

Social Media and Indian Youth

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Abstract— At present Social Media is a part of life for most of the Indian youth. The usage of the Internet is now heavily shifted to Social Media Sites. Undoubtedly Social Media has its own merits, but excessive use of Social Media is affecting the lifestyle of youth moreover, statistics show that addiction to social media resulted in increased health problems and change in behavior. Most of the previous work done in this field relates to foreign countries. This paper focus on the Impact of Social Media Sites on youth, good, bad & major concerns in Indian perspective.

Keywords—Social Media, Impact, Indian Youth, Influence of Social Media, Internet.

I. INTRODUCTION

Started from a simple chat room for a group of people Social media has grown to millions of users active all around the globe. It all started in the late 90s when a site like MySpace gained a lot of popularity in a short duration. At that time most of the users of such sites were adults and sites were more business oriented as compared to now.

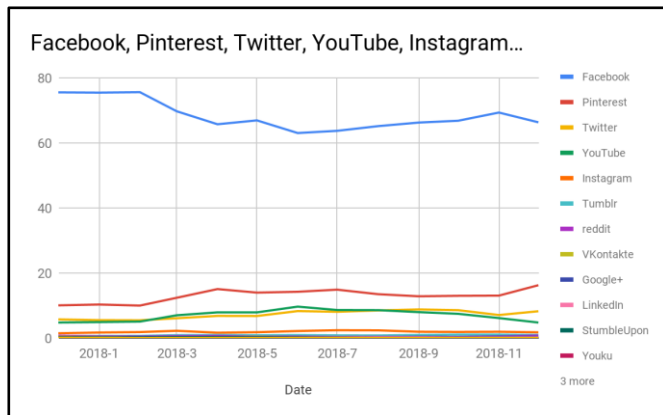


Fig. 1 Shows Indian Users Among various Social Media sites (StatCounter)

In the mid-2000s sites like Facebook & Twitter changed the social media, creating a totally new way how everyone on social media interacts. Many new features like photo sharing, status updates, etc attracted a huge user base in a fairly short time span. Today, there are a variety of social media sites available some of the most popular are Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, WhatsApp, LinkedIn etc and the majority of the users are teenagers.

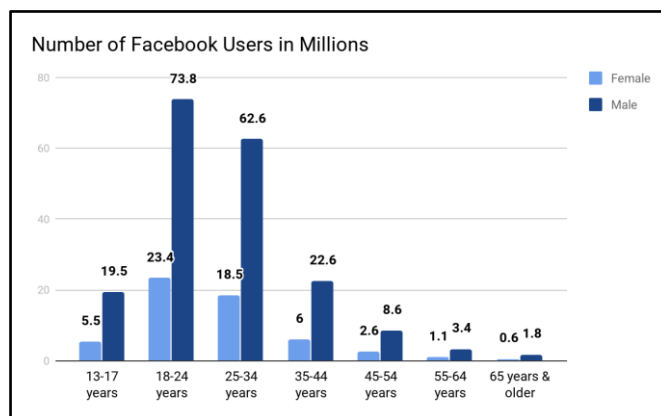


Fig. 2 Shows no of active users on Facebook by age and gender across India (Statista)

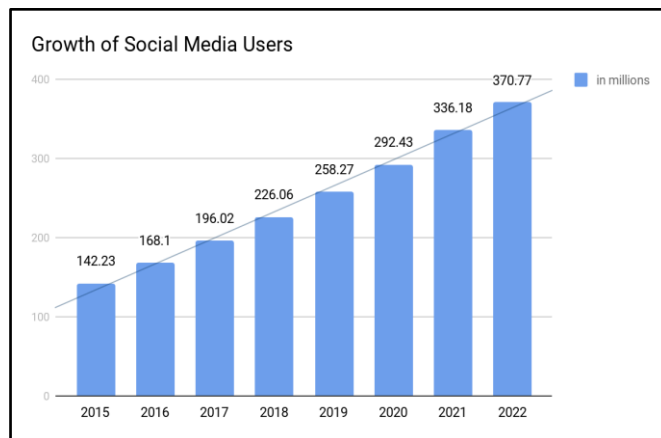


Fig. 3 Shows the number of increase in Social Media users in India from 2015 to 2022(expected) in millions (Statista).

II. RELATED WORK

Most of the earlier work done in this field emphasize how Social Media is growing and what are the advantages and disadvantages of Social Media. These studies will help in investigating the impact caused by Social Media. According to a recent study, the main reason to use Social Media is to keep in touch followed by making new friends [1]. The survey was conducted in order to find the Usability trend on Social media among different age groups and what they access on Social Media. G Nandi and A Das [2] presented an Algorithmic and Data Mining approach for analyzing Social Network on various factors and how researchers can use Data Mining techniques to analyze Social Network. Security is a major concern when using Social Media. This work [3] provided a brief review of security and privacy issues when using Social Media. The authors also summarized how Artificial Intelligence can be used as a foundation framework to improve security and privacy. A recent paper [4] analyzed various activities in which youth is involved while using Social Media. Authors also address the issues of bullying with the positive and negative impact of Social Media on youth.

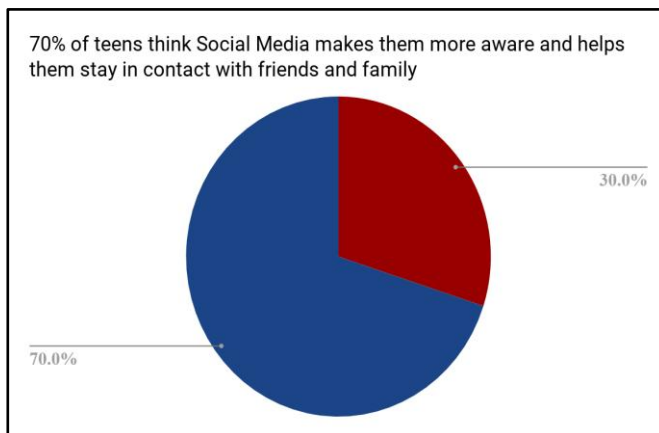


Fig.4 Shows positive outlook of Social Media (TCS GenY Survey)

III. INDIAN YOUTH

According to a recent survey by TCS, “Smartphones are the digital swiss knife for urban teens”. A survey was conducted on Indian youth of age group 12 to 18 studying in high school across the 14 Indian cities which revealed daily online habits of teens over India some of the key outlooks of the survey concluded that 72% of Indian youth owns a smartphone or a digital gadget and more than 50% have Internet access in their home. Most of the teens spend more than 60 minutes on an average on Social Media and when it

comes to learning and career most of the teens admitted that Social Media is not useful for academic studies [5].

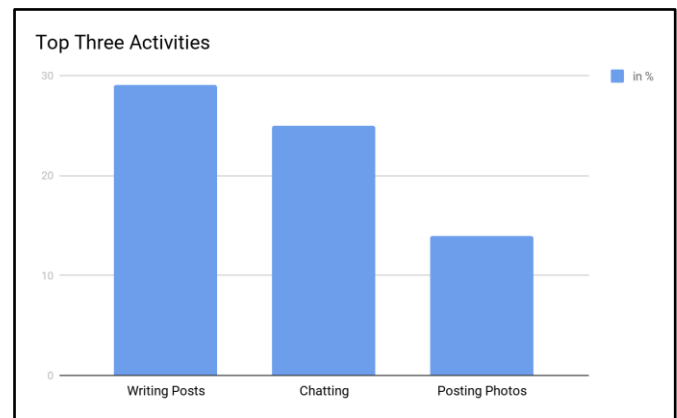


Fig. 5 Shows top three social activities (TCS GenY Survey)

With the advancement of technology and cheap cost of Smartphones, Social Media is now easily accessible via smartphone applications. Smartphones made Social Media more private and personalized. With constant Mobile notifications which engage user more as compared to Computers. According to CNET, Mobile user spent an average of 7 hours engaging in Mobile Applications on Facebook. After cheaper data plans provided by Reliance Jio, Social Media sites gained an outrageous amount of Indian users. “India will cross 370 million social media users by 2022” (Statista) which is nearly one-third of the Indian Population and majority of Social Media is used by Indian teenagers. Teenage is considered as a crucial stage in the development of a child that needs guidance, care, parental support and empathy [6]. At this Age, Social Media does play an important role in shaping the teenager’s behavior toward life [7]

IV. THE GOOD

Social Media as a platform has grown tremendously which gave rise to a number of people showcasing their skill, talent and out of the box ideas on Social Media [8]. There is a significant rise in Social Media influencers who started earning revenue through Social Media. Platforms like YouTube, Instagram, TikTok etc made some of the highest earning Social Media Stars making lakhs, just by posting their content online. While social media is talked in a very negative way, there are many positive points which favor Social Media and its impact on teens [9]. Some of them are:

A. Awareness

Social Media bridges the gap between people causing awareness among them. Much social awareness campaigns run on Social Media to create awareness in people around the globe. Some of the top trending campaigns of 2018 were:

#EndAcidSale which targeted the most gruesome crime of acid attacks in India

#SeedTheRise campaign started by Mahindra and Mahindra to motivate people to donate money to farmers in India.

#MeToo is a moment against sexual harassment. This moment formed a community which helped each other to raise awareness about sexual abuse over the globe.

B. Creativity

Social Media promotes creativity among the users. Many Social Media content creators influence people by sharing their creative content online [10]. Such content can be a source of inspiration for others. There are many categories of such contents like Artwork, Photography, Design etc which gives more exposure to one's inner artist to develop and share over the Social Media.

C. Education

YouTube as an educational content platform has grown huge. Many tutorials and video lectures are available on YouTube providing tons of educational content without spending a penny. Such content is easily accessible and used by many. Quora, another Social Media platform which is used by many to find the answer to their question which can be about anything [11].

D. Social Skills

Many teenagers are introvert Social Media as a platform gives them the freedom to communicate and share their ideas and thoughts without hesitation which help them build their social skills. According to Common Sense Media, Many teenagers consider text message as a better medium of communication over phone calls.

E. Empathy

Virtual empathy on Social Media can help many teenagers who are in depressing to improve their mood. Many studies have shown virtual empathy actually helps [12]. There are many forums and sites are available to overcome distress which is used by many. Community over such sites are actually compassionate and ready to help you anytime.

V. THE BAD

Besides, such positive factors involved in Social Media, it does more harm than good [13]. Some of the negative impact of social media:

A. Addiction

The irresistible urge to check Social Media, again and again, is Social Media Addiction. Most of the Social Media Users are addicted in some way. A hormone called Dopamine releases whenever you see something you like or attracted to [14]. It is the same chemical which makes you feel good

when eating sugar or chocolate. The normal usage of Social Media then slowly turns into addiction [15]. Social Media addiction is a severe problem which is ignored by many. Many cases of Social Media addiction have been reported in Indian youth. Many hospitals have started providing treatment for Social Media addiction in India.

B. Privacy

Privacy is always been a major concern in the Social Media world. There are many cases registered which shows the problem of privacy invading. Data privacy should be taken seriously, there are many malicious users over the internet who want to leak your data. Recently, Facebook sold user data to other companies. Youth should be careful when sharing something over the Social Media [16].

C. Bullying

Social Media Bullying is most prevalent in India many teenagers are affected by bullying over Social Media. It can be a rude comment on pictures of outrageous trolling.

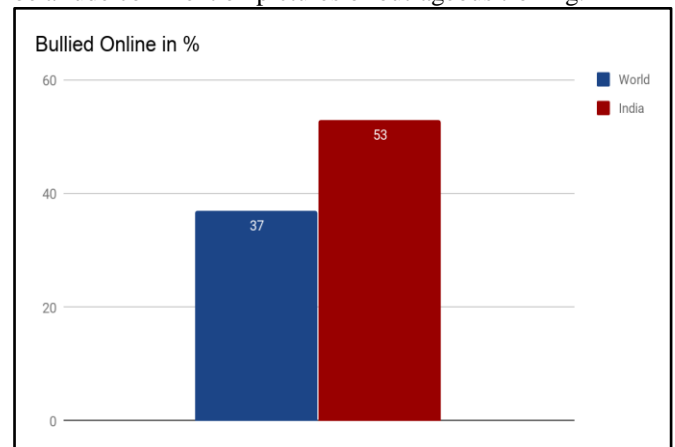


Fig. 6 Compares Online Bullying in India vs World (India Times)

D. Health

Many findings suggest that teenagers who use Social Media for more than three hours a day are twice likely to suffer from poor health. Some of the negative mental health effects are mental tiredness, strain, anxiety etc. [17].

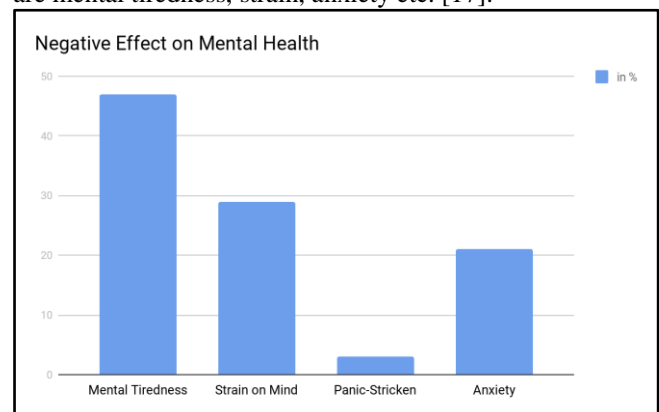


Fig. 7 The negative effect on Mental Health on India Youth [18]

Physical Health is also a concern as excessive use of social media can lead to obesity, poor vision, joint pains etc.

E. Psychological problem and Brain Anatomy Alteration

Studies show that the use of Social Media can induce many Psychological disorders in teenagers. According to one study, Social Media causes lack of concentration. Social Media can also lead to a change in the thought process as well as the change in brain anatomy [19].

VI. CONCLUSION AND FUTURE SCOPE

No doubt social media has a great impact on Indian youth and everything boils down to how one uses Social Media. When used correctly Social Media can be a great platform, but “As they something online is free, you are not the customer you are the product” (Jonathan Zittrain). Considering the fact that most of the social media users are in teenage, parents should guide or educate them properly about the advantages and disadvantages of Social Media. Sites which provide Social Media as a platform should consider updating their privacy policies and security of the users. We should encourage teenagers to not share their private information on such Social Media Site. It is very obvious that Social Media comes with lots of benefits, but it is essential to take all the safety measure so that one may not fall prey to malicious users over the Social Media.

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