Increased influence of social networking services in everyday social interactions during the pandemic situation

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Abstract

After the appearance of the internet people started using it to connect with others in a virtual way in that way that they are engaged without being physically together. These social networking services are altering how people use and interact with the Internet and other people, giving them more opportunities to solve problems, get feedback on their work, learn new things, skills, abilities, and methods to succeed in various fields, as well as stay up to date on the latest global news every minute. Social Networking Services (SNS) are also developing quickly as technology changes and science develops with the new mobile dimensions and features giving the opportunity to the young generation of this century to develop their cognitive and metacognitive skills, and abilities, be in touch with the virtual world, learn new things every time they use them, communicate and meet new friends around the world and also improving the technology skills among them that are crucial in this century for everyone. In the past years, the growth of social networking services is getting globally, and these changes are evident we can say that many countries around the world are in touch with the technology and are following the technology changes and development. The users of these services or the young generation that has access to this kind of service are also called the beta generation giving them the possibility to make the educational process even easier, to learn new things, skills, and languages using different social networking services, staying updated with news and information's from all over the world and many other crucial abilities that are important for their future goals and many other possibilities such as using them during the lockdown that happened around the world where they stayed updated with all the news and information's about the dangerous pandemic situation. In this study we will analyse the use of social networking services before the pandemic situation and during the pandemic situation where the number of users that actively use social networking services increased and they mostly use it to stay up to date with the situation around the world, to learn new things and to use the time properly.

Keywords

Social networking services, technology changes and science development, improving skills and abilities, users, pandemic situation

1. Introduction

People from the beginning started using the Internet as a tool to connect with other people who were physically distanced from them but with the help of the tool called the Internet, they can be connected or engaged in a virtual way where they can communicate, share information's [1] and news, motivate people with different speeches [2], quotes and words to be successful in life, share ideas, plans, and

critical thinking about something or someone, sell something online and other virtually benefits that can make our life easier [3]. Today social networking services are defined as web-based services that allow individuals and groups to create or construct a public or semi-public profile [4] depending on them within a bounded system, articulate a list of people or users with whom they share a connection [5], view or change the list of people or users with whom they share the connection and also visit other constructed profiles by other people or user with whom we want to be connected, share our biography, photos, videos, ideas, creativity, hobbies and other crucial things [6, 7] that are part of our life that we want to share it with the other people or users of the list we share the connection [8, 9]. The use of social networking services (SNS) is increasing every day with the impact of the people or users all around the world that are being in touch with the technology changes and development and are using and implementing these services in everyday life starting from the morning of the day until the moment we go to sleep [10-12]. In the past years we have seen an increase in many different social networking services [13-16] such as Facebook [17] (post photos, videos, and text that can be shared with the list of users with whom he is sharing the connection), Linkedin (professional networking, employers posting jobs and job seekers posting their CVs), Bebo (instant messaging and video streaming), WordPress (blog-publishing system, mailing lists and forums, media galleries, membership sites, learning management systems, and online stores), Tumblr (post multimedia and other content to a short-form blog), Pinterest (image sharing and social media service), Youtube (online video-sharing platform), Flickr (image hosting and video hosting service) and many social networking services that have made our virtual life easier and also practical [15-18]. These different social networking services allow users to manage, build, and represent their social networks online, where we share private or public information about ourselves to the virtual world which is available for all the other users that are using the same or generally the social networking services, for that reason many services support public display of networks, although they may offer privacy restrictions or facilitate closed communities that have our permission to allow the users or people to access our constructed profile, photos, videos, text and other multimedia.
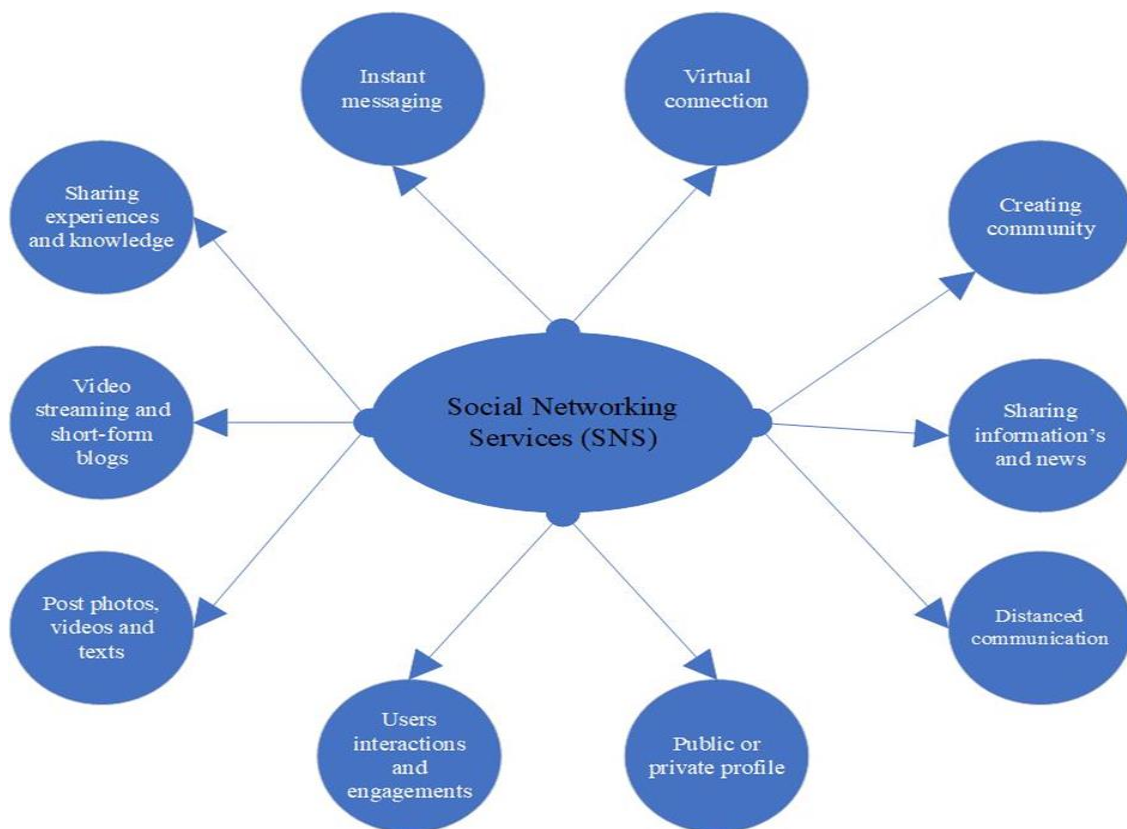

Figure 1: The possibilities of using social networking services

2. Activities done by people on social networking services during the pandemic situation and types of social networking services

Members or users (people) use social networking services [1-4] for many different activities depending on their emotional situation, psychological, and physical situation and also mood which are crucial factors that motivate people to do such kind of activities on social networking services [16-18]. The activities they do on social networking services can be: connecting with exciting networks, making and developing members, users, friendships, or contacts, viewing content and finding different information or news, representing themselves online and creating and developing an online presence, and creating or constructing and customizing profiles, adding and sharing third-party content, authoring and uploading your own content, collaborating with other people around the world and many other activities that are crucial to develop or improve the skills and abilities where you have the possibility to be the best version of yourself using or consuming the power of the digitalization or virtualization that is crucial during this pandemic situation [19, 20] around the world to keep the people safe and healthy [5-8, 17].

Connecting with exciting networks, making and developing members, users, friendships or contacts helps the new digital generation or young people [13] to use digital [9] or social networking services [10] to communicate and socialize with their list of contacts and also consolidate their existing friendship networks [6, 17]. Many people using this kind of activity by increasing the list of people or contacts tend to be more famous and popular in the community [3-7] that he or she is living, working, training, or learning [17-20]. Viewing content and finding different information or news is usually used by people to be up to date on what other members, users, or people by the contact list are doing, where using the services gives the possibility to generate recommendations on likes, shares or subscribes in different social networking services or applications and also generating many other activities that are crucial to keep the member or the user up to date [4-9, 20, 21]. Represent themselves online and create and develop an online presence, creating or constructing and customizing profiles provides different purpose-built spaces or environments to create, construct and present an online representation of themselves in the digital or virtual environment or community, either within a friendship or wider networks.

Adding and sharing third-party content often might be in the form of different links or embedded content hosted somewhere else where you have the possibility to share links in your online profile where the users that click on the link will directly be sent to the page that contains the content so in that way you can be up to date with many information's and news from different character or field [14-18].

Authoring and uploading your own content contains uploading different contents in the form of messages, blog posts, photos, videos, or music.

Collaborating with other people around the world by using service tools to create groups where the users can collectively create or construct profiles, hold discussions, store, share, and comment on objects, topics, and people [21, 22].

Social networking services offer many possibilities to the users or members searching for scientific literature, some pseudo-scientific blogs and marketing resources, entertainment, sport, movies and series, different kinds of topics from many forums, blogs and podcasts, magazines, books, and articles, photos and videos and many other activities that can help the community to develop their knowledge in different fields by searching these kinds of activities or by random access [23]. The types of social networking services are connection, dating, business, enforcing real-life relationships, and socializing that help all the users and members to be included in some communities that can be from the hood where he lives, the schools that he is learning, the company or incorporation where he is working or different type of community that people have to be part of [16-18].

Connection social networking service focuses more on connecting people together and keeping them connected and also by providing a social contact book that the users or members can use to communicate or do other activities with the other people from the social contact list [15-19].

The goal of dating social networking sites is to assist users and members in finding the love of their lives. Each user has login information and a profile that they may use to attract possible partners.

Business social networking services help to provide professionals with useful business contacts, explore the market, involved in different business communities, and many other possibilities to help young entrepreneurs be successful in the business field.

Enforcing real-life relationships is not about finding new friends and increasing the contact list, but reconnecting with existing friends, members, users, or acquaintances. This social networking service helps people to get stronger relationships with their family members, friends, or people by communicating frequently, sharing photos, videos, funny memes, short blogs or podcasts with different topics, and other activities to keep the related much more to each other [3-5], [18].

Socializing fits the more traditional view of social network services. Here members or users can connect with their current friends from the contact list or find new ones to increase the contact list making the member or user more famous virtually or digitally.

All these types of social networking services aim to provide more opportunities to the young people or the new generation to search wider in the networking services where they will be faced with many different information and news from different fields and also about the people from the contact list.
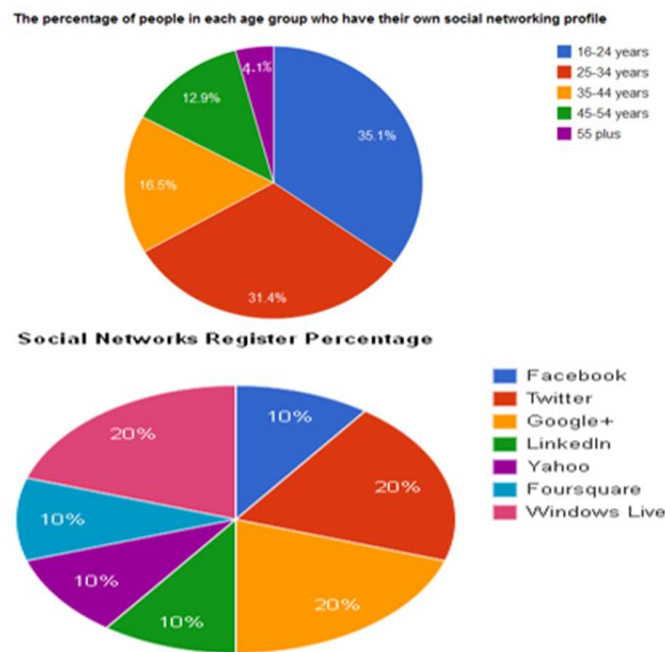
The percentage of people in each age group who have their own social networking profile

- 16-24 years
- 25-34 years
- 35-44 years
- 45-54 years
- 55 plus

35.1%
31.4%
16.5%
12.9%
4.1%

Social Networks Register Percentage

- Facebook
- Twitter
- Google+
- LinkedIn
- Yahoo
- Foursquare
- Windows Live

10%
20%
20%
10%
10%
10%
20%

Figure 2: Connection between types of social networking services

Communication
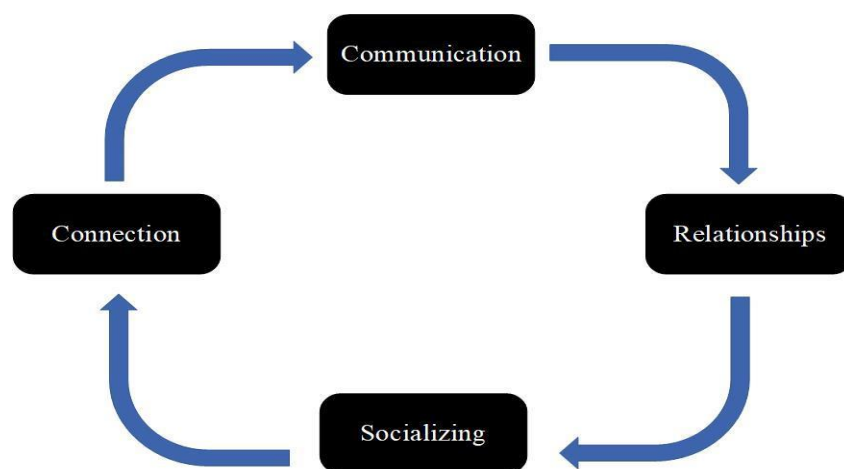
Relationships

Socializing

Connection

Figure 3: User percentage who used social networking services before pandemic situation

The use of social networking services from the figure as we see during the pandemic situation [24, 25] increased rapidly all users around the world started using all social networking services to stay up to date on the pandemic situation or the virus, support each other virtually, uploading photos, and videos, streaming, short-form of blogs and podcasts and reinforcing the relations with the family members and friends by communicating frequently. During this period or the pandemic situation, we can see rapidly increased use of social networking services such as Facebook from 10% to 69.74% and time the users spend this application is ½ hour from 9% of users, Twitter from 20% to 21.11% and time the users spent in this application is 1 hour from 15% of users and other applications with a low percentage of users where these social networking services offers them many different services depending on their need at that moment.
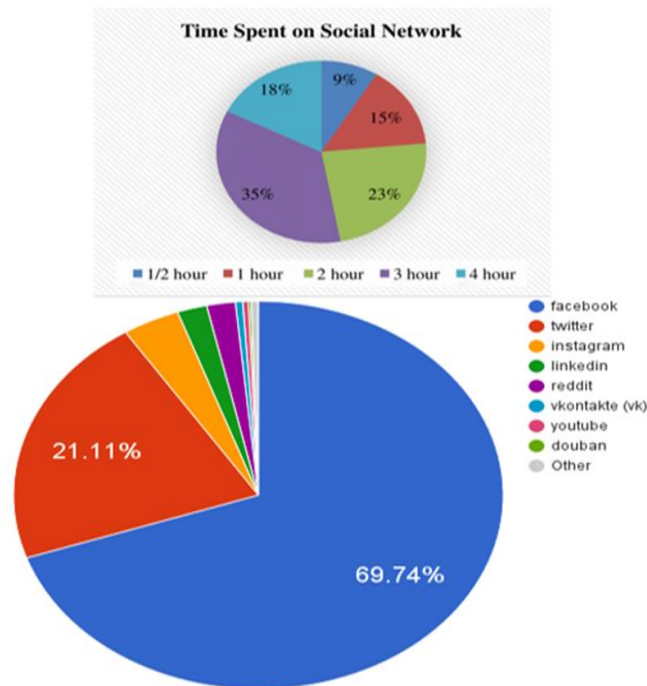

Figure 4: User percentage who used social networking services during the pandemic situation and the time they spent using them

The percentage of the people in each group who have their own social networking profile as we see from the figure is the same before and during the pandemic situation because the number of users were actively users with profiles even before the pandemic situation and that number stayed the same for now but in the future with the connection of the people with the social networking services will increase and as we see from the figure: 35.1% of users that have active profile in the social networking services are from 16 to 24 years old, 31.4% of users that have active profile in the social networking services are from 25 to 34 years old, 16.4% of users that have active profile in the social networking services are from 35 to 44 years old, 12.9% of users that have active profile in the social networking services are from 45 to 54 years old and 4.1% of users that have active profile in the social networking services are older than 55 years old and this shows that the users are connected with the social networking services and also with the other people or users that actively use them.

3. Content of social networking services

Content of social networking services focuses more on the content provided or linked by the user. These contents aim is to connect the user or member with more people, to keep them often communicating together and also to socialize them in the way they will improve themselves and after that also they will improve the socialization of the community where they live and work. Content of

social networking services is content sharing, content recommendations, entertainment, advice sharing, and hobbies [10-14], [19-20].

Content sharing focuses on sharing user-generated content that can happen within a selected group of people such as family members or friends and a far wider audience. Content that is shared by the user or member is usually photos, videos, music, short blogs, podcasts, and multimedia that the user or member wants to share with the people from the social contact list or with a far wider audience.

Content recommendations in some cases the users don't upload content but they are focused more on recommending the existing usually professional content that is interesting for the wider audience and also the people from the social contact list [9-14], [17-22].

Entertainment is usually tied to a gaming community where the user or member profiles are connected to other profiles which can be people from the social contact list or people from a wider audience and can play together online different games, having the possibility to message the other users or member while playing or forming groups of people to play together the games.

Advice sharing offers a place or environment for people to share their ideas, creativity, experience, or expertise in a certain area with others, or to seek help and advice that can help the users and members to be more competitive in the area that they are learning, working or leading a business with many skills, abilities, and experience that is crucial to be successful in this digital generation [12].

The goal of hobbies is to bring together a larger group of individuals who have the same interests and pastimes. The key distinction is that the audience is more homogenous and the subject of social networking services primarily defines its character and attractiveness [13]. This may also include recommendation and advice-sharing features.

4. Benefits of social networking service use

The use of social networking services has a wide range of advantages for young people or the new generation, with the main one being an improvement in the knowledge and skills of the young digital or virtual generation by maintaining contact with the social networking services. Individual identification and self-expression, a feeling of community and collective identity, and community building and strengthening are all advantages of using social networking services [15].

Individual identity and self-expression are increasing and are important for the expression of identity of user or member by using social networking services. Since these social networking sites are so adaptable and individually customizable, users may use them to explore and find support for their sexual, political, ethnic, and cultural identities. Social networking sites may help people express aspects of their identity that are particularly essential to young people or new generations with chronic illnesses, recent immigrants, and minority ethnic groups. Social networking services can provide new generation or young people with a space or environment to work out identity and status, make sense of cultural cues, and negotiate public or private life. The process of socialization is essential for psychological development at a time when many young people are consolidating their identities, pulling up roots from their family, striving for independence, and developing news types of relationships where also this is important in this situation that the world is the pandemic situation where these elements are so important for the expression of identity of the user [17-19].

Social networking services play a big part in the creation of new types of collective identity in this sense of belonging and identification. This feeling of acceptance and belonging might help a new generation of young people who may be more prone to loneliness, such as those with disabilities or chronic illnesses, stay involved in online communities long after their original motivation has faded. Sharing material significantly contributes to the development of a feeling of community and shared identity in this context [6–8, [14–20].

Strengthening and building communities can be achieved by using social networking services where they can facilitate a sense of connectedness, community, and belonging. Social networking services strengthen and build communities by giving users and members the chance to express themselves creatively, experiment with their identities, and produce and consume online content [26, 27]. This strengthens relationships with the social contact list, which is frequently made up of family members and friends as well as a much wider audience that is in the user's best interests. The online community that is built by the use of social networking services can be defined as a collective group of people,

users, members, entities, individuals or organizations that come together either temporarily or permanently through an electronic medium to interact together in a common problem or interest space or environment that improves the communicating and language skills and abilities of the user or member [18-21].
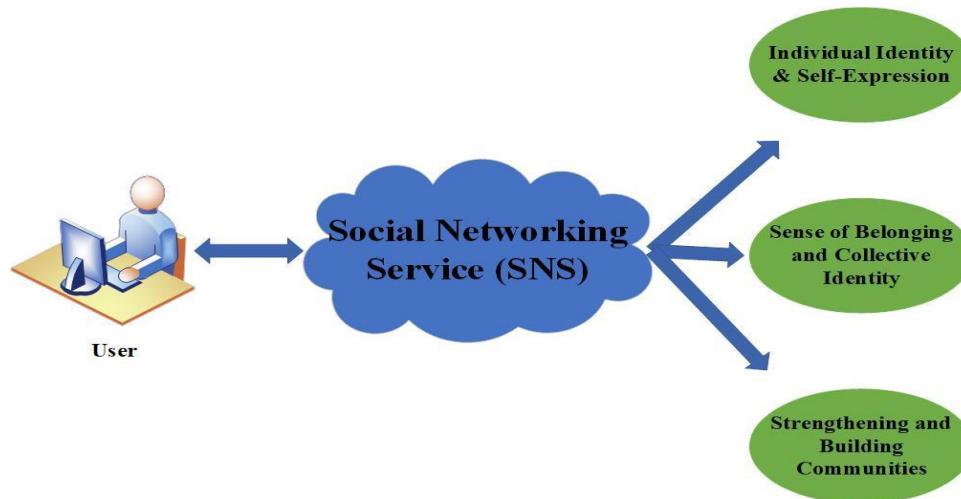

Figure 5: Benefits of social networking service use

5. Social networking services and young people

Many different mainstream social networking services are aimed at teenagers and young adults to give them the ability to socialize and improve their communicative and language skills and abilities by joining different communities and social groups of people. Most social networking services have a minimum membership age starting of 13 or 14 years old the user or member can't join this service before 13 or 14 years old many explicitly state that they are designed for those over 18 years old and also there may be safety restrictions on the accounts of 14 to 17-year-olds. These kinds of restrictions give many possibilities to the young people or the new generation to remain safe by searching or using social networking services on a daily basis, and many sites or social networking services require a parent's permission to sign up which makes the young people or young generation immune to hacker attacks, social abuse or other kind of illegal activities that can damage the user or member. These social networking services also offer a virtual world social networking service aimed at 6 to 14-year-old children, where they can socialize and improve communicative or language skills by watching cartoons, searching books for their year level, listening to different music for their year level, and other activities that can be in favour of them and from here depends on their future development. It is clear that young people or the new generation regard social networking services as just another part of their social and often school-related activities.

The necessity and potential of comprehending the attractiveness and usage of social networking services among young people or the new generation has been increasingly clear to educators, parents, and caregivers during the past ten years. This could be done to stop or address a bad thing that happened, including cyberbullying or improper content or behaviours.

Adults should consider the possible educational advantages of social networking sites and acknowledge the advantages of young people's usage of technology to promote their media literacy skills and social involvement [1-7], [13-19].

6. How to remain safe using the social networking services

Whether to use social networking services (Fig.6) or sites or not is an individual decision made by the user or the person. Before using these social networking services every user or member must be

aware of certain things when discussing their private life in public [6-8], [17-20]. The following are some guidelines to keep you and your family secure when using social networking services or websites:

- Change your profile's privacy right now. Only allow folks on your social friend list to view your personal information.
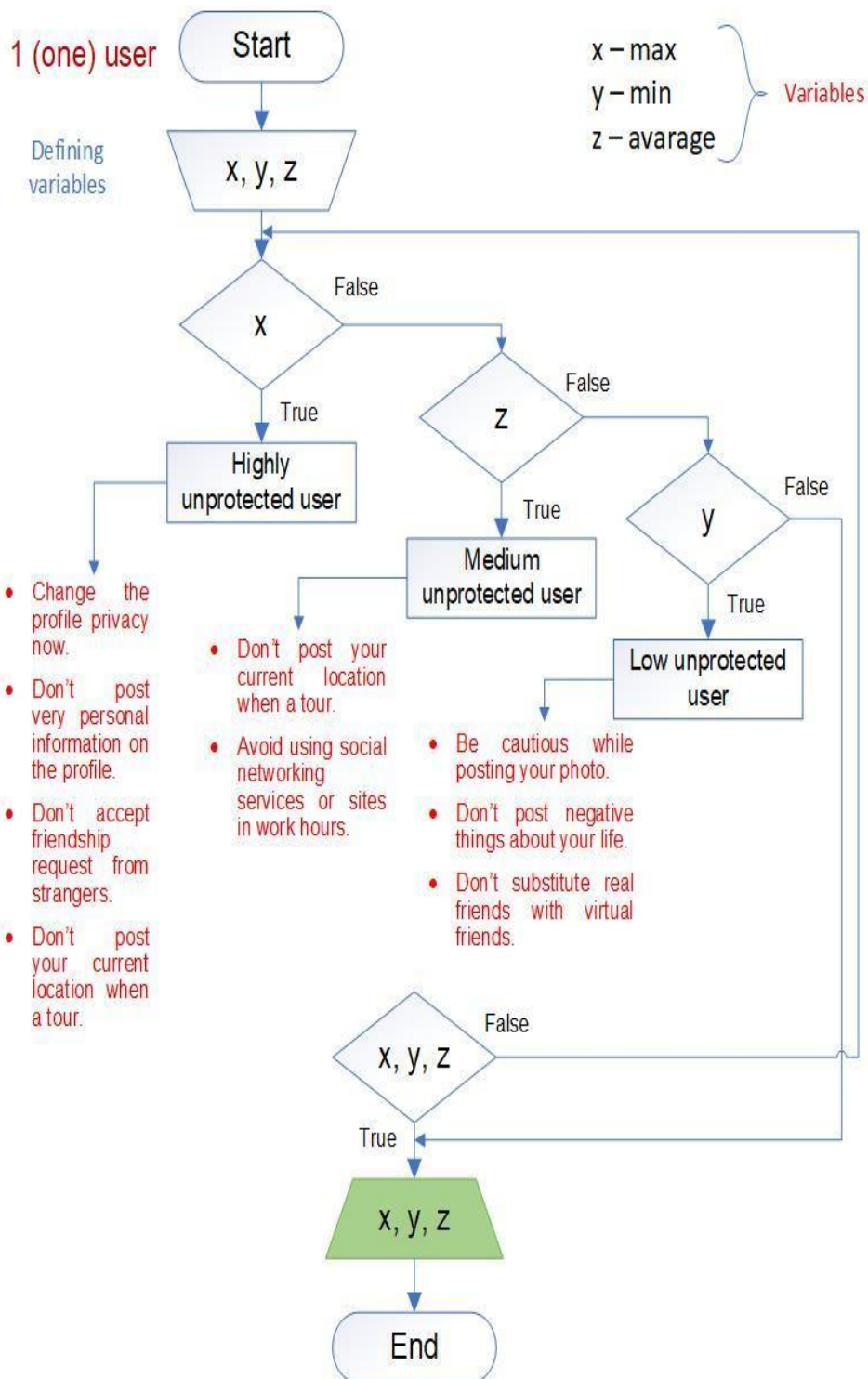

Figure 6: Algorithm on how to use social networking services properly

- Avoid including too much personal information in your profile. It contains information about your family members as well as your email address, birthdate, phone number, and home address.

- Never accept a friend request from a total stranger. We frequently make snap judgments about a person based on their internet profile image and contact information. The first error that online fraudsters intended us to make is this.
- When publishing your photo, use caution. Make sure the background of your shot doesn't reveal where you are in real life.
- When giving a tour, avoid posting your present location. It's the same as inviting crooks in by posting this information on social networking platforms or websites.
- Avoid posting unfavorable comments about your life. It's the same as damaging your own reputation. Your buddies are keeping an eye on your behavior, so one misstep now might have disastrous consequences later.
- Don't use virtual pals in place of actual friends. The ability to interact with new people across the world is provided by many social networking sites and platforms, but they will never truly replace your genuine pals. To improve your social image and lessen tension and anxiety, you need true friends.
- Use social networking apps or websites outside of business hours. Use of social networking services or websites during working hours not only detracts from your job output but also raises your risk of being fired.

7. Social networking services as a method of communication during the pandemic situation

Countries around the world are under lockdown and millions of people cannot leave their homes, and the people who are infected by the virus are kept in isolation in medical wards. In such a condition, social networking services are the only way in which people can communicate from a distance in a virtual or digital way without being physically present and this helps the people to follow all the restrictions given by the government and the most crucial thing to remain safe and healthy. Using social networking services or sites many people are documenting their day-to-day activities and how they are spending their quarantine or lockdown period, sharing positive quotes, news, and information about the virus, supporting each other virtually, reinforcing the relationships with family members and friends by communicating, uploading funny memes, photos, videos, streaming, short-form of blogs, podcasts and other interesting activities that are interesting for the other part of the people or the wider audience. The virtual connection during the pandemic situation allows the users or members to improve their reading, language, communication, and other skills and abilities that are crucial for the activities or jobs they will do in the near future [1-5], [14-17].

8. Conclusion

A vital medium of communication and pleasure for the younger generation, the expansion of social networking services demonstrates a substantial shift in the social and personal behavior of Internet users or members. Social networking services are important participants in the online world, changing how people communicate, creating new socialization opportunities, and affecting established social institutions. These consequences are especially important for young people or members of the new generation, who use social networking sites the most often. Like any place for social interaction, this digital space or habitat has certain inherent risks in addition to some problems.

However, this study contends that both in popular media and social research over the past several years, these difficulties and hazards have been overemphasized, and it provides the user or member safe usage of the social networking service or site. Social networking services will continue to be popular even if they have begun to interfere with the everyday activities of regular people. Everything in this world can be used for good or bad purposes, and it's up to users or members to make a difference by using social networking services wisely to foster cross-border social connections, especially during pandemic situations where the number of users increased and this meant that some users weren't using them in a way that would make all other users' use of the social network insecure.

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