

Impact of Social Media on Youth: Interventions and Interpretations of Cultural changes in the Society

ABSTRACT

The new media communication like social media network is used as medium of communication and information source among people today. They access it for their purpose and essentials of gathering information and it is one of the fastest-growing informative medium in wide range. Social media have become major part of life for many young people today. Most people particularly youths in the society are engaged with social media without any awareness of its effects are on our lives, whether positive or negative. Social media is rapidly evolving in front of our gaze at and it is almost impossible to refuse and conceal from this new form of media. Not only is it an important part of socialization within peer groups but now it is used to market and motivate people to become a part of a larger community. It is undeniably changing the way one communicates and how one finds and shares information. Most websites offer communication through the use of Facebook, Myspace, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn and many various blog formats. With new apps on smartphones and photography and video made digital, media can be created, edited and shared quickly and once it is in this new digital cloud it is common everyone. Through these new advances in technology one can share things about themselves to the world to view, and prior to social media one would have to communicate and share actually. These social media site offer adolescence new ways to access communication and entails cultural change in the way of communication and their long-term effects are still unknown. Today, there is a variety of social media channels, many of which can be linked together for users to cross-post. Emerging studies find that youth spend a considerable portion of their daily life interacting through social media. Thus the study is done to analyse the impact of social media and effects of cultural changes among youth in the society today.

Keywords: Social Media, Youth, Impact, Culture, Communication.

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1.Introduction

The new trends of communication is through Social media networks, it is defined as grouping of internet based an application that builds on the ideological and scientific foundations for transforming communication, in to an effective and interactive conversation between different societies and individuals. Social media is one of the easiest means includes social networking sites like face book, twitter, Google+ etc. This has been creating lot of boom in the current generation as it is one of the exceptional resources in conveying the information. Social media may comprise of different forms like magazines, social club, Internet forums, weblogs, social blogs, micro blogging, wikis, podcasts, photographs or pictures, video, rating and social bookmarking. But now the trend of getting information has totally changed as most of them are using internet to acquire information and to meet people. Social media is different from the usual traditional media which include newspapers, television, radio and films etc. This social media is less expensive when compared to the traditional media and is also easily accessible. This is not only used for communicating and interacting with people worldwide but is also one of the best ways to advance in business. This is also one of the biggest pools of information. The culture of communication is changed and reformed into more technology oriented with endless messages and transformations.

2. Social Media and Youth

Social media has become a part of everyone's life that it cannot be ignored. Social media has both positive and negative impact not only on youth but also on elders and children. Let us see some of the positive impacts of social media:

2.1 Positive impacts:

◆ **Friends:** Making friends has become easier with these social networking sites like facebook, google+ and twitter etc. in olden days it was a bit tough to make friends unless and

until one has personal interest of going out and making friends. Later after in the decades of 70's and 80's mobile phones helped in connecting and improving conversation with people. And now the exploration of social networking sites sprang up and it has changed the whole idea of making friends once more and forever. We can make unlimited friends worldwide and chat with them without any time limit and even at free of cost. Now a day's even we can have a video chat which is also available for free of cost. This can be considered as one of the best advantages of having social networking sites. We can connect with friends whom we missed out in our childhood.

◆ **Empathy:** By connecting with friends through social networking sites we share all of our good and bad experiences with friends. This will improve the relationship between friends and thus creating good bonding. Thus by sharing both good and bad experiences with friends, we will be able to empathize with each other. Sharing one's experiences with friends will also give mental relaxation.

◆ **Rapid communication:** Everybody is becoming so busy with their lives that they don't even have time to communicate with their family members. Our time is getting thinner and thinner with busy work schedule and family commitments. Social networking sites give us a chance to communicate in a speedy and effective manner. Writing in face book, Google+ and twitter will reach as many people as we want just in a span of seconds and with no cost. These sites will allow us to live a life which is unhindered with a small talk.

◆ **Be in touch with the world:** Not only communicating with friends within the circle but we can also make friends worldwide easily. We can build a network of friends and we can share our ideas, photos and videos through these sites. Through this we can have updated news of friends and family members. We can emphasize our location by using location based services like foursquare.

◆ **Building relationship and finding a common ground in an open society:** We can make a strong relationship with friends and relatives through these sites. This can help foster friendship and more besides strengthen us. Because friend is the only person with whom we can share everything related to our life. Connecting with groups will help in improving one's own business, thus creating profits. Professional sites like LinkedIn will have many groups based on different criteria. Through LinkedIn people get jobs and some promote their business.

2.2 Negative impacts:

Social media, now a day's is leaving a negative impact rather being positive. Most of the youth spend lot of time on the internet to visit and check their single or multiple accounts. This will affect students, youth and productivity of work because of the extreme use of technology. The risks of using social media may also include mental health, cyber bullying, texting and revelation to problematical and unlawful content and privacy violations.

◆ **Cyber bullying:** Usage of social media may create a chance for emotional distress in getting frightening, irritating and degrading communication from another teenager which is called cyber bullying. It's been proved that cyber bullying will build advanced levels of depression and anxiety for victims and also resulted in youth suicide. Most of the females become victims of this cyber bullying.

◆ **Texting:** Texting is used to harass people. Using cell phones and social networking sites for instant messaging to threaten, and hassle relationship partners is increasing day by day. One in three teens in relationships has been text messaged up to 30times an hour by a partner to know where they are, what they are doing, or who they are with.

◆ **Privacy:** Most of the teenagers are not aware of the website policies when setting their profiles and they may not be even aware of disclosing the information to the third parties like the advertisers. Most of the teenagers like to post their information publicly which will affect them when the hackers or people with cruel intension may use their information for wrong purposes. (Miller, 2011).

3. Communication and Cultural Impact

Social media outlets provide an avenue for youth to interact, but within a framework that influence perceptions and attitudes, which ultimately structure youth practices via popular culture. It could be argued that, they create a change in the perception of ideology (by offering youths the ability to reach wide audiences). In a complex society, there are several cultures, which develop within a dominant value system. This system is never homogenous; instead, entails constant modifications and adaptations of dominant ideas and values (Brake,1985). The introduction of social media to youths has brought about both positive and negative effects on youth culture. It has enhanced communication by making it more

convenient. Friends do not have to meet face-to-face to communicate but can now do it from far distances. According to (Lievrouw, 2011), the rise of new media has led to shifts within communication. Kear 2010, argues that ‘A significant difficulty with online communication is that participants don’t always get a very good sense of other people in the group’. It can be argued that, although social media allows youth to communicate with friends and family, it has in turn transformed us into anti-social people. In the present day, cyberspace has invaded the minds in public (Simmons, 1995). This is because, as portrayed by the media, it has presented us with a virtual world in which, we are limited, told what to do and presented with representations about what is eligible and trendy. Stuart Hall suggests that, ideas are dependent on effects of the conclusively determining level in the construction of society (Morley and Chen, 1996). It could be said that the social media has conditioned the minds of youths to accept this platform into our norms.

4. Research Method

According to the Lasswells Communication model,

Who -says

What -Message

Which -Through channel

Whom –To whom

With -what effect

The social media communications transfer the information and influence the users mind and dominate its ideology of communication. This Berlo’s simple model of communication explains that the elements of source are equal to the elements of receiver as they received the message with same knowledge and experience.

Source —————> **Message** —————> **Channel** —————> **Receiver**

Thus the study is done to analyse the how the social has influenced the users especially the youth and to understand what impact it has created among them. The Focus group discussion method is adopted to do the analytical study on this topic.

4.1 Focus Group discussions

The research method adopted for the study is Focus Group Discussion method. This method is used to analyse and find the impact of social media and their cultural changes among the youth in the society. The researcher acted as the mediator to pose the questions for the discussion. The persons involved for the discussions were those who use various social media for the communication purpose. The eight members of the age groups 18-25 of both

the genders Male and female were involved in the discussions. The study was conducted and the essential data were collected.

5. Interpretations

The data were collected in the focus group discussion and are interpreted below here.

- People who are spending more time on using these sites to gain information scoreless, when compared to youth who read books.
- The e-learning concept is booming and most of them prefer to this e-learning rather reading books which costs them more.
- Sitting before a TV or computer for longer time will create health problems and many cases have been reported in this regard.
- Using social networking sites to make friends is not always good because most of them make friendship with a bad intension. This may damage their reputation by adding unknown friends to their list.
- Extreme use of technology makes us more disruptive in life. Most of them get addicted to this, knowing its negative impacts. This may lead to low performance and loss of productivity in workplace as people tend to slink on their accounts.
- And on the other side some people tend to express themselves in a good form which they are not.
- Youth with cruel intensions target the audience who are irresponsible.
- Information published through this social media may not always be informative and trusted. Most of the times it misleads people with bad ideas and news.
- Youth who spend long time over the internet show the signs of depression like change in sleeping and food habits, experience swing in moods and change in daily routine.

A major problem with the use of social media by youth is how we strive to find consent and approval online by constantly updating profiles to enhance our virtual profile. This particular issue is at the center of effects triggered forth by new and social media as young people immerse themselves in the thick of the virtual world to a point where their touch with reality is almost secondary and dependent on how the virtual unfolds. There certainly is more to the undercurrents shaping youth behaviour in digital spaces than is clearly apparent and understanding the diffusion of ideology and how profits always triumph over principles might help to elicit some meaning and sense to the deluge of youth practices influenced by new media. (Fernback,1997) attempts to give it perspective explaining cyberspace as 'popular culture' itself.

It's very natives create Fernback's narratives in digital space as a 'cultural memory' that serves as both a reminder and a replication of our lived lives and experiences. Today we are constantly taking 'selfies' and updating profiles to fit in. Social media has offered youths the power to communicate with whom they wish to, and at any given period of time. Although youth is a construct of culture, it is greatly influenced by social media. In other words, youth can arguably be termed as an evolution of social media culture, because both social media and culture affect the creation of youth.

The invention of social media has brought about alterations in ideology. The virtual world presented by this media sells the idea to youths that they must partake in it. It has done this by providing services like communication and entertainment, in which young people crave and enjoy. Also it's a grapevine communication were they share the informal communication which is more interesting and influencing. Overtime, youths have adopted this practice into their culture and lifestyle. Youths feel the need to check their mobile phones whenever they wake up from sleep, for updates from various social media arenas. This has led to addiction of social media. Thus study finds the impact of social media in intervening cultural changes among the youth today in the society.

6. Conclusions

As a result of constant interaction with culture over time, audiences decode signs and symbols to create meaning (Baran, 2007). In other words, messages published on any social media have the power to alter ideology within 'youth'. In order to understand the structure of the modern society, the information age presents new concepts and ideologies. Due to the

process of sharing personal thoughts and ideas online to a specific audience, youths now knowingly or unknowingly adopt certain cultures into their own. Elliot (2009) brings to light that, although actions by individuals may appear impulsive, people also inculcate cultural dispositions.

This analysis has explored the way social media influences and impacts youth culture and ideology. It has enhanced communication among youths and provided a more convenient avenue for interaction. Nevertheless, social media has arguably made youths more anti-social, due to the availability of virtual platforms. The digital revolution has brought about a shift from a mass to a virtual society. As a way of seeking friendship, youths engage in this platform. Social media can in turn be seen to present youths with the idea that, they do not need to go into the public for this purpose. It does this by providing a wide audience for youths to interact globally. Social media challenges our ideological meaning and control. Thus in its indiscernible form, ideology continues to reign not only over the mainstream media, but in cyberspace and popular culture determining our choices in taste, class and other impositions in the social scene. As a result, youths are arguably deprived of the chance of encountering the physical world.

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