SUMMARY

Social networking sites have emerged as popular media that have attracted the attention of people all over the world. But panic and fear are associated with the use of these sites. The fear is regarding the consequences of heavy use of these sites and the possibility of becoming addicted to these sites as a result of their heavy use. Research studies have shown that even heavy use of SNSs is not problematic unless the user perceives it to be so. But the question still lingers on as scholars want to know if these sites are addictive or encourage intensive use? What is the impact of intensive use of these sites on students’ academic performance, social capital, civic engagement and political participation? The objectives of this study were to identify the motives of students’ regarding using SNSs, their usage pattern i.e. whether students use SNSs intensively or addictively; and the relationship of the students’ intensity of use of these sites with their academic performance, bridging social capital, bonding social capital, civic engagement and political participation. A survey was conducted on a random sample of 500 students (UG = 250, PG = 250) for the study. The results of the study revealed that students in the sample used SNSs intensively, but were not addicted to these sites. The study also found that there was a positive association of students’ intensity of use of SNSs with their academic performance, bridging social capital, bonding social capital, civic engagement, and political participation.