

IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON CIVIC ENGAGEMENT OF YOUTH

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Abstract: The socio-economic development and livelihood depend upon the type of youths the country own. The participation of youth in the development process is essential in order to bring change in socio-economic structure and improving the quality of life of an individual. Social media stimulating young people reach a greater number of people; by increasing the flow of information among youth community. This has also resulted in saving lot of additional costs, provide them with better opportunities to network with their partners, listen to their audience expectations and respond to their questions. Youth civic engagement is central for young people's overall empowerment, and development. The theories indicate linkages between use of social media by youth, level of civic engagement and their socioeconomic status and political & non-political participation for the development. Social media supporting meaningful participation of young men & women, it also promoted young people with skills that will improve their participation and community engagement. It also increase their knowledge, awareness and create opportunities to actively participate in various issues that affect on development process. Various activities are going on, events have been occurred in order to unite and bring all the youth in the social transformation for the development with the support of whatsapp, histogram, chatting texting, and emails, Facebook, YouTube and Twitter. So the purpose of this study is to understand the relation between social media adoption and its impact on engagement and participation of youth. With the help of qualitative method and FGD this study showed mixed result.

Keywords: civic engagement; youth; social media, development; qualitative

I. INTRODUCTION

Among human resources of any nation, the vital chunk happens to be its youth. India is a land of youth. According to 2011 census, India had a total youth population of 347 million that is 35.2 per cent of the total population. Out of this population, about 70 per cent were rural youth and the remaining 30 per cent were urban youth. In Maharashtra youth population constitutes around 34 per cent of the total population. Out of this total youth population, 66 per cent were rural youth, while the remaining 34 per cent were urban youth (Anonymous, 2011). The 2011 census indicated that the youth population of India was 35, 59, and 28,000. Among them, male were 18, 45, 78,000 and the female were 17,16,50,000. According to Census 2011, nearly one fifth of the State population belongs to youth group. At present, the youths are having civic engagement, different needs, aspirations, attitudes, habits and values of life. The development of personal, social, economical and spiritual aspects of rural youth are possible, only when their needs, aspirations, attitudes, habits and values of life are recognized early and guided properly. Therefore, in this study some of these aspects are considered and which would be useful to the agencies involved in the development of rural youth. There is less number of studies in this area of research in Maharashtra. Hence, an attempt will be made in this study to know the civic engagement youth for the rural development. Within the civic engagement and leadership domain, Child Fund has identified three key pathways for how youth can effectively become change agents in their families and communities. The first pathway is youth-friendly forums. When youth have knowledge of and access to youth-friendly forums they are able to discuss and reflect on issues that are important to them. These youth-friendly spaces are an important component of giving youth a platform for learning about civic issues and engaging with their communities and other youth. The second pathway that Child Fund has identified is collective voice. Child Fund notes that an important component of youth becoming change agents is that they utilize youth-friendly spaces to come together to share experiences and viewpoints and work collaboratively to develop a goal or plan of action. The third pathway is collective action. Collective action is about youth advocating for and taking action on the goals and issues that they have identified as important. Child Fund recognizes that the collective action pathway requires that youth have the skills, knowledge, and confidence to effectively engage with governance structures, community leaders, and public authorities, such as local and central governments.

Civic Engagement

There are several reasons why one should be concerned about the civic engagement of youth. Their declining involvement in civic life has led some to predict the end of democracy, a system of government that, by definition, requires the active and informed engagement of its members (Gimped et al. 2003). The political aspect of the civic engagement of youth became salient in the 1960s as social scientists began asking how young people viewed politics.

Youth engagement

It is the result when young people are involved in responsible, challenging actions to create positive social change. This means involving youth in planning and in making decisions that affect themselves and others.

Youth participation

It is the active engagement of young people throughout their own communities. It is often used as shorthand for youth participation in any many forms, including decision-making, sports, schools and any activity where young people are not historically engaged.

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Social media includes websites and applications that enable users to create and share content or to participate in social networking. Development is a social and cultural phenomenon and to study this particular concept, it is important to understand different social, cultural, political, economic aspects of engagement and participation of youth. Literature includes different theories and criticism on the impact of social media and the relation between its use and youth civic engagement.

Objectives:

1. To analyze determinants of social media usage among youths
2. To identify the relationship between use of social media and personal, psychological and socioeconomic characteristics of youth
3. To ascertain the relationship between use of social media and youth civic engagement
4. To examine the direct impact of social media on youth engagement development

Design and Approach:

Research Methodology was Qualitative in nature because the totality of custom is largely unknown to the researcher thus it required the long stay and direct and indirect observation to understand various concept to related systems, customs, belief, social values, participations, extent contact, aspirations, motivational achievement, social development and economic transformation, influence of caste and religion and different ritual performed by youth community. To understanding the facts regarding the use of social media and its impact on youth participation and engagement, researcher need to follow qualitative research method, it will help to articulate the issues of rural youth community and civic engagement through social media use. The study was conducted in Maharashtra state, the research methods and the procedures followed in the study by multistage convenient sampling are presented under the following headings. The sample comprised of both males and females youth and total sample size is 600 from all six regions of Maharashtra.

Tools for data collection:

1. Unobtrusive Methods:

- Written and audio-visual records
- Simple observations
- Questionnaires

2. Non- Unobtrusive Methods

- Focus Group Discussions
- Manipulative experiments
- Key informant interviews
- Manipulative experiments

Focus group participant selection

A purposive sampling method was used in selecting focus group participants by using a combination of volunteer and snowball sampling. Random sampling is rarely used in focus group research and can in fact be a real disadvantage, as participants randomly selected may not interact well enough to generate meaningful discussions (Liamputtong, 2011). Purposive sampling is used when the researcher is interested in exploring the attitudes and beliefs in a particular group (Flick, 2002); in this study, those aged 18 to 25 years. Focus group participants were predominantly students. It is important to understand students perspectives of social media as a source for social, community issues, civic engagement and development. Participants were selected through Facebook messaging, email and face-to-face contact, with the researcher advantaged by snowball sampling friend groups; Peer groups are more likely to discuss certain issues, including politics, more freely than strangers. Snowball sampling is where research participants recruit other participants for a test or study. It is used where potential participants are hard to find. It's called snowball sampling because (in theory) once you have the ball rolling, it picks up more "snow" along the way and becomes larger and larger. In sociology and statistics research, snowball sampling (or chain sampling, chain-referral sampling, referral sampling) is a non probability sampling technique where existing study subjects recruit future subjects from among their acquaintances.

Focus group composition and environment

In terms of the number of participants, a relatively small number of participants were selected to provide in-depth information (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). Each focus group will comprised between ten to fifteen participants and it will held in a particular room at the University, college, school, hostel and in case of rural area at chavadi, temple, panchayat office etc. According to Morgan (1996), the rule of thumb is that most projects involve between four to six focus groups in a particular region. The justification for this range is that data becomes saturated with little new information emerging after the first few focus groups. "Productive group discussion is enhanced by both the physical location and the internal environment of the venue" (Liamputtong, 2011, p. 57) and that the venue should provide a comfortable and informal environment that is conducive to a productive discussion (Hennick, 2007), So this study include five focus group discussion in each region (i.e. 5 Region * 5 FGD = 25 FGD)

Statistical Techniques:

For hypothesis testing and further analysis several conventional & non conventional statistical tools will be used such as mean, standard deviation, chi-square test, factor analysis, correlation & regression analysis, Structural Equation Model, ANNOVA, MANCOVA through SAS & SPSS (23).

Hypothesis:

- H1a: Social media has direct impact on civic engagement and participation of youth.
- H1b: Nature of social media differs across personal and socio-economic profile of youth
- H1c: Attitude mediates the relationship between use of social media & civic engagement
- H1d: Constraints to social media use have significant impact on the civic engagement and of youth.

III. RESULTS

Table I: Socio-Economic Profile of Respondents

S. No.	Variable	Classification	Number	Percentage
1	Gender	Male	364	60.66
		Female	236	39.33
		Sub Total	600	100
2	Age	18 to 21	213	35.5
		21 to 25 years	387	64.5
		Sub Total	600	100
3	Caste	General	216	36
		SC	119	19.83
		ST	97	16.16
		OBC	168	28
		Sub Total	600	100
4	Religion	Hindu	429	71.5
		Muslim	171	28.5
		Sub Total	600	100

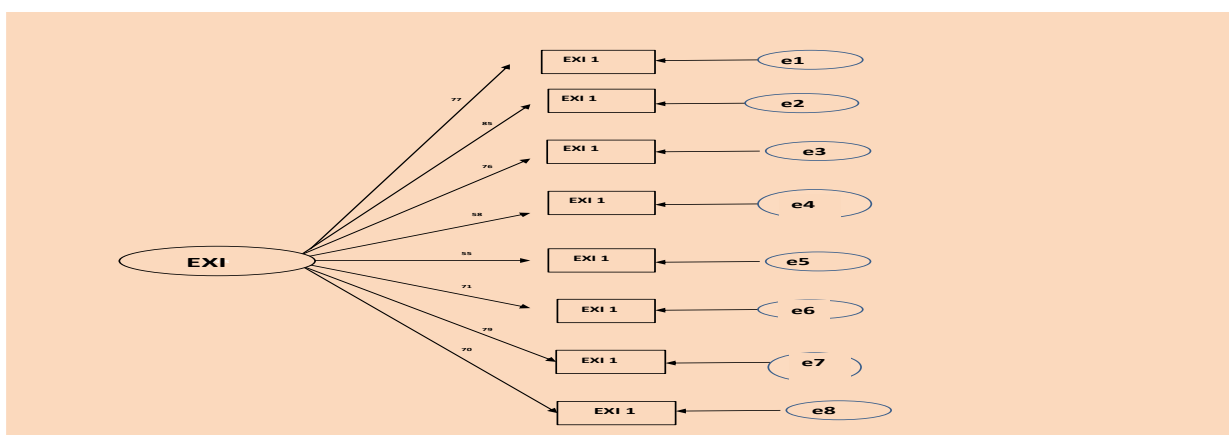
Confirmatory Factor Analysis:

CFA is a statistical tool that enables researchers to either confirm or reject preconceived theory. It is a deductive approach and multivariate statistical technique that is used to test how well the measured variables represent the construct and model building. CFA is conducted with the objective of verifying the fitness of each latent construct. In the present study, it is performed to assess the fitness, reliability and validity of five measured constructs, viz., Social media use (SMU) consists of two main dimensions i.e., external influences & self motivation; social development (SDEP); economic empowerment (EEMP) and economic Progress (EPGR). CFA is a way of testing how well measured variables represent a smaller number of constructs. All the CFA models fulfilled the necessary condition of identification, according to which there must be at least three manifest variables for each construct so that it can have enough degrees of freedom to estimate all free parameters. The constructs have been found to be both uni-dimensional as well as multi-dimensional. Most of the indices like GFI, AGFI, NFI, TLI and CFI are above .90 whereas badness of fit indices i.e., RMSEA of all the constructs is below .08 and Chi-square statistics (CMIN/DF) is less than recommended 0.5 level (Bagazzi & Yi, 1988)

CFA model for External Influences Factor

First order CFA (Figure) is performed on External influences factor dimension, which constituted of eighteen items. Among eighteen items, ten items got deleted as they are not meeting the criteria i.e. SRW's > .50. After deleting, CFA produced good fit as CMIN/DF = 4.182, GFI = .934, AGFI = .961, NFI = .940, TLI = .962, CFI = .978 and RMSEA = .076 (Table IV).The model has been found to be valid and reliable. The alpha value is.768 whereas composite reliability came out to be .973 thereby indicating that all items are reliable. Model has been proved to valid, as AVE came out to be .549 (Table II). The construct validity also stands established as all the indicators have factor loading above .50. Out of the eight items, 'poverty' & 'Lack of labor availability' emerged to be strongest contributor towards External Influences factor dimension, as its regression weight is .85 & .90 respectively.

Figure 1: CFA Model for External Influences Factor dimensions of Technology Adoption



CFA model for Self Motivated Factor, (SDEP) Social development, (EEMP) Economic empowerment, (EPGR) Economic Progress, (BEHR) Behavior and (HLTH) Health is performed on various dimensions of all these factors and result shown in Table no. II, III & IV regarding SRW's, CMIN/DF, GFI, AGFI, NFI, TLI, CFI, alpha value, composite reliability and regression weight.

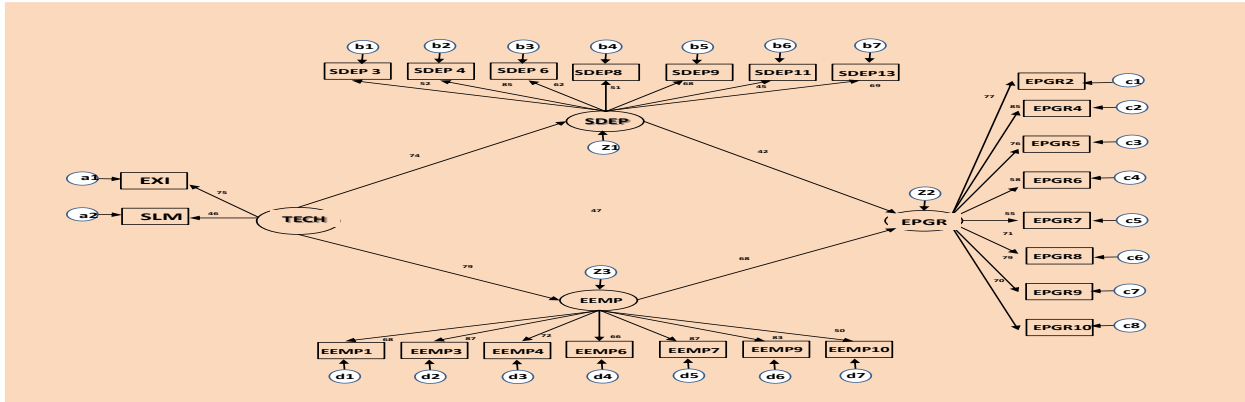


Figure 2: Overall structure equation model

(EXI = External Influences Factor, SLM = Self Motivated factor SMU = Social Media Use; EEMP = Economic Empowerment; SDEP = Social Development; EPGR = Economic Progress)

Table II: Reliability & Validity of latent constructs*

Constructs	AVE	Composite reliability	Cronbach's alpha (α)
External Influences Factor	.549	.973	.768
Self Motivated Factor	.672	.974	.812
Social development	.643	.969	.667
Economic empowerment	.589	.954	.812
Economic progress	.675	.993	.870
Behavior	.645	.987	.876
Health	.561	.934	.871

*Source: Survey

Table III: Discriminant validity of latent constructs

	EXI	SLM	SDEP	EEMP	EPGR	BEHR	HLTH
EXI	(.61)						
SLM	.32	(.578)					
SDEP	.18	.46	(.632)				
EEMP	.37	.26	.15	(.546)			
EPGR	.32	.30	.23	.50	(.604)		
BEHR	.30	.23	.13	.38	.40	(.584)	
HLTH	.24	.09	.06	.17	.16	.06	(.591)

(EXI = External Influences Factor, SLM = Self Motivated Factor, SDEP = Social development, EEMP = Economic empowerment, EPGR = Economic Progress, BEHR = Behavior and HLTH = Health)

*Source: Survey

Table IV: Results of CFA fit indices

Constructs	CMIN/DF	GFI	AGFI	CFI	NFI	TLI	RMSEA
External Influences Factor	4.182	.934	.961	.968	.940	.962	.076
Self Motivated Factor	1.564	.967	.941	.963	.965	.975	.059
Social development	3.543	.983	.964	.981	.979	.975	.075
Economic empowerment	4.523	.982	.950	.978	.979	.965	.068
Economic progress	3.413	.981	.958	.989	.985	.985	.058
Behavior	3.521	.963	.919	.976	.968	.952	.079
Health	4.367	.953	.957	.948	.928	.982	.086

*Source: Survey

Table V: Fitness of the Structural Model

Model	CMIN/DF	GFI	AGFI	CFI	NFI	TLI	RMSEA
Modified model	4.879	.912	.826	.934	.927	.927	.079
Proposed model	9.913	.863	.854	.846	.829	.839	.132

*Source: Survey

Table VI: Results of Hypotheses testing

	Hypotheses	CR	SRW	P- value	Accepted/ Rejected
H1a	External Influence factors significantly predict the adoption of Social Media	10.966	.71	.000	Accepted
H1b	Self Motivated factors significantly predicts the adoption of Social Media	12.351	.39	.000	Accepted
H2a	Social Media has direct impact on civic engagement of youth	13.284	.70	.000	Accepted
H2b	Use of social media has direct impact on economic progress & empowerment.	8.342	.78	.000	Accepted
H4	Social development mediates the relationship between social media use and economic progress	7.256	.52	.003	Accepted
H5	Nature of social media differs across the socio-economic variables	2.658	.98	.043	Partially accepted

*Source: Survey

IV. DISCUSSION

Output from One-way ANOVA

Output from One-way ANOVA using different socio-economic variables subdivided into age, caste, religion, on adoption of social media. Socio-economic variable wise, variance of groups is not same as the value of p is less than 0.05, indicating significant mean difference exist in adoption of social media with regard to religion and caste whereas for age, p value is more than 0.05 indicating no significant different exists. It depicts the output from independent t-test measuring significance of mean difference on the basis gender. As evident from the analysis, there exist no significant difference between male & female respondents, as value of $p > 0.05$ level of significance. So, on the basis of this we can say that the hypothesis 'Adoption of social media differs across the socio-economic variable' is accepted for caste & religion and rejected for age, gender Analysis depicts age-wise output from One-way ANOVA using different dimensions of social media use subdivided into external influences and

self motivated factors. In case of external influences, variance of group is same as the value of p is more than 0.05, indicating insignificant mean difference exist among respondents of different age groups. Whereas in case of self motivated factor, variance of group is not same as the value of p is less than 0.05, indicating significant mean difference exist among different age groups. With regard to self motivated dimension of social media, respondents belonging to 21-25 years of age are highly affected followed by 18-21 years. Table 1.13 shows caste-wise output from One-way ANOVA using different dimensions of social media i.e. external influences and self motivated factors. For external influences dimensions, variance of group is not same as the value of p is less than 0.05 indicating significant mean difference exist among respondents belonging to different caste. Whereas no significant mean difference exist among respondents of different caste with respect to self motivated as variance of group is same as the value of p is more than 0.05. Caste-wise analysis shows that with regard to external influences dimension general caste respondents are highly contended followed by OBC, SC, & ST respondents. Output from independent t-test measuring significance of mean difference among male & female. As evident from the table, significant difference exists with regard to dimension as value of p is less than 0.05. Whereas no significant mean difference exist between male & female with regard to external influences and self motivated as the p value is greater than 0.05.

V. CONCLUSION

The use of social media has revolutionized the way of communication among youth community. Sociability has gained a renewed interest with adoption of social networking sites; it is not only technology for communication but rather as contemporary mean for conversations, interaction and participation in development process. Social media has been supporting youth reach a greater number of people by increasing the flow of information between their community and other youth, this also resulted in saving cost, time listen to social issues and respond to those. Various campaigns taken place by youth community due to socio-economic problems of society. Petitions have been signed and various events have been organized in order to unite people for the social issues with the help of emails, texting, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Whatsup. Use of social media motivates youths to engage in community development and also participate in developmental process.

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