1 CHAPTER
INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

“Social Media is about sociology and psychology more than technology” said by Principal of Future Works, Brian Solis. Right from the beginning, Sociologists recognize the actors and their dynamism as important part in network sociology in The Cyber age. Apropos, Hawthorne researchers studied the effects of informal communication long before. They had acknowledged the productive outcomes of ‘grapevine’ on ties performance, agility in the organization. Similarly, social scientists aware of social network services, they had declared network as a means of communication and cohesion to people, as well as bolster the solidarity of the people (Kendall, 2007, pp. 191-193). Conceptually, changing dimensions of Cyber Sociology demands social observation and consideration. The hype of social network has made many young users belong to the SNS plethora and investigating the trend worth rewarding.

In fact, a non-intervention survey research not only describes the changing communication trend popular among young students, but also describes the effects of people in terms of perception and activities. Traditionally, the Micro sociological approach advocated social growth at personal level, i.e., when people grew socially, social growth transpires. Predominantly the Chicago school of sociologist defended this method vigorously. Theorists such as C.H. Cooley, George Herbert Mead, and Irving Goffman have already outlined role, performance and interaction

1 (Solis, 2007)
of social actors quite elaborately in sociological terms. Grossly, the Social Construction theories support the SNS model so to analyze this in sociological terms. On top of everything, meaningful social interaction deposit social capital that social network sites capable of extending. This can lead to growth both at the individual level and in the society.

This chapter has targeted users, origin, concept, and supporting theories of SNS. Firstly, the framework has explained the theatrical ramification of the problem under investigation. Secondly, the outline has served in describing the social reality of the SNS social system. Accordingly, the structure, the function, and the performance of network members discussed. Thirdly, the framework has advocated SNS concepts and theories, which has given rationale for the hypotheses model. Fourthly, the theoretical framework has given a method for examining SNS phenomenon and a conceptual framework for the hypotheses. Lastly, the framework has guided the literature review and methodology chapters.

Therefore, to conclude with Mike DiLorenzo, NHL social media marketing director quotes that say, “Social networks aren’t about Web sites [alone]. They’re [also] about experiences [of SNS users].” Thus, the human perception of SNS technology is richer in meaning than mere study of technology itself.

1.1 Users of SNS – Background

The data as an interesting factor for social statisticians to know the size of an impact of a trend. To begin with, ‘Network of particles’ structured our universe some 13.5 billion years ago, and does ‘network of practice’ structure our society conforming to the changing epochs? By the time mentioned, the real world population indicated 7.2 billion people around
the world\(^2\), out of which 2.9 billion people knew how to use the internet\(^3\). Remarkably, more than 6 million people adopted social network sites at least daily around the world.

In India 82 percent of users activated to SNS daily, among them there were 100 million Facebook users, amidst male population constituted 76 million and female 25 million. As concerns, the SNS users spent over 37 minutes in the indicated web services. The users were predominantly in the age group of 13 to 24 years. On the top of everything, Bangalore has the largest users in Southern India 4.4 million, followed by Hyderabad 4 million and Chennai 3.8 million, while Delhi 8.2 million and Mumbai 6 million tops nationally (Dobiecki, 2014). Among websites, Facebook and Google+ reached 1 Billion users each, Twitter 500 million users, LinkedIn 225 million users, and the rest.

Other than that, the drive for using the SNS was to contact, information, to share acquaintance with others. *Gizmo*\(^4\) trend arouses people to a virtual world of web 2.0., to capitalize provided services. Typically, SNS did refreshing experience for “Socializers”, engagement capital for “Advanced”, dialogue bargain for “Debaters” and exposure for the “Lurkers” (Brandtzæg, 2012). Therefore, the above data underlines the importance of SNS trend among people.

### 1.2 Origin of SNS

In order to trace the origin of SNS we need to know first appearance from every angle. Social networking has been at the core of all online activity since the delivery of the first “email” in 1969. However, SNS scholars

\(^2\) ‘worldometer.com’ 2014  
\(^3\) according to internetlivestats.com  
\(^4\) any advanced technological device
allude the first recognizable social network site to SixDegrees.com launched in 1997 that allowed users to create profiles, list their Friends and, surf the Friends lists beginning from 1998.

The next wave of SNSs began with Ryze.com in 2001 to help people to leverage their business networks. Likewise, LinkedIn became a powerful business service, Friendster became the most significant. Many new SNSs were launched from 2003 for several popular interests; Teenagers showed much interest in MySpace in 2004.

In case of Facebook that began in early 2004 as a Harvard-only SNS, Later expanded to include high school students, professionals eventually everyone else inside its corporate networks in September 2005. As a result, number of users increased in Facebook to the level of highly populated portals like that of population of China and India. Among social network media, 63.46% use Facebook next to YouTube and Orkut.

Universally, SNS research has epitomized on “impression management and friendship performance, networks and network structure, online/offline connections, and privacy issues”. In addition, “MySpace and Facebook enable youths to socialize with their friends even when they are unable to gather in unmediated situations; SNSs are ‘networked publics’ that support sociability, just as unmediated public spaces do” (boyd & Ellison, 2007). Thus, the synthesis of social and media networks will bring into existence a very strong distinct infrastructure for our society (Dijk, 2006).

Besides, the wave of social network service is an offshoot of modern internet communication technology of the 21st century culture; it is the product of political, economical, social and cultural milieu of the media
world. The virtual technology has thrown open wider possibilities and its discovery put into use in array of fields.

In the first stage, US defense department used virtual network to connect and coordinate activities to command over the enemies. Next, the business enterprises applied virtual networks to connect and coordinate business firms to compete globally. Later, the virtual communities used for social avenues (Castells M., 2010). Positive virtual opportunity for the techno savvy youths accelerated the demand for social network services, meeting the users’ social needs. Thus, the public used SNS technology globally for social ventures to build community of interests (Ryan, May, 2008).

Sociology of social networks emerges from Emile Durkheim’s interaction pattern creating social structure within types and George Simmel’s structural approach to social interaction, as in his statement “Society arises from the individual and the individual arises out of association.” In this way, Network interactions shape social structure, which in turn shapes belief, attitude, behavior, action, outcomes of individuals. The structure, content, and functions of network ties constitute the complete social enquiry (Bryant & Peck, 2007).

Aristotle proclaimed long ago that man is a social animal who networks with others to form human community. In fact, early historical fact show that after the Paleolithic era, around 12,000 BCE nomadic tribes of hunter-gatherers gradually evolved from bio-social groups into a socio-cultural group through the speech network development. “Human web” is as old as invention of “Human speech” (2006, p. 21). Social network is due to human speech, in a way, must have brought people and groups
closer to one another, whereby linking the people within and between groups culturally.

Moreover, members of a group not only influence one another in their behaviors and attitudes in terms of cultural growth, but also through the content and form of those relationship patterns by creating new infrastructure to our changing society. The above-mentioned traces give holistic picture of SNS origin from different angles.

### 1.3 Concept of SNS

The idea of SNS needs clarification from the meaning point of view. The following quotation captures the network idea beautifully. **Reid Hoffman** says, “Your network is the people, who want to help you, and you want to help them, and that's really powerful.”

Recently, all people use the term network commonly. However, the terms network, social network, and social network sites needs definition to understand their meaning. Networks create patterns and structures infinitely between the parts and the whole, similarly the individual actors and their *common ties*\(^5\). In society, individuals interact with ties and create structure like a net and they exchange information through them. The outcome of the process affects actors, groups and other members of the community. Hence, “A network is a web of social relationships that links one person with other people and, through them, with other people they know” (Kendall, 2007, p. 175). Sociologically, it has primary,\(^5\)

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\(^5\) *Common ties* refer to “common lifestyle, culture, work, and beliefs; kinship; ‘consciousness of kind’; shared norms, values, or goals; and the use of shared institutions” (Hillery, 1955, p. 119).

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secondary and potentially extended ties, if utilized serves peoples interest and practice.

Networking serves instrumental or expressive needs of users group for Functionalists, power relations of users group for Conflict school and interactive dynamism of users group for Symbolic interactionalists. To understand the concept social network site let us search for meaning of related terminology.


Thirdly, the term social network sites, they are Web based software which facilitate social connections between individuals. As Boyd, Danah (2007) defines it:

*Web-based services that allow individuals to construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system* (p. 2).

To put it differently, Social network services facilitate connections between users who interact with ties on common interest and form social community by linking through the weak ties. The effect of these links not
only influences individual actors but also of their values, attitude, opinion and behavior, etc., like ripples – as “information and influence normally don’t flash through a group like wildfire; they flow like water trickling through a series of streams” (Gabler, 2010, p. 124).

Thus, social network sites create a “Hyper connected culture” (Rice, 2009, p. 22) that converge the divergent society. Since, “The evolution of societies is accompanied by a growth in size and complexity that results in specialization, differentiation, and a corresponding need for integration of the parts” as with Herbert Spencer’s organic analogy of society do (Adams, 2001, p. 71).

On the other, social network perspective enables in connecting our complex, heterogeneous, human society through mediated communication technology. Like “social epidemic” social network spread ideas or behavior quickly around social connections that they have major influence on young users behavior, because “The connections among people in a social group form a structure, along with it information and influence can be traced” (Gabler, 2010, p. 129).

Besides, ‘network’ giving rise to ‘network analysis’ to study community that was ‘lost’, ‘saved’ ‘liberated’ and ‘accelerated’ arguments (Bruhn, 2011). “Network analysis, which grew out of the micro sociological tradition, helps to connect the dots between the individual and society… Sociologists often study networks of individual people [and their influence], but network analysis can also be applied to networks of groups or organizations” (Gabler, 2010, pp. 120-124). Since, “Social

6 Sociologists’ study on Community revolves around these arguments over the centuries. In fact, Social media accelerates community formation says Barry Wellman.
network analysis offers the methodology to analyze social relations; it tells us how to conceptualize social networks and how to analyze them” (Nooy, Mrvar, & Batagelj, 2005). In some way to sociology, social network connects micro and macro levels of sociological entities through strong and weak ties (Granovetter, 1973).

Nevertheless, there is dilemma in configuring SNS technology rightly to the cultural values of the individuals, because social value must go hand in hand with technological growth of society (Prasad, 2012, p. 97). Moreover, one can say that “technological development is seen as being shaped by social, economic and political relations which in turn often produce indeterminate outcomes… [and] fragmented and divided by gender, race, disability, class, location or religion” (Loader, 1998, pp. 8-9). Hence, research is essential to know the meaning of technology in a given society. The above-mentioned ideas clarify the meaning of SNS concept widely.

1.4 Function of SNS

The main function of creating SNS is well captured by the statement of Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg. He says, “Facebook was not originally created to be a company. It was built to accomplish a social mission - to make the world more open and connected.” If then, how does it work?

At first, profile creation happens where an individual joins the web space filling e-registering form that describes the fields such as username, age, location, interest, “about me” section and so on with the profile photo or multi-media uploads from the users. There are apps supplied by the sites that enhance profiles display.
The main aim is to articulate users profile for others to join their interest by means visual, sound, textual and emoticons. Users are given certain secrete setting options to control in case of privacy, otherwise set works as default. The strategy with regard to user profile display and accessibility varies with SNS websites differently.

Once the profile creation has done users are allowed to identify their friends and join the trailing networks of connection with others through them, labeled popularly as "Friends," "Contacts," and "Fans." Next, users are free to leave messages or comments, inform happenings, reference sources, and post pictures, videos or blog to communicate or express their interest with others in the group. If it is popular, even that information or news may go viral like epidemics spreading to other common ties of the network media, just like six-degree separation of the face-to-face social network. However, private messaging system also exists.

SNS generally accessible to any device that has capacity to connect and use web services. Besides mobile-specific (e.g., Dodgeball), language specific, animal specific for dogs (Dogster) and cats (Catster) where pet-owners manage the profile. Users initially join with their close friends and slowly explore friends based on age, nationality, education and many other factors subsequently over the SNS. Thus, SNS work methodically which needs some kind of technical knowledge. Besides, like Armstrong Williams we can say that the function of “Networking is an essential part of building wealth.”

1.5 Theoretical Questions

The research framework revolves around certain basic questions, such as; what sort of social reality is SNS and how do we conceptualize this reality? What effect SNS have on college students’ social and academic
perception? SNS isolates or socializes student users? What effect SNS have on interactive cognition of the students? How do student-users perceive performance in learning in relation to SNS? What impact SNS have on student’s perception and their academic performance? Is SNS inferior or superior to face-to-face communication in terms of sociability?

In fact, “Media are the extensions of man”- (McLuhan, 1966). If impact of SNS really creates “individualization of social spaces and socialization of individual spaces” to the community of networks (2006), then, “Social action and inaction on the part of different groups plays a vital part in the social shaping of technological applications” (Loader, 1998). Hence, Sociological research assist SNS community by answering certain theoretical questions.

1.6 Problem Statement

The real problem of studying SNS is not to help technology but to help humane being as highlighted in the statement made by a famous Journalist Sydney J. Harris. He says, “The real danger is not that computers will begin to think like men, but that men will begin to think like computers.”

Advent of social network sites to the student’s community brought about vitiated opinions with every new research around the world regarding their social and academic behaviors. Since, SNS invade the life of students in media activities culturally, research is essential not only to evaluate issues but also to assess effects if necessary (Shirase, 2012). In fact, sociological perspective investigates and analyzes issues of isolation, negative performances of student-users; attempts proper synchronization of social media towards social development of society. SNS connects individuals in the microcosm, then, groups, organizations and institutions
in the macrocosm – “Networking comes to aid of students” (Shilpa, 2014).

At the outset, Sociological perspective helps understanding our complex, heterogeneous, human society and its changing form and content. It bridges knowledge gap around social realities wherever that exist. The field of sociology not only takes up positive and negative consequences of media on social actors, but also changing social behaviors and attitudes of people towards media. We can agree with statement that says, “the Internet itself might not automatically bring changes to people’s social networks, but the nature of individuals’ usage will determine its impact on their socialization” (Peng & Zhu, 2010).

Therefore, the problem of SNS is captured in the quotes of political leader Richard Blumenthal who says, “Generally, social networking sites can be hugely promising and beneficial in opening new friendships and vistas and knowledge of the world, but they are also fraught with peril, when young people are reckless or headless.” Similarly, one should think as Jimmy Wales, Co-founder of Wikipedia says, “Wikis and social networking are just tools”. They are just tools and not more than that. Thus, these statements show the issues that really need human solution that requires research.

1.7 Purpose of Study

The purpose of the study examines use of interactive-media among student-users, and looks into social and academic usage of social network media to the student demographic variables. It seeks to understand how web media influences student-users in their social interaction and academic performance. In fact, SNS use among student community is significant due to high adoption rate, expanding network environment of
the community members, and increasing student-users issues (Social networking sites reveal users' true personality, 2009). Student-user’s net adventures misguide and misinform at times causing problems to their life growth. Hence, to understand more this trendy issue sociologically research is essential.

1.8 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework gives purpose of using theory in a research. It gives explanation to the assumed relationship between the variables of the study as clearly as possible.

The theory gives reasons for research problems in social science, since, “Attempts to answer the ‘why’ questions in social science are theories” (Vaus, 2001, p. 5). Besides, “A theory in quantitative research explains and predicts the probable relationship between independent and dependent variables…Theories are no more than broad explanations for what we would expect to find when we relate variables” (Creswell, Educational Research, 2012, p. 120). Thomas Kuhn.

A theory is composed of phenomena, assumption, concepts, definitions, variables and relationships. Phenomena is the focus of the theory, subjects of ontology, epistemology and perspective are the dimensions. Assumptions are the model adopted by theorists to view the phenomena. Concepts are ideas or mental images, definitions are the descriptions of concepts to build theory. However, Variables are properties that vary and researcher uses the operational definitions to define them. Lastly, Relationships show how the concepts are fit together in a theory and can be explained through a conceptual framework.
Edmund Husserl, Martin Heidegger and Maurice Merleau-ponty, study of phenomena reflects on descriptive rather than prescriptive in human media interaction as the researcher follows in SNS study.

The connection between individual and society is very well explained by the phenomenon of the concept “Sociological Imagination” proposed by Sociologist C Wright Mills (1959) which is stated in the following quotation of another author, that says, “Taken for granted in our daily experiences reflected in daily everyday interaction these same experiences reflect microcosms of larger cultural, political, and societal structures. It is both philosophical approach and human science methodology” (Littlejohn & Foss, 2009, p. 750). Thus, the phenomenon of social network sites explained through people’s daily interaction with the social changes and studied through social construction ontology, interpretative epistemological understanding, and symbolic interaction perspective as drafted in the chart.

Table 1-1 Schematic Outline of Theoretical Framework

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<td>Symbolic interaction</td>
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Sociological Theories of social constructionist ontology, interpretivists epistemology, and symbolic interactionists perspectives of SNS predominantly incorporated. SNS theories help to understand the structure, function, and performances of ties. Sociability theories help to
understand the interaction motives of ties behind the social performances, learning theories explain the concept and framework of academic development. For the model to analyze empirical data deductively other theories were adopted. Therefore, the above-mentioned framework outlines the research of the thesis.

1.8.1 Social Constructionist Ontology

The ontology of social construction helps us understand the meaning of SNS phenomenon in sociological tradition. The meaning of “Social constructionism is a term that is applied to theories that emphasize the socially created nature of social life” (Kendall, 2007, p. 118). Before constructing any theory, it is imminent to situate the knowledge that adopts the views of the upcoming knowledge. Ontology is that branch of metaphysics that studies being or reality of knowledge as they are in themselves. Ontology of social network sites and its impact stands on the ground of social constructivism. Certainly, social behaviors are created and modified by human free will and intelligence and they are not determined by natural law or divine will.

Berger & Luckemann (1967) in the book ‘social construction of reality’ introduced the concept; people construct reality through interaction with the members of the society in their communicative ways. “Social constructivists such as Berger and Thomas Luckemann influenced post-modern school of thought in sociology, is the type predominantly adopted by the social communication scholars” (Giddens, 2006). For Social constructionist “Reality is seen as an ongoing, dynamic process that is created, reproduced, and altered by people acting on their interpretations and perceptions” (Littlejohn & Foss, 2009, p. 696).
Social life is a form of construction where people perform roles according to status set by the society that requires meaningful interaction, symbolic expressions of people in fulfilling needs, aspiration and values of the social life. If the process of social reality is constructed in social climate, then, product of such reality subject to social reference. Hence, SNS technology studied through social construction ontology.

1.8.2 Interpretative Epistemology

The validity and reliability of knowledge reside in epistemic stands of the theory. The second way to situate a theory is to the epistemology. Epistemology is the scientific study of nature, scope, and function of knowledge hails from philosophy. To Interpretative epistemology social world is best understood from the point of view of the SNS users who are directly involved in the activities that are to be studied because users’ cognition or perceptive understanding partly reflective of social ties in the network media. The empirical knowledge derived from the users self-report is believed to be real and measurable with the measuring instrument. The survey was conducted from the field where the respondents present. The reported data was coded tabulated, and analyzed rationally with relevant techniques. Thus, the data derived intentionally drawn from the reliable primary source perceptions. The source of knowledge to understand SNS drawn from its users who experience the reality, their interpretation in turn would influence the same reality. Users and SNS reinforce each other as they make reality come alive. This concept makes us clear the possibility and reliability of SNS cognition to human knowledge.
1.8.3 Symbolic Interaction Perspective

Many sociologists idea help us understand SNS from symbolic perspective. Symbolic Interactionists adopt sociological paradigm to analyze community, culture, self-concept, which largely comes through language, symbols, and interaction with others as with SNS users. Sociologists from Chicago school of thought who were supporters of symbolic interactionists perspective. They are C.H. Cooley, George Herbert Mead, Irving Goffman, Franklin Giddings, etc.

Symbolic interaction refers to “the study of individual human interaction in its social context” (Gabler, 2010, p. 114). Interactionists view of things have real social relevance across and within cultures because people create reality they experience in their day-to-day interaction, “people creatively shape reality through social interaction by the process” (Macionis, 2008, p. 146). Person’s interpretation and evaluation of these messages are central to the social construction of our identity. For them, “community represents a psychosocial entity that is symbolically constructed and reconstructed over time by a group of individuals who define themselves as group members” (2007, p. 459) (Giddings, 1922) (Gusfield, 1975).

Emile Durkheim (1951) explained how social interactions create social structures and social community explicitly. For him “The theory of integration links collective feelings to the degree of social interaction and, in so doing, to the morphological structure of society, just as in The Division of Labor in Society” (Turner, 1993, p. 164).

Ferdinand Tönnies (1957) discusses the way social cohesion present in the network of individuals that governs actual social relationships. As network members of the community, how their “collective will”
represented in traditional community as “natural will” and in the modern society as “rational will” creating social transition in the system. He examines “that social groups can exist as personal and direct social ties that either link individuals who share values and belief (Gemeinschaft, German, commonly translated as "community") or impersonal, formal, and instrumental social links (Gesellschaft, German, commonly translated as "society") (n.d).

George Simmel (1950) as ardent supporter of network perspective in sociology at micro level, he says “it was the nature of ties themselves rather than the social group per se that lay at the center of many human behaviors… and considered their effect on individuals, including the way personality and belief structures are formed” (Bryant & Peck, 2007, pp. 208-209). Simmel focused closely on how different forms of individual interaction create different rules and norms through which different types of information are spread.


George Herbert Mead (1934) shows how self and society adapt in the evolutionary process using symbols through interactive communication. He discusses “role-taking—the process by which a person mentally assumes the role of another person or group in order to understand the world from that person’s or group’s point of view.” Thereby learn self development in the socio-cultural training.
Irving Goffman (1959) writes how self presents in everyday life like a drama performance and interact according to the changing settings. In other words, “Dramaturgical analysis is the study of social interaction that compares everyday life to a theatrical presentation” (Kendall, 2007).

Herbert Blumer (1969) student of Goffman introduced symbolic interaction, explains how human beings make meaning through interaction and communicate and update through the changing epochs. Thus the formation, development and performance of ‘self’ seated in communicating oneself using socio-cultural symbols meaningfully.

Mark Granovetter (1973) empirical study on job seekers reveal that information and influence are arranged ultimately with the lines of acquaintances – strength of weak ties, even though immediate social group that define the social situation in network.

Wellman (1979) sociological investigation found that “ties provide the basis for network members to utilize the connection with others that their alters have” of the community in urban society.

Coleman (1988) discusses the transmission of human capital through social network ties. Burt (1992) says, lack of tie between group clusters creates structural holes and the tie that help to bridge the structural hole occupy key place in network analysis. Besides, network ties are the connective tissues that influence behaviors of ties by revolutionizing the way behaviors and information spread across the social community.

Lin (2001, p. 19) advanced further by ordaining social network ties to a capital captured in social relation. “Capital is seen as an asset by virtue of

7 “A structural hole is a relationship of non redundancy between two contacts.” (p.65)
actors’ connection and access to resources in the network or group of which they are members.”

Dijk (2006, p. 214) added, that communication integration within SNS could have influence on students’ perception and cognition “With the combination of images, sounds, texts and data in a single medium.” Produce large impact on young pupil’s minds.

Davis (2011) in her paper ‘Tension of identity in a networked era’ shows how symbolic interactionalists upheld right from the beginning that social interaction creates self-identity both in face-to-face and mediated communications. Sociologists from Chicago school of thought who were supporters of symbolic interactionists perspective are C.H.Cooley, George Herbert Mead, and Irving Goffman. Hence, SNS users construct social reality. The effects of it will be felt in social and academic activities of students who use SNS.

1.8.3.1 SNS Adoption as Cultural Diffusion
The meaning, the effect of SNS adoption and cultural diffusion explained in this model. Theoretical model for virtual environment not only, “studies of ‘presence,’ collaboration, avatar appearance, and social patterns in large-scale online virtual worlds” (Schroeder, 2011, p. 3), but also perception, influence and effect the technology have on users cognition and performance.

People in society adopt social innovations such as SNSs. diffusion process enables people to spread whatever ideas or practices of society by using different means to get into a desired end. To identify SNSs diffusion among college students, the diffusion theory supports adoption level of SNS users. Diffusion refers to “the process by which an item of true or false information (a rumour for example), an opinion, an attitude,
or a practice... is distributed through a given population” (Boudon & Bourricaud, 2003, p. 126).

SNS adoption enables in understanding extend of SNSs diffusion among student community. Research studies show socio-economic group of students respond to SNSs adoption, such as usage time, frequency, and connecting with friends. Adoption model rightly corroborate with response differences in adoption. Suppose, If certain students’ socio-economic groups respond negatively in adopting to popular technology like SNS digital divide pronounces among population such as student users’ accessibility.

**Castells** (1996, p. 469) says, “Networks constitute the new social morphology of our societies, and the diffusion of networking logic substantially modifies the operation and outcomes in processes of production, experiences, power, and culture”.

Thus, **Rogers, Everett** (1983, p. 271) argues, “The central importance of interpersonal network influences on individuals [as] in convincing them to adopt innovations”. Thus, adoption theory indicates social variation, impact users ‘community of pratice’ that will have bearing on social and academic arenas of life. As Nooy, Mrvar, & Batagelj (2005) points out, Network model of adoption not only has S curve but also “contagion”, “exposure” and “thresholds” to measure the diffusion of SNS technology in population. Hence, different others contribute development of adoption theory.

**1.8.3.2 SNS Perception as Technology Acceptance**

Student perception measures SNSs behavior was verified and confirmed by several research studies at the universal level. **Davis** (1986) in his Doctoral dissertation from sloan school of management developed
Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) by using Theory of Reasoned Action as theoretical framework from social psychology, “That evaluates a person’s performance of specified behavior through behavior intention, attitude, and subject norm of a behavior (BI = A + SN)… [strewn into] perceived usefulness and perceived use of ease (BI = A + U) of a technology” (Davis, Bagozzi, & Warshaw, 1989). Hence, Technology perceptions can be studied through this model.

The SNS impact is researchable according to scientific principles of social science and well supported by, “The uses and gratification perspective” proposed by Elihu Katz (1954), Jay G Blumer, and Michael Gurevitch. Since, student users make choice to actively use SNS with some motive or purpose either due to social and psychological factors or of their own. Thus, it is intentional and deliberate act on the part of the users to gratify their needs or wants that can be articulated by the users and captured systematically in a well-constructed instrument.

1.8.3.3 Sociability as Associative Process

Theodore Zeldin, Oxford scholar and thinker says, “Conversation creates a new kind of network within organizations. Current networks are used for competitive advantage, but conversation is focused on encouraging people to realize their potential.”

Simmel, George (1950) in his work examines how sociability as a play form connects and associates people that lead to individual’s social development.

Putnam (1993) shows how sociability not only influences members to develop associations and community but also to create groundwork for social capital in democracy. To put it differently, “Putnam assumes that
social capital can be measured by citizens’ membership in associations” (Albrechts & Mandelbaum, 2005, p. 184).

Preece (2001) examines number of participants in a community, number of exchanges per unit of time, member’s satisfaction as the determinants of sociability and usability of SNS technology as such.⁸

Caroline Haythornthwaite (2005) in her paper discusses how SNS use affect sociability among strong ties and weak ties. SNS sociability among weak ties is governed by “Wide connectivity with low frequency of communication”. Among strong ties, it is governed by “Selective connectivity with higher frequency of communication” via media. Apart from that, weak ties are characterized by few mandated network support, passive contacts, slow beginning, and low social influence in sociability, whereas, Strong ties is marked by multiple optional means of communication, active adaptive structure, fast and spread, and strong social influence on their ties.

SNS is one of the spaces, where people interact to reach out to others. Thereby they construct social reality through social process and create community of practice and purpose. As members, they adopt SNS and collectively influence, shape the reality through social interaction between and among users. SNS encompasses not only time and space continuum but also interaction models of association form. Therefore, “Replacing direct personal experiences with produced images will have more social impact as the process of individualization continues” (Dijk, 2006, p. 198). In fact, informal interaction and sociability influence user’s social network, they in turn influence social avenues and social capital.

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⁸ Major views on SNS Association: Associations promote growth - “Putnam effects” and Association decline growth – “Olson effects”
Thus, SNS sociability not only associate users but also establishes itself as a social reality extended and adopted for various purposes.

Ability to socialize depends upon self-concept, social anxiety, degree of dependence on others, social etiquette, and empathy. Self-concept is what a person perceives about himself, his ability to interact with others in the society. Self-concept is positive when enhances personality, and negative if it does not. Social anxiety is difficulty in adjusting to certain social situations, a dilemma in social perception. Degree of dependency is extending of dependence on others, greater the dependency on certain people lesser the tendency to relate with certain others. Social etiquette is social mannerism practiced in a culture. More frequently, the social etiquette practiced better will be the social interaction. Empathy is feeling with others, ability to socialize depend upon empathetic nature of the individual.

1.8.3.4 Academic Performance as an Interactive Cognition

In the media age, integration of SNS communication may have an influence on students’ perception and cognition or learning. When individuals enact performances in learning, performance of a role increase or decrease based on encouragement and discouragement comes from the social ties or milieu (Operant Conditioning Theory). Individual’s immediate social circles, in this way, influence their life style including academic performance. In students, perception of learning and education slowly change due to SNS friends and the media usage. In addition, Students’ Learning and Academic Efficiency depends on cognitive and non-cognitive variables.

In a synchronous and asynchronous learning environment, media interactions not only influence role performance, self-concept, social
position, but also social values and labeling of individuals that affect academic performance of the students (Piaget and Vygotsky Theories of Communication). Therefore, real time and discussion forum learning affects student user’s cognitions and learning in media rich era. For Symbolic Interactionalists perception and performance of academic activities can be studied using quantitative and qualitative methodologies. Hence, SNS performances can be studied using symbolic interaction methodologies. Education and learning are the social activity cultivated by means of communication and technology – Sociological theory of learning by C.H.Cooley, George Herbert Mead, and Irving Goffman establish this concept. Positive self-concept, Realistic self-appraisal, Indiscrimination, Support, Goals, Leadership, community ties, familiarity are some of the non-cognitive factors predict academic performance of students.

1.9 Theory to Hypotheses Model

Theories help organize the variables and provide basis for analyzing hypotheses. Otherwise, hypotheses remain underutilized, i.e., “Hypotheses, however, remain ad-hoc if they are not stabilized in a theoretical system… The hypothesis organizes the uncertainty within the theoretical analysis, that is, self-referentially. If it holds the theory gains in self-organizing identity” (Leydesdorff, 2003, p. 16). The variables SNS, adoption, perception, intensity, sociability and academic performance affect users community. SNS impact can be felt through adoption, perception of student-users in terms of their social and academic areas of life.

Technology adoption among users is potential in forming community when it comes to SNS reality. Diffusion of innovation leads to adoption
of technology among users community socio-demographically. SNS provide platform for the users to form online community. When users log on daily to relate with their friends, it gives them opportunity to expand their circle of friends and deeper relationship between one another to express or accomplish their interest. Interaction by means of unit of contact and communication between them develops we-feeling in them and transform into a community of interest and purpose. Hence, SNS is useful platform in forming community among the students.

User’s intensity increase or decrease in using the technology based on purpose of use and ease of use as conceived by the TAM. Users form perceptions when they adopt technology. Perception of users inform favorable or unfavorable attitude towards aspect of technology that is used. Therefore, perception is dynamic in nature varies from person to person. Sociability is natural to man. Contact and communication among users, both off and on SNS, bring them closer in forming community of practice and interest. In this way, various academic information prevalent within SNS community influences user’s academic performance socially and informatively when there is academic purpose and intension in students.

Table 1-2 Conceptual Framework of Hypotheses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Construction – Symbolic Interaction</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SNS theory (Users)</td>
<td>Face-to-face (non-users)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adoption theory</td>
<td>Social Perception theory</td>
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<td>Usage scale (H1)</td>
<td>Intensity</td>
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<td>SOC1 (H2)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>APN (H3)</td>
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</tbody>
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Figure 1-1 Hypotheses framework

The framework of hypotheses rooted in social construction Ideology that believes in users as creators of social life. They create it using interactive
symbols, which ultimately influence their own social perception. Similarly, the social perception affects social mechanism of learning and communication of social technology. Symbolically, social media stands as an added source of a conventional learning and socializing. Thus, Theories of Adoption and perception clinch at measuring the effect of users’ learning and sociability, while SNS theory describes the factors of SNS adoption and perception.

1.10 Conclusion:

To put it in a nutshell, concepts and theories examined in this section capture reality of SNS and its users. At the same time, major attempt has been made to reduce complex realities into a manageable hypothesis parsimoniously (in a simple logical way). Mainly, Sociologist’s engrossment into the SNS phenomenon describes media effects and social residues of the users. They are helpful in comprehending advantage and disadvantage of SNS on society. Essentially, Adoption theory supports when examining SNS diffusion among the student population. Uses and gratification theory supports when investigating SNS perception. TAM theory provides SNS perception techniques. Ideas of George Simmel and Putnam have helps in knowing the technicalities of sociability perception. Likewise, Theories of Piget and Vygotsky served in knowing how performance, perception happens in academics synchronously. Indubitably, the sociological inquiry towards social media enveloped the search for SNS paradox. It conjoins the same with literature reviews in the next chapter.