

**Social networking applications and employees' performance**  
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**Abstract**

*This study will help the organizations understand the relationship between employee performance and use of social networking applications. As organizations are recruiting young professionals who excessively use these applications, this research will help them form policies which will help in maintaining the limitations regarding the use of these applications within working hours. Technology is evolving at a fast pace making remarkable advancements that are not easy to gauge by an ordinary human mind. Among them, one of the latest advents of technology are social networking applications (SNAs) that have redesigned the structure of human communication. The objective of this study was to investigate the impact of social networking applications on the performance of employees in the workplace. It was conducted using quantitative method and the primary data was collected using questionnaires that aimed to assess employees' inclination towards the use of communication applications for their daily work purposes and how it affects their performance. Convenience sampling method was used for conducting the survey. The results explained that the employees consider these communication applications useful for the accomplishments of various tasks related to their jobs. The multiple regression and regression coefficient shows that there is great interdependency between use of social networking application and its influence on employees' productivity. The standard error of multiple estimate is 4.6571. It was also concluded using these applications will bring a positive change in employees' productivity.*

**Keywords:** Social networking applications, employees performance, impact, quantitative research

**Introduction**

Technology is evolving at a fast pace making remarkable advancements that are not easy to gauge by an ordinary human mind. According to Nauman & Hussain (2014), all the aspects and domains of human life have been swayed by the vibrant technology in the modern day globalized world. One of the latest advents of technology are social networking applications (SNAs) that have redesigned the structure of human communication. According to Raja (2013), "Communication has become one of the markers of social solidarity, social ranking and professional capabilities and most of the components of the language are learnt through this medium" (p. 154). Nauman & Hussain (2017) also assert that "communication is indispensable in any organization to run everyday business" (4). SNAs have changed the dynamics of modern day communication and they have connected people from different parts of the world. They have reduced communication barriers and have provided a platform which unites people (Ali, 2015). Similarly, Kishokumar

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(2016) asserts that social networking applications have introduced a new form and medium of how individuals connect to each other around the globe; as a result, they have become a prominent business development of the current century. According to Kishokumar (2016), they are an online channel of communication which enable people to develop relationships, exchange notions, transfer knowledge and bind society in an emotional stream. People share their feelings and emotions on social networking websites; they link to different sources on these websites to have updates for all the current world affairs, new trends, news and entertainment, etc. SNAs are not only influencing young generation but also influencing people from varied age group. The increasing use of the smartphone technology has also empowered the employees to use these gadgets for their work purposes and has affected their performance. It has also helped them communicate in a structured way, acquire information and provide feedback promptly.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this study is to investigate whether social networking application (SNAs) influence employee's performance in terms of motivation, efficiency and effectiveness.

### **Scope**

This report focuses on the prospects of how the advancements in the (SNAs) have impacted the overall performance of employees in terms of their interaction with the fellow workers and clear understanding of the tasks that are assigned to them.

### **Method of Investigation**

The study was conducted using quantitative method adopting survey research. A questionnaire consisting of 15 close-ended questions was designed to collect the primary data for this study.

### **Significance**

This study will help the organizations understand the relationship between employee performance and use of social networking applications. As organizations are recruiting young professionals who excessively use these applications, this research will help them form policies which will help in maintaining the limitations regarding the use of these applications within working hours. This study will also help in cultivating new strategies regarding employee motivation, productivity, etc. It will also aid the organization in understanding whether the use of these applications make the employees happier and motivated towards their work or it creates distraction for the employees in their work.

### **Literature Review**

Social networking applications are widely used by employees at their workplace. Gavigan, Ottitsch, & Mahroum (1999) define social networking as engaging oneself with a group of connected individuals via socially meaningful relationships. Among various used social networks, Facebook is widely used across the world. Initially, it was designed for students, but later it gained popularity and it is now used both professionally and personally. According to Caers et al (2013), the introduction and upsurge of Facebook has been the most significant social trends of the past decade. Another social networking application, that is used rather professionally, is LinkedIn. Professionals from all disciplines use this application to connect themselves within a preferred professional environment. Skeels & Grudin (2009) state that the usage of LinkedIn among professionals is growing dramatically. Similarly, Gerard (2011) reports that there has been a

dramatic rise in the membership of the LinkedIn online community. It is one of the most popular and extensively used social networking application for prospective employers and prospective employees which makes it the foremost online professional network in the world (Adam, 2013). Another popular social networking application is Twitter. Kwak, Lee, Park & Moon (2010) define Twitter as a microblogging application which has demonstrated exponential dramatic growth. It allows individuals to keep a track of each other and to 'tweet' within the limit of one hundred and forty character (Curran, O'Hara, & O'Brien, 2011). Another very commonly used social networking application is WhatsApp which is an information sharing application. It allows a free of cost exchange of videos, instant messages, calls and pictures. It is one of the most widely utilized application for information sharing on smartphones (Montag et al, 2015). According to Church & Oliveira (2013), WhatsApp enables smartphone users to exchange information, pictures, videos with individuals or groups free of cost. Use of such applications affect the employees' productivity, therefore literature is reviewed to establish the relationship between social networking application usage and employee productivity and the variables which influence employee productivity due to the use of social media.

Munene and Nyaribo (2013) examine the extent to which employees use social media and its effects on employees' productivity. A sample of population was randomly selected from the population who has internet connectivity at their workplace. Analysis of variance (ANOVA) and Person's correlation was used to determine the relationship between the variables. Questionnaire was used for primary data collection. The questionnaire consisted of 19 open and close-ended questions. The research found both positive and negative relationship between social media participation and employee productivity. The findings of this research concluded that if the social media participation is not well managed, it will lead to the loss in employee productivity. The negative relationship; however, found to be stronger as employees spend most of their time on social media enhancing their personal networks. Whereas positive relationship between these variables is in such a way that employees use social media for seeking and viewing general information. However, this study also proposes that use of social media by the employees causes addiction to it which in return causes distraction for the employees and effects employee productivity and restrains the employee from achieving his goal.

On the other hand, Ashraf and Javed (2014) propose their finding regarding the impact of social networking application on employee performance. They represented that how the use of these application affect the productivity, knowledge, skills, productivity and motivational level of employees of banks. Data collection is done from different banks in order to present the real scenario. Correlation and regression analysis is done for primary collected data. Two hypotheses are presented in this research. The methodology for conducting research is through survey using questionnaire samples. 70 samples were distributed out of which 50 were correctly completed questionnaire. The data showed positive correlation between social networking and four factors of employee performance (productivity, skills, knowledge and motivation). The correlation analysis supported and accepted the 1<sup>st</sup> hypothesis which stated that there is positive relationship between use of social networking and employee's performance Results from regression analysis also showed that dimension of skills learning was 63.9%, gaining knowledge was 48%, productivity was 38.4% and motivational level increase was 64.6%.

Similarly, Kandiero, Mpanwa and Jagero (2014) in their study examined, with the help of case study the impact of social networking on employee productivity and organizational performance at Econet Wireless in Zimbabwe. This study analyzed the link between social networking and employee productivity as well as organizational performance. A sample of 140 employees was selected for the collection of primary data. The findings indicated that workplace productivity can be improved by social networking if communication and collaboration among employees is enhanced. It will also aid the transference of knowledge among employees.

Aguenza, Al-Kareem and Mat Som (2012) proposed in their study that organizations are changing rapidly in terms of communication. The purpose of the study was to examine the relevance of social media to employee productivity, discuss the significance, challenge and constraints of social media at workplace. Employees who use social media at workplace are better in terms of interacting and have higher problem solving capability. It also proposes that use of social media is the best source for collection of data. Social media also plays an important role for organizational success; it acts as a beneficial marketing tool for the organization to reach to the potential employees. Social media also act as a beneficial tool in recruitment of employees because it provides an online platform for the organizations to recruit employees with less recruitment cost and more effective recruitments in terms of employee productivity. In the study challenges and constraints regarding use of social media at workplace were also discussed. It examined some risks related to the use of such sites that it increases the leakage of data while employees gossiping in free and open environment; it decreases the productivity of staff; and it also sometimes causes damage to the reputation of the organization. Due to excessive use of social media during working hours has also caused wastage of time due to which in many organizations the use of social media is banned or limited under employers' supervision.

Yeshambel, Belete and Muluaem (2016) conducted a study to find the extent of use of social media by employees at University of Gondar and its effects on their productivity. They conducted their research through Analytical Research. Primary data was collected with the help of questionnaire. The population of their study consisted of employees that visited social networking websites during the period of their study. Stratified sampling was used while the sampling of population and collection of data. 250 participants were selected at random. Data was collected during the period of 2 months. Questionnaire consists of 10 major close-ended questions. Descriptive data analysis was used for analysis and interpretation of the data. Analysis of Variance, frequency, person's correlation and chi- square was used for the analysis and interpretation of data in order to find the extent and degree of relationship between variables. The study found both positive and negative relationship between variables such as social media participation and employee productivity. The negative relationship found to be stronger as 68.4 % of employees use social media for personal network enhancement. 86% of employees use social media while their working hours. There is also positive relationship between these variables as employees use social media for seeking, sharing and viewing work related information. It concluded that employees at workplace use social media for both work related and non- work related activities.

According to Ouye (2011), social networking applications have been developing into betterment and they have been involved in people's life who use them for both social and professional purposes. There have been researches trying to prove the negative effect of such

technology's use in the work-place. It claims to have the potential to lower the productivity. That it garners an effect of unrealistic themes, leads the home issues into the office and over all stresses a worker. In addition to all that, a person forgets the social etiquette. But it is simply impossible for companies to prohibit the use of smartphones, they can never mandate such a policy because as time passes; it gets out of question. CEOs and corporate leaders must motivate and encourage the employees to use their devices for the company's betterment, and invent ways to do so. Institutional places, organizations or companies need to start adapting to the changes this world is welcoming.

Although studies showed correlation between the use of novel technologies and the performance of employees, it is probable that situational facets may impact upon the relationship, for example, the explicitness of responsibilities and tasks characteristics (Fried and Ferris, 1987), workplace stressors (Jackson and Schuler, 1985; Spector and Jex, 1998), perceived organizational support (Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002), and leader behavior (Gerstner and Day, 1997).

### **Hypothesis**

**H1)** There is effective relationship between use of social networking application and employee productivity.

**H2)** There is no influence of social networking application on employee performance.

### **Methodology**

#### **Method**

The study was conducted using quantitative research method regarding current issue of relationship between social networking applications and employee productivity. Muijs (2010) defines quantitative research as a method that explains phenomena through the collection of numerical data that is later analyzed with the help of statistics.

#### **Sample**

The study was conducted with 500 professionals working for different organizations in Karachi using convenience sampling. According to Dörnyei (2007), convenience sampling is nonrandom where sample is drawn from population on the basis of accessibility, geographical proximity or participants' willingness.

#### **Data collection tool**

The procedure that was used to carry out the study included questionnaires consisting of 15 close-ended questions as primary data collection tool. It consisted of 3 sub-sections, i.e.

- 1- Socio-Demographic profile of respondent
- 2- Social Networking habits of employee
- 3- Skill derived from social networking application

#### **Data analysis**

The data was analyzed using regression analysis, sample testing for mean, standard deviation and variance.

**Findings**

This section summarizes the findings of the study that investigated how the usage of social networking applications affect the productivity of employees in their work places.

**PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS**

**Table 1:**

Categories	Male	Female
<b>Age</b>		
<b>20-40</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>140</b>
<b>40-50</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>60</b>
<b>50&lt; above</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Designation</b>		
<b>Manager</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>60</b>
<b>Employee</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>140</b>

The above table shows the

SOCIO DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS, which concludes that among the age of 20-40 there were 200 males and 140 females, among the age group 40-50, there were 80 males and 60 females and above the age of 50 there were 20 males and no females who filled this questionnaire. The designation of respondents was 80 males and 60 female managers and 220 male employees and 140 female employees working within the organization.

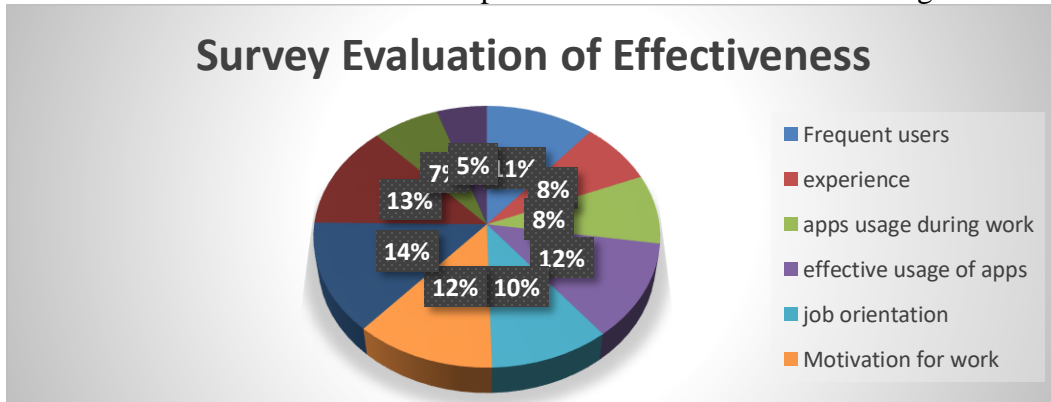
**EVALUATION OF SURVEY**

**Table 2:**

Categories	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Frequent users</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>90</b>
<b>experience</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>110</b>
<b>apps usage during work</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>70</b>
<b>effective usage of apps</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>job orientation</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>130</b>
<b>Motivation for work</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Helpful in working</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>None of it matters</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>80</b>
<b>skill development</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>60</b>
<b>effect on productivity</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>180</b>

The above table shows the frequency where 1 is the highest and 5 is the lowest which shows that

- 1) There are 130 most frequent user of social media app and 90 employees who use these apps very rarely during working hours.
- 2) The most frequent users usually spend 100 hours on social networking websites and the least of them use it for 70 or less than this during their work hours.
- 3) While the effectiveness shows that most frequent users of social networking websites tends to be less effective than those who use to spend less time of social networking websites.



**Regression Coefficients:**

The multiple regression equation is of the general form

$$Y = a + b_1X_1 + b_2X_2 + \dots + b_kX_k$$

where **a** is a starting-point constant analogous to the intercept<sub>2</sub> in a simple two-variable regression, and **b<sub>1</sub>**, **b<sub>2</sub>**, etc., are the unstandardized regression weights for X<sub>1</sub>, X<sub>2</sub>, etc., each analogous to the slope in a simple two-variable regression. In the present<sub>2</sub> analysis, **a** = 4.1828 and the values of **b** are as indicated below. The values listed as **B** are the standardized regression weights.<sub>2</sub>

	<b>b</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>B x r<sub>xy</sub></b>
<b>X1</b>	-0.4925	-0.4371	0.0201
<b>X2</b>	0.5475	0.6065	0.0507
<b>X3</b>	-0.3489	-0.2848	-0.0137
<b>X4</b>	0.7904	0.7739	0.1752
Multiple <b>R<sup>2</sup></b> = 0.2324			
Adjusted Multiple <b>R<sup>2</sup></b> = 0			

Standard Error of Multiple Estimate	4.6571
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**ANOVA Table<sub>2</sub>**

Source	SS	df	MS	F	P
<b>Regression</b>	65.6571	4	16.4143	0.45	0.7703
<b>Residual</b>	216.8884	6	36.1481		
<b>Total</b>	282.5455	10			

Names of Variables:

- X1. Frequent users
- X2. Experience
- X3. apps usage during work
- X4. effective usage of apps
- Y. job orientation

The analysis of data shows that productivity if the employees who use social networking websites frequently during their working hours get strongly affected. The use of these websites influences their performance, timely completion of tasks and job orientation. The independent variables are how frequent users are, experience, apps usage during work, effective usage of apps whereas the dependent variable is job orientation and employee productivity. The multiple regression is 0.2324 whereas regression co-efficient is 65.65 % which shows there is great interdependency between use of social networking application and its influence on employee productivity. The standard error of multiple estimate is 4.6571. The greater the use of these applications during working hours the greater the influence on employee productivity. There are also some other independent factors which influences employees' productivity such as laziness, health, mental state, emotions etc.

### **Discussion and analysis**

The modern day smartphone has everything in the palm of the customers. The interesting fact comes up when thinking about its use in the horizons of an organization. The organizational boundaries have expanded and the use of smart phones has enabled the employees to think bigger than ever. The results of a study conducted by Kishokumar (2016) discovered that the use of social networks at work helped employees improve their performance. According to Pitichat (2013), Smartphones helps building relationships not only among peers but with and among superiors as well. The participants disclosed in the questionnaires that the use of smartphone applications is one of the principle requirements today in their workplace. The study found out that the management indulges in using the applications like Viber, WhatsApp and Skype for interacting with the employees. Zielinski (2012) reports that "Business leaders find that offering greater



choice in work technologies can boost productivity and satisfaction levels of most employee generation” (p.71). The survey unveiled the numbers that support the fact that the response rate reaches at its maximum level as the smart social networking applications make it easy to respond fast and promptly. The employees can be tracked by the application itself as if they have seen the message or not. The results of a study conducted by Ferreira, and Du Plessis (2009) revealed that technology can be used to increase collaboration between individuals who share a common interest or goal. The survey indicated that the smartphone applications contribute in constructing a well-connected work environment in the premises of organization as the employees use the highly integrated system of communication established by the applications. These applications remove the communication barriers at almost no cost. The employees majorly agreed to the fact that they receive day to day useful information frequently on their phones along with that of any important event like presentations or others.

The other side of the coin says that the usage of the smartphone communication applications has accentuated the immoral side of human behavior. The convenience associated with the applications has made it possible to violate work ethics as indicated by a healthy percentage that affirmed and another that decided to choose neutral aspect of the question. The organizations have been combating with the ethical dilemmas since the very day of their existence but the technology has even worsened the entire situation. The exchange of contact numbers has made it in the easy reach of every individual employee, with whom others are bound to work, to misuse the information and even cause the workplace harassment. The study also found out that the irrelevant information shared by the colleagues impacts the performance at the workplace in a bad way. The focus gets disturbed and the employees get distracted. The performance is affected in ways that also harm the organizational goals and objectives. The employees feel less motivated to work after receiving such content and it is hard to concentrate again. However, Griffin (2017) reports that chief executive officers and corporate leaders should encourage the application of smartphones among their employees as tools. An inappropriate act using social networking applications on an employees’ part would be a good indicator that that the employee might not have been the right addition to the team.

## **Conclusion**

The study aimed to investigate the impacts of social networking applications on the performance of employees in the workplace such as Gmail, Skype and WhatsApp, Facebook, etc. The findings suggest that the use of social networking application enhances the productivity of employees as there is greater number of employees using social apps for longer time at work than those who are not frequent users and use it for 3 to 4 hours or less than that. Out of 500 there are 150 employees who say that use of social applications is effective for them and 50 of them say that it is not effective. There are 140 employees who say that use of social apps provides motivation at work while 10 employees out of 500 says that it is not a means of motivation. The use of social networking applications proves to be helpful in working for 160 employees and 30 of them says that it is not helpful. It also helps in skill development according to 80 employees, while we have 60 employees who say that there is lowest effect on skill development. 180 employees say that there is highest effect on productivity while 60 of them says that there is lowest effect on

productivity. Hence, it can be concluded that social networking websites increase the productivity of employees at work. It enhances their presentation skills and it provides them motivation.

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