



SOCIAL MEDIA AND YOUTH: CONFRONTING THE QUANDARY -THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON TEENS AND YOUTH

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: In current world it is becoming undeniable that the world is getting transformed at an extremely rapid rate by the influence of social media. Social media are those websites and applications that enable users to create and share content or to participate in social networking. Social media is not only getting deep rooted in current society but it also has become an influential and irresistible tool of the modern world. At times it becomes difficult for a person to prove himself in front of people if you are not at it (social media). The objective of this review is to find out the association of social media and youth and to assess the effect of social media on youth. A systematic review of a number of published relevant papers and peer reviewed journals were identified, screened, reviewed and abstracted from last two decades. It is a retrospective results based study. This review included the literature review of original reports, published articles and programme reports. The quality of the abstracted studies was assessed thoroughly and in some cases, information from meta-analysed data was extrapolated to form conclusions. In the last decade, the amount of time that adolescents spend on the computer has greatly increased. Online activities with the highest rates of use among adolescents are video games (78% of adolescents), email (73%), instant messaging (68%), social networking sites (65%), news sources (63%), music (59%), and videos (57%). It was found that the social media has a strong association with social life of a youth and it is agreed upon that if adolescents and teens are provided proper and timely guidance and positive usage of social media can be very beneficial to our teens and youth. Especially by parents, school administrators, paediatric societies and government authorities review. On the brighter side, social media promotes collaboration, creativity, communication, and technological proficiency and leadership qualities but on the darker side this craze of social media has led to a host of question regarding its impact on teens, adolescents, society and the world at large. While it is agreed that the social media affects people's living styles and it is an ongoing process to identify the nature of these influence in every society and country especially on youth. This study also focused the impact of social media on youth

KEYWORDS : Social media, youth, paediatric, networking sites, face book, Skype, impact, adolescents, teens, community.

BACKGROUND:

Social media is becoming the most important and significant part and parcel of the present world. In current world it is becoming undeniable that the world is getting transformed at an extremely rapid rate by the influence of social media.

According to Merriam Webster encyclopaedia Britannica Company defines: **Youth** is the time of life when someone is young. Youth is the time when a young person has not yet become an adult.

Youth is very important for future of any nation and country's progress and development. Now a day's Social media is essential for youth in the field of education to learn new trends in education, to improve writing and communicating skills, cultural promoting, religious and political information gathering and sharing links, better living style, growth and development of society (Merriam Encyclopaedia, 2001).

Teens: The years of age starting from 13 to 19 years of age.

Social media is most recent form of media and having many features and characteristics. It have many facilities on same channel like as communicating ,texting, images sharing , audio and video sharing , fast publishing, linking with all over world, direct connecting. It is also cheapest fast access to the world so it is very important for all age of peoples. Its use is increasing day by day with high rate in all over the world. Majority of youth is shifting speedily from electronic media like as television viewers and radio listeners to the social media among all age group. Youth rate is the fastest group shifting towards social media so its influences are much on youth. Shrestha lucky (2013) described that social media is means of connections among people in which they create, share, and exchange information and ideas in virtual communities and networks (Shrestha lucky, 2013).

Anthony J. Bradley (2009) he defines Social media is inevitable for the vast majority of organizations worldwide. He says this predictability is not assurance of success. He says many

organizations fail in social media efforts because they do not deliver their products on the six core principles that set social media apart and bring about its unique value. And these Six Core Principles are of social media collaboration. Social media network site defines social media as: it is an online location where people can interact with others about information, entertainment, news and which will be on their own choice and creation (Turow, 2011). Social media is accelerating at a considerable speed and for that our youth are on tips and toes to catch up with this space by turning everything upside down on their electronic gadgets. Social media is not only getting deep rooted in current society but it also has become an influential and irresistible tool of the modern world. Everyone is in social media- old or young, poor or rich etc. At times it becomes difficult for a person to prove himself in front of people if you are not at it (social media). Social media comprises of all those applications, blogs and websites which enable people to interconnect around the world through internet, whatsapp, LinkedIn Face book, Instagram, Twitter, Snap chat, Twitter, Pinterest, Google +, Tumblr, gaming sites, video call and many more. The most widely used and common sites are Face book, twitter, whatsapp. Although the social media is spreading like wildfire throughout the world. At the same time its universality gives rise to many queries in the minds of majority of people especially related to its impact on youth. Because youth is the most important section of population of every nation. So it becomes imperative to search and dig deep to find out the best choice of social media. Because we all know that besides many of its advantages, social media has impacted the youth of modern times adversely as well such as:

- Teenagers who spend much time on social media have less time to spend with friends and family.
- Most of the young users are not even 10 years old; this could cause severe concerns to their privacy over the web as well the security of device data.
- Parents have their own busy schedule, which leaves them with little time to control browsing habits of their young ones on the social media.
- Incidents of cyber bullying and electronic aggression among grownup teens have been on rise.

- Kids may develop a feeling of isolation in their real life while they are hyper active online.

SOCIAL MEDIA THREATS

School students or teenagers are still young enough to tackle certain issues they come across online. As per the research work by Daniel J. Flannery named "Social Media and its effects on youth", victims too face such major threats online:

CYBER BULLYING:

The incidents of cyber bullying mostly take place on social networking sites and blow down pages. While 30% of the students in middle and high school have been identified as victims or culprits, 18% of the affected students are girls as compared to 12% boys. Unfortunately, 15% of these victims attempt suicide out of depression.

Electronic aggression (EA):

Harassment caused through emails, chat rooms, instant messaging, text messages, fake websites, etc., also pose a major threat to the privacy and safety of youngsters over the social media. The report says, 9% to 35% youngster have been affected by EA at any point of their young age. Because exposure to media has increased over the past decade, adolescents' utilization of computers, cell phones, stereos and televisions to gain access to various mediums of popular culture has also increased. Almost all American households have at least one television, more than three-quarters of all adolescents' homes have access to the Internet, and more than 90% of American adolescents use the Internet at least occasionally.[231] As a result of the amount of time adolescents spend using these devices, their total media exposure is high. In the last decade, the amount of time that adolescents spend on the computer has greatly increased.[232] Online activities with the highest rates of use among adolescents are video games (78% of adolescents), email (73%), instant messaging (68%), social networking sites (65%), news sources (63%), music (59%), and videos (57%).

Not only has the media warped how young adults view themselves but has also manipulated and twisted how today's children interact with the outside world. Interpersonal relationships have grossly deteriorated and an era of personal isolation and cyber interaction has dawned. A few troubling practices have now arisen out of particularly the Social media.

Cyber Friends

or friends you meet through the internet were meant to be a harmless way of interacting with different people but the concept took a life of its own, instead becoming a substitute for real life interaction. From a young age children became insular, confined to a small space in front of their computers, encouraging a sedentary lifestyle, social awkwardness and difficulty in interacting with people when they are put in real life situations.

Internet Personalities:

Identities and personalities teenagers carefully craft that they feel would be popular and acceptable among their cyber peers. A sense of pride is associated with the number of Instagram followers and Face book likes but this may lead to irregular and volatile behaviour patterns and a confused self identity.

Loss of productivity:

The best example of this is probably the YouTube wormhole. The sheer amount of information, distractions, advertisements and recommended content ensures that you end up expending a much longer time than you planned on the internet. This content is carefully chosen by the internet using data from your searches and interests stored in the form of cookies.

Cyber Data Leaks:

A very recent exposé brought to light the liberties taken by Face book with the personal information of its users. Teenagers upload all

their personal information on their social media profiles including phone numbers addresses. This has caused a rather worrying increase in the instances of threatening phone calls, stalking and cyber bullying.

All these negatives should not be allowed to stand in the way of all the positives that media brings. What is needed is parental supervision, an overhaul of security systems in social network and most of all a healthy home environment and an open and accepting family support system. It needs to be ensured that no child and teenager is left isolated in an emotionally vulnerable state and the family should make constant attempts to encourage participation. Parents and elder siblings need to try to become a sounding board towards which the child turns when confused, hurt or in need of company instead of allowing the media to hack together solutions for them which in the long run may cause irreparable harm.

On the flip side, the internet is an unregulated world that has no form of morals or laws to abide to. Youths are exposed to gore images of murder victims, accidents, rape cases or even video footages of gun shootings, violence, verbal outbursts, nudism and explicit sexual content. All these gore content are in the domain of youths and when consumed for a long-time can lead to serious mental breakdowns. For instance, they will start having anxiety attacks and fear of the real world. Whatever they see is registered in their minds and they believe that the world is a bad place, but that is not entirely true. More than 90% of the earth is a safe haven with so many untapped opportunities. Too much social media also leads to addiction

OBJECTIVES:

The objective of this review is to find out the association of social media and youth and to assess the effect of social media on youth.

METHODS:

Review study based on results of retrospective case-control studies. Pertinent information was abstracted by identifying and screening of relevant papers published in peer reviewed journals in past two decades. This review included the literature review of original reports, published articles and programme reports. The studies were identified through data base including Cochrane library, pub med searches, LILACS, Latin American and Caribbean health sciences information system (LILACS), Index Medicus for Eastern Mediterranean Region (IMEMR), African Index Medicus (AIM), EMRO, and all World Health Organization Regional Database and publications in any language by using terms like social media, media impact of media on youth, influence of media on teens, youth and media. The systematic searches were carried out for last two decades. The reference lists of published reviews were also searched. Relevant papers published in peer reviewed articles and journals were identified, screened and reviewed for information. Then Searched and identified records related to social media were cross checked with their reference list and programme reports. Some of the reports were removed which did not meet inclusive criteria. Rest of articles were reviewed and analysed. Among these studies included social media, impact of social media on youth, influence of social media on teens, impact of social media on adolescents, impact of social media on adolescents, family and community. To further establish the connection, several case studies are explored including The Impact of Social Media on Youth: A Case Study of Bahawalpur City.

RESULTS

Majority of the respondents show the agreements with these influences of social media. Respondents opine Face book as their favourite social media form, and then the like Skype as second popular form of social media, the primary place for them, 46 percent responded connect social media in educational institution computer labs, mainstream responded as informative links share, respondents Face main problem during use of social media are unwanted messages, social media is beneficial for youth in the field of education, social media deteriorating social norms, social media

is affecting negatively on study of youth. Social media promotes unethical pictures, video clips and images among youth, anti-religious post and links create hatred among peoples of different communities, Negative use of social media is deteriorating the relationship among the countries, social media is playing a key role to create political awareness among youth.

Youths were never inspired by any emerging phenomena that much until social media came to the fore. The unprecedented clutch of this most vibrant trend nowadays is being further endorsed by survey reports from recognized bodies worldwide as well.

One such survey conducted by TCS with the name of "TCS GenY Survey 2012-13" targeted the 'Post-Millennial' generation. It included responses of more than 17,000 students of age group 12-18 years from urban high schools spread across 14 cities all over India.

The main findings included:

Used by above 65% of the respondents, Mobile phones emerged as the favourite gadget of the youths.

18% of the youth access internet through mobile phones, which is only next to their internet use at home (72%).

One in every four youngsters access internet for more than 60 minutes on daily basis while above 50% do so for 30+ minutes every day.

73.65% youngsters use internet for academic research work, more than 62% use it for social media activities such as chat/connect/blog.

A staggering 73.68% of the respondents all over India use Face book/Twitter as their communication handle, leaving SMS, Voice call, email and instant messaging way behind.

Another survey report published on Social media chimps in the form of Info graphic reflects the impact of social media to even deeper extent.

It says:

5 million Face book users are aged under 10.

58% of the Face book users among children are from the age group 13-17.

50% of teens login to their FB account at least once in a day.

Girls aged 16-17 years are most prone to cyber bullying attacks.

10% teens have had their embarrassing photos being posted on social media sites without permission.

CONCLUSION:

Although social media can influence our youth in both positive as well as negative way. Over the past two decades, social media have gained so much growth and fame worldwide to an extent that many researchers are now interested in learning more about these social platforms and their effects on the community. Despite the fact that almost everyone in the community is connected to at least one social media platform, the youth and teenagers are the leading and most fanatic of these social platforms to the point that they even social network while in class or even church. Despite many positive effects these social sites impact the lives of our youth in a society a great deal in terms of morals, behaviour, curtsey, dealing with Social media threats etc.

To conclude, social media is definitely a boon for all of us, especially the younger lots and it is agreed that this age group is at its nascent milestone of life and demands a great consideration to devise a solid strategy by parents, teachers, school authorities, paediatric

societies to put forth certain effective measures for the safety of this vulnerable group of population. Considering the fact that the young social media users are still in the nascent stages of their lives, their elders need to put forth certain effective measures to ensure their safety online:

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