SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES AND ITS IMPACT ON MARITAL RELATIONS
(With special reference to Jammu City)

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ABSTRACT

The proposed study focused on the impact which the social networking sites are having on the marital lives of the couples. This study has in particular focussed the marital couples who fall in the age group of 18-55 for female as well as 21-55 for the male. The researcher has selected the study area as Jammu city and collected data from the five wards of the Jammu west constituency which fall in the Jammu City. The researcher in this study tries to let the people know that these networking applications which in daily life are considered as just a medium of communication can even impact our lives to a very large extent and wants to know the view points of the respondents regarding this. The researcher collected data from 292 respondents (consisting 131 males & 161 females). The data was collected using the interview schedule method in which both open as well as close ended questions were posed to the respondents. The researcher founded that these networking applications were having impact on the marital relations of the respondents but there are other serious reasons which lead to the end of the marriage beside usage of social networking sites.

Key Words: Social networking sites; Marriage; Divorce; Technology; Social media.

INTRODUCTION

Today, we all are living in the technological era. The whole world can be encountered by just pressing a button. The force, the technology, the source which is binding the world together is *"Social Media"*. Social media are considered as the technologies which are used for the interaction purpose allowing the exchange, sharing as well as the creation of the information with the use of the virtual communities. Social media can be defined as using web-based and other technologies so that the communication becomes faster and at rapid level. Social media is an extension and explosion of traditional word of mouth networks *(Sajithra K & Patil R., 2013)*. Social Networking Sites (SNS) can be called as the sub category of social media. SNS can be called as the sites which are used by the user for social and professional interaction. SNS is allowing scientific groups to expand their knowledge, share ideas and without these new means of communication, their theories might become isolated and irrelevant *(Liu Y. & Ying X, 2010).* SNS are used by each and every person of the society. It has become important for people as their morning tea or newspaper. Everyone today wants to be familiar with the happenings all

around the world; the easiest accessible source for this information is SNS. Technological system supporting social media services such as internet and computer provides a reliable platform for online interaction and socialisation *(Abdullah A. A, Mariah B. M & Rahmat B. G, 2014).* The technology which is binding the world today in the unified form isn't of recent origin. It is having a long history which lasted almost for the last 40 years. The very first e-mail was sent by **Raymond Tomlinson**, who is also known as the father of e-mail. *Sir Tim Berners-Lee* invented WWW (World Wide Web) in 1989. The beginning of the social media was identified in 1997 with the launch of the website known as **"Six degrees.com"**. The social networking sites have in the modern world impacted each and every part and sector of our society. These networking sites have had impact on the education pattern of the children, it has impacted the youth in lot number of ways, it has affected the interaction pattern of the people, it even does have impact of the marital life of the couples. In earlier times, the nature of marriage as well as of family was different. Earlier people were involved in the joint family system and they used to devote most of their time to maintain relations in their family as well as to their household chores.

IMPACT OF SNS - Social networking site is having numerous impacts both in the positive as well as negative manner. It is widely accepted that media has profound influence on health, including violence, obesity, tobacco and alcohol use and risky sexual behaviour *(Pradnya Gainkwad, 2015).* With the increase in the use of these networks, there has been a continued reduction in the personal relationships. Social Networking Site is having both pros and cons. When looked upon in a positive manner, it was never easy to remain in touch with your friends and kins as we all are busy in our own life. The growth of the social networking sites shows a significant change in the social and personal behaviour of the internet users. (Shirase R., 2012).

IMPACT ON SOCIETY - We are living in a social world and to live here in this world and express ourselves we need to communicate with each other. According to D.J. pall," communication is a process, by which people exchange ideas, feelings, facts or impressions on ways that everyone gains a common understanding of the message" *(Khalid Aemen 2017).* People are now becoming more aware of internet and its benefits. Internet usage has now matured from the basic emails to upscale activities like e-ticketing, online banking, e-retailing *(Rani Rama, 2014).*

IMPACT ON EDUCATION - Children exchange their ideas and opinion which results in better socialisation. It provides students different sources of learning. Social media provides a medium to the students to evaluate and comment on their campus environment, institutional policies, classes, professors, studies, and administration *(Boateng R.O & Amankwaa A.,2016,).* Studies have revealed that students who are in the use of social media in school, high school, college if are using social media once during their 15-minute study, they result in lowering or getting bad grades *(Raut V., Patil P., 2016).*

IMPACT ON YOUTH - Youth today are in continuous use of these sites because they want to puke out their ideas and emotions. Due to the rapid popularity of social networking sites on youth they tend to distract themselves from their studies and professions but on the contrary it is also developing friendly and social ties with the world that revolves around them *(N. Khurana, 2015).*

IMPACT OF FAMILY - Social networking sites has made the people change the way of interaction with the other members of the family. Social media has affected the way people spend their leisure time and those days aren't their available when people spent time moving to the parks and libraries *(Gaikwad P.,2015).* Social media like Facebook brings the positive impact on the family, it helps in making od a better society, and as well as it helps to strengthen the relations between the family members *(Joo T.M & Teng C-E.,2017).* Imbalance which are created by the SNS not only reduces family time but also prevents an individual who doesn't have an access to SNS from participating into family discussions and activities *(Anwar A., Ahmed I., & et.al., 2015).*

IMPACT OF MARRIAGE - Social Networking Sites proves to be fatal as well as important for the maintenance of the marital relations. Due to excessive usage of Facebook the romantic relations of the partners are getting disturbed *(Hand, M.M., Thomas, D. & et. al., 2013)*. When the usage of Facebook increased the jealousy factor among the people also increased which led to the problems in the relationships *(Farrugia, R.C., 2013).* New media technologies have become embedded in today's society and have resulted in major societal changes. (*Granth S. M, 2012).* In some cases, SNS is a powerful weapon and can be used for betterment, for real connection with others in real time during hectic schedule. But on the other hand, there are some cases where SNS is being used for negative things like; rumouring, cyber bullying, create misunderstanding (especially among married couple and love relationship), to make their own virtual world and make them un-socialized due to less traditional and ethical practices in the society.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Hand, M.M., Thomas, D. & et. al. (2013) in his study "*Facebook & Romantic Relationships*" examined the relation between social network usage, intimacy, and relationship satisfaction experienced by the couples. A sample of 253 participants was selected and if any participant was missing then they were excluded from the final analysis. After deleting all the unrequited participants, a final sample of 233 was selected. The findings resulted in a positive relation between relationship satisfaction and intimacy of the partners.

Farrugia, R.C. (2013) in his thesis study **"***Face book and Relationships: A Study of How Social Media Is Affecting Long-Term Relationships"* conducted an online survey where 255 respondents were selected, and they provided a detailed information about their significant others. The snowball sample was taken from Face book users sharing links with their friends so that it can reach up to a larger population. The author had selected 181 females and 71 males wherein 03 respondents didn't

answer. The author thus, concluded that SNS is changing the pattern couples develop their relationships. He said when Face book usage increased jealousy also increased.

Shirase Rakesh. (2012) in his study on *"The Impact of Social Networking Sites on Personal Lives of the People in Pune & Neighbourhood* "tried to focus on the negative impacts of SNS. The author in this study explains how SNS affects personal relations with the spouse or family members. The author also observed that SNS shows significant change in social and personal behaviour of internet users.

Saleh, M.& Mukhtar, J.I. **(2015)** "*Social Media and Divorce*-A *Case Study of Dutse L.G.A. Jigawa State*" have looked in their study that there is an influence of social media on marital relations, but they have given special attention to the divorce caused because of social media. They have taken a sample of 142 respondents. Amongst these 140 were given structured questionnaire and the remaining two interviewed through an open-ended question. In large scale, the people in that area believed that excessive usage of Face book can lead to infidelity and it can result into divorce.

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

The following theories will be applicable to this study**:**

Theory of Interactionism:

Now a day's people are in the bad habit of posting each and everything on social networking sites. People post their pictures, happenings of the day on these sites. They keep on waiting for the likes and comments on their pictures, and they frame an outlook about their own self as the people comment about them. Presenting an identity on which people provide their own opinions is a type of Looking Glass- Self in the words of Charles Cooley.

Maslow's Need Theory:

Maslow has explained in his theory of needs that the human motivations as well as human needs are

essential. His need theory stresses out that the lower needs of the individuals should be fulfilled first then only he/she moves to the much higher needs. The same can be applied to the social media platform as well. Social media has in the today's time became a need for the humans and has undergone numerous advancements from time to time. Thus, their need of communicating with their near and dear underwent many technical changes.

Cultural Industry

SNS being a modern concept also requires some technical know-how. People are advanced and have gained mastery over the technical knowledge as well. Thus, because of these technical advancements people have trapped themselves in these applications and they pay less attention to the relations around them which creates problems.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To know the socio- economic background of the respondents.
- To know the impact of SNS on marital relation.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The designed study was based on the Descriptive Research design where researcher has focused on

the influence of SNS on marital life of the respondents. Purposive Sampling method was used for the sampling units from the universe. As there is no exact amount of data regarding married and unmarried people. Therefore, Unit of the study was assumed to each household from the study area. Interview schedule was used for the primary data collection from the respondent. The sample size was calculated using the research formula which gave sample size as 375. But when the researcher went into the field some of the married couple weren't available at that time at home or weren't ready to respond. After deducting these respondents, the researcher found 292 respondents which was the final sample.

RESULT & DISCUSSION

Socio-economic Profile of the Respondent:

People live in a particular family, caste, region, practice a religious faith, traditional or modern society which influences their social role and responsibility. This study particularly focuses on those couple or married persons who are actively engaged in any kind of social networking sites such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, Twitter and so on where they share their information, connect with others and post their own photos or videos.

Table 1.1: General Profile of the respondents:

Particular		Frequency	Percentage
Sex of the Respondents			
	Male	131	44.9%
	Female	161	55.1%
	Total	*292*	*100.0%*
Age of the Respondents			
	18-23 years	20	06.8%
	24-28 years	71	24.3%
	29-33 years	84	28.8%
	33-38 years	51	17.5%
	More than 38 years	66	22.6%
	Total	*292*	*100.0%*

Marriage duration of the Respondents			
	01-04 years	134	45.9%
	04-08 years	39	13.4%
	08-12 years	39	13.4%
	More than 12 years	80	27.4%
	Total	*292*	*100.0%*
Qualification of the Respondents			
	Less than U.G.	10	03.4%
	U. G.	89	30.5%
	P. G.	170	58.2%
	Ph.D.	02	0.7%
	Others	21	07.2%
	Total	*292*	*100.0%*
Social networking sites used by Respondents			
	Facebook	24	08.2%
	Whatsapp	145	49.7%
	Instagram	29	09.9%
	All of these	94	32.2%
	Total	*292*	*100.0%*
Respondent's addiction status towards these sites:			
	Yes	41	14.0%
	Sometimes	112	38.4%
	No	121	41.4%
	Cannot say	18	06.2%
	Total	*292*	*100.0%*

In the **sex of respondents**, data clearly indicate that majority (55.1%) of the respondents belonged to the female category. This is because of easy accessibility and approach to reach them as most of the females live either at home or are still unemployed. As researcher has focused on those couple who are actively engaged in different social networking sites, female responded easily as compared to the male part.

This table focuses on the **age of the respondent** to know about the mental as well as maturity level of the respondents. The table shows that more than one-half percentage (53.1%) of the respondents fall in between the age of 24 years to 33 years. 22.6% (Second highest percent) of the respondents fall in to the age group of more than 38 years who were included in this research. 17.5% of the respondents lie between the age group of 34-38

years and very less (06.8%) percentage of the respondents were included in between 18-23 years old wherein highest percentage was female. This was because the researcher had selected the married couple for the study.

In marriage duration of the respondents, Data reveals that majority of the male respondents (18.2%) were married for more than 12 years whereas 12.3 % of respondents were married for about 1-4 years. In the female context, majority of the respondents (33.6%) were married for 1-4 years while only one-tenth (9.2%) of the female respondents were found to be married for more than 12 years.

In the **educational status of the respondents**, most of the respondents (58.2%) were found post-graduates and 30.5% of the respondents were under graduate. This data clearly indicates that

majority of the respondents (88.7%) were well-educated. While only 3.4% of the respondents were found less than graduate. Rest of the respondents were Ph.D. holders (0.7%), Diploma holders (4.5%) and having technical degree (2.7%). The data of education profile of the respondent clearly indicates that respondents who were using the social networking sites were educated.

In using SNS, The data reveals that around half of the male and female respondents (49.7%) often make use of WhatsApp as a source of communication because it contains such features which attract viewers more towards it and is particularly related to our contact list which creates a curiosity in the minds of the viewers to check the notification/ messages. 31.5% of the male and female respondents agreed that they used all the social networking sites such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat, TikTok etc. because all these networking sites have some or the other special features which attracts the viewers towards these sites. Rest of the respondents agreed that they used one of these sites.

In addiction towards SNS, majority of the (male and female) respondents (41.4%) stated that they weren't addicted to these sites or they don't consider themselves as being addicted to these sites. 38.4% of the respondents believed that sometimes they consider themselves as being addicted to these sites as they get indulged into these sites while doing some work- household or office which makes them forget about the concerned work for some time. There were only 14.0% of the respondents who felt as being addicted to these social networking sites as their mind remains diverted towards their mobile phones and they feel like checking the messages or the notifications again and again which can be treated as FAD (Facebook Addiction Disorder).

IMPACT OF SNS ON MARITAL RELATION

The researcher wanted to know what does the SNS do to the marital relation of the couples. The researcher studied the amount of time given as well as if any problem was faced by the respondent because of SNS.

Graph 1.1: *Usage of networking sites-*
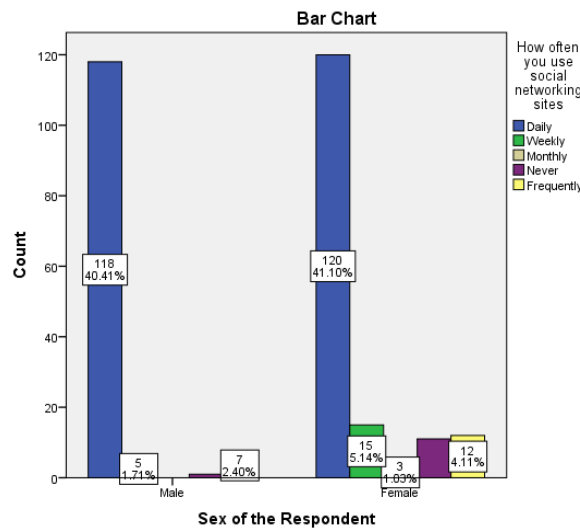
The graph revealed that the majority of the respondents both male (40.41%) as well as female (41.10%) make use of the social networking sites on the daily basis. They are in the habit of frequently checking their applications, watch statuses of the other person, read some of the post by the other member who is in their friend list.

Graph 1.2: *Spending time on SNS can lead to neglecting of household and family-*
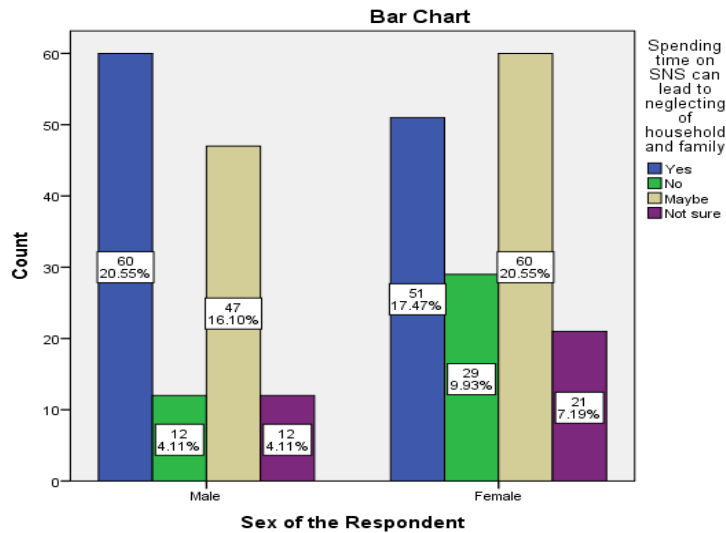
In the context of male members, majority of the respondents (20.5%) feel that spending time on these sites can lead to the neglection of the household and family as the individual won't get enough time to share with their family as well as listen to the matters bothering them. 4.1% of the male respondent's state that spending time on these sites can't lead to family neglection as the person knows how to manage both the things. 16.1% of the male respondents stated that it may be that the networking sites causes neglection of the household and family and 4.1% of the respondents weren't sure regarding the statement. In the context of the female respondents, 17.1% of the respondents stated that social networking sites can lead to family neglection as time frame of an individual gets disturbed as well as they get involved into these sites resulting in insufficiency of giving time to the family. 9.9% of the female respondents' state that networking sites don't cause any neglection of the household and family. There are majority of the female respondents (20.9%) who feel that networking sites may cause neglections of the household and family and 7.9% of the respondents aren't sure regarding the statement.

Graph 1.3: *More Time Consumption can lead to more Irritation in the couples-*
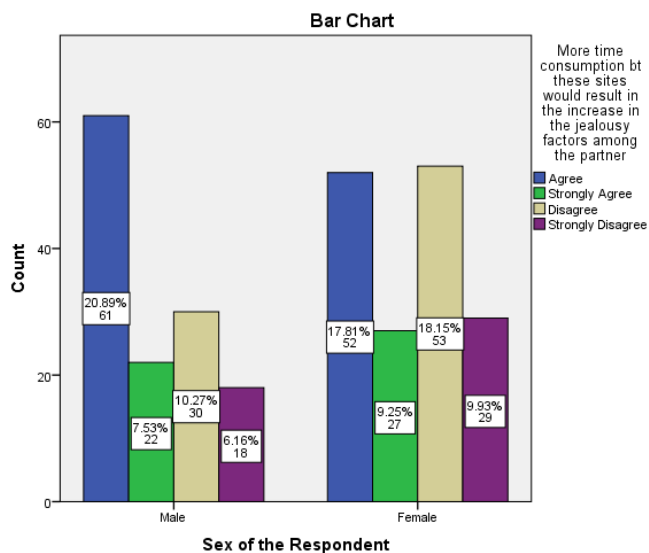
In case of the male respondents, the majority of the respondents (20.89%) agreed to the statement that more time consumption on these sites leads to increase in the irritation among the partner. They stated that it is quite natural that if the partner would spend or give more importance preference as well as time to the networking sites than the other partner would feel a bit low as he would be lonely which would cause the increase in the irritation among the partners while 7.53% of the male respondents strongly agreed to the above-

mentioned statement. There were 10.27% of the male respondents who disagreed to the statement as they don't believe that more consumption of networking sites can cause the irritation level of the partners to increase and 6.16% of the male respondents strongly disagreed to the particular statement. They believed that for a marital life to run successfully, the trust base building should be very strong and these are considered as small issues by these respondents which need to be ignored.

Table 1.2: *Distraction caused due to SNS-*

			Do you feel distracted while your partner is using any networking sites?			Total
			Yes	**No**	**Sometimes**	
Sex of the Respondent	Male	Count	24	82	25	**131**
		% of Total	*8.2%*	*28.1%*	*8.6%*	*44.9%*
	Female	Count	32	99	30	**161**
		% of Total	*11.0%*	*33.9%*	*10.3%*	*55.1%*
Total		**Count**	**56**	**181**	**55**	**292**
		% of Total	*19.2%*	*62.0%*	*18.8%*	*100.0%*

In case of the male respondents, maximum percentage (62.0%) states that they don't feel distracted if their partner is using any of the networking sites as they provide each other with me-time which is very important for having a healthy relationship. They stated that both the partners should have trust on each other which would help in the maintenance of the relationship. There were 19.2% of the respondents who believed that they feel distracted when the other person is using the networking sites as they can't have their own time and whenever they listen to the pinging sound of the mobile phones makes them irritated all the time. There were 18.8% of the respondents who stated that it may happen sometimes that the partner feels distracted while the other is using the networking sites.

Graph 1.4: *Shouting while being active on SNS-*

Do you shout at your if he/she bothers you while you are active on these sites?
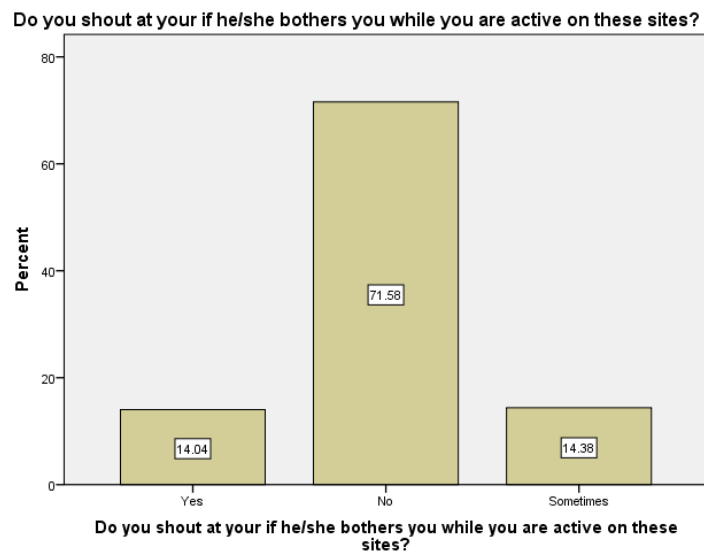
Majority of the respondents (71.58%) stated that they don't shout on their partner if they remain active on these sites as they don't consider shouting as the ultimate source to control the behavior of their partner. They feel that even if they aren't happy with the behavior of their partner they talk regarding the matter as well as the problems being faced by them to resolve these problems but any time of physical or mental pressure, they don't consider as a solution. There were 14.04% of the respondents who agreed that they shout on their partner if they are active on these sites as they lose their control over the situation, feel jealousy or less valued, less important, frustrated as they don't have anyone to share their feelings with resulting in the use of the physical torture as well. It stated by 14.38% of the respondents that the situation where they have to shout on their partner while the other person is active on these sites do arise sometimes.

Table 1.3: *Loneliness due to SNS-*

			Yes	No	Sometimes	Total
Do you feel lonely as your partner is giving more importance to these sites than you?						
Sex of the Respondent	Male	Count	15	89	27	**131**
		% of Total	*5.1%*	*30.5%*	*9.2%*	***44.9%***
	Female	Count	47	62	52	**161**
		% of Total	*16.1%*	*21.2%*	*17.8%*	***55.1%***
Total		**Count**	**62**	**151**	**79**	**292**
		% of Total	*21.2%*	*51.7%*	*27.1%*	*100.0%*

There were 51.7% of the respondents who stated that they don't feel lonely if their partner gives more time to these sites as they themselves are busy in their chores or some other works and whenever they sit together, they don't use the mobile phones to have the discussions with each other. 21.2% of the respondents have said that they feel lonely if their partner gives more importance to these sites as they feel undervalued which makes them lose interest in the relation. 27.1% of the respondents have stated that sometimes they do feel lonely when they are given less importance than these sites which causes issues in between them.

Table 1.4: *Disagreement between couple due to SNS-*

			Agree	Disagree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Never	Total
There can be disagreement between couple even if they are talking to their family members on these sites-								
Sex of the Respondent	Male	Count	49	32	33	08	09	**131**
		% of Total	*16.8%*	*11.0%*	*11.3%*	*2.7%*	*3.1%*	***44.9%***
	Female	Count	34	53	37	19	18	**161**
		% of Total	*11.6%*	*18.2%*	*12.7%*	*6.5%*	*6.2%*	***55.1%***
Total		**Count**	**83**	**85**	**70**	**27**	**27**	**292**
		% of Total	*28.4%*	*29.1%*	*24.0%*	*9.2%*	*9.2%*	*100.0%*

The above statement is based on the Likert scale which depicts if there can be disagreement between couple even if they are talking to their family members on these sites. Majority of the respondents (28.4%) stated that they do face disagreement with their partner if they are talking to their family members on these sites. They said that while their partner talks about their family members on these sites it takes a long time for them in which they remain busy on the mobile phones and the partner feels as lonely. There were 24.0% of the respondents who stated that they somewhat agree with this statement as they have felt that aloofness sometimes in their lives. There were 29.1% of the respondents who disagreed with the statement that there is disagreement if the couple is talking to their family members as well on these sites as they believe that their partner needs time to talk to their family which is very important as it isn't always

possible that the people can go and meet them face-to-face.

CONCLUSION

The researcher concluded that the social networking sites were having impact on the marital lives of the people but there are other reasons which lead to the devastation of the marriage. The researcher also founded that talking in the general perspective the respondents were saying that these sites do impact the relations between the couples but when talked on the personal front they hesitated in agreeing to the point that the social networking sites had impacted their lives as well. The researcher thus stated that respondents were knowing that it is on the couples how they make their relationship. If they would make the use of these networking sites in a limited manner, then it is never going to harm their relation but if there would be excessive usage of these sites, then it is obvious that these sites would ruin their relationship.

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