Employees' Views on the Use of Social Media Platforms at Work

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ABSTRACT

Nowadays, no public or private organization in Bangladesh can function without the widespread adoption of social networking platforms. It has recently replaced in-person social interactions and communication. Most modern organizations provide their employees with affordable Internet connections by PC, laptop, and some other mobile devices, allowing them quick access to personal and professional social networking sites from both home and work. There are many advantages to using social networking sites at work, but there are also some negatives. An organizational policy on the use of social networking sites while on the job is a powerful management tool. This research aims to learn more about how employees are utilizing social media at work as well as the effects of this behaviour. The research hopes to help organizations implement policies that are mutually agreeable to employees and management. A total of 60 people from a variety of occupations participated in the survey. Some of the primary ideas given in this paper that can work for the organization without restricting the freedom of the employees are: providing proper direction; teaching and training employees about the security risks for the organization; enabling employees with time-based access; etc.

KEYWORDS: Social Media, Social Networking Platforms, Organizational Policies.

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INTRODUCTION

Modern organizations are increasingly adopting social media to communicate with their staff and customers. Aside from this, corporations use social media to carry out some of their core human resource activities, such as staff recruiting and selection. Regardless of age, sex, or location, the introduction and widespread adoption of social networking sites in today's society appears to have transformed human behaviour, lifestyle and thinking. It has recently taken the place of real-life social networks in Bangladesh. Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter, among others, are the most popular social networking sites today, with the majority of the internet population using them on a regular basis to engage with their families and friends. Social media may take many forms, and while Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn are all well-known examples, there are many others. Forums, profiles, podcasts, blogs, pictures, videos, texting, and IM are all examples of channels that can be used for this purpose. There are also internet-based audio services and music-streaming apps. Employees' social media use throughout the workday varies widely. But increasingly, it's found that workers are posting photos, memes, and the contents of their lunch on Instagram. Individuals in today's organizations tend to be entranced by the capacity of online social networking technologies to improve business communication and appearance, in addition to individuals. Social media may be used by businesses in many different ways. Teams can utilize wikis to manage projects, exchange best practices, and do case study research. Departments can have brainstorming sessions or maintain ongoing conversations with questions and answers on a blog. Because they are effective at fostering relationships, increasing lateral communication, and enhancing understanding and teamwork, collaborative technologies are valuable in the workplace. Social media platforms have a conversational tone, which is innovative. Knowledge is shared through methods like a debate with questions and answers (online forums), collaborative editing (wikis), or storytelling with reactions (blogs). Although social networking sites were created with the goal of extending and improving human communication capacities, their widespread use has increased the potential for deceit, social grooming, and the creation of defamatory content in the community. Nowadays, modern public institution or private company has made internet access more affordable and accessible via computers, laptop, and other mobile

devices. These advantages are provided by the offices or companies so that their employees can use them to improve their relationships with their colleagues, coworkers, channel members, and consumers. These provide employees with convenient access to their personal and professional social networking sites both at home and at work. Organizations spend money on things like investing in strategic tools to help their staff be more productive. Although mobile devices are a valuable asset to an organization, they are not often subject to the same regulations and monitoring as the company's desktops. Employees' usage of social networking sites while on the job, on the other hand, poses ethical concerns and duties. These should be prioritized in order to preserve and assure excellent morals, righteousness, and virtue among an organization's employees.

Besides this, companies have concerns about employees' use of social media at work. In light of the foregoing, it seems likely that employees will find methods around the company's attempts to prevent access to social networking sites while they are at the work. It's not hard to get around filters nowadays. Various portals provide unrestricted access to restricted resources. IT managers would have to ban access to the major social networking sites as well as any proxy servers that users might use to access those sites. Moreover, there is a potential threat of breaching confidential personal or official data through the use of third-party social connectivity sites, digital applications, or online games. Management should implement a comprehensive policy that addresses all aspects of employee participation in internet activities while at work. Employer and employee cooperation is the key to any organization's success. As a result, the findings of this study will aid organizations in implementing fair policies that are acceptable to employees and management alike. The current research aims to investigate how social media platforms affect organizational norms and information security measures.

The present study aims to:

- Determine the usage status of social networking sites in the workplace.
- To investigate the presence of a social networking policy within the organization, and Effective policy enforcement from the employee's standpoint.

- To demonstrate the employee's perspective on the impact of utilizing Social Networking Platforms in the workplace and to solicit their suggestions for the organization's social networking policy.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Boyd & Ellison (2007) define social networking sites as "web-based services that enable individuals to create a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, to articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and to view and navigate their list of connections and those made by others within the system." Social media were technological platforms that allowed people to communicate, exchange information, and interact with one another (Zerfass et al., 2011; Criado et al., 2013; Song and Lee, 2016). Social media technology transformed the manner in which individuals communicate and engage socially within and outside of companies in connection to the Internet, having a significant influence on people's jobs and lifestyles (Correa et al., 2010; Turban et al., 2011; Moqbel et al., 2013; Holland et al., 2016). People were able to connect or collaborate online via several platforms, including weblogs, blogs, wikis, broadcasts, images, and videos (Broughton et al., 2009). Social media transformed communication by permitting two-way conversations between users, as opposed to one-way communication. Ellison, Steinfield, and Lampe (2007) categorized social networking sites as follows: work-related situations like Linkedin, romantic relationships like Friendster, people with common interests like MySpace, and college students like Facebook.

There have been studies undertaken on the usage and effects of social networking sites. However, only a small number of studies were discovered to address the employer and employee viewpoints, particularly in the setting of Bangladesh. In 2014, 77 percent of employees reported using social media at work, according to the Pew Research Center. Despite the fact that many companies forbid employees from using social media at work. Others, however, have precise rules regarding their employment. In light of this, despite all attempts made by businesses to limit employee use of social media, employees might still be very active there. Simultaneously, several employees provide organizations with immediate benefits through enhanced social media-enabled communication, advertising, and networking. Twitter and

Facebook are typically seen as effective platforms for fostering deeper relationships with customers and business partners. According to Harvard Business Review (2018), Employees can use social media as a strong communication tool to cooperate, exchange ideas, and resolve issues. According to research, 82% of workers believe social media may enhance workplace relationships and 60% think it can help in decision-making. Because of these convictions, the majority of employees use social media to communicate with coworkers—even during working hours. Kissflow (2016) identifies eighty-two percent of employees believe that social media can strengthen professional connections, while sixty percent believe it can aid in decision-making. However, companies also believe that social media kills productivity, with over 50% of US employers apparently restricting access to social networking sites at work. According to a report, the primary reason why the majority of employees use social media at work is to relieve stress related to their jobs. People are able to escape into the digital world through social media. It allows them to watch everything they desire without leaving their workplace or going to the break room. Several prior studies have demonstrated a variety of effects of employees' usage of social networking sites at work, including unlawful postings (Wise, 2009), decreased productivity, and security threats to the organization posed by the external sharing of data (Peacock, 2008). According to Breslin (2009), employers have the power to hold employees accountable for this type of behaviour if the postings are used to "attack the company" or "harass coworkers." Leidner et al. (2010) discovered that an internal social networking system at a U.S.-based investment/insurance firm increased the retention rate of new workers. Patel and Jasani (2010) give businesses a lot of tips on how to make social media strategies that keep social media safe.

According to a poll of over 1,400 CIOs performed by Robert Half Technology (2009), one in five U.S. organizations permit the use of social networking sites for professional objectives, but only one in ten permits the use of social networking in the workplace for personal reasons. In reality, access to social networks can boost productivity (AT & T, 2008; Bennett, Owers, Pitt, & Tucker, 2010). According to a 2008 European research commissioned by AT & T, 65% of employees claimed that social networking increased their productivity (AT & T, 2008). Social networking can have both advantages and disadvantages in the job. Bennett et al. (2010) suggested that the advantages of social networking

in the workplace outweigh the disadvantages. However, many firms continue to undervalue these benefits, despite the fact that some have begun to include social networking into their strategic tools. In October 2009, Manpower Inc. (NYSE: MAN) surveyed nearly 34,000 employers in 35 countries and territories in the Americas, Asia-Pacific, Europe, the Middle East, and Africa. The poll sought to reveal employer perspectives on the usage of external social media at work. Seventy-five percent of employers asked responded that their business had no policy regulating the use of external social networking sites in the workplace, according to the study data. Only 20% of the companies in the sample reported having rules in place to govern the use of external social networking sites in the workplace. The majority of these firms (63 percent) found that their rules were effective in preventing productivity loss, and 33 percent found that they were effective in protecting their intellectual property and other private information. According to the results of the poll, 89 percent of employers claimed that their workers' usage of social networking at work did not damage the reputation of their firm (Manpower Inc., 2009).

In Bangladesh, the phenomenon of the younger generation's use of social networking is fast redefining the nature and scope of labour. This generation, which has just entered the workforce, will eventually constitute the majority of workers in every organization. Therefore, the time has come for management to develop a comprehensive policy for observing, managing, and monitoring employees' use of social networking sites at work.

METHODOLOGY

The study included a sample of sixty employees from various organizations. The sample was drawn from different sectors; namely: Civil service, Banking, Health, Telecommunication etc. irrespective of gender and designation. Google Forms was used to collect data using a closed-ended questionnaire. Secondary data were gathered through consulting a variety of documents, reports, articles, case studies, books, the internet, etc. The acquired data were examined with the study's aims in mind. The duration of the study is from April to June 2022.

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Out of the 60 respondents in the sample, 58.3% are men and 41.7% are women. Three parts were used to get the employees' points of view. First,

the frequency of using different social networking sites among the sample employees was shown. In the second part, it was shown that organizations have rules about how employees can use social networking sites at work and the impact of using those social media platforms on employees. Finally, the employees' thoughts on the different policy ideas have been given.

Usage status of social networking platforms

Table 1: Percentage (%) of Employee's Use of Social Networking Sites Account

Name of Social Networking site	Response in %
Facebook	75.0%
YouTube	16.7%
LinkedIn	1.7%
Others	6.7%

Usage	Response in %
Single social networking Site user	11.7%
Multiple social networking Site user	88.3%

Among the Social networking sites Majority (75%) of the sample respondents use Facebook, and 10 (16.7%) respondents use YouTube. The data also shows that respondents are large users of multiple social networking sites.

Table 2: Frequency of Using Social Networking Sites at Work

Frequency of use	Response in %
Daily several times	76.7 %
Irregular	13.3%
Daily once	10.0%

46 (76.7%) of the sample employees use social networking platforms at the office daily several times. 6 (10%) of sample employees visit those sites at least once a day. Whereas, 8 (13.3%) of the employees mentioned that they were irregular in browsing social networking sites at the office.

Table 3: *Purposes of Using Social Networking Sites at Work*

Purpose of use	Response in %
Personal communication	3.3%
Official communication	10.0%
Both personal and office communication	86.7%

The table indicates that 2 (3.3%) respondents use social networking sites at the workplace for communicating with their family and friends, spending time chatting, sharing and uploading photographs and passing comments. Therefore, they were wasting productive work hours. Whereas, 6 (10%) of the sample employees use social networking sites only as part of their official communication. And, 52 (86.7%) of respondents use those sites for both personal and office communication simultaneously.

Table 4: *Devices to Get Access to Social Networking Sites in the Workplace*

Devices	Response in %
Mobile phone	98.3%
Computer	1.7%

Most of the respondents (98.3%) were found to use their personal mobile phones to visit social networking sites when they are in the office. Only 1.7% of sample employees use office LAN, Office Computer, Laptop etc. provided by the office.

Impact of using social networking sites in the office: Employee's perspective

Table 5: *Employee Agreeableness about Impact Factors*

Employee agreeableness about the Impact Factor	Agree (in %)	Disagree (in %)	Neither agree nor disagree (in %)
Negative effect on employee's work efficiency	30.0%	45.0%	25.0%
Risk of leaking confidential information	21.0%	46.7%	18.3%
Creates conflict among workers	28.3%	50.0%	21.7%
Employee morale is hampered	13.3%	78.4%	8.3%
Negative effect on the office's reputation	18.3%	66.7%	15.0%

Most of the sample employees (45%) (78.4%) and (66.7%) did not agree with most of the negative effects (employee's work efficiency, Employee morale and office's reputation respectively) of using social networking sites at work. It is also can be mentioned here that 21.7% and 18.3% of the respondents remain neutral about the possibility of creating conflict among workers and leaking confidential information respectively.

Organizational Policy regarding social networking platforms at work:

Table 6: *Are Employees Allowed to Get Access to Social Networking Platforms at Office*

Accessibility	Response in %
Never	13.3%
During break	25.0%
Access without knowledge of authority	16.7%
Employer allowed access	45.0%

8 employees out of 60 sample respondents indicated that their employers never allow them to get access to social networking sites while they are at the office. Whereas, it is also noticeable that 27 (45.0%) sample employees responded that their employers allow them to use social networking sites at the office.

Table 7: *Presence of Effective Policy Regarding Social Networking at Workplace*

Response to the presence of effective Policy	Yes (in %)	No (in %)	No idea (in %)
	38.3%	45%	16.7%

According to the table, 27 (45%) employees out of 60 sample respondents informed us that their office does not have any effective policy regarding the use of social networking sites. It is also noticeable that 10 (16.7%) sample employees stated that they were unaware of any relevant policies at their workplace. While 23 (38.3%) indicated that their organizations effectively implement the policy.

DISCUSSION

Organizations would profit from a well-communicated, well-planned social networking strategy that addresses both employer and employee rights and responsibilities. The present study shows a sample employee's recommendation regarding how to minimize the use of social media platforms in the workplace.35 (58.3%) out of 60 sample respondents recommended that the use of social networking sites at work be controlled by allowing access to some specific sites for office purposes. While 9 (15.0%) of the sample employees responded that monitoring mobile phone usage would be an effective policy. And, 3 (5%) of the sample employees preferred blocking access to social networking sites, which would be the best policy. On the other hand, 11 (18.3%) out of 60 sample employees indicated that no policy would be required for this purpose.
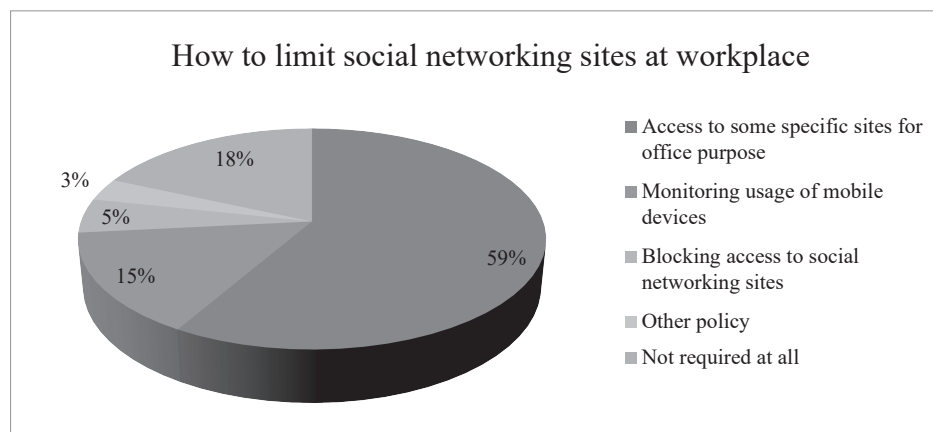
Figure 1: *Respondent's Recommendation to Limit the Use of Social Networking Sites in Office*

7. CONCLUSION

It's a fact that technology will always be evolving. Opposing the advancement of technology is a fruitless exercise. So, management should be aware that if these shifts are handled well, they could be good for the organization. Due to the quick rate of change and development in the use of social media, the organization's authority must periodically examine the social media rules. Employers need to figure out how much hey can monitor their employees' personal use of social media without making it

look like they are trying to limit their freedom of speech. Providing limited website access to employees while yet keeping a check on their time spent on social media sites would be a great way to boost productivity.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

There is no conflict of interest.

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