

Usage of Social Networking Website (YouTube) by Teenagers in Lahore, Pakistan

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Abstract

It has been observed that usage of internet is escalating in Pakistan due to its easy and low cost access. The rapid use of internet has enhanced the usage of social network sites including Facebook, YouTube, hi5, Orkut, MySpace, etc. YouTube is one of the popular websites therefore this paper explores its usage by teenagers in Lahore, Pakistan. Teenagers are targeted because they are the more vibrant, active, keen to learn new things and spend most of their leisure time on internet, thus usually more inclined to get influenced. Survey method was applied to this research and data collected through questionnaire from respondents including male and female. It identifies the popularity, significance and purpose of using YouTube by teenagers which is beneficial for parents, teachers and society as a whole. It concludes that there are two main reasons of its usage including entertainment and to gain information through quick search and easy access to all types of videos. Majority respondents consider it healthy activity because it helps in studies and research work. The study also provides recommendations for ethical use of YouTube and agenda for future researchers.

Keywords: Social networking website, YouTube, teenagers, survey, Usage of media, Pakistan.

Introduction

Communication in contemporary era has been revolutionized into online communication and inevitably, internet usage has got the status of one of the most pressing practices among youth. Their inclination towards accessing various internet sites including Google, Wikipedia and other social networking sites cannot be overlooked. Numerous explorations regarding online communication have been made; however, quite a few studies have been carried out considering the usage patterns of internet in Pakistan. Keeping in view this prevailing trend, this study is aimed at exploring the YouTube usage by teenagers with particular reference to Lahore, Pakistan.

This piece of research is centred on the YouTube usage considering it as one of the most popular websites among teenagers. According to an international survey, carried out in five European countries with sample size of over 3200, 12 to 17 years old respondents, as many as 94% respondents admit using the YouTube at some stage of their lives (Whelan et al., 2009). The findings of the study carried out in Europe depict the widespread popularity of the YouTube. However, present study has exposed the YouTube usage among Pakistani youth.

The YouTube has become one of the most admired websites by youth from all over the world. According to Nielsen Net Rating (2006) "The YouTube website marked new trend of youths' online activities for promoting and broadcasting themselves through internet, as youth aged 12 to 17 indexed as highest among YouTube users."

It has been observed that usage of internet is escalating consistently in Pakistan and core cause of its expansion is easy and low cost access. The rapid use of internet has enhanced the usage of social network sites including Face book, YouTube, hi5, Orkut, MySpace, etc. The YouTube is one of the most popular websites among teenagers for watching videos in Pakistan but no study prior to this research has been focused on the issue of its utility. Thus, the recognition of significance and absence of any such research on the YouTube provides a strong rationale to conduct the present study and explore the usage of the YouTube by teenagers in Pakistan.

Teenagers of Lahore were selected as a target audience of this study because this age group are usually more inclined to get influenced by any website or activity on internet e.g. Google, Wikipedia, social networking websites (Face book, Twitter, etc.), and particularly the YouTube. This age group spends most of their leisure time on internet as compared to the other age group and is more vibrant, active and ardent to learn new things. These aspects give good cause to select youth as audience for this study.

Niesyto et al. (2003) asserts that the YouTube makes the youth able to interact with the youth of other regions and establish global relationship. Through this practice, they create new horizons to live in and take a break from the existing social or other constraints. International research studies reveal that young people are creatively using online sites such as YouTube. Therefore, this research tried to investigate the YouTube using habits of a group of teenagers in Lahore, Pakistan.

This study would be significant because it is a unique investigation and provides invaluable results. It identifies the popularity of the YouTube among the targeted audience, significance and purpose of using YouTube which is beneficial for the parents, teachers and society as a whole.

Contemporary Literature on YouTube

YouTube is a video sharing website on which users can upload and share videos. YouTube created by Chad Hurley, Steve Chen and Jawed Karim in February 2005. It was named Time Magazine's "Invention of the year" for 2006 (Slocombe, M., 2006). YouTube is built upon standardized, convenient technologies by which videos can be uploaded in few formats, such as audio video interleave, quick time, moving picture experts group, or windows media video. It is becoming more popular day by day because it is user friendly website. Millions of people daily use this website. Some of them visit it for entertainment while others use it for communication and information. YouTube is becoming an integral part of most of the students' life. They use this site for various purposes. YouTube is a successful and becoming popular website and one can easily launch his or her videos on this website. Youth can instantly find and view millions of fast streaming video online through this website.

Young users can also search, join and form video groups with people of same interest, put to member videos, make play list, then insert videos on blogs or websites and make videos private or public. Therefore, youth can communicate with many of their friends and learn new things through YouTube. Nielsen Net Ratings (2006) reported that the audience has grown three times from Jan. 06 to Dec. 06, and web pages grow rapidly, and each user spent 10 more minutes on YouTube. Among these users, youth are nearly 1.5 times more than the average web users to YouTube. Bausch (2006) stated that most of YouTube users are youth between 12 to 17 years old and most likely young internet users might not aware of the copyright issues. Therefore, teenagers are the focal point of this research.

Ruddock (2006) expresses that recording of television and radio broadcast programs is acceptable to watch and enjoy these at other convenient time and again and again. However, it can be subject to civil and in some circumstances criminal liability for uploading the record to share with other people on the internet. YouTube provides recordings of various programs of TV channels after broadcasting. So the viewers can watch these programs at their convenient time and any where through YouTube. Corey. K, (2007) declared that Currently youth had ranked YouTube as the top 10 most popular website on the internet, over 100 million videos had been watched each day and more than 65,000 new videos upload every day. This study confirms the popularity of YouTube but the present study has focused on the usage and popularity among the teenagers of Lahore, Pakistan.

Hopkins (2006) mentioned that along with other facilitations, YouTube is also used by politicians as a tool to deprecate their opponents; however it would be significant to assert that such online criticism also counter attacked by uploading videos and commenting on them. Similarly, it is quite obvious that videos on various social issues may also be uploaded and discussed in unhealthy and non acceptable manner. In this process digital communication can be misused easily which could be dangerous for young viewers if taken in the wrong way. However, according to rev2.organisation (2006) stated that nowadays, there had been quite a few cases regarding the misuse of digital communication, one of which is YouTube.

Knight Ridder Tribune Business News, (2007) describes that availability of videos on YouTube has caused numerous legal and ethical issues and as a result ratio of unethical

activities in terms of uploading, viewing and downloading videos is highly increased. It expresses that YouTube have a lot of free music videos and TV shows without having the legal right, so more people will misuse on YouTube. Knight Ridder Tribune quoted "Viacom, the American MTV owner network interests in cable and satellite television, sued YouTube on copyright infringement for 1 billion dollars; it claims that YouTube has showed nearly 160,000 unauthorized video clips from its cable network." People uploaded these unauthorized videos, although they do not have copyright.

Bruun (2007) mentioned a case study in which a video of two school girls was uploaded and consequently they were charged by law enforcement agency. This case study depicts the effectiveness of YouTube. Such studies provided the guidelines to design the questionnaire of the present paper.

While describing YouTube Chenail, R. J. (2009) states, "YouTube the video hosting service, offers students, teachers, and practitioners of qualitative researchers a unique reservoir of video clips introducing basic qualitative research concepts, sharing qualitative data from interviews and field observations, and presenting completed research studies"(p.18).

A study conducted by Gimeno, J. D (2008) focused on the ethical issues related to the YouTube. Although several guidelines and instructions exist regarding ethical usage of YouTube but of no use as majority of users never considering these while using it. According to results of this study unethical content (violation of human rights, offensive videos, etc.) is accessible for anyone who has access to internet and knows its usage. The study further states that this entire situation has also raised questions for the responsible journalists. This study also looked into how the YouTube phenomenon is a big challenge to mainstream journalists in fulfilling their responsibility of providing information to the people while at the same time, minimizing harm.

In the light of the above listed studies it is concluded that various researchers have approached the youth in different ways, reflecting different conceptualizations about internet websites and YouTube. The research done by researchers around the globe has opened up a number of important areas of inquiry for future studies. The researcher defined the aspects for this study after reviewing the available literature. It has been observed that research is being done on YouTube in few countries of the world but in Pakistan, this is a relatively new topic and no research study is found on issues of usage of YouTube. Thus the present study would be among the primary researches on YouTube in Pakistan.

Objectives of the Study

It is generally observed that the YouTube has become a popular website among youths in Pakistan. Emerging interest and usage of YouTube among youth has kicked off new area of research in Pakistan; therefore, it was important to probe the YouTube using habits of the teenagers.

The general aim of the research is to survey the usage of the YouTube by teenage group. However, the specific objectives of the study are;

- To investigate the viewership pattern of YouTube in Lahore, Pakistan
- To determine the core purpose of using YouTube

- To suggest possible recommendations for the future researchers.

Methodology

The fundamental aim of this study was to find out the usage of YouTube by teenagers in Lahore, Pakistan. Survey method was applied to obtain the data, which is partially quantitative in nature from a large group of population. The universe of the study was Lahore and population was the teenagers (13-19 years). Educational institutes were the locations where the population can be conveniently approached. In Pakistan, teenagers of 13 to 14 years are school going students and not allowed to use internet and approach YouTube freely in the institutes and at home. Thus this study excluded 13 to 14 years of teens and focused on 15 to 19 years who are studying in colleges or universities. They have the liberty to use internet and access YouTube without any constraint and with lesser restrictions, hence three renowned universities of Lahore including University of the Punjab, Lahore, Government College University, Lahore and COMSATS Institute of Information Technology Lahore were selected to collect data.

The total population of this study comprises all residents of Lahore who use YouTube and aged 15-19 years. It was not feasible for the researcher to approach the total population therefore; the purposive sampling technique was applied to target the required audience. A sample of 50 respondents ranging from 15-19 year of age was drawn from the each of the above mentioned selected universities. The sample size was equally divided into gender, thus 25 boys and 25 girls were selected on the basis of purposive sampling method from each university. In total 150 respondents were identified to collect the data. A closed-ended questionnaire of multiple choices was opted.

Findings

Data has been analyzed through nonparametric correlations between pairs of samples having two methods available; Spearman's rank correlation and Kendall's rank correlation coefficient. Cochran's Q test is a binomial data. Cochran's C test is used to test the assumption of variance homogeneity of the residuals in the analysis of variance.

Table 1.1

Non Parametric Correlations

		Using You Tube	Maximum time spend on You Tube	You Tube as informative site
Kendal l's tau_b	Using You Tube	1.000	.816	.000
		.	.221	1.000
	Maximum time spend on You Tube	.816	1.000	-.333
		.221	.	.602
	You Tube as informative site	.000	-.333	1.000
		1.000	.602	.
Spearman's rho	Using You Tube	1.000	.866	.000
		.	.333	1.000
	Maximum time spend on You Tube	.866	1.000	-.500
		.333	.	.667
	You Tube as informative site	.000	-.500	1.000
		1.000	.667	.

Table 1.1 indicated that Kendall's tau_b & Spearman's rho Non Parametric Correlations Compared the “using of You Tube”, “Maximum time spend on You Tube” and “You Tube as informative site” at the alpha fixed level .05 with df=7. The non parametric correlation is significant at 0.000.

Table 1.2

		ANOVA with Cochran's Test				
		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	Cochran's Q	Sig
Between People		2883.750		576.750		
Within People	Between Items	.750		.750	.003	.956
	Residual	1473.750		294.750		
	Total	1474.500		245.750		
Total		4358.250	11	396.205		

Grand Mean = 25.2500

ANOVA with Cochran's Test in table 1.2 has revealed that Preference of videos at You Tube and purpose of using You Tube was found .003 at Cochran's Q. The result has been shown that .956 is the significant level of both the variable.

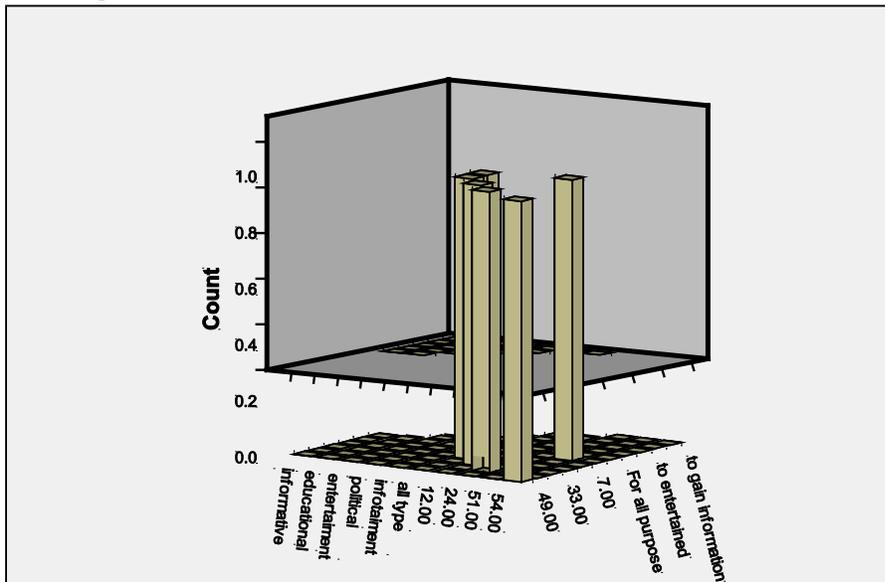


Figure 1.1: Preference of videos at You Tube & purpose of using You Tube

One-Sample Test						
	Test Value = 0					
	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Usages of You Tube is healthy activity	5.38	2	.033	50.00000	10.0216	89.9784
Facilitation in studies	8.98	2	.012	50.00000	26.0438	73.9562
Making research easy for teenagers	6.93	2	.020	50.00000	18.9731	81.0269

One sample test in table 1.2 described that our null hypothesis to be tested: $H_0: m = 150$. The alternative hypothesis was non-directional or "two-tailed": $H_1: m \neq 150$. The probability of getting a sample mean was 50.00. T- Statistics =0 and Sig. (2-tailed) .033 for “Usages of You Tube is healthy activity”, .012 for “facilitation in studies” and .020 was for “making research easy for teenagers”. The result concluded that social networking was significant.

Table 1.3

	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid source of entertainment	25.0	25.0	25.0
12.00	25.0	25.0	50.0
27.00	25.0	25.0	75.0
108.00	25.0	25.0	100.0
Total	100.0	100.0	

Table 1.3 revealed that quick search 108%, source of information 27%, source of entertainment 12% & connect with world was 3%. It was observed that you tube popularity have a solid reason.

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
Downloading Videos by youth	Yes	75.0000	35.35534	1250.000
	No			
Uploading Videos by Youth	Yes	75.0000	62.22540	3872.000
	No			
Valid N (listwise)	2			

Descriptive statistics (table 1.3) synthesize two dichotomy level of variable. M=75.000 for both the “downloading Videos by youth” & “uploading Videos by Youth”. SD= 35.355 and 62.224 respectively. The findings showed that the sample very actively participated in the social networking.

Table 1.4

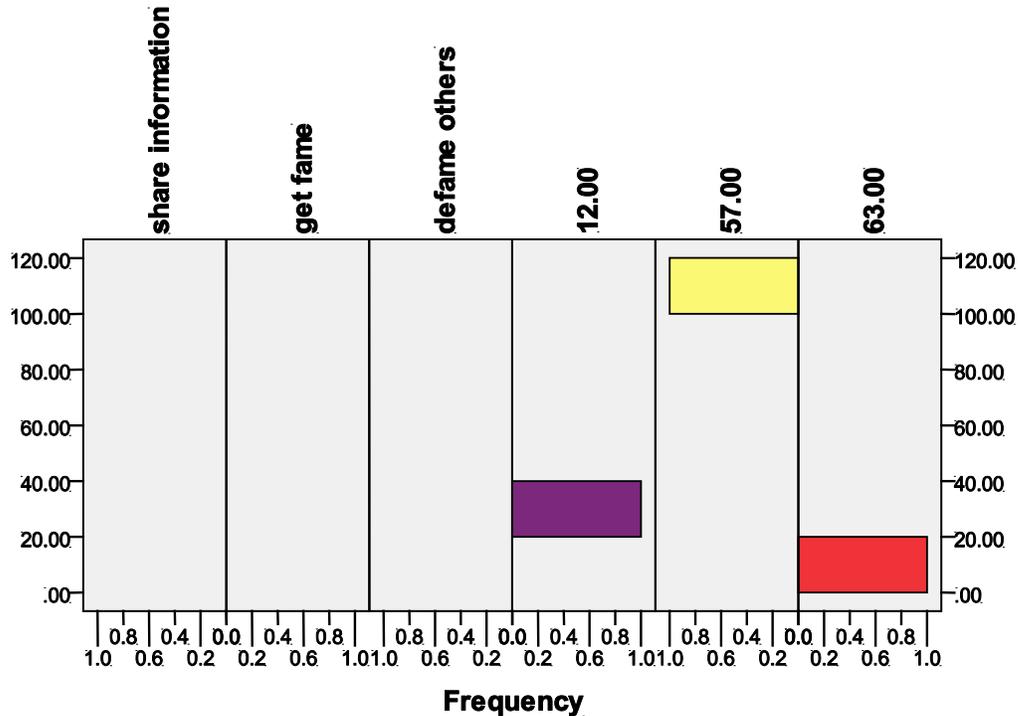
Correlations

			Reasons of Uploading Videos	Level of significance
Spearman's rho	Reasons of uploading Videos	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-.500
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.667
	Level of significance	Correlation Coefficient	-.500	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.667	.

Spearman's rho r has been shown between -1.0 and +1.0. Table 1.4 illustrated that 1.00 & -.500 with r coefficient Sig. (2-tailed) .667. Both the situation was correlated as well as coefficient.

Reasons of Uploading Videos

Level of significance



Discussion and Analysis

In the light of the findings it can be said that YouTube is an accepted and popular website among teenage because a vast majority of respondents are regular user of YouTube. They spare at least one hour daily to visit this site. Data divulged that majority of respondents believes that the main cause of popularity and acceptability of YouTube is the quick and easy access to the required videos. It is a low cost source of information and user can get all types of information and required data easily. The second most voted reason of the popularity of YouTube in Lahore, Pakistan, is its entertainment factor. Study conducted by Corey. K, (2007) and Nielsen//NetRating, (2006) also confirm the popularity of YouTube among the youth in the world. Therefore, it can be figure out that YouTube is one of the important website which is equally popular among the youth and teenage in developed and developing countries.

The data identifies that majority of respondents use YouTube either for entertainment or information mainly. The primary reason of using YouTube by the teenagers in Lahore is the element of entertainment which they find through interesting videos. This result can be generalized to all over Pakistan because majority of teenage have few sources of entertainment and YouTube is one of these. The second major reason of increase in the usage of YouTube among the target audience is that it provides information.

The data revealed that a large majority of respondent is in the favor of YouTube as it is a modified and established website for video searching and also a source of valued information. . It

provides almost all kinds of information and the majority i.e. three-fourth of the respondent was agreed that most of the time they can find required data easily. It means that they are satisfied with the function of YouTube and considered it as a useful website. Yet, it is again important to mention here that there are still a minuscule number of teenagers (one-fourth) who responded that they were dissatisfied with the website. . In their opinion spending time on YouTube is not a healthy activity.

The findings of this research expresses that somehow, the youngsters take interest in all types of videos including entertaining, informative, etc. As Chenail, (2009) stated that “YouTube, the video hosting service affords qualitative researchers the potential avenue to share their valuable resource for all interested parties to use. But the students prefer to watch entertaining videos than informative videos.” Correspondently many educational and political programmes of TV are also uploaded by the channels for the viewers but such programmes do not get better response from the teenagers.

Chenail, R. J (2009) further says that this web-based site (YouTube) also offers a unique reservoir of video clips to the students, teachers, and practitioners of qualitative researchers which introduced basic qualitative research concepts, sharing qualitative data from interviews and field observations, and presenting completed research studies. Although respondents appreciate such informative and useful videos which have the potential to guide the user but majority of them prefer and take more interest in watching and using entertaining videos. However, the findings show that majority think that YouTube is helpful in research and studies but practically they are focusing more in its entertaining aspect.

The results also viewed that only one-third of the total respondents download videos for saving purpose from the YouTube and majority do not bother. This result proves that one can access the videos very easily whenever net is available therefore there is not much need to save videos and watch these off line. This is again attested that the website under discussion facilitates the users and provides them easy access to the required videos and information.

The concerned website also allows the user (if registered) to upload personal videos’ of various activities for the viewers from all over the world. But the data indicates that uploading is not very frequent by the majority. Only one-fifth of the respondents declared that they are used to upload videos of their activities on the YouTube for others to view. On the basis of the findings it can be concluded that variety of foreign videos are available on YouTube than local. Pakistani youth/teenagers are inclined to watching more foreign video than local stuff and there is need to reduce this imbalance by uploading various interesting and informative videos. Through these videos a better image of Pakistan can be promoted at internationally.

The findings also stipulate the reasons of uploading videos on YouTube by the respondents. Half of the respondents pointed out that they upload videos for sharing information with others. Whereas 42% respondents declared that they upload videos for the purpose of popularity and they want to be known at national and international levels. This is also a basic human instinct that he/she wants to be known and appreciated by others and YouTube is designed to satisfy this very intention of human being. Therefore, they try to upload videos for getting fame and recognition. This is may be one of the basic reasons of its warm welcome by the teenagers and other users. But according to the findings few of the respondents admitted that some time videos of others are uploaded to defame them. It means that YouTube is not only a useful website but if misused, harmful as well.

According to the 40% of respondents, YouTube is playing a significant role in their life. This is also confirmed by Nielsen Net Rating when he concluded in a study that “YouTube

'website' is a new Trend of youth's online activity for promoting and broadcasting themselves over the internet. But a small number of respondents are not agreed that YouTube making their life easy and have a noteworthy role.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Conclusively, it can be said that a large majority of respondents (teenage) in Lahore are regular users of YouTube and spending 1 hour daily to explore this website. The target audience of this study mentioned two main reasons or list of preference to use YouTube including entertainment and to gain some information. According to this research, main reasons behind the popularity of YouTube among teenagers included quick search, easy access to all types of videos and aspect of entertainment for the users.

Majority of respondents are satisfied with the YouTube system and accepted that YouTube is a modified and established website for video searching. It can be finalized on the basis of findings that for teens, spending time on YouTube is a healthy activity because it helps the youth in their studies and make their research work easy. It is good source for someone to introduce itself and get some fame but can also be used to tease or defame others so there is a need of monitoring and emphasizing on ethical usage of concerned website. It can be concluded that YouTube is playing a significant and positive role in teenagers' life but its misuse and spending plenty of time on this website would be harmful.

This study confirms the popularity of YouTube among youth in Lahore, Pakistan. This study also shows that majority of teenage using YouTube for entertainment and information purposes. Although internet is one of the most dynamic media vehicles influencing the users than other communication vehicles, therefore, viewers are required to be alert and use it sensibly. This study reveals that YouTube has become an important and integral part of teenager's daily activities. It is not surprising that in some cases teens may go beyond the actual act of watching it for entertainment therefore parents and elders are recommended it remain alert and monitor their activities. It is further recommended that effects of these entertainment videos must be targeted for research studies in future.

The present research did not study the impact of specific videos of YouTube on the viewers. So a combination of content analysis and a survey in a study may be more interesting and valuable. Therefore, the researcher is interested in conducting such a study in future for publication in research journals.

YouTube provides a variety of videos including local and foreign. One can find sexual content easily available in the foreign programmes which enhancing the importance of research on effects of sexual media contents in Pakistan. Further, research must take into account gender difference in general and also in different environments. Functions and effects of contents may vary for boys and girls or for males and females substantially.

The website is popular among the target audience due to low cost and easy availability of internet connection in various parts of the country. Therefore YouTube requires systematic studies based on a variety of methods and diverse populations.

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