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A STUDY ON THE ONLINE SOCIAL ETIQUETTE OF HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

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Abstract

The present study has been conducted among 150 Higher Secondary School students in Chennai to study their Online Social Etiquette. The researcher used a self-constructed tool for this research. The data collected was analysed and interpreted to draw inferences using appropriate statistical methods like mean, standard deviation and t-test and chi square test. The result shows that there is no association between the Online Social Etiquette and in Real-Life Social Etiquette of Higher Secondary School students. There is a significant difference in the Online Social Etiquette with respect to Parents' qualification, Number of social media sites or apps used, Connectivity with parents in social media sites and Receiving guidelines for online behaviour from parents. How ever there was no significant difference in the Online Social Etiquette with respect to Time spent in social media sites and apps, Connectivity with teachers in social media sites and Receiving guidelines for online behaviour from teachers.

Introduction

Etiquette is the unwritten code of polite behaviour in society. It is the glue that binds communities and defines the boundaries of what's acceptable or not. We notice that etiquette also defines expectations for social behaviour according to contemporary conventional norms. So, it is by no means static. Especially in these times of fast paced change.

As more and more of our life goes online it only to be expected that a set of etiquette revolves around this new public space. Whether you are emailing or commenting on a Facebook post a common code is evolving to shape acceptable online behaviour that respects the individual and the collective.

There was a time when portals of education were the places that influenced social change. Of late they seem to have missed a beat as far as online behaviour is concerned, more so in India. We have the unique scenario of the students being ahead of the teachers in familiarity with online life. It is time the schools caught up and helped the new generations navigate the online wilderness as responsible social citizens. This study is but one small scratch on the surface to understand where our students stand on online social etiquette.

Objectives of the Study

1. To study the Online Social Etiquette and Real-Life Social Etiquette of Higher Secondary students
2. To find out whether there is any significant difference in the Online Social Etiquette between Higher Secondary students whose parents are both non-graduates and both graduates
3. To find out whether there is any significant difference in the Online Social Etiquette between Higher Secondary students who spend two hours a week or less and students who spend more than two hours a week in social media.
4. To find out whether there is any significant difference in the Online Social Etiquette between Higher Secondary students who use one social media and students who use more than one social media.
5. To find out whether there is any significant difference in the Online Social Etiquette between Higher Secondary students who are connected to their parents in social media and students who are not connected to their parents in social media.
6. To find out whether there is any significant difference in the Online Social Etiquette between Higher Secondary students who are connected to their Class teacher in social media and students who are not connected to their Class teacher in social media.
7. To find out whether there is any significant difference in the Online Social Etiquette between Higher Secondary students who get guidelines from their parents on social media usage and those who don't.
8. To find out whether there is any significant difference in the Online Social Etiquette between Higher Secondary students who get guidelines from their teachers on social media usage and those who don't.

Hypotheses of the Study

1. There is no association between the Online Social Etiquette and Real-Life Social Etiquette of Higher Secondary students.
2. There is no significant difference in the Online Social Etiquette between Higher Secondary students whose parents are both non-graduates and both graduates.

3. There is no significant difference in the Online Social Etiquette between Higher Secondary students who spend two hours a week or less and students who spend more than two hours a week in social media.

4. There is no significant difference in the Online Social Etiquette between Higher Secondary students who use one social media and students who use more than one social media.

5. There is no significant difference in the Online Social Etiquette between Higher Secondary students who are connected to their parents in social media and students who are not connected to their parents in social media.

6. There is no significant difference in the Online Social Etiquette between Higher Secondary students who are connected to their Class teacher in social media and students who are not connected to their Class teacher in social media.

7. There is no significant difference in the Online Social Etiquette between Higher Secondary students who get guidelines from their parents on social media usage and those who don't.

8. There is no significant difference in the Online Social Etiquette between Higher Secondary students who get guidelines from their teachers on social media usage and those who don't.

Review of Related Literature

Wang, X., & Xing, W. (2018). Exploring the Influence of Parental Involvement and Socioeconomic Status on Teen Digital Citizenship: A Path Modelling Approach. Journal of Educational Technology & Society, defines Digital etiquette as "norms of appropriate, responsible behaviour with regard to technology use" is to reinforce ethical online behaviour and discourage risky conduct. Data gathered from 270 teens and their parents was studied to examine the effects of parental involvement and socio-economic status on teen digital etiquette. The results provided significant evidence that teens of parents more involved in the technology usage and online activities, have higher levels of digital etiquette and safety.

A comparison between two kinds of relationships designated as online and offline may imply either that they are mutually exclusive or opposed to each other. Miller, D., Costa, E., Haynes, N., McDonald, T., Nicolescu, R., Sinanan, J., Wang, X. (2016), in their research on How the World Changed Social Media reports that their research showed relationships as created, developed and sustained through integrated online and offline interaction. The entire range of offline relationships, from family through school and work to social relations in the wider neighbourhood, was present online in a manner that is rarely separated out from one's offline life. The popular perception of online relationships as things which can be contrasted with a 'real world' – inhabited by one's real or more authentic offline relationships – seemed therefore simplistic and misleading.

Little is known about the influence of electronic media use on the academic and social lives of university students. Using time-diary and survey data, Wade C. Jacobsen and Renata Forste, in their Study on The Wired Generation: Academic and Social Outcomes of Electronic Media Use Among University Students explore the use of various types of electronic media among first-year students. Time-diary results suggest that the majority of students use electronic media to multitask. Robust regression results indicate a negative relationship between the use of various types of electronic media and first-semester grades. In addition, we find a positive association between social-networking-site use, cellular-phone communication, and face-to-face social interaction.

The study by Debatin, B., Lovejoy, J. P., Horn, A. K., & Hughes, B. N. (2009), on Facebook and online privacy: Attitudes, behaviors and unintended consequences. Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication examined the relationship of Facebook privacy issues, privacy settings, perceived benefits and risks, routinization and ritualization, and invasion of privacy to the self and others among a college population. Survey findings indicated that while the majority of Facebook users report having an understanding of privacy settings and make use of their privacy settings, it is also apparent, however, that they may have a skewed sense of what that exactly entails. Additionally, as hypothesized, perceived benefits of online social networking outweighed risks of disclosing personal information. Most strikingly, the interviews exemplified how deeply Facebook is integrated into daily routines and rituals, and how much it has produced its own routines and rites. The habitual use of Facebook and its integration into daily life indicates that it has become an indispensable tool of social capital and connectedness with large numbers of people. Interviewees tended to underestimate Facebook's actual importance to them. This can be seen as an expression of the level of Facebook's integration into students' lives: A truly pervasive technology with a high level of gratification, Facebook has become an almost invisible part of students' everyday life.

Methodology

Survey method has been used for this study.

Sampling Technique and Sample Size

Random sampling technique has been used for this study and the sample size was 150. Data has been collected from 150 Higher Secondary School students in Chennai.

Tool Used for the Study

The researcher used a self-constructed tool for this research. The tool consisted of 16 statements regarding Real-Life Etiquette and 16 statements regarding Online Social Etiquette. Each statement was followed by five columns with response categories, Always, Often, Sometimes, Rarely and Never. Provision was made to collect personal details like Parents' qualification, Number of social media sites or apps used, Time spent in social media sites and apps, Connectivity with parents and teachers in social media sites and Receiving guidelines for social media usage from parents and teachers.

Analysis and Interpretation

Table 1: chi square test – Association between the Online Social Etiquette and Real-Life Social Etiquette of Higher Secondary School students

Variables	Low	Average	High	Total	df	χ^2-value	p-value
Real-Life Social Etiquette	26	99	25	150			
	25	100.5	24.5				
Online Social Etiquette	24	102	24	150	2	0.15	0.93
	25	100.5	24.5				
Total	50	201	49				

Since p value is more than 0.05, the null hypothesis is accepted and there is no association between the Online Social Etiquette and the Real-Life Social Etiquette of Higher Secondary students.

Table 2: t test – Difference in the Online Social Etiquette between Higher Secondary students whose parents who are both non-graduates and both graduates

Variable	Category	N	Mean	S.D	t-value	p-value
Online Social Etiquette	Both parents non-graduates	89	57.31	8.81	3.93	.000
	Both parents graduates or post graduates	24	65	7.09		

Since p value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected and there is significant difference in the Online Social Etiquette between Higher Secondary students whose parents who are both non-graduates and both graduates.

The mean value of the students whose parents are graduates or post graduates is more than that of students where parents are non-graduates. The reason for this may be the educated parents either by example on by guidance teach online social etiquette to their children.

Table 3: t test – Difference in the Online Social Etiquette between Higher Secondary students who spend two hours a week or less and students who spend more than two hours a week in social media

Variable	Category	N	Mean	S.D	t-value	p-value
Online Social Etiquette	Spending two hours a week or less in social media	97	57.83	9.05	-1.26	.209
	Spending more than two hours a week in social media	53	59.73	8.36		

Since p value is greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis is accepted and there is no significant difference in the Online Social Etiquette between Higher Secondary students who spend two hours a week or less and students who spend more than two hours a week in social media.

Table 4: t test – Difference in the Online Social Etiquette between Higher Secondary students who use one social media and students who use more than one social media

Variable	Category	N	Mean	S.D	t-value	p-value
Online Social Etiquette	Students using one social media	28	53.82	8.35	3.208	.002
	Students using more than one social media	122	59.58	8.61		

Since p value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected and there is significant difference in the Online Social Etiquette between Higher Secondary students who use one social media and students who use more than one social media.

The mean value of the students using more than one social media is more than those using only one social media. This could be because using more than one social media increases their exposure to how others one the social media and there by learn online social etiquette.

Table 5: t test –Difference in the Online Social Etiquette between Higher Secondary students who are connected to their parents in social media and students who are not connected to their parents in social media

Variable	Category	N	Mean	S.D	t-value	p-value
Online Social Etiquette	Students connected to their parents in social media	79	60.13	8.72	2.427	.016
	Students not connected to their parents in social media	71	56.69	8.65		

Since p value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected and there is significant difference in the Online Social Etiquette between Higher Secondary students connected to their parents in social media and students who are not connected to their parents in social media.

The mean value of the students connected to the parents in social media is more than that of the students not connected to the parents in social media. A probable reason could be that the students are more concerns of their language and conduct online due to their parent's presence.

Table 6: t test – Difference in the Online Social Etiquette between Higher Secondary students who are connected to their Class teacher in social media and students who are not connected to their Class teacher in social media

Variable	Category	N	Mean	S.D	t-value	p-value
Online Social Etiquette	Students connected to their Class teacher in social media	50	59.42	7.59	.895	.372
	Students not connected to their Class teacher in social media	100	58.05	9.39		

Since p value is greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis is accepted and there is no significant difference in the Online Social Etiquette between Higher Secondary students connected to their Class teacher in social media and students who are not connected to their Class teacher in social media.

Table 7: t test – Difference in the Online Social Etiquette between Higher Secondary students who get guidelines from their parents on social media usage and those who don't get guidelines from their parents on social media usage

Variable	Category	N	Mean	S.D	t-value	p-value
Online Social Etiquette	Students who get guidelines from their parents on social media usage	96	59.72	8.87	2.29	.023
	Students who don't get guidelines from their parents on social media usage	54	56.33	8.40		

Since p value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected and there is significant difference in the Online Social Etiquette between Higher Secondary students between who get guidelines from their parents on social media usage and those who don't get guidelines from their parents on social media usage.

The mean value of the students who get guidelines is more than that of students who don't get guidelines, meaning the guideline given by parents is useful for the students.

Table 8: t test - Difference in the Online Social Etiquette between Higher Secondary students who get guidelines from their teachers on social media usage and those who don't get guidelines from their teachers on social media usage

Variable	Category	N	Mean	S.D	t-value	p-value
Online Social Etiquette	Students who get guidelines from their teachers on social media usage	78	58.05	8.77	-.656	.513
	Students who don't get guidelines from their teachers on social media usage	72	59.00	8.93		

Since p value is greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis is accepted and there is no significant difference in the Online Social Etiquette between Higher Secondary students who get guidelines from their teachers on social media usage and those who don't get guidelines from their teachers on social media usage.

Findings

The result shows that there is no association between the Online Social Etiquette and Real-Life Social Etiquette of Higher Secondary School students.

There is a significant difference in the Online Social Etiquette with respect to Parents' qualification, Number of social media sites or apps used, Connectivity with parents in social media sites and Receiving guidelines for online behaviour from parents.

However, there is no significant difference in the Online Social Etiquette with respect to Time spent in social media sites and apps, Connectivity with teachers in social media sites and Receiving guidelines for online behaviour from teachers.

Conclusion

The study suggests that there is no significant association between real world social etiquette and online etiquette among the students we studied. If you have been brought up with a good knowledge of social etiquette it is not necessary that you also possess good online etiquette.

As we continue to explore the schools' role in shaping the netizens and their online social behaviour this brings us greater challenges and opportunities simultaneously. An educational system rooted in traditional models will need to adapt quickly to the new world values and methods. We need to help the seemingly well-mannered children in our schools be equally adept in their online life with new insights and skills. As it is said, knowledge can be Googled out but character needs to be built through real world interactions. And that's where the teacher stands: equipped to mentor for a better world.

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