

ROLE OF SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES IN ENHANCING STUDENT ENGAGEMENT WITH LIBRARY SERVICES

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Abstract *The emergence of Social Networking Sites (SNS) has greatly revolutionized the communication and information-sharing culture in the academic realm where the libraries have been forced to embrace these sites in the delivery of their services and interacting with the users. This paper will discuss how Social Networking Sites can be used to promote the use of library services by students, particularly students of the SSMRV College. A survey research approach was employed to collect data by assessing 178 students enrolled by BBA, BCom, BCA and the Mcom programmes in the age bracket of 19-24 years using a structured questionnaire based on a Google Forms platform. The research examined the level of awareness, usage habits, purposes, perception, and the problems associated with the SNS-based library services among the students. The results demonstrate that the awareness and attitude to the use of SNS in libraries are high, and such platforms as WhatsApp and Instagram are the most desirable. The SNS were identified to be very useful in enhancing awareness on library resources, enhancing communication and promoting active involvement in library activities. Nevertheless, such challenges as information overload, inconsistent updates, internet connection problems, and privacy were also mentioned. The researchers conclude that the strategic and systematic application of Social Networking Sites can play a very critical role in increasing the interest of students and making academic libraries relevant in the digital age.*

Keywords: *Social Networking Sites, Academic Libraries, Student Engagement, Library Services, Social Media, User Survey*

INTRODUCTION

Social Networking Sites (SNS) are becoming a part of the digital age of communication and interaction with each other, and the sharing of information both amongst students and academic establishments. Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, and YouTube are popular social and academic applications among students with large access to smartphones and the internet (Jachak & Kumari, 2021). The recent research in the Indian context notes that SNS are not just mediums of social interaction but powerful information services promotion tools, libraries outreach expansion tools, and communication mediums that enhance the relationship between libraries and their patrons (Das & Sarkar, 2021; Devi & Madhusudhan, 2025). Modern academic libraries are realizing the possibilities of SNS as an alternative to the physical world to communicate with students and keep them updated with the resources, events, and services (Das & Sarkar, 2021; Devi & Madhusudhan, 2025). The library services have also been embracing the use of social media technologies to facilitate effective communication and user interaction, where the Indian universities testimonies have

revealed that people have positive attitudes towards the SNS-mediated library services. As an example, a study was conducted among university students in India, it was found that platforms such as Facebook and WhatsApp helped to interact, share information, and study together (Das & Sarkar, 2021; Munshi, 2018). Similarly, those studies aimed at library professionals highlight the popularity of SNS to deliver services and communicate with users and support the importance of these platforms in modern academic libraries (Devi & Madhusudhan, 2025). Notwithstanding the identified advantages, the role of SNS in improving student access to library services cannot be comprehended without the systematic empirical research. Engagement refers to the level of understanding library services, engagement in library activities and valuable interaction with library content-aspects that social networking sites are positioned uniquely to influence. As such, the proposed study utilizes the survey methodology to investigate the role of SNS in enhancing student involvement with library services, gauge the perceptions of users, and highlight the issues of SNS adoption in the academic setting in an empirical study.

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LITERATURE REVIEW

Social Networking Sites (SNS) have become potent means of communication and information and this is changing the way academic libraries communicate with their users in the digital age. It is found that the SNSs (Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, and YouTube) are popular among academic students and library professionals to exchange information and interact with users about library services (Das & Sarkar, 2021; Jachak & Kumari, 2025). According to the study of the Indian university students, Jachak and Kumari (2025) discovered that 100% of postgraduate students who participated in the study used SNS, with WhatsApp and YouTube being the most frequently used. In addition to that, as it was also shown in this research, the main purpose of these platforms is to exchange information and acquire knowledge, which indicates the ubiquitous nature of SNS in the academic communication process (Jachak & Kumari, 2025). SNS is useful not only in communication. Devi and Madhusudhan (2025) analyzed how social and cognitive strategies could improve the library services among LIS professionals in the University of Delhi where WhatsApp, Facebook, and YouTube were found to be the core instruments in knowledge sharing and service provision. They find that SNS is capable of improving the engagement and participation among the library community significantly (Devi & Madhusudhan, 2025). In a similar manner, Shalini Gupta and Fatima (2024) indicated that social media applications like Facebook, LinkedIn, twitter, YouTube and Instagram have helped library professionals in the Aligarh division to market library resources, provide scholarly content and facilitate communication with users thus increasing the reach and visibility of library services (Gupta & Fatima, 2024). In addition to the professional visions, there are studies on users preferences and interaction that indicate that social media platforms improve library outreach and access to information. The study by Amar Dixit and Vandana Gavali investigated the preferences of library users concerning the use of social media as a means to access library information services and it is highlighted by the study that the ability to interact with the library and the mechanism of providing information on SNS is the key factor that determines how the user prefers to use the library information services (Dixit & Gavali, 2025). Similarly, quantitative studies in marketing of academic libraries have shown that social media increases the visibility and reach of libraries through news, events, and resource information but the internet connectivity and technical expertise continue to be a challenge in successful utilization (Kumar & Kumar, 2024; Das & Biswajit, 2022). The empirical evidence based on Indian settings, therefore, indicates invariably the increasing significance of SNS in the library settings namely, in two aspects: to enhance the presence of resources as well as to enable effective interaction among the student groups.

Nevertheless, whereas the current literature confirms the relevance and the promise of SNS to enrich library services, a dedicated research is necessary to identify the impact of these technologies on the engagement of students in particular, the frequency and perception of the engagement. The existing gap brings to the fore the applicability of the current survey-based study in terms of its ability to capture the opinions of students regarding SNS as a motivation behind using library services.

OBJECTIVES FOR THE STUDY

- To examine the level of awareness and usage of Social Networking Sites for library services among students.
- To identify the purposes for which students use Social Networking Sites to access library resources and services.
- To assess students' perceptions of the effectiveness of Social Networking Sites in enhancing engagement with library services.
- To identify the challenges faced by students in using Social Networking Sites for accessing library services.

METHODOLOGY

A survey research design was adapted to address the research question of this paper because it was necessary to analyse how the use of Social Networking Sites could be used to increase student participation in library services. The survey approach was deemed suitable as it will allow systematic gathering of information about a big sample of respondents to know their awareness, usage habits, perception, and issues regarding Social Networking Sites in the library setting.

The case was done on the students of SSMRV College, Bengaluru. The sample consisted of the students who are pursuing undergraduate and postgraduate courses, namely, Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA), Bachelor of Commerce (BCom), Bachelor of Computer Applications (BCA) and Master of Commerce (MCom). The respondents were under the age of 19 to 24 years which is the main users of the Social Networking Sites and academic library services. A structured questionnaire that would capture demographic data, awareness and use of Social Networking Sites, purposes of using SNS to access library services, student participation, perceived effectiveness and difficulties facing users was used to collect the data. The questionnaire was sent through the internet via the Google Forms, was straightforward to use, and allowed a broader scope of participation. One hundred and seventy-eight valid answers were obtained and put into consideration. The respondents were balanced in terms of gender with 85 (47.75) being men and 93 (52.25) being women. The data gathered was then coded and analyzed with the help of the relevant descriptive

statistical methods like frequency and percentage analysis so as to make sense of the data and impress conclusions.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS

Use of Social Networking Sites (N = 178)

Name of SNS	Most of the Time	Some time	Never
WhatsApp	133(74.72)	45(25.28)	00 (0.00)
Facebook	62 (34.83)	68(38.20)	48 (26.97)
Instagram	123 (69.10)	55 (30.90)	00 (0.00)
Twitter / X	32 (17.98)	77 (43.26)	69 (38.76)
YouTube	16 (8.99)	124 (69.66)	38 (21.35)
Instagram	38 (21.35)	67 (37.64)	73 (41.01)

The results show that the most regularly used SNS is WhatsApp where 133 (74.72) respondents claim to use it most of the time and 45 (25.28) use it occasionally. The use of Instagram is also widespread, and 123 respondents (69.10%) use Instagram most frequently. Facebook has a moderate usage with 62 (34.83) using it regularly and 48 (26.97) never using it. Twitter/X is also less popular as 69 respondents (38.76) never use it. YouTube is also the most utilized at times at 124 (69.66) with LinkedIn being the least popular, 73 respondents (41.01) never used it. This means that immediate and visual communication channels are more suitable in communication with the library.

Purpose of Using SNS for Library Services

Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA
I use SNS to receive updates about library announcements and notices.	5 (2.81)	12 (6.74)	28 (15.73)	81 (45.51)	52 (29.21)
I use SNS to know about new books, e-resources, and databases.	6 (3.37)	14 (7.87)	34 (19.10)	76 (42.70)	48 (26.96)
I use SNS to get information about library events, workshops, and training programs.	8 (4.49)	18 (10.11)	39 (21.91)	71 (39.89)	42 (23.60)
I use SNS to communicate with library staff.	12 (6.74)	26 (14.61)	46 (25.84)	59 (33.15)	35 (19.66)
I use SNS to ask reference or information-related queries.	15 (8.43)	29 (16.29)	44 (24.72)	55 (30.90)	35 (19.66)

Most of the students access SNS to get library updates and 133 (74.72) respondents agreed or strongly agreed. In the same way, 124 respondents (69.66) indicated that SNS assist them in becoming familiar with new books and e-resources. On events and workshops, 113 respondents (63.49%) were positive. The moderately supported aspects were the

communication with the staff of the library, 94 respondents (52.81) said that they agreed or strongly agreed. Respondents (90) supported the asking of reference or information queries using SNS (50.56%), which means that there is a moderate and increasing use of SNS to access interactive library services.

Student Engagement Through SNS (N = 178)

Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA
Social Networking Sites help me stay connected with library services.	4 (2.25)	10 (5.62)	27 (15.17)	83 (46.63)	54 (30.33)
SNS increase my awareness of available library resources.	6 (3.37)	11 (6.18)	29 (16.29)	78 (43.82)	54 (30.34)
SNS encourage me to visit the library (physically or virtually).	9 (5.06)	21 (11.80)	38 (21.35)	66 (37.08)	44 (24.71)
SNS make library services more interactive and user-friendly.	5 (2.81)	14 (7.87)	31 (17.42)	79 (44.38)	49 (27.52)
SNS help me participate more actively in library activities.	7 (3.93)	18 (10.11)	36 (20.23)	72 (40.45)	45 (25.28)

SNS contribute to the increased student involvement in library services. 137 of the respondents (76.96%) strongly or agreed that SNS assist them to remain in touch with library services. One hundred and thirty-two respondents (74.16) became aware of library resources. The respondents were also encouraged to make visits to the library (110

respondents 61.79%), and 128 respondents (71.90%) believed that SNS enhance the interactivity of library services. Moreover, 117 respondents (65.73) claimed that SNS promote the active involvement in library activities.

Perception and Satisfaction (N = 178)

Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA
Information shared by the library on SNS is timely and useful.	4 (2.25)	9 (5.06)	25 (14.04)	82 (46.07)	58 (32.58)
Library SNS content is clear, relevant, and easy to understand.	5 (2.81)	12 (6.74)	30 (16.85)	79 (44.38)	52 (29.22)
I am satisfied with the library services provided through SNS.	6 (3.37)	14 (7.87)	34 (19.10)	73 (41.01)	51 (28.65)
SNS are more effective than traditional communication methods (notice boards, emails).	8 (4.49)	19 (10.67)	33 (18.54)	69 (38.76)	49 (27.54)

Information shared on SNS was also found to be up-to-date and helpful as 140 respondents (78.65%) indicated that they were satisfied with this type of library services, or strongly so. Relevance and clarity of content was recognised by 131 respondents (73.60%). General satisfaction was described

by 124 respondents (69.66%), and 118 respondents (66.30) said that SNS are more efficient than traditional means of communication, which indicates the effectiveness of SNS in the communication process in libraries nowadays.

Challenges and Barriers (N = 178)

Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA
Information overload on SNS reduces the usefulness of library posts.	14 (7.87)	28 (15.73)	36 (20.23)	61 (34.27)	39 (21.90)
Lack of regular updates affects my engagement with library SNS.	11 (6.18)	24 (13.48)	41 (23.03)	63 (35.39)	39 (21.92)
Internet connectivity issues limit my use of SNS for library services.	18 (10.11)	35 (19.66)	42 (23.60)	54 (30.34)	29 (16.29)
Privacy concerns affect my use of SNS for library interactions.	22 (12.36)	38 (21.35)	44 (24.72)	46 (25.84)	28 (15.73)

Although there were benefits, some challenges were found. One hundred respondents (56.17), stated that they were in agreement or strongly agreed information overload decreases the usefulness of SNS posts. Not having frequent updates impacted the engagement among 102 respondents

(57.31%). Only 83 respondents (46.63%) expressed concern about internet connectivity and 74 respondents (41.57) expressed concern about privacy. These results imply that the management of the content, as well as user privacy, should be handled with caution.

Overall Opinion (N = 178)

Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA
The library should increase its presence on Social Networking Sites.	3 (1.69)	7 (3.93)	21 (11.80)	78 (43.82)	69 (38.76)
More interactive content (videos, live sessions, polls) should be shared by the library.	4 (2.25)	9 (5.06)	24 (13.48)	76 (42.70)	65 (36.51)
Overall, Social Networking Sites play a positive role in enhancing my engagement with library services.	2 (1.12)	6 (3.37)	20 (11.24)	81 (45.51)	69 (38.76)

The general attitude towards SNS in the library services is very good. Majority of them 147 (82.58%) said yes or very much that the library needs to do more on Social Networking Sites. In the same way, 141 of the respondents (79.21) suggested more interactive content. However, best of all, 150 participants (84.27%) affirmed that Social Networking Sites have a positive influence in their interest in library services.

FINDINGS

- The research has also identified the equal gender representation of the respondents; 93 (52.25) students were found to be female and 85 (47.75) students were found to be male in the research, hence there was diversity in the opinions of evaluating the use of Social Networking Sites in library services.
- The level of awareness of library utilization of Social Networking Sites was high since all 178 (100) respondents were aware of their library using SNS to deliver services.
- The most commonly used platform was WhatsApp as 133 (74.72) respondents used it the most often, then came Instagram that was often used by 123 (69.10) respondents. It means that students favor instant and visual communication platforms.
- The main reason of using SNS in library services was to get them aware of announcements and notices, which was supported by 133(74.72) respondents, then they access information about new books and electronic materials, as supported by 124 (69.66) respondents.
- The SNSs were observed to have a significant contribution to the engagement of the students with 137 (76.96) respondents saying the SNS have enabled them to stay informed with the library services and 132 (74.16) respondents admitting that the SNS have made them more aware of the existing library resources.
- The level of satisfaction of the students to the library services provided by SNS was very high with 124 (69.66) respondents describing that they are satisfied with the library services provided by the library by the use of SNS and 140 (78.65) respondents affirming that the information posted by the library via the SNS is timely and helpful.
- Although there were positive perceptions, there were a number of challenges that were mentioned. The respondents mentioned information overload as a problem that bothers them 100 (56.17) respondents stated that it is a problem that bothers them, and 102 (57.31) respondents noted that they do not like receiving updates regularly.

- Eighty-three (46.63) respondents and seventy-four (41.57) respondents raised their concerns on internet connectivity and privacy matters, respectively, indicating the necessity of better digital accessibility and privacy-focused communication plans.
- The general impression regarding the adoption of the Social Networking Sites in library services was quite positive, as 150 (84.27) of the respondents agreed that SNS have a big impact in increasing the involvement of students.
- Most of the respondents 147 (82.58) of them indicated that the library needed to further enhance its presence through Social Networking Sites and create more interactive content so that the users can be more engaged.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The academic libraries are advised to develop and complement their activities on trendy Social Networking Applications especially WhatsApp and Instagram because these are the most commonly accessed by students and have been found to be effective in increasing the level of interaction.
- The libraries ought to maintain a schedule of frequent and regular updating of the Social Networking Sites to prevent information lapses and keep the users interested. The negative effect of irregular updating can be minimized with the help of a structured posting schedule.
- To manage information overload, libraries ought to embrace content management techniques, which may include use of terse messages, the sorting of posts, and utilization of hashtags or pinned posts, to enhance the clarity and accessibility of the post.
- Libraries are also advised to use interactive materials, such as videos, live lectures, polls, quizzes, and virtual orientation, to ensure that students engage actively and enhance the level of engagement.
- The personnel in the library should be trained on managing social media and digital communication as such, they will be able to take better advantage of Social Networking Sites as a means of providing reference services, interacting with the user, and broadcasting information.
- To prevent privacy concerns among the students and generate their trust in libraries, libraries must create and publish explicit privacy and data protection policies in terms of using Social Networking Sites.
- There should be an attempt to tie together the Social Networking Sites with the traditional library services

and provide an all-inclusive service to students who might have problems with internet connectivity or might choose to use the conventional method of communication.

- They ought to conduct periodical user feedback and evaluation surveys to determine the success of the SNS-based library services and associate the social media efforts with the changing student requirements.

CONCLUSION

The current paper has discussed how Social Networking Sites can be used to improve student access to library services and specifically students of SSMRV College. The results have shown clearly that the use of Social Networking Sites has been effective as a means of communication, dissemination of information and user interaction in the academic library setting. The increased use of digital platforms in the delivery of library services is indicated by the widespread awareness of students in the usage of SNS by the library. It was found that the use of apps like WhatsApp and Instagram are highly popular among students, and instant and graphical communication is essential. The use of Social Networking Sites was also identified to make students more aware of library resources and facilitate their interaction with library services and involvement in library activities. The satisfaction of the users is also high which goes to show that the SNS is effective in supplementing the traditional library services. Nonetheless, other challenges that were found in the study include information overload, irregular updates, internet problems and privacy issues, which can be a setback to optimum engagement. These issues can be addressed by strategic management of the content, frequent changes, and privacy-related considerations, which may enhance the efficiency of library services on SNS. On the whole, the research concludes that the Social Networking Sites have a good and considerable influence in enhancing student involvement in the library services. SNS when applied strategically can help in increasing the visibility, accessibility, and relevance of the academic libraries in the digital age, which will become more responsive to the needs of the current generation of students.

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