



Use Of Social Media To Get Connected With International Community: Analytical Survey Of Facebook Users

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Abstract

Social media has become a basic and essential tool to get connected with International Peers. Therefore, this study is designed to analyse that for what purpose people make use of social media specifically Facebook to get connected with International Community. The research has been done during a tenure of two weeks, on a sample of 127 respondents having female and males. People make international friends according to the area of interest and to gratify their needs. It was found that about 75% of respondents have friends from international community. Out of which 24% connect with them for educational purpose, 15.3% for professionalism, 27% for social exposure, 27.3% for entertainment and remaining 6% for other purposes (health, tourism etc).

Keywords: Facebook, International Community, International Connectivity, Social Interaction

1. Introduction

Internet was originated in the United States, but it has been spreading all over the world. In the studies of mid 1990s, it was concluded that nearly 70% of the internet users belong to North America however the number was estimated 30% in 2005 (Babel, 2000). People from different age groups use online communication differently, for example women mostly used it for connecting with friends and family and young generation is more comfortable to use the facility with comparison to old generation (SE & Ray, 2006). According to Wikipedia, internet has provided a resource "social media" for sharing and discussing details among humans. Social media is encouraging the people to online. Any website which allows common man to share views, develop connections and generate groups can be referred as social media website. As a category of online debate, social media is a platform where people build, post, bookmark and network content at excessive rate (Asur & Huberman, 2010). Facebook is a famous social networking site which is common among the students of high school and colleges. It was estimated that Facebook have approximately 845 million users as of December 2011 (Facebook.com). Facebook provides a platform to an individual to post information, pictures, messages, views or events and link on the friend's site. The communication style has become more flexible because of Facebook. Hence, due to vast spread of Facebook, it become a subject of interest for researchers and more than hundred studies has been published on it (Capua, 2012). According to Wikipedia, in geopolitics and international policy the international community is a complex and descriptive term used to refer to a nebulous community of the

world's citizens and governments. It does not apply literally to all countries or states in the world.

1.1 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to analyse about the use of Facebook to get in touch with the person outside the border. This study will show a percentage of males and female Facebook users' purpose of having international community as their friends.

1.2 Research Objectives

The main objectives of the study are:

1. To find out an average number of international Facebook friends for an individual.
2. To know the purpose of the people behind adding international community in their friend list.

1.3 Significance of Study

At the end of the study, we will be able to know that either the global village is helping the people in the connections with international community for the areas of interests like education, job, get to know each other and entertainment or not. This study will also help in creating different platforms of people for educational institutes to provide information about foreign scholarship or admission programs to students, for the people in getting foreign jobs and similarly provide data for entertainment and social interaction.

2. Literature Review

Wellman & Haythornthwaite (2002) found out in his book "The Internet in everyday life" that Internet has become an important part in everyday lives of common and elites and there is a need to raise and answer the questions that what are the impacts of these resources in social interaction and local and international community and to find out the effects of internet on social and communal behaviours of users in interaction with local family and adding commitments to geographical communities. There are about 500 million Internet users having different activities (Nua, 2002). Sajid (2016) in his study "Social Media and its role in Marketing" stated that Social media is nowadays the best and easily available tool which can help to get in touch with the customers. Community social networking sites has won the believe of customers in linking them with the market at a deeper level, hence consumers are considering several social media promotional possibilities to enhance their marketing powers. Lovejoy & Saxton (2012) has concluded in their study "How Non-profit organizations use social media" that the rapid dissemination of social media app Twitter is the best possibility for organizations to communicate with stake holders and engage general public in this modern era. The non-profit organizations which are better at using three key functions of microblogging "Information," "Community", and "Action" have more power to persuade stakeholders than the traditional websites. RAACKE & BONDS-RAACKE (2018) find out in their study on "Applying uses and Gratification theory to exploring friend networking sites" that the new tool of communication (Internet) changes the way of people interaction, and this effect is more appearing in the friend-networking sites such as Facebook and Myspace. The study found that majority of the students use these friend networking sites to make new friends and locating old friends and it gratify the need of "keeping in touch with friends".

Leung & Law et al. (2013) concluded in their research on "social media in tourism and hospitality" that social media really help the travellers in making the decision about tourism operations and management. A content analysis has been done on the researches published on

tourism and hospitality in Journals during 2007 to 2011, and it was found that all focussed on the impact of social media in the planning, promotion, management and operations on the travellers and only a few discussed the distribution of products. Capua (2012) did review of more than hundred of studies which had been done on Facebook in his study "A literature review of Research on Facebook use". The eight main research themes were identified at initial stage which consists of the effect on users, friendship, building of impressions, privacy, uses, Politics in the context of Facebook, self-expression, social capital and social circles. The main focus of the study was on the element of Facebook use, which lead to six further categories such as initiating new relationships and maintaining, get to know others, recognition, will of communications, social influence and experience. Later it was concluded that most of the people used Facebook to keep in touch with other people but when any user tends to be a detective on other profiles then it led to exposing oneself personality traits.

Hanna & Rohm et al. (2011) found in their studies of power of social media ecosystem that consumers are actively participating in marketing with their companies and brands as due to vast spread of social media online marketing techniques. However, the challenge occurs to the companies which are not active on social media, so companies need to develop social media strategies on Youtube, Twitter and Facebook to be standalone in spite of being a part of integrated system. Chung and Koo (2013) referred in their research on social media in travel information search that travellers are now more rely on getting information about tours via Internet (social media ads) as these found more valuable resources in the present era This study has concluded that travel information search using social media has become more beneficial and influential.

2.1 Research Questions

1. What is an average number of international Facebook friends for an individual?
2. What is the purpose of the people behind adding international community in their friend list?

3. Theoretical Framework

3.1 Uses and Gratification Theory

In 1944, a psychologist Herzog performed a study on radio programs and discovered that people listen different soap operas to satisfy their emotional needs. A similar study was performed by Berelson in 1949 to investigate the reasons behind viewing different daily newspapers by people. Hence this various satisfaction kinds were later named as Gratifications by psychologist Herzog. The basic assumption of the theory is how people use media for their needs and gratification. The needs are further categorized into Cognitive, Affective, Personal Integrative, Social Integrative and Tension free needs.

3.2 Linkage of Theory with Research

As by uses and gratification theory, it was assumed that people use media and media messages according to fulfil their needs either social or personal needs. This study has been done to analyse about that what are such needs of the facebook users which urge them to connect with international community. Some of the people consider international friends as a source of some educational or professional information while some of them utilize the presence of international friends only for entertainment and social exposure. Hence it can say that people use international connectivity according to their needs and gratification.

4. Methodology

4.1 Research Design

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Survey method design has been chosen for the study because of the rapid increase in the popularity of Internet surveys. In the survey research design, information is gathered from the target population through different questions asked orally or in written form as questionnaire. Surveys are now become more common in all areas of life such as education, media, business, politics and industries.

A questionnaire was designed with reference to analytical survey to know the reason behind adding the international community as Facebook friends, as analytical surveys attempt to explain WHY the situation exists.

4.2 Population

Any research can be at its best when it is investigated to the whole population. For this study, the targeted population was Facebook users. But practically, it is impossible to do the study on the all-targeted population. So, alternate to it, we made the study on a subset of population to represent the entire population named as sample.

4.3 Sample

From a huge population of Facebook users, a sample of around 150 people (both male and female) were selected by purposive and convenience sampling and the questionnaire was shared with the targeted sample. Out of 150 people, 127 people including 77 males and 50 females responded to the survey and 23 people didn't respond at all.

4.4 Sampling Technique

Purposive and convenience sampling was done to select the sample from a huge population. The reason behind selecting these sampling techniques was to get response from the participants who are easily available for taking voluntarily part in study and can be contact easily.

4.5 Data Collection

A questionnaire was designed to get the responses from the participants of the study based on the objectives and research questions. The questionnaire which was surveyed from Facebook users had two components -total friends, international friends- covered by 11 items. The survey for the experimental study was performed from 18th to 28th of January, 2021 on people who had some experience on Facebook. The survey was shared with the convenient sample via social media apps i.e. WhatsApp, Instagram and Facebook messenger. Surveyor distributed questionnaires directly to in contact Facebook users and then collected the response on google forms from respondents responded. 150 questionnaires were distributed, 127 of which were returned. However, 11 questionnaires were duplicates, and 29 of the respondents reported that they had not added international friends in their Facebook friend list, leaving 87 questionnaires for analysis.

4.6 Data Presentation and Analysis

Classification	Categories	Frequency	Composition Ratio
Gender	Male	77	61%
	Female	50	39%
Frequency of using Facebook	Daily	101	80%
	Weekly	18	14%
	Monthly	0	0%
	Never	1	1%
Number of Facebook Friends	less than 50	18	14%

	50 - 100	21	17%
	100 - 500	51	40%
	greater than 500	37	29%
Have International friends?	Yes	96	76%
	No	31	24%
Number of International Facebook Friends	less than 50	88	80%
	50 - 100	15	14%
	100 - 500	4	4%
	greater than 500	3	3%
Purpose of adding international friends	Educational	27	25%
	Professional	17	15%
	Social Exposure	30	27%
	Entertainment	30	27%
	Health	2	2%
	Tourism	5	5%
Frequency of connecting with international friends	Daily	22	20%
	Weekly	41	37%
	Yearly	44	40%
Way of communication	Texting	99	90%
	Voice calling	9	8%
	Video Calling	2	2%
international friends help you in desired purpose of connectivity?	Agree	57	52%
	Disagree	8	7%
	Neutral	46	42%

Table 4.1 – Demographic Characteristics of Respondents and International Connectivity Data

5. Results

This section is organized according to the results concerned to participants who had either International community as their friends on facebook or the participants who did not have any connectivity with international friends.

5.1 Users: General Information

Of participants surveyed, 77 or 60.6% male and 50 or 39.5% Female took indirect part in survey.

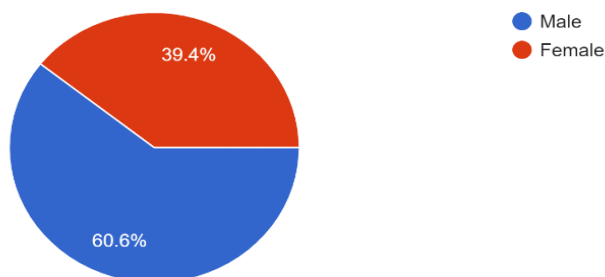


Fig 5.1 – No. of respondents

5.2 Users: Nationality

Out of which 99% are having Pakistani Nationality and 1 other than Pakistani.

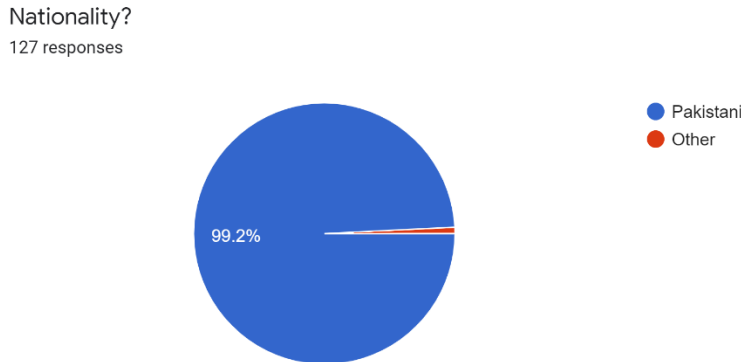


Fig 5.2 – Nationalities of the respondents

5.3 Users: Frequency of using facebook

The ratio of using facebook distributed as 101 or 79.5% People used it daily, 18 or 14.2% used it on weekly basis and 7 or 5.5% people never used Facebook at all.

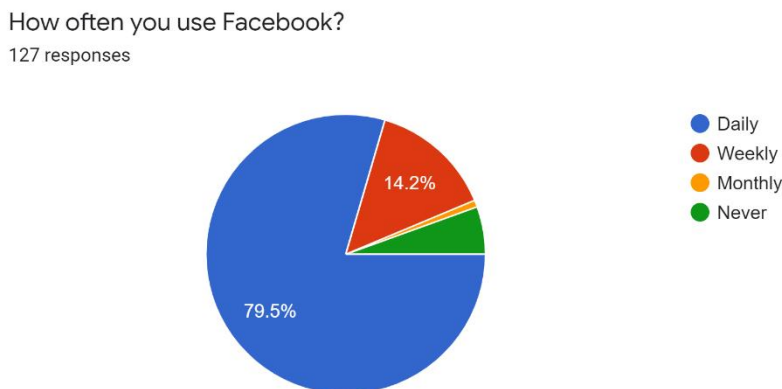


Fig 5.3 – Frequency of using Facebook

5.4 Users: Number of Total Facebook friends

From the participants surveyed, 51 or 40.2% of people are having Facebook friends in range of 100-500, 37 or 29.1% have more than 500 friends, 21 or 16.5% people have friends in between 50-100 and remaining 18 or 14.2% having less than 50 friends on Facebook.

How many friends do you have on Facebook?

127 responses

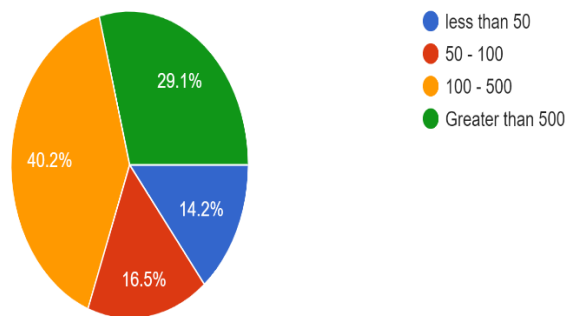


Fig 5.4 – Approximate number of Facebook friends of the respondents

5.5 Users: Connectivity with International Friends

From the 127 respondents, 96 or 75.6% are having international friends on Facebook and 31 or 24.4% has not added international community as their Facebook friends.

Do you have international friends on Facebook?

127 responses

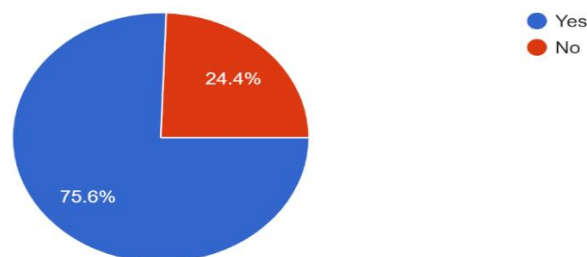


Fig 5.5 – Respondents having International friend

5.6 Users: Gratification of needs

Very popular uses and gratification for having international community as friends included 27% for Social Exposure “to increase the number of friends on facebook”, 27% for Entertainment “to get more information about music, movies, series etc”, 24.3% for Education “Get themselves updated about scholarships and admissions in abroad”, 15.3% for Professionalism “looking for jobs etc” and remaining 4.5% for tourism and 1.8% for health-related queries.

For what purpose you connect with your international friends?

111 responses

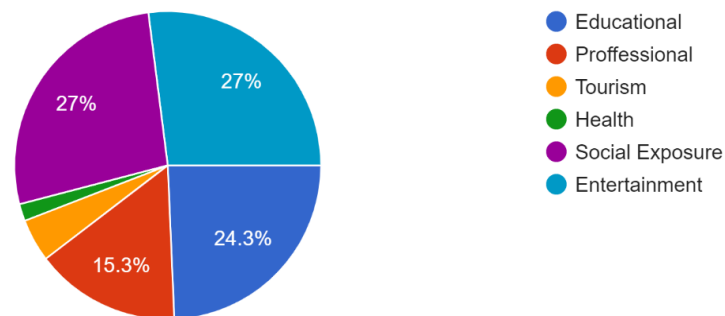


Fig 5.6 - Percentage representation of purpose of respondents to connect with international community

5.7 Users: Frequency of connecting with international friends

Then it was asked that how often they connect with international friends, very popular failed uses and gratification included 42.1% Yearly, 37.4% weekly and 20.6% do it daily.

How frequently you connect with your international friends?

107 responses

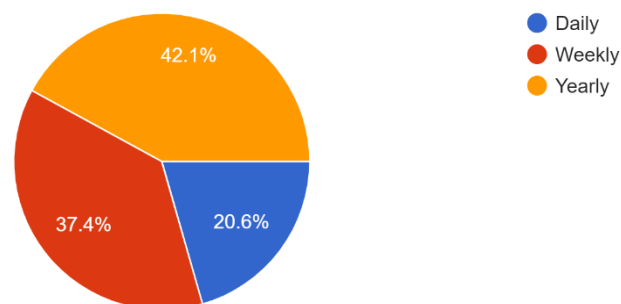


Fig 5.7 - Percentage representation of purpose of respondents to connect with international community

5.8 Users: Way of Communication with international friends

The preference of way of communicating with international friends of 90% of the respondents is Text messaging, 8.2% preferred voice calling 1.8% use video calling.

What do you prefer to connect with your international friends?

109 responses

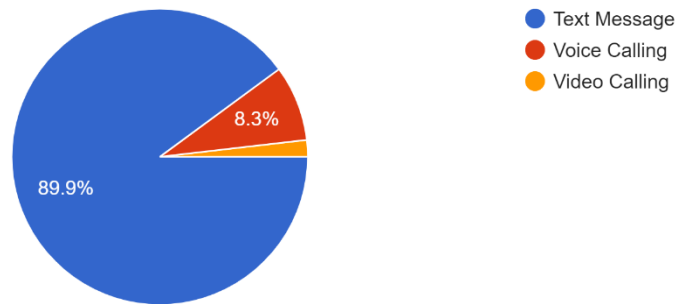


Fig 5.8 – Means of communicating with international friends

5.9 Users: Satisfying the Needs

50.5% people agree on the question that the international community friends really help them in the desired purpose they select to add them in their friend list and 4.41% shows neutral behaviour on the question.

Do you think that your international friends really help you in your desired purpose of connectivity?

111 responses

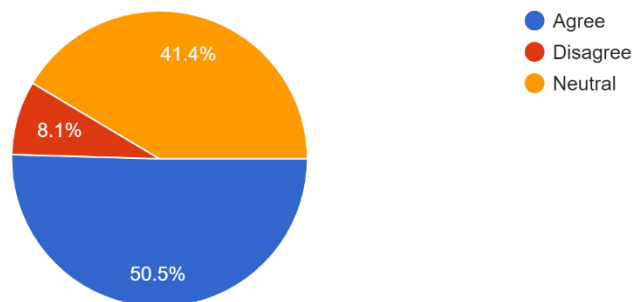


Fig 5.9 – Users satisfaction in the purpose to get connected with international friends.

The 24% of respondents who do not have international friends on Facebook did not responded to the questions which are related to the research objective

5.10 Analysis of Research Questions

Research Questions		Frequency	Composition Ratio
Approximate number of international Facebook friends of an individual?	less than 50	88	80%
	50 - 100	15	14%
	100 - 500	4	4%

Purpose of adding international community as Facebook friends?	greater than 500	3	3%
	Educational	27	25%
	Professional	17	15%
	Social Exposure	30	27%
	Entertainment	30	27%
	Health	2	2%
	Tourism	5	5%

Table 4.2- Analysis of Research Questions

It was analysed from the study that approximate 80% of the respondents of study has connected to less than 50 international friends. Also, most of the respondents (54%) connect with international community for social exposure and entertainment and 25% for educational and 15% for professional purpose.

6. Conclusion

It was concluded from the study that Facebook user having international community as their international friends have connected them equally for social exposure and entertainment. The users who have a good taste and more concerned towards entertainment (27%) (Music, Movies, Web series etc) are more likely urge to connect with people outside the border. Also, the users who are more active on Facebook connect with international friends for making more social interactions (27.3%).

Similarly, users who are more concerned about education (24.3%) are referred to international community to get themselves updated about the recent admissions either undergraduate or graduated programs and getting scholarships. This class of people mostly belong to educational field or some organization which provide information or guidelines about new admissions and scholarships to inform others.

The users who rely on social media to get know how of jobs other than their homeland (15.4%) somehow used connections with international friends and make themselves prepare.

6.1 Recommendations for Future Studies

For the future work on the study, a large number of Facebook users included international community can be select for survey. Studies can be done on a large sample size having diversity in the Facebook users as age discrimination, level of education and area of interest

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