



## RESEARCH ARTICLE

### A Comparative Study on Gender -wise Social Media Utilization Behavior of Agricultural Students during Covid – 19

Jayabharathi D<sup>1</sup>, Karthikeyan C<sup>2\*</sup>, and Shantha Sheela M<sup>3</sup>

Department of Agricultural Extension and Rural Sociology, Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Coimbatore – 641 003

Corresponding author :karthikeyanextn@yahoo.com

#### ABSTRACT

Social media utilization behavior of youth has tremendously changed. There were major differences observed in boys' and girls' social media utilization behavior. Keeping this in mind, study was undertaken with the 1<sup>st</sup> year M.Sc. (Agriculture) students of Tamil Nadu Agricultural University. 50 students were taken as respondents for this study. The study focuses on analyzing gender-wise differences in social media utilization behavior. The variables considered for this study were experience in social media; most frequently used social media, duration, frequency, status-posting behavior, a suitable time for social media use, and money spent on social media. Nearly 88.8 percent of boys had more than five years of experience in social media. Among girls, 56.3 percent of girls had 3 – 4 years of experience in social media. Most of the boys (55.6%) used social media to make new relationships in their life. On the other hand, 93.8 percent of the girl respondents used social media to sustain their already established relationships in their life. Mostly 44.4 percent of boys considered that usage of social media affects their academic performance and then most of the girls (37.5%) respondents considered that usage of social media improved their academic performance. This study revealed some observable changes in the social media utilization behavior of boys and girls in the context of time spent on social media, experience in social media use, money spent on the internet, and types of content shared on social media. It was also observed that there exists some difference in the social media utilization behavior among boys and girls.

**Keywords:** Covid – 19; Gender; Social Media; Utilization pattern

#### INTRODUCTION

Social media is one of the essential tools of information and communication technology, which facilitates the users to share /her ideas, thoughts, feelings, and information through virtual networks. Social media mostly acts as an interactive technology that allows the users to create, share and exchange information with the help of virtual networks. The transformation in the technology of information and communication generation, processing, storage, and dissemination witnessed in the 21st century unprecedentedly opened-up new media platforms unmatched in history in terms of interconnectedness, interactivity, multiplicity, and accessibility (McQuail, 2005:38). An increasing number of social scientists are developing an interest in studying Social Networking Sites because of its impact on society. Further, the usage of SNS among the people of India is

increasing, particularly among Indian college students (Manjunatha, 2013). Social media assumes a fundamental part in changing an individual's way of life. Web-based media incorporates interpersonal interaction and websites where individuals can interface with one another without much of a stretch. Generally, it can be viewed that boys are much more likely to apply social media to be trying to find information, at the same time as girls use social systems to connect to people. SNS allows its users to become content creators and content consumers at the same time, thus allowing instant participation, sharing of thoughts or information and personalized communication (Child net International Research Report, 2008). Depending on the topics discussed by boys and girls, their social media utilization patterns differ. Research shows that social media utilization behavior had changed a lot during this corona period. This study mainly focused on finding out the difference in the social media utilization behavior of boys and girls of postgraduate students of Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU) during covid - 19.

## MATERIAL AND METHODS

This study was conducted with the first-year M.Sc. (Agriculture) students of Tamil Nadu Agricultural University. The total number of students were 215 girls and 129 boys is 344. Using the general formula for proportionate random sampling,

$$n_i = [N_i/N] * n$$

$n_i$  = Number of respondents to be selected from the  $i^{th}$  category of students

$N_i$  = Total number of respondents in the  $i^{th}$  category of students

$N$  = Total number of students

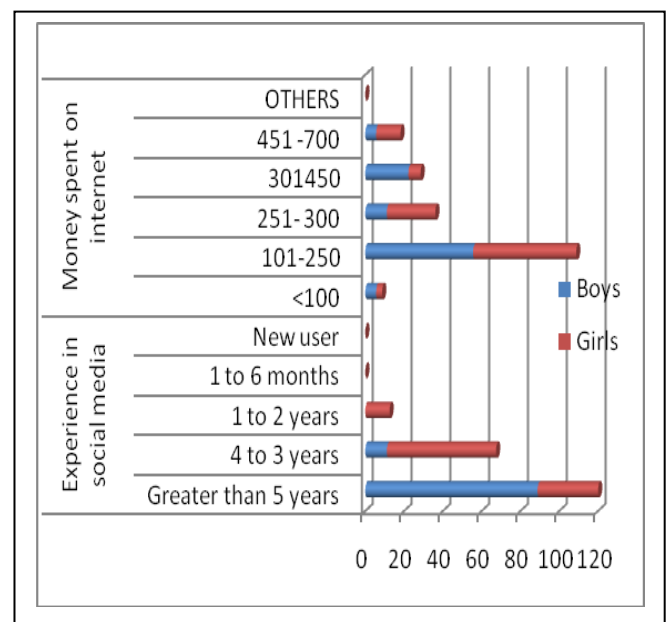
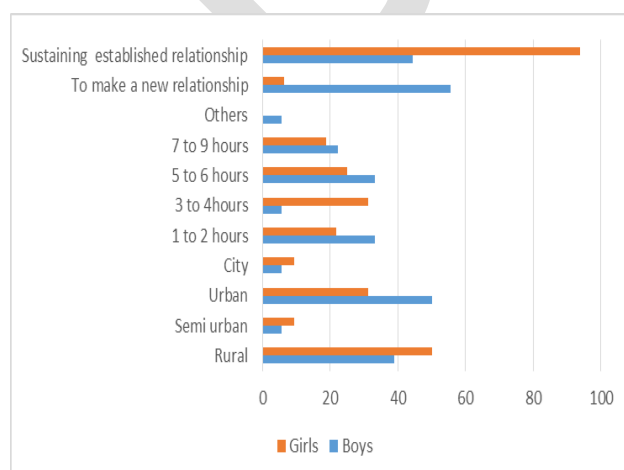
$n$  = Sample size

Fifty students were selected as the respondents for this study. This sample of 50 contains 18 boys and 32 girls. The researcher adopted an online data collection method (Google Forms) to collect the necessary data for this study. A questionnaire was prepared and sent to students' e-mail and Whatsapp. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as percentage analysis and frequency distribution. Variables considered for this study were gender, experience in social media, time spent, frequency, money spent, and purpose.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

From graph 1(a) it can be viewed that the majority of the boys (50%) belong to an urban area and only 5.6 percent of boys belong to the city and then the majority of the girls (50%) belong to a rural area. While considering the duration spent on the social media category, the majority of the boys (33.3%) spent 5-6 hours on social media, and consider that most of the girls (31.3%) spent 3-4 hours on the social media. The majority of the boy respondents, 55.6 percent of boys, are using social media to make new relationships in their lives. On the other hand, most of the girl respondents (93.8 %) used these social media platforms to maintain their established relationships in their life. From graph 1(b) while considering the social media experience criteria, most of the boys (88%) had more than five years of experience in social media. In girls, 56.3 % of girlshad 3-4 years of experience in social media. None of the respondents comes under 1-6 months and new user categories. Considering the money spent on the internet category, the majority of the boys (55.6%) spent 101-250 rupees on the internet and 53.1 percent of girls have spent 101-250 rupees on the internet.

**Graph 1 .Gender-wise social media utilization behavior is based on residential status, experience, duration, money spent, and personal use (n=50)**



From table 1(b), the majority of the boys (66.8%) used social media for entertainment purposes, while considering the girls, most of the girls that is 43.8 percentage, used it for entertainment purposes. Nearly 55.6 percent of the boys were constantly logged on social media but in the case of girls, nearly 75 percentage of the girls are logged on social media several times a day. Consider the form of content post criteria, in that majority of the boys (66.1%) and girls post pictures. This data showed that the majority of the boys (88.3%) liked to watch video forms of content on social media, in the case of girls, it was 5 percentage. Mostly 88.9 percent of boys and 93.8 percent of girls used smartphones to access social media. Most of the boys (8.3%) used to share abstract topics on social media, on the other hand, 53.1 percent of girls used to discuss personal issues on social media. Majority of the boys (55.6%) considered night as the most preferable time for social media usage and about 37.5 percentage of girls considered the night suitable for social media use.

**Table 1(b) Gender-wise social media utilization behavior based on general use, log on status, form, and types of content posted, preferable time, and device used (n=50)**

Social media utilization behavior		Boys(%)	Girls(%)
General-purpose	Education	22.2	37.5
	Entertainment	61.1	43.8
	Communication	5.6	18.8
	Research	11.1	0
Login status	Constantly log on	55.6	21.9
	Several times n a day	27.8	75
	Once in a few days	11.1	3.1
	Once a week	0	0
	Occasionally	5.6	0
Form of content posted	Text	22.2	15.6
	Pictures	61.1	78.1
	Videos	16.7	6.3
Types of content watched	Text	0	6.3
	Pictures	16.7	37.5
	Videos	83.3	56.3
Device used	Smartphone	88.9	93.8
	Laptop	5.6	6.3
	Tablet	5.6	0
Topics discussed	Personal issues	16.7	53.1
	Abstract topics	88.3	46.9
Preferable time for social media use	Morning	5.6	6.3
	Afternoon	11.1	18.8
	Evening	27.8	38.5
	Night	55.6	37.5

From table 1. (C), it can be viewed that English and vernacular languages were considered as the preferable language by the majority of the boys (4.4%) and girls (53.1%). Nearly 55.6 percent of the boys had trust in the privacy policy of social media and mostly 61.1 percent of boys have enabled all the privacy policies. On the other hand, the majority of the girls (56.3%) had trust in the privacy policy of social media, and the majority of the girls

(62.5%) enabled the privacy policy of social media. Nearly 66.7 percent of boys felt that they are addicted to social media and 59.4 percent of girls revealed that they are addicted to social media. Considering the social media towards academic performance criteria, most of the boys (44.4%) considered that social media affects their academic performance, and most (37.5%) of girls considered that social media improves their academic performance. The majority of the boys (44.4) used to post one post per day and the majority of the girls (43.8%) used to post only one status per day.

**Table 1. (c), Gender-wise social media utilization behavior based on preferable language, trust in the privacy policy, usage of social media during class, social media towards academic performance, addiction to social media.**

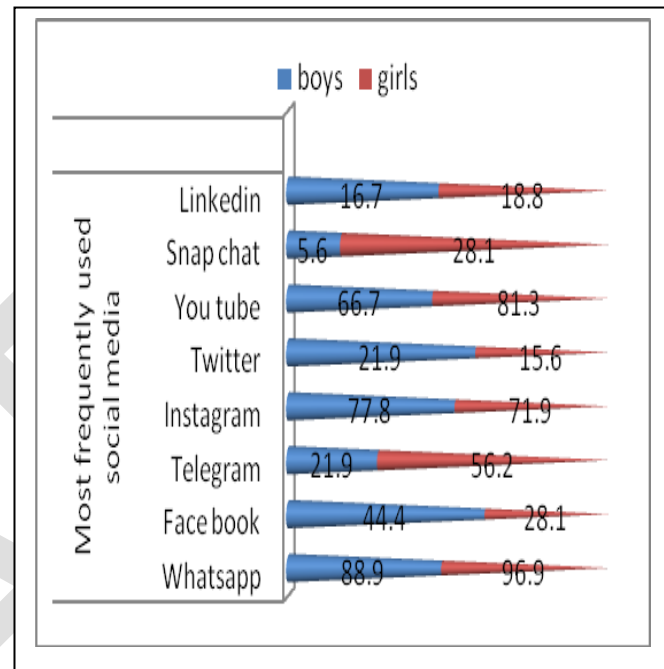
Social media utilization behavior		Boys(%)	Girls(%)
Preferable language	English	38.9	43.8
	Vernacular	16.7	3.1
	English + Vernacular	44.4	53.1
Trust in the privacy policy	Yes	44.4	56.3
	No	55.6	43.8
Enable privacy policy	Yes	61.1	62.5
	No	38.9	37.5
Social media usage during class	Yes	66.7	31.3
	No	33.3	68.8
Social media towards academic performance	Improves	22.2	37.5
	Affects	44.4	34.4
Status posting behavior	Yes	61.1	50.0
	No	38.9	40.6

Table 1. (d) shows that most of the boys (38.9%) are used to posting less than five posts per week. On the other hand, the majority of the girls (78.1%) used to post less than five posts per week. About 61.1 percent of boys preferred to post their photos on social media, and 71.9 percent of girls did not prefer to post their status on social media. While considering the most frequently social media usage, most of the boys (88.9%) used WhatsApp followed by Instagram (77.8%). On the other hand, 96.9 percent of girls used WhatsApp as their first preference, followed by youtube (81.3%). Compared with girls majority of the boys preferred to use social media during class, as revealed in this study.

**Table 1(d) Gender-wise social media utilization behavior based on the number of posts/week, preference to post photos, most frequently used social media**

Social media utilization behavior		Boys Percentage	Girls Percentage
Number of posts per week	Less than 5	38.9	78.1
	5 TO 15	5.6	9.4
	16 TO 30	16.7	0
	31 TO 50	11.1	0
	Others	27.8	12.5
Preference to post photos	Yes	61.1	28.1
	No	38.9	71.9
New social media during the pandemic	Yes	44.4	46.9
	No	55.6	53.1
Covid related information sharing	yes	50	53.1
	No	50	46.9
Frequency of post	Always	5.6	3.1
	Never	27.8	34.4
	Sometimes	66.7	62.5
Use of covid related apps	Yes	55.6	46.9
	No	44.4	53.1



## CONCLUSION

When social media experiences are considered, boys had more experience than girls. Regarding criteria like duration, log-on status, boys spent more time on social media compared with girls. The study revealed that male respondents mainly visit social media daily and female respondents have a high level of social networking site visit twice a week (Thanuskodi Shanmugam, 2013). The majority of the girls used social media to share personal issues and sustain their established relationships, whereas boys used social media to discuss abstract topics and create new relationships. The results of this study was similar to that of the study conducted by Saranya (2017). A higher percentage of boys preferred nighttime to use social media, while girls preferred evening time. Compared with boys majority of the girls did not prefer to post their photos on social media. The most frequently used social media by boys are Whatsapp and Instagram. Girls preferred WhatsApp and youtube. Thus the study concludes that there exist more differences in the social media utilization behavior between post-graduate agricultural boys and girls.

## Ethics statement

Specific permits were not required for the above field studies because no human or animal subjects were

Involved in this research.

**Consent for publication**

All the authors agreed to publish the content.

**Competing interests**

There was no conflict of interest in the publication of this content.

**Data availability**

All the data of this manuscript are included in the manuscript. No separate external data source is Required. If anything is required from the manuscript, certainly, this will be extended by communicating With the corresponding author through corresponding official mail

**REFERENCE**

Anonymous. cQuail, D.2005. McQuail's Mass Communication Theory. Fifth Edition London. SAGE Publications Ltd.

Anonymous. 2008. Young People and Social Networking Services: A Child net International Research Report.

Manjunatha S. 2013. The Usage of Social Networking sites Among College Students in India. *Int. Res. J. Social Sci.* **2(5)**: 15-21.

Saranya, S .2017. An Empirical Study on the Usage Pattern of Social Media Among youths with reference to Bangalore city, *The Inter. J. Social Science .*, **6(1)**: 2251 1571.

Thanuskodi Shanmugam .2013. Gender Differences in Internet Usage Among College Students: A Comparative Study, *e-Lib. Sci. Res.Jou.* ,**3(6)** : 2319-8435.

DRAFT