

NEEDS GRATIFICATION OF PASHTUNS OF KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA THROUGH FACEBOOK AND TWITTER USE

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Abstract:

The birth of information communication technology and the switch over of the world societies from traditional mass media to social media for satisfaction of their needs have become the focus of research in the field of mass communication. Researchers around the globe have been found engaged in studying the phenomena with the spectacles of their respective societies. This particular study is an attempt to address the issue in the context of Pashtuns of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The study aims at measuring different needs the users satisfy from Facebook and Twitter use. The study is purely quantitative in nature and makes use of survey method for collection of data from the sample. Uses and gratification approach provided theoretical foundation to this research paper. Results indicate that both Facebook and Twitter satisfy information, social interaction and entertainment needs of the respondents.

Key words: needs; gratification; Pashtuns; Khyber Pakhtunkhwa; Facebook; Twitter.

Introduction:

The emergence of social networking sites in the latter part of 1990s changed the complexion of communication behaviour of people all over the world. People started switching over from traditional mass media like newspapers, radio and television to social media. Consequently this new media became very powerful in a short span of time. The fact that the first social networking site “sixdegree.com” was created in 1997 and today they are in thousands, testifies its popularity.

The most popular social networking sites in Pakistan are reckoned to be Facebook and Twitter. The interfaces of these two sites are somehow different from each other with respect to their features and specifications. These social networking sites were initially used as a hobby but with the passage of time it became an addiction. The young folk in particular, make use of Facebook and Twitter for multifarious purposes like seeking and sharing information, social interaction and entertainment (Boyd & Ellison 2007).

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This study is estimated to be the first of its kind in Pakistan in line with comparing needs gratification obtained by Pashtuns of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) from the two popular social networking sites - Facebook and Twitter. The study aims at measuring gratification of information, social interaction and entertainment needs. The key objectives of the study include:

- I. To measure the needs Pashtuns of KP satisfy from Facebook and Twitter use
- II. To explore gender differences with regard to satisfaction of needs from the usage of Facebook and Twitter
- III. To compare the level of gratifications obtained by Pashtuns of KP from Facebook and Twitter usage.

Review of Literature

The use of information communication technology has become commonplace of the youth around the globe. The western societies, especially, the US citizens have been using internet since 1990. But beginning of the 21st century marked a revolutionary change in the arena of this digital facility. The mushroom growth of social networking sites contributed a lot to the attraction of the young around the globe towards the technology. University students in particular, around the world are observed to be the early adopters of the technology (Castells 2001; Quan-Hasse 2008). Young generation usually spent a lot more time using social media for satisfaction of various needs (Livingstone & Bober 2005). Around 49% of the young users are found to use these sites for satisfaction of information and social interaction needs (Ofcom, 2008; Dowdall, 2009). Likewise, over 20% of the Americans make use of social media for interaction with friends, 83% for entertainment and 69% for information sharing (Lenhart, Rainie, & Lewis, 2001).

Facebook

Facebook is considered to be the most popular site around the globe. The worldwide monthly active users of Facebook are estimated as 1.94 billion (Facebook, March 2017). It has been found that 97% of the internet users make use of social media with 90% of them using Facebook (Smith & Rainie 2008). According to the findings of the report of Australian Psychological Society (2010), among 97% social media Australian users, 95% make use of Facebook. Whereas, Connolly (2011) found the number of regular Facebook users to be approximately 250 million. These statistics speak of its world-wide popularity.

The popularity of Facebook can be ascertained from its rapid growth in the number of consumers. It was estimated that until 2009, the number of active users of Facebook were crossing over 90 million (Hendrix, Chiarella, Hasman, Murphy, & Zafron, 2009). In the early part of 2012, Safko has estimated the number of active users as well over 800 million (Safko 2012) and till June 2012, the numbers of active users of Facebook rose to 955 million around the globe (Facebook, 2012).

Facebook was founded in Harvard University by Mark Zuckerberg, Chris Hughes, Dustin Moskovitz, and Eduardo Saverin in 2004 as a network for students to connect with their friends around campus and exchange information and contents. Initially aimed at serving the Harvard University students only, it took no time in expanding

to other colleges and then to universities of the region (Abdulahi, Samadi & Gharleghi, 2014). According to Facebook founder, Mark Zuckerberg, the sharing of contents and connecting of people around the clock with much ease and with great control over their contents were the notions behind establishing Facebook (Zuckerberg 2011).

Facebook has penetrated so deep into the souls and minds of the youth that its use has become an indispensable component of their lives and they cannot even think of life without it (Debatin, Lovejoy, Horn, & Hughes, 2009).

Christofides, Muise, & Desmarais, (2010) in a study found that young users spend more time using Facebook than elderly users whereas; elderly users were having more Facebook friends and were making use of the site for social interaction more than the young users. Dhaha & Igale (2013) also found that 31% users spend 1-2 hours a day on Facebook with majority of them using the site for gratification of escape, entertainment, information, and pastime needs. Another study also produced similar results. The study suggested that 80% of Facebook users obtain satisfaction of social interaction and communication needs from its usage (Hargittai 2008).

Pempek, Yermolayeva & Calvert (2009) revealed that students make use of Facebook for 47 minutes a day. Most of the students use it at evening during the timings from 9:00 PM to 12:00 AM mid-night. They spend almost half an hour daily for interaction and communication with other users. The study also found that younger students make use of Facebook more frequently than older students and engage themselves in communication with others.

Likewise, Sheldon (2008) noted that females make use of social networking sites like Facebook more often for interaction with family and old friends, for pastime, and entertainment. Male users on the other hand use these sites mostly to find out new friendship relationships. According to another study, 82% of Facebook users login to it several times daily. The study found that Facebook is basically used by youth to strengthen friendship bond with existing friends irrespective of whether they live near to them or far away and to help find new friends. According to the findings of the study, it is Facebook that facilitates user to interact with so many people spontaneously. Similarly, the usage of Facebook was found helpful in observing activities of other users, especially, of those offline friends who were not in constant touch with each other in real life situations. The same researchers note that communication through Facebook is part of two way traffic. During this information trafficking, lots of contents are exchanged among users which let them gratify their needs of information and being part of social networking community (Quan-Haase & Young 2010). More similar results were indicated by Special & Li-Barber (2012) when they found that maintaining relationship was the main motivation behind Facebook usage, followed by pastime, entertainment, connecting with old friends, searching new friends, and information sharing.

Twitter

Twitter is one of the social networking sites that facilitate people to connect and communicate with each other. Twitter let its consumers to receive and disperse contents within no time. The short messages of maximum of forty characters that are delivered through Twitter are known as “Tweets” while the responses received through Twitter are called as “Re-Tweets” (Moody, 2010). Those users who have signed up to receive tweets are known as followers. The saying of Twitters’ founder Dorsey is worth mention with regard to the importance of tweets. In 2007 he stated “one could change the world with one hundred and forty characters” (Kerr, 2010).

Started in March of 2006 by Jack Dorsey, Noah Glass, Evan Williams, and Biz Stone, Twitter gained global popularity, with over 200 million users sending over 200 million tweets and 1.6 billion searches per day (Safko 2012). It has been estimated that there are 317 million monthly users around the world (Twitter, January, 2017).

Distinctive features of Twitter are instant messaging and text messaging generally known as micro-blogging. These features help users to disseminate and receive information about socio-political and economic events and to exchange ideas with regard to issues of mutual concerns. This “micro-blogging” facility has won many awards for Twitter since its inception. In 2008, twitter came almost parallel to that of Google in providing news and giving quick results (Kerr, 2010). Its aptness as a tool for breaking news has stimulated the BBC and the CNN to present “Twitter feeds” (Martin & Erickson 2013). Twitter has the sole privilege of attracting political figures and personalities. The sharing of messages and exchange of information by making use of Tweets has become a norm of the day of the users from all walks of life.

Growing popularity of Twitter can best be estimated with figures mentioned in the succeeding lines. In 2009, number of tweets per day was more than 2.5 million whereas, number of tweets rose to 50 million in 2010 (Learmonth, 2010). Number of Twitter users is also increasing day by day. Twitter is gaining around 3 million users a day around the globe (Brown 2010). Connolly (2011) noted that there are 15 million regular users of Twitter. The estimated value of Twitter allocated by JP Morgan in the first quarter of 2011 was worth 4.5 billion dollars (Gobry 2011).

The News of Bin Laden death on May 2, 2011 on Twitter increased its popularity further. On average, around 3000 tweets per second were reported on that very day (Richmond, 2011). Twitter usually provides a suitable platform for discussions on certain burning issues.

According to Brown, Twitter has more than 600 million searches on daily basis which indicates that gratification of information need through Twitter usage is the top priority of the users (Brown 2010). Quick passing of information through tweets and retweets is one of the key characteristics of Twitter. As mentioned by Kwak, Lee, Park, & Moon (2010), that information through a ‘retweeted tweet’ reach to 1,000 users on average. Such a facility of spreading and sharing of information instantly with numerous people has never been enjoyed by users before the emergence of this technology. Twitter has been used by people, especially high

profile personalities for catering to their fans through discussions on various topics of public concern. Volumes of areas are available for public debates. Most of such topics are taken from important stories of the day. As noted by Kwak et.al, (2010), more than 85% of the topics discussed by Twitter users are abstracted from major news or follow up stories. Asserting this, Moody has rightly mentioned that the provision of links to important key stories and sites is one of the striking features of Twitter (Moody 2010). It is not all over here, Twitter has been providing another facility of connecting people through instant messaging and texting. This capacity of sending text messages on Twitter is aiding a new dimension to freedom of expression. It has been found that people disclose almost everything they have in their mind when they happen to do texting. The same people show reluctance in speaking of their minds openly when they are in face to face settings. This feature tends to develop what Reid and Reid (2007) phrased as “brave SMS self.”

One of the gender based studies with regard to usage of Twitter found that female users make use of texting to create new identities, while male users do texting to interact with their friends and share their feelings (Lin & Tong, 2007). Similarly, another study investigated that 56% of the female users make use of tweets on weekly basis. Twitter has grown into a public sphere where people make debates on important issues and give way to a narrative about what is happening around them in real life. This networking site allows its users to discuss ‘popular culture’ in a “rapid back and forth environment” (Bernoff, 2010).

The sharp information dissemination facility on Twitter is utilized for reporting news, asking questions, discussing problems and responding to services or goods to meet demands of different people (Johnson & Yang 2009).

Twitter generally let its users to establish one sided relations. Most of the celebrities for instance have millions of followers but they follow only a few of them. When it happens to be followed by a high profile personality, the followers of an ordinary user can increase tremendously. Thus a small act of following a dignitary can change things substantially for a common user (Moore 2010). According to a study, mere 22% relationships on Twitter are based on mutuality (Kwak et al., 2010). However, other features like text messaging can ensure and even strengthen interpersonal relationships (Harley, Winn, Pemberton, & Wilcox 2007). Similarly, the facility of frank and transparent conversations can prove to be a good public forum for maintaining and consolidation of relationships (Parr, 2010).

Chen, (2011) conducted a study on the use of Twitter and subsequent needs gratification. Results indicated that the time spent per week using Twitter was positively related to gratification of the need of connection with others.

The services of twitter for societies in terms of creating and adding to the popular culture and citizen journalism are very commendable. The provisions of so many functions, features and facilities for satisfaction of its user’s needs and its deep penetration in societies, make twitter an attractive topic for research.

Method

Data was collected through questionnaire from a sample of 673 students drawn from seven universities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. The researcher made use of “Excel Sheet” and “SPSS” (version 23) for statistical analysis of the data. Descriptive statistics were used for obtaining data on simple statistics, frequencies and percentage. Likewise, simple mean test was administered to compare means of different variables. Whereas independents sample t-tests were applied to establish relationship between two independent variables like gender and dependent variables with significance level (< 0.05).

Results Demographic Variables

Among the sample students, 443 (65.8%) were males while 229 (34.2%) were females. Among them, 52.5% belonged to urban areas and 46.7% were found to be rural people. Similarly, majority (64.0%) of the respondents were in the age bracket of 18-22. More than half of the respondents (56.0%) were revealed to be the students reading in BS program (See table 1).

		Frequency	Percent	Total
Gender	Male	443	65.8	672
	Female	229	34.0	
Locale	Urban	353	53.0	667
	Rural	314	47.0	
Age	18 - 22	431	64.4	669
	23 – 27	161	24.1	
	28 - 32	40	5.97	
	33 – 37	18	2.69	
	More than 37	19	2.94	
Level of Education	BS	377	56.5	667
	Msc	190	28.5	
	MS/MPhil	76	11.4	
	PhD	24	3.59	

Social Media Use

The succeeding table reflects data with respect to social media use. According to results more than 95% students were using social media. Around 73% of the respondents were making use of Facebook and Twitter through their cell phones while 52.5% students were accessing the sites through their PC/Laptops. Facebook was revealed to be the favourite social networking tool of around 90% of the students, whereas Twitter was opted as favourite site by 34.5% of the respondents.

Likewise most of the respondents (29%) were having login to the sites once a day. In the same manner, majority of the students (39.5%) were spending on average 1-2 hours a day (see table 2).

		Frequency	Percent	Total
Social Media use	Yes	641	95.2	673
	No	32	4.75	
Mode of access	PC/Laptop	353	52.5	673
	CellPhone	490	72.8	
Favourite SNS	Facebook	441	65.5	673
	Twitter	232	34.5	
Login frequency	Once a week	115	17.9	641
	2-5 times a week	111	17.3	
	Once a day	184	28.7	
	2-5 times a day	127	19.8	
	More than 5 times a day	104	16.2	
Average time spent using Facebook/Twitter	Less than one hour	190	29.6	641
	1-2 hours	253	39.5	
	2-3 hours	83	12.9	
	3-4 hours	74	11.5	
	More than 4 hours	42	6.77	

Independent sample t-test was administered to ascertain whether any differences exist between the two genders with respect to favourite social networking site (see table 3). The study found significant relationship of gender with Facebook and Twitter as favourite sites ($P < 0.05$ and $t > 1.96$). The findings suggest that female respondents were more inclined with mean score for Facebook (1.11) and Twitter (1.75) than male with mean score for Facebook (1.04) and Twitter (1.57) to report the sites as their favourite.

Gender and favourite social networking site

Group Statistics

		N	M	SD	SEM
Facebook	Male	431	1.04	.200	.009
	Female	209	1.11	.313	.021
Twitter	Male	431	1.57	.495	.023
	Female	209	1.75	.430	.029

Independent Samples Test

		EV		EM		
		F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. 2-tailed
Facebook	EVA	44.7	0.00	3.33	638	.001
	EVNA			2.87	292.8	.004
Twitter	EVA	105.276	.000	4.56	638	.000
	EVNA			4.79	467.4	.000

Note: Equality of Variances= EV, Equality of Means=EM, Equal variances assumed=EVA, Equal variances not assumed=EVNA

Similarly, table 4 reflects results of the t-test with regard to frequency and the time spent using social media. Results found insignificant relationship between gender and login frequency ($P > 0.05$ and $t < 1.96$). The finding suggests very little differences in the mean scores of males (3.01) and females (2.98). Whereas, significant relationship of gender was explored with respect to time spent using Facebook and Twitter ($P < 0.05$ and $t > 1.96$). This result indicates visible differences in the mean scores of both genders. Male respondents (mean = 2.39) were inclined to spend more time using the sites than their female counterparts (mean = 2.12).

Gender with frequency and time spent using SM

Group Statistics

	Gender	N	M	SD	SEM
Frequently of login to SM	Male	431	3.01	1.28	0.06
	Female	209	2.98	1.36	0.09
Time spent using SM	Male	431	2.39	1.29	0.06
	Female	209	2.12	1.21	0.08

Independent Sample Test

EV	EM
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		F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig.2-tailed
Frequently of login to SM	EVA	2.78	0.09	1.90	638.0	0.06
	EVNA			1.86	391.2	0.07
Time spent using SM	EVA	4.48	0.03	2.49	638.0	0.01
	EVNA			2.44	391.2	0.02

Needs Gratification (Three items with Cronbach's Alpha = .61)

One of the key research questions framed for this study was about gratification of various needs the responds obtained from Facebook and Twitter use. The succeeding tables represent data with regard to the same asking. Analysis of data with respect to satisfaction of needs was undertaken in terms of descriptive statistics and frequency distribution. The extent of agreement or disagreement with three statements regarding gratification of needs was measured on a 5-point scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). Test results of Facebook and needs gratification reveal the mean scores for information need (4.73), entertainment need (4.18) and social interaction need (3.36). The mean scores of all the needs are on the high side which indicates that Facebook use satisfy all mentioned needs of the respondents (see table 5). Whereas, test results of Twitter and needs gratification reveal the highest mean score for information need (4.87) followed by entertainment need (3.85) and social interaction need (3.16). The mean scores of the mentioned needs with respect to usage of Twitter are also on the high side which indicates that the sites satisfy the noted needs of the respondents (see table 6).

Descriptive statistics for Facebook and satisfaction of users' needs

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Facebook use satisfies my Information need	638	4.73	0.78
Facebook use satisfies my Social interaction need	637	3.36	2.40
Facebook use satisfies my Entertainment need	638	4.18	1.22

Descriptive statistics for Twitter and satisfaction of users' needs

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Twitter satisfies my Information need	638	4.87	0.78
Twitter satisfies my Social interaction need	637	3.16	2.44
Twitter satisfies my Entertainment need	638	3.85	1.62

Data in the succeeding tables represent level of satisfaction of the needs of respondents. Majority of the students have shown their agreement with regard to satisfaction of all three needs through Facebook and Twitter use. Results of the study

indicate that Facebook satisfied the needs of social interaction and entertainment more than Twitter. Whereas, Twitter satisfied information need of the respondents a bit more than Facebook (see tables 7 & 8)

Frequency distribution with respect to Facebook and satisfaction of needs

Note: 1= strongly disagree, 2= agree, 3= neutral, 4= agree, 5= strongly agree

		1	2	3	4	5
Facebook satisfy my social interaction need	Number	68	23	6	101	438
	Percent	10.8	3.6	0.9	15.9	68.8
Facebook satisfy my entertainment need	Number	53	33	13	182	357
	Percent	8.3	4.9	2.0	28.5	56.0
FB/TW satisfy my information need	Number	19	4	8	68	539
	Percent	3.0	0.6	1.3	10.7	80.0

Table # 8: Frequency distribution with respect to Twitter and satisfaction of needs

		1	2	3	4	5
Twitter satisfy my social interaction need	Number	80	29	7	94	426
	Percent	11.8	4.3	0.9	13.9	63.3
Twitter satisfy my entertainment need	Number	60	34	10	180	350
	Percent	8.9	5.0	1.5	26.7	52.0
FB/TW satisfy my information need	Number	15	2	2	74	545
	Percent	2.2	0.3	0.3	10.9	84.9

The next table represent data of independent samples t-test regarding genders and needs gratification through Facebook use. Significant differences are found in the mean scores of males (M=3.02) and females (M=3.48) regarding gratification of entertainment need ($P < 0.05$ and $t > 1.96$). Results suggest that female respondents were inclined more than their male counterparts to satisfy their entertainment need through Facebook use. However, the study found insignificant differences in the mean scores of male and female respondents with information and social interaction needs ($P > 0.05$ and $t < 1.965$) (see table 9).

Gender & Needs Gratification of Facebook users

Group Statistics	Gender	N	M	SD	SEM
Information need	Male	430	4.74	0.74	0.03
	Female	207	4.69	0.87	0.06
Social Interaction need	Male	428	4.30	1.31	0.06
	Female	208	4.50	3.75	0.26

Entertainment need	Male	429	3.02	1.68	0.08
	Female	209	3.48	1.59	0.11

Independents Sample Test		EV		EM		
		F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig.
Information need	EVA	2.79	0.09	0.87	635.0	0.38
	EVNA			0.82	354.7	0.41
Social Interaction need	EVA	0.73	0.39	-1.02	634.0	0.30
	EVNA			-0.77	232.1	0.43
Entertainment need	EVA	12.18	0.00	-3.27	636.0	0.00
	EVNA			-3.33	431.5	0.00

Similarly, data in table 10 reflect relationship of the genders with needs gratification through Twitter use. Results of the study revealed significant relationship between gender and gratification of information need ($P < 0.05$ and $t > 1.96$). The finding indicates that females with mean (4.79) were more eager than males with mean (4.61) to use Twitter for satisfaction of their information need. Nonetheless, the study found insignificant relationship of genders with satisfaction of social interaction and entertainment needs through Twitter ($P > 0.05$ and $t < 1.96$).

Gender and needs gratification of Twitter users

Group Statistics	Locale	N	M	SD	SEM
Information need	Male	337	4.61	0.91	0.04
	Female	296	4.79	0.61	0.03
Social Interaction need	Male	338	4.42	3.06	0.16
	Female	294	4.37	1.26	0.07
Entertainment need	Male	338	4.18	1.29	0.07
	Female	295	4.20	1.12	0.06

Independent Sample Test	EV		EM			
	F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig.	
Information need	EVA	15.9	0	-1.97	631	0.04
	EVNA			2.02	593.8	0.04
Social Interaction need	EVA	1.00	0.31	0.45	630	0.65
	EVNA			0.47	461.1	0.63

Entertainment need	EVA	4.34	0.03	-1.61	631	0.10
	EVNA			-1.62	630.9	0.10

Discussion and Conclusion

The study explored gratification obtained by Pashtuns of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan through Facebook and Twitter use. Focus was made on comparing the level of satisfaction of needs like information, social interaction and entertainment obtained from Facebook and Twitter use. Key objectives of the study encompassed measuring the needs the Pashtun users satisfy from Facebook and Twitter use, exploring gender differences with regard to satisfaction of needs from the usage of the two sites and comparing the level of gratifications obtained from Facebook and Twitter usage.

Facebook was revealed to be the favourite site of both the genders in this Pashtun belt. However, females respondents were more inclined than males to report Facebook as their favourite social networking site. The finding is in line with the fact that Facebook is used by common people, while Twitter is used mostly by politicians and celebrities. Male folk in this Pashtun belt takes more interest in political activism than females. Given this reason, male respondents switched to opting Twitter as their favourite site.

Results have indicated respondent's agreement with regard to satisfaction of information, social interaction and entertainment needs through both Facebook and Twitter use. Twitter satisfied information need of the respondents more than that of Facebook, whereas, Facebook satisfied social interaction and entertainment needs more than that of Twitter. Since Twitter is used more by political leaders and high profile personalities in Pakistan, hence attract users to seek and share information. Facebook, on the other hand, is generally used by common people for interaction with other users just to have fun and joy.

Female respondents were motivated more than their male counterparts to satisfy their entertainment need through Facebook use. Likewise, females were more eager than males to use Twitter for satisfaction of their information need. These findings seem consistent with socio-cultural values of the Pashtuns of KP were males have wide range of options for satisfaction of entertainment and information needs as compared to their female counterparts.

This research paper is limited in its scope since number of other social networking sites like YouTube, LinkedIn and WhatsApp are used in this Pashtun belt. Similarly, the users may also satisfy other needs like companionship, escape, surveillance from Facebook and Twitter use. Research studies in line with addressing the stated issue need to be undertaken in future.

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