Social Media: Impact On Human Behavior And Society

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Abstract

Social Media, a popular medium of communal interaction, gradually has become an essential part of modern life. It has completely transformed the pattern of human behavior and society. Knitting the fabric of Indian society social media has made deep penetration into our life. It is gaining momentum day by day. Started as an e-mail correspondence, it soon spread into the digital universe.

Keywords- Indian Social Media, Impact On Human Behavior, Society and digital universe.

Introduction

The phenomenal hike in social media is proving to be a double edge sword in today's life. It has a huge bearing on social, political, commercial, educational and technological dimensions of the country. Emerging platforms like Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter lead to a connectivity boom and revolutionized the process of information flow. Besides, it also poses a series of new challenges before society and individuals.

2.0 SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media is the digital medium that facilitates communication, creation and sharing of innovative ideas, promotion of creativity through virtual networks.

By Andreas Kalpan and Michael Haenlein (2010)

Social Media is a group of internet based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundation of web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of user generated content.

Nancy. K. Baym (2010)

Social media are networked communication channels that allow users to create, share and exchange content.

Jan A.G.M. van Dijk(2012)

Social media refer to web- based services that allow individuals to(1)Construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system.(2)articulate a list of other users with whom they share connection and (3) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system.

In the light of above definitions, it could be concluded that social media is an online platform that helps users to create, share and exchange content.

2.1 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF SOCIAL MEDIA

The phenomenon of social media emerged in 1997 when the first social site 'six degree' was launched and entered public life. It allowed the users to create profiles and befriend the other users. From six degrees, social media entered the era of instant messaging billions of users. A step forward, 'Twitter' was founded in 2006 as a micro blogging site

and rapidly grabbed the attention of the intellectual section of society. In 2010, the rise of "Instagram" was seen as a photo sharing site and in 2011 'Snapchat 'was introduced and blogging. In 2002 LinkedIn website was founded which aimed towards professionals who wanted to network with one another. And thus provide innovative experiences and gain popularity. In 2004, media consumption skyrocketed with the entry of Facebook in the digitalized world and soon became a social media giant as a video sharing service. These sites opened new horizons and achieved tremendous success in the media market. As of 2023, there were thousands of social media platforms with their own audience. For example Instagram gains popularity among the audience who want to communicate through photographs while Twitter is the first choice for those who like to communicate to the point.

The potential of social media is evident from the fact that India is the 2nd largest online market behind China. As per a report released by Forbes in 2023 an estimated 4.9 billion people across the world use social media. India has 33.4% active social media penetration. The most widely used social media platform is Facebook followed by you-tube and India is leading with 1st rank in using Facebook. Nearly, one out of every five people in India is a Facebook user. This represents around 31.8% of the population. India is a leading country in using Facebook with 448.1 million users. Instagram is gaining more popularity among the 18-25 age groups, while Facebook is the first choice for those aged 25-40 and 40 and above.

2.2 ADVANTAGES OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media provides opportunities to nurture relationships with family and friends who are abroad. It helped to find groups of like-minded people or develop new relations. It gives opportunities to creative people to showcase their talent. Social media provides a treasure of knowledge just at one click and proved to be very helpful for students if used in a balanced way. People can update themselves with events or events happening in the world. This will boost their confidence. In recent years social media has become the voice of marginalized people leading to social justice and creating awareness among people. Government also use social media for promoting its policies and schemes thus bridging gap between authority and general public Social Media has become best platform for marketing and advertising and hence help in promoting business

2.3 DISADVANTAGES OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media has become an indispensable part of modern society, providing us an easy way of communication. Social media has many negative effects on society. Social media has become means of harassing and bullying online. The victims of cyber bullying developed emotional stress, lower self-esteem, and in some cases even commit suicide. Fake news and rumors can be easily spread with the help of social media that misguide people sometimes result in violence and mob lynching. Excessive obsession for social media can be easily visualized in our adolescence and youth. They waste many hours in scrolling updates and notifications. Although social media provides opportunities to make distant friends, it declines face to face interaction in real life. Individuals find it easier to hide behind

a computer screen and connect to virtual communities which accelerate feelings of loneliness and social disconnection. On social media people display every aspect of their lives in beautiful pictures and awesome status that might cause comparison, self-criticism and dissatisfaction. Personal information can be easily leaked via social media and used by third party companies or advertising agencies. It is necessary to understand these negative effects in order to decline its impact on society

3.0 SOCIAL MEDIA AND HUMAN BEHAVIOUR

According to the report released by Statista, Youth were the most vulnerable users of social media. Adolescence is considered as a juncture between youth and children. They are in the phase of identity building, so they get easily trapped in the glitter and glamor of social media. Switching from adolescence social media has an influence on people of all ages. It not only brings change in the pattern of human behavior but also leaves a deep mark on their thoughts and ideas. People present every aspect of their life with great embellishment which helps them create a new connection. Display of beautiful pictures and wonderful status create an illusion of a better, happy and successful life. This artificial world accelerates the desire for self-criticism and unnecessary comparison of oneself to others which finally leads to natural insecurities and isolation. Numerous studies suggest that the parents engaged in the virtual world find it very difficult to allocate quality time for their children. A 2023 report published by a leading child psychological institute says children grown up in an environment where parent attention is compromised may show higher levels of anxiety, lower self-esteem and problems in making secure attachments. Report also says people in an attempt to keep up with digital age and become idealized online persona, sacrificing formation of strong emotional bonds that finally leads to family split and increase cases of divorce and suicide. But this is not the complete picture; social media has positive aspects as well. Kasturi,S.K and Vardhan,P.B.(2014) in their study "Social Media: Key Issues and New Challenges" found 94.4% of respondent trust social media give sufficient web space for personal content and play crucial role in communication, collaboration, education and employment. It helps people in updating themselves regarding news and events happening in the world. It serves as a great platform for education seekers, the entire treasure of knowledge is available in just one click. Goyal (2021) in her study, on dimensions of social media, revealed the majority of people use social media for learning new skills. Social media provides an opportunity to the artist to showcase their talent. The rise of several youtubers and social media influencers is the testimony of opportunities provided by social media. As per Forbes 2023, half of millennial trust recommendations given by social media influencers. A research by Mefin Awoke Bekalu from Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health revealed that regular use of social media positively impacts social wellbeing and mental health. Thus, study challenges the normal belief that social media is universally harmful.

4.0 SOCIAL MEDIA AND SOCIETY

Social Media reduces the distance barrier and strengthens the bonds between the people, hence building social fabric. But over engagement in these media outlets disrupt family norms and create a danger of overlooking real connection. Giving more time to distant relationships leads to lack of interest and disengagement in personal connection.

Social media in the recent past has become platform for hate speech and rumor which leads to communal violence and mob lynching (e.g. - Delhi Riots 2020). As per Microsoft study Report 2019,

Over 64% of Indians encounter fake news online. There are a large number of edited images, manipulated video, and fake content spreading through social media.

"Online trolling" of those who do not agree with particular views and narratives is quite common. In addition to this there is a growing concern over women safety. Women often face cyber rape and threat that affect their dignity. It is detrimental in the sense that it invades privacy like never before. Oversharing on social media makes children vulnerable to hackers and predators; it may lead to cyberbullying. According to the National Crime Record Bureau (NCRB) report 2022, the number of persons convicted of cybercrime increased from 736 to 1407 in the year 2022. The Ministry of home affairs has launched an online reporting portal on 30 august 2019 for all types of cybercrime with special focus on women and children. The U.S. Surgeon General's Advisory highlights social media as becoming popular but there is not enough evidence about its safety. It escalates worries about exposure to unethical content and mental health risk.

There are always two sides to a coin, despite these demerit social media acts as a catalyst for social change. Movement like #Me too and #Black Live Matters exemplify its dominion in mobilizing communities and raising social awareness. It provides a platform for raising burning issues of the society. In governance perspective, social media reduces the gap between the citizens and governments. Provides voice to the marginalized section and brings about "social justice" and inclusive growth. Bhargav (2023) studied Social Media platform in India: Crisis response and context – specific approach found social media play role in conflicts and discrimination in society. It also showed India attempts to treat everyone on an equal basis by having principles like secularism and policies to help marginalized groups.

5.0 CONCLUSION

No technology is all good or bad. It is the use of technology which makes it right or wrong. Social media can be an agent for change if used wisely; it may be detrimental to society if not closely monitored. The need of hour is an exhaustive national law and policy to deal with the expanding horizon of social media. Beside this digital literacy is required to prevent its misuse. Responsible usage of social media must be taught at school and colleges especially in rural areas. Legal deterrence along with responsible use may realize the goal of "Digital India".

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