



Review Article

Impact of Social Networking Sites on Youths

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Abstract

Social media are now rapidly become the popular components of our everyday and social lives in today's globalizing society. These site are providing context where people across the world can communicate, exchange messages, share knowledge, and interact with each other regardless of the distance that separates them. That's why, now-a-days people all over the world spend more time on social media than on any other activity on the Internet and when we go across the differentiation on the basis of age, we get to the conclusion that the young people are quite ahead of their demographic relatives. Hence it is obvious that the social networking site affect young people more than any other mass media activity. In India the young people who have access to the Social Networking Sites are undergoing a huge change in terms of their media behavior. This paper attempts to investigate the impact of the social networking sites on the youths.

Keywords - Social Networking, young people, Internet, Social media

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Introduction

New social media provide this opportunity where people can communicate with others and belong to different networks via virtual communities on the Internet. In relation to interacting with others online, people use social media to gain knowledge and learn about different opinions and perspectives of issues, topics, and events. Most importantly, new social media is used for socializing; it is a form of media that allows people to participate in conversations and online dialogue without being face-to-face with others. Cultural differences influence communication, behavior, and values. (15-17)

“There are differences in the way that people who identify with different cultures, based on both national identity and gender, manage their communicative behaviors within social network sites” (Rosen et. al, 2010).

Social networking “is enabled by information and communication technology and heavily depends on continuous user participation” (Veltri and Elgarah, 2009). The diffusion of new social media across the world has different effects on individual but ultimately promotes interconnectedness and understanding among global societies. What is a social networking site? At the most basic level social networking sites are sites which allow users to set up online profiles or personal homepages, and develop an online social network. Boyd and Ellison (2007) define social networking sites as “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 a connection, and

3. View and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system” (Boyd and Ellison, 2007 and Veltri and Elgarah, 2009). (1-4)

Since their introduction, social network sites (SNSs) have attracted millions of users, many of whom have integrated these sites into their daily practices. As of this writing, there are hundreds of SNSs, with various technological affordances, supporting a wide range of interests and practices. While their key technological features are fairly consistent, the cultures that emerge around SNSs are varied. Most sites support the maintenance of pre-existing social networks, but others help strangers connect based on shared interests, political views, or activities. Some sites cater to diverse audiences, while others attract people based on common language or shared racial, sexual, religious, or nationality-based identities. Sites also vary in the extent to which they incorporate new information and communication tools, such as mobile connectivity, blogging, and photo/video-sharing. (5,2-8)

Four popular types of social media and networking sites are Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and the iPhone. An example of social media that promotes the exchange of messages between people across the world is Facebook. Facebook was created in 2004 by Mark Zuckerberg, whose mission was to bring people together with different backgrounds and encourage interaction (Facebook, 2010). There are over 500 million users in the world with a population of 6.8 billion, which means that about 1 out of 14 people have a Facebook account.

The social media are providing a common medium for exchanging messages, and many people around the globe can use the Internet to communicate and collaborate. There are more than 70 translations available on the site, and about 70percent of users are outside the U.S.(Facebook, 2010). According to Mark Zuckerberg, “If Facebook were a country, it would be the 6th most populated country in the world.” This social networking among numerous countries enriches social lives through ignoring the factor of distance. Social media brings people together with different backgrounds and encourages interaction. YouTube is a video-sharing website that began in 2005 that “allows individuals to interact with the global community by viewing and sharing user generated video content” (Georgetown University, 2010). Because so many videos are shared by people around the world, traditional stereotypes of groups of people begin to decline. People have the opportunity to comment on videos and participate in discussions and conferences. Numerous people have used YouTube, and this innovation “became a driving force for change around the world” (Ostrow, 2010). YouTube has over 78 million users with over 150,000 videos uploaded daily (Lake, 2009). Many companies use videos to promote their business to other countries. This strategy provides businesses with the opportunity to market their service or product to potential customers spanning across greater distances. (10-14)

In regards to worldwide current events, people upload videos to the Internet for the purpose of entertainment, information, or persuasion. Some videos instigate controversy, and people across the globe

can voice their opinions on the issue, which may contradict societal norms and stereotypes. Twitter is a form of social media that allows people to communicate information through microblogging. People use microblogging to “talk about their daily activities and to seek or share information” (Java et al., 2007). Twitter is a social-networking site created in 2006 to relay real time information to users. “The platform was inspired by creator Tim Dorsey’s introduction of an SMS-based concept that allowed members of his then-company, Odeo, to keep tabs on one another. The name ‘Twitter’...is used to describe a short burst of inconsequential information” (Georgetown University, 2010). Social media provide a place where people across the world can stay in touch and feel closer and more connected regardless of the distance that separates them. New social media have been rapidly spreading across the globe and gaining popularity in today’s society. While providing a common way of linking people together through knowledge, behaviors, and attitudes, a sense of belonging to a greater social network other than one’s own local community is effectively created. The Internet exemplifies such a significant means in connecting to a diversity of people, places, ideas, and cultures. New social media have provided ways in which people can communicate and interact with others across the world, without being restricted by the limitations of time and distance.

The characteristics of social media: are as follow:

1. Conversation

Whereas traditional media is about “broadcast” (content transmitted or

distributed to an audience) social media is better seen as a two-way conversation.

2. Connectedness

Most kinds of social media thrive on their connectedness, making use of links to other sites, resources and people.

3. Openness

Most social media services are open to feedback and participation. They encourage voting, comments and the sharing of information. There are rarely any barriers to accessing and making use of content – password-protected content is frowned on.

4. Participation

Social media encourages contributions and feedback from everyone who is interested. It blurs the line between media and audience.

5. Community

Social media allows communities to form quickly and communicate effectively. Communities share common interests, such as a love of photography, a political issue or a favourite TV show.

Hypothesis

With the increase of social media users day by day, it arouses curiosity among the media researcher that what are the driving forces which stimulate especially young ones to be on the social networking sites. How this affect their media habits. Our hypothesis for the above research is based on the following statements.

1. The access rate of users of Social Networking Sites among the young

ones is because it provides them privacy from their peer groups.

2. Freedom of having something like their personal media to which he or she is not going to share with anybody.
3. Selection, participation and interaction as an active user unlike the old media.

Objectives

In present study, followings are two major objectives :

1. To study the pattern of access of the social networking sites.
2. To study the impact of social networking sites on youth of Bundelkhand University.

Review of Literature

A study by the University of Maryland suggested that social media services may be addictive (Haythornthwaite 2005) and that using social media services may lead to a "fear of missing out," also known as the phrase "FOMO" by many students (Parks ,1996). It has been observed that Facebook is now the primary method for communication by college students in the U.S (McMahon, 1997).

Research methodology

1. A survey based on closed end questionnaire is structured for this study keeping the objective of the study in retrospect.
2. The universe of the sample study is youths in Dehradun from which the student of the Bundelkhand University campus are selected through multistage sampling. Finally the 50 number of student are selected among them through convenient sampling using social networking sites.

Result of the study

From the present study it reveals that:

1. 38 percent of the respondents internet everyday, 30 percent in day after another, 14 percent in a weak and remaining 18percent more than in a weak.
2. 20 percent of respondents uses internet on their laptop, 22 percent on their PC, 24 percent on their mobile, remaining 36 percent on their college and cybercafé.

Most of the respondents (36 percent) said that they spend to access the SNSs an average daily time 1 Hours- 2 hours while only 28 percents of the respondents are heavier user access more than 2 hours per day and rest 36 percent of access less than 1 hours per day. (9,10)

3. Regarding the percentage of activity they generally do on the internet are- surfing for information and news(20-25 percent), studying or collecting academic material (20-25 percent), entertainment via listening music and watching video (25-30 percent), spending time on social networking sites (35-40 percent).
4. Social interaction means that while you are on with Social Networking Sites in and exclusive or inclusive environment. 80 percent of the respondents answer that they use it in and totally exclusive environment. The user which have internet access at their home generally are late night users. Remaining 22 percent answered that they use in presence of their friends but avoid in presence of their family members.
5. Among the total respondents, 28 percent agreed that they express

- themselves better on SNSs in comparison to face to face interactions.
6. 42 percents of the respondents responded that they can present themselves to the people now better due to use of social networking sites.
 7. Social networking sites help the users to know the people within and outside the country, which broaden their contacts. 68 Percent of the respondents agreed this statement that their contact might be increased due to the use of social Networking sites
 8. 42 percents of the respondents said that their friends on Social Networking Sites helped them in many ways whenever they needed.
 9. 32 percents of the respondents reveal that they access the Social networking sites to pass their time.
 10. In view of the 28 percents of the respondents these sites enriching their knowledge..

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