

SOCIAL NETWORKING AND THE YOUTH AT THE UNIVERSITY OF DHAKA: A SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY

A thesis presented to the
Department of Sociology, University of Dhaka

Presented by
Examination Roll: 4099
Registration No: 5330
Session: 2012-13
Department of Sociology

Supervisor
Dr. NehalKarim
Professor, Department of Sociology, University of Dhaka

A thesis paper submitted for the fulfillment of the partial requirement of Course
SOC-529 for the Degree of MSS (Masters) in Sociology



University of Dhaka
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Abstract

Online social networking has become globally growing phenomena over the last decade. It is a known fact that young adults and teenagers are the most avid users of Social Networking sites (SNSs) which have a great impact on their lives. One can easily see the entry gate of these social networking sites but unable to find exit for these SNS. Some 22.880 million people of Bangladesh use the world's strongest social media, Facebook (FB), as it secured 51st position among the nations using the network globally. This paper takes Facebook as an example for these Social Networking sites and focuses to provide an insight on the youth's perception towards social networking. In this paper we also focused on the positive as well as negative consequences of these social networking sites on the social behavior and lifestyle of Bangladeshi youngsters and the influence of SNSs on rising awareness among them.

This paper reports the findings of a research work that was carried out in the University of Dhaka targeting a random sample of young adults aging from 18-28 years where 100 responses were collected through a survey administrating a structured questionnaire and 8 In-Depth Interviews were conducted for better understanding. Data was analyzed using SPSS.

According to this study, although SNSs have a positive impact on the youth, yet quite a large number of respondents reported having met with negative experiences. On the other hand, Social activity groups and Protest groups have been formed on social media networks and coordinated for inviting the public to participate in social works and rising awareness. The area of youths' usage of social media is hardly researched in Bangladesh as it is relatively a new phenomenon. The research results can be used as a useful tool to successfully communicate and improve interactivity with youths through social networks.

Keywords Youth, Youngsters, Social Networks, Facebook, Bangladesh, SNS (Social networking sites)

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1. Introduction

Over the past ten years social networking sites (SNS) have grown from a niche to a mass online activity here in Bangladesh, in which a total number of 36128 thousand internet subscribers are engaged, both in their leisure time, and at work, according to BTRC by the end of February, 2014. However, there has been very little research on the social impact of these sites in the Bangladeshi context. In this paper, we focused on the consequences of these social networking sites on the youth of Bangladesh and the role these sites play in rising awareness.

1.2. Statement of the problem

Human beings always have sought to live in social environment and since the society began, Social Networking existed without a doubt. We can get an insight on how modern Bangladeshi youth societies manage their social networks if we try to look on the propagation of social networking sites and their influence in everyday life of the youth. The various factors which have prompted the consideration of the impact of these technologies on young adults are, for example, the willingness of users to embrace SNS as a means of communication and social networking in everyday life and how SNS are affecting daily social processes. Now, from close friendships to casual acquaintances, sites like Face book, twitter, youtube, Friendster and LinkedIn are influencing the way users to establish, maintain and cultivate a range of social relationships.

The term "social networks", have different connotations in the literature, as some researchers used it to mean "socially interactive technologies" such as instant messaging and text messaging, or the networks that offer fast-paced, inexpensive, online communication which allow youth social interaction to start and evolve (Bryant et als, 2006). An individual's social network consists of all those people with whom they have a connection. Online social networking is the activity by which an individual

communicates and extends their social network through internet tools. Usually online social networking takes place through Social Network Sites (SNS) which allow their users to create profiles and link their profiles to others through a friends list. Profiles, containing details about their owners, may be publicly visible on the internet, or access to a profile may be controlled using privacy settings.

Involved in web 2.0 technologies, Facebook as one of the leading social networking sites, made it easy for young generation to share information and communicate between different users (Madge et als, 2009). According to Chang and Cheng (2004), there are significant differences between online and offline relationships, as online relationships are characterized by less depth but on the other hand, it provide extra connections external to the participants' existing social networks. This simply means more relationships but less strongly ones. Other researchers found that social media networks are used by people who are not willing to communicate in face to face interactions (Sheldon et al, 2009).

Since the beginning of the new millennium, the Bangladeshi government has put a lot of emphasis on the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) among the youngsters. Bangladesh's internet users reached to 33.43 million at the end of April this year thanks to mobile technology driving internet penetration. In 2013, Internet users in Bangladesh increased to 33 million as compared to 100,000 in the year 2010, out of a population of 161,083,804 individuals, representing a penetration rate of 22% (<http://www.internetworldstats.com/asia/bd>). However, it should be noted that according to the Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC) statistics, around 95 percent people (31.33 million) use internet through mobile network and remained (1.71 million) used broadband internet. Six mobile phone companies and two Wimax operators are mainly rolling out across the country by offering different kinds of internet package, thinking the demand of the people. With this increase, more and more youths are getting access to the Internet and most of them have embraced the new trend of joining SNS sites, causing a change on the way they interact among each other. In the past, young people were keeping in touch with friends while hanging out at educational institutions or meeting up in public places while others developed friendships with

people they had never met through ‘pen pal’ services. SNSs have increased the capacity of youngsters to make and sustain friendships as well as having more regular communication with family and exploit new avenues of making online friends. Young people create elaborate profiles of themselves, connecting with their offline friends, friends of their friends and other users having similar interests. They then interact among themselves through the writing of comments, sending of private messages, chatting and other SNS communication features. The rapid adoption of social networking sites by youngsters around the world has led to many research studies, focusing on the role of SNSs in youths’ social life, the dangers of SNSs particularly for young people and their impact on the lives of youngsters. In Bangladesh, no in depth study has been carried out on the consequences of online social networks among young people and the impact of SNSs on their social life to rise awareness. This study is, therefore, an attempt to do so. The first part of the paper deals with a literature review of the impact of SNSs on the youth. Then follows an explanation on the methodology used for the sake of this article. In the second part, we shall analyze the findings of survey. Finally, a conclusion based on the study will be given.

1.3. Significance of the study

Computer mediated communication channels such as instant messaging, video chatting or social networks have become very popular especially among young people. Students today network with each other using technology as much as, if not more than, face-to-face communication (Heiberger & Harper, 2008).

The current tools of youngsters’ communication go by a peculiar set of names. Wall Posts, Status Updates, Activity Feeds, Thumbs Ups, and Profiles are some of the ways that youth today communicate with one another. These tools are features of social network sites (SNS), such as Facebook and MySpace. SNS are part of a suite of Web applications, also called social media, which utilize Web 2.0 principles. The term Web 2.0 defines websites that are designed to:

- a) rely on the participation of mass groups of users rather than centrally controlled content providers,
- b) aggregate and remix content from multiple sources,
- c) more intensely network users and content together (O'Reilly, 2007).

Youngsters use social media in large numbers. Youth are a unique population of SNS users. They are among the first to have grown up entirely surrounded by communication technologies. Youngsters are also in a period of rapid development, growth, and maturation. Research about social media effects on youth promises to contribute. In this article I consider several key controversies around youth participation in SNS and review relevant research that begin to inform these debates.

1.4. Objectives

1.4.1. General Objectives

To explore and understand the consequences of Social Networking on youth of the University of Dhaka.

1.4.2. Specific Objectives

- a) To understand the youth's perception towards Social Networking.
- b) To understand the consequences of Social Networking on the behavior of youth.
- c) To understand the role of Social Networking in rising awareness among youth.

1.5. Research question

Following study specially attempts to find answers to the following questions –

- a) What are the Common Online usage habits and Perceptions of online risk?
- b) What are the perceptions and attitudes of young adults towards social media networks?

- c) What are the role played by social networks in rising awareness and group activities among young adults?

1.6. Focus and Scope of Research

As already mentioned, the motivation for conducting such a research was to get a better and deeper understanding of the usage of online social networking sites by the young adult students of University of Dhaka. The University of Dhaka was chosen primarily because it has the high number of Internet using youngsters.

This research focused on Bangladeshi undergraduate students of University of Dhaka for the following reasons:

- The students are matured enough to use online SNS.
- They comprise the majority of users of online SNS compared to other age groups.
- The youth are the future leaders of the country and therefore it is important to know their perspectives on emerging forms and trends of new media (SNS being one of the most popular trends in the current scenario).
- Understanding the usage pattern of the students of University of Dhaka may serve as a good reference towards understanding similar patterns of students situated in other major cities of Bangladesh.

The study assumes that undergraduate students in University of Dhaka spend a vast amount of time on online social networking sites. It also assumes that SNS is influencing their daily lives. Thus, the study aims to use online SNS usage patterns as a stepping stone towards measuring and comprehend comprehending wider online media literacy and communication contexts among Bangladeshi youth.

1.7. Limitation of the study

“Every study is more or less, best with the limitations in regard to timing, cost and staffing” (Moser & Kalton, 1971:43). Research is a complex complicated activity based on scientific understanding and competence. But as I am a new in this, so, obviously some problems are, therefore, inevitable in the way of conducting for such a task.

While conducting the research procedures I also encountered some limitations those were unavoidable. The shortcomings I have faced at the time of conducting this study are following:

- a) Time frame for such an important research work is too narrow to take a representative sample size for the in-depth study. But I have only about three months to finish my study. The time given for data collection was too short. For social science studies, researcher needs more time for in-depth data collection. To structure the design in the light of development, extra time is essential. Personally I feel if I had more time it would help me to get more reliable data.
- b) Conducting a research requires a good amount of resources. As a student, I have very limited access to resources that compelled me to curtail many of the programs that could have enhanced the value of this research.
- c) Some potential respondents flatly refused to cooperate.
- d) Gaining access to the undergraduate students is not so easy because sometimes they feel insecure about privacy issues and do not want to open up much even after enough of the confidentiality ensuring.
- e) Being an inexperienced researcher, in my cases, I faced a lot of problems to elicit real information.
- f) The results cannot be generalized to all Bangladeshi youngsters. This study only used a small sample of internet using young adults in the study area to gather information.

Chapter 2: Literature review

To put it simply, SNS are websites based on the WEB 2.0 platform (Social Networking, 2008), a modern interactive web platform where anyone can join in for free and can set up an online profile page by using their basic contact details and preferences ranging from favorite movies, stars, books, music, quotes, activity and hobbies (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). These options vary from site to site, with some sites asking users to fill in every profile field in detail while others require only basic contact information (Social Networking, 2008).

After setting up online profiles, a user can interact with other users signed on that SNS network and build online, virtual contacts that can be displayed as a list of friends. These friends can be people from real life or people found online with whom no real life connection is shared whatsoever (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). However, the word ‘friend’ carries a different meaning in the online world and is not similar in concept to a real-life friend (Social Networking, 2008). In online contexts, friends are only those who are invited by you or those whose invitation you have accepted for online social networking.

As users find online friends on SNS, they can browse through more friends from the friends list of people with whom they have already been connected. Hence this friend browsing cycle continues and more and more people become friends on SNS, leading to the user’s own online network of friends.

The ideas that generated the inception of SNS are not new. From the beginning of the Internet’s journey, when it was developed for the US Defense Department (Ruthfield, 1995), the main purpose of the Internet was to share documents with one another on the same network through remote access. From the start of the Internet, tools like e mail, online chat, web forums and message boards existed to facilitate online communication (Social Networking, 2008). The SNS that we experience today are also based on the same idea of online sharing and incorporate all those online communication tools as well as other interactive features, as an upgrade from traditional online communication.

The first-ever recognized SNS was Friendster. Launched in 2002, it could not maintain its strong hold in the online world and it fell in 2004 (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). In the wake of Friendster, other new SNS started evolving. LinkedIn, MySpace and Hi5 started in 2003; Flickr and Facebook (Harvard only) started in 2004 while Bebo started in 2005 (Social Networking, 2008).

With new SNS entering the online mediascape, their focus is by no means the same. Each SNS is distinct on its own merits. Besides general SNS like Facebook, Myspace, Friendster and Hi5, other specialized SNS have also been popular (Boyd & Ellison, 2007) like LinkIn for online employer-employee communication, YouTube for online video sharing, Flickr for online photograph sharing, Scribd for online documents sharing. Furthermore, SNS based on specific interests are coming into being. The Copia is an SNS where book lovers can socialize with each other. SNS based on specific regions are also growing fast, for example, Bharat Student is an Indian site where all Indian students can interact and socialize.

The usage of SNS can be explained through the media theory known as The Uses and Gratifications Theory. This theory can be seen as a psychological communication perspective that deals with the fact that people use the media to fulfill their needs and wants. According to this theory, media use depends on some factors, which include the psychological need for communication, social interaction, mass media consumption, communication behavior and the consequences of such behavior (Rubin, 1994, p. 419). Katz, Blumler and Gurevitch (1974) said that the uses and gratifications perspective depends on the social and psychological source of human needs, which develop an expectation from the mass media leading to various degrees of media exposure and resulting in needs gratification and other consequences. Therefore, people use SNS because it helps them satisfy their needs. They turn to online SNS to seek emotional support and to quench their thirst for information (Joinson, 2008).

People also search for others in SNS to be a part of specific social groups. Through online social networking, people get connected via SNS and fulfil their need for communication and social interaction (Urista et al., 2008). However, different people use

SNS for different purposes, depending on their specific preferences, cultural background, social environment and behavior traits (Urista et al., 2008).

The following is a quick look at the key aspects of online social networking sites. Friendships Online social network sites have given new meanings to ‘online friends‘ or ‘online friendships’. SNS allow people to connect with their peers in new, innovative ways. People connect with others based on some similar traits, likes and affiliations, such as school, religion or hobby. People use these ways to extend their network and keep in touch with their offline contacts as well as new online friends (Ito et al., 2008). Self-directed learning in social networking sites where social activity is mainly dependent on similar interests, people develop new ways of expressing themselves or learn more about something that they are interested in. People get to know about what needs to be done and how it needs to be done. People also share their ideas and work to get feedback from others (Ito et al., 2008). People learn about new innovations in an interactive way, where there is more freedom of expression than in any formal learning environment. SNS provides the opportunity to develop necessary social and technological skills that are required in this modern age. People can now access important information and the trendy online culture to learn about things that were unknown to them before, as well as new values and symbols for communication developed for learning in an online environment that gives rise to new cultural cues (Ito et al., 2008). The whole SNS platform provides a new way of educating oneself for the modern world.

Since SNS allow people to find other people of similar interests, background and beliefs, it is possible to come under one social umbrella. In times of need, groups of like-minded people can take collective action online by cooperating with each other to push forward a certain agenda for a certain cause. SNS platforms make it easy to let everyone know of the programme and detail the plans of how action can be carried out (Ellison, Lampe & Steinfield, 2009). People are also using SNS platforms to arrange online flash mobs and online signature campaign to protest against a specific issue. All these activities can be done in minimum time with minimal effort, and yield maximum coverage.

Bangladesh is also feeling the heat of online SNS. The country has seen a sharp rise in Internet users in recent years due to the availability of cheaper mobile Internet technology and the introduction of Wi-max connectivity in Dhaka (Tauhid, 2008). Internet accessibility is not limited to personal computers (PCs) anymore. Internet on cell phones has become increasingly popular and accessible over the past few years (Davies, 2010). Bangladesh Telecommunications Regulatory Commission (BTRC) statistics show that the country currently has around 70,000,000 mobile phone subscribers (Rahman, 2011). Bangladesh now has 800,000 Internet users and the BTRC expects it to cross the one-million mark in the near future. But the Internet usage of most Bangladeshis has been limited to chatting, playing online games, social networking, reading news reports, searching for jobs and keeping updates of latest sports happenings on numerous sites over the World Wide Web, as opposed to other uses of the Internet (Rahman, 2011). Most Bangladeshis also use low cost handsets which do not allow them to explore the full potential of the Internet with their mobile Internet subscription (Rahman, 2011). Despite all these factors, the number of Bangladeshi users using SNS has shot up and continues to grow rapidly. More than one million Bangladeshis were already on Facebook as of March 2011, with the majority being youngsters (Internet World Stats). Twitter is still not that popular with Bangladeshi Internet users but community blogs and forums like Somewhereinblog, Tech Tunes and Projonmo are highly popular among Bangladeshi netizens and new people are coming to these sites, making them a commonplace for Bangladeshi Internet users (Uddin, 2010).

Communications and information technology are transforming our world, therefore social media networks can be explained through the changing structure of human society. Human groups are valuable as knowledge creators. In business environment of a multinational organization, Cohen and Prusak (2001) came up with the following principle: “if you want people to connect, to talk, to begin to understand and depend on one another, give the places and occasions for meeting, and enough time to develop networks and communities (p.99)”. This is exactly what social media networks provide youngsters - a place to connect, understand and meet. Social media networks compete with other sources of media for need satisfaction of people. Children or preteens are always in need to discover new things themselves. As part of this need, they usually

experiment with their own self-image, manipulate their online personification to fit stereotypes around them. That's why they try on new images by changing their profile appearance to match the image they want to be (king, 2009). Social networking sites enable individuals to play an active role in the socialization process and construct their own identity (Urista et als, 2009). Facebook not only allows users to meet other people who do not know, but it also allows users to shape and make their social networks visible to others, thus providing the opportunity to establish contact with strangers and expand their network.

In the past few years, online social networks have turned to be a mainstream social phenomenon used by everyone, not just children and teens. No doubt, Facebook – in specific- has completely changed the way young people communicate together. When comparing the design of Facebook to other social networks as MySpace, we find that Facebook is highly private, with a members' only policy. It presents one unified profile page or "wall" that can't be changed, compared to the flashy and highly personalized nature of MySpace. As a social network, Facebook places people into "networks" defined by location, class, special interest, or even employer, which make it easier for users to find their existing friends online or even find people with similar interests in their area. "it is more for socializing and talking to friends about work than for actually doing work", this is how university students described their re-registration engagement with a university Facebook network. University students use Facebook for social reasons, not for formal teaching purposes, although it is sometimes used informally for learning purposes (Madge et als, 2009).

Risk is defined as "the possibility than human actions or events lead to consequences that might harm the human beings value" (Klinke et al).Children as less amenable to parental mediation, they are considered worldwide as the "online experts" (Livingstone, 2008). Using such adult social network became a major concern among researchers worldwide as it consumes a lot of time, provides them with a false sense of privacy, teens become target of scammers and using Facebook impacts their person to person and their social communication skills as well (Fodeman, 2009).

Numerous studies outline the significant relationship between SNSs and its impact on students' communication and interpersonal relation patterns. Some believe that motivations that determine how young people use online social networks are psychological and it is strongly related to the human needs of communication, socialization, being an active part of a group, or maintaining long-distance friendships (Baltaretu & Balaban, 2010). Moreover, the relationship between online media and offline social activities and interpersonal interaction are enjoying significant discussion at present (DiMaggio, Hargittai, Neuman & Robinson, 2001). The findings of a study conducted in Malaysian context show that Facebook usage among Swedish university students seems to be an important part of their everyday life but can present some challenges in their social relationships (Sofiah et al, 2011). Smaller social circles, less communication at home, and loneliness are some greater internet use results, which have been identified in some studies. (Kraut et al., 1998). Spending more time on the internet and particularly in SNSs can create an addiction to the internet. Internet addiction is a rampant problem affecting individuals throughout the world and is recognized as a relic stage of internet adoption within a society (Zhang & Amos, 2008). Aghazamani (2010) has conducted a study on the university students' facebook usage patterns and found that most of the students use facebook for communicating with friends. The study indicates that traditional friendship pattern, communication pattern with friends are enjoying a colossal change with the delicate touch of SNSs. Stollak et al (2010) administrated a study to find out the relationship of social media usage and its impact on academic performance. The result shows interesting findings that, there is a yawning relationship between the students GPA and the time they spend in SNSs. They found that students', who spend more time in social media, are enjoying less GPA. But there are some limitations have been identified in the aforementioned study as they conducted the study with only 430 samples. So it is very tough to generalize the relationships between SNSs and grade point upon the limited number of sample. Another problem is that the research was run by on-line interview where they failed to understand the non-verbal behavior of the respondents.

Donath and boyd (2004) were among the first to hypothesize that online social networks may not increase the number of "strong ties" (i.e., long-term, sustained interactions) a

person may have, but may increase the “weak ties” (i.e., infrequent, casual interactions) a person could form because the technology is suited to maintain these ties cheaply and easily. Ellison, Steinfield, and Lampe (2007) was empirically tested this proposition by using survey data from a small sample of undergraduate students in the U.S. Applying Putnam’s (2000) framework of “bridging” and “bonding” social capital, Ellison and her colleagues found that use of Facebook had a strong association to maintaining or solidifying existing offline relationships, as opposed to meeting new people.

Jahan and Ahmed (2012) have been conducted a study in Bangladesh context. They try to understand the student perception about the academic use of SNSs. The results indicate a positive attitude towards academic use of SNSs by the students. Although there are some differences in terms of students’ opinions on academic applications of SNSs, these differences are largely due to the fact that the use of these sites in academic contexts is not well-defined.

Habib (2012) conducted a research to identified the uses types of Facebook by university students of Bangladesh and found that they are using it most for chatting and gossiping with friends. This finding indicates the shifting of interpersonal relationships format among students but he failed to identify the nature of the changes as the study depends only quantitative data.

Though a good number of studies have been conducted about SNSs and students but very few studies have been focused on the using patterns and consequences of SNSs by students especially in Bangladesh context. The present study is an attempt to explore this knowledge gap. Another concern is that, most of the studies have been conducted in the western society perspective though it is very essential to unearth the situation of developing countries like Bangladesh.

Chapter 3: Conceptual framework

The advent of new media – with its ability to dissolve boundaries between telecommunications and broadcast industry- have changed what we expect from the media we use. Access to new technologies has changed and extended abilities for entertainment and information gathering, and media researchers require greater understanding of the personal and social reasons people have for using new media (West et al, 2007).

The theory of uses and gratifications states that people actively seek out specific media and specific content in order to generate specific results or gratifications. Blumler and Katz (1974) presented a simple description for gratifications approach as it concerns of the social, psychological basics and the needs that result from it, which raises expectations from mass media or other sources, that leads specific patterns of media use to satisfy those needs. The four basic concepts that revolve around the approach are:

- First, active audience who perceives and compares the abilities of the different media to achieve gratifications. (Hassan, Hamdy, 1991, p13-24).
- Second, since the theory is an extension Maslow's hierarchy of needs, it views social and psychological gratifications the second step or higher level of motivation the audience seek in order to satisfy their needs after being active in selecting and comparing different media. Lucas and Sherry investigated gender differences in video game use, through focusing on interpersonal needs and socially constructed perceptions of gendered game play (Lucas and Sherry, 2004). Therefore, psychological factors could be the motive for media use.
- Third, needed gratifications and achieved gratifications, since the gratification that the individual is searching for through exposure to mass media is not necessarily the same gratification he/she will get, as it involves other variables as exposure, beliefs.
- Fourth, expectations, which could be defined as probability of satisfaction from mass media or in other words the gratifications the public look for. Uses and

gratifications approach stresses that social and psychological motivations can make people use a specific media for companionship or other gratifications as using it as a substitute to face to face interaction. (Sheldon et al, 2009).

In other words, the basic assumption in uses and gratifications approach is that the audience have specific needs and they select a specific media to use mainly to meet these individual needs.

McQuail and colleagues summarized audience needs and gratifications into four basic streams:

- Diversion, which is defined as escaping from routines and daily problems,
- Personal relationships, which involves substituting media for companionship,
- Personal identity, which are the different ways to reinforce individual values,
- Surveillance, collecting needed information. (West et al, 2007, 428- 9).

The interactive nature of social media networks and the internet in general makes the uses and gratifications approach well suited for studying the phenomena of widespread use of social media networks among youths.

The uses and gratifications approach had been used by many researchers to explain why adolescents and adults use a specific media. Lucas and Sherry (2004) used it to explain differences in how young adult women and men participated in video game play. A uses and gratifications perspective has been specifically used to test the use of new media. Papacharissi and Rubin's (2000) concluded that the theory provided an important framework for studying new media and found that people have five primary motives for internet use, the most important was information seeking. Kaye and Johnson (2004) mentioned that the growth of the internet has produced a renaissance in the uses and gratifications as it allows researchers to go beyond discovering who uses the internet to examining why they use this medium. LaRose et al, (2004), in their application of uses and gratifications perspective found that people expect that using the internet will improve their lot in life in terms of specific social outcomes as social status and identity. This means that people may enhance their social status by finding like-minded others

through the net and expressing their ideas to them. They also suggest that “perhaps the internet is a means of constantly exploring and trying out new, improved versions of ourselves”. The former suggestion truly applies to the social networks in specific, as it considered the way youth use it to express their identity and to enhance their sense of belonging to specific groups.

The uses and gratifications theory services the discipline as a “perspective through which a number of ideas and theories about media choice, consumption and impact can be analyzed” (Baran et al, 2003).

Researches that have used uses and gratification theory have grouped media gratifications into two categories:

- Process
- Content

Process gratifications are associated with performance of the activity or usage of the medium such as web browsing or creating content on ones’ profile page, whereas content gratifications depend on the acquired information (Kayahara and Wellman, 2007).

Leung (2007) divided functions of the internet into interpersonal utility functions such as relationship building, social maintenance and social recognition, and entertainment and information utility functions. Another researcher (Matsuba, 2006), classified internet uses into mood management as entertainment and information seeking, and social compensation as gaining recognition or relationship building. In conclusion, the factors that were found in internet uses and gratifications research were varied as some researchers called them motives or motivations, and it took several dimensions as information, convenience, social interaction, companionship, escape, relaxation or political guidance, while others divided them according to expected outcomes and gained outcomes.

Chapter 4: Methodology

The ‘Methodology’ section refers to identify the questionnaires, observation records or other data collection tools that researcher use to collect the data & develop a broader understanding of the research study (Walsh: 2001). It explains how researchers gather insight on a topic. In this chapter I will elaborate the methods of data collection to gain an in depth knowledge about the total procedure of my research work.

4.1. Why Mixed Method

A mixed method approach is one in which the researcher collects, analyzes, and integrates both quantitative (quan) and qualitative (qual) data in a single study or in multiple studies in a sustained program of inquiry (Creswell, 2003). An integrated quantitative and qualitative approach has been followed for the present study. The former focuses on the association of the different variables whereas the later helped in explaining the relation between variables. Present Study mainly followed quantitative methodology whereas qualitative methodology has been adopted to facilitate the former. Primarily the underlying reasons of adopting this integrated approach are -

- Rigorous mixed methods studies provide the opportunity to efficiently generate greater understanding.
- Asking a question that has rarely been asked or has been asked with questionable results is possible.
- Provides the strength of multiple methods triangulation
- Some variables are easily quantifiable at this stage of inquiry
- To “illuminate the black box” committee absolutely nothing department stairs

Here in this study, the used questionnaire during data collection included both open-ended (ie. qualitative) questions *and* closed-ended (ie. quantitative) questions and then the results are quantified by counting the number of times each type of response occurs (quantitative data analysis). Following steps has been adopted and although the steps are numbered but I've often moved around in the circle in multiple directions especially steps 4 to 7 –

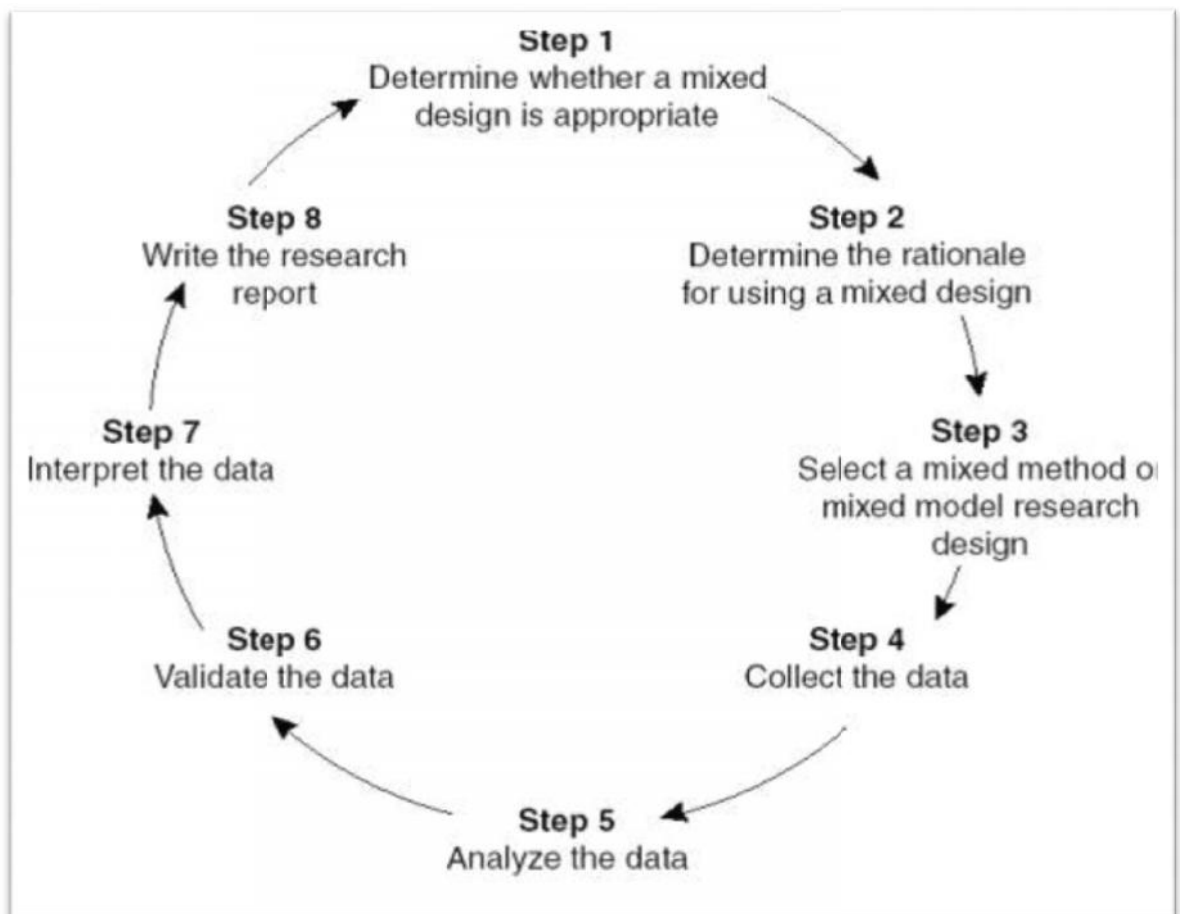


Figure Steps adopted for the mixed method study

4.2. Study Design

This was a sequential mixed methods study design (Creswell & Clark, 2011; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). The quantitative component of the study collected information using

cross sectional survey design. The quantitative survey information (Ary, Jacobs, Razavieh, & Sorensen, 2009) has collected information to meet objectives 1 through 3.

Qualitative method was used after the quantitative data collection had been completed. Information from qualitative component has been used to meet objectives 2 through 4.

4.3. Study Population and Site

The study population included young adults aging from 18-28 years. University of Dhaka was selected as the study site.

University of Dhaka is located 23° 43' 23" N, 90° 24' 3 E in Dhaka division with an area of 600 acres or 2.43 square kilometer (without the Institute of leather engineering and tech.)with a student body of 33,000. The respondents attend undergraduate classes.

4.4. Study Samples and Size

Data were collected in the University of Dhaka targeting a random sample of young adults aging from 18-28 years.

Study site and the university has been selected purposefully considering the feasibility of data collection time and resources. Sample of students were selected using systematic random sampling method for quantitative data collection to ensure maximum generalizability (Lohr, 2009). On a later date students who showed interesting outputs were approached for in-depth interviews. Data collected from hundred students were used for this study.

4.5. Study Instrument and Data Collection

4.5.1. Quantitative Component

Self administered pre-coded structured questionnaire (Gillham, 2000) was used to collect quantitative information. However, this was not completely anonymous but requested for contact phone number. It did not ask for names of the student or the department they attend in the university. The reason for collecting phone numbers was to identify students who might later be approached for in-depth interview. They would be later

contacted for qualitative interviews. The questionnaire and consent form explained the purpose of collecting contact information. It was important to know in details from these students.

The questionnaire consists of three parts: Part I: Sample characteristics, Common Online usage habits, Perception of online risk, Part II: Perceptions and attitudes towards social media networks: Uses and gratifications of Facebook, Part III: The Role played by Facebook in rising awareness and Group activities

Data collection procedure followed conventional systematic random sample procedure (Kalton, 1983). Students gathers in different places like seminar rooms, libraries, empty lecture rooms, campus premises after attending class lectures. Students of the same class usually sit in small groups or according to their convenience, nevertheless in groups. The researcher went to each group and identified if they were eligible for participating in the research; i.e. if they have a Facebook account and aging from 18-28. He then explained the purpose of the study and asked every student in the group if they would agree to participate in the research. A consent form was given to obtain written consent. The researcher then explained how to fill out the questionnaire and gave pens and questionnaire to fill them out. After doing this in one group the researcher went to another group. The questionnaire takes about fifteen to twenty minutes to fill out. By the time the researcher went to the last group the first group had completed the questionnaire and the researcher began collecting it from the first group and so on. End of the Summer semester break in the selected university was selected as time frame as conducting the research in this time is the best time for students to reflect on their experience with social media networks, as they won't be fully occupied with studies. Data was collected during July to August 2014.

4.5.2. Qualitative Component

Depth interviews (IDI) of students

During collecting quantitative data students were informed that they might be contacted for further interviews if they had provided a phone number (which was also asked in the questionnaire). Later filled out quantitative questionnaires were sorted to identify

potential students for interviews. There were only 27 students who had provided telephone numbers. With the aim of interviewing at least 8 students, they were later called for appointments. 8 students had consented for indepth interview.

Indepth interview guideline (Weinberg, 2002) was used for interviewing student. The area of enquiry from studentsts included 1) reasons for their using SNS like Facebook and their experiences 2) how SNS is helping them in group activities or events on rising awareness.

4.6. Data analysis

4.6.1. Quantitative data

Quantitative Data were entered and analyzed using SPSS statistics 20.0 for preliminary analysis (Field, 2009).

4.6.2. Qualitative data

Qualitative interviews from both parents and children were recorded and they were directly transcribed to English for analysis. Transcribed data were coded according to a-priori coding schemes (Bernard & Ryan, 2010). These coded data were later used for generating results under broader themes that directly answered the research questions. Quotations to typically reflect a finding was used but kept anonymous.

4.7. Ethical Consideration

The study was conducted with utmost ethical consideration particularly ensuring that no harm to the study participants is done.

The study used a consent form in which the study method, its objectives, purpose of the study was briefly described. Upon clear understanding the participants have signed on the consent form. The consent form ensured that the results will not be shared by outside the research team and that no identification of the child, the school or the parents will be used.

Although the quantitative questionnaire asked for phone numbers for the purposive sampling of qualitative data collection, these were never used for the data reporting or keeping any identity attached to the school name since name of the school was never asked. For qualitative research only gender identity and age were used for reporting any quotes from the research participants.

4.8. Reliability and Validity

The quantitative questionnaire was piloted and ensured that similar reliable answers were obtained from participants on different items, therefore, ensuring inter item reliability (Furr & Bacharach, 2008). Since this was self administered questionnaire, inter rater reliability was not tested.

This explorative study lacks external validity since the sample size does not adequately represent the population of the study site. However, representation was partially achieved by ensuring the random sampling procedure for the quantitative variables.

Chapter 5: Result

All one hundred (N = 100) students interviewed were from the University of Dhaka.

5.1 Quantitative Research Findings

5.1.1 Sample Characteristics:

Sample size consisted of 215 teens, both males and females, classified according to the following table:

Sample according to age and gender	Males	Females	Total
	N	N	%
18 – less than 20	4	2	6
20 - less than 22	17	15	32
22 – less than 24	10	30	40
24 – less than 26	11	3	14
26 – 28 years old	6	2	8

Table 5.1. Sample Characteristics

5.1.2 Online Usage Habits in Bangladesh:

Young adults' hours of internet usage ranges between two and four hours a day, as (21%) use it for more than four hours, while a very close percentage -(20%) mentioned they use it from two to four hours. This shows that internet occupies a great part of their daily activities.

Hours of Internet usage	%
Always connected	22
More than 4 hours	14
2-4 hours a day	16
1-2 hours a day	14
Less than 1 hour a day	14
Do not use internet per daily basis	20
Total	100

Table 5.2. Hours of Internet usage

As hours of internet usage, almost one third of the sample mentioned that they are always connected, either through their mobile phones (39%) or through the free Wi-Fi (27%). whereas 36 respondents 24 respondents (18%) used 3G or WiMax connections and 22 respondents (16%) had Broadband Connection.

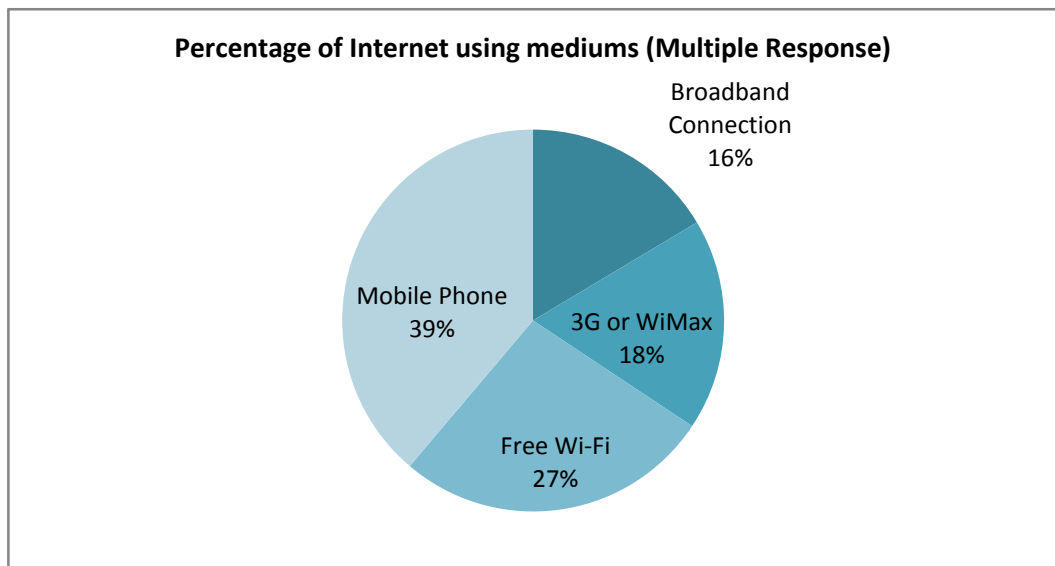


Figure 5.1: Percentage of Internet using mediums (Multiple Responses)

Majority of the respondents reported that they use internet mostly at home (31%) where as majority uses internet via cellphone whether at home or outside.

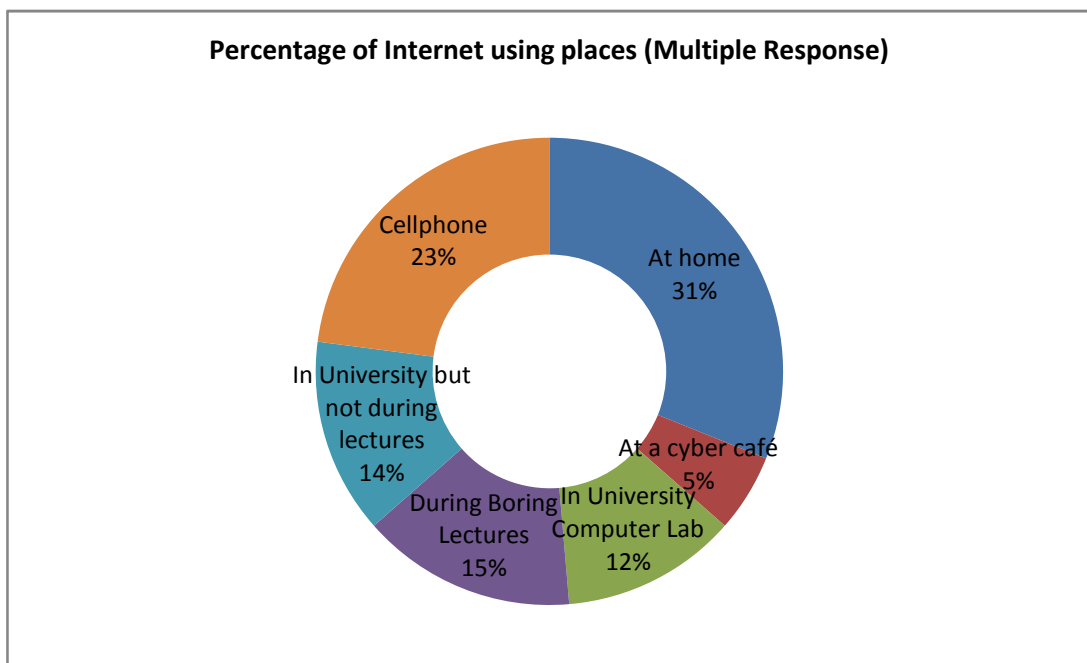


Figure 5.2. Percentage of Internet using mediums (Multiple Responses)

Cross tabulation results by age showed that the more adolescents are older, the more hours they spend on the internet, as the majority of 22-24 years old stated that they are always connected and they use the net between 2 and 4 hours. Older adolescents are always connected too and they use it for more than four hours a day.

5.1.3 Perception of Online Risk:

When asked if they follow any personified rules while using internet, majority reported they do not have any (76%). The next question was about whether parents set any rules internet usage. The majority of respondents (80%) stated that their parents do not set any rules. Respondents' evaluation of what they consider risky, is explained in the next table-

What considered to be risky	%
Exposing to impolite websites or contents	66
Conversing with people I do not know	11
Adding people I do not know	19
Meeting people I do not know	4
Total	100

Table 5.3. What youngsters considered to be risky

The next question was whether the respondents have ever been exposed to dangerous websites. (63%) of the sample denied their exposure to undesired websites during their internet navigation, while 37% clarified that they are exposed to such sites (16%) or sometimes they are exposed to it (21%). The next table explains the actions they usually take when they are faced with such sites

What do you do when you face a undesired website	%
Seek help from friends	19
I ask my parents or someone older or someone having better online experience about it	10
It upsets me and I wish I have never seen it	34
I do not think too much about it and ignore the experience	13
I thought it was funny or cool	11
I pass it to my friends	4
Protested its spread and took an attempt to stop it reaching other	9
Total	100

Table 5.4. Strategies followed by youngsters when facing dangerous websites

The majority of the sample (34%) highly perceived the risk and admitted that it influenced them when choosing the statement "it upsets me and I wish I haven't seen it" while (13%) take a neutral strategy by ignoring the whole experience and other (19%) admitted the seek help from their friends. Those who have risk taking attitude by passing it to their friends are (4%), and thinking it was funny and cool (11%). From this we conclude that the youth are aware of risk, they sometimes are exposed to dangerous websites but they tend to take different strategies to cope with risk, mostly experience a vulnerable upsetting situation.

5.1.4. Uses and gratifications of Facebook:

Majority of the data responds to moderate usage of facebook, as (34%) of the sample indicated that they devote about an hour for the Facebook, following by the second major group who admit of spending more than three hours a day on the Facebook (20%). The low percentage of respondents who don't use their account on daily basis (12%) confirms their heavy usage of Facebook (58%).

Cross tabulation results found gender differences in time devoted to social media networks, as males spend more time with Facebook when compared to females. The majority of males spend between two and three hours with Facebook. Some females spend more than three hours, while others spend about an hour using Facebook.

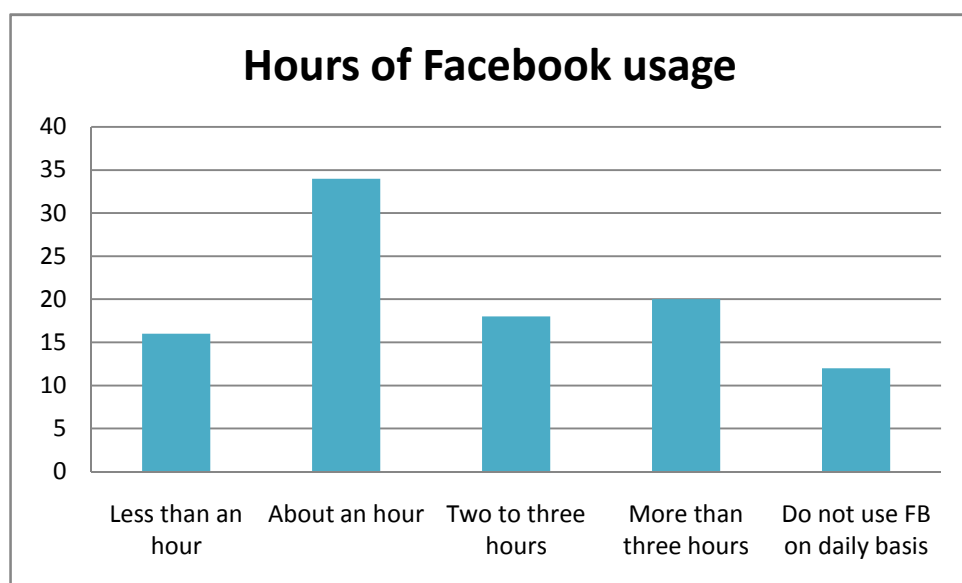


Figure 5.3. Hours of Facebook usage

The following section describes the uses of Facebook among teens, through describing all the possible uses of social media networks on a three point Likert scale: always, sometimes and rarely. Based on the review of literature, the uses of social media networks revolve around the following themes:

- First: using it as a channel of personal communication, to stay in touch with others or using it instead of face to face interactions, express emotional feelings.
- Second: using Facebook as a means to spend leisure time, or escape from obligations.
- Third: functional uses of Facebook, through using the different utilities inherited in the characteristics of Facebook as posting photos and monitoring comments on it, or as sending and receiving messages, and updating personal profile.
- Fourth: using Facebook for social interactivity purposes, that could take forms of connecting with old friends, maintaining existing relationships, sexual attraction and social comparisons.

Youngsters mainly use the internet for socialization purposes as know news of their friends (50%), chatting (40%) and expressing what they want to say (42%), they sometimes use the net to make new friends and meet new people (54%). They also use the internet for functional purposes as uploading and receiving videos (26%), sending and receiving mails (22%) and sometimes they use it for educational purposes when doing research (22%). Leisure activities take also a great deal of their internet usage, as the majority always use it for playing games with their friends (24%).

Activity	Always	Sometimes	Rarely
	%	%	%
a. Make new friends	22	54	24
b. Find friends you've lost connection with	36	44	20
c. Know news of your friends	50	38	12
d. Chat	40	32	28
e. Conduct surveys or research	22	40	58
f. Express opinions freely via comment and status posting	42	44	14
g. Posting seifies and changing profile picture frequently	40	32	28
h. Sharing your favorites like videos, movie clips, songs	26	40	34

i. Upload photos and videos	36	42	22
j. E-mailing and FB messaging	22	46	32
k. Play FB online games	24	38	38
l. Letting people know my talents	21	41	38
m. To create / join events and give a hand to the cause	31	39	30
n. Group activities	29	42	29

Table 5.5. Facebook usage habits of Bangladeshi youth

While chatting on Facebook, majority (54%) reported they always chat only with their FB friends whom they personally know offline whereas (32%) take this as an opportunity to meet and know new people. Another (14%) admitted that it does not matter whether they know the FB friend they are chatting with personally offline or they are just their virtual friend. Following table shows the usage of Facebook by respondents for personal communication and social interactivity purposes -

Statement	Agree	Disagree	Neutral
	%	%	%
a. Using FB instead of SMS / phone / E-mail	58	16	26
b. I use FB instead of talking to someone directly / via phone	57	32	21
c. FB is the place where I make plans with my friends	27	20	53
d. FB is to keep in touch with	35	54	11
e. I use FB to congratulate my friends and relatives instead of talking to them directly or sending gifts	52	20	28
f. FB helps me to contact friends easily who are away	40	8	52
g. I use FB to know how others doing	35	14	61
h. FB lets me know if others doing better or worse than me	30	16	54
i. I like to see my friends' shared pictures	40	4	56
j. FB lets me know who is connected to who	32	14	11
k. I use FB to get information about known or unknown others I'm interested in	39	10	51
l. FB is a way to keep track on current events going on in my known and unknown world	80	4	16

Table 5.6. Using Facebook for personal communication and social interactivity purposes

5.1.5. Perceptions and attitudes towards Social Media Networks:

The place of Facebook in the lives of teens and their attitudes towards it was checked through Likert statements. Taking into account the ages of the sample and in order to get precise results, the researcher put neutral at the end of the scale, and simplified the scales used throughout the questionnaire to be on a three point scale, with agree/disagree/neutral.

Statement	Agree	Disagree	Neutral
	%	%	%
a. Facebook has become an inseparable part of my social life	57	33	10
b. Facebook lets me express who I am	46	29	25
c. In Facebook, I can say what I want to say freely and sometimes what I can't say in person	50	32	28
d. Facebook helps me to know more people which sometimes is not possible in real life	26	32	42
e. I know more and get news quickly than I used to do before starting using Facebook	41	12	37
f. I open Facebook during class lectures	21	32	57
g. I keep Facebook open while doing my studies	41	43	16

Table 5.7. Perceptions and attitudes towards Facebook

Youngsters view Facebook as a means of expressing their individuality. This perception of Facebook is also confirmed through the statement "Facebook lets me express who I am", since (46%) agreed to the statement. They also consider it an important part of their social life (56%) as majority confirms to it.

(41%) of the sample stated that they open Facebook when doing their homework, while a similar percentage (43%) disagreed to the statement. So, they may be using Facebook as a channel to escape from the hours of study. For them, Facebook provides them with a motivation to digitally express what they can't say in person (50%, N=108).

Facebook was also found to be used as a way to spend leisure time, as they always use it to waste time (26%), sometimes use it when they don't want to study (42%), and they always enjoy spending time with Facebook (44%).

5.1.6. The role played by Facebook in rising awareness and Group activities:

(44%) agreed that they have joined more than 10 groups via Facebook while (24%) reported to be engaged with 1 to 3 groups at least.

A majority of (48%) reported they joined a group because the joining invitation came from a friend and they accepted it. Another (40%) reported they joined groups to keep themselves connected to groups / organizations / institutions they are already a member of. They also mentioned group's well-expressiveness and well-activity (34%), interesting causes (22%), group study purposes (22%) as the reason for joining groups.

The next question in this part asked about activities they knew about or joined through a group formed in Facebook. Respondents were asked to mark all that applies. Since most of the respondents marked between two and three points, the SPSS counted up to three choices. Results shows that the most activities teens participated in were: organizing strikes and objections (25%), cleaning the streets (38%), participating in public committees (24%), followed by charity work (21%) as joining NGOs that provide charity activities as collecting clothes for the poor, visiting orphans, collecting money.

Statements	Always	Sometimes	Rarely
	%	%	%
1. Organizing strikes and objections	25	36	39
2. Posting radical images, messages.	16	44	50
3. Cleaning the streets	38	46	36
4. Participating in public committees	24	38	60
5. Charity work	21	58	31
6. Signing for petitions	18	50	32
7. Sharing videos and spreading comments on the wall	26	48	26

Table 5.8. Activities known from or joined through a group formed in Facebook

The following statements shed light on the role played by Facebook in rising awareness among youth. It used Likert statements on a three point scale.

Statement	Agree	Disagree	Neutral
	%	%	%
1. When I pass a message or an objection about an event or cause, I feel I have a role	70	17	13
2. Facebook made me do things on social purpose, I would never thought I can do	50	14	36
3. Facebook was the only media that encouraged me to raise voice on a cause or actively participate in events	26	36	38
4. I always follow the thread of comments shared by friends about events or causes I'm interested in	49	28	23
5. I open Facebook to know the news of daily social events and activities going on around me and globally	35	12	53
6. Facebook gave the feeling I am an important person in my society	46	14	40

Table 5.9. The role played by Facebook in rising awareness among youth

5.2 Qualitative research findings

In-depth interviews of respondents revealed their opinion regarding their perception towards social networking on youth, its consequences on youth and role played by SNSs in rising awareness among youth taking FB as an example.

- a) Factors influence youths' perception towards social networking
- b) Consequences of social networking on the social behavior of youth
- c) Factors contributing use of SNS in rising awareness among youth.

Respondents mentioned similar factors about what makes their perception towards social networking on youth, its consequences on youth and role played by SNSs in rising. They are as follows:

5.2.1. Factors influence youths' perception towards Social Networking

Those who stated that their parents usually object or comment on their patterns of internet usage, stating that their parents warn them not to put their pictures on Facebook

or speak with people they don't know, or log to impolite sites, or their extensive usage of Facebook.

"I often feel it annoying because everytime I sit before my PC to use FB, the more time I spent the more anxious my parents get. They keep asking me to give attention on real life relationships rather than wasting time on FB."

- Male Facebook user from University of Dhaka

5.2.2. Consequences of Social Networking on the social behavior of youth

5.2.2.1. Negative Consequences

In the survey participants were asked whether they have ever had a bad social networking experience. For the most of the 8 respondents, the experience reflected unwanted contact or people posting inappropriate or upsetting information online.

"I know him but I do not like his attitude. I do not want him in my friend list but he kept sending me friend request even after canceling his requests previously several times. In the end I had to block him from sending me requests. As I know him offline also when he asked me why I did not add him, I could not answer. It was embarrassing."

- Female Facebook user from University of Dhaka

Some respondents specified having online bullying and provided examples such as abusive messages and harassment from someone of the opposite sex.

"I added him as a friend even though I don not know him personally offline. After few days, he wanted to chat with me and I thought I can do that as it will be a new experience, talking with someone I do not know personally. But after talking with him few times it felt like he is getting too comfortable with me and often using harassing words. One day he directly started conversing using abusive words. Next day, I got him out of my friend list and block him from refining further contract."

- Female Facebook user from University of Dhaka

Hyper-networking was also associated with depression, substance abuse, poor sleep patterns, suicide and poor academic performance.

“I am so addicted with FB that I keep my profile logged in via my cellphone all the time and checking my profile time to time whether I am on a bus, at a classroom, in a family gathering or just went bed for a sleep. Sometimes I would spend whole night sitting in front of my PC or tapping my cellphone laying on bed at home chatting, commenting and browsing. Although my CGPA were good for first few semesters of my Dhaka University life, but now it is detolerating.”

- Male Facebook user from University of Dhaka

In considering the disadvantages, respondents identified a number of negative aspects of online social networking including:

- a) For the time-consuming nature of online social networking sites, Bangladeshi youth admitting that they waste a lot of time on these sites.
- b) Concern about access to personal information by others, with almost half of the youth worried that “non friends” may see their personal information.
- c) Concern that information posted may be used against them.
- d) Encouraging poor grammar, usage, and spelling .
- e) Allowing the spread of misinformation that may be perceived as fact even in light of evidence to the contrary.
- f) Exposing youngsters to online predators.
- g) Creating a culture in which a single mistake such as a racy picture or poorly thought-out comment can cause irreparable harm to your reputation.
- h) Decreasing productivity as workers habitually check social networking sites while they should be working.
- i) Providing information that increases the risk of identity theft.

5.2.2.2. Positive Consequences

On the other hand, there are no hard and fast rules when it comes to the positive effect social networks are having on us as the 8 respondents report.

“It has never been easier to make friends than it is right now, mainly thanks to social networking sites. Just a few days ago, before starting to use FB, it was pretty tough to connect with people, as I was not the overly outgoing type able to make conversation with anyone at a party. But FB helped to change this, connecting people in a new easier way.”

- **Female respondent from University of Dhaka**

The social networks sprang up and the whole idea of friendship changed once more and forever. It's entirely possible to have hundreds of friends on Face book. They may not be friends you know on a personal level and spend time with in the real world on a weekly basis. But they're friends nevertheless.

“There are several people I consider friends who I have never met – indeed, I may never meet them – but that doesn't lessen the connection I have, thanks to social network and FB.”

- **Male respondent from University of Dhaka**

Social networking sites have made the world a smaller place. It isn't just the inner circle of close friends and even closer family members that social networking sites allow to communicate with easily and effectively, either. They open the world up, making it a smaller place than it has ever been before.

“I actually haven't a clue where many of my contacts reside. When it comes to social networks like FB, everyone is equal, regardless of location. My sister is living abroad but we can be kept abreast of the latest happenings in our world as quickly as those living next door. Friends whom I haven't seen since school, and who have since moved away, now I am able to keep in touch them.”

- **Female respondent from University of Dhaka**

There is no doubting that social networking sites can lead to the breaking up of relationships. But there is another side to the tale, which is that people are moving onto other, perhaps better, relationships at the same time.

“FB helped me to be in touch with those I have lots in common with, and that common ground helped me to build longlasting relationships. Now I am using FB for 4 yers

already and I have friends from abroad whom I have never met in real life and I do not think I'll ever get a chance to do so. But our relationships are far tighter than those I am able to converse on daily basis face-to-face. I can easily share and talk about things more openly with this foreign friends than my deshi friends because we have a lot in common."

- **Female Facebook user from University of Dhaka**

5.2.3. Factors contributing use of SNS in rising awareness among youth

Internet is now characterized by network relations, shaped by broader and socio-political shifts in the society. These network relations –in most cases- occur outside the family rather than within it, thus leading into more individualization than group collectivism.

Social media networks have re-shaped the web. Political activists dream that this new structure will allow people to say the truth freely, away from the power of regimes, and simply assume that social network sites will make people politically activated, which is not always the case.

"I joined Gonojagoron Mancha after learning about it via a n invitation from a friend to join a cause that was working for this purpose which lead me to spends hours on road later for the cause it was raising voices for."

- **Male respondent from University of Dhaka**

Social media networks provide opportunities for anyone to showcase themselves as pseudo-celebrities through performances that are not necessarily "real", thus providing a platform for attention-seeking populations to their thing.

In social network sites, people are exposed to only what their friends choose to share and if that content is valuable, it will be spread further through friend networks.

"I was not aware about abusing behaviors on home servants. Then I joined a cause that arranged a money-collecting activity for a girl who have been abused by her employer."

Later from that cause I further joined group-activities that works for deprived house-servents. Now I give free lessons in a free-school for house servent and FB helped me to know about this school. ”

- Female respondent from University of Dhaka

As social networks allow people to share messages, it can be used as a tool to activate unmotivated groups.

“I was not interested in photography that gives socially inspiring messages although I took photography as a hobby. Then I joined this photography group at FB who does inspiring photo-sharing and arranges monthly photo showcase functions. Now, I feel like I am doing something for the society and getting my hobby-feel at the same time.”

-Male Respondent from University of Dhaka

Chapter 6: Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendation

6.1. Discussion

The high penetration of social media networks – specifically the Facebook and the role it plays in the lives of teens makes it a hot topic of discussion and scientific research. It is now proven that social media networks constitutes an important part in the lives of young adults, as they consider it an interesting and cool media. They use the internet to express themselves away from any parental supervision. The introduction of WiMax or 3G services had lead to increase in computer literacy and hours spent on the internet among the different social classes. However, the Bangladeshi society is not fully aware of the risks that are associated with internet usage by youngsters as most of the sample admitted that they are exposed to undesired websites when they navigate the net. Although parents or students themselves do not set any rules regarding internet usage, they do understand what is considered risky over the net and they take a neutral strategy when facing risks by just ignoring the whole experience. Social media networks for them is a means of self expression and social interaction with others and it is a pleasurable way to spend leisure time. They use Facebook for different personal and social communication reasons. The Facebook played a role in creating the spirit of community among the young adults in Bangladesh. It was social media networks that attracted youngsters to be part of current societal changes occurring, and encouraged them to give a hand in change despite their young age.

6.2. Conclusion

Since the massive popularity of social networking sites come about until the early 2000s, research in this field is obviously incredibly young and there is still much to be done. The studies reviewed in this article appear to indicate that despite initial concern, online social networking may have more positive influence on young adults than negative. Internet communication is an outlet for both extroverted and introverted youths. Traditional social development does not seem to have been impacted since social networking patterns seems to follow the norms in this area. Young adults most often use social networking sites to connect with friends and build communities, something they

are also doing offline. Nevertheless, risks lie in communication with dangerous strangers, lack of face-to-face interaction, and the weakening of family ties. Much research remains to be done in this field before any conclusive assumptions can be made.

6.3. Recommendation

The new digital social networking media are a frontier that is rich with opportunities and risks, particularly for young people. Through SNS technologies, young people are participating in a range of activities, including social networking, blogging, vlogging, gaming, instant messaging, downloading music and other content, uploading and sharing their own creations, and collaborating with others in various ways. Based on the findings and considering the reality of the context of Bangladesh following may be recommended to address the existing situation - these issues decide the social and ethical responsibilities of the youth that using the services of social networking sites:

- a) Every person that using the SNS should be aware about their rights and moral responsibilities.
- b) We should respect the authentication and privacy of those members that are using SNS.
- c) We should follow the ethics of online identity.
- d) Create culture of disclosure.
- e) Online, a number of strategies—including privacy settings, selective disclosure, code switching, and deception are used by youth to control the presentation of their identities and thereby manage their privacy. Most social networking sites have privacy settings that allow users to limit access to their profiles to a narrow audience of confirmed friends, and evidence suggests that many young people use them.
- f) The online culture of disclosure holds important promises for young people, including empowerment of themselves and others, the creation of communities of support around shared struggles, and the development of a broad ethical sense of responsibility with respect to privacy.
- g) Promises of Ownership and Authorship Online.

- h) Maintain Credibility. So the youth of Indian can play an important role to reduce the negative impact of social networking sites such as that it can be used in the beneficial way.

This research presented a descriptive survey of consequences of social networking in Bangladesh taking Facebook as an example. The research was conducted on a limited sample of youths aged between 18-28 years old, in a limited number of students of University of Dhaka situated in the capital city of Bangladesh. So, it needs to expand the sample geographically to encompass a variety of economic and social classes of young adultss, specifically with the increase in usage of SNSs in Bangla Language and the spread of new informal language in SMS and BBM that uses numbers and abbreviations.

Social media network is a rich area for research across different disciplines as sociology, psychology, political science. Research is needed to design policies to safeguard children in different stages of cognitive development.

Finally, cross cultural studies of social media networks can shed light on social differences in internet usage and social communication patterns in different societies.

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Annex

A. Self administered structured questionnaire for Participants:

Survey questionnaire on

Social Networking and the youth of the University of Dhaka: A Sociological Study

Dear participants,

I am a MSS 2nd semester student of the dept. of Sociology of the University of Dhaka. In partial fulfillment of my Masters degree, I have to prepare a thesis paper and undertaken the above mentioned research project. I seek your generous co-operation. Provided information by you will be kept strictly confidential and data will be used only for this academic research. If you have a Facebook account, and aged between 18 and 28, I would appreciate if you answer the questionnaire. You are requested to carefully write the correct answer that you believe to be. Thank you for your help.

PART I: Sample characteristics, Common Online usage habits, Perception of online risk:

QA1 Please mention your age _____

QA2 Please mention your gender: a. Male b. Female

QA3 Your average daily usage of internet:

- a. Always connected
- b. More than 4 hours
- c. 2-4 hours daily
- d. 1-2 hours daily
- e. Less than an hour
- f. Don't use internet per daily basis

QA4 You are using internet via (multiple answers acceptable):

- a. Broadband connection
- b. 3G or WiMax
- c. Free Wi-Fi
- d. Mobile phone
- e. Other, please mention _____

QA5 You are using internet mainly (multiple answers acceptable) __

- a. At home
- b. At a cyber café
- c. In University computer lab
- d. During boring class lectures
- e. In university but never during class lectures
- f. As long as you have a cellphone in your hand
- g. Other, please mention _____

QA6 Do you follow any personified rules while using internet?

- a. No b. Yes, please mention _____

QA7 What do you consider as harmful or risky when you are using internet (multiple answers acceptable)?

- a. Exposing to impolite websites / contents
b. Conversing with people you do not know
c. Adding people you do not know
d. Meeting people you do not know
e. Other, please specify _____

QA8 Have you ever exposed to undesired websites / contents that you suppose as inappropriate / harmful?

- a. Yes, mostly b. Sometimes by chance c. No, never

QA9 If yes or sometimes, how did you manage the risk (multiple answers acceptable)?

- a. Seek help from friends
b. I ask my parents or someone older or someone having better online experience about it
c. It upset me and I wish I have never seen it
d. I don't think too much about it and ignore the experience
e. I thought it was funny or cool
f. I pass it to my friends
g. Protested it's spread and took an attempt to stop it reaching other
h. Other, please mention _____

PART II: Perceptions and attitudes towards social media networks: Uses and gratifications of Facebook.

QB1 On a average day, you use Facebook for:

- f. Less than an hour b. About an hour c. Two to three Hours d. More than three hours e. I don't use my facebook account on daily basis

QB2 If you don't use your facebook account on daily basis, then when you do:

- a. You confirm heavy usage (like spending long time / hyper activity)
b. You just check notifications and inbox, then log out

QB3 Please state whether you always do each following activity on the net while using facebook, or sometimes you do it, or you rarely do it. (put a tick sign on specific box)

Activity	Always	Sometimes	Rarely
o. Make new friends	1	2	3
p. Find friends you've lost connection with	1	2	3
q. Know news of your friends	1	2	3
r. Chat	1	2	3
s. Conduct surveys or research	1	2	3
t. Express opinions freely via comment and status posting	1	2	3
u. Posting seifies and changing profile picture frequently	1	2	3
v. Sharing your favorites like videos, movie clips, songs	1	2	3
w. Upload photos and videos	1	2	3
x. E-mailing and FB messaging	1	2	3
y. Play FB online games	1	2	3
z. Letting people know my talents	1	2	3
aa. To create / join events and give a hand to the cause	1	2	3
bb. Group activities	1	2	3
cc. Other activity (specify please)			

QB4 While you are chatting on facebook, you___

- Take this as an opportunity to meet and know new people
- You always chat only with your FB friends whom you personally know offline
- You mostly chat with your FB friends and it does not matter whether you know them personally off line or they are just your virtual friend
- Other, please mention _____

QB5 Please state whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about Facebook:

Statement	Agree	Disagree	Neutral
h. Facebook has become an inseparable part of my social life	1	2	3
i. Facebook lets me express who I am	1	2	3
j. In Facebook, I can say what I want to say freely and sometimes what I can't say in person	1	2	3
k. Facebook helps me to know more people which sometimes is not possible in real life	1	2	3
l. I know more and get news quickly than I used to do before starting using Facebook	1	2	3
m. I open facebook during class lectures	1	2	3
n. I keep facebook open while doing my studies	1	2	3

QB6 Please state your opinion on following statements about using Facebook for personal communication and social interactivity purposes:

Statement	Agree	Disagree	Neutral
m. Using FB instead of SMS / phone / E-mail	1	2	3
n. I use FB instead of talking to someone directly / via phone	1	2	3
o. FB is the place where I make plans with my friends	1	2	3
p. FB is to keep in touch with	1	2	3
q. I use FB to congratulate my friends and relatives instead of talking to them directly or sending gifts	1	2	3
r. FB helps me to contact friends easily who are away	1	2	3
s. I use FB to know how others doing	1	2	3
t. FB lets me know if others doing better or worse than me	1	2	3
u. I like to see my friends' shared pictures	1	2	3
v. FB lets me know who is connected to who	1	2	3
w. I use FB to get information about known or unknown others I'm interested in	1	2	3
x. FB is a way to keep track on current events going on in my known and unknown world	1	2	3

QB7 As a pleasurable way to spend time, You use Facebook:

- To waste time – 1. Always 2. Sometimes 3. rarely
- You enjoy spending time with FB – 1. Always 2. Sometimes 3. Rarely
- Using FB when not wanting to study – 1. Always 2. Sometimes 3. Rarely

PART III. The Role played by Facebook in rising awareness and Group activities:

QC1 Number of groups you have joined via Facebook:

- 1-3
- 4-10
- more than 10
- I'm not interested in joining groups

QC2 You accepted invitations to join a group, because:

- Invitation comes from a friend
- Group name seemed interesting
- The group expresses the activity it is made for, well and they seemed well-active

- d. I also wanted to join and work for a great cause
 - e. It would help me to remain connected virtually to the groups / organizations / institutions I'm already a member of
 - f. Of Group study purpose
 - g. It helps me to remain connected to my department / batch mates from my University
 - h. Not interested to join groups on Facebook.
 - i. Other, please mention
-

QC3 Please state if any of these following activities you knew about or joined through a group formed in Facebook:

Statements	Always	Sometimes	Rarely
1. Organizing strikes and objections	1	2	3
7. Posting radical images, messages.	1	2	3
2. Cleaning the streets	1	2	3
3. Participating in public committees	1	2	3
4. Charity work	1	2	3
5. Signing for petitions	1	2	3
6. Sharing videos and spreading comments on the wall	1	2	3
8. Other activity, please specify			

QC4 Please state your opinion on following statements:

Statement	Agree	Disagree	Neutral
When I pass a message or an objection about an event or cause, I feel I have a role	1	2	3
Facebook made me do things on social purpose, I would never thought I can do	1	2	3
Facebook was the only media that encouraged me to raise voice on a cause or actively participate in events	1	2	3
I always follow the thread of comments shared by friends about events or causes I'm interested in	1	2	3
I open Facebook to know the news of daily social events and activities going on around me and globally	1	2	3
Facebook gave the feeling I am an important person in my society	1	2	3

B. Participants In-Depth Interview Guideline

In-depth Interview guideline for Participants

Theme 1: Youth's perception towards Social Networking

1. *Why do you use internet mainly for?*
2. *How do you like using SNSs?*
3. *Do you or your parents set any personified rules for using internet?*
4. *What do you consider as harmful or risky when you are using internet?*
5. *Why do you use Facebook mainly for?*
6. *Do you use Facebook Chat or Messaging options?*
7. *Can you please describe what Facebook means to you for me?*
8. *Please describe how you spend your time using Facebook (What do you do when you are using Facebook?)?*

Theme 2: Consequences of Social Networking on the social behavior of youth

1. *Have you ever exposed to any undesired content or websites that you consider inappropriate while using internet?*
2. *How did you manage the risk?*
3. *Ever faced any undesired situation while using Facebook that you consider as risky or uncomfortable for you?*
4. *What would you like to experience when you are using SNSs that will make you like it more?*
5. *What do you think government or responsible authorities should do to make your SNS experience more interesting so that you feel it as benefitting you?*
6. *Do you think you are experiencing a friendly community via social networking?
Why?*

7. *Do you wish your SNS friends appreciated you more than the real life friends in a face to face communication?*

Theme 3: The role of Social Networking sites in rising awareness among youth

1. *Are you engaged in group activities via Facebook or have you joined any event arranged via Facebook?*
2. *What kind of activities or events they have been?*
3. *Can you please describe that experience for me?*
4. *What kind of changes have occurred within yourself after joining these kind of activities or event?*
5. *Will you continue working for society or societal change this way in future?*

C. Consent form for participants

Consent Form for Participants

Title of the Research: Social Networking and the youth of the University of Dhaka: A Sociological Study

Principle Investigator:

Purpose of the research

Assalmualaiuk/adab, I am approaching to you for a brief research that I am doing as a component of my Masters in Sociology from Department of Sociology, Dhaka University. I am attempting to explore the consequences of social networking on the youth as per social structure of Bangladesh.

Purpose of Selection

I am considering you as one of my potential respondent since you have identified yourself as a young adult aging from 18 to 28 and a student of University of Dhaka having a Facebook account.

Expectation from the respondent

If you agree to participate I will give you a questionnaire which you will fill it out yourself. If you agree the questionnaire also asks for your phone number because I might select you for a follow up interview based on your willingness to participate.

The interview will take approximately 30-45 min.

Risks and benefits

There will no risk to you for participating in this study and / but directly or indirectly. The contact number I will collect will be only used for contacting you for a follow up interview. However, in neither situation the data will have any way of connecting the information you provide with your identity.

Privacy, anonymity and confidentiality

The data will not be shared with anyone else out of the research team (I and the research assistant). It will be kept confidential in a way that does not related to your identity.

All the formation collected from you will remain strictly confidential. We would be happy to answer your questions about the study and you are welcome to contact me.

Future use of information

Some of the information collected from this study may be kept for future use however in such cases information and data supplied to other researchers, will not conflict with or violate the maintenance of privacy, anonymity and confidentiality of information identifying participants in any way.

Right not to participate and withdraw

Your participation in study is voluntary, and you are the sole authority to decide for and against your participation in this study. Refusal to take part in the study will involve no penalty. If you agree to my proposal of enrolling yourself in my study, please indicate that by putting your signature the specified space below.

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

**Signature of Investigator
Participant**

Signature of Subject/

Date:

Ethical Approval Form

Date: _____

Examination Roll: 4099

Registration No: 5330

Session: 2012-13

Department of Sociology

Title of Thesis Topic: **Social Networking and the youth of the University of Dhaka: A Sociological Study**

- Source of population: Students of University of Dhaka
- Does the study involve (Yes, or No):
 1. Physical risk to the subjects – No
 2. Social risk – No
 3. Psychological risk to subjects - No
 4. Discomfort to subjects – No
 5. Invasion of privacy – No
- Will subjects be clearly informed about (Yes, or No):
 1. Nature and Purpose of the study - Yes
 2. Procedures to be followed - Yes
 3. Sensitive questions - Yes
 4. Benefits to be derived- Yes
 5. Right to refuse to participate or to withdraw from the study - Yes
 6. Confidential handling of data - Yes
 7. Compensation and/or treatment where there are risks or privacy is involved - Not Applicable
- Will verbal consent for be required (Yes, or No):
 1. From study participants - Yes
 2. Will precautions be taken to protect anonymity of subjects - Yes
- Check documents being submitted herewith to Committee:
 1. Consent Form
 2. Questionnaire or interview schedule