

THE USES AND GRATIFICATIONS OF FACEBOOK.COM: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN PAKISTAN

by

ZUBAIR MAHMOOD

**Thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements
for degree of
Doctor of Philosophy**

May 2019

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Hereby, I would like to convey my thanks for valuable encouragement and motivation without which I would not be what I am today.

Finally, I would like to express my deep and sincere appreciation for the cooperation, support and love I had received from my father, Khalid Mehmood (Late). My deepest thanks and prayers to him for making this task much less arduous than it would have been. Much love to my mother, Shabeena Khalid, the strongest and lovable lady in my life, and my younger brother Muhammad Tayyab Khalid, the most valuable personality in my life. I also thanks to all my sisters and brothers who always love and encourage me to do my tasks of life. Last but not the least my wife who always keep me up from the very first day of our new life. We suffered a lot after the sudden death of my father on 4 January 2016, but they all showed strong patience and inspiration till writing the last word of my thesis.

<div align="right">Zubair Mahmood</div>

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

Page

LIST OF FIGURES

PENGGUNAAN DAN KEPUASAN PENGGUNAAN FACEBOOK.COM:

KAJIAN EKPLORASI TERHADAP PELAJAR UNIVERSITI DI PAKISTAN

ABSTRAK

Facebook mempunyai kadar penembusan yang tinggi dalam kalangan pelajar universiti di Pakistan. Terdapat beberapa kajian akademik yang dilakukan untuk memahami populariti dan kegunaannya secara teori. Kajian ini meneroka Penggunaan dan Kepuasan penggunaan Facebook.com dalam kalangan pelajar universiti. Pendekatan Teori Penggunaan dan Kepuasan penggunaan iaitu *Uses and Gratifications* (U&G) diaplikasikan dalam kajian ini kerana teori ini telah diuji oleh penyelidik-penyelidik terdahulu, iaitu dengan prinsip Penggunaan dan Kepuasan (U & G), pengguna dapat memuaskan keperluan mereka melalui proses penggunaan medium itu sendiri (Cutler & Danowski, 1980). Konsep penonton aktif, iaitu sebagai penerima aktif dengan penggunaan media adalah prinsip teras utama dan merupakan perspektif teori U & G dalam meningkatkan aplikasinya dalam kajian Facebook. Tumpuan kajian ini adalah untuk meneroka: (1) corak penggunaan Facebook dalam kalangan pelajar universiti di Pakistan (2) keperluan pelajar universiti dan kepuasan terhadap penggunaan Facebook di Pakistan (3) manfaat penggunaan Facebook dalam kalangan pelajar universiti di Pakistan dan (4) motivasi yang mendorong pelajar menggunakan Facebook. Kajian ini menggunakan pendekatan Penggunaan dan Kepuasan (U & G) seperti yang diperkenalkan oleh Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, (1974) untuk memahami daya tarikan media massa terhadap penonton, serta andaian yang dapat diterapkan secara khusus dalam media interaktif. Pendekatan kualitatif digunakan untuk kajian ini dengan teknik perbincangan kumpulan fokus digunakan

sebagai pengumpulan data. Kaedah teknik perbandingan berterusan digunakan untuk menganalisis data yang dikumpulkan daripada 8 perbincangan kumpulan fokus dari tiga buah universiti penyelidikan utama di Pakistan: Universiti Punjab, Lahore, Universiti Quaid-i-Azam, Islamabad, dan Universiti Pertanian Faisalabad. Hasil kajian ini sesuai/bertepatan dengan 7 tema yang sedia ada iaitu; meluangkan masa, interaksi sosial, pencarian maklumat, penghiburan, istirahat, alat komunikatif, dan utiliti kemudahan, serta mengenal pasti 4 tema baharu yang muncul: mencari berita semasa, mengemas kini keadaan semasa, meluahkan perasaan terhadap ketidakadilan sosial, dan membeli-belah dalam talian. Hasil kajian juga mendedahkan bahawa golongan belia menggunakan Facebook sebagai cara untuk berhubung dengan orang lain secara sosial dan emosi. Selain daripada berhubung dan berinteraksi, Facebook juga merupakan cara untuk melihat kegiatan orang lain, meluangkan masa, mencari berita dan maklumat. Hasil kajian juga mendedahkan bahawa Facebook dibangunkan sebagai alat yang kerap digunakan, dan telah menjadi sebahagian daripada kehidupan seharian golongan belia untuk terus berhubung dengan rakan dan keluarga, untuk tujuan pendidikan dan supaya sentiasa termaklum dengan kejadian terkini di dunia. Pelajar juga menganggap Facebook sebagai keperluan untuk golongan muda pada masa ini.

THE USES AND GRATIFICATIONS OF FACEBOOK.COM: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY IN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN PAKISTAN

ABSTRACT

Facebook has a high penetration rate among university students in the Pakistan, yet few academic studies seek to theoretically understand its popularity and uses. This study explored university students' uses and gratifications of Facebook.com. The Uses and Gratifications Theory (U&G) approach is applied in this research because it has been tested by previous researchers, that with the U&G principle, users can gratify their needs through the very process of using a medium (Cutler & Danowski, 1980). The concept of an active audience, as active receivers with purposive media uses, is the core tenet of the adaptation of theory U&G perspective, and augments its application to the study of Facebook. The focus of study was to explore: (1) the patterns of using Facebook among university students in Pakistan (2) the needs of university students as gratified by using Facebook in Pakistan (3) the benefits of using Facebook among university students in Pakistan and (4) the motivations which induce students to use Facebook. This study utilized the U&G approach as introduced by Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, (1974) to understand the appeal of mass media to the audience, as well as the assumptions that are particularly applicable to interactive media. The Qualitative approach was used for this study and for the focus group discussion technique for data collection. A constant comparative technique method was applied for the analysis of data collected from 8 focus group discussions from the top three research based universities in Pakistan: University of Punjab, Lahore, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad, and Agricultural University of Faisalabad. The findings conformed to the 7 existing themes; passing time, social interaction,

information seeking, entertainment, relaxation, communicative tool, and convenience utility, and indicated 4 emerging themes: seeking current news, updating current state of affairs; raising voices against social injustice, and online shopping. The findings also revealed that youth use Facebook as a way to engage with others socially and emotionally. Other than for engaging and interacting, Facebook is also a way to check on others' activities, to pass time, seek news and information. The findings also revealed that Facebook has developed a common tool, which has been converted to be part of daily lives for youth to keep connected to friend and families, for education and to be up-to-date with the latest happenings in the world as well. Students even regarded Facebook as a need for young people nowadays.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the contextual understanding of the present research is deliberated and followed by the status of Facebook in Pakistan, statements of the problem, the significance of research for the research. The Uses and Gratifications (U&G) approach to study the social media is also presented for logical justifications of theoretical framework to study the uses and gratifications of Facebook by university students in Pakistan. To grasp the projected research implications, the research questions and research objectives are also enumerated in this chapter.

1.1 Background of the Study

In the realm of the technological advancement of the world, nobody can repudiate the imperative position of Internet in the modernization of the world in the last quarter of twentieth century. In the field of communication the community of scholars from social and natural sciences have benefited greatly from this latest innovation, i.e Internet. In recent time, millions of people have spent billions of minutes on Internet in their lives.

According to the Internet World Statistics of 2018, globally more than 400 million individuals are using the internet, this is more than 50% of the total population of the Earth, and among them mostly are Asians i.e. 48.1% (IWS, 2018). In Asia, China is on the top of the list of the total number of people using internet (38.1%). India maintains its second position with 34.1%; whereas, Pakistan is in the list of top 20 countries consuming internet in the world. The number of users of internet in Pakistan is 22.2% and it is increasing rapidly (IWS, 2018). These users are using internet to stay in touch, getting information and keeping up-to-date with the world.

Based on Socialbakers (2015) about internet users in Pakistan, one out of every five Pakistanis is internet user (IWS, 2018), whereas, social websites on internet have multiplied online communication sources, which affect the human lives in education, social interaction, entertainment, and information (Jalalian, et al., 2010). The use of Internet in connecting people worldwide has increased dramatically since 2008. Gibs (2008) suggested that this increase indicates a remarkable change in the way people view the purpose of the Internet. The advantage of the internet is that it allows its users to tie with strangers in an egalitarian pattern of interaction where social characteristics are less influential in framing, or even blocking communication (Lewis, 2011; Castells, 2000).

The United States Institute of Peace (2011) announced that new media have impacted by the transformation of individuals giving them new skills to preference tasks assigned to them. It can be something as simple as pictures or videos from smart phones and video recordings on social media. According to the Nielsenwire Report (2010), internet users spent 17% of their time visiting social networking websites. The desire of online consumers to connect, communicate and share is driving the medium's growth (Nielsenwire, 2010, p.1). On these websites, users can exchange, discuss and share their ideas. They also share their contents and beliefs to strengthen their social interactions. Curtis (2013) explained that people interact freely on social media. They share and discuss information with the help of multimedia mixed, facility provided by social networks.

Boyd and Ellison (2007) argue that these sites allow users to construct a public or semi-public profile, articulate lists of other users, and view their lists of connections. These sites vary greatly in their features and user base. Some social networking sites (SNSs) have provided people with opportunities to connect with existing or new friends. In fact, users can be associated to an extension of traditional social networks, which

2

maintain social connectivity among people. The SNSs like YouTube, Twitter and Facebook have constituted social relationships among youth. On these websites, social relationships among youth further mediated by communication created and received. On these websites, they live in a new era of charismatic descriptions and visual culture that can generate an enormous amount of events as much as they wish to record them.

Therefore, social media is empowering the public and providing them free and uncontrolled platform for raising their voices on any issue or policies of the government. Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube have given rise to a reservoir of public energy that posits a new relationship between the new media technologies and public life (Giroux, 2009). These digital technologies influence the formation and activities of civil society groups, mobs and movements, and can facilitate the formation of social protests (Etling et al., 2010). Likewise, these websites have established a new social morphology of organizations which modifies the operation and results in the processes of production, experience, power, and culture (Castells, 2000). Social networking websites facilitate users to create profiles on social web sites, and access lists of users whom they want to connect with on the internet. They can also view and navigate their own list of connections and sometimes those made by others within the system (Nasri, 2012).

Facebook is one of the most popular SNS on the Internet. It has been an explosive social phenomenon studied by many researchers (Baran, 2010; Abroms & Craig, 2009; Raacke & Bonds-Raacke, 2008; Aragon, 2007). On the other hand, different studies have also been conducted to detect the impact of Facebook on youth and provided the evidence that Facebook has significant impacts on different aspects of their lives. Facebook has provided a new channel for immediate connect into the world. Students are not only building new relations but also accelerate already formed/real time relations by the use of

Facebook (Kabilan, Ahmad & Abidin, 2010; Smith, 2010; Christofides, Muise & Desmarais, 2009; Fogg & Lizawa, 2008; Junco & Mastrodicasa, 2007; Ellison, Heino & Gibbs, 2006).

In the community of social researchers and communication scientists, debates about Facebook are being disseminating swiftly. Due to the rapid increase in the number of users of Facebook, experts have also been discussing the role and importance of Facebook in youth social interactions and communication. Additionally, Researchers are also exploring the reasons of speedy increase in the use of Facebook and its remunerations for youth. According to the Rouis, (2012) and Eldon (2011), a platform of social interaction, , the ratio of teens using Facebook is snowballing compared to other age groups.

According to Christofides, Muise and Desmarais (2009), students in the age group of 18-24 years actively use Facebook, This is higher than any other age group on Facebook, and the ratio has been increasing gradually.. Rouis (2012) claimed that Facebook provides an opportunity to researchers to study different dimensions of users behaviors. He argued that the main users of Facebook are students. Who spend much of their time surfing and posting. Spending much time on Facebook by students had resulted in negative effects on their education causing worries and fears for their parents and teachers. However, students do not accept the fact that Facebook can affect their academic performance. As confirmed by research finding that there is a positive correlation in poor academic performance and an increase in use of Facebook (Rouis, 2012).

1.2 Status of Facebook in Pakistan

According to Internet World Statistics 2018, there are more than 44 million Facebook users in Pakistan and there are 40 million Facebook users. On June 2017, users

penetration is 13.7%. the percentage of users are 51% and 26% for 18-24 age group and 25-34 age group respectively (IWS, 2018).

According to the Facebook audience insights tool, Pakistani Facebook users comprise 15–20 million men and around 5-6 million women. Two third majority of the Pakistani users of Facebook is under the age of 25 which indicates its popularity amoung youth. The 33% of mobile users in Pakistan access Facebook via smartphone and two-third majority of them below 24 years of age. These users spends an average of 40 minutes a day on Facebook (Qureshi, 2016).

1.3 Statements of Problem

Social networking sites (SNSs) are playing a crucial role in overcoming boundaries, crossing seas and bringing people to a common platform to meet and communicate people as well as to find and connect with. SNS have become a potential medium in relationship building and staying in touch. It has been observed that youth spending most of their time on social media. Communication researchers believed that mostly students spend their most time on Facebook. As it is the most popular social medium recognized in the world (Moghaddam, 2012; Khalid et al., 2012; Facebook Inc., 2009; Christofides, Muise & Desmarais, 2009).

Social media like Facebook, Twitter and blogs are so popular in western and Islamic countries as well as in Pakistan. The Arab spring is the best example of the uses of social media among youth. In Pakistan, social media is also getting more popularity day by day. Youth in Pakistan use social media for dissemination of information on any issues ranging from social to political and personal, to collective. They use social media as interactive forum where one can easily convey their thoughts to the masses without any

fear (Chaudary, 2015). It is a fact that more than 1.5 billion people globally are using Facebook actively and more than half of active users are youngsters. They are glued to their computers and are inseparable from their mobile phones. Since the rapid popularity of Facebook, researchers have been exploring the different dimensions and themes of its use in different age groups (young and aged) from different segments (students and professionals) of society within several theoretical perspectives and under many methodological designs.

Like other nations of the world, the addiction of Facebook is also significant in Pakistani society, specially, among the students who have become addicted to this phenomenon. This addiction can be judged by the fact that they are using 8 million minutes each day on Facebook (Socialbakers, 2015). The addiction of Facebook is linked to the uses and gratifications of the users, but this addiction is not without needs and motivations.

There is growing popularity globally and in Pakistan on the use of Facebook for participation in any social and political issues. This makes Facebook the essence for communication researchers to get in-depth understanding of this medium for better utility among the masses. This situation demands the investigation of Facebook uses thoroughly and deeply among youth in Pakistani society. Therefore, an in-depth enquiry of the use of Facebook is needed to explore the themes of uses and gratification, which will determine the directions of its uses and the current scenario in Pakistan. It also creates demand to investigate and highlight the uses, needs and the motivations that lead users to use Facebook.

Therefore, current research explored these needs and motivations for the use of Facebook. The study focuses on the students because the existing literature suggested that

the students are the main segments of society who use the Facebook in recent times. The reasons for selection of university students are not random. Their selection for this research is very much logical and rational. It is apparent that they are mature enough to present their point of views as compared to college or school students. Additionally, researchers claim that the large numbers of Facebook users are university students (Karimi et al., 2014). Further, it is obvious that university students use Facebook for many reasons, which are assorted and wide-ranging, and descent in different settings (Margaryan et al., 2011).

1.4 Significance of the research

Few studies have been conducted in Pakistan on use of Facebook (Riaz et al., 2016; Jabbar, 2012; Shafique, 2012; Naz, 2012; Fayyaz, 2011; Nasir, 2011; Hassan, 2009). The researchers mostly used the survey research technique. Therefore, the current research was an attempt to explore the uses and gratifications of Facebook use and highlighted the needs gratified by using Facebook. It was the first study in Pakistan in which the researcher uses qualitative approach and Focus Group Discussion (FGD) as a sole technique to explore uses and gratifications of Facebook among university students in Pakistan.

The current research was aimed to understand the patterns, needs, benefits and motivation for the use of Facebook among university students in Pakistan. The researcher selected this topic because there is a lack of scholarly literature available on the use of social media in general and Facebook in particular among university students in Pakistan.

The researcher applied uses and gratification (U&G) approach because other researchers have tested, with the uses and gratifications principle users can gratify their needs through the very process of using a medium (Cutler & Danowski, 1980).

This research will provide the data for follow-up studies on the uses of Facebook in future researches and offered a baseline data information for users' perception regarding the most significant theme for the use of Facebook. The current research was intended to understand the use of Facebook by university students in Pakistan. This research also explored the gratifications of their needs while using Facebook. It further explored the themes, which university students adopted to reap the benefits, and investigated those needs, which motivates them to use this medium in their daily life. Similarly, this study was also intended to understand the patterns of using Facebook among university students in Pakistan. It is hoped that the findings of this study will be helpful in the field of cyber community, education and new marketing strategies.

1.5 Research objectives

1. To understand the patterns of using Facebook among university students in Pakistan

2. To analyze the needs of university students gratified by using Facebook in Pakistan

3. To explore the benefits of using Facebook in university students of Pakistan

4. To explore the motivations which induce students to use Facebook

1.6 Research questions

1. What are the patterns of using Facebook among university students in Pakistan?

2. How are the needs of university students in Pakistan gratified by using Facebook?

3. What are the benefits gained by university students are in using Facebook?

4. What are the motivations, which induce university students in Pakistan to use Facebook?

1.7 Summary

The use of Facebook by the young people, especially students in Pakistan for dissemination and getting information on any issues ranging from social to political and personal to collective, is increasing day by day. However, there is still a lack of systematic inquiry on the use of Facebook among students. Therefore, there is a dire need to explore the uses and gratifications of Facebook in this particular segment of society.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The chapter elucidates the use of Internet and social media followed by an overview of global trends in the use of SNSs, Facebook and global trends in Facebook use. The studies related to use of Facebook among the masses, and the use of Facebook among students are separately discussed. Features of Facebook are also presented. The scholarly existing body of knowledge about the needs gratified by the use of these sites; social and psychological impacts are elaborated in details. Lastly, motivations, which induce users to use Facebook, are also stated.

2.1 Internet and Social Media Uses

Internet is a collection of different interconnected small and large networks. It is a speedy high way that connects multiple regions. It is a primary tool of modern life for people to intermingle with others. It affects all aspects of life and how people spend their leisure time to socialize. It has become a more influential tool to minimize the communication gaps among different societies. These, social networks are an accretion to the online communication sources (Jalalian, et al., 2010). Indeed, in this digital life billions of people in the whole world are being connected with each other via Internet social network sites (Ross et al., 2009). According to Hamburger and Vinitzky (2010), life on Internet social networks sites covers all social tools. Social media on the other hand, is a group of Internet applications built on the technological and ideological foundations of web 2.0 to enable the creation and exchange of user-generated content (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

11

According to Boyd and Ellison (2008) Social networks are web services that allow individuals; (a) to create public or semi-public profiles within a bounded system, (b) to articulate lists of other users with whom they share a connection, and (c) to view and browse their lists of connections and those made by others within the system. On the impact of social media, in 2011, The United States Institute of Peace reported that Social Media could have an impact by helping to transform individuals and give them new skills (Nasir, Vel & Mateen, 2012). The researchers argued that individuals tended to be involved in social networking web sites from the time they perceived that it is medium that have high impact on social presence (Flanagin & Metzger, 2001; Hussain, 2005, 2012).

Many other researchers characterized social networking sites as the new digital technologies where people can create online contents (Kuppuswamy & Narayan, 2010; Neelamalar & Chitra, 2009). Penuel and Riel (2007) defined the social network as a set of people and the relationships between them. These are the sites where users can share their ideas, feelings, and emotions. They can also get feedback on these genres. According to Kuppuswamy and Narayan (2010) and Neelamalar and Chitra (2009), the participation level of young people is very high on these social networking websites. While explaining the concept of social media in a broader context, Smith (2010) stated that, these social networks cover different activities which integrate technology and social interactions. As well as constructs pictures and words for these activities.

There is no doubt that the communication of connotation among users on these sites produces the form of interactivity and information. The notions, social interaction and presentation of information depend on various perspectives and shared frames of references among users. The social networking websites provide opportunities for users

to share their stories and comments, since their emergence on internet, these websites have attracted billions of internet users around the globe (Lenhart & Madden, 2007).

On these websites, individuals can create their personal sites to interact users of different cultures (Williams & Merten, 2009). These sites enable people to connect with friends, share their likes and dislikes to other members in different groups and forums, which were constructed using facilities provided by these social networking sites. These sites also provide an entertainment platform to share music, and videos of popular movies and television shows (Neelamalar & Chitra, 2009). While describing the importance of these sites, Christofides, Muise and Desmarais (2011) stated that they have connected people in a way which was not possible in the past. Now people can interact with one another without any restrictions.

The researchers working on these websites have the opinions that there are hundreds of networking websites on internet, some are for specific users and others are for general users. Some are popular in particular countries but others are not *(myconvergence.com,* 10 September, 2014). Hether, Murphy and Valente (2016) stated that online support networks are fairly effective in meeting participants' needs. They suggested that there might be an optimal network size to support member engagement, whereby too large a network may facilitate diffusion of responsibility. Too small a network on the other hand, may not facilitate enough momentum to support a well-connected community. Other researchers explored the relationships and dynamics between the use of mobile news and social media to access news (Chan, 2015).

As the effectiveness of social media becomes increasingly reliant on paid advertisement to reach new and existing users, it can be challenging to disseminate curated research outcomes using organic reach. This social media metric measures the number of

unique users that view content whether on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, or other social media platforms that were reached without paid advertisements. There are several techniques for organic reach that have proven to be successful, including but not limited to joining online communities, creating content with entertainment value, maintaining a positive tone, and integrating visuals into posts. Ensuring content is adding value, and building trust from followers (Clifton-Ross, Dale & Newell, 2019).

While using the participation observation, field interviews, and social media content, Hill, Canniford and Milliward (2018) suggested that Internet-based social movements establish stable forms of organization and leadership at these networked intersections in order to advance instrumental programs of change.

While exploring the online presentation and user participation in social networks by adopting the purposive sampling method Patra (2015) stated that from a total of 150 respondents of age group 15-22, she used qualitative and quantitative techniques to assess people's presence in various online groups and social networking. To highlight the significance of these networking sites for the promotion purpose, Robson et al. (2013) claimed that the social network is a worthy avenue for to increase the project awareness and the conversion rate from browsers to participants. However, targeting existing communities with the participation of the campaign was a more successful means for increasing the amount of data collected by volunteers.

Social networking sites (SNSs) have provided new opportunities for self-expression, connectivity and self-creation among young people, but few pay due attention to geographical and cultural variations. Furthermore, Takahashi (2010) discussed four dimensions of audience participation: information search activity, connectivity, bricolage and participation. Young people reflexively create and recreate themselves in everyday

life. To further describe the self-expression in stereotype presentation, Bailey et al. (2013) argued that stereotypical representations of sexualized objects such as girls seek boys attentions is commonly found in social networks. Mediatized celebrity culture preaches girls with messages that they must be attractive, have a friend, and be part of the party scene.

To abolish the avoidance of people from political circles, Kobayashi and Inamasu (2015) explained that the new high-choice media environment enabled entertainment-oriented people to avoid political messages, resulting in a wider gap in political knowledge between intelligence and entertainment-oriented citizens. However, Internet users tend to be concentrated in a handful of portal sites that offer mixed information environment in which both news and entertainment are readily available.

Bor (2014) showed that social networking sites were used to improve the efficiency of reports of candidates' campaigns to generate online and offline activism involvement, and improve understanding of the needs and opinions of voters. Additionally, Dimitrova and Bystrom (2013) also examined the effects of social media on political participation and candidate image evaluation in the first-in-the-nation Iowa caucuses.

Andreassen (2014) highlighted the negative aspect of these websites and suggested that the use of online social networking sites for personal use during working hours have negative effects on self-reported work performance, although these effects were small. Oloo (2013) highlighted the features of these websites which attract the users. He stated that social networking sites provide a platform where users can arrange themselves in a variety of ways. Users' upload photos of friends and brands they love, or simply comments. Recently social networking sites have been on the rise especially on pages, which are based on photo sharing. There is a strong tendency for college students to

interact online due to the amount of time they spend on the Internet and on mobile devices. Dunne, Lawlor and Rowley (2010) examined that the user uses the social network for their own personal motives and Gratification, in terms of presentation and management of a particular identity and persona in a social context. Zhao et al. (2011) explored that Twitter as a new form of social media, which can potentially contain much useful information. Twitter can simply be considered a faster newsletter that covers mostly the same information as traditional media.

By describing the effects of these websites on marketing, Stephen and Galak (2009) found in their study that both traditional and social media have significant effects on marketing performance, although one whole social media has much less influence than one unit of traditional media. However, social media has a significant impact on Performance because social media is created in higher quantities than traditional media. Furthermore, social media acts as an intermediary in the flow of information in an informal network comprising traditional and social media. However, Chan (2015) argued that there is still a lack of studies that conceptualize the characteristics of social media as perceived by users and compare the perceived qualities and advantages of different types of social media. Various applications of social media are perceived differently and social media usage patterns, age and sex affect these perceptions.

On the other hand, Boyd and Ellison (2008) argued that social networking sites are increasingly attracting the attention of academic and industrial researchers. Although, Coyne et al. (2013) find that adults spend more time on the internet and listen to music using media than doing any business. They also found that exposure to certain types of media content can produce both positive and negative results.

Social Networking Sites (SNSs) are new modes of communication, and Facebook in Pakistan growing day by day in popularity. The youth is prone to be attracted by such compelling sites where they can get to interact with friends, meet new people, explore each other interests, share pictures, music and funny messages, and use it for business purposes, and yet they still can't have enough of it (Nasir, 2011). Moreover, social networking sites also provide opportunities for interactions, online and offline. Jabbar (2012) explored multiple reasons for the usage of the SNSs such as, contact with peers, relatives and friends, sharing pictures, guest book, tales and gossips, for fun and humor as well as, quick access of information literature, politics, current affairs and entertainment among these, the most important reason for using SNSs are the sharing of pictures and videos. His study, based on survey in Lahore, capital city of Punjab, reveals that social media are most popular means of communication among Pakistani youth. Young people use social media for getting information on current affairs in the country and internationally.

In addition, Fareri and Delgado (2014) argued that the rapid development of social media and social networks in human society in the past decade has brought increased attention to social relationships and are connected with each other. While discussing the convenience of these social networking sites, Zarrella (2010) stated that users can now chat with others, send emails, share videos and also can do voice chat. They communicate or interact to others in the way of file sharing and logging. Facebook provides a platform for group discussions as a vital element through which people can communicate and intrect.

Undeniably, social media has become a new source of instant information and news for mainstream media (Shafique, 2012). Social media tools are used for breaking

stories and bring attention to neglected issues and offer the platform to debate them. Although social media also provide detailed news stories to its users now a days audience use to look at this medium for instant and quick news-bites rather than more detailed information. People connect with social media for news so it has become a popular tool for journalistic community. Even individual journalists have social media accounts for communication and to share their views. Social media has emerged as a powerful and influential medium for information and opinions. Now people can take participating roles in the major happening around the world more easily.

Hassan (2012) stated that the most common reason for the popularity of these websites is to connect with friends and family or look for new friends relationships. However, many people use SNS as a way out for projecting their feelings and desired self. He claimed that extroverts use more SNS and are motivated to use SNS for social interaction rather than personal enjoyment.

While highlighting the popularity of these sites among youth, Naz (2012) stated the main motivation for the usage of Facebook is entertainment. Youth use Facebook mainly to visit pages of their favorite celebrities, to play games and listen to their favorite music that they shared on their wall and others'. The other motives are to interact with family and friends and make new friends. Fayyaz (2011) argued that Social networking sites are influencing every day social functioning of adolescents and adults. There are multiple ways through which social networking trends may enhance the social functioning of the individual and provide opportunities to stay connected. The feeling of connectedness with the physical word is diminishing. People spend whole day using these sites and participation in outdoor activities is decreasing. It is very important to see how these sites effect the social functioning in Pakistani collective culture. Results of his study

revealed that students who used more SNSs had lower the grade point average and the students who gave more time to SNSs had more social withdrawal as they spent more time on virtual interactions and did not participate in social activities. Relationship problems depression and anxiety were also found.

2.2 An Overview of Global Trends about the Use of Social Networking Sites

Approximately 1.5 billion people use SNSs (Das & Sahoo, 2013). According to Soe et al. (2013), they use SNSs for social self-efficacy and collective self-esteem. Pradeep and Sriram (2016) declared self-representation as the main use of SNSs, whereas, Lin et al. (2011) argued that extroversion, and horizontal collectivism is the main cause of the use of SNSs. Lev-On (2011) claimed that the use of these sites gives them the sense of community. De Ridder and Van Bauwel (2013) stated that the cause of using social networking sites is '*heteronormativity*'. Fareri and Delgado (2014) stated that neuroimaging is the real cause of using these sites. Valtchanov et al. (2014) claimed that the reason of using these sites is appraisal assistance. McClure (2016) highlighted the religious beliefs as the motive behind the use of SNSs, while Zhu (2015) stated that people use these sites for the propagating social movements.

Other researchers, however, discussed that these sites are for making friends, bridging and bonding social capital (Antheunis, Schouten & Krahmer, 2016; Brody, LeFebvre & Blackburn, 2016; Kwon, Angelo & McLeod, 2013). Some researchers discussed the use of these sites within psychological contexts like social influence (Gruzd &Wellman, 2014), personal and social behavior (Das & Sahoo, 2013), exhibitionism (Capua, 2012), and personal reasons (Andreassen, 2014; Dunne, Lawlor & Rowley, 2010; Kothari & Hickerson, 2016), loneliness and social loneliness (Deters & Mehl, 2012;

19

Innorviris & de Valk, 2016), civic engagement and psychology empowerment (Leung, 2009), psychological safety and harmony enhancement (Leung et al., 2015), emotional and behavioral disorders (Morgan, 2010), anonymity (Kwon, Stefanone & Barnett, 2014), attachment anxiety (Liu et al., 2013), needs and communication (Khokhar & Naeem, 2014), addiction (Parvathy & Suchithra, 2015), transformation in habits (Cavalli et al.,) educational endeavor (Albayrak & Yildirim, 2015; Lang, 2010; Nalbone et al., 2015), health care (Hunt, Koeyko & Gunter, 2015), social needs (Gerald, 2012), stereotypical representation (Bailey et al., 2013), cyberbullying (Mesch, 2016), crisis communication (Jin, Liu & Austin, 2011), news consumption (Tandoc & Johnson, 2016), conflict resolution (Seo & Ebrahim, 2016), social contacts for people with psychosis (Highton-Williamson, Priebe & Giacco, 2015), belonging (Quinn & Olmeadow, 2013), and loneliness and social loneliness (Deters & Mehl, 2012; Innorviris & de Valk, 2016).

Other researchers placed SNSs under commodification (Fuchs, 2012), political and commercial interests (Baumgartner & Morris; 2010; Dimitrova & Bystrom, 2013; Tong, 2017), entertainment (Ho, Shin & Lwin, 2017; Ezumah, 2013; Raake & Bonds-Raacke, 2008), awareness and information (Robson et al., 2013; Quan-Haase, Martin & McCay-Peet, 2015), marketing campaign (Krombholz, Markl & Weippl, 2012; Jensen, 2017), civic engagement and psychology empowerment (Leung, 2009).

Mäntymäki and Islam (2016) expressed that exhibitionism, voyeurism and interpersonal connectivity predict SNS use. Furthermore, the number of friends in the SNS decreases the effect of exhibitionism and increases the effect of social enhancement. Altogether, the role of exhibitionism and voyeurism in predicting SNS use underscores the need for increased awareness of the socio-psychologically dark side of SNSs. Dhaha and Igale (2013) investigated the uses and gratifications obtained by Somali youth from

using Facebook based on the uses and gratifications theory. They employed online survey to collect the data. A total of 311 respondents participated in their study. The results of their study suggested that Somali youth were motivated by virtual companionship escape, interpersonal habitual entertainment, self-description of own country, self-expression, information seeking, and passing time gratifications.

Additionally, Safar and Salman (2010) determined the factors that affect sustainability of Internet usage by Malay youth in Kota Bharu, a rural town in the north east of peninsular Malaysia. They used survey research for obtaining data. Some 225 respondents were sampled from the young Malay internet users in Kota Bharu, Kelantan. They were interviewed using a standard questionnaire. There was sustainability of internet usage among Malay youth. As far as factors that have positive effects on sustainability of internet usage were concerned, the results of the study showed that interpersonal and social network and perceived and realized benefits have significant positive effects on sustainability of internet usage by Malay youth. Ayyad (2011) explained that the main reasons for accessing the Internet among male student are to communicate through e-mails and to follow up current affairs, female students use the Internet mostly to entertain themselves and to search for information related to their studies.

Wok, Idid, Misman and Rahim (2012) explained in their study that youth used social media to share information including personal information five to seven days per week. They used the social media more for sharing negatively oriented information (sharing latest pictures, sharing recent activities, sharing personal information, sharing opinions with friends and family members, sharing movies, hobbies, previews, music, music videos, etc., sharing links related to entertainment) compared to the positively-

oriented information (sharing notes on religious values, wisdom from hukama/religious scholars, sharing links related to Islam, religious-related like, verse from holy Quran or Hadith/ Bible/religious texts, naysaid/advised contents videos and songs, academic-related news, web-links related to assignments, ideas on projects/courses, and latest news related to politics). Although there were more items on the positively oriented information-sharing activities but more youth spent their time on the negatively oriented information-sharing activities. The results are supported by a strong relationship between frequency of use and the negatively oriented information-sharing activities.

Latiffah, Samsudin, and Fauziah (2009) explored the patterns and consequences of media consumption on the labels and norms of young adults in Malaysia. A focus group study of thirty multi ethnic young adults (20 to 25 yeats old) delved into labels and norms. The findings of their study revealed that the young adults preferred media content with recurring cultural themes, action and reality genres and everyday socialization is also along ethnic lines.

The most of previous researches on SNSs were conducted under the theoretical perspectives of U&G (Abdulahi & Jalil, 2014; Ahn, 2011; Chan, 2015; Clavio &Walsh, 2014), Coyne, Padilla-Walker & Howard, 2013; Hether, Murphy & Valente, 2016; Kwon, Angelo & McLeod, 2013; Patra, 2015; Riaz, Aksar & Pasha, 2016; Vandoninck, 2011), Social Comparison Theory (Ho, Lee & Liao, 2016), action research approach (Albayrak & Yildirim, 2015), and media displacement (Chan, 2015).

2.3 Facebook-A Significant Social Media Tool: An Overview

The narrative of global village has brought many changes in human communication patterns. According to Christofides, Muise and Desmarais (2009), the residents of this global village like to move on different places and give priority to communicate during work. The scholars claim that modern media not only offer the zenith in the participation, creation and distribution of media content but also provide the opportunity of involvement and self-expression.

Facebook in recent times has become the most popular and visited social networking website (Kthirikaran, 2012; Carlson, 2010). It is the stage like fashion, where people share information, ideas, personal feelings, current events, upload information, group discussions, and many other similar things. According to Phillips (2007), Facebook was used by a limited number of students at Harvard University, but after some time, its use became widespread in Boston Ivy League, and Stanford University students took advantage of this newly born website with hindsight.

The creation and effects of Facebook have debated by anthropologists and philanthropists since its emergence as one of the social networks in cyber world. The Progressive considers it as 'one of the wonders' of social networking websites (Carlson, 2010) and the traditional criticizes it as an addiction; a drug anticipation on its user (Sengupta, 2012). According to Spivakov et al. (2012) Facebook casts a charmed incantation on its users, therefore, they are incapable to move and botch to blink their eyes while using Facebook. Dhir, Chen and Chen (2015) developed and validated a 35-item instrument for measuring Gratifications tagging photos on Facebook.

By providing the chunks of historical background of Facebook, Ahmad et al. (2011) stated that in 2003, Mark Zuckerberg established a website named 'Facemash', but it was banned due to privacy issues by the school administration and Zuckerberg was

found guilty and had to pay a heavy fine. After paying the fine, 'The Facebook' was established instead of 'Facemash'. Next year in 2005, the word 'The' was deleted from its name and now it remains 'Facebook'. The main resolution of the Facebook is that it has innovated tools that allow users to share their acquaintance and information more skillfully and expertly. It is running thousands of databanks, providing its members with sharing tools (Facebook.com, 2014).

2.4 Global Trends of Facebook Use

Globally, Facebook is mainly used for freedom of expression, making new relationships with online and offline friends. Facebook is leading in social network site around the world with 125 billion, where this site is the main source of virtual friendships, entertainment, relaxation, gaming, passing time, surveillance of others, online chatting etc. It is also a huge source to generate revenues. For profit and non-profit organizations rely on Facebook mainly as a platform for target-oriented advertising and large-scale marketing campaigns. According to the Facebook statistics of 2013, the net generating revenue of Facebook was estimated to be $1.058b. Almost half a million pages have been uploaded. The average Like received is 10. It has nine million apps and 774 US patents. 650 patents have been purchased from Microsoft and 15% revenue is being received from Zanga (Bullas, 2014). Additionally, Krombholz, Merkl, and Weippl (2012) claimed that as one of the most popular social networks in may 2012, Facebook, had an initial public offering (IPO), which was among the largest in internet technology.

With regard to the utility of Facebook in political decisions making in USA, Nee (2013) argued that those who actively use social media while watching television with socio-cognitive motives were probably engaged with one of the 2012 presidential