

A gender-based analysis of the use of social media and electronic communication methods by new entrants: with special reference to Faculty of Management, University of Peradeniya

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Abstract

Social network sites are profile-based web sites that allow users to maintain social relationships by viewing, visiting, and sharing their lists of social connections with other members (Boyd & Ellison 2007). The objectives of this study was to study whether there is a gender-based difference in having access to Facebook, Twitter, Skype, e-mail, and Short Messaging Service (SMS) among the new entrants to the Faculty of Management (FM), University of Peradeniya and their willingness to communicate with the library using these accounts. Data were gathered using a structured questionnaire distributed among 149 new entrants to the FM, when they registered in the library in February 2015. The response rate was 86% and SPSS (Ver.13) was used to analyse the data.

Findings confirmed that, 60 (47.2%) were male and 67 (52.8%) were female. Out of the total, 41 (68.3%) male and 42 (64.6%) female respondents have FB accounts, 05 (8.3%) male and 05 (7.7%) of female new entrants have Twitter accounts, and 13 (21.7%) males and 19 (29.2%) of females have Skype accounts. It is evident that, FB is more popular among the respondents. Thirty two males (53.3%) and 30 (46.2%) females have email accounts. They were also asked whether they like to communicate with the library by using any of these accounts and 37 (61.7) of males and 35 (53.8%) of females confirmed that they are willing and 39 (65%) males and 40 (61.5%) females confirmed that they like to receive SMSs from the library. Although a gender-based difference was observed this was not proved as statistically significant.

The librarians who develop training programmes and plan information services need to pay attention to the preferences of the new entrants and attempt to market the information resources and services through the media more familiar to them. At the same time, library should concentrate on organising training sessions to promote the use of social media and email among the undergraduates so that the communication between the fast and the such social media to improve their ability to use social media and to improve the awareness of having communication with the library digitally through these social networks.

Keywords: *Social Media, Undergraduates, Facebook, Twitter, SMSs, Management, Sri Lanka*